Title: Viajeros españoles a Rusia: Cartografía de un ilusión, 1917-1939

Authors: Becerril Longares, María Elena

Advisors: Naharro-Calderón, José M.

Department/Program: Spanish and Portuguese

Type: Dissertation

Sponsors: Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, University of Maryland (College Park, MD)

Issue Date: 2015

URI: http://hdl.handle.net/1903/16911

DRUM DOI: doi:10.13016/M2PP95

Collections:
Languages, Literatures, & Cultures Theses and Dissertations
UMD Theses and Dissertations

Abstract: Spanish travel accounts and their search for a better society in the USSR between the 1917 Russian Revolution and the end of the Spanish Civil War (1939) were marked by socialist ideas that had taken strong root in early 20th century Spain. Eventually, the II Spanish Republic (1931-39) was perceived as a possible springboard for spreading the worldwide worker’s revolution. New Humanist ideals were also combined with theories of perfect governance and the renaissance of Utopias. Antonio Machado, a poetic icon, praised the revolutionary “goodness” early on and was an advocate for the need for change among Spanish society. Battleship Potemkin and other films contributed to the Spanish proletariat’s revolutionary awakening and participation. In this socio-historical context, ideologically diverse intellectuals began their travels to the USSR seeking to confirm firsthand the “Russian experiment.” They ranged from later renowned authors such as Rafael Alberti, Max Aub or Manuel Chaves Nogales to the forgotten, like León Villanúa or Amado Blanco. Upon these voyagers’ return to Spain they availed themselves of a myriad of literary genres: testimony literature, personal memoirs, autobiography, travelogues and parodies, their impressions and experiences quickly becoming widespread. Therefore, my dissertation dissects the impact and reception of the Russian Other throughout these diverse Spanish traveler’s accounts, imaginaries, and their reader’s reception as well as the structural changes evident in this diverse corpus and its authors. It also turns a critical eye towards the Russian miracle agitprop rhetoric and the decline and crisis of the USSR Spanish travel examples, particularly during the post 1939 Spanish Civil War exile, the Cold War and Stalinism horror revelations.