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Medieval Spanish Castles: The Glory of the Past and the Construction of Race during Franco's Regime

In 1949, ten years after the end of the Civil War, Francisco Franco, the dictator who ruled Spain from 1939 to 1975, signed a national decree for the protection of approximately two thousand Spanish castles. According to the official text, these monuments were to be preserved as they had been "in their most glorious epochs." In its view, historic preservation was not only an architectural duty, however; it was a moral obligation aimed at maintaining the "spiritual values of the race" (*valores espirituales de la raza*).[1]

This essay contextualizes the 1949 protection decree as a central decision of Franco's regime that affected, at least theoretically, the conservation of many fortresses across the country but especially in Al-Andalus. To understand the full meaning of the modern afterlife of these fortifications and the contradiction inherent in this decree, it is crucial to remember that many castles had been built in the area of the Iberian Peninsula that was under Muslim rule from 711 to the fall of Granada in 1492. Specifically, I focus on the way the decree helped to direct public attention toward an image of the Spanish medieval past closely linked to the so-called Christian Reconquista ("reconquest").[2] At its conclusion, the essay considers how the presentation of the castles—restored with government sponsorship—as the essence of Spanish medieval Christianity coincided with the development of national and international tourism.

Francoism and the Appropriation of the Medieval Past

After almost three years of Civil War (1936–39), conceived as a "crusade" against communism, a medievalizing rhetoric had become common currency in the government of the dictator Franco.[3] Therefore, it is easy to understand why words

1 Francisco Franco, "Ministerio de Educación Nacional: Decreto de 22 de abril de 1949 sobre protección de los castillos españoles," *Boletín Oficial del Estado* 125 (1949): 2058–59.

2 See 87n3 in this volume (Lamprakos) for recent literature that problematizes this concept.

3 Francisco J. Moreno Martín, "*Gesta dei per Hispanos*: Invención, visualización e imposición del mito de Cruzada durante la Guerra Civil y el primer franquismo," in *La Reconquista: Ideología y justificación de la Guerra Santa Peninsular*, ed. Carlos de Ayala, Isabel Cristina Ferreira, and Santiago Palacios (Madrid: La Ergastula, 2019), 483–532; M. Pilar García Cuetos, "La restauración en la España del Nacionalcatolicismo. Caudillaje, Cruzada," in *Art i Memòria. XVII Congreso Nacional de Historia del Arte, Barcelona, 2008* (Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 2012), 528–42, at 530–31.

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such as "race," "homeland," and "glory" were used in the decree enacted in 1949 to protect Spanish fortresses. The presence of these terms explains why recent historiography has considered this law as propaganda, part of a state strategy aimed at using castles built during the medieval Reconquista to support a reinvigorated Catholic national discourse rooted in the historical destiny of Spain.[4] Although a national Catholic ideology had already emerged in the nineteenth century, it was only in the early years of the dictatorship that it was officially enforced and considered unquestionable. This ideology tended to fix on tangible material references; according to this reading, medieval castles had helped Christian armies to recover the territory "invaded" by the Muslims.

The damage these structures suffered during the conflict that resulted from the resistance of Spanish Republicans to Franco's coup d'état was generally minor. While the Civil War proved devastating for some cities, the rural areas remained largely untouched because they were removed from military action.[5] It therefore was problematic to present the dictator as the savior of glorious ruins since they never were the target of Republican attacks (something they had in common with other monuments and works of art said to have been "miraculously" recovered by Franco's actions).[6] The majority of the more than two thousand castles counted in Franco's census had been long abandoned; before the Civil War, only 150 had been declared "historic and artistic monuments," an official designation that secured the highest level of protection.[7] Sometime later, however, the castles provided a new opportunity to support Franco's role as the leader of the new state. As if in a medieval tale, he is said to have signed the decree for the protection of all Spanish castles after seeing the ruined

4 Javier Rivera, "Consideración y fortuna del patrimonio tras la guerra civil, destrucción y reconstrucción del patrimonio histórico (1936–1956): La restauración monumental," in *Bajo el signo de la Victoria: La conservación del patrimonio durante el primer franquismo (1936–1958)*, ed. José I. Casar and Julián Esteban (Valencia: Pentagraf, 2008), 85–109, at 95; Gonzalo López-Muñiz, "El inventario de castillos de España (1949–1960): Una fuente documental para el conocimiento de la historia y restauración de fortificaciones durante el franquismo," *Cuadernos de Arquitectura y Fortificación* 4 (2017): 159–80, at 160; Esther Almarcha and Rafael Villena, "Una nación de castillos: Su restauración, imagen fotográfica y significado en el segundo franquismo," *Vínculos de Historia* 11 (2022): 189–212, at 190.

5 Esther Almarcha and Rafael Villena, "Los castillos ¿destino turístico?," in *De Marco Polo al low cost*, ed. Héctor Martínez and María Rubio (Madrid: Catarata, 2020): 69–90, at 76.

6 Julián Esteban, "El primer franquismo ¿La ruptura de un proceso en la intervención sobre el Patrimonio?," in Casar and Esteban, *Bajo el signo* (Valencia: Pentagraf, 2008): 21–70, at 36.

7 [Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos] (hereafter cited as AEAC), "Editorial," *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos* 2 (1953): 47–48, at 48 (hereafter cited as *BAEAC*); [AEAC], "El decreto de 22 de abril de 1949 y sus consecuencias para los castillos españoles," *BAEAC* 2 (1953): 60–63, at 60.

shape of a castle during a hunting trip.[8] Presented by the Minister of National Education, José Ibáñez Martín, the decree seems to have been written by the Director General of Fine Arts, the Marquis of Lozoya, an art historian—and fascist politician—who played a crucial role in the events recounted here.[9]

The decree very clearly attempted to connect the ruins (or semiruins) with the glorious history of the Spanish homeland: the castles were presented as a metaphor of the spirit of the "Spanish race" and, as such, they deserved protection by the state. One of the decree's provisions created the post of Architect Curator of Castles, while another instructed the General Directorate of Fine Arts to begin drawing up an index of Spanish castles.[10] Thanks to having instituted this law, the dictator would, a few years later, be celebrated as a fighter "for hearth and home" (*pro aris et focis*) against the enemies of patriotic traditions.[11] Medieval past and twentieth-century present were thus fused, generating an intentionally ambiguous discourse. This discourse, however, was not invented by the dictator; the idea of justifying an authoritarian government by using medieval rulers as a comparison was common in intellectual circles surrounding Franco. One example is the publication by the Marquis of Lozoya on the Catholic monarchs, Isabella and Ferdinand, which presented them as a royal couple that had to fight against oligarchies, separatism, and the erosion of the Catholic faith, much like Franco himself.[12]

One of the forms the public appropriation of the past took was the organization of huge ceremonies based on rituals excavated from history books.[13] The Victory Parade of Madrid in 1939 celebrating the triumph of the Spanish nationalists, for example, was full of references to the Middle Ages. It even included the use of actual medieval relics brought from cities such as Oviedo and of antiphons taken from early medieval liturgical codices.[14] Another strategy to connect Franco's dictatorship with the most glorious moments of Spain's history was the creation of an "imperial style" implemented by ar-

8 Leonardo Villena, "Cincuenta años de la Asociación de Amigos de los Castillos," *Castillos de España* 129 (2003), 27–36, at 34; Pablo Schnell, "El inventario de arquitectura defensiva de la AEAC, un ejemplo de ciencia ciudadana en España," *Patrimonio Cultural de España* 9 (2014): 81–94, at 83.

9 Gabriel Alomar, "El Marqués de Lozoya y la conservación de los castillos españoles," in *El Marqués de Lozoya, Grande de España* (Madrid: Centro segoviano de Madrid, 1976), 75–78.

10 Franco, "Decreto," 2058.

11 [AEAC], "Entrega a su Excelencia el Jefe del Estado de la primera Medalla creada por la Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos," *BAEAC* 25 (1959): 73–80, at 80.

12 Marqués de Lozoya, *Los orígenes del Imperio: La España de Fernando e Isabel* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1939), 7–12; discussed in Giuliana Di Febo, *Ritos de guerra y de victoria en la España franquista* (Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 2002).

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

14 Di Febo, *Ritos de guerra*, 112; Carmen J. Gutiérrez, "Francisco Franco y los reyes godos: La legitimación del poder usurpado por medio de la ceremonia y la música," *Cuadernos de música iberoamericana* 33 (2020): 161–95.

chitects loyal to the regime.[15] The restoration of monuments likewise was used to emphasize great epochs of Spain's past. This explains why, immediately after the end of the war, some castles were not just restored but entirely rebuilt. The most significant is the medieval fortress of La Mota in Medina del Campo (Valladolid), which was completely remodeled between 1939 and 1942 to house the Women's Section of the fascist Spanish Falange party. The project involved the rebuilding of old walls and the insertion of new ones, the installation of neo-medieval furniture, and the construction of a neo-Gothic facade copied after the Hospital de La Latina in Madrid (Fig. 5.1).[16] The

Fig. 5.1: Postage stamp with the image of Franco and the castle of La Mota in Medina del Campo, 1948. Photo: Wikimedia Commons (public domain).

15 Carlota Bustos, "Muguruza en la arquitectura española," in *Pedro Muguruza Otaño (1893–1952): Arquitecto y académico*, ed. Enrique Castaño Perea and Carlota Bustos Juez, Supplement [*Anexo*], *Academia: Boletín de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando* 2 (2015), 27–46, at 41; Dirección General de Regiones Devastadas, "Exposición de la Reconstrucción de España," *Reconstrucción* 3 (1940): 1–60, at 10.

16 Miguel Lasso de la Vega, "Pedro Muguruza: ¿La voz de Franco en la arquitectura?," in Castaño Perea and Bustos Juez, *Pedro Muguruza Otaño*, 205–16, at 208; María Rosón, *Género, memoria y cultura visual en el primer franquismo* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2016); Alex Garris, "La reconstrucción de la arquitectura militar como imagen del régimen franquista," in *Art i Memòria*, 576–90, at 580.

postage stamp is one among hundreds of examples of cheap, mass-produced visual formats (stamps, lottery tickets, calendars, and the like) that were pressed into service to promote the regime's cultural undertakings. Other examples of fortresses rebuilt to house institutions linked to the fascist state include the castles of Las Navas del Marqués (Ávila), San Servando (Toledo), and Coca (Segovia).[17]

In short, the law for the protection of Spanish castles was integral to the propaganda machinery of a dictatorship that habitually looked at itself in the distorted mirror of the past. That said, the 1949 decree pursued two objectives that were in reality very difficult to achieve in a context of deep crisis: the conservation and the documentation of thousands of fortresses spread throughout the Spanish territory. Two questions arise: Were these goals actually achieved, and what were the implications of this attempt for a modern use of the medieval heritage?

The Real Impact of the Protection Decree: Conservation versus Reconstruction

Soon after the signing of the decree, the propaganda services of Franco's regime developed a strategy to publicize it. In April 1949, an exhibition was organized in Madrid under the title *Castillos en España* (Castles in Spain).[18] Later that same year, the Castle Conservation Service was founded with an architect appointed from within the Ministry of National Education as its head. The main function of this new administrative entity was to develop an overall plan for conservation and restoration work; additionally, it was to draw up a catalogue of all castles found in Spain, complete with plans and photographs.[19] Direct interventions in the fabric of the fortresses themselves were limited due to the lack of financial resources. In the first eight years of its existence, this agency had a total of eight million pesetas at its disposal.[20] To put this figure in perspective, the amount invested in the conservation of the mosque of Córdoba between 1939 and 1959 alone was more than two million pesetas.[21] In most cases, the shortage of funding meant that all that could be done was emergency work to consolidate ruined walls. If we consider that, by 1958, the number of architectural interven-

17 Luis M. Feduchi and José M.G. Valcárcel, "Escuela Nacional de instructoras Isabel la Católica en el castillo de Las Navas," *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 122 (1952): 7–13; [AEAC], "Editorial," *BAEAC* 26 (1959): 135–40, at 137; Garris, "La reconstrucción de la arquitectura," 583.

18 Pedro Muguruza, "El Palacio de Don Juan II, en Madrigal de las Altas Torres," *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 91 (1949): 283–91.

19 [AEAC], "El decreto de 22 de abril," 60.

20 Casto Fernández-Shaw, "Un programa para la conservación de los castillos españoles," *BAEAC* 17 (1957), 46–57, at 49.

21 Antonio Gallego Burín et al., eds., *Veinte años de Restauración Monumental en España: Catálogo de la Exposición* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1958), 28.

tions amounted to sixty-five, then it is obvious that the goal of preserving the more than two thousand catalogued castles was impossible to reach.[22]

From the current perspective of preventive conservation, however, one must be grateful that even a small number of projects was executed. In 1946, Leopoldo Torres Balbás, the architect who introduced the principles of the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (1931) to Spain, pointed out the problem with castle renovations that sought to "leave them as new."[23] In order to understand Balbás's critique of existing approaches, it is useful to go back a few years, to the period of the Civil War. Before the conflict, the only institution that managed the Spanish built heritage and so controlled restorations across the country was the General Directorate of Fine Arts.[24] During the war, a small group of fascist intellectuals linked to Franco created its own organization: the Service for the Defense of the National Artistic Heritage. Although it was intended for the protection of all types of artworks and buildings, this organization was especially oriented toward the recovery of Spanish church properties.[25] Its first commissioner was Pedro Muguruza, a Catholic architect who rescued from ruin the cathedral of Sigüenza (Guadalajara), presented as the most important building of "Medieval Spain," the perceived "real" Spain.[26] After the defeat of the Republic, the Service was absorbed by the Directorate of Fine Arts. Its director at the time was the Marquis of Lozoya, the ultra-Catholic politician who would some years later draft the decree for the protection of castles.[27] In short, the Spanish institutions that supervised the official restoration of the monuments after the war were conditioned by their affiliation with both the fascist government and the Catholic Church.

In 1940, these two existing arts organizations were joined by a new and much more politicized administrative entity: the General Directorate of Devastated Regions (Dirección General de Regiones Devastadas hereafter DGRD), which reported directly to the Ministry of the Interior.[28] When a monument, and especially a church, was located within an area controlled by the DGRD it fell under its authority rather than that of the Directorate of Fine Arts. In 1941, a total of 106 architects were working for this agency; some of them would go on to direct restoration projects according to the methods they acquired while working for the DGRD. Predictably, most of the human and economic resources that the state freed for the architectural reconstructions

22 Gallego Burín, *Veinte años,* 47.

23 Ascensión Hernández, "Algunas reflexiones en torno a la restauración monumental en la España de posguerra: Rupturas y continuidades," in *Historia, restauración y reconstrucción monumental en la posguerra española*, ed. M. Pilar García, Esther Almarcha, and Ascensión Hernández (Madrid: Abada, 2012), 97–132, at 105.

24 Esteban, "El primer franquismo," 43.

25 Esteban, "El primer franquismo," 37.

26 Marqués de Lozoya, "La conservación de los monumentos nacionales durante la guerra," *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 1 (1941): 14–16, at 16.

27 Esteban, "El primer franquismo," 23.

28 Rivera, "Consideración y fortuna del patrimonio," 91.

were funneled into this organization.[29] The DGRD's overall mandate was to "rebuild" (*reconstruir*) the villages destroyed during the war and to exploit this kind of activity to create propaganda for the new state. Numerous newly designed villages and neighborhoods were built following an idealized pattern (which never existed historically), one that featured a central square with a church and individual houses, the latter intended to discourage political relations among the population. Some of these reconstructed places were deeply connected to the Christian Middle Ages (one thinks of Covadonga, the site where the Reconquista had started) or the Hapsburg imperial past (such as the Alcázar of Toledo).[30]

The castle of Maqueda, built in the fifteenth century in what is now the province of Toledo, offers a representative example of how the DGRD approached its work. The castle was completely refashioned under its auspices to house a barracks for the partially militarized police force, the Guardia Civil (Fig. 5.2).[31] Although none of the reconstruction is perceptible from the outside, the interior was completely emptied and a modern building erected. One of the ruined medieval towers was entirely rebuilt and a water tank of reinforced concrete placed inside it. Given the propagandistic intent of the rebuilding, it is unsurprising that no archaeological survey was carried out.[32]

In 1953, four years after the approval of the decree protecting Spanish castles, a new development took place with the foundation of the Spanish Association of Friends of the Castles (Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos or AEAC). This voluntary organization declared itself to be a loyal servant of Franco, whom it named Honorary President (Fig. 5.3). Its first board of directors included the Marquis of Lozoya and Germán Valentín Gamazo, who had previously been appointed Architect Curator of Castles and had begun his relationship with the regime as an architect of the DGRD.[33] Among the main objectives of this new organization was to promote awareness of the historical value of the monuments and the need for their proper conservation. To this end, the AEAC published a journal featuring not only articles and news but also proposing activities such as exhibitions and excursions. Another task it took on was to collaborate with the Castle Conservation Service on the inventory of Spanish castles.[34] This task was passed on directly to town councils and local institutions, which were required to report on the location and condition of the castles situated in their territory. By 1968, after almost twenty years of effort

29 Esteban, "El primer franquismo," 43.

30 Rivera, "Consideración y fortuna del patrimonio," 97; Esteban Riera, "Proyecto de cuartel de la guardia civil en el castillo de Maqueda," *Reconstrucción* 82 (1948): 128–34.

31 Esteban Riera, "Cuartel para la guardia civil construido por la Dirección General de Regiones Devastadas, en Maqueda, Toledo," *Reconstrucción* 116 (1953): 59–66.

32 Riera, "Cuartel para la guardia civil," 116.

33 Esteban, "El primer franquismo," 44.

34 [AEAC], "Editorial," 47.

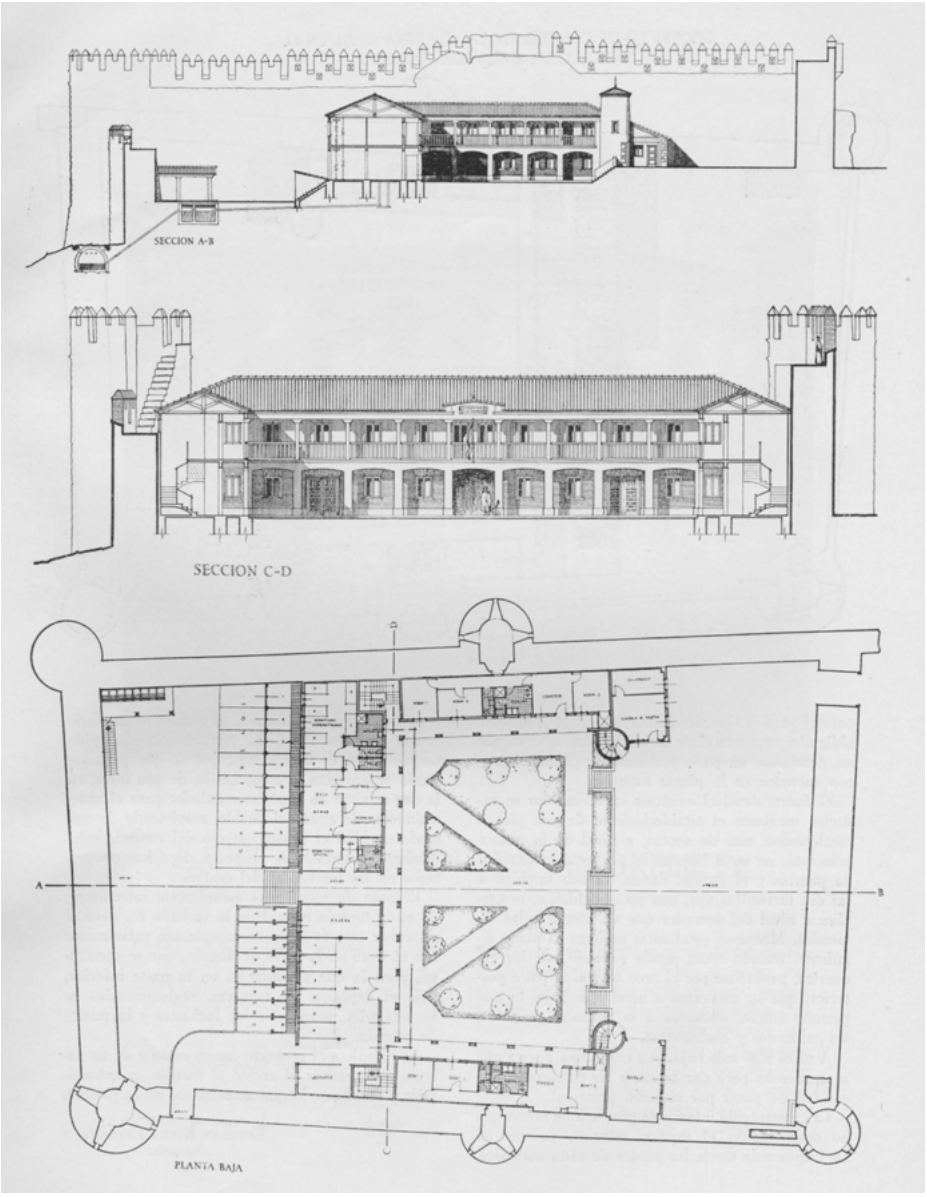

Fig. 5.2: Maqueda, Castle, reconstruction project, 1948. Photo from Riera, “Proyecto de cuartel.”.

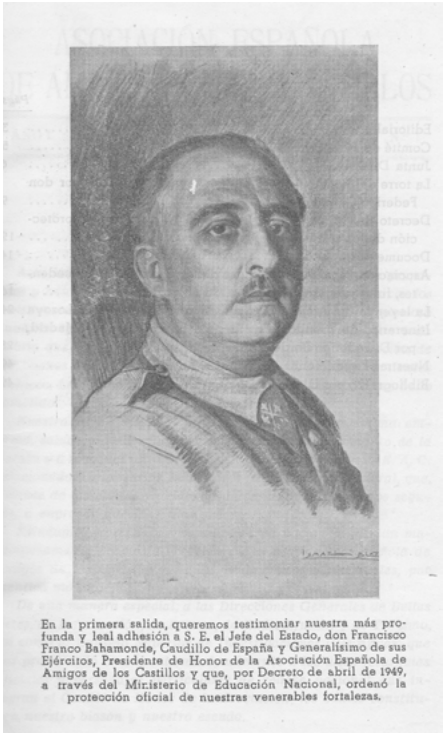

Fig. 5.3: Francisco Franco as Honorary President of the AEAC. Photo from *BAEAC* 1 (1953).

and despite having very few resources, the AEAC had registered a total of 5220 examples of "military architecture."[35]

But what were the links between this association and dictator Franco? In the first thirteen years of the AEAC's existence, its board of directors was received in Franco's official residence on three occasions to celebrate the special ties that united them. The first was in 1953, when Franco was appointed as the association's Honorary President in recognition of his role as "savior of the history of Spain."[36] Six years later, the AEAC bestowed on the dictator a medal that honored him as the first protector of Spanish castles.[37] Finally, in 1966, Franco met with the association to be informed about exhibitions on the castles of Spain planned for other European countries and the United States.[38] It would be unfair not to recognize the work of the AEAC in the promotion of

35 Alejandro Carrión, *Plan Nacional de Arquitectura Defensiva* (Madrid, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015), 6; López-Muñiz, "El inventario de castillos," 171.

36 [AEAC], "Visita de la Junta Directiva de la Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos a S. E. El Jefe del Estado," *BAEAC* 3 (1953): 81.

37 [AEAC], "Entrega a su Excelencia," 73.

38 [AEAC], "Audiencia concedida por el Jefe del Estado y Presidente de Honor de nuestra Asociación," *BAEAC* 52 (1966): 103–08, at 81.

Spain's monumental heritage, particularly in the area of defensive architecture. It is obvious, however, that the organization's birth was directly related to the dictatorship's intention to present castles as a reflection of the national and Catholic spirit of the Spanish nation. That is not surprising when considering that the public to whom the AEAC's publications and activities were directed was of a high social class and an intelligentsia ideologically aligned with the regime.

The Origins of Spanish Fortifications: Between a "Spanish Race" and an Islamic Past

The 1949 decree for the protection of castles was a legislative text that intentionally used the rhetoric of propaganda to oppose academic histories dealing with the Spanish Middle Ages. When that law spoke of the "spiritual values of our race," it deliberately ignored the Islamic presence in Iberia.[39] But while fascist politicians and the population that supported the dictatorship may have believed in the spiritual and racial purity promoted by this ultranationalist discourse, the historical record tells a different story.

As is true for other European countries, it was during the nineteenth century that Spain developed a national history. While the role of Al-Andalus in this story could not be ignored, ultra-Catholic historians saw the peninsula's Muslim past as proof of the existence of an enemy against which the Spanish had forged their national unity. As a result, the almost eight centuries of Islamic presence were considered an "accident" caused by the "invasion" in 711. The Reconquista, understood as an uninterrupted struggle stretching from then until 1492, helped to create a sense of collective identity and to close a wound caused by a foreign occupation.[40]

This anti-Islamic conception of Spanish medieval history came in another, more moderate version, which tried to minimize the contribution of Islamic culture by subsuming it to a more powerful late Roman indigenous culture. Thus, when Al-Andalus reached its political, cultural, and artistic peak in the tenth century, it was considered a success achieved by a majority Hispanic population intermixed with an Arab minority.[41] Nineteenth-century historiography used the term "Islamic Spain" in an attempt to describe this situation, but that concept was anachronistic; no Spanish nation, ei-

39 Alejandro García Sanjuán, "Al-Andalus en el nacionalcatolicismo español: La historiografía de época franquista (1939–1960)," in *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,* ed. Francisco J. Moreno Martín (Madrid: Fundación Pablo Iglesias, 2016), 189–208, at 206–7.

40 García Sanjuán, "Al-Andalus en el nacionalcatolicismo," 195–96.

41 García Sanjuán, "Al-Andalus en el nacionalcatolicismo," 204.

ther Islamic or Christian, existed in the Middle Ages.[42] Still, this imagined Hispano-Arabic arcadia had the merit of acknowledging the positive contribution of Islamic culture, at least once it had been included with and accepted into the Spanish matrix. To demonstrate Islamic and Christian coexistence, it was common to present the beautiful Andalusian monuments as unique and unrepeatable. As a result, the mosque of Córdoba or the Alhambra of Granada were celebrated as hybrid products in what was otherwise an ocean of Spanish culture with a few drops of "oriental" influence.[43]

It is in the context of assessing the Islamic presence in the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages that the Marquis of Lozoya's ideas about the restoration of fortifications should be seen. He argued that the emirate of Córdoba (756–929) was simply a government in which an Arab minority had subdued Spaniards of the south and that it was only with the rise to power of 'Abd al-Rahman III and the proclamation of the Umayyad caliphate in 929 that an authentic "Spanish state" was formed. What made the Umayyad caliphate such a state was its unitary character achieved after fighting internal secessionist movements. For the Marquis, the art of this period should be called "Hispano-Muslim" rather than Islamic. He believed that it constituted one of the most brilliant periods in the history of Spain, far superior to that of the Christian kingdoms of the north (although, paradoxically, he also considered these "the true Spain").[44]

Regarding Spanish castles, the same author pointed out that, unlike similar structures in other countries such as France, their function was above all military; the move toward residential use came only at the end of the Middle Ages.[45] The military character of early medieval fortifications was, he thought, due to the Byzantine contribution brought to Iberia by the Muslims: "Our homeland saw a long series of splendid fortresses rise on its soil whose origin came from far away and in which all the art of classical, Byzantine, and oriental fortification was continued with its own characteristics." He added that "the Spanish castle was surely the oldest and the most important in Europe."[46] In his view, the Islamic conquest facilitated the recovery of ancient poliorcetic systems of fortification, including the preference for elevated locations, double protective walls with forward towers, and a generally rectangular or polygonal plan.[47] Ironically, then, compared to other European defensive systems, Spanish cas-

42 David A. Wacks, "Whose Spain Is It, Anyway?" in *Whose Middle Ages?: Teachable Moments for an Ill-Used Past*, ed. Andrew Albin et al. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 181–90.

43 García Sanjuán, "Al-Andalus en el nacionalcatolicismo," 207; Jesús Lorenzo, "Arqueología de al-Andalus durante el franquismo," in Moreno Martín, *El franquismo y la apropiación del pasado*, 209–34, at 217.

44 Marqués de Lozoya, *Historia del Arte Hispánico* (Barcelona: Salvat, 1931), 1: 230.

45 Marqués de Lozoya, *Historia del Arte Hispánico*, 1: 24–25.

46 [AEAC], "Fines y aspiraciones de la Asociación," *BAEAC* 1 (1953): 19–23, at 19.

47 Fernández-Shaw, "Un programa para la conservación," 46; Ángel Dotor, "Los castillos árabes en España," *BAEAC* 48 (1965): 7–26, at. 7–8; Dotor, "El gran castillo o alcazaba islámica de Baños de la Encina," *BAEAC* 57 (1967): 147–58, at 148.

tles owed their modernity to the innovations imported by Islamic armies when they conquered the Iberian Peninsula in 711.

Another strategy to "Hispanize" the castles of Al-Andalus was to present them as proof of the Umayyad dynasty's attempt to unify the territory. The obsession with territorial unity was so intense in the writing of national histories such as the Marquis of Lozoya's that it paradoxically ended up by placing the Umayyads on the same level as the Catholic Monarchs Isabella and Ferdinand, the Hapsburg Empire, and Franco, who were all seen to be engaged in comparable attempts to unify Spain.[48] In a subtle and gradual but intentional way, the fortifications of Al-Andalus came to be called "Hispano-Arabic" castles.[49] The use of this prefix (as in the case of "Hispano-Muslim" art) was a rhetorical strategy to erase the Islamic roots of these cultural manifestations. Two objectives were achieved by Hispanizing the Andalusian fortresses. First, the Muslim contribution to medieval defensive architecture was minimized. Second, the same monuments, now classed as "Spanish," could continue to exist in modern times as testimonies of the racial and spiritual essence of the nation.

Reassessing Islamic Castles during Franco's Regime

Despite the acknowledgment of Al-Andalus as a transmitter of certain construction techniques in military architecture, the evaluation of Spain's Islamic past was quite negative in the years after the Civil War. The crusading spirit with which Franco had mobilized his troops was still in the air. Considering recurrent allusions to the "spirit of the nation" and to the "Spanish race" in the 1949 protection decree, one might suspect that Muslim fortresses would have become the object of a physical *damnatio memoriae*. The data, however, show that this was not the case: castles of Islamic origin (built by the Umayyads and other dynasties) were treated, on a practical if not ideological level, no differently than Christian monuments. Given the deep economic crisis during the postwar period, financial resources dedicated to artistic heritage, regardless of its cultural identity, were minimal. Only sites that could serve as propaganda for the regime (such as the Alcázar of Toledo and Covadonga) or, from the 1950s onward, as tourist attractions were the object of investment. Architectural investigation of the great sites of the Andalusian period—from the palatine city of Medina Azahara (Córdoba) and the fortress palace of the Aljafería (Zaragoza) to the Alhambra (Granada) and the citadels of Almería and Málaga—had started in the first decades of the

48 Federico Bordeje, "Las fortalezas musulmanas españolas," *BAEAC* 4 (1953): 150–53, at 151; Rodolfo Gil Benumeya, "La Alhambra de Granada como ciudadela esencial hispano-islámica," *BAEAC* 28 (1960): 5–30, at 21.

49 Benumeya, "La Alhambra de Granada," 9.

twentieth century and was not interrupted.[50] In 1958, on the occasion of an exhibition celebrating twenty years of monumental restoration after the Civil War, figures on spending disclosed that the state had disbursed more than six million pesetas for the conservation of a total of twenty-six Islamic buildings. That figure is somewhat misleading since some 90 percent went toward the restoration of only three sites (Medina Azahara, mosque of Córdoba, Alhambra); moreover, a few non-Islamic structures were included in the tally without apparent reason.[51]

To illustrate the postwar preservation of Islamic sites, it is useful to examine how research and restoration work was carried out at three of the most famous citadels of southern Spain: Málaga, Almería, and Jaén. By doing so, I want to demonstrate that no steps were taken to hide the Islamic past and that, on the contrary, the ultimate objective was to make these monuments more visible in order to increase their value as tourist attractions.[52]

Fig. 5.4: Málaga, Alcazaba. Photo: Fernando Domínguez Cerejido/Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 4.0).

50 Lorenzo, "Arqueología de al-Andalus," 224–32.

51 Gallego Burín, *Veinte años de Restauración*, 27–33. The non-Islamic buildings were the synagogues of Córdoba and Toledo, the convent of Santa Catalina de Zafra, and the monastery of San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo.

52 This has also been pointed out by Javier Ordóñez, "Moros y cristianos: Un discurso ambivalente en las restauraciones del primer franquismo," in García, Almarcha, and Hernández, *Historia, restauración y reconstrucción*, 191–222, at 221–22.

Restoration on the Alcazaba of Málaga, originally built in the eleventh century, had begun before the Civil War. After the end of the conflict, with the devastated city at its feet, the fortified palace complex was rebuilt in imitation of the Alhambra in Granada. To suit that goal, orientalizing features, such as gardens and waterworks that would be attractive from a tourism point of view, were (re)constructed (Fig. 5.4).[53] Something similar occurred at Almería, an impressive citadel dating back to the Umayyad period. In 1949, the authorities expressly requested an intervention on the model adopted in Málaga. Since no sufficiently significant Islamic remains were found, however, it was decided to give more importance to the late medieval and Renaissance (i.e., Christian) periods as a way to boost the monumentality of the whole complex. The small rebuilt chapel even received a newly constructed bell tower to create a more traditional atmosphere (Fig. 5.5). A similar outcome was achieved at the castle of Santa Catalina in Jaén, albeit with the complete obliteration of the remains of the Islamic alcazar. In their stead, a hotel belonging to the state-owned network of

Fig. 5.5: Almería, Alcazaba, Chapel. Photo: Jebulon/Wikimedia Commons (CC 1.0 Universal Public Domain).

53 Ordóñez, "Moros y cristianos," 196–99.

inns (Paradores Nacionales) administered by the Ministry of Information and Tourism was built immediately adjacent to the castle on the site of the Islamic ruins.[54] Catering to the nascent tourist industry became the guiding principle of all these interventions; this means that tourism and the income it generated had started to trump purely political agendas.

Fig. 5.6: Granada, Alhambra. Photo: Jebulon/Wikimedia Commons (CC 1.0 Universal Public Domain).

The official architects of Franco's regime, however, also recognized the value of the Islamic contributions to the history of Iberian architecture. Indeed, they chose the fortified palace of the Alhambra as a meeting place in 1952 to discuss the criteria for the restoration of national monuments (Fig. 5.6), issuing a text known as the Alhambra Manifesto. The selection of this site for the meeting is especially revealing because it was chosen over an overtly imperial site, the monastery of El Escorial, the main residence of the Hapsburgs located just outside Madrid.[55] The admiration expressed for the palace complex of the Alhambra, built under the Nasrid dynasty, even led Pedro Muguruza, Director General of Architecture, to consider the possibility of future collabora-

54 Ordóñez, "Moros y cristianos," 199–209, 216–19.

55 Felipe Asenjo, "Muguruza ha muerto," in Castaño Perea and Bustos Juez, *Pedro Muguruza Otaño (1893–1952): Arquitecto y académico*, 235–56, at 251.

tions with Muslim architects.[56] In the opinion of Franco's architects, the Alhambra anticipated architectural concepts that would not be brought to fruition until six hundred years later; they included the integration of architecture and nature, the geometrical arrangement of the spaces, the plantings in the courtyards, and the use of humble yet effective building materials.[57] Praise for that monument, however, did not imply recognition of Nasrid culture as such. For the regime's architects, the Alhambra remained a Spanish monument because it had been built in a "vassal" kingdom of Castile.[58]

Even this recognition, distorted as it was, happened only in professional circles and especially among architects. In another exhibition, named *Castillos de España*, the organizing committee was apparently unaware that, among the castles presented, there were several of Islamic origins. The catalogue accompanying the event nonetheless reiterated references to a "national spirit" and the racial particularity of the Spanish already mentioned in the castle protection decree: "Full of racial substance . . . these venerable Hispanic fortresses . . . are a symbol of our heroic past, of our energy, of our universal spiritual desire."[59] It seems strange, to say the least, that the Alhambra and other Andalusian citadels could fit into this kind of definition (Fig. 5.7).

During the late 1950s, coinciding with the regime's efforts to open Spain to the outside world, the public message about the Islamic architectural presence became more relaxed. An inventory drawn up in 1961 assigned almost all fortresses built in Iberia between 711 and 1100 to various Muslim dynasties.[60] A few years later, the *Bulletin* of the AEAC published an article on "Arab" castles in Spain that acknowledged for the first time Muslim rulers as the initiators of this type of architecture.[61] The same piece also recognized that more than half of the 2,538 castles that were counted had an Islamic origin and concluded that there was nothing similar in the rest of Europe. Finally, it presented nine of the most important so-called Arab castles preserved in Spain, highlighting the caliphal castle at Gormaz in the province of Soria (Fig. 5.8).

This stunning fortress also attracted the attention of Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, an art historian who had fought on the side of the Republican government and had been subjected to a trial that condemned him to political irrelevance during the first years of the Franco regime.[62] Although his 1965 article about the castle was brief and in the style

56 Dirección General de Arquitectura, "Sesiones celebradas en la Alhambra durante los días 14 y 15 de octubre de 1952," *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 12 (1953): 12–50, at 48.

57 Dirección General de Arquitectura, "Sesiones celebradas en la Alhambra," 13.

58 Dirección General de Arquitectura, "Sesiones celebradas en la Alhambra," 17, 20.

59 Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte, *Castillos de España, Catálogo-Guía* (Madrid: AEAC and SEAA, 1957), 8–9. This exhibition should not be confused with the 1949 exhibition of the same name.

60 Cristóbal Guitart, "Ensayo de clasificación racional de los castillos españoles," *BAEAC* 33 (1961): 91–100, at 99.

61 Dotor, "Los castillos árabes," 7–12. Note that the full title of this article refers not to Spanish castles, but to "castles in Spain."

62 Josemi Lorenzo, "Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, maestro sin discípulos, autor del primer manual de Historia del Arte español (1946)," in Moreno Martín, *El franquismo y la apropiación del pasado*, 307–35.

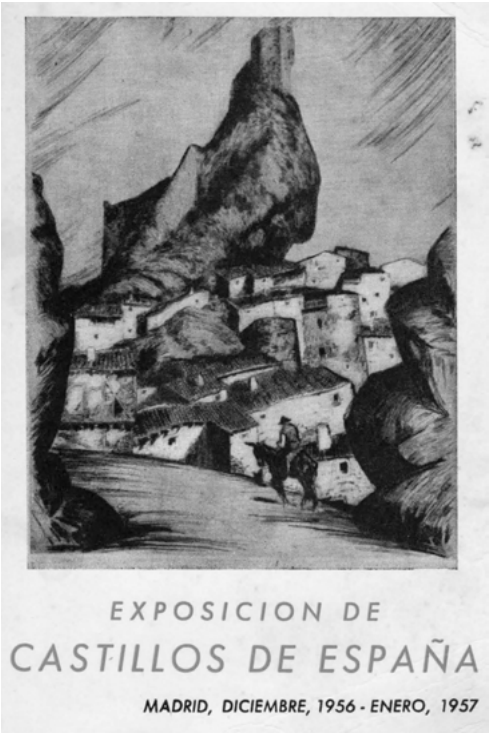

Fig. 5.7: Front cover of the catalogue of the exhibition *Castillos de España*, 1956–57. Photo from *Castillos de España.*

of a literary essay, it was the first detailed treatment of the building, which it presented in entirely positive terms.[63] Gaya's numerous favorable references to the nation's Islamic past were particularly remarkable. He went so far as to write that "My ancestors fought here in the tenth century; I don't care if they were Moors or Christians."[64] Only four years later, archaeological excavations at Gormaz began and they are considered pioneering works of modern Spanish medieval archaeology.[65]

With the end of the dictatorship near, the ultranationalist, more or less explicitly anti-Islamic discourses, started to seem obsolete. Yet they continued to echo in popular publications, if not in scholarly texts. In 1967, the Marquis of Lozoya published *Castillos de España*, a work written for a broad audience in which 120 Spanish castles

63 Juan A. Gaya, "La peregrinación a Gormaz," *BAEAC* 50 (1965): 317–23. See also J. Gil Montero, "El Castillo de Gormaz," *BAEAC* 7 (1955): 296–98, at 298.

64 Gaya, "La peregrinación," 318.

65 Mertxe Urteaga and Manuel Retuerce, "Las excavaciones en la fortaleza de Gormaz (Soria) y la introducción en España del Harris Matrix System," in *Al-kitab: Juan Zozaya Stabel Hansen* (Madrid: AEAM, 2016), 134–44, at 137.

Fig. 5.8: Gormaz (Soria), Caliphal Castle, Main entrance. Photo: Windwhistler/Wikimedia Commons (CC BY 3.0 unported).

were presented through short texts and photographs. Only twelve were identified as Islamic (even though it was known that approximately half of all medieval Spanish castles were of Islamic origin); this suggests that the Marquis intentionally chose castles without an Islamic connection for his book.[66]

Ruins, Tourism, and International Promotion

The defeat of the Berlin-Rome Axis in 1945 and the ensuing isolation of fascist Spain put an end to Franco's imperial dream, but not to his national Catholic project for the country, which would last until 1975. Some megalomaniacal architectural projects, such as the Falange's national headquarters, were abandoned.[67] The 1950s were characterized by a degree of economic recovery, the progressive opening to the interna-

66 Marqués de Lozoya, *Castillos de España* (Barcelona: Salvat, 1967).
67 Lasso de la Vega, "Pedro Muguruza," 208.

tional market, and the recognition from foreign countries that culminated in Spain's entry into the United Nations. The three pillars on which economic development was consolidated were tourism, emigration to other European countries, and the influx of foreign capital in search of cheap labor. From a cultural and religious perspective, this apparently modern Spain could not continue to embrace an ultra-Catholic view of the past based on a nonexistent national spirit. In the realm of artistic creation, the resulting changes fostered the emergence of a younger generation of painters who started to explore avant-garde art (especially abstraction) proscribed by Franco's regime. In the domain of architecture, it meant renouncing an imperial national style turned toward the past and adopting more modern, international tendencies (such as rationalism).[68] The perception of medieval castles, however, remained unchanged. Romantic and anachronistically ultranationalist thoughts continued to be prevalent; silhouettes of ancient fortresses emerging from the fields of rural Spain continued to be interpreted as reminders of a glorious past. "There is nothing more spiritual or more worthy of respect than a Spanish castle . . . . Even in its most ruinous and disconsolate state, it offers itself to us strangely alive, immortal, and eternal."[69] The evocative power of fortresses in ruins was used by Francoism not only as evidence of a bygone era but also as a warning against the tragedy of recent times caused, so the official rhetoric had it, by Republican Marxism.[70]

At the same time, the possibility of using medieval and Renaissance castles as tourist attractions started to take hold in government circles. From 1944 onward, the Ministry of Tourism and Information invested in the Paradores Nacionales.[71] Two of the chain's hotels, in Ciudad Rodrigo (Salamanca) and Oropesa (Toledo), had been opened during the Second Republic (1931–39) and cleverly incorporated what remained of the former structures.[72] After the Civil War, both were enhanced with a complete set of furniture and objects that helped to create a supposedly medieval atmosphere.[73] Following the same idea, the construction of the Paradores of Málaga and Granada was approved in the 1940s. While the first was planned on the hillside of

68 Asenjo, "Muguruza ha muerto," 250.

69 Miguel García de Mora, "La conservación de los castillos, exigencia de todos," *BAEAC* 24 (1959): 29–31, at 31.

70 The most eloquent example of the use of ruins as a reminder of Marxist destruction was the prohibition to rebuild some villages, among them Belchite Viejo in the province of Zaragoza. See Pedro Gómez Aparicio, "El símbolo de los dos Belchites" *Reconstrucción* 1 (1940): 6–9, at 7, and discussion by Esther Almarcha Núñez-Herrador, "La elocuencia de las ruinas," *Conversaciones . . . con Nicholas Stanley-Price* 9 (2020): 165–81.

71 María J. Rodríguez, *La red de Paradores: Arquitectura e historia del turismo 1911–1951* (Madrid: Turner, 2018), 173.

72 Rodríguez, *La red de Paradores,* 125.

73 Luis M. Feduchi, "Parador Nacional de Oropesa," *Revista Nacional de Arquitectura* 84 (1948): 479–81.

the Andalusian castle of Gibralfaro, the second was built within the historic site of the Alhambra itself.[74]

One can therefore conclude that the decree for the protection of castles was, at least in part, enacted to support the nascent tourist industry.[75] Following this idea, the AEAC, founded in 1953, recognized the value of Spanish fortresses as tourist attractions and, thus, a means to generate income. In addition, the association's founding statutes declared that one of its goals was to organize excursions, allowing its members to experience the castles directly.[76] With the support of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, the AEAC started to offer trips as soon as the following year; these could even involve air travel, thanks to the use of Air Force planes.[77] In areas located away from major towns, access to castles was improved and municipalities were asked to repair roads and build adequate facilities for potential visitors.[78] More consequentially, in 1964 a special plan used significant economic investment to stop the destruction of historic castles. The impetus was no longer, as in the 1949 protection decree, political. Instead, following the path established by the Paradores project, the goal was to market the castles to foreign tourists and demonstrate that Spain was much more than a country of "beaches and sun."[79]

The AEAC was active in the international promotion of Spanish castles. After the success of the second *Castillos de España* exhibition in Madrid, the organization hoped to send the display abroad, to Paris and London. This move, responding to the general modernization of Spain, was supported by the Directorate of Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[80] In addition to European and American venues for exhibitions on Spanish castles, others were planned in the Middle East (though they were never carried out).[81] Even more extravagant ideas were proposed to support the preservation of the venerable castles. One sought foreign sponsorship, particularly in Latin American countries and nations of the Islamic world, by appealing alternatively to the Spanish and Muslim heritage. These countries would be responsible for the restoration and conservation of the castles; in exchange, they would be allowed to install museums on the premises in which their own cultural achievements could be disseminated across Spain.[82] In 1962, these ideas were pushed even further when the Spanish ambassador to

74 Rodríguez, *La red de Paradores*, 218–20.

75 Almarcha and Villena. "Los castillos ¿destino turístico?," 70.

76 [AEAC], "El decreto de 22 de abril," 62; AEAC, *Estatutos de la Asociación Española de Amigos de los Castillos* (Madrid: AEAC, 1953).

77 [AEAC], "Audiencia concedida," 107; Almarcha and Villena. "Los castillos ¿destino turístico?," 85, 87.

78 [AEAC], "Editorial," 139.

79 Almarcha and Villena, "Una nación de castillos," 199.

80 Fernández-Shaw, "Un programa para la conservación," 49.

81 [AEAC], "Audiencia concedida," 105; Almarcha and Villena. "Los castillos ¿destino turístico?," 81.

82 Fernández-Shaw, "Un programa para la conservación," 50. For another Franco-era cooperative project between Spain and the Islamic world involving architectural heritage (the mosque at Córdoba), see the contribution by Michele Lamprakos in this volume.

the United States transmitted to his government a project sponsored by a group of Texas millionaires who would restore a number of castles in return for a grant of ownership for life.[83]

To conclude, one can say that, by the end of Franco's regime in 1975, the old Spanish fortresses were no longer of interest as witnesses to national and Catholic unity or as racially-inflected reflections of the "Spanish spirit." Instead, they were reconceived as tourist attractions. Both the old and the new rationales played a role in setting in motion the restoration of the monuments I have discussed. In the early years of the dictatorship, some castles—generally of little importance—were rebuilt to house political institutions and facilities connected to the police; those that promised economic profit were converted—totally or partially—into luxury hotels (the Paradores) in response to an increase in tourist demand. This is one of the many manifestations of the dictatorship's adoption of a double discourse, one that alternated between ideology and pragmatism. On the one hand, the regime's propaganda apparatus focused on the supremacy of national Catholic thought tinged with a layer of fascist rhetoric; on the other, the need to bring Spain out of the isolation into which it had been condemned after the defeat of Nazi Germany meant that the built heritage was recognized for its economic potential. The same mix of ideological and practical considerations can be seen in the Decree of Protection of the Castles approved in 1949. While it is a text full of propagandistic allusions and triumphal rhetoric, the sweeping restoration projects it envisioned remained, in practice, severely underfunded and, ultimately, unrealized. Even so, the lack of appropriate resources for restoration and conservation projects affected Christian castles and Islamic fortresses alike.

83 Almarcha and Villena, "Una nación de castillos," 200.