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Dancing in the sun: The musical as touristic hook in 'Honeymoon'

Lidia Merás & Sarah Wright

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Abstract

The British/Spanish co-production *Honeymoon* (*Luna de miel*, Michael Powell, 1959) is a curious case of an export for foreign audiences that won the Technical Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival yet was a commercial failure. Taking this now forgotten film as a case study, we will investigate the musical genre from a transnational perspective. Recently restored to its original length, *Honeymoon* includes compositions by Manuel de Falla and Sarasate, as well as performances by ballet dancer Ludmilla Tchérina and Spanish dance star Antonio (Ruiz Soler), both choreographed by Léonide Massine. We examine the interplay between national and transnational elements in a musical that tries to emulate the success of *The Red Shoes* (Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger, 1948) by putting it in the context of the Spanish cultural and economic policies of promoting the country.

Keywords: co-production, Cold War, dance, film genre, Francoism, heritage, Michael Powell, musical, tourism, transnational cinema

1 Introduction

In 1959, in his first film without Emeric Pressburger since the global success of their collaborative smash *The Red Shoes* (1948), Michael Powell released *Honeymoon* (*Luna de miel*), designed to be a 'Spanish *Red Shoes*'. Although the film won the Technical Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival and was praised by establishment critics within Spain,¹ it was a critical and commercial flop and is now relegated to a footnote (if mentioned at all) in critical biographies of the British director.² *Honeymoon* is 'glorious screen Baedek-

er³ writes one reviewer, while for another: 'basically the film is an enormous travel poster of the most blatant kind, full of fast cars, sumptuous hotels, elegant dresses, flowing money and lovely scenery'.⁴

Powell remarked of *Honeymoon*:

I made it because I was interested in Antonio, the Spanish dancer. He wanted to do a ballet in a great film like *The Red Shoes*. It confirms that you should never do the same thing twice.⁵

He hoped to emulate the success of his earlier film with a ballet extravaganza set in Spain. Antonio Ruiz Soler (stage name 'Antonio') has now largely been forgotten even within Spain, but for years he was the most famous Spanish dancer who had also performed dance-cameos in Hollywood films. With this film, Antonio was keen to fashion himself as a star with transnational appeal.

In choosing to name the film 'transnational' we follow the definitions of Natasa Āurovičová, for whom if the term 'global' suggests rather too much a notion of totality then 'international' relies rather on a suggestion of a latent, if false, relation of parity. 'Transnational', for Āurovičová, speaks to the possible inequalities involved in the establishment of geopolitical forms and social relations.⁶ Featuring an international cast, *Honeymoon* was a co-production by Suevia (one of the more well-known production companies of the Franco regime) and British Lion. The Marshall Plan and the Treaty of Rome (1957), leading to the foundation of the European Economic Community, provided the basis for the promotion of European co-productions within the context of the Cold War.⁷ European film industries were also re-launching the co-production system to compete with Hollywood films with more lavish production values. Consequently, between 1955 and 1965 the percentage of European co-productions rose from 10% to 40%.⁸ At the same time, Spain was pursuing opportunities to build bridges with former ideological enemies. Spain had joined the United Nations in 1955 and received a visit from President Eisenhower in 1959. The Franco regime was moving from a rhetoric of 'victory' to one of 'development'. From 1957 to 1969, *desarrollismo* was the name given to the economic policies (after the autarky that followed the Spanish Civil War) responsible for the 'economic miracle' of the 1960s. As part of this strategy, the government would invest heavily in tourism. The dictatorship also supported co-productions as a means of improving trade relations while promoting the country's 'apertura' (openness) among new allies.⁹

Aside from the usual benefits of co-production arrangements (e.g. shar-

ing production costs and opening up new markets beyond national boundaries),¹⁰ it was envisaged that the exotic locations in *Honeymoon* might entice international tourists and attract economic partners. *Honeymoon* might therefore be considered a cultural artifact of *desarrollismo*. Despite its commercial failure, the film anticipates the early moves toward mass tourism between Spain and the UK and other international visitors. It is an example of 'cinematic tourism', or the generating of tourist industries through cinema used as advertising.¹¹ *Honeymoon* was filmed using Technirama, a process which stretched the image, making landscapes more stunning. The film's producer, the mogul Cesáreo González, had recently invested in the tourist sector – in 1953 he bought the Gran Hotel in Vigo, the city where the film begins – and had also produced a number of documentaries advertising Galicia as a tourist destination.¹²

Britain was willing to endorse Spain as a destination for the package holidays seen as integral to the healthy leisure pursuits begun as part of postwar regeneration projects. The aim of *Honeymoon* was to court flows of traffic toward Spain. The film's format fits the European road movie's concern for mobility and movement, a genre which charts the 'changing European socio-geographical space'.¹³ Our international couple is a product of the new possibilities for affordable international transportation; they are simultaneously rootless and at home in the world. *Honeymoon* shows the couple arriving in Spain by liner and their quick passage through customs, before finding their Bentley (the British-made luxury car) to begin their trip through the Spanish landscape. The film visualises the itinerary of the new tourist ideal.

Honeymoon also has similarities with what Diane Negra has identified as the 'romance and/as tourism' sub-genre which she locates in the 1990s (but she notes that it has roots at least as far back as the 1940s). In these 'tourist



Fig 1: Anthony Steel (as Kit), Ludmilla Tchérina (Anna), and Antonio (as himself).

romances', American women travel to an ideal 'Europe', in an example of a 'limited and commercialized vision of transnational encounter which fetishizes an idealised image of Europe for white American self-fashioning'.¹⁴ In *Honeymoon*, Anna (the international female traveller) journeys to Spain for a romance with Antonio in a narrative which charts romance, the Spanish landscape, and culture (specifically dance) as the vocabulary of her emancipation, which, even though short-lived (she returns to her husband at the end of the film), allows for the exploration of masculinities and fantasy alternatives to the *machista* version of marriage she is confined by. Spain therefore also symbolically offers the (female) international traveller/spectator landscape, culture, and fantasy packaged as romance.

If *Honeymoon* self-consciously offers a 'foreigners' view' of Spain, it simultaneously presents Spain with an opportunity to refashion Spanish identity away from the dour image of dictatorship toward a more hospitable imaginary. The holiday romance format was also useful for the Spanish establishment, offering a variation on Franco's famous statement in 1953 with regard to the need to offer military bases to the U.S. in exchange for financial aid: '*si tenemos que bailar, que bailemos con la más guapa*' (if we have to dance, let us dance with the best-looking girl in the room).¹⁵ Antonio's fling with Anna mimics the benefits of Spain's courting of international economic flows through tourism, without having to be concerned with the 'marriage' of ideology and economics.

Powell's script was a tale of forbidden love between Anna (Ludmilla Tchérina) and Antonio (Antonio Ruiz Soler), who meet during Anna's honeymoon as she tours Spain with her husband Kit (Anthony Steel) in a Bentley (see Fig. 1). Anna, who has recently given up dancing for marriage, is seduced by Antonio back to dancing and the film features long ballet sequences that express Anna's mad passion for Antonio, before she returns to her husband at the end of the film. But, as noted by British critics, the film is also a travelogue, a showpiece for Spain to woo holidaymakers from abroad (significantly, the longer ballet sequences were shortened for the cut for the British market).¹⁶ Both the UK and Spanish versions present an amalgam of unlikely scenes and clashing styles. In this article, we seek to explore some of the (often conflicting) motivations and meanings behind the film to shed light on a forgotten era of European co-productions, as well as the cultural contexts negotiated by the film. Following Bergfelder, in his interest in a transnational history of European cinema based on co-productions, we will reflect on the ways this filmic text 'travels' according to the 'specific requirements of different cultural contexts and audiences'.¹⁷

2 Confluence of national cinemas and genre traditions

Honeymoon is one of the eight Hispano-British co-productions from the 1950s, a small number compared to other international agreements.¹⁸ When *Honeymoon* was filmed, Britain and Spain had no diplomatic ties and, unlike co-productions with Italy, France, or Mexico (nations that enjoyed closer cultural bonds with Spain), Anglo-Hispanic co-productions were sporadic rather than systematic and without a shared star system.¹⁹ Lacking a tradition of collaboration and with a history of ideological opposition during the Second World War, the musical might be viewed as a 'soft' genre which, with its prototypical light-hearted apolitical plot, was capable of avoiding potential clashes.

American musicals had great impact in the long years of postwar austerity. By 1955 the musical was the most popular genre in the UK.²⁰ The influence of Hollywood on the British cinema is evidenced by the spectacular visual style; production companies also hired American stars and talents to compete.²¹ Spain, meanwhile, could draw on its heritage of musicals, and the 1950s were a golden age for the genre.²² Although Hollywood musicals were very popular, a locally-produced stardom of *folklóricas* – female singers of *boleros*, *coplas*, and other popular Spanish songs, such as Juanita Reina and Sara Montiel – flourished during the decade, and these were very popular with domestic audiences. The competition between homegrown and Hollywood musicals (compulsorily dubbed under dictatorship) was therefore more balanced in Spain.

Michael Powell had been filming musicals in Britain since the 1930s and, along with Emeric Pressburger, was an innovator of the genre, above all in *The Red Shoes* and *The Tales of Hoffman* (1951).²³ Powell's celebrated musicals with Pressburger are often categorised within the *auteur* tradition, and therefore differ from other British musicals of the 1950s. He created a way of filming detached from both the Hollywood and the British style. Unlike his British filmmaking contemporaries, he avoided dependence on American stars in his musicals.²⁴ Only in some aspects of Antonio's role and performance does Powell gesture to the Hollywood musical. With *Honeymoon* he was working in a foreign country and was subject to the legal arrangements of co-production in Spain. He was also limited by local taste and talent. *Honeymoon* is shaped by a number of different traditions: the ballet musicals by Powell and Pressburger, the updated choreographies of Spanish dances by Antonio Ruiz Soler (mainly by what is known as the *danza estilizada*), and Hollywood, filtered through the performances of Antonio, the film's star. *Honeymoon* also included two

long ballet sequences: *El amor brujo* (Bewitched Love, 1915), by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, and *Los amantes de Teruel* (The Lovers of Teruel), choreographed by Léonide Massine. It also featured new compositions such as Mikis Theodorakis' 'The Lovers', which became an international hit and was later covered by The Beatles.²⁵

The aim in *Honeymoon* was to emulate the success of *The Red Shoes* by introducing Spanish dance (of which flamenco formed a minor element) and combining it with the Ballets Russes tradition.²⁶ The selection of Sergei Diaghilev's main choreographer, Léonide Massine, as the choreographer of *The Lovers of Teruel* (and who also played a cameo role in the film) is a clear sign that they sought to appeal to ballet aficionados. In order to recapture the spirit of *The Red Shoes*, Powell surrounded himself with other former collaborators of his previous musicals: dancer Ludmilla Tchérina and Ivor Beddoes, assistant designer in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and the set designer responsible for the costumes and paintings in *Honeymoon*.

Filmed in 1957-1958 and released between 1959 and 1962, *Honeymoon* was nominated for the Golden Palm at Cannes. This was a big budget film (at least by Spanish standards), and the national press publicised *Honeymoon* as the most expensive feature ever made in the country.²⁷ The film was released in two versions (the original in English and dubbed into Spanish), although some parts of the film remained bilingual or even trilingual to highlight its international cast.

3 Antonio, 'ambassador' of Spain

Antonio Ruiz Soler (1921-1996), best known as 'Antonio' or 'Antonio, el Bailarín' (the Dancer), was a dancer and choreographer who would become the director of the Ballet Nacional Español in 1983. Considered an unofficial ambassador for Spain, Antonio was awarded recognition for his artistry and also for his promotion of Spanish tourism.²⁸ Dance and tourism were intimately linked in Spain during the period, a connection forged in part through Antonio himself. Antonio starred in *Honeymoon* at the peak of his international dancing career (he obtained a Golden Medal from the Royal Academy of Dance three years after the release of the film and the First Award from the Academy of Dance in Paris in 1964). The most important proponent of *danza estilizada* (stylized dance, a synthesis of classical ballet and Spanish dances), Antonio also cultivated other Spanish styles, mainly *escuela bolera* (dances from the 18th century performed by the *majos* and represented in many Goya's paintings). He was also famous



Fig. 2: *Zapateado* with music by Sarasate (1844-1908); choreography and performance by Antonio.

for choreographing brief pieces based on popular compositions by the musicians Albéniz, Falla, Father Soler, and Sarasate. The speed of his movements and the height of his stunning leaps made him an ideal candidate for popularising the Spanish dance tradition through film. Antonio's goal was to enhance the steps, making them more stylised and spectacular for the stage and the big screen.²⁹ Antonio would eventually go on to form his own dance company, *Ballet Español de Antonio*.³⁰

A good example of stylised dance is the *Zapateado* choreographed by Antonio (Fig. 2). Shortly before Antonio is offered a ride in Kit's and Anna's Bentley, he performs a *zapateado* (staccato stamping of the feet, in this case set to Sarasate's violin piece of the same name) through a village road. In spite of the fact that it is indebted to the footwork drawn from flamenco, the dance sequence contains gestures which clearly imitate Gene Kelly's physical movements in *Singin' in the Rain* (Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen, 1952). Antonio waves his white cap around in a way that recalls Kelly's carefree movements, while Kelly's presence is also detectable in Antonio's *vuelta de avión* (plain lap, developed from Kelly's cross lap).³¹ Furthermore, Antonio's upturned palms and head tilted back recall similar movements in *Singin' in the Rain* (although Antonio raises his face to the sun rather than the rain), while the way Antonio jumps on and off the whitewashed stone blocks of the pavement recalls Kelly's owning of the space in the earlier dance number.³² The integration of children references Kelly's interaction with children in the number 'I Got Rhythm' from *An American in Paris* (Vincente Minnelli, 1951).

Antonio's *zapateado* confirms his artistry, on par with Gene Kelly and in some senses rescued from its stereotypical folkloric setting (c.f. José Greco's *zapateado* in *Around the World in Eighty Days* [Michael Anderson, 1956], a

colourful tableau of flamenco costumes in a film which revels in national stereotypes). This visual construction of the ‘Spanish Gene Kelly’ establishes Antonio as the star of the show (in this, the Spanish *The Red Shoes*) and aligns him with Spain. It also sets off a ‘push-and-pull’ chain of resonances which see Antonio as involved in an appropriation of Hollywood; but equivocally, this may represent a colonisation of the smaller film/star by Hollywood, or the attempt to conquer Hollywood by a Spanish star.

In a sense, this scene represents a potted history of Antonio’s career trajectory to date. At the age of six his mother enrolled him in dance classes where he was paired with Rosario (Florencia Pérez Padilla). ‘Los chavalillos sevillanos’ (The Sevillian Kids) toured France and then Latin America.³³ They were discovered in Mexico by Marcel Ventura, former agent to Mae West, who took them to New York.³⁴ They made it to Broadway, performing in the musical *Sons o’ fun* in 1941 and the Hollywood films *Ziegfeld Girl* (Robert Z. Leonard, 1941), *Hollywood Canteen* (Delmer Daves, 1944), and *Pan-Americana* (John H. Auer, 1945). In *Ziegfeld Girl*, Antonio and his dance partner played minor roles alongside Judy Garland, James Stewart, and Lana Turner. In *Pan-Americana* they provided a flamenco set as the Spaniards amongst an array of colonised Americans – apparently part of a ‘Hispanisation’ project to allow Hollywood to enter Latin American markets.³⁵ The couple was hired by Sol Hurok, manager of La Argentina (Encarnación López), the pioneer who paved the way for the internationalisation of Spanish dance that Antonio would extend even further.³⁶ Rosario and Antonio toured the world before their separation in 1952 (caused by their fiery temperaments), a back story which is echoed in the dance-partner’s abandonment of Antonio in *Honeymoon*.

Antonio was thus involved from early in his career in a process of transculturation which saw local folkloric colour developed to fit with foreign and international assumptions about ‘Spanishness’. *Honeymoon* continued Antonio’s (self) fashioning as a transnational star. Kathleen Newman draws on the work of Mary Louise Pratt to theorise the transnational star as a ‘contact zone’, or site of cross-cultural interactions that are not necessarily dictated by existing power relations but may be structured by the more flexible categories of the ‘transnational’.³⁷ For local Spanish audiences, Antonio was a dancer with extraordinary influence over ‘Spanish dance’ – an artistic form with high culture resonances. For international audiences he was an emerging talent, poised between foreign renderings of ‘Spanishness’ and his Spanish take on (Hollywood) stardom.

At the same time, Antonio quite cleverly managed to bridge ideological differences both in Spain and abroad. Although he had always declared

himself apolitical, he was on good terms with the establishment. In 1963 he was invited to be part of the commemorations of the second anniversary of President Kennedy's government. A year later, he was the first Spanish artist to visit the Soviet Union after the Spanish Civil War. With his connections and experience abroad, his role as a cultural ambassador for Spain served the government well. In an episode of the Spanish newsreel *No-Do*, covering the visit of Igor Moisseiev and his Ballet to Spain in 1966 at Antonio's invitation, the bombastic tone of the voiceover depicts the meeting as 'the reunion of the two famous dancers [that] revives a friendship founded in Moscow during the performances of Antonio, who awaken the Russian people's enthusiasm for Spanish dances'.

Nevertheless, the footage looks more like an infomercial aimed to promote tourism, in which Antonio is not only simply the host but also Spain's unofficial cultural ambassador. In his spacious studio, Antonio offers a glass of wine to his guests with an image of him in a dancing pose placed on the bottles and glasses. The voiceover announces that, days later, the visitors were invited to the countryside, and every Spanish cliché is present: bullfighting, flamenco, and paella. The news item uncannily mimics the sequence in *Honeymoon* when Tchérina, playing the role of Anna Cato, is invited to Antonio's studio and then to a lunch in the countryside where Anna wears an Andalusian hat identical to the one worn by Moisseiev's daughter seven years after the release of the film.³⁸ The government's endeavor of promoting the country through dance and the development of Antonio's professional career were, to some extent, the same thing.

4 Dance as tourism: The Festivales de España

The link between dance and tourism should be regarded as closely tied to Spanish state policy during the Cold War. Under Franco's dictatorship the government exploited culture – and Spanish dance in particular – as a tool of persuasion in the *Coros y Danzas de España* (Chorus and Dances of Spain) founded in 1939 within the women's branch of *Falange*, the *Sección Femenina*, and in the *Festivales de España*. From the mid-1950s and throughout the 1960s the annual *Festivales de España*, founded in 1954 by the Ministry of Tourism and organised in different Spanish locations, sought to draw attention to monuments, buildings, and heritage sites to promote a positive image of the country. Theatre, dance, music, and painting were the main artistic disciplines on display – but dance and symphonic music were considered the most valuable, and these were the only ones



Fig. 3: *The Alhambra* (Granada).

considered to have an international scope. The performances of the *Festivales*, in which Antonio was deeply involved, were, in terms of *mise-en-scène* and purpose, very close to the dances shown in *Honeymoon*. The standard *mise-en-scène* of the *Festivales* was an open space with the stage located in front of an historic building, highlighting the magnificence of its architecture. The impressive castle shown in the *zapateado* scene, which Antonio greets with a bow, is likewise situated as a background without narrative function.

In the sequence in which Antonio and Anna playfully dance in the Alhambra, both dancers extend their arms pointing to the architectural elements to be looked at (Fig. 3). Music and dance were thus enhancing the experience of examining historical buildings in a way similar to the festivals. This may partly explain why British reviewers of the film criticised *Honeymoon* for being a travelogue,[39] while the Spaniards, more familiar with the existence of these festivals and more interested in the potential of cinema to publicise national treasures than their British counterparts, praised it.[40] *Honeymoon* was 'a great opportunity to go into ecstasy with the artistic and natural beauty of our homeland' (Gómez Mesa).⁴¹ The role of dancing in promoting Spanish tourism, and particularly Antonio's role in this enterprise, was recognised in 1967 by the Ministry of Tourism with an award that commemorated his ten year-long participation in these Festivals.

5 *Honeymoon* as tourist travelogue

In 1957, Roland Barthes, in his analysis of the Travel series *The Blue Guide*, wrote that

the ethnic reality of Spain is [...] reduced to a large classical ballet [...] whose improbable typology serves to mask the real spectacle of conditions, classes and professions. For the *Blue Guide*, men exist as social entities only in trains, where they fill a 'very mixed' Third Class. Apart from that, they are a mere introduction, they constitute a charming and fanciful décor, meant to surround the essential part of the country: its collection of monuments.⁴²

The 1960s would see an explosion of construction work along what came to be known as 'the costas' and the cultivation of mass tourism. The *Blue Guide*, like *Honeymoon*, instead propagates a view of Spain as the setting for castles, architecture, art, and, indeed, ballet. Barthes was surely right to suggest that the *Blue Guide* 'gave latent support to Franco'.⁴³ It, like *Honeymoon*, urges tourists to travel across Spain to seek out tourist sites and not just confine themselves to the coastal beaches.

The beach was, by the mid 1950s, where British holidaymakers enjoyed a heady concoction of 'health, repose, bare skin and displacement from routine'.⁴⁴ In an attempt to diversify and individualise 'Spain's tourism product on the Mediterranean market', and to 'confront the uneven territorial and seasonal distribution of "sun and beach tourism"',⁴⁵ agents also encouraged tourists to move inland, tempting them with specific tourist sites. In *Honeymoon*, Antonio, who has hitched a lift with Kit and Anna, guides them 'off the beaten track' to a *taberna* which is 'not in the *Blue Guide* nor the *AA*'. The tavern's breakfast of ham and bread is later praised in comparison to the 'inauthentic' delicatessen at the local hotel. In a barn, a local girl dances a fiery and tempestuous rendition of flamenco with Antonio. Spain thus conforms to the tourist's search for an experience that would allow one to touch the 'authentic' in order to 'reconstruct a cultural heritage or a social identity' connected with natural, 'primitive', or exotic destinations.⁴⁶ The film also confirms Afinoguénova's assertion that an early policy of tourism was to attract wealthy visitors to Spain; at the port in customs, officials unpack one of Anna's bags to find that it contains only shoes – an announcement of the exuberant consumerism that tourism will bring.⁴⁷ Later, the couple will discover the 'real Spain', a colourful construction that is an archaic 'lost paradise' and, simultaneously, a country trying to catch up. In one scene a hotel manager explains to the couple that Spaniards have no opportunities to practice their language skills and therefore are delighted to speak English. At the *Parador* (a converted historic building devolved to tourism), the hotel staff are so proficient in English that Kit has no chance to converse in Spanish – doubtless an unrealistic depiction of a tourist industry still in its infancy.

The depiction of Spain in *Honeymoon* confirms that one of the mainstays of the Francoist policy of tourism in the 1950s and 1960s was its construction of a Spanish heritage for tourists to enjoy in 'destination Spain'.⁴⁸ Heritage was a more flexible, mobile tool of tourism than the mass-produced tourism of the costas: '[r]egional monuments, celebrations and traditions became a resource for local development and received a boost or a knock-down, depending on how many tourists the area could attract'⁴⁹ or the economic needs of a particular location. With its artistry, historical buildings, and architecture, *Honeymoon* seems to anticipate this movement, which Afinoguénova locates in the mid-1960s. Moreover, it also seems to chime with her assertion that contemporary tourist short films such as *Albergues y paradores (Inns and Paradors)* (directed by José Luis Borau in 1965 for the TV series *Conozca Usted España [Get to Know Spain]*) were designed to appeal to women.⁵⁰ If these documentaries were designed for Spanish audiences, foreign tourism was also aiming at women. Adverts in British magazines for fashion targeted to wealthy women such as *The Tatler* and *The Bystander* were marketing Spain in a similar way:

[c]ome to joyful Spain. Live pleasant days under its perennial sun. Discover a country that is beautiful, interesting, rich in historic art, 'different', and above all, gay and charming.⁵¹

Honeymoon, with its story of dance and passion for its female protagonist, seems similarly structured to appeal to the female consumer.

Latin American musicals made in co-production with Spain during the same period likewise demonstrated the importance of the musical genre for improving bilateral relations.⁵² Díaz López coins the term 'transnational encounter' to define Spanish co-productions with Latin America, where music served to promote *Hispanidad* ('Hispanicity') using certain forms and the coming together of a female Spanish singer-actress and a Mexican male star, both appreciated on both sides of the Atlantic.⁵³ Unlike Mexican co-productions with Spain, national differences in *Honeymoon* are not reconciled through music. Rather, the producers of the film were marketing Spain as a 'different' but welcoming destination for European tourists; Spain was being rendered 'exotic'.

6 Exoticism and queerness in *Honeymoon*

Antonio's portrayal as 'exotic other' is central to *Honeymoon*. His dark skin and strong accent in English have an essential function. In one scene, Anna and Antonio dance against the architecture of the Alhambra in Granada and the Mosque of Córdoba (against a set with paintings by Beddoes). In the final ballet the story of the legend of the Lovers of Teruel is altered to stress Antonio's ethnic difference. According to the medieval story of the impossible love between Isabel de Segura and Diego Martínez de Marcilla, her family did not approve their marriage owing to Diego's humble origins. Both were Christians, but the ballet in which Antonio plays Diego and Tchérina plays Isabel, he is portrayed as Moor, thus imposing a different obstacle to their love affair (Fig. 4).

An additional obstacle for the consummation of Antonio and Anna's affair is the constant feminisation of the Spanish dancer in the film. In his book *Incongruous Entertainment: Camp, Cultural Value and the MGM Musical*, Steve Cohan shows how Gene Kelly was figured extra-filmically in terms of his athleticism, working-class roots, and 'ordinary Joe' character in response to the typical elision between dance and effeminacy (in the mid-century in the U.S. effeminacy was read as homosexuality).⁵⁴ Kelly's dance movements stressed his overt masculinity (he's the dancer 'with balls') even as it offered him up as a figure for (homo-) erotic display. In referencing Kelly in his dancing, Antonio's performance in some senses also indexes Kelly's masculine style.

Antonio's other male star 'touchstones' in *Honeymoon* were less overtly masculine. In the ballet sequences set to *The Lovers of Teruel*, Antonio appears in a turban with a darkened face. Here, his construction as 'ethnic other' visually recalls the ethnically charged, ambivalent masculinity and



Fig. 4: The ballet *The Lovers of Teruel*. Choreography by Léonide Massine.

specularised male body of Rudolph Valentino, which serves to underline the use *Honeymoon* makes of Antonio's body as a figure for display. In the ballet *Bewitched Love*, Antonio wears flamboyant colors (a red short jacket, bullfighter style, and yellow kerchief around his head), while Anna's stylish look imitates Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Blake Edwards, 1961). The ardent way in which she stares at Antonio visibly objectifies the dancer's body. Douglas Fairbanks's image from *The Thief of Baghdad* (Raoul Walsh, 1924, remade by Michael Powell in 1940) is an even clearer point of reference for the ethnically-inflected Antonio. *Honeymoon*, likewise, 'exploits the sensuous textures of a fantastic oriental heterocosm', and where *The Thief of Baghdad* offers 'a visionary world dependent, first of all, on architecture',⁵⁵ Antonio likewise is compared to the feminine, orientalist world conjured up by the mise-en-scène of the mosque and of the Alhambra.

In *Honeymoon*, Antonio is persistently 'feminised' in reference to Kit's brooding masculinity; his desire for Anna clearly centres on his desire for her as a ballerina/diva, and the world of ballet is persistently coded as 'feminine' and 'artistic'. The film attempts to manage and naturalise this scenario by having Anna choose Kit over Antonio; Kit eschews the world of dance through his comment to Anna, 'what would you have me do, wear a tutu?' After the rehearsal for the ballet where Anna dances for the first time, Antonio and Kit sit, legs crossed identically, smoking (a gesture which seems to confirm the equation of Anna's dancing with sex/adultery). Antonio declares theatrically, 'Kit is Othello, but I am Antonio!', in a staging of the two men as antagonists in love. But Antonio also disturbs Kit, as is evidenced by Kit's retreat into morose drinking after the bulls (significantly it is Antonio who comes to coax Kit out of his mood rather than Anna), while Antonio's display of multiple masquerades destabilises Kit's solid masculinity; the trailer selects a phrase from the film where Kit declares to Anna 'no wife of mine will sleep out of the marital bed!', which in the excerpt reinforces dominant masculinity while in the film it becomes the manifestation of an anxiety-ridden reaction to threats to the traditional view of maleness. Extra-filmically, Antonio was photographed as the matinee idol, with soft focus shots of him in suits. Yet at the same time, rumours of Antonio's homosexuality circulated in popular discourse (in his memoirs he confirms his bisexuality).⁵⁶ *Honeymoon* queers the balletic space, permitting a reading of Antonio as its queer icon.

7 Conclusion

If, as Díaz López has written, Mexican co-productions of the era had as their goal the forging of a space of living together in harmony, or *convivencia*,⁵⁷ in *Honeymoon* there is no such 'reconciliation'. Significantly, the love affair is aborted in the film, which concludes denying the happiness of two individuals who are unhappily married to their respective partners. The ambiguous resolution avoids both the happy ending typical of Latin American and Hollywood musicals as well as the overdramatic resolution of *The Red Shoes*. Lovesick Anna recovers from her anxiety crisis, a torrid dream in which she fantasises about dancing with her Spanish lover. At the hospital, she and Kit are visited by Antonio. Kit announces that they are suspending their honeymoon to return to Australia. Antonio leaves the room after revealing he will start a new tour around the world, leaving the door open for a future encounter with Anna.

Honeymoon is a travelogue with apparently no hint of discontent to cloud its beautiful vision ('well, it's a free country', says Anthony Steel at one point).⁵⁸ Yet the showy display offered by Antonio and Spain in *Honeymoon* creates a self-reflexive knowingness about both Antonio's performance and the construction of Spain it propagates, which arguably belies the classification of the film as a flat, if colourful, travelogue. *Honeymoon* was a flop partly because of its blatant selling of Spain, even if, ultimately, the Francoist dream of tourism as economic miracle was a success.

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Notes

1. The film had just 29,794 spectators in Spain according to the Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte database (<https://www.mecd.gob.es/bbddpeliculas/cargarFiltro.do?layout=bbddpeliculas&cache=init&language=es> [accessed on 29 May 2015]).
2. In his 700-page autobiography, Powell (1986) does not mention *Honeymoon*. In the second part (Powell 1992) he mentions it once.
3. Anon 1962, p. 22.
4. J.G. 1962, pp. 32-33.
5. Powell in Lazar 2003, p. 60.
6. Āurovičová 2010, pp. ix-x.
7. Pardo 2007, pp. 137-138.
8. Ibid.
9. Castro de Paz & Cerdán 2005, p. 87.
10. Bergfelder 2005, p. 53.
11. Tzanelli 2007, p. xii.
12. Castro de Paz & Cerdán 2005, p. 192.
13. Mazierska 2006, p. 1.
14. Negra 2006, p. 167.
15. Cited in Pavlović 2003, p. 64.
16. Doble 2013. Some international reviewers thought that the ballet numbers were too short for ballet aficionados yet too long for mass audiences. Arguably, the intention may have been to give more attention to tourist 'hook' locations.
17. Bergfelder 2005, p. 326.
18. Heredero 1993, p. 389.
19. Ibid.
20. Lacey, quoted in Mundy 2007, p. 148.
21. Ibid., p. 149.
22. See Woods Peiró 2012 and Díaz López 1999 and 2008.
23. Other collaborations included *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), *A Canterbury Tale* (1944), *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946), and *Black Narcissus* (1947).
24. Mundy 2007, p. 149.
25. Christoforidis 2009, p. 41.
26. Ibid., p. 38.
27. Anon 1959, p. 15. The cost was 25,000,000 pesetas according to a French leaflet held at Ashbrittle Film Foundation.

28. Commemorative Plaque of the Ministry of Information and Tourism (1967) and Commander of the Legion of Honour for Merit to Tourism (1972).
29. Interview with Dr Inmaculada Matía Polo at Sociedad Española de Musicología, Madrid, 10 May 2013.
30. Antonio's success in the UK is recorded by Brunelleschi 1956.
31. Segarra 2012, p. 378.
32. Antonio acknowledged the direct inspiration of Gene Kelly's performances in *On the Town* (Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen, 1949), *An American in Paris*, and *Singin' in the Rain*. See Segarra 2012, p. 378.
33. Navarro García 2009, p. 216.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
35. Pérez Melgosa 2012, pp. 42-75.
36. Hurok was manager to Isadora Duncan, Anna Pavlova, and Mstislav Rostropóvich. He also brought the Bolshoi Ballet to the United States in 1959, during a time of deteriorating U.S.-Soviet relations.
37. Newman 2010, p. 9.
38. Newsreel Noticiarios y Documentales (No-Do), 3 October 1966: <http://www.rtve.es/filmoteca/no-do/not-1239/1477243/> (accessed on 19 January 2013).
41. *Ibid.*
42. Barthes 1957, p. 195.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 196.
44. Pack 2006, p. 8.
45. Afinoguénova 2010, p. 418.
46. MacCannell 1976, pp. 11, 13.
47. Afinoguénova 2011, p. 164.
48. Afinoguénova 2010, p. 417.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 424.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 426.
51. Anon. 1951, p. 677.
52. See Dapena 2004 and Díaz López 2008.
53. Díaz López 2008, p. 40.
54. Cohan 2005, p. 154.
55. Studlar 1995, p. 112.
56. Arriazu 2006, p. 159.
57. Díaz López 2008, p. 40.
58. The Falange symbol can be glimpsed just once in the film, on the side of a wall beside Kit's car.

