The National Revolution Architecture: Rooted Modernism in the Spanish New State (1939–1959)

Daniel Domenech
University of Granada
ddomenechm@correo.ugr.es

Abstract

Francoism was the product of the sum of all the heterogeneous forces of anti-liberal right, from the most radical fascists to Christian traditionalists even further to the conservative right than the Monarchists and the Carlists, and as a result their architectural response to the problem of rebuilding Spanish society following the Civil war could not be unitary either. Each school of thought, each situation to be solved, and each architect generated a different solution, and as a result we find a wide variety of architectural works in Francoist Spain. Rather than revisit the topics studied in multiple works since the seventies, this article will focus the research on typologies that have hardly received any attention, namely constructions of marked ideological and propagandistic character, such as the monolithic monuments dedicated to the Fallen, the reconstructions of 'mythological' places for the discourse of the first Francoism, and the production of monumental civic buildings, such as the Universities of Labor. The core issue to be resolved is whether some cultural discourses under Francoism constructed the new regime as pioneering a modernizing national revolution, rather than installing a reactionary counterrevolution, and whether the architectural works that resulted in fact present outstanding elements of modernity that had nothing to envy, in their physical scale, radicalism of design, and futural temporality, those of National Socialist Germany or Mussolini's Italy. Such a kinship suggests that many buildings of right wing regimes, at least in Spain, in the first half of the twentieth century should be considered as belonging organically to the fascist era, even if the regimes that promoted or hosted them were not technically fascist in a strict political and ideological sense, a kinship expressed in their 'rooted modernism'.

Keywords

Spain – Francoist architecture – fascism – para-fascism – rooted modernism

In the unprecedented disaster which was the *coup d'état* against the constitutional government of Spain on July 18, 1936 and the consequent Civil War, the only fact which historians can observe clearly and find consensus on is the sheer complexity of the topic and the difficulty in establishing clear and precise definitions of the socio-political and the ideological forces driving the conflict. It has thus become impossible to achieve unanimity on such contested issues as the nature of Francoism, and whether it was essentially reactionary, or in a qualified sense could be seen not just as modernizing, but even fascist, and hence revolutionary in a strictly right-wing, nationalist sense. To plunge into the ocean of Spanish and foreign literature about the Francoist era is to emerge frustrated and bewildered by the proliferation of conflicting interpretations. Fortunately, new methodological approaches and the contribution of disciplines adjacent to History suggest positive progress is being made to resolve some of the core interpretational issues, a trend signalled in a series of fresh investigations such as Gustavo Alares' *Políticas del pasado en la España franquista (1939–1964)*,¹ *España Trastornada* by Ramiro Trullén,² and *Fascismo y Modernismo* by Ángel del Arco et al.³

However, even if progress is being made in the right direction when it comes to historical reconstruction, confusion still prevails when it comes to studies on the art and cultural products produced by the Francoist State itself in particular, and by those of the right-wing dictatorships of the interwar era in general. Apart from the general disinterest of historians of art and architecture in the cultural production of right-wing regimes compared to the attention lavished on Soviet Russia, a conceptual obstacle is still posed by a wide-spread assumption which has almost achieved the status of an axiom: a fascist state, being regressive and anti-modern, cannot produce a pure and sincere art, let alone a genuine avant-garde art, and it is limited to repeating elements and characteristics of other styles in a cynical effort to, as Walter

1 Gustavo Alares, *Políticas del pasado en la España franquista (1939–1964): Historia, nacionalismo y dictadura* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2017).

2 Ramiro Trullén, *Políticas España Trastornada: La identidad y el discurso contrarrevolucionario durante la Segunda República y la Guerra Civil* (Madrid: Akal, 2016).

3 Miguel Ángel del Arco, Francisco Cobo and Claudio Hernández, ed., *Fascismo y Modernismo: Política y cultura en la Europa de Entreguerras (1918–1945)* (Granada: Comares, 2016).

Benjamin put it, 'aestheticize politics'.⁴ Following this logic, right-wing authoritarianism is, because of its reactionary, anti-progressive nature, incapable of producing anything genuinely 'modern' or 'original', let alone modernist. Thus, even when such elements seem to be present, they reveal themselves on closer examination as inauthentic, lifeless imitations of the real thing, producing state-sponsored *kitsch*.⁵

In fact, until the publication of *Modernism and Fascism* by Roger Griffin (2007),⁶ the various excuses ('it is not sincere',⁷ 'it is not art',⁸ 'it is an instrument in the service of reaction'⁹) were combined to basically deny any hint of modernity to works of an ideological character and propagandistic purpose produced by these regimes, again in marked contrast to the reverence with which different currents of Soviet art have traditionally been treated. It should be noted that, in previous decades, some works of right-wing regimes have gradually been 'saved' from oblivion, and recognized as at least representing a partial modernity, as in the case of social and housing constructions,¹⁰ or in those produced by architects who were not dedicated Francoists/fascists, or in constructions which, even though made by radical fascists, exhibited an undeniable modernity.¹¹ However, the publication of *Modernism and Fascism* crystallized a conceptual framework which opened up the possibility of arguing that cultural products born of a fascist or extreme authoritarian right-wing regime, nevertheless possessed an autonomous modern dynamic and original

- 4 Ansgar Hillach, Jerold Wikoff and Ulf Zimmerman, 'The Aesthetics of Politics: Walter Benjamin's "Theories of German Fascism"', *New German Critique* 17 (1979): 99–119.
- 5 Luis Mariano González González, *Fascismo, kitsch y cine histórico español (1939–1953)* (Madrid: Ediciones de Castilla-La Mancha, 2009).
- 6 Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism: The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler* (London: Palgrave, 2007).
- 7 Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (London: Harry N Abrams, 1992).
- 8 Umberto Silva, *Arte e ideología del Fascismo* (Valencia: Fernando Torres Editor, 1975).
- 9 David Pallol Font, *Construyendo un imperio: Guía de la arquitectura franquista en el Madrid de la Posguerra* (Madrid: La Librería, 2016).
- 10 Javier Alquézar Penón, "'Ni un hogar sin lumbre': Política social de la vivienda en el Franquismo: La obra sindical de la Vivienda en Andorra y Ariño,' *Celan 2015*, accessed October 11, 2017, http://www.celandigital.com/25/images/pdfs/15_rev_andorra/vivienda_sindical.pdf; Carlos Sambricio, 'Que coman república: Introducción a un estudio sobre la reconstrucción en la España de la postguerra,' *Cuadernos de arquitectura y urbanismo* 121 (1977): 21–33.
- 11 Giuseppe Terragni is the best example. His works have been widely studied by historians and architects, e.g. in Giorgio Ciucci, *Giuseppe Terragni: Opera Completa* (Milan: Electra Editrice, 1996) and Peter Eisenman, *Giuseppe Terragni: Transformations, Decompositions, Critiques* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2003).

creative force rooted in their conception, not only in their external form, and in the tools and techniques used for their creation, but in their temporality, one suggesting not reaction, nor even 'reactionary modernism', but a hope-charged, optimistic, thrust towards a new future.

Applying this premise, the thesis of this article, is that even in Francoist Spain, a far more conservative, less developed and less technologically advanced country than Hitler's Germany and even Mussolini's Italy, modern state architecture was produced, not in the sense of canonical modernity (to be defined later), but in the sense that it reflected and contributed to a period which sought to mark a historic caesura, both with the previous and modern art, the largely left-wing, experimental avant-garde, and with the era of liberalism and socialism that produced it, by achieving an aesthetic modernity with its own, idiosyncratic style of creativity and form. Moreover, it cannot be forgotten that it was established in an ideological framework, which saw the Civil War as a 'war of liberation' or 'a Crusade'¹² against the evils of Marxism, and Francoism as a 'national revolution'¹³ (more in the manner of Pétain's Vichy than Hitler's Germany) that would establish a timeless continuum with 'eternal values', and not as a reactionary return to a mythic past.

This study is based on the fact that, thanks to a perceptible paradigm shift in the scholarly understanding of the cultural history of the interwar period that is still working itself out, the axiom 'Francoist art is reactionary and traditionalist',¹⁴ despite its use of modern techniques, now reveals itself to be extremely questionable. The only remaining defence of this position is to argue that, regardless of the modern aesthetics it possesses and modern techniques deployed in its creation, if a work of art serves to underpin the hegemony of a reactionary movement it can neither be modernizing nor modern. The premise underlying the present essay is that the use of modern techniques under Franco already conveys semiotically a message of modernity, of being in step with an age in which fascism in both its Italian and German variants represented not just innovation but a new idiom of modernity that seemed to be destined to defeat liberalism and communism and win hegemony at least within 'European civilization'. This is not to deny that a wide range of different belief systems and cultural politics were subsumed under Francoism, some overtly hostile to the experimental avant-garde in art and the values underlying International Style and Rationalism in architecture. What it does assert is that all the political and cultural factions of Francoism recognized the need to

12 Alberto Reig Tapia, 'Epílogo,' in *En el Combate por la Historia*, ed. Ángel Viñas (Barcelona: Pasado y Presente, 2012), 910.

13 Serrano Suñer, 'La exposición de la Reconstrucción en España,' *Reconstrucción* 3 (1940).

14 Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, *Discurso a las Juventudes de España* (1931), 24.

FIGURE 1 *Falange propaganda posters from Civil War and before with vanguards aesthetic features ad compositions. From left to right: 'Ha llegado España,' Josep Morell, 1939 (125 x 90 cm); '¡Arriba España!' Servicio Nacional de Propaganda 1936–1939; 'En España amanece. Arriba España,' A.G., 1935 (32x25 cm).*

work towards a new type of Spain, neither liberal nor communist, but dynamic and modern in an intensely and uniquely Spanish way.

An outstanding expression of this vision of Spain's place in the emerging new world is offered by the propaganda posters printed by Falange of the most radical part of the National side (figure 1). Those cultural constructions were extremely modern, in their realization (the techniques, the compositions that draw on avant-garde aesthetics), their message (the rise of a new state, a country which is a product of a 'national revolution' which has put an end to everything decadent and evil) and their function (state propaganda, legitimization discourse, support for the 'secular region' of the state opposed to the Christian religious one). These posters expressed the coming of something new, disruptive and different from what have been tried before. Moreover, they did not appeal to the heart with bucolic and traditional images, but they represented a nationalist dream with an overt affinity with that of the fascist regimes in Germany and Italy. We can observe them in the cheerful and hopeful collage of images in the first poster of figure 1 which asserts that Spain has won through against its enemies, an avant-garde aesthetic (second poster) yoke and arrows shield which is moving, leaving behind a trail of the Spanish and Falange flags, and finally (third poster) a very rigid and ordered composition of three soldiers (evoking the Nazis composition of three flags which flew together over the Nuremberg Tribune in the Zeppelin Field in Nuremberg, or Hitler, Himmler and Lutze standing side by side in *The Triumph of the Will*)¹⁵ facing a black sun with the Falange shield. The message in 1939, was clear: 'this is a new thing'.

15 *Triumph des Willens* (1935) directed by Leni Riefenstahl.

Unless we apply historical hindsight to these images with the knowledge of what happened later as a result of the political currents that operated within Francoism, it is difficult to deny their modernist and optimistic vision of their own national future.

A parallel argument applies to architecture, which under Franco made significant advances away from existing styles and techniques thanks to the efforts of architects who saw themselves as modernizing the country and helping address social evils by drawing on neither democratic nor left-wing values, but on the values of nationalism. In the words of Serrano Suárez, president of the *Junta Política de la Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista* [FET y de las JONS; Traditionalist Spanish Phalanx and of the Councils of the National Syndicalist Offensive]:

The reconstruction does not aspire to leave the people of Spain to whom it is targeted in their previous state. It aspires to improve their situation, bringing to them the breath of the national revolution, bearing in mind we are not afraid to admit it the sad truth about many of the housing conditions that were sometimes incompatible with basic human dignity. We truly hope that the new houses meet the requirements of hygiene and joy, so that the children of those who sacrificed themselves, appreciate the huge scale of the effort undertaken.¹⁶

Francoism, Counterrevolution and National Revolution

'Between 1936 and 1939, the Gale of history toppled the altars of liberal intelligence and devastated the buildings of Spanish national culture. And, on the remains left by this catastrophe, the culture of the national Spain was rebuilt during the uniquely Spanish [Españolísima] dictatorship of General Francisco Franco Bahamonde.'¹⁷

The liberal edifice was torn down and its remains scattered around. Although it is not possible to say that they spent a lot of time in the mud: instead, with a pragmatic attitude and a sense of urgency the new Francoist regime hurried to take up sizeable fragments of what had gone before, and use key speeches as ideological mortar for integrating them into a new Spanish culture. Using this

16 Serrano Suárez, 'La exposición de la Reconstrucción en España,' *Reconstrucción* 3 (1940).

17 Ignacio Peiró Martín, *En los altares de la Patria* (Madrid: Akal, 2017), 109.

first epigraph as a starting point, we will try to understand the key elements of the new era that soon opened up for architects under the Caudillo.

Firstly, we consider Francoism as a two-sided coin, both revolutionary and reactionary: the first national Catholic and traditional, the other fascist, revolutionary and populist. These two political and cultural currents were manifested in the different parties that arose during the Second Republic offering an alternative point of view to the left and to liberalism. The Church, the Spanish Action and the Falange de las JONS joined forces in opposition to the official government, but even conservative liberalism and democratic radicalism would add their voices to protests against the left-wing Republic.¹⁸ After the *coup d'état*, such conflicting currents would be merged into an amalgam of anti-liberal ideals and a unique Party.

The conservative and reactionary elements, looked to the past and advocated the ideas of the old regime. It was represented by all those who saw the Church as a useful guarantor of public morality, and Catholicism as a tool to promote a hierarchical social order. In marked contrast, the most revolutionary sector, represented by the Falange or National Syndicalists, looked forward to a new order aligned to international fascism¹⁹ or communism, one which could only be brought about by a 'transcendental revolution'²⁰ marking a violent rupture with traditional Spain.

Eventually, after the forced union at 19 April 1937 of all the parties in the single *FET y de las JONS*, headed by Francisco Franco, these ideas overlapped and their contours became blurred, being identifiable only with reference to the leading ideologues and activists who represented them. However, we must not forget that, just as architecture and styles anchor their tap roots in earlier periods, Francoism and the most radical interpretation of the FET and the JONS found its inspiration in the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera (1923–1930) whose support base had also been a hybrid of radical and conservative right-wing factions united in opposition to liberalism and the left. Thus, we can highlight as its core features:

The cult of the chief, the exaltation of hierarchy, the repudiation of liberalism and parliamentarianism, the vertical structuring of politics

- 18 Ismael Saz, 'Las raíces culturales del franquismo,' in Manuel Pérez Ledesma and Ismael Saz, *Del Franquismo a la Democracia 1939–2013* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2014), 23.
- 19 Something that was not to happen in Spain, because of the overwhelming strength of the traditional and authoritarian right in Spain. See Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, *¿Fascismo en España?: Sus orígenes, su desarrollo, sus hombres* (Córdoba: Almuzara, 2017), 35.
- 20 Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, 'La vida política: El fracaso constituyente,' *La conquista del estado* 1 (1931).

involving the rejection of traditional 'Partitocracia', the corporate reorganization of labor relations extended to the social and political structure. The concept of the state as organizer and harmonizer of social interests, including patriotic nationalism, populism, a directed economy and an organic democracy opposed to universal suffering, with a strong executive and a single official party intended to exercise the monopoly of administrative responsibilities.²¹

These ideals, articulated through radically conflicting ideologies, were common both to the militants of the reactionary counter-revolution and the fascist revolutionaries, both bent on the overthrow of the previous system. The practical realization of these principles in the new dictatorial government guaranteed a working consensus for the new order that emerged after the total breakdown of national government caused by the Civil War, one which irrevocably destroyed once and for all the prospect of a reconstitution of the Republic and the former Liberal system. Thus, the Civil War, marked the watershed of an era, the end of one period and the beginning of another, or as Fernandez Cuesta put it, the 'War of Liberation, Our Crusade . . . destroyed some ideas and ways of living, but opened up the possibility of others.'²²

After the Civil War and the total destruction of liberal Spain, the feeling of a new beginning emerged. The three long years of fratricidal war had been more focused on the elimination of the enemy than in the traditional wars of territorial conquest. It led to the destruction of thousands of buildings, from churches and palaces of great historical value, to whole towns and neighborhoods. This material devastation and the consequent Tabula Rasa allowed new constructive and urban principles to be brought into play.²³ Cultural projects and architecture now fell into the hands of ideologues whose main purpose was to legitimize the actions of the Franco regime and consolidate the new government.²⁴

This new beginning was tied to the old, to the recovery of the past, but simultaneously dedicated to outlining a vision of the future. The atmosphere of reconstruction prompted reinterpretations of the Spanish tradition, integrated

21 Eduardo González Calleja, 'Los mitos del 18 de Julio,' in *La Radicalización de las derechas*, ed. Francisco Sánchez Pérez (Barcelona: Crítica, 2013), 221–238.

22 Raimundo Fernandez Cuesta, *18 de Julio* (Madrid: Doncel, 1962).

23 Jesús López Díaz, 'Vivienda social y falange: Ideario y construcciones en la década de los 40,' *Scripta Nova* 7, no. 146 (2003), accessed March 19, 2016, [http://www.ub.edu/geocrit/sn/sn-146\(024\).htm](http://www.ub.edu/geocrit/sn/sn-146(024).htm).

24 Alares, *Políticas del pasado en la España franquista*.

within an alternative future, an Utopia combining a celebration of the old Spain with its integration within the modern era, which was being shaped by the – what seemed at the time – unassailable dominance of the Axis and its creation of a fascist Europe immune to liberal chaos and Bolshevik totalitarianism. For the first few years, the cultural mission of Francoism would be to recover an ideal past while pointing to an idealized future for Spain to be transmitted in public events, political ritual, cinemas, literature, art, and architecture.²⁵

Three main cultural trends in the early years of the regime arose to meet this objective. The first, of historical character, was to commemorate Spain's Golden Age and Spanish Empire, and hence refer back to Spanish Neoclassicism, which flourished at a time of imperial and colonial expansion throughout the globe. It is a revivalist impulse which mixes the epic, the monumental, the grandiose, the national and the imperial, and sets out to reinterpret and make actual historical characters like Isabel and Fernando and Carlos V. The stylistic references to the neo-classical revivals in contemporary fascist Germany and Italy are clear, but adapted to the Spanish context. This attitude towards the past will have its representation in traditionalist and historicizing architecture.²⁶

Secondly, there was renewed interest in the vernacular, the rural and the regional. Greater attention was paid to the peasants, the fishermen, the farmers of a pre-modern Spain, as opposed to industrial workers and the urban proletariat. The countryside was thus celebrated as a source of authentic values in contrast to the city, the incubator of liberalism, the origin of degeneration and moral anarchy, and a Second Republic which had fought a war with the 'true' Spain. This moral crusade against urban degeneracy²⁷ will have its counterpart in the field of architecture, in the restorations of devastated regions,²⁸ in the new towns of the 'inner colonization',²⁹ in the investigations carried out to

25 Francisco J. Moreno Martín, ed., *El franquismo y la apropiación del pasado: El uso de la historia, de la arqueología y de la historia del arte para la legitimación de la dictadura* (Madrid: Editorial Pablo Iglesia: 2017).

26 Luis Gutiérrez Soto, 'Proyecto de edificio para Nuevo Ministerio del aire en la plaza de la Moncloa,' *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 20 (1943): 291.

27 Ramiro Trullén, *España Trastornada: La identidad y el discurso contrarrevolucionario durante la Segunda República y la Guerra Civil* (Madrid: Akal, 2016), 139–165.

28 José Manuel López Gómez, *Un modelo de arquitectura y urbanismo franquista en Aragón: La dirección General de Regiones Devastadas 1939–1957* (Zaragoza: Departamento de Educación y Cultura, 1995), or in articles like 'Brunete: Reconstrucción del Hogar,' *Reconstrucción* 13 (1941): 12–21.

29 Miguel Centellas Soler, 'Los pueblos de colonización de la administración franquista en la España rural,' *P+C, proyecto y ciudad: Revista de temas de arquitectura* 1 (2010): 109–126.

identify the individual 'style' of each region,³⁰ and in initiatives to encourage a vernacular interpretation of building projects which made no concession to internationalist architecture.

The third ideological and corresponding aesthetic current which swirled around within the new Francoist culture was a revival of interest in the epic, Christian, national symbology that blended into the myth of the Crusades. All the rituals associated with war, death, honor, sacrifice, memory and the birth (or resurgence) of the new national order come into play. This current will be expressed in an elevated, remote, almost abstract architecture, monolithic, yet in some cases incorporating very modern features, and evoking an air less of Catholic eternity and more of national timelessness.

We must remember that these three sources of aesthetic inspiration share the same objective of seeking some semiotic legitimacy for the newly established political system, and that, while they all look to the past, each one does it in a different way to imply a contrasting vision of the modernity to be aspired to. What they have in common is, as Jan Nelis put it, the urge to present 'the antique but dressed in a high degree of spirituality',³¹ and to redefine the concepts of the Universal and the Eternal in the context of an authoritarian movement of national renaissance. This evocation of a new temporality in Spain rooted deep within a real and imagined national past has a deep affinity with how the past was being mythicized as a source of political legitimacy in the contemporary the fascist states.³²

This is where the architectural problem arises which has been a major issue of contention for historians. They have almost always considered this search for legitimization and the lack of an overt discourse of modernization of the sort familiar in left-wing ideology as something reactionary and obscurantist, and that it inevitably generates products devoid of architectural authenticity and originality.³³ At this point the only way to describe the works of art produced in fascist states is as *kitsch*. Following the definition of Matei Calinescu,

30 José Rodríguez Cueto, 'La vivienda andaluza,' *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 20 (1943): 289.

31 Jan Nelis, 'Imperialismo e mito della Romanità nella Terza Roma Mussoliniana,' *Forum Romanum Belgicum* (2012): 4, accessed May 10, 2016, http://www.bhir-ihbr.be/doc/3_forum_nelis.pdf.

32 Lorenzo Santoro, 'Temporality and Time in Fascist Experience,' *Methaodos: Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 2, no. 1 (2014): 45–48, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://www.redalyc.org/html/4415/441542971005/>.

33 Adam, *Art of the Third Reich*, 304.

kitsch 'can be defined as a systematic attempt to flee, in time and space, from everyday reality'.³⁴ Similarly, Celeste Olalquiaga points out that *kitsch* 'is a time capsule with a return ticket to the realm of myths, the land of individual or collective dreams . . . where the lost time is momentarily found'.³⁵ It is on this premise that Luis Mariano in his book *Fascismo, kitsch y cine histórico español (1939–1953)* states that: 'When I speak of Francoist kitsch, I will be referring to an aesthetic trait that, in an attempt to escape to an idealistic past, melts and confuses the sentimental with the patriotic, creating a cultural artifact that is marked by both its artificial character and its purely propagandistic function in the service of the hegemonic reactionary ideology of the postwar period.'³⁶

Such historians point to the artificial nature of this art and consider that its essential nature is solely propagandistic. It is quite true that in many cases under Franco architectural form was dictated by the need to evoke moments or mythicized past realities that would serve ideologically in the task of rebuilding the national imaginary, just as was done in the state cinema or in the regime's political rituals and state religion. However, we do not think that 'kitsch', as it has been defined, is an adequate concept to refer to the architecture of the period. Like the architectural forms that emerged under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera which reflected the palingenetic mood of *Regeneracionismo* after Spain's humiliating defeat in the Spanish-American war of 1898, the architecture of the early Francoist period was not a mere product of conversations and agreements between reactionary politicians and architects during the Civil War and later years keen to purge the country of any art associated with the Republic by bathing it in nostalgia. Their roots can be traced to earlier architectonic ideas and theories which not only found expression in fascist countries, but in communist regimes and liberal democracies in the period 1920–1970. These ideas are sufficiently consistent by themselves and believed in by the artists and architects that created works framed by the spirit of the tradition and history, that to qualify them as 'kitsch' is more than an insult (a delegitimizing expression to support the supremacy of certain modern styles) than an objective valuation. Indeed, in a time of modernism represented by the modern movement and vanguards internationalist styles, these 'kitsch'

34 Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 244–245.

35 Celeste Olalquiaga, *The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), 28–29.

36 Mariano, *Fascismo, kitsch y cine histórico español*, 35.

elements and works, were not out of date. Instead, they were a coherent answer to the rejection of the 'international newness' and the elaboration of a rooted nationalist modernism.

Revolt Against the Modern World: An Architecture of 'Rooted Modernism'.

'Everything was just the total reconstruction of the Fatherland.'³⁷

The above assertion of Dionisio Ridruejo is unambiguous and synthesized the idea of the time: the overriding purpose of the new regime was not to restore the Spain of pre-Republican days, since the past was dead, nor just the physical reconstruction of a Spain devastated by the Civil War, but to rebuild the fatherland as a concept, as source of belonging and identity. This meant, for the phalangist author, that the goal was to develop a new idea of Spain, a new 'imagined community', one which surpassed the vision offered by the socialist left but at the same time went beyond the Spain idealized within conservative nationalism and Catholicism, even if it was forced to look for its inspiration partially in its monarchical, patriotic, and imperialist past.

In a way that parallels the development of the historical and political ideas of Francoism encountered in the first of the three cultural trends noted above, we find two general themes running through Francoist architecture in the decade after the Civil War: a new historicist-traditionalist vision and a stand against international modernism, producing a new aesthetic language that we will call anti-modernism. The first directs its gaze towards the styles of the patriotic past, which leads to attempts to emulate within a modern idiom the neo-classicism of Juan Villanueva. The Escorial built by Juan Herrera evoked, for example in the Air Ministry of Luis Gutierrez-Soto, and is expressed ideologically in the visionary nationalist speeches and art criticism of Giménez-Caballero,³⁸ in the Christian humanism of Victor D'Ors,³⁹ and the Spenglerian biologicism of Diego de Reina de la Muela.⁴⁰ It would also be the vision that

37 Dionisio Ridruejo, 'La patria como síntesis,' *Arriba*, October 29, 1940.

38 Ernesto Giménez Caballero, *Arte y Estado* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2009).

39 Victor D'Ors, *Arquitectura y humanismo* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1967).

40 Diego de la Reina, *Apuntes para un estilo arquitectónico imperial* (Madrid: Ediciones La Verdad, 1944), 76.

promoted historicist competitions in the designing of squares, crosses, fountains, banks or grilles.⁴¹

With regard to the second element mentioned, the anti-modern current within Francoist architecture, this is signalled by monolithic masses of material, mostly stone or brick, with an almost total absence of historical details, powerful sculptures and minimal or refined decoration. It is an architecture that can hardly be considered nationalist or rooted in Spanish identity because of its lack of references to Spanish forms or history, and which sometimes achieves the purity of the line of Art Deco, and sometimes moves closer to a stripped neoclassicism. The anti-modern current is one that looks to the most monumental and timeless works of Italy, Germany or Portugal, and is inspired by Wilhelm Kreis and Paul Bonatz rather than by Albert Speer; or by Giovanni Muzio and Ernesto Bruno La Padula rather than by José Ângelo Cottinelli Telmo; and by Leopoldo de Almeida rather than by Raul Lino. It should be said that by anti-modernism we do not refer to an architecture of the past, or anti-modernity, simply one whose discourse is opposed to the canonical aesthetic of modernism, and which to do so does not embrace historical traits typical of traditionalist architecture, but pursues 'a third way', with its own discourse and aesthetic features.

Both currents are distancing themselves from the liberal 'neo' styles such as neo-Baroque, neo-Renaissance, neo-Gothic, neo-Medieval or neo-Egyptian, and also from the style of the floral, biomorphic variant of Art Nouveau perfected by Gaudí that becomes fashionable during the twenties, thirties and forties among the bourgeoisie in almost every Spanish city. Finally, as we have pointed out earlier, it set itself apart from the style of canonical modernism too, both in its Movement Modern and avant-garde forms. We define canonical modernity with the four basic criteria of Rodrigo Almonacid.⁴² First, the use of mechanisms of repetition, seriation and standardization (advocating equality in modern society). Second, the interest in showing a dynamic response to modern reality (a certain formalist or constructive expressionism, or unstable equilibrium that creates spatial tensions). Third, the renovation or typological innovation of the buildings based on the precepts of social hygiene and the promotion of advances in the daily life of modern humanity.

41 Often published in *Revista Reconstrucción* and *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura*, for example, Francisco Prieto-Moreno, 'Detalle arquitectónicos: Portadas,' *Reconstrucción* 28 (1942): 433–444; or 'Concurso de Fuente monumental en memoria de Don Juan de Villanueva,' *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 8 (1942): 21.

42 Rodrigo Almonacid, 'La continuidad de "lo moderno" en la arquitectura española de los años 40,' in *Los años del CIAM en España: La otra modernidad* (AhAU, 2017), 212.

Finally, a general idea of visual and functional economy linked to an expressive austerity, to spatial fluidity, to simple volumes, and large, but not massive, bodies.

Although canonical modernity transcends the previous phase of architecture and is typical of its era, representing the *Zeitgeist* of the first half of the twentieth century, and above all the interwar period, this also applies to the new Traditionalism and Anti-modern architecture under Franco. They perfectly epitomise the definition of going beyond previous styles, and there is no doubt that they are equally a product of their own time and bear the stamp of modernity.

It should be noted that here we omit discussion of vernacular architecture, which would be a third chapter in the architecture of the regime. Similarly, the focus here will be more on monuments and public buildings than on the urban restorations and extensions. It suffices here simply to list concisely the different Francoist institutions that research and practice vernacular architecture: the *Dirección General de Regiones Devastadas* [General Office for Devastated Regions] (DGRDR) (the former *Servicio Nacional de Regiones Devastadas y Reparaciones*) (founded 1938), directed by Moreno Torres; or the *Dirección General de Arquitectura* [General Office for Architecture] (September 1939) directed by Pedro Muguruza, who at the time was a director in the *Servicio Técnico de Falange* [Technical Office of Falange]; and finally the *Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda* [National Institute of Housing] (INV) directed by Federico Mayo (April 1939), which also oversaw the *Obra Sindical del Hogar* [Syndical Housing Authority].

There is a minimal, but perceptible modern current which adopts elements of canonical modernity, as can be seen in the buildings *Sanatorio Antituberculoso 'Generalísimo Franco'* [Antituberculous Sanatorium 'Generalísimo Franco'] by Eugenio María de Aguinaga and the *Casa de Prácticos del Puerto* [House of Port Workers] from Tomás Machado built in 1947. It is not possible, due to the small number of buildings designed in Modern Movement style, to consider it relevant. Nevertheless, its very existence is interesting in a period in which almost all the magazines and professionals criticized it and blamed it for all kinds of evils, such as being the product of socialism, of communism, and even of Judaism,⁴³ as well as of being stateless and Internationalist. But it was not until the decade of the 1950s when this current began to become prominent in the field of public buildings and in the hand of the Church.

Between the two currents (which are not styles, since each one encompasses a series of diverse styles), the historicist and the anti-modern, we can locate almost all public and state buildings built between 1939 and 1955. To visualise

43 De la Reina, *Apuntes para un estilo arquitectónico imperial*, 63.

clearly with an example of each one, we will compare the cases of the Laboral University of Gijón with that of Cordoba (figure 2).

The Labor University of Gijón (the top picture) is an outstanding example of a monumental project incorporating traditional characteristics, in this case

FIGURE 2 *Labor University of Gijón main building (1946–1956) and Labor University of Córdoba Paraninfo building (1952–1956).*

as functional as it was symbolic for the regime. It was the largest building in Spain of that time, with 270,000 square meters and a tower 130 meters high, the highest in the country built in stone. More about the 'aesthetic standards' was said by Luis Moya, the main architect in December 1955:

My opinion is already known that this time is not conducive to architectural inventions of a human nature, but to those of a technical or mechanical nature. We were honoured with this important commission and we understood the responsibility that we had to avoid constructing a building that, in following the dictation of fashion, committed the big mistake of 'staying modern', as the sculptor Laviada put it.⁴⁴

At this time, he received numerous criticisms of the lack of modernity of the project along the lines 'Luis has stopped the clock', and 'what would they think of us in an international exhibition?' Other critiques were of an aesthetic character: of the building's orientation, the composition of the façades, or the choice of the courtyard. There was no shortage of allusions to the Stalinist architecture of the time. Luis Moya, in response to the critics, finished his speech with two points to reflect on: 'I think you're hallucinating with these trends, for they pass through our age and are forgotten as soon as they enter in our country' and 'So in this situation it seems very reasonable that in this context a building was designed in the noblest way architecture could conceive, which corresponds to the heroic man of Classical Humanism and Christianity, instead of the architecture of the mass-man devised by our own mechanical technology', because, as the journalist of Gijón, Ignacio Taibo, commented: 'low-ceiling buildings, sad and cheap, the workmen have enough of those'.⁴⁵ Umberto Silva's assertion of the use of tradition by the fascist states also applies to the Labor University of Gijón: 'The fascist will create centres of recollection and meditation focused on the glorious past and the national present, in order to promote a romantic mass-mobilisation of feelings that will give rise to particular contrary effects. The monuments become static emblems of an equally static social reality, invaded only by a breath of metaphysical restlessness, of hope, of not action'.⁴⁶

The Labor University of Córdoba (1952–1956) is a project initiated just six years after the University of Gijón, and already the change it embodied was

44 'Universidad Laboral José Antonio Girón, en Gijón: Sesión de Crítica de Arquitectura,' *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura*, no. 151–152 (1954): 40.

45 'Universidad Laboral José Antonio Girón, en Gijón,' 48.

46 Silva, *Arte e ideología del Fascismo*, 252.

radical. It can be said that it fulfilled some of the logic of the canonical modernity, such as the seriation and repetition of spaces, and that it lacked specific historical references. The architectural ensemble consists of two special buildings, a church, an auditorium and six cross-shaped institutes, in addition to the workshops, dining rooms, cinemas, sport areas. The whole area is oriented towards two main axes with a wide space of garden areas, with water and an open auditorium. A main axis is the one that directs us from the access road to the paraninfo frontal way. This building has each and every one of the characteristics of Italian buildings like the *Palazzo Uffici* of Rome (designed by Gaetano Minnucci, 1937–1939), the Mediterranean Theatre of the *Mostra d'Oltremare* in Naples designed by N. Barillà, V. Gentile, F. Mellia and G. Conmbito (1939–1940) and Adalberto Libera's *Palazzo dei Congressi* (1938–1954). We can observe the columns or pilasters without capitals or bases, their repetition of these along the external front, as well as the preference for the light clear colours, mostly Mediterranean whites.

To the right of the paraninfo there is the church. It is one of the first Spanish churches to be built in a modern style during Francoism. The Church (as an organization) adopted an attitude of radical modernity in the 1950s and that led to the introduction of the Modern Movement in Spain, including paintings and sculptures. Highlights are the light-colored tower with a cross-plant and a series of niches at the top that marks the preoccupation with the religious throughout the program of the Labor University. The church begins on the other axis, perpendicular to the first, which crosses the Greek theatre and the central courtyard adjoining communal buildings and study spaces. On each side, three schools are housed dedicated to different themes. These are joined on its ground floor by a gallery-corridor of 260 meters, which also connects the Paraninfo to the dining rooms.

The total project draws some inspiration from Fascist urban complexes like the EUR42 or the *Mostra d'Oltremare*, although this element is weaker in the institutes, which present a more conventional image, and show how the budget of the whole project had been cut down. The Labor University of Cordoba is representative of a style inspired by the works of Italian Fascist architecture that were in vogue in Spain between 1952 and 1956, other examples of which are the Palace of Justice of Almería, the *Colegio la Aduana* of Córdoba, the Bank of Spain in Jaen and Linares, the Delegation of Hacienda of Valencia or the Delegation of Hacienda of Logroño. This second wave of buildings with Italian Fascist characteristics is the product of the architects who were either studying during the first wave, or could not exercise their profession, but were still exposed to all kinds of propaganda in the form of various architectural magazines of the fascist era published between 1940 and 1944. The first wave

is represented in buildings such as the trade Union House of Melilla by José Antón García (1942), or the Málaga Ejido Institute of Miguel Fisac and Ricardo Fernández Vallespín (1942), or the buildings of the *Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* [CSIC; Spanish National Research Council] also by Miguel Fisac (1942–1944).

The Labor Universities illustrate the contrast between the two currents of Francoist architecture, and invite us to look for similar patterns in all the other state buildings. In a previous work,⁴⁷ I analysed in detail the styles of Francoist architecture in Andalusia, and, although we cannot extrapolate the situation there to the whole of Spain, we can point out that historicizing architecture was the preferred option to be built between 1939–1949, while the vogue for antimodernist buildings dominated between 1948 and 1959. This is not to say that after this date there are no historicizing buildings, but the smallest number are started between the rise of the Modern Movement (1949–...), the entrance of the architects of the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM) into the architectural profession in the early fifties, and in the years of the new direction taken by the regime in 1952, all of which result in a constant search for international legitimacy.

On the other hand, it is essential to understand the importance of reconstructions and restorations undertaken for the purpose of resignifying and recoding the ruins of the past or the Civil War. The journalist and poet Agustín de Foxá argued that it was vital 'to destroy in order to illuminate, to laminate⁴⁸ in order to rebuild' and 'new blessed ruins were necessary in order to raise the New Spain.'⁴⁹ The reconstructive activity was for architects, political leaders and Franco himself, an 'educational work whose purpose was the restoration of the spiritual values', but in an ethos of renewal, not regression. Traditional Spanish Catholicism was to be infused with the mythic heroism of the Francoist victory which laid the foundation for a new Spain to arise from the ruins. It was in this sense that the director of the project of restoring the Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza, which was announced in the most important national magazine of architecture, wrote:

Two fundamental aspects were to guide the project of reconstruction of the sanctuary: the traditional religious aspects and the heroic dimension

47 Daniel Domenech, 'El concepto de modernidad en la arquitectura española durante el primer Franquismo, el caso de Andalucía, 1937–1957,' in *Actas del XIII Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea*, ed. Damián A. González, Manuel Ortiz and Juan Sisinio Pérez (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2017).

48 Lamination involves subjecting materials to heat.

49 Agustín de Foxa, 'Arquitectura hermosa de las ruinas,' *Vértice* 1 (1937).

of recent events [the Civil War]. The first means restoring those glorious ruins in such a way that . . . they retain the perspective that the pilgrims and devotees of all time have contemplated. . . . In the heroic aspect, there could be no better goal than to preserve and perpetuate in its ruin a place where the glorious Captain Cortes, the soul of the defence [against Republicanism] . . . , was wounded.⁵⁰

While Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza is one of the key symbolic pillars for the regime, others, like the National Monument to the Sagrado Corazón de Jesús del Cerro de los Ángeles (figure 3), followed this idea of spiritual rejuvenation and the salvation of religious symbols. In this case, it is a reconstruction of the monument inaugurated just two decades earlier, in 1919, by King Alfonso XIII. This monument was of great symbolism for the regime since it was not

FIGURE 3 *The National Monument to the Sagrado Corazón de Jesús del Cerro de los Ángeles. Photo 1 and 2 show the original monument in 1919, photo 3 shows the reconstruction monument, photo 4 and 5 focus on the sculptural groups 'Spain defender of the Faith' and 'Missionary Spain'.*

50 José Moreno Torres, 'Aspectos de la reconstrucción: El Santuario de Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza,' *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 1 (1941).

only located in the geographical centre of Spain, and was the scene of numerous processions and meetings of fervent masses, but it had been famed for the sculptural groups 'Sanctified Humanity' and 'Humanity on the Path to Sanctification' which were destroyed in the Civil War. The new sculptural ensembles, 'Spain defender of the Faith' and 'Missionary Spain' by Fernando Cruz Solís stood out, with characteristics similar to those of the monument built to commemorate the Discoverers of Lisbon (1940). The rest of the monument is a version of the original, made by the same architect, Aniceto Marinas, together with a set of neoclassical features, quite sober, reminiscent of certain works of the Third Reich but with hispanicized features, sculpted by Pedro Muguruza and Luis Quijada. The multiple axes of symmetry throughout the whole monument, and the use of the three niches with sculptures, complete an austere design lacking in other architectonic details.

Another strategy adopted under Francoism in the construction of a new national future through state architecture was to design new places of remembrance in the aftermath of the Civil War. We thus move on to the third pillar of the regime's architecture: the construction of monoliths and spaces of ritualized memory, created to commemorate the religious and secular crusade against the left and the war out of which Francoism was born, which according to its constantly reiterated discourse had liberated the Spanish from the enemy outside and within, and ended in a victory that was inaugurating a new future. This future was now linked once more to the lost past, and in the process not only of eradicating the contemporary 'evil' of the Republican forces, but also purging the 'old Spain' of its decadence.

Margherita Sarfatti called for the 'transposition of the features of contemporary reality to a higher level, integrating them within the scheme of immortal truths: from what is agreed upon to the vital, from the ephemeral to the lasting, and from the modern to the eternal'.⁵¹ While Franco's new government was already planning memorials (figure 4) during the war, his own military activity prevented him from concentrating too much effort on cultural production. Thus, the Italians were the first to project and build buildings in memories of the soldiers who fell victim to the conflict, such as the monuments of the fallen Italians in the port of Escudo, Cantabria and the Church of San Antonio de Padua in Zaragoza (1937–1940) by Víctor Eusa. Both corresponded to a design without modern or traditional references: the first is a staggering pyramid with a large M in stone marking the entrance, and the second a complex in stone with a large tower, reminiscent of fortresses in the work of the romantic painter John Martin. Another possible and pre-fascist antecedent to the memorials

51 Margherita Sarfatti, *Messaggero Egiziano*, 20 December 1929.

FIGURE 4 *Monuments of the Fallen with no traditional forms all around the Spanish geography. From right to left: Alcocero de Mola, Palma de Mallorca, Melilla, Alicante, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Santander, Ceuta, Cantabria.*

of the fallen of the Civil War was offered by the massive Monument to the Discovering Faith, built in Huelva in 1929 and designed by the American sculptor Gertrude Vanderbilt.

In the Spanish case, one of the first monuments to be constructed and the most shocking for the time was built (1938–1939) to the memory of General Mola, one of the initiators of the coup d'état, killed in a plane crash on June 3, 1937. The *Alcocero de Mola* consists of a large monolith twenty-two meters high and a cross-shaped plant with the name MOLA under a Spanish coat of arms exhibiting Francoist iconography. In its inauguration, with Franco at the head of the Mora Guard and a large number of military personnel and assistants, it was consecrated like just as any of the major ritualistic and propaganda installations of the regime. Although the monolith is the culmination of the design, the whole monument is conceived as a landmark, a 320 meters-long line in the landscape, set between mountains, composed of stairs, terraced surfaces, and finally five arches, or rather openings within a luminous off-white stone.

But not all memorials to the fallen are dedicated to prominent members of the rebellion. Others commemorate anonymous victims of the conflict, like the monument of the fallen of the *Baleares* cruiser by Francesc Roca (1940), located in the Plaza de Sa Feixina de Palma, and the monument to the fallen in

the Plaza de España in Santa Cruz de Tenerife by the architects Tomás Machado and Méndez Fernández de Lugo, which was built between 1940–1946. Both possess a strong vertical component, the second being of a slightly lighter shade of stone, composed of four faces with a cross shape. It is formed in total by four sculptural pieces: The Allegory of the Fatherland holding the Fallen; a winged woman representing Victory, alluding to those maritime expeditions that ‘gloriously’ returned to their native land; and two figures of soldiers in a resting stance with a sword in their hands, representing civic and military values respectively. These sculptures have an element of Art Deco reminiscent of sculptures which crowned the banks of Spain before the war. Finally, the monument to the fallen in Cabo Mayor (1941), Santander, by the architect Valentín Ramón Lavín and the sculptor José Villalobos suggests, in spite of the mass of stone, a hint of modernity, but embedded in the idea of a timeless monolith.

There are other, more idiosyncratic monuments, like that of *17 de Julio* (1941), in Melilla, which combines features of Art Deco in the design of the profile of a stone eagle, with a notable absence of figurative details, except for the figure of the soldier, which is both figurative and detailed. In Ceuta, another monument was erected on a large stone platform, that of the *Llano Amarillo* (1938) of Francisco Hernanz, reflecting a more modern aesthetic. This architect had previously made numerous works of houses in Art Deco style in Melilla and in the Protectorate during the 1930s. The monument to General Sagardía, by the Gipuzkoan architects Eduardo Olasagasti and José Antonio Olano, built in 1939, maintains this same aesthetic concept, one which prevailed almost until the end to Francoism. Mention should also be made of the Monument built to the Memory of Ion Moța and Ion Vasile, the volunteers of the Romanian Iron Guard killed in Majadahonda, which was inaugurated in September 1970, and whose arches evoke the monument to the General Mola and the Italian architecture of the Fascist Thirties, as well as the mausoleum in Rome erected to those who fell in the cause of Italian independence (1940). Another monument that stands out for its abstract modern quality, a surprising feature in the Spanish countryside, is the one built to commemorate the fallen of the Civil War in Vega Baja, in Alicante, built between 1941 and 1944 and designed by Miguel López and Daniel Bañuls. Five square pillars without any historical detail create the background for a male figure derived from Roman sculpture symbology. Although all the monuments referenced before shared the vision of a radical ‘rooted modernism’ which stressed the eternal features among the historicist trends, they were not the only trend. For example, we can find more examples of a Spanish traditionalist trend, but only the ones referred to earlier avoided the ‘kitsch’ and contributed to the National Revolution discourse in the language of stone.

FIGURE 5 'Spanish, spiritual guide of the world' poster from Servicio Nacional de Propaganda compared to the Valley of the Fallen (1940–1959).

On the other hand, the most relevant construction which marked the founding of a new tradition, was the *Valle de los Caídos* [Valley of the Fallen], erected in the Sierra de Guadarrama, near Madrid (figure 5). The monument that most powerfully encapsulates unique blend of Catholicism and totalitarianism on which the Franquist regime and its all-embracing political religion was founded,⁵² was the result of a protracted process of planning, designing and redesigning that extended for the entire duration of the period of Franquism under consideration (1940–1959). This monastery-like building complex that was destined to be the mausoleum not just of José Antonio Primo de Rivera (the son of the dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera and leader of Falange, the most powerful Spanish fascist faction in the Civil War), but of Franco as well, has already been an object of study in nearly every humanistic discipline. What concerns us here is to emphasize its symbolic function as the Cathedral of Francoism, one which combined characteristics of the three idioms of Franquist architecture identified earlier.⁵³ It is a building signalling both the triumph over Republican and left-wing anarchy, but also sacralizing the losses

52 As Gareth Stockey points out the connection between National Catholicism and Franco's regime could be seen in the symbolism and use of the combined image of sword and cross. Gareth Stockey, *Valley of the Fallen: The (N)Ever Changing Faces of General Franco's Monument* (Nottingham: CCP, 2013), 50.

53 Not only symbolic, but also a strong legitimizing work: The importance of the monument for political identity formation under the Franco government and its use as a tool of political legitimization will further be discussed, in order to facilitate an analysis of its legacy. Andrea Hepworth, 'Site of Memory and Dismemory: The Valley of the Fallen in Spain,' *Journal of Genocide Research* 16, no. 4 (2014): 465.

of Franco's armies and then, the Republican army. It materializes in stone an ideological blueprint for Spain's future greatness and strength, and provides a permanent but wordless ideological lens through which contemporary history is to be interpreted. This was the image of a Christian Spain which would give a sense of moral direction to the world, in its function as the 'orientadora del mundo', as an official notice put it in the 1940s, as much for the Catholic idea that it encapsulated as for the way it commemorated a successful crusade against Communism fought on behalf of Europe.

Although the features of 'kitsch' or new traditional styles prevail over the anti-modern ones, we can find outstanding works of art that often go unnoticed in the study of the pro-Franco cultural products (figure 6). Extraordinary examples are the outdoor sculptures of Juan de Ávalos in the Valley of the Fallen, in particular the titanic figures of San Lucas, San Juan, San Marcos and San Mateo, as well as the Pietà (the one which now stands as well as the first

FIGURE 6 *Examples of sculptures inside the Valley of the Fallen from Luis Antonio Sanguino (Ejército de tierra) and Juan de Ávalos (Archangel Azrael, San Lucas, first Pietà design, second and finally Pietà sculpture).*

one designed, which was demolished because of its lack of monumentality) sculpted between 1951 and 1959. In its interior we find the bronze statues of the Archangel Azrael, San Miguel, San Gabriel, San Rafael, added in 1968 also from Juan de Ávalos and the sculptures representatives of the different armies (Land, Sea, Air and Militias forces) from Luis Antonio Sanguino. These sculptures were unusual in the two first decades of the Regime, and reveal Franco's megalomaniac impulse to compete with the fascist regimes in the creation of 'Pharaonic' works which was repressed by the outcome of the Second World War. Finally, the Valley of the Fallen taken as a whole, once the sculptures are considered along with the buildings, shines with the light of a rooted modernism and its own individual style with which nothing built before or after during the Francoist regime could compare. It can be considered the architectonic blend of all the political discourses of the Regime, from the National Revolution and fascist to the reactionary Catholic and traditionalist ones.

Additionally, the entire monument can be seen as a symbol of the isolation of the regime that was forced upon it by the disappearance of its allies and the defeat of fascism. After this, the regime had no one to offer its particular vision of the world to other than anti-Republican Spaniards. Unlike international exhibitions such as the Discoveries of Portugal of 1940, the Italian *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* and *Mostra d'Oltremare* of the 1930s, the Berlin Olympics and the EUR42 projects which were organized to demonstrate to the whole world the greatness of the new fascist nation and to attract visitors, the Valley of the Fallen was condemned to remain an almost hermetic sign of the reaffirmation and consolidation of the dictatorship, and perhaps too its fatal dependency for viability on the survival of Franco himself.⁵⁴

All of the examples of Francoist architecture considered here were conceived in opposition to the canonical modern movement and have been rejected by the traditional art historians of architecture, but were in that precise moment of history the representation of the deliberate rejection of internationalist styles and the cosmopolitan, experimental currents of aesthetic modernism. The interesting point here is that all of them, except the Valley of the Fallen monument, were designed without any political order which constrained the creativity of their designers. The buildings contained an inner force and represented the *Weltanschauung* of their architects, sometimes gravitating towards

54 Curiously, we can find some buildings in countries that copy the idea of a big cross and a mausoleum above a hill. For example, the *Dambana ng Kagitingan* or Shrine of Valor (1966–1970) built to honor and remember the gallantry of Filipino and American soldiers who fought during the Second World War, which copies some features like the section of the Cross and the dominant position on a mountain.

a historicist one and other times to a synthesis of the traditional with a conservative modernity. The Spanish architects and the commissioners of new buildings expressed their own view of the idea of the fatherland and the new state, against the background of intense debate of how architecture could contribute to the utopia of the future Spain grounded in its pre-Republican history.

Conclusion

The thesis that this article has developed questions the hegemonic view of the architecture of the Franco Regime put forward by different historians of art and architecture that have been available previously. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War Francoism embraced for pragmatic reasons a fascist style of discourse and relied on a minority constituency of support that was revolutionary in its vision of the new Spain, and hence in its own way modernising. However, this constituent coexisted with arch-reactionary interpretations of the new regimes advocated by conservatives of many hues. This fact has already been addressed by historians like Ismael Saz.⁵⁵

The originality of my thesis is that an important insight into the nature of Francoism as a social, political and historical force derives from an exploration of how the Franquist hybrid of reaction and fascist modernity was reflected in the ideological architecture of the regime. Although, due to a matter of space, it has not been possible to develop each and every one of the points mentioned, the examples cited substantiate the argument that there was a transcendent concern among creative elites under Franco with modernising Spain in a uniquely Spanish right-wing idiom heavily influenced by the two fascist regimes. The resulting blend of anti-modernism and nostalgia for the past glories of Spain with the aspiration to create a new, flourishing, internally pacified and modernized Spain able to withstand the considerable threats posed to all nations by the modern world created several stylistic idioms typical of the fascist era. All of these can be seen as variants of what Roger Griffin has termed a 'rooted modernism'. Their function was to legitimize the regime, regardless of the exterior and expressive features of the building's design. From this perspective, Franquist architecture should be assessed not on the assumption that it does not rise beyond the level of 'kitsch', but that it belongs to, reflects, and refracts through the uniquely traumatic experience of Spain of the époque,

55 Ismael Saz Campos, *España contra España: Los nacionalismos franquistas* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2003).

the era of fascism, albeit often in a muted, attenuated form that owes less to internationalist and rationalist architecture than many Italian Fascist and Nazi buildings.

To demonstrate the force of this argument, we have highlighted a series of works that have a special value, whether through their representativeness, through their repetition of recurrent features of design and style found throughout the whole Spanish panorama of the time, or through their similarities with cultural products from contemporary fascist countries. It has been emphasized that these works are to be approached not as unique phenomena of the Francoist dictatorship, but actually Spanish adaptations of traditional and anti-modern (in the sense of rejecting International Style) currents.

Finally, we have considered the four characteristics of architecture of the regime during the first twenty years of its existence. First, the co-existence of two main stylistic currents, historicizing and architecture and anti-modern architecture; second, the symbolic restorations of buildings ravaged by war, which are the practical application of the Regenerationist discourse of the turn of the nineteenth century which shaped the Spanish vision of recovery and renewal; third, the proliferation of epic monuments built in memory of the fallen, in an anti-modern, timeless language which stylistically drew on different traditions, some of them overtly fascist; fourth, the synthesis of all these ideas in a unique and monumental building, the Valley of the Fallen, which rivalled the monumental and 'Pharaonic' projects of Nazi Germany, outdid the monumentalism of Mussolini's Italy, and symbolized the hybridization of nostalgic and conservative nationalist with futural, modernizing fascist discourses into a powerful expression of Franco's unique aesthetic of 'rooted modernism'.

Two facts militated against the possibility of architecture of the Franco regime producing variants of canonical modernity similar to the most radical Italian versions of it by such architects as Giuseppe Terragni, Giuseppe Petrazzi or Mario de Renzi: on one hand the fate suffered by several of the more modernist architects who felt sympathy in greater or lesser degree for European fascism, such as José Manuel de Aizpurúa, Rafael Coderch de Sentmenat or Teodoro Anasagasti, all victims of the War; on the other, the hegemony achieved by the reactionary, conservative elements within the Franquist synthesis over the more radically technocratic and fascist ones who were open to aesthetic modernism, but who were effectively suppressed till the 1950s.

In 1933 Manuel Azaña presciently anticipated that if there were to be a Civil War Franquism, with its sustained embrace of a patriotic, statist Catholicism, would prevail over the radical secularism and experimentalism of fascism:

There are, or can be, in Spain all the fascists you want. But a fascist regime will not come about. If the Republic were defeated by force, the country would relapse into a traditional type of military and ecclesiastical dictatorship, despite the many fascist slogans that are translated into Spanish and the many fascist nicknames that are used . . . Instead there will be sabres, ecclesiastical chasubles, military parades and homages to the Virgen del Pilar. Ultimately it is on that side that the country gives its all.⁵⁶

56 Manuel Azaña, *Memorias políticas y de guerra, vol. 2* (Madrid: Afrodisio Aguado, 1976), 313.