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**Raquel Camprubí**  
University of Girona

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### **Cinematographic image of Barcelona and the tourist consumption of the city**

Numerous studies have considered the relevance of films as a powerful tool to generate and disseminate destination image. However, the relationship between the perceived image of a destination and the consumption of its space remains underexplored. This study focuses on bridging this gap, taking Barcelona as a case study. Firstly, a content analysis of five international films was carried out to determine the most recurrent landmarks. Secondly, official statistics from the DMO were examined to determine visitors' consumption patterns of the city. Finally, the relationship between tourist image and visitor' consumption patterns was analysed using Pearson correlation. Findings suggest that the tourist sights most visited in the city are, in turn, the places which systematically appear in the films analysed.

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Keywords: tourist image, film tourist image, information sources, poly-nuclear city, tourist consumption

Raquel Camprubí  
Business Organisation and Management Department  
Faculty of Tourism  
Plaça Ferrater Móra, 1  
17004 – Girona  
Spain  
Phone: [34] 972 41 97 20  
Email: [raquel.camprubi@udg.edu](mailto:raquel.camprubi@udg.edu)

Dr. Raquel Camprubí is Associate Professor at University of Girona. She completed her PhD in 2009, focusing on tourism image formation and relational networks. She is Maîtrise en Ingénierie et Commercialisation des Produits Touristiques from University of Toulouse - Le Mirail. Her research interests cover tourist behaviour, destination management, tourism image, branding, and consumer behaviour. She collaborates regularly with several European universities, and she is coordinator of the Master in Tourism Management and Planning at the University of Girona.

## **Introduction**

Over the past two decades, tourism research has recognized the power of films as generators and disseminators of a destination's tourism image (Croy, 2010), and thus a relevant information source (Gartner, 1994). Hahm and Wang (2011) mention that cinema, together with other communication tools, can play an important role in influencing travel decision-making.

Various studies have analysed patterns of tourism image transmitted through cinema (Busby and Haines, 2013; Croy, 2004; Tovar, 2014), and demonstrated that the increase in tourism demand in a destination could stem from a particular film (Tooke and Baker, 1996; Iwashita, 2008). However, there are no studies focusing on the relationship between the image emitted through films and a destination's consumption patterns.

This paper, therefore, aims to explore this relationship. Taking Barcelona as a case study, this paper examines the city's cinematographic image through a sample of films and visitors' consumption patterns through official statistics.

## **Literature review**

### *Tourism image conceptualisation*

Academic literature has developed a theoretical corpus around the factors influencing the decision-making process (Crompton and Baker, 1996; Bigné, Sanchez and Sanz, 2009; Oppermann and Chon, 1997; Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005). Among them is the power of tourist image, which can be defined as a mental representation of a destination in an individual's mind (Rodríguez and San Martín, 2008). A tourist image is defined as "the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination" (Crompton 1979: 18). This mental representation, which is based on an individual's knowledge, makes a tourist image highly personal (Gunn, 1988) and gives it a subjective character. However, as an image is constructed socially, there is no agreement on whether this subjectivity is collective

or unipersonal (Gallarza, Gil, and Calderón, 2002). Tourism image has a complex nature due to many variables interacting simultaneously (Gallarza et al., 2002; Tasci and Gartner, 2007).

Extensive studies on tourism image conclude that it is composed of both cognitive and affective components (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martín, 2004). These cognitive and affective evaluations result in an overall image of the destination (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999). Other authors consider conative evaluations a third component of tourist image (Dann, 1996; Gartner, 1994), although it cannot be considered an image in itself, since it is related to intentions to visit or effective purchase. For the past 40 years, researchers have been analysing the image formation process (Crompton, 1972; Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Tasci & Gartner, 2007 to determine which variables intervene and influence the resulting tourism image in the minds of individuals. Scholars agree that various information sources, together with other influencing variables such as socio-demographical and psychological variables, are crucial in this process (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999).

### *Image formation process*

Every day, people receive multiple stimuli of a diverse nature (text, visuals, audio, etc.) and from various channels (books, cinema, Internet, mass media, etc.) that propitiate the construction of images in their minds regarding products, services, places, and so on. During the process of accumulating images of a place, Gunn (1972) concluded that attitude could be either unconscious: accumulating organic images based on information collected from art, newspapers, documentaries, etc.; or conscious, though actively gathering information from travel books, destination websites, tourist blogs, brochures, etc., resulting in induced images. Both types of images (organic and induced) constitute the perceived a priori image of the place. Galí and Donaire (2005) identify three types of perceived image (a priori, in situ, and a posteriori). According to these authors (2005: 778), perception a priori is the mental

construction an individual makes of a place without having a physical connection with the place; perception in situ is a key moment in the tourist experience because tourists contrast what they have imagined with what they are perceiving; and perception a posteriori means that tourist experience does not end with the journey home, meaning that tourist areas continue to be consumed in the place of origin after the trip through pictures and memories. Therefore, each one of these images corresponds to a particular stage in the travel experience and evolves in the mind of the individual during this process.

### *Cinematographic tourist image*

Tourist image formation a priori is essential due to its highly influential effect on tourist behaviour, and subsequently, on perceived images in situ and a posteriori. In this context, films constitute one of the most powerful information sources since the visual, sonorous, and moving elements converge. These features, together with the fact that films are a non-sales type of travel communication (Riley and Van Doren, 1992), they are easily accessed by the general public, and have longer exposure periods than traditional travel promotion efforts (Henefors and Mossberg 2002), gives them an exceptional ability to generate awareness, appeal and profitability (Riley and Van Doren, 1992; Hudson and Ritchie, 2006; Henefors and Mossberg 2002).

When viewing films, individuals increase their knowledge of a destination and modify the cognitive and affective evaluations of the image perceived in their mind. In essence, they are able "to experience attractions vicariously" (Riley and Van Doren, 1992: 270), influencing their perspective of the place screened. Kim and Richardson (2003) determined that after watching a specific film, individuals altered cognitive and affective evaluations of the destination image (Vienna). Therefore, the presence of various tourist attractions or characteristic elements of the place in films makes these landmarks and features part of the

destination's collective imagery. Therefore, considering the high credibility and market penetration of popular culture, this implies that films can dramatically change an area's image in a short period of time (Gartner, 1994).

In general, motion pictures can enhance the tourism image of a place (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006), especially when it is presented as a "formula of idyllic or extraordinary landscape qualities, a unique social and cultural vantage point, and/or an image that tourists identify with and wish to explore and rediscover" (Riley and Van Doren, 1992: 274). Nevertheless, on the contrary, if a negative image is transmitted through films, then the effect will negatively affect people's perception. This is the case for Colombia, for instance, as its image has been affected by news and American films focused on violence and drug trafficking. In fact, the Colombian Tourism Board put this negative image projected in American films and other popular culture to use in its advertising campaign "Colombia, the only risk is wanting to stay."

Even though cinema contributes to the formation of the tourist image, it is difficult to prove a direct link (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998) because several information sources can be used simultaneously. In this context, using the case of Las Vegas, Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 75) illustrate that films have a "cumulative impact on image formation." Referring to movies such as *The Godfather*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*, and *Casino*, they argued that people who had not visited the destination had a perception of it centred on its "adult product," connected to gambling, sex, mafia, and entertainment. For those who have visited Las Vegas, these stereotypes were still evocative images. Other authors have attributed increased visitor numbers in some countries or regions to cinema. For example, Riley and Van Doren (1992) suggested that Historic Fort Hays, KS recorded a 25% increase in 1990-91 compared to an average increase of 6.6% for the previous four years. Along the same lines, several other authors have proved that television shows or films increase visitor numbers (Busby and Klug,

2001; Croy, 2010; Iwashita, 2008). Busby and Haines (2013) state that "television shows have a significant impact on influencing tourist motivation to visit the places depicted on-screen." However, although the influence of motion pictures on tourist behaviour has been examined in-depth, previous research has not yet fully explored behaviour patterns at the cinematographic destination.

### *Tourism image and consumption of the city*

As mentioned above, a city's tourist image precedes tourist visits. The tourist has a preconception of the place, which will influence their expectations and movements at the destination. Ateljevic (2000: 378) identifies "consumption as an ongoing process of reproduction," meaning that the tourist attempts to consume all the elements that form part of its imagery at the destination. In this sense, the tourist space is constructed socially (Ateljevic, 2000) and conceived through the three-dimensional spatial metaphor: the representation of the space (image on information sources), the material space, and the spaces of representation (Harvey, 1993).

Nevertheless, the primary material is an essential ingredient required for this to happen, which means that the tourist destination needs tourist resources to be configured based on the tourist attractiveness, to be transmitted through the various information sources. In this context, following on from MacCannell (1976), Leiper (1990) establishes that attractions in a tourism destination are configured through a system in which three different elements intervene: the tourist, the marker (information), and the "nucleus" (the attraction in itself). In this attraction system, there is a hierarchical classification of primary, secondary, and tertiary attractions. Primary attractions are the main purpose of the visit, and secondary and tertiary attractions are complementary. Regarding this hierarchy, Botti, Peypoch, and Solonandrasana (2008: 594) mention that "all tourists are unique individuals who make their

own ranking of the tourist attractions at the destination." Therefore, it can be considered that each tourist consumes the destination according to their needs, motivations, and expectations. However, it has been demonstrated that tourists usually follow a kind of conduct code when consuming a place, which is marked by its specific tourist type (Galí and Donaire, 2006; Grinberger, Shoval and McKercher, 2014).

The geographic space of the tourism destination has a direct influence on the definition of its tourist attractiveness. This means that bigger spaces considered tourist destinations would likely attract more tourists because they can include more tourist attractions within one system. For example, capital cities do not usually have a single element as a primary tourist attraction, but instead, various tourist attractions that can be considered primary, and others considered secondary and tertiary attractions. In this context, post-modern cities are configured as multi-nodal; in other words, they have various tourist interest centers, but modeling them presents numerous difficulties (Hall and Page 2003).

In a nutshell, the destination's tourist consumption responds to a dialectical process within the system of tourist attractions at the place and to the desire to reproduce what they have imagined before traveling to the destination through films and/or other types of information sources. Culture has been described as one of the most complex words in the English language, making it difficult to define (Williams, 1976). Master and Prideaux (2000) argued that culture could be viewed from two different perspectives, from an ideological viewpoint comprising of values, norms, conventions, and practices (Rokeach, 1979) and secondly as a combination of both ideological and material elements such as ways of life (Assael, 1992; Mowen, 1993). Human societies differ in shape, purposes, and meanings and are expressed in institutions, arts, and learning (Williams, 1958). Williams (1958) argued that culture could also mean a whole way of life; the common meanings, the arts, learning, and the special processes of discovery and creative efforts. The term culture encompasses

peoples' civilization with its continuity and change processes and is portrayed in individuals' values, beliefs, rituals, artifacts, and tools (Were, 1982). Thomlinson (1991) argued that as there are different meanings of culture, it is better to concentrate on how the term culture is being used. A similar view is given by van Maanen and Laurent (1993) who argued that it is important not to focus on the all-embracing definition of culture. Richards (1996) noted that because of the vast meaning of the term 'culture,' it also poses a major problem in analysing cultural products' consumption.

A range of studies in tourism has shown the influence of culture on tourists' behaviour (e.g., Kim et al., 2002; Sussmann and Rashcovsky, 1997; Pizam and Jeong, 1996, Yu and Ko, in press). Actions acceptable by some cultures may be repugnant to other cultures (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995). National culture characteristics such as attitudes, social behaviours, perceptions, needs, expectations, beliefs, norms, motivations, and verbal and non-verbal communication patterns of tourists (March, 1997; Rokeach, 1973) have been used to explain variations of tourists' behaviour. Leisure researchers have analysed travel vacation patterns among different nationalities (Kim and Lee, 2000; Sussmann and Rashcovsky, 1997). Noting the significant differences between French and English Canadians in the number of their vacation trips and their importance to accommodation and destination attributes, Sussmann and Rashcovsky (1997) concluded that tourism is a product of cultural variables processes. The analysis of Japanese, Korean, and American tourists' behavioral characteristics on guided tours revealed considerable differences in their trip length, food preferences, adventure, novelty and familiarity, photography and letter-writing (Pizam and Jeong, 1996). A recent study by Yu and Ko (in press) revealed significant differences in perceptions of medical tourism among Chinese, Japanese and Korean tourists in Korea. Korean tourists placed more of an emphasis on selection factors followed by the Chinese tourists, and the Japanese. Kim and Prideaux (2003) noted significant behavioural differences among four national groups of

passengers (Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Americans) in their expectations of availability of in-flight materials, their food and beverage requests and duty-free purchases. Lee and Lee (2009) found a clear contrast between Japanese and Korean travellers in their evaluative image of Guam. Their findings indicated that the travellers' perceived destination image exerted a significant influence on their destination choice and preconditioned tourist destination behaviours leading to attitudinal consequences. Reisinger and Turner (1997) presented the cultural differences between Indonesian and Australian tourists using Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions of power-distance, individualism,-collectivism, uncertainty-avoidance, and masculinity-femininity. Indonesian tourists were found to be oriented towards collectivism (group-oriented) and had a preference for package tours, while the Australians being more inclined towards individualism (self-oriented), sought independent tours preferring risk-taking activities in contrast to Indonesians. Hofstede (1991) and Matilla (1999) further argued that westerners being from an individualistic society, value hedonic experiences such as enjoyment and fun more than Asian consumers. Wong and Lau (2001) confirmed that Chinese travellers favour travelling in groups. Cultural differences were noted in travel agents' attitudes towards political instability at selected Mediterranean destinations (Seddighi et al., 2001). The latter concluded that the significant differences among travel agents from six European countries had important implications for policy makers and destination marketers. The scholars further noted that the respondents' cultural background determined the difference in their perception across the different types of political instability examined.

Some studies have looked at cultural influences on tourists' information search behaviour, indicating different significant cultural differences among various national groups (Gursoy and Chen, 2000; Gursoy and Umbreit, 2004; Ortega and Rodriguez, 2007) and preferences for external information sources for their decision-making process (Chen, 2000;

Mihalik et al., 1993; Uysal et al., 1990). Tourists visiting national parks in the USA revealed different preferences for external information sources influencing their decision-making process (Uysal et al., 1990). A study conducted by Iverson (1997) showed that Korean travellers revealed shorter decision time frames than Japanese travellers. March (1997) further concluded in his analysis of Korean and Japanese travellers' behaviour that the former bought more expensive gifts and engaged in more adventurous tourism activities than the Japanese. Chen (2000) argued that cultural differences existed between Japanese, Australian, and South Korean vacation and business tourists travelling to the USA. Mihalik et al. (1993), in their study of German and Japanese tourists travelling to USA, concluded that the latter relied mostly on pamphlets, books, and travel agents. Another study by Ortega and Rodriguez (2007) revealed that British, German, American, and French tourists in Spain attributed much importance to information at the destination through films shown in their hotel rooms and pamphlets available in the lobby area. While Spanish tourists also attributed great importance to pamphlets in the hotel area, they were less keen on information though films in their hotel rooms. Kang and Mastin (2008) employed Hofstede's cultural dimensions to investigate cultural differences in international tourism public relations websites. They argued that this is important to build and maintain relationships with multicultural audiences. Prior studies have also observed that their cultural background influences tourists' motivation to travel to destinations. In essence, Philipp (1994) noted a racial difference between white and black Americans in their quest for novelty at tourists' destinations. Kozak (2002) argued that literature still lacks empirical studies investigating how tourists' motives differ across different groups. Understanding cultural differences in tourists' motivation is necessary for international tourism management (Kim, 1998).

## **Methodology**

*Study site*

Barcelona has been chosen as a case study, considering its appropriateness for the purposes of this research. Firstly, Barcelona's tourism appeal makes it one of the main city destinations in Europe. In 2015, it received 8.3 million tourists and was ranked sixth in tourism arrivals to European cities. Secondly, its attractive image has made it the setting for several national and international films and other productions such as shorts, documentaries, or commercials. In 2015, Barcelona was the setting for 48 films, 490 short films, 586 commercials, and others (Barcelona Film Commission, 2016).

**Table 1: Evolution of filming production in Barcelona**

<b>Type of productions</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Films	45	40	50	62	48
Shorts	374	359	324	435	490
TV entertainment	223	197	250	260	349
Documentaries	207	183	183	331	255
Commercials	303	399	525	560	586
Photographs	431	583	678	801	942
Other	322	379	484	624	641
Total	1.905	2.140	2.494	3.073	3.311

Source: Barcelona Film Commission (2016)

*Study method*

A sample of 5 films was taken from Barcelona's global filmography (All About My Mother; Auverge Espagnol; Manuale D'amore 2; Vicky Cristina Barcelona; and Biutiful). Criteria used to choose the films in the sample were twofold: Firstly, films had to be set in

Barcelona, where the city was presented as the main scenario of the film; and secondly, films had to be screened internationally. Table 2 shows the details of each of the films included in the sample. It should be pointed out that this is a limited sample because the criteria established reduced the final sample considerably. Five films were also considered sufficient, as academic articles analysing tourism images in films are usually limited to one or two films (i.e., Busby and Haines, 2013; Tovar, 2014).

**Table 2 Characterisation of the sample**

Film title	Year	Director	Country	Genre(s)	Place(s)	Box office	Budget
All about my mother	1999	Pedro Almodóvar	Spain	Drama	Barcelona, Madrid and La Coruña	9,962,047€ (Spain) US \$67,872,296 (world) 2,748,605€ (France)	€ 3,900,000
Auverge Espagnol	2002	Cédric Klapisch	France	Romantic comedy	Barcelona and France	US \$31,024,110 (world) 6,199,674€ (Italy)	€ 5,300,000
Manuale d'amore 2	2007	Giovanni Veronesi	Italy	Romantic comedy	Barcelona and Italy	US \$27,727,619 (world) US	-
Vicky Cristina Barcelona	2008	Woody Allen	USA	Romantic comedy	Barcelona, Asturias and New York	\$23,000,000 (USA) US \$91,262,911 (world)	US \$15,500,000

					Barcelona,	US \$5,101,237	
	Alejandro				Badalona (Mexico)		US
Biutiful	2010	González	Mexico	Drama	and Santa	US	\$20,000,000
		Iñárritu			Coloma de	\$25,147,786	
					Gramanet (world)		

The films were analysed using content analysis, "an observational research method that is used to systematically evaluate the symbolic content of all forms of recorded communications" (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991). An inductive approach was taken to perform the content analysis, considering criteria from Kolbe and Burnett (1991) based on objectivity, systematization, and quantification. Recommendations by Camprubí and Coromina (2016) on carrying out successful content analysis were also considered.

Each film was watched twice. During the first viewing, the various sites and tourist nodes that featured in the film were identified. During the second viewing, the length of time each of these sites appeared was recorded. Therefore, it is considered the relevance of whether a site appears in the film and the time that this site is shown on the screen. A total of 42 different sites were detected during the inductive process (Table 2), with a total running time of 57 minutes, 55 seconds. Table 3 shows the number of sites that appeared in each film analysed.

During this process, two judges intervened. One was an independent coder who received instructions from the author to collect data. When discrepancies occurred, these were discussed and agreed upon.

**Table 3: Number of sites by film**

<b>Film title</b>	<b>N</b>
All about my mother	9
Auverge Espagnol	14
Manuale d'amore 2	9

Vicky Cristina	
Barcelona	16
Biutiful	13

Afterward, three categories were created based on the annual report supplied by the local DMO (Barcelona's Tourism Board, 2016), regarding the number of visitors to tourist attractions and sites: (a) Architectural interest areas; (b) Leisure areas; (c) Museums and collections. A fourth category, called "Public areas," was also added. This last category accounts for other outdoor spaces in the city, such as streets and squares, which are not listed in the official statistics. All the sites previously detected were classified accordingly. Simultaneously, the annual report provided official data from which we could identify the main tourist attractions and other sites of interest in the city.

Finally, following the study aims, comparisons were drawn between the results of the content analysis and data from the DMO report.

## Results

### *Barcelona's image in films*

According to the data analysed (table 4), in films, Barcelona is portrayed as a city with an outstanding architectural heritage (28.6% of sites) and a high number of public areas such as squares, streets, and parks (54.8%). Museums and leisure activities count for 9.5% and 7.1% of sites, respectively. Regarding running time, the 42 detected sites concentrate a total running time of 57 minutes and 55 seconds. Following in the same direction, "public areas" is the category with the highest running time (56.3%), followed in the second position by architectural interest areas (31.3%).

**Table 4: Number of sites and running time by category**

Category	N	%	Running time	%
Architectural interest areas	12	28.6	0:18:06	31.3

Leisure areas	3	7.1	0:03:50	6.6
Museums and collections	4	9.5	0:03:23	5.8
Public areas	23	54.8	0:32:36	56.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0:57:55</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5: Top 20 sights depicted in films.**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Running time</b>	<b>% total running time</b>
1	Raval Quarter	00:11:10	19.28
2	Güell Park	00:06:00	10.36
3	Ramos Houses	00:05:31	9.53
4	Barceloneta Beach	00:03:30	6.04
5	La Rambla	00:02:57	5.09
6	Gràcia Walk	00:02:35	4.46
7	Tibidabo	00:02:23	4.12
8	Catalan Music Palace	00:02:12	3.80
9	Sagrada Família	00:01:50	3.17
10	Escudellers Blancs Street	00:01:32	2.65
11	Duc de Medinaceli Square	00:01:27	2.50
12	Catalunya Square	00:01:20	2.30
13	Fundació Antoni Tàpies	00:01:20	2.30
14	Port Cabelway	00:01:20	2.30
15	Laietana Street	00:01:12	2.07
16	Caputxes Street	00:01:07	1.93
17	MNAC	00:01:05	1.87
18	Sarajevo Bridge	00:01:00	1.73
19	MACBA	00:00:54	1.55
20	Sant Pau i Santa Creu Hospital	00:00:50	1.44

The city's tourist landmarks stand out clearly in the films. The top 10 sites (Table 5) identified during the content analysis, in terms of running time, include the Raval quarter, Güell Park, Barceloneta Beach and Sagrada Família. These sites account for 68.5% of total running time. If we consider the top 20 sites, then this percentage rises to 88.5%. It is worth noting that, in general, more than half of these top 20 sites are outdoor spaces depicting daily life in a modern, lively, cosmopolitan city. However, some films such as *Biutiful*, or *All About My Mother*, paint a more critical picture of the city, and show negative aspects of city life such as prostitution or a lack of street cleanness in the Raval Quarter.

#### *Barcelona's tourist visitation*

The annual tourism report in Barcelona found a total of 39 tourist attractions that received 29.7 million visitors in 2015 globally. In general terms, all these places have increased the number of visitors notably in relation to data from 2014. Table 6 shows data from the 10 most visited landmarks in the city, including top ranking sites of particular interest, as the Sagrada Família and the Güell Park, which had 3.7 and 2.7 million visitors respectively.

It is recognized that Barcelona has other landmarks related to streets and squares as a part of its attractiveness. The visitors' survey (2016) could also provide the number of visitors in these outdoor spaces, and in other sites where the number of visitors was not counted, through the question "Which sites or specific areas have you visited during this stay in Barcelona?" Although the report does not have the exact number of visitors, it calculates the percentage of visitors who confirm having been in specific places in the city. Therefore, this percentage was used to infer data and obtain the number of visitors for each place. The reference data used for the calculations were the number of visitors to the Sagrada Família,

since this where visitor numbers can be counted from the sale of tickets. It is noted that, although the Cathedral is an indoor attraction, there are no ticket sales, and thus, the number of visitors cannot be counted accurately. This is the reason why this landmark has used the same system to calculate the number of visitors.

**Table 6: Top 10 sights in Barcelona**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>2.015</b>
1	Sagrada Família	3,722,540
2	Güell Park	2,761,436
3	Museum of FC Barcelona	1,785,903
4	Aquarium	1,549,480
5	El Born – Cultural Centre	1,486,228
6	Spanish Town	1,221,647
7	Picasso Museum	1,008,125
8	Zoological park	1,004,069
9	Casa Batlló	992,126
10	La Pedrera	990,112

Source: Annual report 2015

Results are shown in Table 7 and demonstrate the high number of visitors in emblematic spaces of the city such as La Rambla, which has more than 5 million visitors; Catalonia square with 3.7 million visitors; or the Cathedral with around 3 million visitors.

**Table 7: Other indoor and outdoor spaces visited**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>N° visitors</b>
1	La Rambla	5,050,946*
2	Catalonia Square	3,775,076*
4	Gothic Quarter	3,272,233*
5	Cathedral	2,994,543*
6	Gràcia Walk	2,957,018*
7	Olympic Harbour (Moll de Xaloc)	2,461,680*
8	Mapfre Tower	2,409,144*
9	Arch de Triumf	2,221,516*
10	Barceloneta Beach	2,183,990*
11	Agbar Tower	547,874*
12	Raval Quarter	97,567*

\*Inferred visitors

Previous studies have only shown that a number of tourist attractions with a high level of visitors exist. In this study, however, we have further analysed these sites, showing their geographical location. Map 1 shows that the main landmarks are relatively near each other, especially those located around the Gothic quarter, such as the Cathedral, Catalonia Square, or La Rambla.

The map also confirms that Barcelona is a multi-nodal city. This implies that tourists consume not just one specific node but various spaces around the city. Nevertheless, Barcelona cannot guarantee a balanced distribution of visitors across the city. Thus it could

be termed a poly-nuclear city. This implies that some city spaces have an excessive concentration of tourists, and other spaces are invisible to the tourist gaze. In recent years, this situation has been heavily criticized, and Barcelona's social movements have been rising against tourism. Authorities in Barcelona have had to create a strategic plan to redistribute the tourist flows throughout the city's various districts and created, for example, tourist products outside the usual tourist routes.

**Map 1: Geographical distribution of the main sites visited (Barcelona).**



Source: Adapted from [www.google.es/maps](http://www.google.es/maps)

*Tourist image of Barcelona versus consumption of the city*

To achieve the aims established above, we compared results from the content analysis of films and visitor data. Of the 42 sites found during the content analysis, 23 were chosen for

comparison since these had direct or indirect visitor data available. Table 8 shows that spaces with a high volume of visitors also have a higher percentage of running time in films (Pearson correlation= .334). Examples are the Rambla, Sagrada Família, Gràcia Walk, or Güell Park.

**Table 8: Relationship between projected image through films and the number of visitors to tourist sites.**

Ranking by visitors	Ranking by running time	Sites	Number of visitors (2015)	% of Running time	Number of films
1	4	La Rambla	5,050,946	7,24	3
2	9	Catalonia Square	3,775,076	3,27	2
3	8	Sagrada Família	3,722,540	4,50	5
4	15	Gothic quarter	3,272,233	1,02	1
5	14	Cathedral	2,994,543	1,23	1
6	5	Gràcia walk	2,957,018	6,34	2
7	2	Güell park	2,761,436	14,72	2
8	16	Olympic harbour	2,461,680	1,02	1
9	19	Mapfre tower	2,409,144	0,41	1
10	20	Triumph arch	2,221,516	0,41	1
11	3	Barceloneta's beach	2,183,990	8,59	4
12	17	Pedrerera	990,112	0,82	1
13	11	MNAC	717,211	2,66	1
14	6	Tibidabo	682,939	5,85	1
15	21	Agbar Tower	547,874	0,33	1
16	23	Miró Foundation	451,559	0,16	1
17	12	MACBA	321,366	2,21	2
18	18	Finca Güell	261,167	0,82	1
		Sant Pau i Santa Creu			
19	13	Hospital	235,207	2,04	1
20	7	Catalan Music Palace	195,260	5,40	1
21	22	Colom monument	109,727	0,29	1

22	1	Raval quarter	97,567	27,40	3
23	10	Antoni Tàpies Foundation	70,174	3,27	1

The number of films in which each of the sites has appeared is also taken into account. Results show that 8 of these sites have appeared in two or more films. In this case, the Pearson correlation between the number of visitors and the number of films for each site is .048 (p-value = .028), indicating a positive relationship between these two variables, thus showing that the most visited sites of the city are used in the projected image of Barcelona through films. Consequently, it produced feedback between the places that characterise Barcelona's projected image and the main tourist sights of this city. For instance, the three prominent landmarks, which are also the most visited sites in the city, appeared in 2 or more films. Likewise, Sagrada Família is ranked as an iconic attraction as its image is seen in all the films analysed, and it is one of the most visited sites in the city. In this sense, Sagrada Família is seen on cinema screens as an emblematic symbol defining both a monumental city and Gaudi's architecture. It characterises and gives identity to Barcelona's projected image, even though other monuments and sites are displayed in the film for longer periods.

## **Conclusions**

The aim of this paper has been covered using Barcelona as a case study. The study contributes to academic literature by exploring the relationship between a destination's cinematographic image and its main landmarks' tourist consumption.

Kim and Richardson (2013) state that films tend to familiarize audiences with various attractions at the destination and "make the intangible tangible" at the same time (Bolan and Williams, 2008: 388). Therefore, a tourist's natural reaction to this input is to reaffirm their previous perception. The tourist gaze focuses on the imagery created by the various

information sources, particularly films, and they try to close the circle by visiting the places stored in their mind. In the case of Barcelona, findings show that there is a higher number of tourists at the most recurrent landmarks in the city's filmography. This, therefore, confirms a direct relationship between the landmarks of the city promoted through films and the most visited spaces in the city. The conclusions also show that Barcelona is a multi-nodal city, with numerous tourist spots spread out geographically around the city. However, the main landmarks are concentrated in a small number of districts. This feature is also represented through the films analysed. Both films and visitor statistics highlight specific landmarks' relevance, most of them outdoor spaces such as La Rambla, Catalonia Square, or the Gothic Quarter. Sagrada Família and Gaudi's architectural heritage both rank as iconographic images of the city.

We are aware that this study has certain limitations regarding the relationship between the perceived image in films and consumption of the city. The first is based on knowing whether visitors have watched the films in the study or not and the effect that each of them has on the city's perceived tourist image. To gain further insight, future research could survey visitors to confirm the extent to which the filmography of a destination has influenced the itinerary visitors follow. Secondly, although there is a relationship between emitted images in films and the consumption of the city, a more in-depth analysis could be carried out. In some way, the order of these two concepts can be questioned, as in the "chicken and egg" theory. Which one comes first? Do people consume what they have perceived through films? Or is it the filmmakers who decide to film specific landmarks because of their potential as part of the organic image of the destination? In any case, future research needs to explore the interdependency of the perceived image of a destination and its consumption in greater detail.

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