Cultural Narratives of Charles V and Spanish Imaginaries in West Germany during the Franco Dictatorship

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to contribute to research on the international relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Spain after World War II, when the Franco dictatorship experienced a process of rehabilitation. In order to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon, we need to complement existing studies on the history of diplomatic relations with approaches to the sphere of cultural imaginaries. This article, intended as a particular case study, analyzes the resignification of Francoism in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) via the heritage and tourist narratives associated with one historical figure shared by both nations: Charles V.

Introduction: Adenauer Takes off his Hat

In 1967, just two months before his death, Konrad Adenauer, former Chancellor of the FRG, paid an official visit to Spain (Figure 1). The abundant coverage of this visit in the media, including the Franco regime's official cinema newsreels known as the No-Do, gives an idea of the importance of the event. Even though the conservative German leader had already withdrawn from politics, his presence constituted a valuable endorsement for the Francoist dictatorship. As noted in Vicente Sánchez Biosca's analysis of No-Do reports on the visit, Adenauer "saw places as exotic for a person responsible for German denazification" such as the Valley of the Fallen, one of the largest monuments built to commemorate the fascist victory after the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), and the Alcázar of Toledo, another landmark of the so-called *national crusade*.[1] While visiting the latter, Biosca continues, "according to the No-Do voice-over, [Adenauer] took off his hat in the courtyard of Charles V, the emperor

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Figure 1. News report on Konrad Adenauer's visit, *La Vanguardia Española*, February 19,1967 (detail).

who ruled both Germany and Spain [*sic*], 'because', said the former chancellor, 'you must enter it as if going into a church.'"[2]

The courtyard of Charles V occupied a prominent place in the propaganda apparatus developed by the Francoist regime around the Alcázar of Toledo. This military fortress endured a much-memorialized seventy-day siege under the Republican army during the Civil War, which gave rise to a primordial myth in the foundational narrative of the Francoist regime. The commemorative value of the building—deliberately left in ruins throughout the 1940s and well into the 1950s—began to be exploited even before the war was over, leading to its transformation in what Miriam Basilio has described as a "patriotic-tourist destination."[3] In this context, the above mentioned courtyard, built during the reigns of Charles V and Philip II, was read as an "architectural embodiment of the Spanish nation and its imperial tradition."[4] This meaning was underscored by the presence, in its center, of a copy of the famous sculpture by Italian Renaissance master Leone Leoni, *Charles V and the Fury* (1551–1555), which resisted miraculously unharmed after the siege. Francoist propagandists leapt at the opportunity to exploit the symbolism of the statue's survival, presenting it as a

Figure 2. *Charles V and the Fury*, copy of the sculpture by Pompeo Leoni in the courtyard of Charles V at the Alcázar of Toledo (Wikimedia Commons).

demonstration that the Catholic imperial tradition had prevailed despite attacks by Spain's enemies (Figure 2).

As head of the royal house of Habsburg which dominated continental Europe until its decline in the eighteenth century, Charles V (1500–1558) unified the territories today known as Austria, Germany, Spain and its possessions of Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, as well as the Netherlands and the American colonies. This historical figure served Franco's propaganda goals especially well. Together with other key historical figures in Spain's national mythology like the Catholic Monarchs, Visigoth Pelayo, or El Cid,[5] Charles V provided a powerful symbol for the regime's rhetoric of empire and crusade, which played a pivotal role in the symbolic construction of early Francoism.[6]

However, to return to Adenauer's gesture of removing his hat, it is worth asking what the courtyard of Charles V symbolized from the point of view of the foreign observer as late as 1967. Sánchez-Biosca has highlighted that by the 1960s, the increasingly numerous visits to the Alcázar by distinguished tourists like the former chancellor were "already more relaxed with respect to any ideological link or identification of the visitor with the regime's values."[7] This means that the memory of the siege, albeit still prevalent in the public presentation of the building, left room for other ways of dealing with the site, including appreciation of its architectural and cultural heritage value.

The shift in the international perception of Franco's dictatorship after 1945 has been studied mainly from the perspective of diplomatic relations. Historiographical accounts present the regime's rehabilitation as a product of Cold War politics in which Franco was reframed as the "sentinel of the West" and as the result of a series of "cosmetic reform" measures aimed at modernizing Spain's image abroad, while leaving the regime's fundamental repressive structures intact.[8] However, the question of how this diplomatic process was accompanied by changes (or continuities) in the sphere of "mental maps" has yet to be analyzed.[9] There is a need to complement the macropolitical narrative by addressing the sphere of cultural imaginaries, exploring other elements that may have been instrumental for the reformulation of people's (not their governments') relations with Spain under the Franco dictatorship. Factors that are generally underestimated because they are wrongly considered apolitical, such as heritage and culture, or even banal, such as tourism, should be reconsidered as key political agents in this rehabilitation process. Adopting just such an approach, in this article I examine the narratives associated with the figure of Charles V as a case study that sheds light on international opinion concerning Franco's Spain, and more specifically on the role played by the Federal Republic of Germany in the international rehabilitation of the dictatorship.

I consider the West German case to be of special interest for several reasons. First, in relation to the suggested approach, Germany and Spain share the symbolism surrounding the imperial figure Charles I of Spain and Charles V of Germany. Second, in relation to the rehabilitation of the dictatorship, this process had particular implications in the specific case of the FRG. Founded in 1949 but not fully sovereign and independent of the occupying powers until after 1955, the legitimacy of the FRG depended largely on its ability to present itself as fully denazified after World War II. This had an impact for obvious reasons on Germany's hesitant relations with the Franco regime. In Birgit Aschmann's words, "Spain confronted the Federal Republic with its own past like no other country."[10] Third and lastly, Spain soon became a major destination for postwar German tourism. This is especially relevant taking into account that tourism is not only one of the most powerful tools for shaping cultural imaginaries but was also a key diplomatic instrument for the Franco dictatorship.[11]

As for the sources used, given that the aim of this study is to gain access to cultural imaginaries, a varied, non-hierarchical corpus of documents has been sought, which disregards the frontiers between high and low culture. Research work was based on newspaper and periodical sources as well as travel literature and tourist ephemera, mainly published by German agents and intended for German audiences, in particular from the collections of the Ibero-American Institute in Berlin. This set of primary sources proved that one of the most salient resources when it came to mobilizing cultural narratives around the historical figure under scrutiny was that of heritage sites. In tourist literature as well as in press articles of the time, Charles V is often mentioned in connection with monuments and historical sites throughout Spain. This superimposition of the historical figure onto specific spaces of the present time paves the way for political discourses that summoned the specter of the Habsburg emperor as lingering in the present of postwar European politics. At the same time, the alluded connection between Charles V and specific heritage sites suggests a link to tourist practices and imaginaries which become entangled with the mentioned political discourses.

Methodologically, the present analysis is situated in the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies. It builds on previous research on tourism imaginaries and visual culture about Spain during the Franco dictatorship,[12] a field of work which is intersected here with the approaches of heritage studies and the history of international relations. The key role of heritage in the production of national imaginaries and narratives has been widely studied. Scholars have highlighted its function as a material "vestige of the past,"[13] that enables people to develop a sense of collective memory and national belonging in terms of an "imagined community."[14] Special emphasis has been laid on the uses of and the conflictual aspects that derive from heritage as an instrument to reinforce identities, from the emergence of discrepant or "dissonant" versions of national memory,[15] to the "heritage machine" as a source of exclusion and of asymmetrical power relations in local contexts.[16]

These approaches appeal to me in that they emphasize not what heritage *is* but what heritage *produces*, in line with the performative and affective turns within critical heritage studies. According to Laurajane Smith, heritage is not a set of material remnants from the past but "a process of engagement, an act of communication and an act of making meaning in and for the present."[17] However, I propose a shift in the focus of national heritage narratives from the more common point of view of local agents, toward the perspective of foreign audiences, which, as suggested by heritage tourism studies, are active cocreators and not merely consumers of local heritage discourses.[18] This approach provides new insights into tourism narratives applied to heritage sites of great symbolic importance in Spain during the Franco dictatorship.

In the following pages, I analyze a series of ideas attributed to the figure of Charles V in West Germany from the perspective of cultural imaginaries, tourism, and heritage

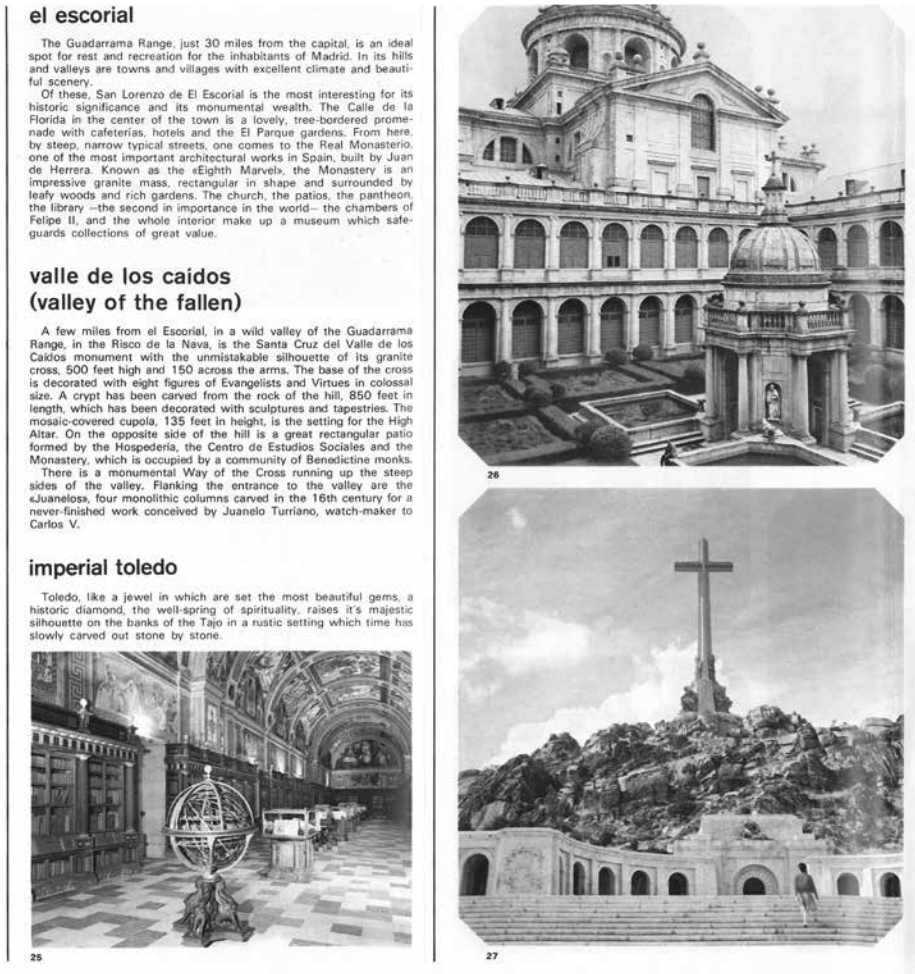
studies. These ideas differ from the more familiar account of the Franco regime's imperial rhetoric, which was intended for domestic audiences. They tell us instead about international perceptions regarding Francoist Spain in the 1950s and 1960s. The various narratives are structured according to the three main architectural heritage sites most often associated with the monarch, though only the last one was directly built during his reign: (1) The Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, built by his son Philip II in accordance with his father's mandate to create a Royal mausoleum, (2) the Monastery of Yuste, Estremadura, where the monarch spent his last days, and (3) the Palace of Charles V in the Alhambra, Granada. Combining newspaper and tourism-related sources with bibliographic and secondary sources, I will analyze the different imperial narratives these monuments mobilized in the collective imagination of postwar German society. This will illustrate the key role that historical and artistic heritage plays in shaping, renegotiating, and reinforcing national narratives and will enable a better understanding of the changes in both German and international perceptions of the Franco dictatorship after 1945.

El Escorial: The Heart of Europe

In 1958, almost a decade before Konrad Adenauer's visit, another high-ranking representative of the FRG visited Spain: Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano. That year marked the fourth centenary of the death of Charles V, an anniversary that the regime celebrated with numerous commemorative events, including the inauguration of the newly restored Monastery of Yuste and the Museum of Fine Arts of Granada in the Palace of Charles V in the Alhambra following restoration and refurbishment work.[19]

As with Adenauer's visit ten years later, Heinrich von Brentano's official visit included trips to both the Monastery of El Escorial and the Valley of the Fallen, the construction of which had been completed that same year. This funerary monument, place of the dictator's tomb from 1975 until the exhumation in 2019, was originally planned in 1939 to commemorate Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War. However, in accordance with the changed geopolitical order when its construction ended in 1958, the Valley was subsequently re-signified, first as a monument to the victory *and* the fallen, then only to the fallen, and finally in terms of a heritage site, with its monumental cross and its vast catacombs presented as a wonder of architecture.[20] As such, it also became associated with the Renaissance monastery of El Escorial, both in metaphorical terms (the Valley of the Fallen was referred to as "Franco's Escorial") and as a tourist attraction. In fact, the two were often linked in a combined visit that turned into a popular excursion from Madrid (Figure 3).

The day after his visit to the Valley of the Fallen and El Escorial, the German minister attended a dinner hosted in his honor by his counterpart, Foreign Minister Fernando María Castiella, considered one of the driving forces behind the modernization of the regime's international image.[21] The speeches given that evening were



el escorial

The Guadarrama Range, just 30 miles from the capital, is an ideal spot for rest and recreation for the inhabitants of Madrid. In its hills and valleys are towns and villages with excellent climate and beautiful scenery.

Of these, San Lorenzo de El Escorial is the most interesting for its historic significance and its monumental wealth. The Calle de la Florida in the center of the town is a lovely, tree-bordered promenade with cafeterías, hotels and the El Parque gardens. From here, by steep, narrow typical streets, one comes to the Real Monasterio, one of the most important architectural works in Spain, built by Juan de Herrera. Known as the «Eighth Marvel», the Monastery is an impressive granite mass, rectangular in shape and surrounded by leafy woods and rich gardens. The church, the patios, the pantheon, the library —the second in importance in the world— the chambers of Felipe II, and the whole interior make up a museum which safeguards collections of great value.

valle de los caídos (valley of the fallen)

A few miles from el Escorial, in a wild valley of the Guadarrama Range, in the Risco de la Nava, is the Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos monument with the unmistakable silhouette of its granite cross, 500 feet high and 150 across the arms. The base of the cross is decorated with eight figures of Evangelists and Virtues in colossal size. A crypt has been carved from the rock of the hill, 850 feet in length, which has been decorated with sculptures and tapestries. The mosaic-covered cupola, 135 feet in height, is the setting for the High Altar. On the opposite side of the hill is a great rectangular patio formed by the Hospedería, the Centro de Estudios Sociales and the Monastery, which is occupied by a community of Benedictine monks.

There is a monumental Way of the Cross running up the steep sides of the valley. Flanking the entrance to the valley are the «Juaneloss», four monolithic columns carved in the 16th century for a never-finished work conceived by Juanelo Turriano, watch-maker to Carlos V.

imperial toledo

Toledo, like a jewel in which are set the most beautiful gems, a historic diamond, the well-spring of spirituality, raises it's majestic silhouette on the banks of the Tajo in a rustic setting which time has slowly carved out stone by stone.

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Figure 3. *Madrid and its surroundings* (promotional leaflet), Madrid: Ministerio de Información y Turismo, 1971 (CDTE, Tourspain).

replete with references to the two nations' cultural ties. One of the most cited tropes was that of the "traditional German-Spanish friendship," which was epitomised by the figure of Charles V.[22] Recalling this "great historical figure," the German minister observed: "This year we recall, both here and there, the day four hundred years ago, when the eyes of this great King of Spain and Emperor of Germany closed forever. It was in the chapel of El Escorial that I truly realized the full extent of our shared past, which should also inspire our countries to continue working together now and in the future."[23] It is ironic that von Brentano's realization came to him precisely in such a symbolic space of the Counter-Reformation as El Escorial. 400 years earlier, the imperial figure that the German minister was now extolling as a source of spiritual

brotherhood had been the target of anti-Spanish rhetoric, contributing to the so-called black legend, "a set of negative images derived from the Age of Reformation that had promoted the image of a fanatically catholic, intolerant, despotic and therefore hopelessly antimodern Spain."[24] Von Brentano's memory serves as evidence for the performative, rather than innate, nature of national myths and stereotypes. Far from being reflections of a supposed "national character," such narratives are active agents in the construction of that character. As Ismael Saz has argued, "the mythogenesis of national characters is always constructed, fixed and changed from somewhere, always in response to precise objectives or needs."[25] Applying this to Heinrich von Brentano's discourse, we may infer that the 1950s narrative of Charles V as the epitome of an allegedly traditional German-Spanish friendship responded to "precise objectives or needs" of the FRG itself. And, if there was one thing that German society needed in the postwar period, it was reconstruction in the broadest sense of the word: not only material, but also moral and identitarian. A key agent in this respect was the *Abendland* movement.

In the pursuit of an identity project that would break with the Nazi past, Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) government promoted the idea of the *Abendland* in the 1950s. This concept, which could be translated as "the West" (the German term *Abendland* refers to the land of the sunset, as opposed to the land of the morning or *Morgenland*, i.e., the East), was rooted in the belief in the existence of a series of values and cultural ties shared by Christian Europe. Originally defining a geographical entity, this cultural trope became ideologically loaded in the context of nineteenth-century German Romanticism when it turned into a Christian-Catholic identitarian project that sought, according to Rosario Forlenza and Bryan S. Turner, "a conscious differentiation from the South-East (the non-Christian realm, primarily Islam, but also Russia)."[26]

World War II was a key moment in consolidation of the concept of "the West," when it became associated with positive values such as democracy, progress, or human rights. In the case of West Germany, this process of westernization was, as Jasper Trautsch has shown, particularly accentuated: whereas previously the tendency had been to cultivate the idea of the exceptionality of a "German culture" not fully subsumed within "Western civilization," 1945 gave rise to a "reinvestigation of Germany's relationship with 'the West.'"[27] It was imperative to find new identity anchors that allowed for spiritual reconstruction, at a time when, moreover, the first steps were being taken towards an incipient European Union. It was in this context that the idea of *Abendland* blossomed once more: "The focus was on the renewal of a Christian, supranational European community, in which Germany could find its place on the basis of shared religious values."[28]

Against this backdrop, Spain stood out as one of the oldest nations in this Europe united in the Christian faith. Researchers such as Walter Lehmann and Birgit

Aschmann have shown that, through the *Abendland* movement, German Catholicism in the conservative Adenauer era became one of the main defenders of the Franco regime's interests in Europe.[29] Representatives of the Spanish government—which included prominent members of Catholic internationalism like Alberto Martín Artajo (Foreign Minister between 1945 and 1957) and Joaquín Ruiz Giménez (Education Minister from 1951 to 1956), both leading members of the National Catholic Association of Propagandists (Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas; ACNP)—were often invited to contribute to the *Abendland* movement's main periodicals, while political personalities associated with the movement in both countries took part in meetings organized by the European Centre for Documentation and Information (CEDI), a conservative think tank founded in 1952 under Spanish initiative. This organization served as an important exchange forum for conservative and Catholic circles throughout Europe, and has been associated with the genesis of what could be considered a "Conservative International," active in Western Europe from the 1950s to the present day.[30] Under an academic guise, and with the promotion of European integration as its official goal, CEDI meetings in fact functioned as a covert form of diplomacy between the Franco dictatorship and its supporters in countries such as the FRG and France.[31]

The figure of Charles V played a prominent role in this identity framework. As Dietrich Briesemeister has observed, the Hispanic imperial past proved useful as a means to foster the idea of a consolidated Europe against dependence on the United States and protected from the influence of the Soviet Union.[32] The notions that it was Spain—i.e., Europe—that had founded American civilization, and not otherwise, or that the emperor had already protected European culture against threats from the East, were powerful narrative anchors in this respect. The fact that almost all of CEDI's annual meetings were held at the Monastery of El Escorial further supports this interpretation. Gathered in the sanctum sanctorum of the former Spanish Empire, as Carlos Collado Seidel has shown, "CEDI stalwarts saw in 1950s Spain that 'healthy conscience of the West' which they feared was in danger of being lost in their own countries."[33]

The emphasis placed on the figure of Charles V as the epitome of the alleged Spanish-German friendship also played another particularly important role: it helped minimize the importance of the much more recent alliance between Franco and Hitler. The memory of Nazi-Francoist collaborationism had to be "whisked away as a parenthesis or blank historical space" according to Carlos Sanz, "so that it would not interfere in an idealized 'traditional Spanish-German friendship' that would have its roots in the times of Charles V—now celebrated . . . as precursor and paladin of the 'Christian West.'"[34] The imperative need to bury the recent past under layers of the distant past becomes easier to understand if we bear in mind that, according to reports analyzed by Birgit Aschmann, it was still common in 1950s Spain that "any

German man" was greeted with the fascist salute as a sign of friendship.[35] Such displays shocked German observers and diplomats, who helplessly noted the "undeniable admiration that the Third Reich arouses in Spain," to the extent that for the average Spanish citizen, "the existence of a federal president as the highest representative of the German State was, even in 1960, 'largely unknown.'"[36]

That the figure of Charles V served as a useful tool to combat the uncomfortable memory of the Franco-Hitler alliance was explicitly stated in the German press at the time. A good example of this appears in a series of articles that the journalist Ekkehard Gentz published about a trip through Spain in 1952, entitled "Spanish Diary." In the very first instalment, Gentz noted that "Germans are warmly welcomed in Spain," but was quick to deny any potentially suspicious origin of this affinity: "This has nothing to do with the Hitler era, we are assured, but goes back much further, ultimately to Emperor Charles V, under whose reign 'we were one country.'"[37]

The fact that this reference appears in a series of travel-themed articles indicates that this type of discourse, typical of diplomatic relations, also surfaced in the field of tourism. Indeed, the remote past was not an exclusive recourse of *Abendland* ideology but finds a direct correlate in tourism imaginaries as well. One of the most striking things to emerge from an analysis of the visual culture of tourism in Spain during the 1950s and 1960s is the enduring prominence of representations of backwardness.[38] In contrast to the images of sun and sand that usually come to mind in association with the tourism boom, the narrative of Spain as a primitive paradise stranded in time permeated the tourism imaginary to a far greater extent than might be expected. At the very same time as the Franco regime's tourism authorities were trying to modernize the country's image, the narrative of a backward South, which had long been firmly established in European mental maps, surfaced in the tourism imaginary of Spain.

This primitivist discourse explicitly converged with the use of Charles V in travel guides such as *Spanien. Reisen mit Nutzen und Genuβ* (Spain: make the most of your trip and enjoy yourself), co-published by Daimler-Benz in 1955. On the one hand, this guide is full of images of underdevelopment, including representations of cave dwellings and rudimentary roads traversed by preindustrial elements such as donkeys or carts, contrasting with the modern tourist vehicle. Such images of backwardness were romanticized from a primitivist perspective. On the other hand, the guidebook text reflects a deliberate attempt to render modernity invisible, replacing the present with nostalgic references to the splendor of the imperial past. According to the author:

> [The Spaniard] constantly looks back to Spain's Golden Age in the sixteenth century. And those of us who travel around Spain today do so with him, because that past remains more present and alive here than anywhere else. . . . At every step of the way, the traveler encounters the memory of Philip and Charles V, and the echo is

> often so strong that one would not be surprised if a gilded chariot instead of a modern automobile were to emerge, with solemn slowness, from around the corner.[39]

My contention is that this systematically past-oriented vision of Spain, albeit incongruous with the regime's efforts to cast an image of modernity and development, ended up favoring Franco. Primitivist tourism discourses made it possible to divert attention away from the present situation and toward the sphere of timeless essences. This allowed tourists to experience Francoist Spain as a journey through time, not as a holiday in a dictatorship. In this respect, the effect was very similar to that of the *Abendland* discourse, which, according to Walter Lehmann, deployed "projections based on the distant past" that "masked the political and social circumstances of Francoist Spain, and thus fostered ignorance of the political situation prevailing within the country."[40]

Yuste: Processing the Experience of Defeat

The Monastery of Yuste, the place to which the emperor retired in his final years, evokes an image of Charles V very different from the figure of imperial power, this is, that of abdication and retirement. As photographer Jorge Ribalta has demonstrated, an interesting transformation takes place here: the symbolic body becomes the mortal body.[41] This does not seem, a priori, to be a very exploitable narrative in terms of Spain's image as a tourist destination (Figure 4). However, the Monastery of Yuste was also incorporated into the rhetoric of "traditional German-Spanish friendship."

Among the sources consulted, it is striking, first of all, that most of the documents in which the monastery is mentioned were written by authors that are directly associated with the rehabilitation of the Franco dictatorship in the German public opinion. Of particular note among these are Werner Schulz, who reported on it in several of his articles in *Merian* (a popular travel magazine of the time in the FRG);[42] Heinz Barth, who, even before the end of World War II, had published an article entitled "Yuste," in which he wrote wistfully about the Europe of the past;[43] and Otto Roegele, who covered the Monastery of Yuste in his *Diary of a trip to Spain* in the mid-1950s.[44]

Werner Schulz and Heinz Barth have been identified as two of the main correspondents who contributed to disseminating a pro-Franco perception among the German public throughout the 1950s.[45] As for Otto Roegele, cofounder of the journal *Rheinischer Merkur* and an influential voice of postwar Catholicism, he was one of the most active German participants in the aforementioned CEDI meetings.[46]

What meanings did these authors associate with Yuste? Without exception, the monastery is mentioned as a place of retreat for Charles V, clearly linked to a narrative of nostalgia and decline, in which the monastery functions as a metaphor for the waning of the Spanish Empire. This ties in, once again, with one of the Spanish stereotypes that have long circulated in Europe: the tale of decay. Whereas in the

Figure 4. *Yuste (Cuacos). Cáceres, España* (promotional leaflet), Madrid: Ministerio de Información y Turismo, 1968 (CDTE, Tourspain).

eighteenth century the compendium of negative attributes of the "black legend"—cruelty, fanaticism, obscurantism—functioned as a mirror in which, according to Ismael Saz, "enlightened Europe reconfirmed itself in opposition to the Spanish Other," in the nineteenth century these attributes underwent a positive reformulation.[47] It was, as Enrique Moradiellos has explained, against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars that Romanticism turned the "black legend" on its head: "Hispanic cruelty became invincible bravery, execrable fanaticism became steadfast passion, and haughty pride became patriotic and individualistic dignity."[48]

Seen through this romantic filter, the narrative of Spain's decline acquired a tragic and nostalgic hue, which dovetailed neatly with the imaginary of Spain after World War II. This narrative of decline pervades the work of German correspondents and travelers in Francoist Spain. In fact, the figures of Charles V and Philip II can be said to mobilize an imaginary that has more to do with the idea of decay than with that of the emperor as a symbol of power. The articles published by the aforementioned Werner Schulz in the travel magazine *Merian* provide an eloquent example. For instance, in a text on the armory of the Royal Palace in Madrid, Schulz described the armor, shields, and lances as "silent witnesses of the greatness and tragedy" of two monarchs, Charles V and his son, thrown into the quandary "of the struggle between an emerging new world and a waning old world."[49] The author seems to take advantage of the slightest pretext to cultivate this tale of decline, but does so in romantic terms, as a story of great men doomed to a tragic destiny.

I do not think it is misguided to assume that German readers of *Merian* would have found it relatively easy to identify with this narrative of defeat, given that the memory of World War II would still have been fresh in their minds. This provides clues as to the possible motives that made the decline of the Spanish Empire such an attractive story for the German public. It was, after all, a major historical example of the collapse of a power, which in some way offered a template for processing the experience of defeat.

This shared experience of defeat did indeed mark the diplomatic relations between the two countries after 1945. As suggested, among others, by the Hispanist Dietrich Briesemeister, the fact that both nations started from a common position of *Außenseiter*, or "outsiders," in the new geopolitical order, sparked a certain level of empathy.[50] Excluded from the main decision-making bodies, both governments were in need of Western recognition, but at the same time, they were both unwavering in their demand for national sovereignty and rejection of foreign interference. West Germany did not achieve full sovereignty until 1955, precisely the same year that Francoist Spain was admitted to the UN. Within this body, the Franco dictatorship's delegates strongly supported West German interests in the "German question," defending the right to exclusive UN representation of the FRG and a veto on the GDR, in accordance with the so-called Hallstein doctrine.[51]

This strategic alliance can be glimpsed between the lines of Heinrich von Brentano's 1958 speech. After referring to the vision he had had of Charles V at El Escorial, the minister went on to lament the division of his homeland. Far from being a purely domestic political issue, he contended that this should be "a matter of deep concern to all those who recognize the right of self-determination of peoples."[52] Von Brentano then thanked the Spanish government for "having at all times shown a willingness to remedy this unjust situation," and concluded by promising that as soon as he returned to his homeland, he would become "an eloquent advocate" of Spain's interests in West Germany and in Europe. Under the umbrella of the German-Spanish friendship, epitomized by the figure of Charles V, there were shared interests that went far beyond cultural and spiritual ties.

The Palace of Charles V in the Alhambra: Encountering the Exotic

The Renaissance Palace commissioned by Charles V to be built at the heart of the Alhambra, the fortress of the Nasrid dynasty that ruled the Emirate of Granada from 1230 until 1492, has traditionally generated two opposing narratives. In a travel guide by British writer John Langdon-Davies, the "intrusive" presence of this palace is interpreted as a demonstration of the Spanish monarchy's determination to erase all traces of Islamic culture from Spain.[53] However, the opposite narrative seems to have been the most widespread one in West Germany, where the existence of the Renaissance palace within the Nasrid complex was read as a fusion of the two cultures.

This idea, which harks back to the romantic and orientalizing vision of Spain as a cultural melting pot, dovetailed perfectly with *Abendland* ideology, in which Spain played the role of a bridge between European, American, and African civilization. In the words of Walter Bernecker, "The West, according to these interpretations, was more present in Spain than elsewhere, due to the latter's peripheral location and its function as a nexus on the edge of Europe."[54]

The Palace of Charles V provided unsurpassed symbolic capital for this argument, as it was both emblematic of the power of the Hispanic monarchy that was situated at the origin of Europe, and a link with that other great symbol of the Arab world, the Alhambra. It is not surprising, therefore, that an author such as the aforementioned Otto Roegele adhered to this second version of the palace narrative. In a 1958 issue of the journal *Merian* devoted to the Alhambra (precisely in the year of the fourth centenary of Charles V, which also coincided with Heinrich von Brentano's visit) (Figure 5), Roegele argued that although the Renaissance palace was "the complete opposite of the Moorish Alhambra, that is to say, a large square building, which sits with an authoritarian air within the ancient enclosure," the building did not in any way clash with the ensemble.[55] On the contrary, Charles V had, in his opinion, shown unusual sensitivity toward the Hispano-Islamic heritage, at a time when one might have expected a more intransigent attitude. As proof of this, Roegele cited the well-

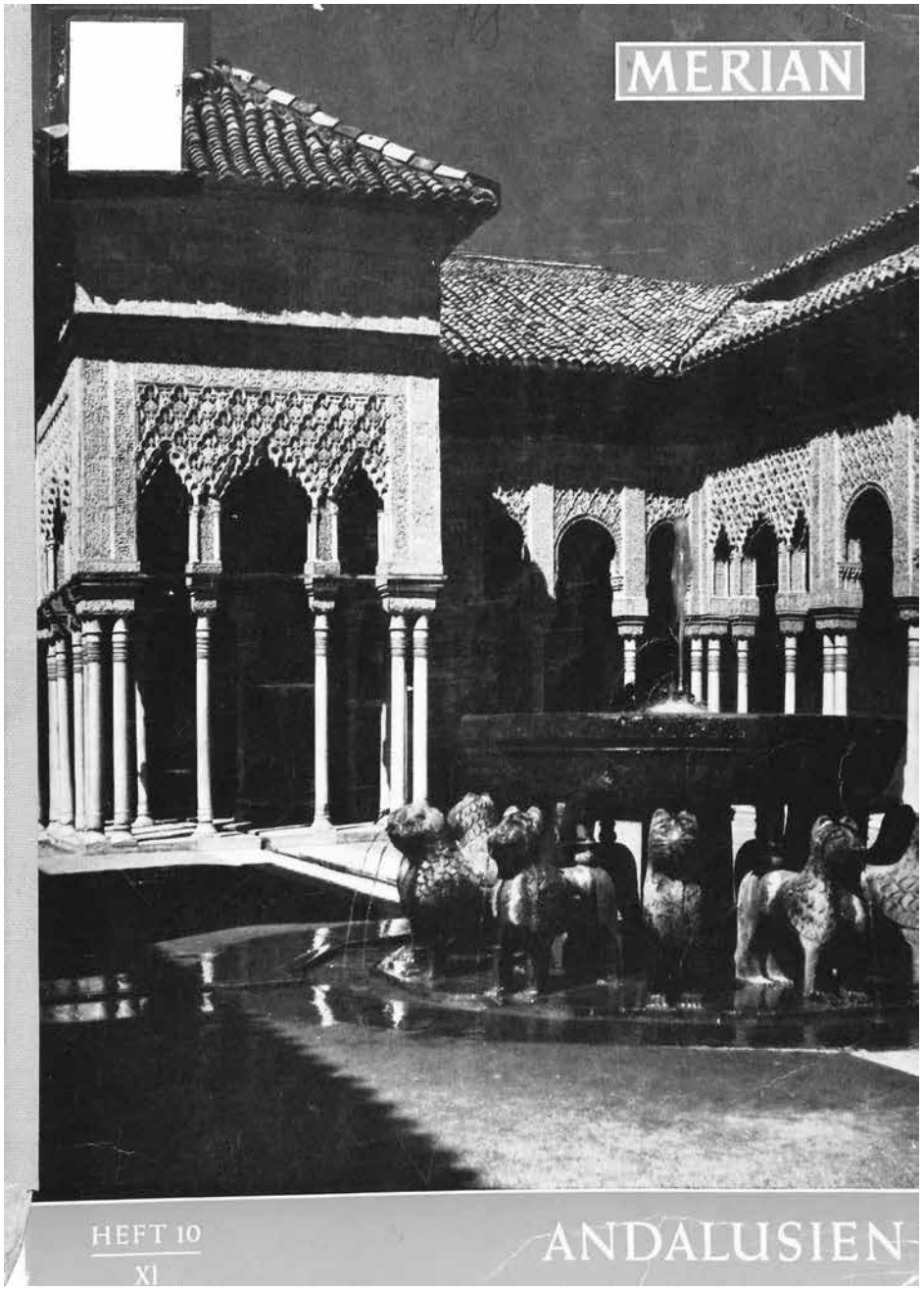

Figure 5. *Andalusien. Merian* XI, no. 10, 1958 (cover).

known story of the emperor's horror at the destruction of heritage committed when the mosque of Cordoba was converted into a cathedral, as well as his choice of the Alcázar of Seville to celebrate his wedding with Isabella of Portugal in 1526, "a palace," as Roegele pointed out, "built by Arab artists commissioned by Christian kings."[56]

The imperial image of the "black legend" is here completely reversed, replaced by that of a cultured, tolerant emperor whose stance comes close to modern concepts of multiculturalism. Of the three narratives so far identified around Charles V, this is the one that most directly connects with tourism discourses. The above-mentioned article by Roegele, eloquently entitled "Charles V in Andalusia," evidences a desire to highlight the emperor's ties with southern Spain, and therefore with the geographical and cultural region most closely associated with the tourist notion of Spain. The emperor's happiest days, observed Roegele, were set in Andalusia, and more specifically at the Alhambra in Granada, where the king and Isabella of Portugal spent some time after their marriage in the summer of 1526. From the viewpoints—the author imagines—the newlyweds could see the snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada, and in the evenings they would retire to their rooms "in the silent courtyard of the Lindaraja, which, with the glossy leaves of the orange trees fluttering in sun and shade, encourages self-absorption, reverie and introspection. It was a happy summer that Charles spent in the Alhambra."[57]

Here, we are presented with a sensitive, cosmopolitan, humane Charles V delighting in the landscape of Granada, captivated by the exoticism of the Alhambra and even, like a good cultural tourist, appreciating the local historical and artistic heritage. There appears to be a desire to bring his figure closer to the reader, both united around the same exoticizing imaginary of Spain. Any *Merian* subscriber could indeed identify with this idyllic account of the monarch's time in Granada. Images such as the snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada or the interior courtyards overflowing with orange trees were, in fact, frequent visual references in the tourist guides of the time. It could be said, therefore, that Charles V functions here as a mirror through which postwar German tourists could project their desire for exoticism. The fact that this text appeared in a travel magazine, inserted among other reports of a more clearly touristic nature that focused on Andalusian folklore traditions such as Holy Week or flamenco singing, helped to embed the figure of the emperor within this imaginary.

This narrative of the Palace of Charles V in Granada as a symbol of the Hispano-Islamic cultural melting pot echoes one of the most well-worn tropes of tourism propaganda in Spain: that of difference. A headline such as "Andalusia, between East and West. The Alhambra and the Palace of Charles V as emblem of two cultures," which headed an article published in the *Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung*,[58] is equally reminiscent of the nineteenth-century orientalist discourses as well as of the famous tourism slogan "Spain is different." Contrary to popular belief, this slogan did not originate in the 1960s but much earlier: Rafael Calleja, head of the Spanish tourist department from

1931 to 1957, first used it in a 1932 campaign and then exploited it in early Francoist tourist promotion.[59] In fact, during the period when Manuel Fraga headed the Ministry of Information and Tourism from 1962 to 1969, this idea of difference was attenuated at the time when the priority was to bring Spain into line with European standards, leaving exoticist discourses behind.[60] However, it continued to shape the foreign imaginary of Spain for decades.

From 1960s onwards, the *Abendland* discourse on Spain gradually faded in the FRG. According to Walter Lehmann, as the so-called economic miracle progressed, "a West German 'identity' had taken shape, aligned not so much with fundamental Christian values as with the ideals of economic productivity and 'modernity' of the liberal-democratic order."[61] The *Abendland* discourse, which had marked Spain's image in West Germany, lost its preeminence and other elements entered the scene, such as tourism or the presence of Spanish migrant workers (*Gastarbeiter*) in the FRG.

Epilogue: the *Kanzler* Observes the *Kaiser*

Let us go back where this text began. The elderly Konrad Adenauer takes off his hat as he enters in 1967 the courtyard of Charles V in the Alcázar of Toledo, as if he were entering a holy place. This is how the moment was reported on the Franco regime's official No-Do newsreels, but what was the story from the other side? The figure of Charles V resurfaces in the traces of this trip in the German press of the time, albeit not in the Alcázar—the great landmark associated with Francoist national mythology—but in another more politically neutral and yet no less culturally significant space: the Prado Museum.

Adenauer's visit to the Prado was one of the highlights in the report of his trip published in the German weekly *Der Spiegel* (Figure 6). In particular, the report stressed the deep impression made on Adenauer by Titian's portrait of *Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg* (1548). The painting left the former chancellor so pensive that, after seeing it, he walked past all other works without paying them much attention: "Goya's *Naked Maja*," reported the correspondent,

> only received a furtive sidelong glance from the elderly chancellor. . . Not only because of the pack of photographers [chasing him], but also because contemplation of the portrait of Charles V had left him lost in thought. At the age of 91, Adenauer had set out for Spain with the intention of again defending the Europe that had once lain at the feet of the great Catholic monarch, but whose inheritance the Russian and American world powers now wished to divide between themselves.[62]

Once again, the figure of Charles V was working as an identification template rather than as historical subject matter. With the function, in this case, to depict a journalistic portrait of a declining Konrad Adenauer and the signification of his political persona

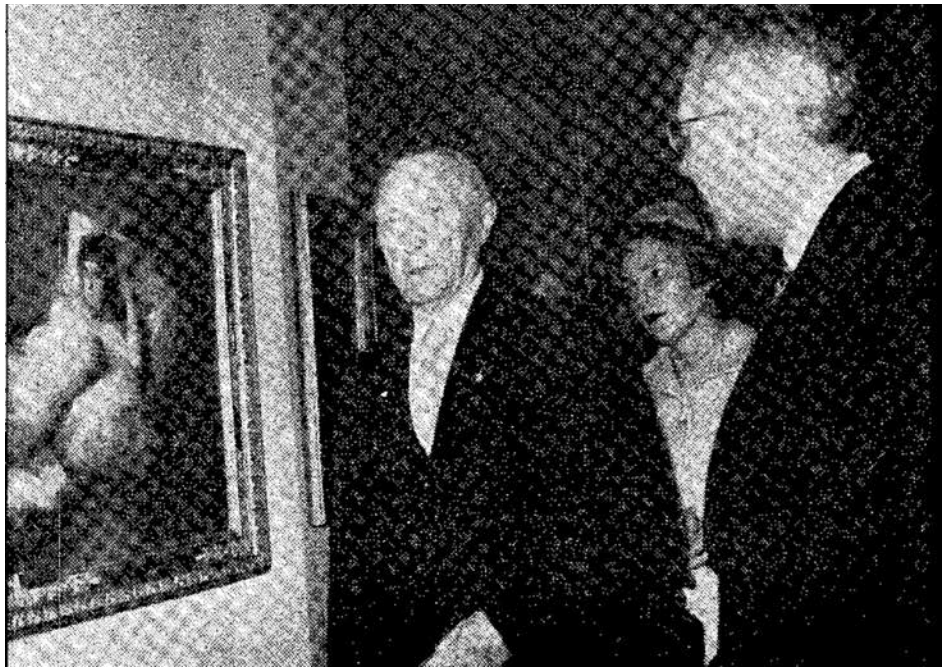

Figure 6. "Adenauer-Reise. Flug ins Ritz," *Der Spiegel*, February 19, 1967 (detail).

in recent European history. Barely two months after his meeting with the *Kaiser*, the *Kanzler* who had embodied the ideal of *Abendland* died, marking the end of that era.

Conclusion

The myth of Charles V was embedded in the concerns and debates of postwar West Germany. In interaction with this interlocutor, the figure of the emperor and the elements of historical and artistic heritage associated with him acquired a series of specific meanings. None of these narratives clashed significantly with the discourse of imperial emulation pursued by the Franco regime, which would welcome this revival of the figure of Charles V. But it should be stressed that these resignifications were sparked by German society's own expectations, needs, and mental maps following World War II.

The vision, embodied in El Escorial, of the emperor as the founding myth of a Europe united in the Christian faith was related to the need for identity reconstruction in a denazified Germany; the evocation of the melancholic monarch symbolized by the Monastery of Yuste can be associated with a need to assimilate the experience of defeat; while the narrative represented by the Alhambra, of a Charles V fascinated by Hispano-Islamic heritage, connects with the projection of exoticist imaginaries of the South typical of modern tourism.

This case study thus provides novel insights into the active engagement of West Germany in the resignification of the Franco dictatorship after World War II. This process is normally studied as a series of diplomatic, political, and economic alliances, against the backdrop of the Cold War. However, by integrating an approach rooted in cultural imaginaries, we realize that the acceptance of Francoist Spain depended to a great extent on its capacity to respond to the collective needs and expectations of the Western world. Finally, it has also been confirmed that historical and artistic heritage played a vehicular role in this process, as an active tool in the (re)production of national narratives.

Notes

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