

# *Shortening Distances: Spanish Architectural Modernity in International Architecture Journals*

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*At the end of the 1930s, Spain suffered a Civil War which led to the establishment of a dictatorship that lasted about forty years and whose ideology separated it from the main powers in the West. At the same time, the war had devastated the country's economy and culture, thus further widening the gap between Spain and other developed countries. In the realm of architecture, the Civil War extinguished the budding modernity that had begun to develop in Spain in the 1920s and some of its significant figures, such as Josep Lluís Sert or Antonio Bonet went into exile. In spite of this complex situation, during the 1950s, a new generation of young Spanish architects, aware of their estrangement from European culture, embarked on a search for the modernity that had been denied to them. The results of their efforts started to be manifest even beyond national boundaries, as various international journals began to cover Spanish architecture. For instance, in 1959 L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui applauded "the praiseworthy effort of various architects in the country to reach for an architecture with a contemporary spirit." Spain's presence in the international architecture media continued to grow into the 1960s, with special issues in such journals as Zodiac, Baumeister, Werk, L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, Architectural Review, etc. And by the 1980s, architecture criticism was enthralled by contemporary Spanish architecture. The initial gap appeared to have been bridged. It is important to highlight the role played in this process by some Spanish architects, who, desiring to build bridges and to show Spanish architecture to the world, served as critics or commentators for a variety of international publications. The goal of this paper is to analyze the role played by architecture journals as a means of disseminating and bringing closer together architectural realities that were distant or peripheral, as documented by the Spanish experience between the 1950s and 1980s.*

In August 1975, the architect Lew Martin published an article in the *NZIA Journal* in which he expressed his enthusiasm for a group of low-cost flats in Reus (Spain) called the “Gaudi District,” developed by the Spanish architect Ricardo Bofill and his architectural studio.<sup>1</sup> Martin, as the article describes, discovered the project through an article published in *Architectural Review* in 1973. His interest in the project was so intense that he visited the buildings while on a tour of Europe in 1974, and he conveyed his positive impressions of the trip in the article.<sup>2</sup>

Going beyond the value found by the New Zealand architect in this Spanish building, this paper focuses on the role played by architectural journals. The example provided, *Architectural Review*, serves as a way of bringing closer a distant Spanish reality. Spain, as we know, is at the antipodes of New Zealand. Distance is sometimes not just a matter of geography, though, but also one of lack of knowledge, and the event described above is neither isolated nor random. From the 1950s onwards, modern Spanish architecture started to gain recognition within international circles, and architectural magazines played an important role in this process. My objective in this context is to analyze the role played by international architectural periodicals as a vehicle to bridge the gap between modern Spanish architecture and the international context, and I will do so by analysing the origins of this process through to its consolidation in the 1980s. This idea takes on a particular strength in a country like Spain, which has traditionally been on the periphery, far away from Europe and the world. Before delving in, however, I must outline some key points which help give context to this perspective on the country.

During the twentieth century, the country was marked by the Civil War it suffered between 1936 and 1939. The war brought Spain’s reality to the world’s attention—“never had there been so much interest in Spain in other countries”—and it would lead other nations to take sides in the conflict.<sup>3</sup> However, Spanish society, economy and culture were completely destroyed, generating an important gap in relation to other developed countries. Within the world of architecture, war took with it the incipient modernity which had begun to grow in Spain in the 1920s, relevant figures such as Josep Lluís Sert or Antonio Bonet had to live in exile.<sup>4</sup> Others suffered worse fates and died during the conflict.

Once the war was over, a new political regime was established: Franco’s dictatorship, which would retain power for nearly forty years. From an ideological viewpoint, the newly established

<sup>1</sup> Lew Martin, “Barrio Gaudi,” *NZIA Journal* 4 (1975): 113–16.

<sup>2</sup> This article is the result of a wider research project, in which I analyse the diffusion of Spanish architecture within the international context through foreign architectural periodicals during the second half of the twentieth century. The analysis is based on the study of around 180 architecture magazines.

<sup>3</sup> Javier Noya, *La imagen de España en el exterior* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, 2002), 61

<sup>4</sup> Their exile and that of other architects was motivated by the “guidelines for cleanliness” introduced by the Franco government, which targeted well-known openly leftist individuals. For more information, see J.M. Martín Fichilla and C. Sambricio, *Arquitectura española del exilio* (Madrid: Lampreave, 2014), reviewed by Lucía C. Pérez-Moreno, “Spanish Architecture in Exile,” *Journal of Architecture* 21, no. 8 (2016): 1343–47.

order was also very distant from Western powers. During the dictatorship (1939-75), and despite some signs of opening up to the world, the shadow of a repressive regime was a constant obstacle in its relation to other developed countries.

## The First Approach to Spanish Modernity

In the 1940s, the Franco regime embarked on the process of reconstructing a country that had been devastated. In the realm of architecture, as pointed out by Esteban-Maluenda, the government grounded this process in “the memory of other more ‘glorious’ moments in the history of the nation.” In this sense, it “supported the search for a so called ‘national style’ in architecture, which was generally limited to official buildings, whereas a folkloric style was employed in regional and rural works.”<sup>5</sup>

In this context, some international outlets voiced the prevalent poor appreciation of Spanish architecture at that time. For example, the Dutch journal *Forum*, in an article from 1950, collects the impressions of Dutch professors during a Spanish trip, explicitly remarking on “the very low appeal of recent Spanish architecture.”<sup>6</sup>

Even if the majority of Spanish architects initially produced work based on the academic and nationalist models supported by the regime, from the late 1940s some voices began to question those models. They started, albeit with some hesitation, a search for the modernity that the Civil War had inhibited.

This period would start a new stage in the country in which “contemporary Spanish architecture, conscious of its lag in regards to European culture ... would begin an intense adventure.”<sup>7</sup> The results of this modernizing effort would start to show beyond Spanish borders, through the pages of different architecture journals. For instance, in the fall of 1953, the British publication *The Architects' Journal* published a review of an exhibition of recent Spanish architecture in which the author perceives the ongoing change of course: “it is only in the last year or so that designs of important buildings have broken away from the Escorial-nationalist style and the contemporary style is now firmly entrenched.”<sup>8</sup>

In this initial stage, two events favoured the discovery of Spanish architects by international critics. First of all, the American Institute of Architects awarded the 1957 Reynolds Prize to the canteen of the SEAT factory (fig. 1), designed by the Spanish architects César Ortiz-Echagüe, Rafael de la Joya

<sup>5</sup> Ana Esteban-Maluenda, “Tradition vs. Technology: Periodicals as a Driving Force for the Architectural Debate—The Spanish Gaze over the Pacific,” in *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand 35, Historiographies of Technology and Architecture* (Wellington: SAHANZ, 2018), 141.

<sup>6</sup> J. Schipper, “Travel Impressions from Spain,” *Forum* 8 (1950): 277.

<sup>7</sup> Antón Capitol, *Arquitectura española: Años 50 – Años 80* (Madrid: MOPU, 1986), 13.

<sup>8</sup> “Architecture in Madrid,” *The Architects' Journal* (November 1953): 509.



Sozialgebäude der Automobilfabrik S.E.A.T., Barcelona

Architekten: Manuel Barbero Finkenzeller mit César Ortiz Estévez und Rafaell de Júoz Centro

Im Automobilbau ist die brennende Forderung nach einer Betriebsküche wurde als erste Baufähigkeit eine Werkstatt errichtet, die wegen des sozialen Bedürfnisses aus einer möglichst leichten Durchdringung der Betriebsfläche bestand. Die Betriebsküche sollte nicht nur eine funktionale Einheit sein, sondern auch den Arbeitsplatz. Da innerhalb jedes in zwei Sektionen geteilten wird, bestimmt die Arbeitsteilung die Gestaltung. Eine Trennung zwischen Küchen und Arbeitsraum ist unbedingt zu vermeiden.

Diese Arbeitsteilung ist eine funktionelle Forderung, welche für die Architektur aber auch eine Raumordnung, die logische Verbindung von drausen und drinnen schafft, die während der Messe in Brüssel einen Preis erhielt. Eine solche Arbeitsteilung ist nicht nur eine technische Geste, die optimal sind für die Ausübung der Wiss verleiht, die sehr praktisch kann, sondern auch eine ästhetische, die die Arbeitsergebnisse in einem schönen Raum präsentiert, gepaart mit Wissenspotenziellen und nicht zuletzt wegen der Stimmung der Beschäftigten. Das kann nur durch eine Arbeitsteilung erreicht werden, die die Arbeitsergebnisse im gesamten Raum präsentiert.

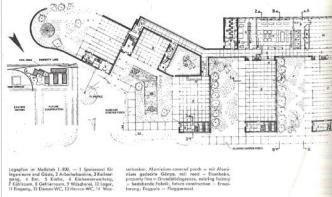
Die Arbeitsteilung gaben Antrieb über die tiefere soziale Lösung für Bade-, Sanitärbereiche, Feuerwehr- und Duschabteilungen mit Abwasser. Und genau wie die Arbeitsteilung, die die Arbeitsergebnisse im gesamten Raum präsentiert, wurde sie in die Struktur des Kitchens, und alle transparenzen und transparenten Flächen sind transparent.

Das Gebäude erhält des B. S. Reynolds Memorial Award 1957, den die große meiste Arbeitsergebnisse im gesamten Raum präsentiert.

Die Arbeitsteilung ist die Arbeitsergebnisse im gesamten Raum präsentiert.



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Sozialgebäude der Automobilfabrik S.E.A.T., Barcelona  
Architekten: Manuel Barbero Finkenzeller mit César Ortiz Estévez und Rafaell de Júoz Centro

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Sozialgebäude der Automobilfabrik S.E.A.T., Barcelona  
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and Manuel Barbero. And one year later, in 1958, Spain would win acclaim again with the pavilion presented by Antonio Corrales and Ramón Vázquez Molezún to the Universal Exhibition in Brussels, the first celebrated after World War Two. The Spanish pavilion won the competition's gold medal.

Both works were built in the second half of the decade and appeared in a variety of international magazines.<sup>9</sup> Sixteen publications included the SEAT canteen, and nineteen, the Spanish pavilion.

The appeal of both these works, in addition to their intrinsic artistic merits,<sup>10</sup> lies in the fact that the authors used them to make the most of their international relevance—for the prize awarded by the American Institute of Architects, Mies was part of the jury; and the Brussels pavilion was part of a Universal Exhibition—in order to present their work to the outside world and, in doing so, open new venues for Spanish architecture as a whole. We could say that they became a focus that allowed international critics and editors to pay attention to Iberian architecture. In this connection, we must highlight the appreciative comment made by J.M. Richards, director of the *Architectural Review*, who noted the number of people who “were introduced to modern Spanish architecture by the Spanish pavilion at the Brussels International Exhibition of 1958.”<sup>11</sup> Dieter von Schwarze, in the sixth edition of *Baumeister* (1967) refers to the pavilion in similar terms, remembering “how the Spanish pavilion surprised us in the Universal Exhibition in Brussels, because of the architectural quality of the building.”<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, from 1957 onwards, a variety of articles introducing Spanish work to the international reader started

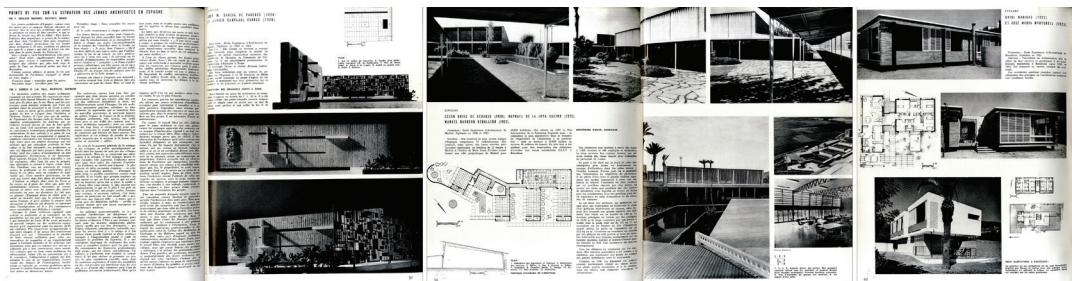
Figure 1. The Canteen of the SEAT factory. (Reprinted from *Baumeister* 5 (1958).)

<sup>9</sup> The SEAT canteen was included in *Architectural Forum*, *Architectural Record*, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, *Techniques et Architecture*, *Baumeister*, *Werk*, *Architekten* (Copenhagen), *Arquitectura* (México), *Bauen und Wohnen*, and *Architectural Design*. The Brussels Pavilion appeared in *Architectural Design*, *Architectural Forum*, *Architectural Review*, *Architekten* (Copenhagen), *Arkitektur DK*, *Bauen und Wohnen*, *Baumeister*, *Casabella*, *Domus*, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, *L'architettura. Cronache e Storia*, *Architects' Journal*, and *Zodiac*.

<sup>10</sup> In this sense we must understand that up until that moment Spanish architecture already had a set of works of very high level, such as the Civil Government building in Tarragona (1954-57) by Alejandro de la Sota, which barely had any international response.

<sup>11</sup> James Maude Richards, “The Spain of Carlos Flores,” *Architectural Review* 781 (1962): 187.

<sup>12</sup> Dieter v. Schwarze, “Spanische Architektur seit Gaudí,” *Baumeister* 6 (1967): 701.



to be published. In 1957, the French journal *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* decided to include Spain in an edition dedicated to the work of young architects around the world,<sup>13</sup> which compiled the works of over 80 architects from 21 countries (fig. 2).

A year later, in 1958, the Italian architect Alberto Sartoris published an article titled “Current Spanish Architecture”<sup>14</sup> in *Architectural Design*, in which he described his vision of contemporary Spanish architecture. This publication is particularly relevant. It is the first time that an international critic produced a broad overview of the country’s architectural scene. In these pages and not without a tone of surprise, Sartoris made note of the advances made by Spanish architecture, remarking on the influence that “modern theories” had on this new impulse, which had guided it “on an objective course of development, such as it has not known for a long time.”

Towards the end of the decade, in 1959, another noteworthy article appeared in *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*.<sup>15</sup> The origin of this chronicle can be traced to a letter written by the Spanish architect Miguel Fisac to the journal editors after the rather brief mention of Spain in the aforementioned issue on young architects around the world. In this letter the Spaniard reprimanded the French publication for “not paying enough attention to the work done in the country.”<sup>16</sup> In response to this, the editorial board published a lengthy article giving a complete overview of Spanish architecture in these years, in which, as the editors describe, “interesting and promising works” are compiled. The magazine asked Fisac to provide the material, and an article by him provides a context for the production of the country’s architecture, giving a description of its evolution since the early twentieth century to the current moment, in which, in his own words, “the new generation of architects tends to a renovation”<sup>17</sup> oriented towards “helping Spanish architecture walk on a firm and secure path.”<sup>18</sup> On receiving the material, the editors stated they were “glad to publish some recent Spanish productions,” while at the same time acknowledging the

Figure 2. “Points du vue sur la situation des jeunes architectes en Espagne,” by José Antonio Coderch. (Reprinted from *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, 73 (1957): 56-60.)

13 Alexander Persitz, “Jeunes architectes dans le monde,” *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* 73 (1957).

14 Alberto Sartoris, “Current Spanish architecture,” *Architectural Design* 5 (1958): 204-209.

15 Miguel Fisac, “Quelques réalisations récentes en Espagne,” *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* 85 (1959): 45-65.

16 Fisac, “Quelques réalisations récentes en Espagne,” 45.

17 This renovation responds to three principles: the teaching of those he calls “masters of their time”: Gropius, Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies, Neutra or Aalto, to focus on the essence and not form of traditional or popular architecture and to be aware of the economic and industrial means at their disposition.

18 Fisac, “Quelques réalisations récentes en Espagne,” 45.



“commendable effort made by various architects in the country to achieve a modern spirit in their architecture” (fig. 3).<sup>19</sup>

Through these comments we can see that during the 1950s, Spain went from being completely unknown within the international editorial sphere to gaining some attention from various magazines, with a growing presence as the years went by (fig. 4).<sup>20</sup> But, as we will see next, the most remarkable aspect of this is that said attention went deeper than the usual attraction produced by something new or exotic.

## A Growing Interest in Spanish Architecture

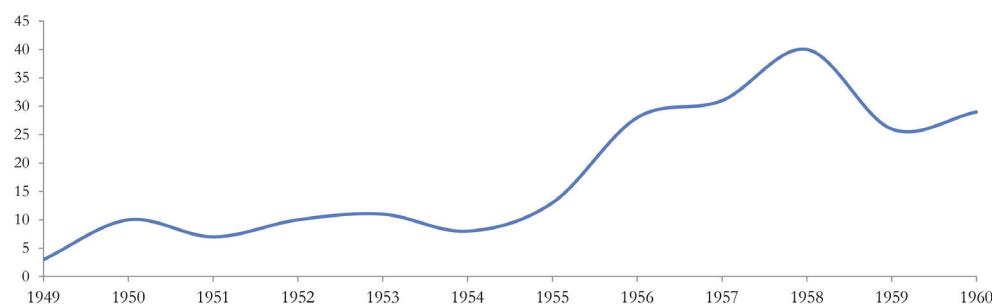
This process of bringing Spanish modernity closer to the world would consolidate in the following decade, as articles on Spanish architecture increased in number—reaching up to 67 magazines in 18 different countries. But this period was marked mainly by the appearance of the first special issues devoted to Spain in international publications.

The 1960s were an heterogeneous period for architecture in Spain, as a result of architects overcoming the International Style and exploring new paths of modernity. This process coincided, from an editorial perspective, with a moment during which architectural periodicals left post-war reconstruction to concentrate on revising modernity and expressing the plurality of the architectural debate from a variety of perspectives, both locally and internationally.

Figure 3. “Quelques réalisations récentes en Espagne,” by Miguel Fisac. (Reprinted from *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 85 (1959): 45-49.)  
19 “Espagne,” *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* 85 (1959): 45.

20 Note that in 1949 there were only three articles published (a total of 15 pages) on Spanish architecture in three international magazines. At the end of the decade, in 1959, we find 24 articles (181 pages) in 21 magazines from eight different countries.

Figure 4. Number of articles about Spanish architecture per year in international journals (1949-60). Source: author.



Spaniards had slowly consolidated their architectural production and had garnered a critical mass of projects that had allowed the publication of these monographic issues. In them we find broader studies that contextualize and detail the country's architecture. Due to the very nature of these "special" editions, their impact and visibility was greater. Between 1962 and 1971, up to thirteen such issues appear in such well-known international magazines as *Werk*, *Zodiac*, *Baumeister*, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*.<sup>21</sup> But despite this growing interest in Spanish architecture, some of these publications would highlight "gaps" that had yet to be breached, which weren't related to architecture so much as the country's political situation. As we have seen, Spain was a dictatorship and this affected the way its architecture was perceived by other countries. In fact, in the monograph produced by *Werk* in 1962 (fig. 5), its director, Lucius Burckhardt states:

*Should we dedicate an entire edition to the young generation of Spanish architects? Would this be misinterpreted in Switzerland—and even Spain? ... Whoever believes in real change in authoritarian governments is wrong. But so is whoever boycotts the cultural ambassadors of a country who have remained in it because of that reason.*<sup>22</sup>



21 The 13 monographs are: *Werk* 6 (1962), *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 25 (1962), *Kokusai-Kentiku* 3 (1963), *Tijdschrift voor architectuur en beeldende kunsten* 15 (1963), *Program* 3 (1964), *Zodiac* 15 (1965), *Aujourd'hui Art et Architecture* 52 (1966), *Baumeister* 6 (1967), *Cuadernos Summa Nueva Visión* 22 (1969), *Arquitectura* (Lisbon) 107 (1969), *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 149 (1970), *Arquitectura* (Lisbon) 115 (1970), and *A+U* 8 (1971).

22 Lucius Burckhardt, "Spanische Architektur," *Werk* 6 (1962): 185. This is the first monograph published on Spain by an international magazine. The Spanish architect César Ortiz-Echagüe collaborated in its publication.

Figure 5. Special issue on Spanish architecture. (Reprinted from *Werk* 6 (1962), cover.)

Three years later, in 1965, in the monograph on Spain by the Italian *Zodiac*, Vittorio Gregotti points out:

*When we developed this number, about a year ago, we established an objective: to overcome our personal objections to the regime, and to try and go past the traditional figure, based on the fight between regime and resistance, which Spanish life shows to the world.*<sup>23</sup>

As evidenced by their comments, both Burckhardt's and Gregotti's approach to the architectural reality of Spain is partly conditioned by the political situation. That is, however, an obstacle that does not halt their interest in the work of Spanish architects. In spite of their ideological distance, they do not despise, and even value, that work. They advance, however, a somewhat overly optimistic or naive view, since Spanish architects held diverse political views under the unifying umbrella of Francoism. As Pérez Escolano argues, "those committed to the uprising, or those who carry it out immediately, are then followed by those who sympathize or compromise out of convenience or necessity."<sup>24</sup> In contrast, critics like Bruno Zevi are more radical in their assessments of the country's political situation. In 1964, in his journal *L'Architettura Cronache e Storia*, Zevi calls on Italian architects not to participate in Spanish architectural competitions as a sign of condemnation of that country's politics.<sup>25</sup>

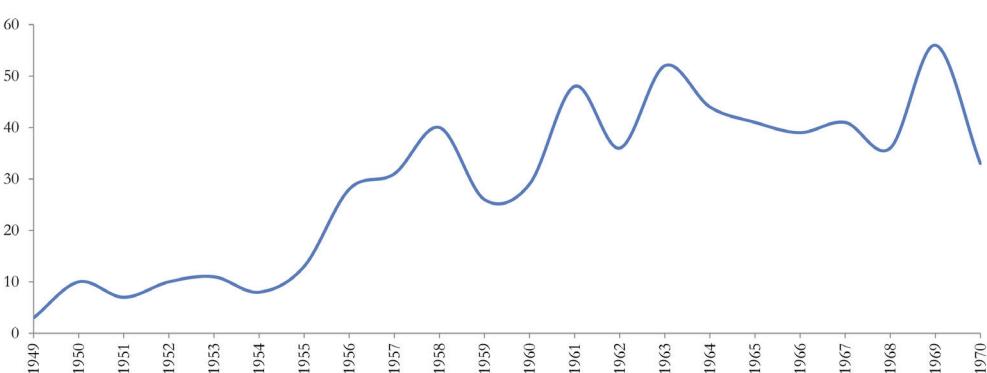
At any rate, this approach seems to be unrepresentative of the majority of publications, since looking at the data as a whole we see that in the 1960s the presence of Spanish architecture in the international scene continues to grow (fig. 6). Furthermore, Spanish architecture is also able to overcome the boundaries of Western publishing. So, in 1963, Spanish architecture becomes known in Japan, a country distant not only geographically, but also socially and culturally. The platform for this was the Japanese magazine *Kokusai-Kentiku*, which dedicated an

<sup>23</sup> Vittorio Gregotti, "Premisa," *Zodiac* 15 (1965): 3.

<sup>24</sup> Víctor Pérez-Escalano, "Arquitectura y política en España a través del Boletín de la Dirección General de Arquitectura (1946-1957)," *RA* 15 (2013): 40.

<sup>25</sup> Bruno Zevi, "Editoriali in Brevi," *L'architettura. Cronache e Storia* 104 (1964): 76-77.

Figure 6. Number of articles about Spanish architecture per year in international journals (1949-70). (Graph by author.)



extended monograph to the subject.<sup>26</sup> It is of interest to analyze the genesis of this “exotic” edition.

The origin of this first reference to Spanish architecture in Japan<sup>27</sup> can be found in the exhibition organized in 1962 by the General Direction of Cultural Relations of the Spanish Foreign Office in the Institute for Spanish Culture in Munich, under the title “Thirty years of Spanish Architecture (1930-1960).” The panels presented at this exhibition were taken to Japan by the final-year students of the Architecture School of Madrid as part of a trip they made in 1962, during which they recreated the Munich exhibition in Tokyo. The Spanish journal *Arquitectura* captured the good impression the exhibition made, which would translate into a “monograph dedicated to Spain ... in the important Japanese magazine *Kokusai Kentiku*.<sup>28</sup> Adding to this, various Spaniards, such as Carlos de Miguel and Antonio Fernández Alba, collaborated in the edition.<sup>29</sup>

As in the case of Miguel Fisac, these collaborations are proof of the desire of Spanish architects to build bridges and make their work internationally known. Throughout the decade, more than twenty professionals would provide advice for the issues on Spanish architecture. Foreign editors, when faced with a reality they often barely knew, would travel to Spain or make contact with nationally prominent architects who would help in the selection process for these monographs and helped them understand the important elements of their architectural history. In some cases, this is reflected in the acknowledgements written by the directors of these special editions. For example, in *Baumeister*, in the 1967 monographic edition, they acknowledge the “cordial support, advice and hospitality” which “Francisco Cabrera, Carlos Flores, Ferenc Lantos and Vicente Bonet”<sup>30</sup> had provided for the creation of the magazine edition.

As well as providing advice, Spanish architects wrote many of the articles included in these editions. Normally they would

26 *Kokusai Kentiku* 3 (1963).

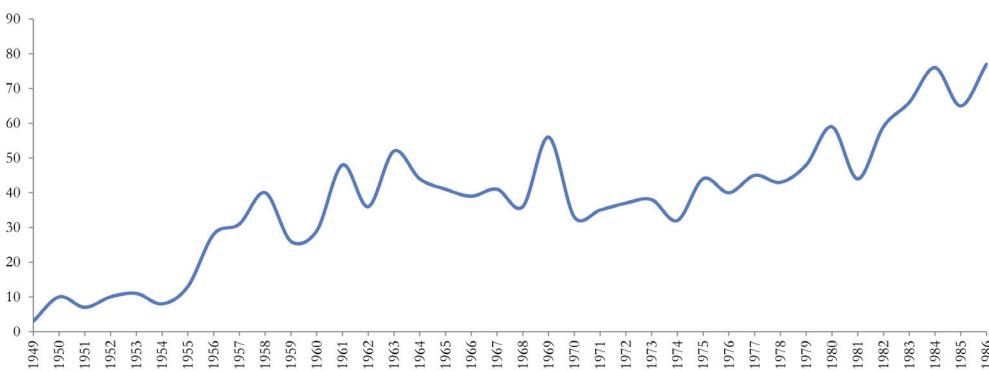
27 The path started in Japan did not stop there, and interest in Spain will continue through the pages of *A+U*, which would in the 1970s dedicate long articles to Spanish architecture.

28 “Arquitectura española en Japón,” *Arquitectura* 54 (1963). The article also appeared in “La arquitectura española en el mundo,” *Hogar y Arquitectura* 45 (1963): 104.

29 On the back cover there was a brief acknowledgement text for the Spanish architects written by the editors. Said text refers to the help they provided to write the editorial article “Tradition and Nature of Spanish Architecture.”

30 “Spanische Architektur seit Gaudí,” *Baumeister* 6 (1967): 701.

Figure 7. Number of articles about Spanish architecture per year in international journals (1949-86). (Graph by author.)



author articles that provided a panoramic vision of Spanish architecture, where they covered its history or the current situation with the objective of getting the reader to understand their national architecture.<sup>31</sup> Other Spaniards would also collaborate more regularly as special correspondents or by becoming members of the editorial boards of some magazines.<sup>32</sup>

## Spanish Architecture Bridges the Gap

After this wave of monographs that introduced it to the rest of the world, Spanish architecture maintained its place in the pages of international journals<sup>33</sup> during the first half of the 1970s. But between 1975 and 1986 it would achieve even higher levels of diffusion (fig. 7). In 1975, after the death of Franco, the country started a transition to democracy, culminating in 1986 with its entry into the European Union. Naturally, Spain's new political situation attracted the attention of international publications and the optimism held for the country influenced how its architecture was seen.

In this last decade, the number of references to Spain in architectural periodicals increased, almost reaching the same number of articles as the entire previous period of study, and producing up to 21 monographic issues.<sup>34</sup>

International journals give prominence to new names like Rafael Moneo, Juan Navarro Baldeweg, the Solá-Morales brothers, Studio Per and many others. Yet the masters—those architects who had started the path to modernity in the 1950s—are still present. Many of the special issues, such as those published by *Architectural Review*, *Abitare*, *Controspazio* or *International Architect*, offer a sound perspective on the influence of those masters on the new generation. In this way, those articles establish a kind of genealogy of Spanish architecture that anticipates later important historical works, such as the third edition of Kenneth Frampton's *Modern Architecture*, published in 1992.<sup>35</sup> In Peter Buchanan's words, at a moment in which modernity seemed to be exhausted, Spanish architecture became relevant because it was able to show "the various approaches still possible with the language of Modernism."<sup>36</sup> At the same time, other voices gave a name to the peculiar contribution of Spanish architecture to the international debate, identifying it as "critical regionalism."<sup>37</sup> Alexander Tzonis, for instance, argued that

*in that moment [during the 1980s] we could find in Spanish architecture something that we missed in the*

<sup>31</sup> For example, the monograph by *Zodiac* 15 (1965) included the collaboration of Carlos Flores and Oriol Bohigas, who wrote a text on "the current situation of Spanish architecture," 4-33; of Ricardo Bofill with "An Historic Overview of Modern Spanish Architecture," 34-43; and Antonio Fernández Alba, who authored "Current Situation and Cultural Problems of the Architect," 131-35. Another monographic title which includes many collaborations by Spanish architects is *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 149 (1970), dedicated to the most recent architecture from Madrid and Barcelona. Antonio Fernández Alba wrote "Des voix du silence aux agents de l'exécutif," 1-12; Juan Daniel Fullaondo, "Les contradictions de l'école de Madrid," 92-94; and Lluís Clotet, "A Barcelone: Pour une architecture de l'évocation," 106-109.

<sup>32</sup> For example, César Ortiz Echagüe was a member of the editorial board of the Portuguese magazine *Binario* and a correspondent for *Werk*. Oriol Bohigas was part of the editorial board at *Lotus*. Xavier Busquest was a correspondent for *Architecture, Formes et Fonctions*, etc.

<sup>33</sup> In these recent years, 191 articles have been located in 72 international magazines.

<sup>34</sup> A+U 2 and 12 (1976, 1977), *Bauen Wohnen* 33 (1978), *Lotus* 23 (1979), *Controspazio* 4 (1979), *Casabella* 453 (1979), *Wonen-TA/BK* 8 (1979), *Werk* 35 (1979), *Archives d'architecture moderne* 24 (1982), *International Architect* 2 (1983), *Proa* 333 (1984), *Werk Bauen+Wohnen* 9 (1984), *Der Architekt* 9 (1985), *Bauwelt* 27 (1985), *Proces: Architecture* 57 (1985), *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 245 (1986), *Architectural Review* 1071 (1986), *Abitare* 246 (1986), *Archis* 4 (1986), and *Oeil* 372-73 (1986).

<sup>35</sup> Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 3rd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992). Speaking of Spain, the English critic argues that "the current power of contemporary Spanish architecture goes back to the early 1950s" (340).

<sup>36</sup> Peter Buchanan, "Spain: Poetics of Modernism," *Architectural Review* 1071 (1986): 23.

<sup>37</sup> The monographic issue on Spain in *Techniques et Architecture* includes a text on this matter by Antonio Bonet Correa with the title "Analytical Regionalism." But even before, it had been introduced by Alexander Tzonis in "Moderne Spaanse architectuur. De kritisch-regionalistische benadering," *Bouw* 1 (1986): 9-15.

*main current of postmodern architecture promoted by the media. Spanish architecture was defined by a profound sense of belonging, as opposed to the uniform display of postmodern compositions.*<sup>38</sup>

In the face of international trends that attempted to unify architectural expression in the West through new linguistic and formal patterns, Spain paradoxically gained prominence by opposing those mainstream trends and offering as an alternative an architecture that corresponded to the context and place in which it arose.

## Conclusion

The more than 1400 references to Spanish architecture found in about 180 international journals make for a broad and varied sample. The international presence of Spanish architecture through this medium can thus be considered a rich and complex phenomenon. In this paper I have tried to present a general picture highlighting the role played by international architecture journals in the diffusion of Spanish architecture beyond national boundaries.<sup>39</sup> It is clear that the foreign perspective on Spanish architecture changed substantially in only three decades and international journals were of decisive importance for this change.

In the beginning, international journals started to acknowledge modestly the reality of postwar Spanish architecture, almost entirely unknown in their respective countries. This process became, as it were, normalized over time. Spanish achievements received increasing attention and stopped being a *rara avis* to be registered only exceptionally by international media.

Architecture journals have proven to be a privileged showcase for the diffusion of new ideas and achievements throughout the twentieth century. Their periodical nature and their use to spread news and to exchange opinions made them the most fitting means of making Spanish architecture, which had been considered merely peripheral until the last decades of the last century, available to the rest of the world. One might think that this discrepancy with respect to international trends ended up being a blessing. Modernity came to Spain late, but Spanish architects, detached from the initial euphoria that accompanied it, were able to reinterpret it reflectively, while responding in a coherent and fitting way to the demands of their own local context. At the same time, one should stress the important

<sup>38</sup> Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Tras la década dorada. El desafío de los noventa," *AV Monografías* 24 (1990): 22.

<sup>39</sup> The high complexity of the phenomenon makes it impossible to address it in full within the limits of this paper. Still, having analyzed the data and established a general framework, I am addressing in ongoing research some of the crucial aspects of the process under study, such as the role of Spanish architects in the diffusion of Spanish architecture abroad, the treatment of Spanish architecture by certain foreign critics, and the critical reaction to the work of those Spanish architects who won international acclaim. See Pablo Arza Garaloces, "Exportando Torres Blancas. La recepción de la obra de Sáenz de Oiza en la prensa arquitectónica internacional," *RITA* 10 (2018): 154-62; Pablo Arza Garaloces, "Técnica 'made in Spain'. Detalles constructivos de arquitectura española en *The Architects' Journal* (1969-74), in *La tecnología en la arquitectura moderna (1925-1975): mito y realidad*, ed. Pablo Arza Garaloces and Josee Manuel Pozo Municio (Pamplona: T6 Ediciones, 2018), 117-24.

role that some of them played in the diffusion and appreciation of Spanish architecture abroad. Their contribution was accomplished through the writing of articles, the coordination of monographic issues, as well as through several tasks performed as members of editorial boards or as correspondents for various international publications.