



The Pioneers of the Spanish Travel Agency Business Before Mass Tourism

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11.1 INTRODUCTION

Although the background of tourism goes back to the Modern Age, with phenomena such as the Grand Tour and spas, it was actually in the nineteenth century when it gained greater importance. Along with the Industrial Revolution, there was also a first Tourist Revolution, in which transport, and therefore travelling, underwent great transformation. More specifically, in the cradle of industrialisation, in the United Kingdom, the transition from a minority tourism to one with a greater social base was brought about by the spread of railways and steamships. These means of communication made large-scale leisure travel possible. This expanded mobility also gave rise to a new way of travelling, favoured by

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intermediation. This was the great success of Thomas Cook in the mid-nineteenth century, founder of the first travel agency and therefore creator of organised trips. Cook, in short, sold a service, taking care of transportation, accommodation, support and so on. Therefore, travellers did not have to worry about such details. In summary, it was about offering a product to its customers. And here lies the origin of travel agencies, although it is true that the vast majority of trips continued without an intermediary.

However, customers who used a travel agency paid a certain price in exchange for services and the guarantee of reduced uncertainty. The user bought tangible but also intangible services such as trust, security or comfort (Vallejo and Larrinaga 2018, p. 724, 2020, p. 2). Hence the success of travel agencies, some companies, many of them family-owned, that began to emerge in the second half of the nineteenth century (Visentin 1995, p. 303). Spain was no exception, although the birth of the first properly Spanish travel agencies occurred a few years later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the first Spanish tourist system began to take shape. And the development of the business of travel agencies must be linked to the birth of modern tourism—in other words, tourism conceived as an industry, in which we are going to have different companies, or entrepreneurs, dedicated to tourism in its different aspects. Here we must then place the first Spanish travel agencies, among which Viajes Marsans (first called Viajes Marsansrof) and Viajes Cafranga stand out. We will focus on these companies in this work, although, as will be seen, they were not the only ones.

11.2 THE BEGINNINGS OF INTERMEDIATED TRAVEL IN SPAIN

The period between 1900 and 1914 must be considered the embryonic years of the establishment and development of travel agencies in Spain, a period in which certain characteristics stand out. First, the importance of traditional operators: foreign and national railway companies as well as foreign (Booth Line, Real Mala Inglesa, etc.) and national (Trasatlántica, Transmediterránea) shipping companies which expressly worked in “tourism” or incorporated tourism travels into their business. Second, the appearance of foreign travel agents moving their clients to Spain or stopping over in Spain. Third, some of these foreign operators made the leap to Spain through two routes. The first was by opening one or more offices in the country, just as Cook did from 1892 onwards in Madrid (Vallejo

and Larrinaga 2020, p. 9). The second way was to open a strictly national branch or subsidiary after signing an agreement with a Spanish agent. This was the strategy followed by Maurice Junot, from the Société Française de Voyages Pratiques (later Exprinter), with the newspaper *La Correspondencia de España*. A fourth characteristic was that large events were an extraordinary motivation for some tourist intermediaries to decide to operate in Spain. The fifth feature would be the birth of the first Spanish travel brokerage companies.

Although it was not the only one, Viajes Marsansrof (1910) stood out, emerging as a section of the Marsans Rof e Hijos banking house with its headquarters in Barcelona.¹ Undoubtedly, Marsansrof's first challenge was to create tourists, foster a love for travel and, at the same time, facilitate itineraries, transport and accommodation. That is, the classic middleman tasks of a travel agency. And for this its location in Barcelona was a comparative advantage, both from a geographical point of view, due to its proximity to France and the existing contacts with this country, and also thanks to its character as an economic engine. At the time, Catalonia was the spearhead of the travelling movement in Spain (Viajes Marsans 1986, p. 84). In addition to its industrial appeal in Barcelona, its urban, cultural and artistic appeal should also be noted, to name but a few of its features (Palou 2012, chap. 2). Thinking specifically about its customers' trips abroad, in 1912 it launched a very innovative payment system at the time in Spain, traveller's cheques, then called *giros de viaje* or money orders, a device that had already been introduced by American Express in 1891. These money orders or cheques were issued by the J. Marsans Rof e Hijos bank in francs and included a list of the equivalences in different European currencies and in dollars. The aim was to prevent travellers from frequent abuse in currency exchange (Viajes Marsans 1986, pp. 85–86). Here we have a clear example of the connections between businesses, banking and travel.

This first expansion of the business of intermediated travel in Spain was aborted by the First World War. The lack of foreign market (inbound and outbound) in those years led some agencies to focus their business on the

¹ Banca Marsans was a family bank founded in 1892 by José Marsans Rof. In 1902, his son Luis Marsans Peix and son-in-law Francisco Casas Negre joined the company, under the name J. Marsans Rof e Hijos (translator's note: J. Marsans Rof and Sons). However, it was not until 1919 that it became a Public Limited Company when new associates entered the business (Viajes Marsans 1986, p. 82).

domestic market, as was the case with *Viajes Marsans*, which focused, above all, on the so-called circular trips in Spain, that is, the organisation of circuits (*Viajes Marsans* 1986, p. 86). After the Great War, we can recall the formative years and the boom of travel agencies in Spain, coinciding with an expansion of tourist activity after the war years. When the battle was over, and, above all from the early 1920s, Spanish travel agencies had a greater national and international presence. These agencies became an important pillar of the Spanish tourism system of the time, occupying a prominent role in the tourism industry. More specifically in this context it is worth mentioning the emergence of an entrepreneur, Eusebio Cafranga, who, over the years, would become one of the key figures in intermediated travel in Spain. Of Asturian origin and established, at least since 1916, in the small town of Mendaro (Guipuzcoa), he would soon settle in San Sebastian. In fact, during the Great War he devoted himself to international trade and banking. Here it should be remembered that many tour operators had the basis of their origins in this type of business (transport, banking or travel). These were the cases of the aforementioned José Marsans Rof, from *Viajes Cafranga*, and, a little later (1930), of *Viajes Baleares*, to name just a few examples (Vallejo and Larrinaga 2018, p. 727, 2020, pp. 9–10). With this logic, Cafranga would diversify his business, soon becoming a travel agent. In 1922, he began to participate with the Genoese company *Navigazione Generale Italiana* in organising a trip to South America. In fact, this would not be his only collaboration with this company. The following year he began working with the Italian official operator *Ferrovie dello Stato* through the travel and tourism offices of the *Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo (ENIT)*. Still in 1926, Cafranga continued to operate with outbound tourism, especially to France, this time as an agent of *Turismo Internacional (Paris)* (Larrinaga 2019, p. 285).

At the same time, there was a renewed interest from European travel agencies in Spain, not so much as a tourist destination (although this was also the case), but as an outbound market. It should be borne in mind that neutrality had enriched the country with more disposable income from the classes with greater purchasing power, while the strengthening of the peseta in the 1920s favoured Spanish travel abroad (Vallejo and Larrinaga 2018, p. 751, 2020, p. 11). Consequently, foreign agencies considered the Spanish clientele a business opportunity.

But there were also Spanish agencies. *Viajes Marsans* shows the positive situation of Spanish travel agencies through this important fact. In its

1924 report and balance sheet, the expansion of the travel agency was mentioned thanks to having obtained the corresponding banking services of American Express (along with what this implied as regards North American tourists) and the opening of its first branch outside of Catalonia, in Madrid, with a second one planned in Seville and others in the rest of Spain.² The following year, it also opened offices in Seville and Vigo and branches in Palma de Mallorca, Zaragoza and Valencia.³ It even started a new business strategy incorporating a nationalist discourse, very typical during those years of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Everything seems to indicate that this Spanish manoeuvre was market-oriented whereby the large foreign travel agencies had considerable weight.⁴ Responding to this strategy, in 1927 it presented itself as a “genuinely Spanish agency”, at a time of expansion throughout the national territory (Vallejo and Larrinaga 2018, p. 755, 2020, p. 13).

In the summer of 1928, the travel agency achieved the autonomy of the parent bank, becoming Viajes Marsans, S.A.⁵ Its founders were José Luis Marsans Comas and Pelayo Miguel Banús, representing Banca Marsans, S.A. Its purpose was to make and issue tickets for individual or collective trips by sea, land and air in any country and in combination with and apart from railway, maritime or air companies; to promote tourism in all its manifestations, preparing and making excursions and visits to cities and monuments or to fairs and exhibitions; to establish services for travellers on their own or for others; to publish loose leaflets, brochures and advertising and guidebooks; and to carry out all the secondary and banking operations of transportation and consolidation with and without agreement with other companies. In short, it could be dedicated to any lawful business that directly or indirectly was related to a travel and tourism company. The registered office was established in Barcelona but it could set up branches, agencies, subsidiaries and representations anywhere in Spain or abroad. The company was born indefinitely and with a capital of 1,010,000 pesetas, represented by 1010 bearer shares of 1000 pesetas each. This capital was disbursed by the founders at the time of creating the company. In this constitution, the first Board of Directors was appointed (Table 11.1),

²1925. *La Ilustración Financiera*, February 22, and 1925. *El Financiero*, March 20 (includes the balance sheet).

³1925. “VI Congreso de la Federación Internacional”. *La Vanguardia*, October 22.

⁴This nationalist discourse would be reinforced even further after the 1929 crisis. See, for example, 1930. “El verano, el turismo y el valor de la peseta”. *Nuevo Mundo*, June 27.

⁵Madrid Commercial Register, 3 September 1928, Sheet 60,680, 1st inscription.

Table 11.1 First Board of Directors of Viajes Marsans, S. A.

President	Francisco A. Ripoll Fortuño	lawyer and entrepreneur ^a
Members	Juan Salvans Pascual	textile entrepreneur ^b
	Francisco Corbera Puñet	financer ^c
	Francisco Salvans Armengol	textile entrepreneur and financer ^d
	Bernardo Corbera Puñet	financer and entrepreneur ^c
	José Guix Ribas	entrepreneur ^e
Secretary	José Luis Marsans Comas	financer and entrepreneur

Source: Madrid Commercial Register, 3 September 1928, Sheet 60,680, 1st inscription. Author's own elaboration

^a<http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/100976/francisco-de-asis-ripoll-y-fortuno>. Accessed on 5 March 2020

^b<http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/65677/francisc-salvans-armengol>. Accessed on 5 March 2020

^c1928. *La Vanguardia*, January 26

^d<http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/65677/francisc-salvans-armengol>. Accessed on 5 March 2020

^e1943. Obituary. *La Vanguardia*, December 5

while the General Management of the company was taken on by José Dalmau Castiñeira, who held the position until his death in 1953.⁶ José Luis Marsans Comas (the grandson of José Marsans Rof) was appointed as Chief Executive Officer representing Banca Marsans, owner of the majority of the shares (Viajes Marsans 1986, p. 87).

On 12 February 1931, Viajes Hispania merged with Viajes Marsans. This was a horizontal merger between two companies in the sector and demonstrated the strength of the company, which that year had, in addition to the parent company, nine branches and agencies in different Spanish cities and “various” delegations throughout Spain.⁷ Based on the data in Table 11.2, everything seems to indicate that this merger responded to the restructuring that the sector was undergoing at that time. The period 1930–1931 were years of crisis in the tourism sector in general, greatly affected by the serious global crisis of 1929. The rising number of travel agencies in Spain, against the backdrop of international exhibitions in 1929, was drastically interrupted in those years and began to pick up again in 1932. This crisis of the travel agencies coincides, in addition, with the crisis of the tourist activity of those first years of the decade of 1930 (Ogilvie 1933).

The Hispania and Marsans merger was not the only one during this period in this sector. In fact, Viajes Baleares, as already mentioned, was founded in 1930 from the merger of three businesses: banking, railways

⁶ 1953. *La Vanguardia*, March 19.

⁷ 1931. *La Vanguardia*, February 12.

Table 11.2 Contributing travel agencies in Spain per Industrial and Commercial Contributions, 1927–1933^a

	<i>Barcelona</i>	<i>Madrid</i>	<i>Other provincial capitals</i>	<i>Cities with over 20,000 inhabitants</i>	<i>Places with under 20,000 inhabitants</i>	<i>Total</i>
1927	4	5	7		1	17
1928	10	5	14		6	35
1929	13	8	15	2	8	46
1930	11	7	17		4	39
1931	8	5	22		4	39
1932	11	6	26		4	47
1933	16	7	29	1	8	61
1927–1933 (Average)	10	6	19	2	5	41

Source: *Estadística de la CIC* (Statistics on Industrial and Commercial Contributions), 1927–1933. Collated in Vallejo y Larrinaga (2018, p. 734), and Vallejo and Larrinaga (2020, p. 7). Author's own elaboration

^aDoes not include travel agencies in the form of PLCs

and tourism. The Crédito Balear Bank was the majority shareholder and leader of a new agency, with 85 per cent of the subscribed capital. Rafael Blanes Tolosa, a board member of Ferrocarriles de Mallorca, represented railroad interests for Viajes Baleares. Eventually, the tourism business was represented through Viajes Catalonia, a travel agency belonging to Banco de Cataluña. Therefore, Viajes Baleares was closely associated with Viajes Catalonia and in fact acted as its representative in the islands. But scarcely a year after the creation of Viajes Baleares, the owners acquired Viajes Catalonia in order to organise a network of travel agents which would cover the entire country. Viajes Catalonia had a single office in Spain, in Barcelona, and another office in Paris. The acquisition of Viajes Catalonia and its greater objectives made it necessary to change the name Viajes Baleares to Viajes Iberia in 1932 (San Román 2017, pp. 55–56).

11.3 THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF SPANISH TRAVEL AGENCIES AND FIAV CONGRESSES

The *Federación Internacional de Agencias de Viajes* (FIAV) (the International Federation of Travel Agencies) had been created in 1919 and from the following year onward organised its annual congress. Three were held in Spain, in 1925, 1928 and 1934, proof of the power and hold

which Spanish travel agencies were beginning to have. Therefore, the VI Congress was held in October 1925 in Barcelona, with Viajes Marsans being the main protagonist. Its objective was to promote the development of tourism in Spain and consequently it invited many foreign travel agencies from both Europe and all over America. The representatives for Spain were Mr Bateau from Viajes Prácticos, the director of the Agencia Sommariva de Madrid and the directors of branches of Viajes Marsans in Madrid, Seville and Vigo, as well as the subsidiaries of Palma, Zaragoza and Valencia. Nine representatives of the railway companies also took part.⁸ Thus, the *Federación Nacional de Agencias de Viajes* (National Federation of Travel Agencies) was also constituted, integrated into the International Federation.

A few years later the IX FIAV Congress was also held in Spain (October 1928), organised by the association of Spanish travel agencies, under the auspices of the *Patronato Nacional de Turismo* (PNT) or National Tourist Board (NTB). Eusebio Cafranga was the congress president, and his secretary, Maurice Junot, also representing the French Federation and the Exprinter agency, attended on behalf of the FIAV. The Assembly brought together delegates from the 31 participating agencies and the many agencies represented.⁹ On the eve of the Exhibitions in Seville and Barcelona, this congress was the ideal setting to publicise the great modernising advances that had been taking place in Spain since Primo de Rivera's accession to power. In fact, the congressmen not only visited Madrid, but also the two venues of the exhibitions, seeing the rhythm of the works and Spain's tourist potential. Naturally, infrastructure, hotels and the issue of passports were also analysed.¹⁰ Additionally, they discussed the advantage that Spanish railway companies were comparable to foreign ones as regards the organisation of services and tourist excursions.¹¹ In short, as a result of the congress, the participating travel agencies committed to promoting Spain as a tourist destination, especially Barcelona and Seville (Table 11.3).

⁸ 1925. "VI Congreso de la Federación Internacional". La Vanguardia, October 22.

⁹ 1931. "El Congreso de las Agencias de viajes". ABC, October 27.

¹⁰ Risquet. 1928. "El Congreso de Agencias de turismo". El Imparcial, October 25. 1928. "El Congreso de la Federación de Agencias de Viaje". La Época, October 25. 1928. "El IX Congreso internacional de Agencias de Viaje". La Vanguardia, October 26.

¹¹ 1928. "El congreso Federación de Agencias de Viaje". La Voz (Madrid), October 26. 1928. "Reunión del Congreso de la Federación internacional de agencias de viajes". El Heraldo de Madrid, October 27.

Table 11.3 Receptive or Inbound tourism in Spain, 1912–1934

	<i>Total number of visitors</i>	<i>Tourists (in thousands)</i>	<i>Bookings</i>	<i>In transit</i>
1912		198.7		
1925–1927		213.3		
1929	362,716		276,468	86,248
1930	440,552		277,912	162,640
1931			187,220	
1932			201,914	
1933			200,346	
1934			190,830	

Source: Fernández Fúster (1991, p. 277), and Vallejo et al. (2016, p. 147). Author's own elaboration

Note: Tourists (thousands): these figures are taken by Vallejo, Lindoso and Vilar (2016, 147), comparable to those of Bookings for 1931–1934

Taking advantage of the momentum of the 1928 congress and, above all, while the Barcelona and Seville Exhibitions were still being held, in March 1930 an important meeting took place in Barcelona, chaired by José Luis Marsans and attended by Eduardo Lesperut on behalf of Viajes Hispania of Alicante, Eusebio Cafranga for Viajes Cafranga of San Sebastian and Fernando Baquera for Viajes Bakumar of Málaga. In this meeting, a decision was made to communicate, through the FIAV bulletin, that these events were still open to promote travel, more specifically, in a context marked by the 1929 crisis. It was then agreed that a large amount of advertising would be sent both to the national and foreign federations to distribute it amongst their associates. Approval was also given to submit a request to railway companies to grant tourists as many facilities as possible. They would also send another letter to the PNT so that, in line with foreign travel agencies, it would intensify advertising about Spain. They also asked the PNT for permanent contact with the Federation of Travel Agencies of Spain, requesting the participation of one of its members within the Board of trustees, a fact that was accepted by the Government a short time afterwards.¹² Finally, they went to the *Cámara*

¹²1931. “La Federación de Agencias de Viajes de España”. La Correspondencia de Valencia, December 24. In fact, in the Provisional Regulations of the PNT, approved on 12 February 1932, it was established that the Federation of Travel Agencies of Spain was part of the General Council of Tourism, an advisory body of this institution. 1932. Boletín Oficial del Estado [Official State Gazette], January 14, pp. 365–367.

Table 11.4 Federation of Spanish Travel Agencies in 1932

<i>City</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Barcelona	Viajes Internacional Express
Barcelona	Viajes Marsans, S.A.
Barcelona	Italia-América
Barcelona	Viajes Catalonia
Madrid	Carco, S. A.
Malaga	Viajes Bakumar
San Sebastian	Viajes Cafranga
Valencia	Valencia Express

Source: 1932. *La Época*, May 25. Author's own elaboration

Oficial Hotelera, the Official Chamber of Hospitality, to agree on issues related to national tourism.¹³ Thus, with these four agencies, this business federation was launched, although that same year Viajes Internacional Express of Barcelona joined. In its organisation chart, at the meeting in December 1930, José Luis Marsans was named president, Eusebio Cafranga vice president and Eduardo Lesperut secretary.¹⁴ In 1932 there were already eight federated agencies (Table 11.4). In 1933, Cafranga was elected president¹⁵ and, soon afterwards, a member of the PNT.¹⁶

In addition, some of the members of the FAVE created a public limited company capable of launching itself to attract tourism directly in the European outbound markets. In fact, in 1933 the “Fave Travel PLC was created, with a capital of 250,000 pesetas, to channel international tourism in Spain, Portugal and Morocco”. With its registered office in the French capital, it had its “first office in Paris, at the premises of the PNT”, in order to take advantage of “this body’s work for the advertising carried out Abroad”.¹⁷ Marsans, Cafranga, Iberia and Carco were part of FAVE, S.A.¹⁸

¹³ 1930. *La Vanguardia*, Mars 19.

¹⁴ 1930. *El Heraldo de Madrid*, December 26.

¹⁵ 1933. *La Vanguardia*, December 28. In fact, as vice president and by representing the Federation, he took part in the International Tourism Congress of Brussels in 1932 (1932. *El Sol*, October 28).

¹⁶ 1934. *El Sol*, May 6. We must remember that the General Council of Tourism was abolished by the decree of 31 January 1934, hence modification of the PNT regulation. 1934. *Boletín Oficial del Estado* [Official State Gazette], January 31, p. 810.

¹⁷ 1933. *El Heraldo de Madrid*, January 3. See also Moreno (2007b, pp. 212–213).

¹⁸ 1936/2. *Barcelona Atracción*, 302.

In this new context of clear recovery of tourism, in 1934 the last of the FIAV congresses (no. XV) was held in Spain before the outbreak of the Civil War. Specifically, the congressmen embarked in Barcelona on 29 October to go from there to Mallorca, where the sessions were held, and the congress was inaugurated on 30 October. The objective was to debate particularly significant aspects for Spanish tourism, but, above all, for tourism in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands (Palou 2012, Buades 2004 and Cirer 2009), which reveals the importance that these two regions already had in the national tourism panorama.¹⁹ Almost 100 attendees gathered,²⁰ with 75 foreign delegates. They remained on the island until 3 November when they returned to Barcelona, where the closing ceremony took place. It is important to point out that by then Eusebio Cafranga was already the President of FIAV.²¹ This should be interpreted not only as a great personal success, but also a success for Spain's travel agents, having become important players both on the national and international stage.

In this sense, the territorial expansion of Viajes Marsans, for example, has already been seen, although this was not the only case. Bakumar had been founded in 1921 and by 1929 there were seven branches (Malaga, Barcelona, Valencia, Alicante, Seville, Cordoba and Cadiz). As for Viajes Cafranga, by 1934 there was a branch in Bilbao and a delegation in Oviedo. In 1935, two delegations joined in Pamplona and Santander (Larrinaga 2019, p. 293). In 1933, when the crisis seemed to be over, other agencies emerged, proof of the dynamism of the business in the years before 1936 (Vallejo and Larrinaga 2018, p. 756, 2020, p. 14). In turn, Viajes Iberia, in addition to the Barcelona and Palma offices, opened another in Madrid but this closed in 1936 (San Román 2017, p. 60).

11.4 THE EARLY YEARS OF THE FRANCO REGIME

The Civil War put an end to all this congressional dynamism and, to a large extent, to the tourist activity which had occurred until then. For example, almost all of Viajes Marsans' employees were soon mobilised, travel-related activities were paralysed, most offices closed their doors and,

¹⁹ 1934. "El fomento del turismo". La Vanguardia, October 26, and 1934. "El XV Congreso internacional de Agencias de viaje". La Vanguardia, October 27.

²⁰ 1934. "El XV Congreso de la Federación Internacional de Agencias de Viajes". La Vanguardia, October 30.

²¹ 1934. La Vanguardia, November 4.

hoping to maintain some commercial activity, the management decided to dedicate their shops in Barcelona and Valencia to the sale of books, although this had little success (Viajes Marsans 1986, p. 87). Both Marsans and Cafranga joined the rebels, but since the cities where they lived, Barcelona and San Sebastian, did not join the uprising, they were forced to flee. Cafranga resorted to his Portuguese passport, having been first Vice Consul and then Honorary Consul of that country in San Sebastian, returning shortly after the war to this capital after his capture by the Franco side (13 September 1936) (Larrinaga 2019, p. 294). Everything seems to suggest that Eusebio Cafranga soon recovered his economic activity.

In the area controlled by the Franco regime, by an Act of 30 January 1938, the National Tourism Service (NTS), dependent on the Ministry of the Interior, was created. This was headed by the journalist Luis Bolín, who settled in San Sebastian. Enrique Marsans Comas, José Luis's brother, was chosen so that, from the General Secretariat, he would be in charge of structuring its organisation.²² The NTS launched the War Routes for that summer. These were tourist itineraries initially through northern Spain, and later through Andalusia. The two fundamental objectives were to obtain foreign currency and to advertise the Franco cause (Holguín 2005, p. 1.400; Correyero and Cal 2008, pp. 250–273; and Concejal 2014, p. 260). These itineraries were a monopoly of the state and could not be carried out freely, but through the purchase of coupons from certain travel agencies authorised by the NTS in collaboration with different foreign financial entities when it came to foreign visitors. They were therefore intermediated trips, and hence the need to collaborate with travel agencies. Indeed, Viajes Cafranga, based in San Sebastian, was one which collaborated most actively with the NTS. Although these routes were not a great economic success, they served to maintain some hospitality businesses (Bolín 1967, p. 315). For his part, Eusebio Cafranga saw the opportunity that these War Routes offered, since some of his competitors saw their business paralysed by the battle. Thus, at his headquarters in San Sebastian, he soon added two more branches that same summer, one in Bilbao and the other in Zaragoza, two very significant cities in northern Spain and therefore with potential clients.²³

²² <http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/85508/enrique-marsans-comas>. Accessed on 5 March 2020. Later he would become the head of the Foreign General Tourism Directorate. 1940. *La Vanguardia*, August 23.

²³ 1938. Advertisement by Viajes Cafranga. *El Diario Vasco*, July 2 and August 24.

Shortly after the war ended, the Central State Administration was reorganised through the Act of 8 August 1939, by which the former *Servicios Nacionales* (National Services) were renamed *Direcciones Generales* (General Directorates). The NTS was now renamed the GDT, General Directorate of Tourism, with Luis Bolín again at the forefront. The GDT was created with the general coordination of all the tourist aspects related to the private sector. In fact, through the Franco dictatorship's desire to control the private sector, the GDT carried out an intense legislative activity that revealed the clearly interventionist policy of the regime in tourism matters (Correyero 2005, pp. 62–63; Moreno 2007a, pp. 152 and 159–160). The DGT always tried to collaborate in the reconstruction of Spain, stimulating the country's promotion and its preparation to welcome national and foreign tourists, while aspiring to achieve international recognition of Spain, when, at the end of the Second World War, it was prone to significant isolation by the triumphant democracies over fascism and Nazism. For this, it had no qualms carrying out remarkable propaganda work, relying mainly on the private sector, specifically in the Spanish Federation of Trade Unions of Initiatives and Tourism (FESIT in its Spanish acronym) and in travel agencies (Correyero and Cal 2008, p. 302). More specifically, those who had collaborated from the outset with the regime benefited extensively.

According to Bolín, it was very important to have the support of travel agencies as they knew the markets and had experience in managing tourism and selling Spain to foreign tourists (Vallejo and Concejal 2018, p. 399). In fact, the new functions of travel agencies in Spain were regulated in the Decree of 19 February 1942,²⁴ which aspired to take full control of their activity to avoid competition with the state. Tourism as such was the exclusive competence of the state, so that travel agencies were reserved, according to article 2, for the following purposes and business: selling tickets and reserving seats in all kinds of regular transport, booking hotel rooms and services, and organising package tours, group tours, excursions and city visits.

The decree further classified the agencies into two groups. Group A would be made up of those agencies which, dedicated to the activities indicated in article 2, fulfilled the following requirements: (1) be depositories and issue tickets of the International Union or, failing that, of three

²⁴1942. Boletín Oficial del Estado [Official State Gazette], May 6. Transcribed by Fernández Fúster 1991, pp. 484–486.

European nations; (2) be concessionaires for the sale of combined coupon tickets of the National Network of Spanish Railways; (3) be concessionaires for the sale of tickets of the Spanish Air Companies; (4) be authorised to sell tickets from the main Spanish Navigation Companies; and (5) have civil liability insurance arranged to cover the risks of both group and individual travel. Therefore, those agencies that did not comply with these conditions would infill Group B, acting as intermediaries between the public and those of Group A, only providing the tickets and bonds issued by them.

Once the decree had been issued and disseminated, the applications submitted were studied so that, from the month of December onward, the classifications or licences, granted to Group A agencies appeared in the *Boletín Oficial del Estado* (Official State Gazette) as shown in Table 11.5. At the same time, the first classifications were also awarded to Group B agencies, that is, to those agencies which were intermediaries between the main Group A companies and their clients. Taking into account Table 11.6, we see a territorial increase in these agencies and therefore an expansion of the business, and, at the same time, that the first three of Group A (Marsans, Internacional Expreso and Cafranga) were the agencies that had more intermediaries, which allowed them to strengthen their presence in certain areas of the country. Furthermore, the changes between one and the other with respect to the same Group B agency are also interesting, which makes us aware of a certain conflict between the large agencies of the sector at a difficult moment of reconstructing the tourism business after the Civil War and the Second World War. Indeed, the fact that some of these agencies ceased to trade is clear proof of this.

Likewise, the DGT created an Advisory Commission, made up of the 12 largest agencies operating in Spain, coinciding with those in Table 11.5. As its name indicates, this Commission had a merely advisory function. Ricardo Jaspe, representing the GDT itself, occupied the secretariat of an institution, known as the commission of twelve, which lasted until 26 February 1963 (Correyero and Cal 2008, p. 398), when it was abolished in a new stage of further liberalisation of the Spanish economy after the launch of the 1959 Stabilisation Plan and a greater opening of the Spanish economy to the outside world, which, in tourist terms, materialised in a real boom in the sector. The Permanent Commission of Travel Agencies,

Table 11.5 The top 12 agencies in Group A (in authorisation order between 1942 and 1944)

<i>Classifications</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>BOE</i>	<i>Central office</i>	<i>Branches</i>
1st	Viajes Marsans, S.A.	3-12-1942	Barcelona	Madrid, Palma, Sevilla, Valencia
2nd	Viajes Internacional Expreso	3-12-1942	Barcelona	Palma
3rd	Viajes Cafranga	7-12-1942	San Sebastian	Bilbao, Irún, Oviedo, Pamplona, Zaragoza, Vitoria.
4th	Viajes Iberia, S.A.	11-12-1942	Palma	Barcelona
5th	Wagons-Lits Cook	23-12-1942	Madrid	Agencias: Madrid (H. Palace), Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Granada, Algeciras, Valencia, Palma, San Sebastian, Bilbao, Irún. Sub-agencias: Alicante, Badajoz, Cadiz, Santander, Zaragoza, Cartagena, Canfranc, Gijon, Oviedo, Valladolid, Jerez de la Frontera, Cordoba, La Coruña, Vigo y Valencia de Alcántara.
6th	Viajes Bakumar, S.A.	14-1-1943	Malaga	Alicante, Barcelona, Cádiz, Córdoba, Palma, Madrid, Sevilla, Valencia.
7th	Viajes Hispania	14-1-1943	Alicante	Barcelona, Valencia.
8th	J. Meliá y cía.	14-1-1943	Valencia	
9th	Deutsche America Linie	14-1-1943	Madrid	
10th	Agencia General de las Compañías Hamburguesas	14-1-1943	Madrid	San Sebastian, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.
11th	Viajes Sommariva	9-2-1944	Madrid	
12th	Viajes Vincit	21-6-1944	Pamplona	

Source: Boletín Oficial del Estado (Official State Gazette), General Archive of the Administration, GAA, (03)049.002TOP.22/44.203-52.704-box 12.423, and Fernández Fúster (1991, pp. 486–487). Author's own elaboration

Table 11.6 Agencies of Group B (in authorisation order between 1943 and 1950)

<i>Classifications</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>BOE</i>	<i>Head office</i>	<i>Intermediary of</i>	<i>Ceased trading (BOE)</i>
1st	Pedro Jiménez y Jiménez Viajes Castilla	25-9-1943 18-6-1945	Valladolid	Viajes Iberia Cafranga (1944)	12-5-1946
2nd	Viajes A.B.C.	25-3-1944	Barcelona	Viajes Marsans, S.A. Cafranga (1947)	
3rd	Viajes Galicia Expreso		Vigo	Cafranga	25-9-1946
4th	Viajes Sanmillán	20-5-1945	Castellón	Viajes Marsans, S.A.	
5th	Jerez Expreso	14-2-1946	Jerez de la Frontera	Viajes Marsans, S.A.	6-8-1947
6th	Viajes Horizonte	20-3-1946	Madrid	Viajes Marsans, S.A. Internacional Expreso (1947)	8-5-1948
7th	Viajes Elcano, S.A.	28-9-1946	Madrid	Wagons-Lits Cook	
8th	Viajes Metropol, S.L.	21-10-1946	Las Palmas	Viajes Marsans, S.A.	05-04-1952
9th	Viajes Viamar	28-7-1947	Palma de Mallorca	Viajes Iberia, S.A.	5-04-1952
10th	Viajes Galicia Expreso	2-11-1947	La Coruña	Internacional Expreso	19-10-1950
11th	Viajes Gerona	12-03-1950	Gerona	Viajes Baixas, S.A.	5-04-1952
12th	Viajes Ibero-Alemán	4-4-1950	Barcelona	Internacional Expreso	
13th	Viajes Orpag	21-7-1950	Sevilla	Cafranga	

Source: Boletín Oficial del Estado (Official State Gazette). Author's own elaboration

Table 11.7 Board of Directors of Viajes Marsans, S. A., 1955

President	Enrique Marsans Comas	Madrid
Members	Luis Figueras Dotti	Madrid
	Juan Claudio Güell	Madrid
	Federico Díez-Isasi	Madrid
	Antonio Navarro Reverter	Madrid
Secretary	Cirilo Genovés Amorós	Madrid

Source: Madrid Commercial Registrar, 29 April 1955, Sheet 60,680, 5th inscription. Author's own elaborations

created on 10 December 1943, was more decisive. This was made up of Group A travel agencies and those other sectors interested in solving various problems of the time which affected tourism activity in Spain (DDT, RENFE, merchant marine, airlines or the *Sindicato Vertical de Hostelería*, to name but a few).²⁵

In short, despite the crisis which the tourism business and travel agencies experienced in general (particularly during the war years), shortly after the war ended, the travel agency sector began to recover following the Decree of 19 February 1942. This decree served to regulate and reorder the sector, as well as to lay the foundations for its future action. The most important travel agencies managed to position themselves in the sector, so that, at the beginning of the 1950s, a denser implementation of these agencies was observed throughout the country. The intermediated trips were becoming increasingly important within the tourist activity of the 1950s. In 1955, Viajes Iberia S.A., for example, had eight offices: four in the Balearic Islands (Palma, Ibiza, Pollensa and Mahon) and another four in the peninsula: Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia and San Sebastian (San Román 2017, p. 66). By then Viajes Marsans had set up an empire, with offices in 15 countries and 50 in Spain (Viajes Marsans 1986, 130). This coincided, incidentally, with a very significant change in the company originating from the agreements taken at the extraordinary general meeting of 23 November 1953 (Table 11.7).

In those years, even the organised trips of Spaniards abroad began to become a reality.²⁶ Undoubtedly, it was a reflection of the strong tourist

²⁵ GAA, (03)049.002TOP.22/44.203-52.704-box 12.423.

²⁶ For example, for the summer of 1953 Viajes Marsans offered trips to Germany-Belgium-France-Switzerland, Scandinavian countries or a great cruise through Ceylon and India. *La Vanguardia*, 28-06-1953, 12. However, a few years earlier, in 1949, José Meliá had created the Coach Tours in Europe, even opening two offices in Paris and New York. Galindo (2000, 445).

expansion that began to be experienced in those years and which accelerated even further in the 1960s. The distribution of travel agencies allows us to recognise the most significant tourist regions in Spain, although, in the early 1950s, there had still not yet been any radical changes from the previous years (Barke and Towner 1996, p. 17).

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