

Allusions and Illusions in Spanish Architecture, 1898-1953

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Abstract

Spanish architecture during the first half of the twentieth century might rightfully be characterized as obsessed with quotation. By the late nineteenth century, historicist reproductions had already appeared throughout the Iberian Peninsula, yet the cataclysmic events of 1898, when the homeland of the conquistadores lost its last colonies, precipitated a dramatic increase in architectural mimesis. While most buildings produced in this manner were broad stylistic references (Smith Ibarra's Casa Garay, Rucabado's Casa Allende, Palacios' Circle of Fine Arts and even Gaudi's fascination with Spanish Gothic), others were conceived as verbatim reproductions of specific relics from Spain's glory days. The most frequently cited buildings were the Alhambra (Chueca's 1953 text Manifiesto de la Alhambra) and the monastery-palace at El Escorial (Zuazo's Nuevos Ministerios and Gutiérrez Soto's Ministry of the Air). More controversially, despite the reverence most historiographic accounts pay to the first avant-garde works produced in Spain in the 1930s, these too could be characterized as a quotation of projects designed in the 1920s by Le Corbusier and Erich Mendelsohn. Interestingly, Spanish buildings that cite the Alhambra or the works of central European masters are typically regarded by historians as richly nuanced specimens of regional modernity, whereas buildings that reference El Escorial are invariably described as a mis-step of worn out historicism in the otherwise meritorious trajectory of twentieth century Spanish architecture from GATEPAC in the 1930s, to what Pozo, Lahuerta and Sambricio have aptly described as the "Brilliant 50s". To investigate El Escorial and the Alhambra as perpetually quotable sources, this paper will consult original manuscripts such as Fernando Chueca's Manifiesto de la Alhambra and Zuazo's Lecciones de El Escorial. It will also consult historiographic accounts of Spanish architecture built between 1898 and 1953 written by Carlos Flores, Miguel Fisac, Miguel Angel Baldellou, Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón and others.

Introduction

In 1898, centuries of empire ended when Spain ceded control over its last three colonies, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Philippines. A half-century later, in his 1953 text *The Alhambra Manifesto*, architect Fernando Chueca Goitia noted that this event provoked an intense identity crisis and an essential search for an architecture that is originally and authentically Spanish, yet he also recognized the inevitable pitfalls of such a search. Most of the architecture produced in Spain during the intervening years had been designed as an allusion to, or quotation of, representative buildings from Spain's past which, as Chueca rightfully pointed out, created among Spaniards a false sense of identity. "This drive to return to genuine Spanish sources is highly plausible as a spiritual endeavor, but it has little use in architectural expression, and it typically produces superficial results".¹

Clearly, to describe all buildings designed in Spain in the first half of the twentieth century as inauthentic quotations of historic architecture would be misleading. To find examples of original architecture produced during this period - that is, architecture that does not mimic other sources, whether from Spanish history or from foreign sources, but is new and representative of a uniquely Spanish authorship - one only has to look at the work of Antoni Gaudí, Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Antonio Flórez and engineer Eduardo Torroja. The originality of the work of these architects stems from their honest use of materials, their overt exploitation of industrialized constructive processes, their search for innovative forms and, most importantly, from their ability to resist the trend towards stylistic simulation. Nonetheless, during this period in Spain, the originality that is evident in the work of these architects was the exception to the norm.

Contrived Authenticity

Prior to the 1950s, Spanish architecture abounded with verbatim quotes of historical sources, and historian Carlos Flores noted that these sources ranged from the vernacular architecture of Spain's distinct geographic regions, to high styles like the fifteenth century Plateresque, the sixteenth century Herrerian and the eighteenth century Villanovan.² To illustrate the unwavering reliance on vernacular sources that is evident in Spanish architecture, especially during the first decades of the twentieth century, Flores highlighted the work of Cantabrian architect Leonardo Rucabado (1876-1918) and Basque architect Manuel María Smith Ibarra (1879-1956). He criticized their copies of Spain's traditional rural architecture as inauthentic and naïve, yet he underscored the painstaking fidelity with which Rucabado and Smith Ibarra reproduced elements of the Montañés architecture of Spain's northern coastal regions, and he made particular note of Rucabado's systematic three-year study of seventeenth and eighteenth century examples of rural Cantabrian architecture.³

Beyond Rucabado and Smith Ibarra, the tendency to imitate Spain's rural architecture was widespread, and replicas of Andalusian cortijos, Basque caseríos, Catalanian masías and Galician hórreos appeared in urban locations throughout the country.⁴ However, most of these reproductions lacked a systematic and meticulous analysis of the source, which is precisely the element that, for Flores, makes Rucabado's and Smith Ibarra's work worth mentioning. As Leopoldo Torres Balbás stated in 1918, these buildings demonstrated a type of fakery practiced by architects that design according to a style of which they are entirely ignorant.⁵

During the 1930s, the Grupo de Arquitectos y Técnicos Españoles para la Promoción de la Arquitectura Contemporánea (GATEPAC) repeated Torres Balbás' critique. Although this group concentrated on the "promotion of contemporary architecture", it frequently used its journal, *A.C. Documentos de la Actividad Contemporánea*, to engage in a deep investigation of Spain's diverse vernacular architecture, and its usefulness in the creation of modern architecture that is sensitive to the unique identities of Spain's geographic regions, yet also respectful of the past and not bent on an archaeological resuscitation of it.⁶

The journal denounced the tendency to produce facsimiles of vernacular Spanish architecture; it criticized such mimesis for “searching these [vernacular] buildings for a repertoire of ‘decorative motifs’” that could be applied superficially to modern buildings.⁷ *AC* was especially harsh in its critique of buildings designed by Rucabado and Smith Ibarra. Following the graphic style of other avant-garde journals of the previous decade, such as *G*, *AC* published black and white photos of buildings like Smith Ibarra’s 1916 Lezama-Leguizamón House in Bilbao, which were crossed out with preachy red X’s.⁸



Figure 1. Casa de las Flores, Secundino Zuazo, 1931, Madrid. Photo by author.

While some architects were creating what *AC* called “gross imitations” of Spain’s vernacular architecture, others chose to quote, copy and even plagiarize representative examples of Spain’s high styles.⁹ In this second tendency, no source was more often exploited than Philip II’s sixteenth century monastery-palace at El Escorial, begun by Juan Bautista de Toledo and finished by his apprentice, Juan de Herrera. When Secundino Zuazo was commissioned in 1932 to design Nuevos Ministerios, a sprawling complex that housed governmental agencies of the Second Spanish Republic, he turned away from the originality that had marked his 1931 Casa de las Flores, in order to quote the sixteenth century monastery-palace. He purposefully arranged the public spaces according to the patterns he had discovered at El Escorial, and he described the great plaza at Nuevos Ministerios as a replica of those of Philip II in El Escorial.¹⁰

Citations of this monument also continued after the Civil War. In 1942, Luis Gutiérrez Soto was appointed to design Franco’s new headquarters for the Ministry of the Air. This building, with its hip-roofed corner towers, regimented façade composition and porticoed entries was even more slavish in its simulation of El Escorial’s forms. Gutiérrez Soto’s mimicry of the sixteenth century monument in the design of an official Franco-regime building is related to—and even directly inspired by—the grandiloquent traditionalist architecture produced in Nazi Germany.¹¹ Albert Speer had traveled to Spain in the 1930s and early 1940s, and he was fascinated with El Escorial; in his memoirs, he noted that his visit to this monument was a turning point in his own design process.¹² Although he was often critical of the Nazi regime and its official architecture, Paul Bonatz was equally impressed by El Escorial. According to Olivia Muñoz-Rojas, Speer and Bonatz both urged Gutiérrez Soto to abandon his early schemes for the Ministry of the Air building in favor of more direct citations of El Escorial.¹³ In 1950, Gutiérrez Soto recounted that, during his visit to Spain in 1943, Bonatz spent several hours in Gutiérrez Soto’s studio “obsessing” over the façade of the Ministry of the Air, eventually opting for the version that most faithfully reproduced the

facades of El Escorial.¹⁴ In a latter-day *mea culpa*, Gutiérrez Soto admitted that his attempts to duplicate the forms of El Escorial also resulted from his own acquiescence to the nationalist and traditionalist sentiment that had triumphed in all sectors of Spanish thought following the Civil War.¹⁵



Figure 2. Nuevos Ministerios, Secundino Zuazo, 1933-1942, Madrid.
Photo by author.



Figure 3. Monastery-Palace of El Escorial, Juan Bautista de Toledo and Juan de Herrera, 1563-1584, San Lorenzo de El Escorial (Madrid). Photo by author.

Years later, architect and critic Antonio Fernández Alba stated that this formalist mimicry of Spain's high styles was devoid of expressive symbolism and ideological content.¹⁶ In fact, there is deep irony in Spaniards' use of El Escorial as a pure and authentic artefact of Spanish culture. Philip II complained that Bautista's original design was not sufficiently "Spanish".¹⁷ Zuazo claimed that El Escorial borrows heavily from the Italian Renaissance, thanks to Bautista's study of Italy's cruciform hospitals, and his apprenticeship with Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, at the time when Sangallo was working on the Palazzo Farnese and St. Peter's.¹⁸ To these Italianizing influences, Zuazo's contemporary Francisco

Javier Sánchez Cantón adds that El Escorial also draws on Flemish and German interpretations of Renaissance architecture, as well as “primitive Nordic sources”;¹⁹ for Fernández Alba, El Escorial is a purified version of Austrian architecture.²⁰ Moreover, the murkiness of Bautista’s own personal biography, along with the fact that his family appeared in Rome in the early 1500s only a few years after Ferdinand and Isabel’s expulsion of Jews, led Zuazo to speculate that Bautista might have been born to a family of Jewish *conversos*. Anecdotaly, the monastery’s name, which is taken from the nearby 11th century village located in the Sierra de Guadarrama northwest of Madrid, is derived from the nouns *escoria* (dross) and *escorial* (slag-heap). Therefore, the irony is that, in their search for a pure, undefiled icon of their own culture, Spanish architects of the twentieth century chose a building that reflects a blending of Italian, German, Flemish and Austrian—not strictly Spanish—ideas, whose original architect might have been ethnically Jewish, and whose name quite literally means “The Dump”.



Figure 4. Headquarters of the Ministry of the Air, Luis Gutiérrez Soto, 1942-1958, Madrid. Photo by Emma López Bahut.

For decades, Spain’s other greatest architectural monument, the Alhambra in Granada, had served as a vital source for artists and writers, but architects were late in noticing its usefulness in modern architecture.²¹ Admittedly, since the nineteenth century, Spanish architects had extensively copied Moorish architectural details such as viewing screens, horseshoe arches, polychromatic surfaces and layered geometric patterns. This tendency is evident in Antoni Gaudí’s use of the *mocárabe* ceiling and polychromatic tilework in the 1885 Casa Vicens in Barcelona, and in José Espeliu’s use of horseshoe arches in the 1931 Las Ventas Bullring in Madrid. Nonetheless, while Zuazo’s *Nuevos Ministerios* and Gutiérrez Soto’s Ministry of the Air were conceived as facsimiles of El Escorial, no twentieth-century Spanish building directly reproduced an entire historic building of the Moorish tradition, such as the Alhambra, the Medina Azáhara or the Great Mosque in Cordoba.

To explain the choice of El Escorial over the Alhambra, Fernández Alba stated that the architecture of El Escorial presented an easily copied symbol;²² such a symbolic reference would undeniably recall Spain’s Catholic heritage and its glory days as a colonial power. Fernando Chueca noted that the Alhambra’s architectural program as a grandiose residential palace for a Moorish ruler was outdated and irreconcilable with modern life, whereas El Escorial’s program as a monastery lent itself to facile interpretation in the design of modern government ministry buildings.²³ Monk’s cells translated easily into individual offices, audience chambers into conference rooms, and the basilica into an assembly hall;

likewise, the regimented, gridded façade could remain unchanged. Chueca also attributed Spanish architects' inability to cite the Alhambra to an exaggerated sense of romanticism. He noted that, when visiting El Escorial, Spanish architects were always fascinated with its symmetrical composition, yet when they considered the Alhambra, they would exchange their rational analysis for emotional impressions: "Oh yes, I like this, but not as architecture".²⁴

In addition to these allusions to Spain's vernacular architecture and historic high styles, a more deceptive tendency emerged in Spain in the first half of the twentieth century. Buildings in Madrid such as the 1903-1918 Central Post Office, the 1919-1926 Circle of Fine Arts and the 1933-1945 Mercantile Bank, all designed by Antonio Palacios, along with Luis Moya's magisterial 1946-1956 Labor University in Gijón, doggedly follow a seemingly codified and orthodox style extracted from some glorious period of Spanish history. However, the styles to which they apparently refer never existed historically. According to Flores, Palacios did appropriate architectural ornament from Spain's Renaissance and Baroque periods, but he also used an "ornamental repertoire" that included "his own motifs, which were, in some cases stylizations, and in other cases the exclusive product of his own undisciplined, romantic imagination".²⁵ Similarly, historian Antonio Río Vázquez has noted that, in Gijón, Moya fabricated an equally imaginative architectural style.²⁶ Moya intended to use Franco's Labor Universities, which eventually appeared in every major region of Spain, as a means of forcibly establishing an entirely new architectural tradition.²⁷ Despite their forcefulness, in the end neither of these feigned styles garnered a following, most likely because they were so personalized, imperious and out of step with the times.



Figure 5. Cine Barceló, Luis Gutiérrez Soto, 1930, Madrid. Photo by Marino Real Gallego.

While perhaps not as contrived as the pseudo-historic styles of Palacios and Moya, some of the modern architecture produced in Spain prior to the Civil War was equally inauthentic. Between the mid-1920s and the mid-1930s, Spanish architects began to allude to sources they had discovered in Central Europe. Luis Gutiérrez Soto's "Rationalist-Expressionist" buildings, such as the Cine Barceló and the Cine Europa, cite the early 1920s expressionism of central Europeans like Bruno Taut, Hans Poelzig and Erich Mendelsohn.²⁸ Gutiérrez Soto and his classmates had studied the work of these architects during their years at the School of Architecture in Madrid, and Gutiérrez Soto visited them in-person during his extensive travels throughout Central Europe in the 1930s.²⁹ Later, Gutiérrez Soto himself criticized the

modern architecture he and his contemporaries had produced in the 1930s as inauthentic, placeless copies of foreign sources.³⁰

Genuine Inquiry

In the late 1940s, two of Spain's professional journals, *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* and *Boletín de Información de la Dirección General de Arquitectura*, published a series of transcripts from lectures that had been delivered by leading Spanish architects including Miguel Fisac, Gabriel Alomar, José Fonseca and Francisco Cabrero at meetings of the National Assembly of Architects. These articles criticized the backwards mentality and architectural imitation that had prevailed in the previous decades, and they were particularly wearied by the tendency to reproduce El Escorial in its entirety, or to take architectural details from Moorish buildings out of their historic context.³¹ Instead, they implored Spain's architects to view their own architectural history with a professional, critical eye, and to transcend a superficial study of forms in order to discover the essential spirit of historic buildings. Fisac stated this point succinctly; he pointed out that the inherent condition that makes a building Spanish "is not on the outside; it is not the coat of arms, or the corner window or the corbel. [...] It is further inside; it does not surrender itself so easily".³²

Then, on the heels of these articles, Spain's most forward-thinking architects again took interest in the modern architecture that was developing abroad, while simultaneously delving below the surface to find deeper meaning in Spain's historic architecture, both the vernacular and the high styles. Buildings built in diverse locations in the early 1950s, such as Francisco Javier Sáenz de Oiza's and Luis Laorga's 1950-1955 Sanctuary of Our Lady of Arantzazu in the Basque Country, Miguel Fisac's 1951 Daimiel Institute in Castilla-La Mancha, Francisco Cabrero's 1951 Casa Cabrero in Madrid and Jose Antonio Coderch's and Manuel Valls' 1952 Casa Ugalde in Catalunya, represent a collective attempt to infuse modern architecture with an identity that was uniquely Spanish.



Figure 6. Sanctuary of Our Lady of Arantzazu, Francisco Javier Sáenz de Oíza and Luis Laorga, 1950-1955, Arantzazu (Basque Country).
Photo by author.

Armed with this new willingness to search for deeper meaning in Spain's historic architectural treasures, these architects were drawn - as they claimed by History herself - to the Alhambra as a viable source.³³ They had learned that Frank Lloyd Wright and other modern architects had traveled to Asia to study

traditional eastern architecture, and that many of their modern ideas were derived from these field studies. When Spaniards began to look for viable sources for their own architecture, travel to the East was unnecessary, since they had prime examples of Moorish architecture in their own backyard.³⁴ Therefore, in October of 1952 twenty-four of Spain's most talented architects gathered for two days in the Alhambra to study its substance: "in the Alhambra there is something that we must understand".³⁵ By early 1953, they had written, and signed, the *Alhambra Manifesto*, which they conceived as a call to arms against the facile mimesis that had characterized Spanish architecture in the previous decades.³⁶ Penned primarily by Chueca himself, the document, which would eventually become one of the most important theoretical texts written in Spain in the twentieth century, analyzed the Alhambra according to its forms, construction strategies, architectural ornamentation and incorporation of gardens. Their purpose was to analyze its potential as a fountain of ideas - not forms to be imitated - that could imbue their modern architecture with a deep sense of what Spanish philosopher Miguel de Unamuno had called "eternal tradition".³⁷ In his 1895 essay "La Tadición Eterna", Unamuno argued against two tendencies that, at the time, governed Spanish thought: *casticismo*, which roughly translates as the search for that which is pure and genuine to the Spanish race, and the idea that tradition is finite, somehow fixed in time. He pointed out that *casticismo* belies an inherent rejection of developments that occur outside of Spain, and that such an attitude stands in direct opposition to the renewed vigor and progressive spirit that were, as he saw it, so necessary in Spain during the first years of the twentieth century.³⁸ He also described tradition as a living substance that exists in a continuous state of evolution; it is always incorporating new developments into its own historical narrative. In a word, for Unamuno and the signatories of the *Alhambra Manifesto*, the Moorish palace represented the apogee of progressive Spanish thought and creative activity.

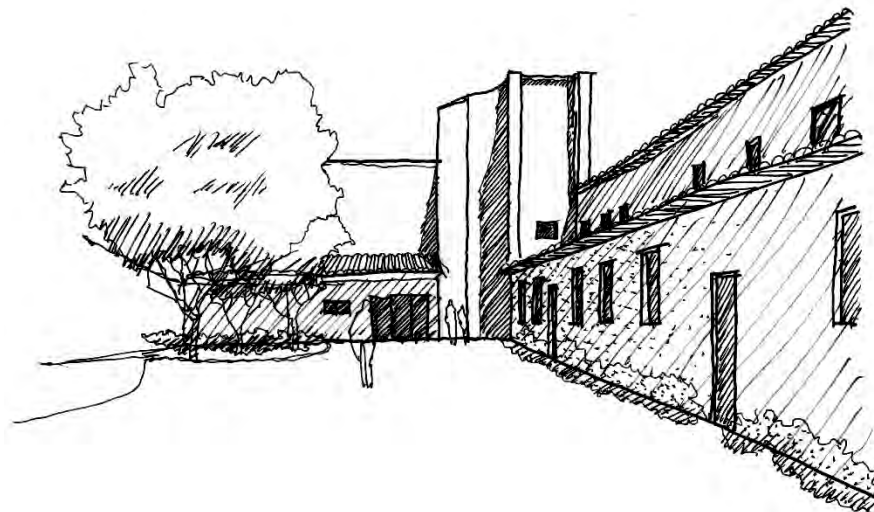


Figure 7. Institute of Labor, Miguel Fisac, 1951, Daimiel (Castilla-La Mancha). Drawing by author.

It was the first instance in which a group of twentieth century Spanish architects collectively applied their professional acumen in an analysis of the Alhambra. They discovered that, like the modern buildings Le Corbusier and others had designed in Central Europe in the 1920s and 1930s, it was more focused on volume and the planar definition of space, than it was on mass and form.³⁹ Moreover, they were surprised to find that this thirteenth century building contained many of the most basic elements of modern architecture: it is proportioned according to the human body; its organization of spaces employs an organic asymmetry; its volumes are pure and sincere; it fuses gardens with interior spaces; and it uses

materials rationally and economically.⁴⁰ Like the *Alhambra Manifesto*, Chueca's 1947 text *Invariantes Castizos de la Arquitectura Española* illustrated, in graphic form, several of the Alhambra's architectural strategies that could be used to accomplish modern ideas, such as sequential screens of arcades that stratify space;⁴¹ the use of the architectural section to compartmentalize space;⁴² and the arrangement of unadorned geometric volumes, such as cubes and pyramids, according to various non-parallel axes to emphasize the passage through time.⁴³ He also claimed that the lack of similarity between the program of the Alhambra and that of most modern buildings would necessarily drive modern Spanish architects to transcend superficial formalist mimicry, and to study the Alhambra more deeply in order to discover its enduring spatial values.⁴⁴ Abstraction, which by the 1940s and 1950s had already become a standard working process in Spanish art, could now be applied to the study of iconic buildings of Spain's architectural heritage. As a result, they began to read the Alhambra not as a building fixed in history or as a repository of architectural details, but rather as a living text full of abstract ideas: "for us, this building has no age; it only has architecture".⁴⁵



Figure 8. Sala de las dos Hermanas looking towards the Patio of the Lindaraja, Alhambra. Photo by author.

One of the most important lessons mid-century Spanish architects learned from their study of the Alhambra is the deep sense of honesty that pervades its design. In it, they discovered a rational, sincere and exquisitely legible use of architectural materials.⁴⁶ Likewise, they were delighted to discover that the Alhambra lacks what Chueca called "rhetorical molding", which had characterized the stylistic copies - including those that lifted details from Moorish buildings - that pervaded Spanish architecture in the preceding decades.⁴⁷ This lack of molding and ornamentation appealed to their newly-acquired modern sensibilities, and from it they learned to design surfaces and forms with uninterrupted integrity. Previously, Spanish architects had determined dimensional modules according to Renaissance theories of composition, which they now criticized as being divorced from the reality of construction.⁴⁸ In their studies of the Alhambra they discovered that the dimensional module was based not only on the human body, but also on the economy and constructive properties of materials. They also discovered a means of fusing interior and exterior spaces that appealed to the human sensorial apparatus, which was particularly evident in the Alhambra's integration of architectural and natural elements. In this last regard, the Alhambra perfectly represented Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset's "vegetative ideal", which he first introduced in his 1927 treatise *Teoría de Andalucía*.⁴⁹ In this essay, Ortega y Gasset argued that Spaniards, particularly those from Andalucía, have always been wedded to the land they inhabit, and that

local flora played a critical role in developing the local culture. The architects that signed the *Alhambra Manifesto* interpreted this as a call to designing spaces that inherently connect the inhabitant with the surrounding vegetation, and the seamless connections between the Alhambra's interior rooms and exterior gardens became a primary inspiration.

Their analysis of the Alhambra taught them how to study other historic buildings in order to extract essential qualities that could inspire the creation of modern architecture. With this newly acquired professional perspicacity, they returned to El Escorial as a viable source. This time, the aspects of El Escorial that impressed them most were not its hip roofs, corner towers and coats of arms, but rather the austerity and simplicity that resulted from Philip II's prudence. According to Sánchez Cantón this austerity was ultimately relevant, given the lack of capital, industrial infrastructure and opulent materials that plagued Spain in the 1950s.⁵⁰ In 1564, after construction on the monastery-palace was already well underway, Philip ordered Bautista to enlarge the project in order to house twice as many religious clerics, and to re-design it in order to reflect aesthetically the prudence that by then had become a hallmark of Philip's reign.⁵¹ Simultaneously, he also drastically reduced the construction budget; when Juan de Herrera took over the design of El Escorial upon Bautista's death, Herrera proposed a construction budget of 1.5 million ducados, yet Philip only approved 600,000.⁵² Furthermore, Philip insisted on accelerating the construction process, in order to see the monument completed during his reign.⁵³

In 1961 Zuazo stated that the simplicity of design in El Escorial, particularly evident in the south façade, was a good precursor for "functional architecture".⁵⁴ In this façade, as well as in other aspects of the monastery-palace, these architects discovered an elegant example of simply-articulated masses rendered honestly in unmasked, unadorned, naked materials.⁵⁵ Gutiérrez Soto claimed that even his plagiarism of El Escorial taught him the rationale of using materials from the local region, such as brick, granite and Colmenar limestone.⁵⁶

Like the Alhambra, their new ability to abstractly analyze El Escorial led them to read it as a living text that could serve continually as a source of new interpretations.⁵⁷ Sánchez Cantón believed that, if Spanish architects could use El Escorial as a source for more than the production of formalist facsimiles, it would continue to exercise a reviving influence on Spain's "universal spirit and sensibility".⁵⁸ Zuazo believed that the sixteenth century monastery palace would become an essential foundation in the development of architecture that was modern, yet also inherently Spanish:

Within El Escorial lies the greatest fount of ideas for an authentic recovery of our architecture in a modern sense, if we can absorb its organization of volumes and all of its other architectural principles that might be less apparent.⁵⁹

Conclusion

Spanish architecture built in the first half of the twentieth century is marked by an intense search for authenticity that initially resulted in the tendency to reference and imitate Spain's vernacular and historic high styles, as well as the modern architecture of Central Europe. Such oscillations between sources are plainly evident in the work of Luis Gutiérrez Soto who, before the war, designed avant-garde buildings like the Cine Barceló, and after the war built the Ministry of the Air as a duplicate of El Escorial, most notably on the advice of Albert Speer and Paul Bonatz. Rafael Moneo highlighted this disparity, by stating that, prior to the war, Gutiérrez Soto was a fervent supporter of the modern movement with a singular understanding of Cubism, yet that after the war he was infatuated with Herrerian forms.⁶⁰ Carlos Flores pointed out that this pendulum swing was not unique to Gutiérrez Soto, but rather was also evident in the work of Zuazo and other architects that were active in Spain both before and after the Civil War; for Flores,

if, in the creative sense, [the artist] is not capable of surpassing in future works the successes of his previous works, he should at least remain faithful to his own initial principles without abandoning them for others, so that the change follows a logical evolution.⁶¹

However, historian Miguel Angel Balldelou makes the point that, even during his student days in the early 1920s, Gutiérrez Soto inherited a type of eclecticism from his mentor Modesto Lopez Otero, who was then the director of the School of Architecture in Madrid, which resulted in a certain penchant towards stylistic mimesis.⁶² Moreover, upon considering that Gutiérrez Soto himself criticized the avant-garde work of the 1930s, including his own buildings, such as Cine Barceló and Cine Europa, as placeless copies of foreign sources, the apparent oscillations between historicism and modernity that characterize his work are more readily understood. At least for Gutiérrez Soto, neither the avant-garde work of the 1930s, nor the historicism of the 1940s represents an original idea; both are facsimiles of another architect's work, made by an exceptionally talented copyist. The only real distinction that marks Gutiérrez Soto's work is that he knew how to switch sources, and when it was most convenient to do so.

It may seem pejorative to label Gutiérrez Soto, Rucabado, Zuazo, or any other Spanish architect of the first half of the twentieth century as a copyist. Nonetheless, it was necessary for Spaniards to engage in architectural plagiarism of source material, whether extracted from vernacular architecture, historic high styles or contemporary Central European architecture, precisely because the failure of such imitation taught them to critically and abstractly analyze historic sources like El Escorial, or local manifestations of vernacular architecture. It also showed them that, to reproduce these sources in the twentieth century with no attempt to adapt them to the current situation, only served to strip them of their inherent value. From their studies of the Alhambra and the philosophies of Miguel de Unamuno and José Ortega y Gasset, Spanish architects learned that, despite the incongruity of the Alhambra's program with modern building types, it could still serve as a useful source of inspiration in the twentieth century, as long as they could sidestep the emotional romanticism with which they had viewed it previously, investigate it rationally and with professional discernment, and search out its most essential substance, instead of superficially mimicking its forms. This experience taught them to recognize true authenticity and, as is evident upon consideration of the original work produced in Spain in what has been called the "Brilliant 1950s", how to adequately infuse Spanish architecture with both modern ideas and a strong sense of tradition, without resorting to imitation or deception.⁶³

Endnotes

- ¹ Fernando Chueca Goitia, *Invariantes Castizos de la Arquitectura Española, Invariantes en la Arquitectura Hispanoamericana, Manifiesto de la Alhambra* (Madrid, Editorial Dossat, 1981), p. 204. This paper cites the 1981 edition of this book, which is a compilation of three essays published by Chueca in the 1940s and 1950s. Original quote: “Esta ansiedad por volver a las fuentes españolas---castizas - es altamente plausible como dirección espiritual; pero no encuentra una manera de producirse y convertirse en expresión arquitectónica por un exceso de superficialidad “. This quote and all subsequent quotes identified in the notes as “original quote” have been translated by the author.
- ² Carlos Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, vol 1 of 2 vols (Madrid, Aguilar, 1981), p. 94. This paper cites the 1981 version of this text, which is a reprint of the original 1961 version.
- ³ Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 95. See also Isabel Ordieres, *El Albúm de Apuntes de Leonardo Rucabado* (Bilbao, Xarait Ediciones, 1987).
- ⁴ Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 99.
- ⁵ Leopoldo Torres Balbás, ‘Mientras Labran los Sillares’, *Arquitectura*, 2 (1918), 31.
- ⁶ ‘Respetamos la Buena Arquitectura del Pasado’, *A.C. Documentos de la Actividad Contemporánea*, 2 (1931), 22.
- ⁷ ‘Los Engendros de la Arquitectura Típico Popular’, *A.C. Documentos de la Actividad Contemporánea*, 18 (1935), 37. Original quote: “buscar en estas construcciones un repertorio de ‘motivos decorativos’”.
- ⁸ ‘Los Engendros de la Arquitectura Típico Popular’, 37.
- ⁹ ‘Los Engendros de la Arquitectura Típico Popular’, 37.
- ¹⁰ Lilia Maure Rubio, *Secundino Zuazo, Arquitecto* (Madrid, Servicio de Publicaciones del Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos, 1987), 318.
- ¹¹ For the connection among Gutiérrez Soto, Speer and Bonatz I am indebted to the unpublished research conducted by my student Katrina Suing.
- ¹² Joaquín Medina Warmburg, ‘Irredentos y conversos. Presencias e influencias alemanas: de la neutralidad a la postguerra española’, in *Modelos alemanes e italianos para España en los años de la postguerra* (Pamplona: T6 Ediciones, 2004), 21-38 (p. 33).
- ¹³ Olivia Muñoz-Rojas, *Ashes and Granite: Destruction and Reconstruction in the Spanish Civil War and Its Aftermath* (Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 2011), 36.
- ¹⁴ Luis Gutiérrez Soto, ‘Sesiones de Crítica de Arquitectura: El Ministerio del Aire’, *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura*, 11 (1951), 41. Cited in Medina Warmburg, ‘Irredentos y conversos’, 34.
- ¹⁵ Miguel-Angel Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto* (Madrid, Servicio de Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1973), 19.
- ¹⁶ Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 27.
- ¹⁷ Secundino de Zuazo Ugalde, ‘Juan Bautista de Toledo y Juan de Herrera’, in *Lecciones de El Escorial* (Madrid: Taurus, 1964), 54-55.
- ¹⁸ Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, ‘Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años’, in *Lecciones de El Escorial* (Madrid: Taurus, 1964), 27 references Bautista’s study of Italian cruciform hospitals
- ¹⁹ Sánchez Cantón, ‘Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años’, 30.
- ²⁰ Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 54-55.
- ²¹ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 219.
- ²² Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 55.
- ²³ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 218.
- ²⁴ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 208. Original quote: ‘Sí; esto me gusta, pero no como arquitectura’.
- ²⁵ Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 104. Original quotes: “repertorio ornamental” and “motivos propios, estilizaciones en ciertos casos de elementos históricos y, en otros, producto exclusivo de su imaginación indisciplinada y romántica”.
- ²⁶ Antonio Santiago Río Vázquez, *Las Universidades Laborales Gallegas: Arquitectura y Modernidad* (Santiago de Compostela, Colexio Oficial de Arquitectos de Galicia, 2011), 40.
- ²⁷ Río Vázquez, *Las Universidades Laborales Gallegas*, 16.

²⁸ Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto*, 18.

²⁹ Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto*, 12.

³⁰ Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto*, 19.

³¹ For a more complete analysis of this series of articles, see Brett Tippey, 'Genuine Invariants: The Origins of Regional Modernity in Twentieth-Century Spain', *Architectural History*, 56 (2013), 299-342.

³² Miguel Fisac, 'Lo Clásico y lo Español', *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura*, 78 (1948), 197-206 (p.198). Original quote: "Pero no está allí fuera; no es el escudo, ni la ventana de la esquina, ni la ménsula... Está más dentro; no se entrega tan fácilmente".

³³ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 209.

³⁴ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 212.

³⁵ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 209. Original quote: "En la Alhambra hay algo, algo que es necesario comprender".

³⁶ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 242.

³⁷ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 242.

³⁸ Miguel de Unamuno, *Obras Completas, VIII: Ensayos* (Madrid, Biblioteca Castro, Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 2007), 64.

³⁹ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 223.

⁴⁰ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 211.

⁴¹ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 62.

⁴² Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 73.

⁴³ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 73.

⁴⁴ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 218.

⁴⁵ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 211. Original quote: "para nosotros el edificio no tiene edad: solo tiene arquitectura".

⁴⁶ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 217.

⁴⁷ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 215.

⁴⁸ Chueca, *Invariantes Castizos*, 228.

⁴⁹ José Ortega y Gasset, *Teoría de Andalucía y Otros Ensayos* (Madrid, Revista de Occidente, 1942). This paper cites the second edition of this work, published in 1942. The first version appeared in 1927.

⁵⁰ Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 28.

⁵¹ Zuazo Ugalde, 'Juan Bautista de Toledo y Juan de Herrera', 54-55.

⁵² Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 29.

⁵³ Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 28.

⁵⁴ Zuazo Ugalde, 'Juan Bautista de Toledo y Juan de Herrera', 58.

⁵⁵ Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 28.

⁵⁶ Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto*, 19.

⁵⁷ Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 12.

⁵⁸ Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 34.

⁵⁹ Sánchez Cantón, 'Lecciones de El Escorial a sus Cuatrocientos Años', 28.

⁶⁰ Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto*, 59.

⁶¹ Flores, *Arquitectura Española Contemporánea*, 140-141. Original quote: "Si en obras sucesivas no es capaz de sobrepasar los aciertos, en el sentido de creación, de trabajos precedentes debeá cuando menos permanecer fiel a sus propios principios iniciales a no ser que éstos vengan sustituidos por otros de tal naturaleza que el cambio suponga una lógica evolución".

⁶² Baldellou, *Luis Gutiérrez Soto*, 30.

⁶³ José Manuel Pozo (ed.), *Los Brillantes 50: 35 Proyectos*, (Pamplona: T6, 2004).

