

The artist as historian-politician: Romantic historicism, art, and architecture in the performance of cultural nationalism in Pérez Villaamil and Escosura's *España artística y monumental* (1842-50)

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When a lavishly illustrated publication claims to showcase a nation's monuments, it is natural to assume that these landmarks are real or have existed. However, *España artística y monumental*, a French publication issued from 1841 to 1850, defied this expectation from the outset.¹ Despite its promise to unveil 'the most remarkable views and monuments in Spain', the work broke that pledge in its very first instalment,² introducing a fictional edifice from an imaginary town in a lithograph titled 'A Market' (fig. 1).³ The scene depicts people leisurely gathered around an intricately adorned fountain, with a vast sea of tents in the background, overshadowed by an imposing church that commands viewers' attention.⁴ Like many Spanish ecclesiastical buildings,

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¹ Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental: Vistas y descripción de los sitios y monumentos más notables de España*, Paris: Hauser, 3 vols., 1842, 1844, and 1850. This work was subsequently reprinted in Spain (Madrid: José Ribet; Barcelona: Emilio Font, 1865). Two facsimile editions have been produced, one in smaller format (Boadilla del Monte, Spain: JdeJ Editores, 2010), and a luxurious one in life-size format (Madrid: CM Editores, 2011).

² The first volume consisted of twelve separately issued instalments, each of which contained four prints.

³ This promise was made in the subtitle of the publication as well as in its prospectus, which was quoted at length by an anonymous reviewer in *La France*, 14 June, 1841, 3.

⁴ 'A Market' is based on an oil painting by Pérez Villaamil titled *Un mercado en España*, 1840 (Museo Nacional de Buenos Aires, cat. 2797). For more information on this lithograph and the painting, see Enrique Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico Jenaro Pérez Villaamil*, Madrid: CSIC-Centro de Estudios Históricos, Departamento de Historia del Arte 'Diego Velázquez', 1986, 229, 421. The oil painting was exhibited in the Salón de París of 1841; see H.W. Janson. ed., *Catalogues*



Figure 1 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, painter, and Benoist and Bayot, lithographers, *A Market*, in Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. I, 1842, 1st set, 4th print. Image 285 x 390 mm, print 370-505 mm. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León.

the church incorporates numerous architectural styles; yet, intriguingly, the exact selection and arrangement of the styles on this particular church had no existing Spanish counterpart. One cannot help but wonder why the publication chose to depict an invented church instead of an authentic one such as those that could be found throughout Spain. The deliberate inclusion of this fabricated building in *España artística y monumental's* inaugural instalment suggests that the decision was not a frivolous whim but instead a deliberate choice on the part of the publication's Spanish creators,

of the Paris Sal6n 1673 to 1881, New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1977, facsimile edition of *Explication des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture, gravure et lithographie des artistes vivants expos6es au Mus6e royal le 15 Mars 1841*, Paris: Ballard, 1841, 234. See also the manuscript register of the 1841 Salon, cat. number 2602, at the Archives Nationales, Online Reading Room: https://www.siv.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/siv/UD/Fran_IR_054675/c-6dxxvffgy--r5zhtm0kb47r, accessed 5 July, 2023.

Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura. After all, the decision had great significance, insofar as the first instalment had the responsibility of fulfilling the promises made in the prospectus. The instalment had to demonstrate the publication's quality and content, elucidate its objectives, and attract potential subscribers to ensure its financial viability. Hence, there must have been a compelling advantage in portraying a fabricated monument, one that justified such a remarkable departure from reality.



Figure 2 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, painter, and Benoist and Bayot, lithographers, *A Market*, in Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. I, 1842, 1st set, 4th print. Image 285 x 390 mm, print 370-505 mm. Detail. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León.

Upon closer inspection, it becomes apparent that the imaginary church (fig. 2) possesses a unique attribute overlooked by previous scholarship: its architectural styles are assembled in chronological order. As will be argued here, this intentional arrangement of styles reveals that the monument functions as a narrative tool, weaving

a history of Spanish architecture that could not be found in any single, real Spanish edifice. However, this observation only raises fresh questions as to why such a distinct historical narrative was sought, especially considering that Pérez Villaamil and Escosura did not have a scholarly interest in architecture, and that *España artística y monumental* was not intended to be a history of Spanish architecture. As we will see, the invented monument served multilayered purposes: it lent scientific credibility to a particular historical narrative of the nation; it helped construct and authenticate a national identity; it made that identity real; and it charted a pathway for the nation's future progress. Although the use of imagery of historic buildings and landscapes for cultural and political purposes was well established throughout Europe by the mid nineteenth century, the buildings depicted were usually authentic. Also remarkable was the historiographic emphasis in the invented church, insofar as the director of *España artística y monumental*, Pérez Villaamil, was a painter, unlike similar publications of the era, which tended to be spearheaded by antiquarians or intellectuals, such as *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France* (1820-1878), by Charles Nodier and Isidore Taylor; *Les Monuments de la France* (1816-36), by Alexandre de Laborde; or *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain* (1807-1826), by John Britton.

Contrary to prevalent opinion, Pérez Villaamil's imaginary church was neither a capricious indulgence of his renowned proclivity for fantasy nor a mere depiction of the history of Spanish architecture.⁵ Instead, he employed his creative imagination to fashion a monument that constructed a distinctive national identity, both literally and metaphorically, with the aim of transforming Spanish society at a time of crisis. In the process, the Spanish painter assumed the roles of artist, metaphorical architect, historian, and politician, blurring the boundaries between these domains. Although the bilateral interplay between politics and history, history and national identity, national identity and architecture, and architecture and history were commonplace at the time, a painter's consolidation all of those bilateral relationships into a single network of interdependences was quite exceptional. Equally remarkable was the fact that Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, as will be analysed later, closely adhered to the methodological and theoretical frameworks advanced by philosophers, historians, architects, and politicians.

This article contends that among the causes championed by *España artística y monumental* was a nuanced and idealised Catholic national identity aligned with the ideals of the Partido Moderado—the conservative branch of Spanish liberalism—and particularly with *moderado* perspectives on the origin of the Spanish nation and the

⁵ Among the scholars that considered this church a whimsical monument are Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 229; Enrique Arias Anglés, *España artística y monumental: Jenaro Pérez Villaamil y Duguet (1807-1854)*, Madrid: CM Editores, 2011, 124-125; Luis Sazatornil Ruiz and Vidal de la Madrid Álvarez, *Imago Urbis: Las ciudades españolas vistas por los viajeros (siglos XVI-XIX)*, Gijón: Trea and Museo de Bellas Artes de Asturias, 2019, 486 and 501.

Moorish contribution to its identity.⁶ In order to fully understand the relevance of this act of cultural nationalism, the analysis here for the first time positions *España artística y monumental* within the tumultuous political landscape of Spain. Also for the first time, it considers the artistic activism of the authors, including the remarkable fact that during much the work's period of production they were living as exiles in Paris following a coup by Spanish progressives that had overthrown the *moderado* government. By exploring *España artística y monumental* through these novel perspectives, its true nature as a publication with significant potential political agency becomes evident: the work strove to counteract the rise of progressivism by regenerating and unifying the nation around *moderado* ideals.⁷

This article presents an interdisciplinary analysis that builds bridges between philosophy, historiography, nationalism studies, and the history of art and architecture. Rather than solely focusing on the distinctive features and historical context of a construction of national identity, the analysis advances a framework for examining the process by which this identity was rendered real, concrete, comprehensible, and persuasive in *España artística y monumental*, with special emphasis on two areas. On the one hand, it examines the intellectual scaffolding that enabled the process in question, paying particular attention to the epistemology shaped by Romantic historicism and aesthetics, the conceptualization of the nation as a civilisation, and the role of architecture as historical evidence. And on the other hand, it analyses the experience of the work's readers and viewers in order to demonstrate the unique opportunities afforded by a publication of this kind in performing cultural nationalism, which included the ability to sequence the monuments strategically, guide their interpretation through an integrated visual and verbal discourse, and widely disseminate the product through the printed medium. The combination of these three opportunities gave Romantic publications depicting national landmarks a degree of political agency unmatched by other artistic and literary forms.

⁶ This article is partially based on two papers presented at the Zurbarán Center for Spanish and Latin American Art, in Durham, UK: 'Imaginary Architecture as Imagined Community: "A Market" by Genaro Pérez Villaamil' (2019), and 'The Soul of the Nation: Architecture, History, and Nationalism in *España artística y monumental* (1842-50)' (2022, via Zoom). Its content introduces some of the core issues that will be analysed in greater detail in a book-length study on the nationalist agency of *España artística y monumental*, currently in progress.

⁷ Although some scholars are aware that *España artística y monumental* begun publication during the exile of its authors, they have not analysed the impact of that circumstance on its content. See, for instance, Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 82-83, and Raquel Gutiérrez Sebastián, 'Una imagen del país desde el exilio: *España artística y monumental* de Patricio de la Escosura', in *Romanticismo y exilio: Actas del X Congreso del Centro Internacional Estudios sobre Romanticismo Hispánico 'Ermanno Caldera'* (Alicante, 12-24 de Marzo de 2008), ed. Piero Menarini, Bologna: Il Capitelo del Sole, 2009, 135-149. Gutiérrez Sebastián is the only scholar to date who has analysed the text by Escosura, mostly within the framework of Romantic travel literature, despite the fact that the work is not a travelogue or a travel guide.

***España artística y monumental*: a national Catholic portrait for a transnational audience**

España artística y monumental is a luxurious collection of 144 lithographs portraying Spanish views, monuments, and traditions.⁸ Compiled in three volumes dated 1842, 1844, and 1850, these lithographs were initially published in Paris in sets of four prints, each accompanied by two pages of commentary. In comparison to similar works, *España artística y monumental* is distinguished by its intimate ties to the political context and its uncommon transnational character. The text was published bilingually in French and Spanish, thereby catering to both international and national audiences. Despite being produced in Paris, it was fundamentally a Spanish collaborative enterprise involving three eminent Spaniards: the painter Genaro Pérez Villaamil,⁹ the

⁸ The most complete information about *España artística y monumental* can be found in Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 192-196, 421-430; his *España artística*, published as a companion to the facsimile edition of 2011, does not provide new information; Matilde Mateo, 'La mirada pintoresca en la *España artística y monumental* (1842-1850)', in Begoña Alonso Ruiz and others, eds., *La formación artística: creadores-historiadores-espectadores*, vol. 1, Santander: Editorial Universidad Cantabria, 2018, 805-816. Remaining scholarship on the work appears included within broader studies that are too numerous to list here. Those published before 1986 can be found in Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*. The following is a selection of more recent studies: Luis J. Gordo Peláez, *La capilla de San Isidro en la iglesia de San Andrés de Madrid, Jenaro Pérez Villaamil ca. 1843* (Pieza del mes de abril de 2013), Madrid: Museo Romántico, 2013, http://museoromanticismo.mcu.es/web/archivos/documentos/piezames_abril_2013_def.pdf, accessed 1 June, 2015; Gutiérrez Sebastián, 'Una imagen', and 'Libros de Viajes: *España artística y monumental*, de Patricio de la Escosura', in Raquel Gutiérrez Sebastián, José María Ferri Col, and Borja Rodríguez Gutiérrez, eds., *Historia de la literatura ilustrada española en el siglo XIX*, Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, 2019, 429-437; Claudia Hopkins, ed., *Romantic Spain: David Roberts and Genaro Pérez Villaamil*, Madrid: Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, and Instituto Ceán Bermúdez, 2021; Claudia Hopkins, 'Navigating Stereotypes and Perceptions of Spain', in Elisa Martínez López, ed., *The Routledge Hispanic Studies Companion to Nineteenth-Century Spain*, London and New York: Routledge, 2021, 179-182; Claudia Hopkins, 'Beyond Orientalism: The Case of Jenaro Pérez Villaamil', *Hispanic Research Journal*, 17: 5, 2016, 392-400; Matilde Mateo, 'The Pleasures of the Imagination: Truth and Distortion in the Gothic Cathedrals by David Roberts and Genaro Pérez Villaamil', in Hopkins, *Romantic Spain*, 320-344; Carlos Sánchez Díez, 'Nuevas obras de Jenaro Pérez Villaamil en el Museo Lázaro Galdiano', *Goya*, 311, 2006, 103-112; Sazatornil Ruiz and de la Madrid Álvarez, *Imago Urbis*, 484-501, 392-400.

⁹ Some of the lithographs were based on drawings by other Spanish artists: José Domínguez Bécquer, Blas Crespo, Juan Pérez Villaamil, Cecilio Pizarro, and Valentín Carderera. For more information about Genaro Pérez Villaamil, see Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*; Javier Barón, *Genaro Pérez Villaamil: díptico con vistas de ciudades españolas*, Madrid: Museo del Prado, 2014; and Hopkins, *Romantic Spain*.

politician and man of letters Patricio de la Escosura,¹⁰ and the financier and art patron Gaspar Remisa.¹¹ Although Spanish scholarship celebrates Pérez Villaamil as a paragon of Romantic landscape painting in Spain and regards *España artística y monumental* as 'the crown jewel of Spanish Romanticism,' both he and his publication remain largely unrecognised outside of Spain, with the notable exception of recent publications by Claudia Hopkins.¹²

The explicit and implicit objectives of *España artística y monumental* are subtly interspersed throughout the text, where they still await an in-depth analysis. As indicated by the work's prospectus and robust advertising in the French press in May 1841, it was a 'publication initiated out of patriotism by a Spanish society of artists, writers, and capitalists'.¹³ Nonetheless, ascribing the objectives of *España artística y monumental* only to patriotism—understood as love and pride for national culture and heritage—conflates motivation with intent, thereby denying the work's proactive agency.¹⁴ On the other hand, the absence of an explicit acknowledgment of the Spanish contributors involved in the production intimates that *España artística y monumental* transcends their individual efforts, which is how previous scholarship has framed its study.

In this article, *España artística y monumental* is examined as a self-contained and collaborative work in its own right. It must be noted, however, that the work's inception, questionably dated to 1837, and the extent of collaboration among its

¹⁰ For more information on Escosura, see Antonio Iniesta, *D. Patricio de la Escosura*, Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1958; and María Luz Cano Malagón, *Patricio de la Escosura: vida y obra literaria*, Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1988. In a few instances, Escosura incorporated commentaries by other Spanish authors.

¹¹ For information on Remisa, see J.M. Ramón de San Pedro, *El Marqués de Remisa: Un banquero de la época romántica*, Barcelona: Banco Atlántico Servicio de Estudios, 1953, and Enrique Faes Díaz, 'Remisa, el hombre nuevo dice que tiene escrúpulos', in *Banqueros románticos catalanes*, Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2017, 177-204.

¹² For examples of the praise given to *España artística y monumental* as the crown jewel of Spanish Romantic visual art and publications, see the back cover of the facsimile edition of 2010, and María Fidalgo Casares, 'Etnografía y romanticismo en la obra de Jenaro Pérez Villaamil', *Revista de Folklore*, 440, 2018, 10. For the publications by Hopkins see note 7.

¹³ 'Cette publication, entreprise dans des vues toutes patriotiques par une *Société espagnole d'artistes, de littérateurs et de capitalistes*'. The announcements were always identical and were published in the French press during the month of May 1841 in venues including but not limited to *La Presse*, *La France*, and *Gazette de France*. All translations to English are by the author of this article.

¹⁴ I am using here a modern definition of patriotism. For the main interpretations of this concept in nineteenth-century Spain, see 'Patria' in Javier Fernández Sebastián and Juan Francisco Fuentes, eds., *Diccionario político y social del siglo XIX*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2003, 512-523.

contributors remain unknown.¹⁵ The prevailing opinion assumes a minimal level of interaction, with Pérez Villaamil orchestrating the endeavour and providing most of the drawings, Escosura authoring the written commentary a posteriori, and Remisa's role confined to financing the project. Yet, a more integrated collaborative approach cannot be entirely dismissed.¹⁶ Nonetheless, within the context of this article, there is limited merit to ascertaining which individuals were responsible for each decision or idea. This is not an essay about Villaamil or Escosura or Remisa, but instead about the particular national identity that was forged within *España artística y monumental* as it was presented to, and interpreted by, its Spanish audience both at home and in exile.

As stated in its promotional materials, one of the objectives of *España artística y monumental* was 'to spotlight the monumental riches of Spain, which for the most part have been ignored, and to furnish more accurate information on her customs and traditions than those published to date by foreign writers'.¹⁷ The assertion, and indeed the entire work, tacitly constitutes a counter-response to the Romantic and Orientalist portrayal of Spain that had been popularised by European travellers, artists, and writers. Such portrayals primarily associated the nation with its southern region, Andalusia, and its renowned Islamic landmarks.¹⁸ In stark contrast, *España artística y*

¹⁵ Arias Anglés has argued that the publication had been planned at least since 1837 (*El paisajista romántico*, 193), a claim that has been accepted by other scholars without question. Arias Anglés supports his claim with a watercolour depicting the courtyard of the palace of the dukes of Infantado, in the Museo Lázaro Galdiano (inv. 10041) of Madrid, dated 26 March, 1837. This watercolour served as a model for one of the lithographs, and was rich in notations by the painter, among which was an indication of its placement within *España artística y monumental*. Although the notations on the watercolour and date were written in pencil, presumably at the time the image was made, those regarding its the placement are in ink, opening the possibility that they were written at a later date—arguably, when Pérez Villaamil was already in Paris. A letter from José Ochoa to Federico de Madrazo, dated in Paris, 30 December, 1840, relates the arrival of the painter to Paris and his plans for an illustrated publication on Spain (cited in Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 447). Ochoa, however, says that its title would be *España pintoresca*, and its text would be written by the poet Eugenio Moreno. Those details have been interpreted as mistakes by Ochoa, but they could equally suggest that the plans for the publication were still uncertain at that point, increasing the likelihood that the placement indications on the watercolour were written after Pérez Villaamil's arrival in Paris.

¹⁶ On a few occasions, Escosura acknowledged that he was using notes provided to him by Pérez Villaamil.

¹⁷ 'pour objet de mettre en lumière les richesses Monumentales de l'Espagne, pour la plupart ignorées, et de fournir, sur ses moeurs et ses usages, des renseignements plus exacts que ceux qui ont été publiés jusqu'à ce jour par les écrivains étrangers'. This information appeared in the announcements in the press (see note 12).

¹⁸ The literature on the Romantic image of Spain in Europe, especially in France and Great Britain, is extensive and comes from multiple disciplinary perspectives. An excellent review of the issue from the viewpoint of literature, with ample bibliography, is Xavier Andreu Miralles, *El descubrimiento de España: Mito romántico e identidad nacional*, Madrid: Taurus, 2016. For general

monumental accentuates the nation's Catholicism through illustrations of religious traditions and a shift of emphasis towards Christian edifices in the medieval kingdoms of Castile and, to a lesser degree, Aragon. In essence, the publication sought to change the face of the country, launching a visual array of cathedrals, churches, and monasteries that could outshine the Alhambra and the Great Mosque of Córdoba, with the aim of demonstrating, as Escosura eloquently articulated, that 'in Spain, wherever we direct our gaze, we will find in magnificent monuments the justification for the appellative of "Catholic" that history has bestowed upon her.'¹⁹

The intent of *España artística y monumental* to propagate a Catholic image of Spain is further substantiated by the conspicuous omission of the Alhambra, a decision that would likely have adversely impacted sales. Given the financial hardships experienced by Pérez Villaamil and Escosura during their exile, the absence of the Alhambra is a strong indication that upholding a Catholic identity took precedence over potential profit.²⁰ Even the other prominent Islamic monument, the Mosque of Córdoba, was depicted only once, with its Islamic character strategically negated via a caption labelling it as 'The Mozarabic Chapel in the Cathedral of Cordoba' (fig. 3).

information from the perspective of art history, with ample bibliography see Matilde Mateo, *La visión británica del arte medieval cristiano en Gran Bretaña (siglos XVIII-XIX)*, PhD dissertation, Universidade de Santiago, 1994; Arcadio Pardo, *La visión del arte español en los viajeros franceses del siglo XIX*, Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1989; Hopkins, *Romantic Spain*, 201-287, and 'Navigating Stereotypes', in Sazatornil Ruiz and de la Madrid Álvarez, *Imago Urbis*, 340-609. See also Tonia Raquejo, *El palacio encantado: La Alhambra en el arte británico*, Madrid: Taurus, 1990. For the orientalisng perception of Spanish Gothic architecture, see Matilde Mateo, 'In Search of the Origin of the Gothic: Thomas Pitt's Travel in Spain in 1760', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 15 Dec. 2016, 1-22, and 'The Moorish-Gothic Cathedral: Invention, Reality, or Weapon?' in Stephanie A. Glasser ed., *The Idea of the Gothic Cathedral: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Meanings of the Medieval Edifice in the Modern Period*, Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2018, 47-80.

¹⁹ 'Por donde quiera que tendamos la vista en España, hallaremos en magníficos monumentos la justificación del dictado de Católica que por excelencia le da su historia', Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 10. I explored this matter in a paper entitled 'Christian vs. Muslim in the 19th century View of Medieval Spain: the *España Artística y Monumental* and its Apology of the Christian Cultural Heritage', presented at the CAA Conference in Chicago in 2001. See also Hopkins, *Romantic Spain*, and 'Navigating Stereotypes', 179. As Xavier Andreu Miralles has argued, Spaniards flaunted their Catholicism as proof of the moral superiority of Spain because they were conscious of their political, economic, and technological inferiority. Xavier Andreu Miralles, '¡Cosas de España! Nación liberal y estereotipo romántico a mediados del siglo XIX,' *Alcores: Revista de Historia Contemporánea*, 7, 2009, 47-50.

²⁰ On their financial struggles, see Pérez Villaamil's diary, 28 December, 1842, in Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 538; Iniesta, *D. Patricio*, 16, and Cano Malagón, *Patricio*, 49-50.

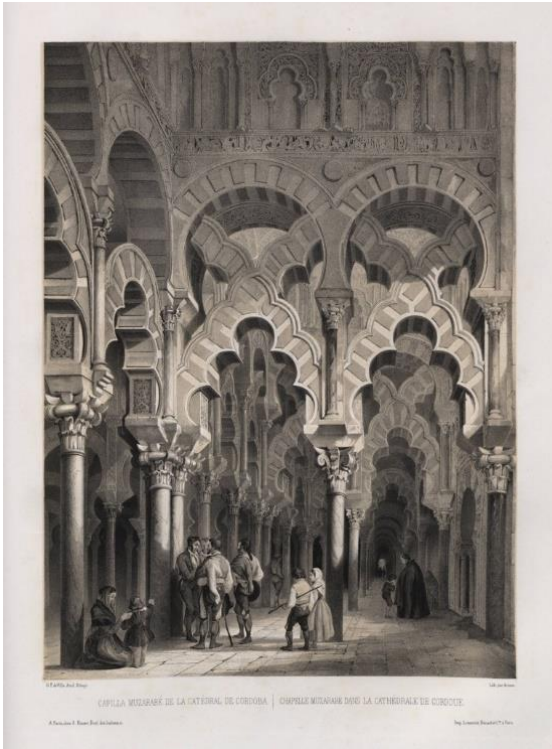


Figure 3 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, painter, and Arnout, lithographer, *Mozarabic Chapel in the cathedral of Córdoba*, in Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. I, 1842, 11th set, 1st print. Image 285 x 380 mm, print 370-505 mm. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León.

Three additional factors confirm the ambition to disseminate the Catholic identity of Spain to a broad international audience: the text in French, the *lingua franca* of the European educated class at the time; the publication in Paris, a major hub in the European book market; and the establishment of an impressive network of subscription services in Paris, London, Berlin, Vienna, Saint Petersburg, Munich, Manheim, Dusseldorf, Amsterdam, Brussels, Liège, Basel, Zurich, Florence, Rome, Milan, and Naples.²¹ By all measures, *España artística y monumental* was an ambitious endeavour. It aspired to have an impact on the international market of illustrated publications on Spain, by glorifying the nation's Catholic identity in an opulent elephant-folio format, coupled with high artistic and technical standards, all of which lent it a degree of magnificence that foreign and national publications on Spain could not rival.

In light of these factors, it is understandable that previous scholarship has framed *España artística y monumental* as a work primarily targeted at the international market. Nevertheless, this assumption overlooks the fact that the publication was equally designed with a Spanish audience in mind, as evidenced by its Spanish text and Madrid distribution outlets. It is thus necessary to reexamine the intent and meaning of its portrayal of Catholic identity within the Spanish context. Unlike those of European audiences, Spanish reactions to *España artística y monumental* could hardly have been neutral or detached. For Spaniards, Spanish identity was a subject of heated national debates and was intrinsically tied to their own individual identities. Arguably, the

²¹ The list of cities and addresses where *España artística y monumental* could be purchased was listed in the advertising in the press.

Catholic identity promoted by *España artística y monumental* held an additional, more nuanced significance beyond that of merely counteracting an orientalist, foreign perception. Its interpretation also depended on the ideology of the Spanish viewer/reader, and the evolving political context during the eight years in which the publication was issued, even though this article will only focus on its debut.

To claim that Spain was Catholic was neither revolutionary nor questionable; it was a belief deeply ingrained within Spanish society and had been widely accepted internationally for centuries. Unlike other European countries, the creation of a Spanish liberal society and state during the first half of the nineteenth century did not erode self-identification as a Catholic nation. In fact, with the exception of a radical minority, liberals embraced their Catholicism as an intrinsic factor of their Spanish identity and believed it should be protected by the State. They also viewed the Church as a crucial social institution, although they sought to remove certain of its elements seen as obstacles to the nation's progress, including but not limited to its legal and economic privileges, the Inquisition, and many of its religious orders. The liberals also aimed to reduce the Church's role to that of arbitrating matters of religious authority, religious education, and spiritual guidance for the Spanish people. This is not to say that all liberals had the same interpretation of Spanish Catholicism. Certainly, as we will see later, progressives and *moderados* disagreed on several matters.²²

The Catholic identity promoted by *España artística y monumental* should therefore be analysed within the narrower framework of liberal *moderantismo*. However, as we will see, this politically aligned agenda is seldom stated in the publication outright and is instead encoded in the commentaries and in the selection and depiction of monuments, which makes the determination of the degree of conscious intentionality challenging. Nonetheless, Spaniards, thanks to their ideological polarization and superior knowledge of the country and its historical myths, were likely able to detect muted allusions to contemporary events and recognise the publication's subtle defence of *moderado* ideals and its critique of progressivism, all of which could easily have been overlooked by a foreigner.

The scope of the impact on Spanish audiences of the *moderado* message of *España artística y monumental* cannot be determined with certainty at this point. There is no doubt, however, that the message was recognised as such. The publication was promoted by the principal *moderado* newspapers in Spain, including *El Correo Nacional* and *El Heraldo*, the latter of which was founded in 1842 as an instrument of opposition

²² For more information on the relationship between Spanish national identity, Catholicism, and liberalism, see Gregorio Alonso García, *La nación en capilla: ciudadanía católica y cuestión religiosa en España, 1793-1874*, Granada: Comares, 2014, 3, 23-41; Felipe-José de Vicente Alguero, *El catolicismo liberal en España*, Madrid: Ediciones Encuentro, 2012, 135-136; José Álvarez Junco, *Mater Dolorosa: La idea de España en el siglo XIX*, Madrid: Taurus, 2001, 305-431; Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, 'Iglesia Católica', *Diccionario político*, 355-359.

to the policies of Baldomero Espartero's government.²³ *El Heraldo* published an extensive and laudatory review, lamenting that the work had not been published in Spain and was therefore not more accessible to a broader national audience and denouncing the Espartero government's new tariffs and limitations on the importation of foreign books.²⁴ It is also significant that after moderantism fell into a new crisis, publishers in Madrid and Barcelona reprinted *España artística y monumental* in 1865.

The first instalment of *España artística y monumental* and the history of Spanish architecture



Figure 4 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, Frontispiece, Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. I, 1842, 1st set, 1st print. Image 432 x 279 mm, print 370-505 mm. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León

²³ *El Correo Nacional*, 28 Feb., 1842, 4; *El Heraldo*, 18 Nov. 1842, 3-4. The research on the reception of *España artística y monumental* is still a work in progress. In any case, it is clear that the group of Spanish exiles in Paris were aware of their publication and were in constant contact with their homeland.

²⁴ On 1 November, 1841, Espartero's government passed legislation pertaining to tariffs on the importation and exportation of goods. According to the new law, the importation of books in a foreign language and/or printed abroad was limited to one copy per person unrelated to the book trade. It also stipulated that tariffs would be doubled when the book had been produced abroad (*Ley de aduanas, aranceles é instrucción, que rigen en la Península é islas adyacentes desde 1^o de noviembre de 1841*, Madrid: Imprenta Nacional, 1841, 40).

The first instalment of *España artística y monumental*, released on June 1, 1841, epitomises the publication's objectives and content. True to its advertised plan, its first trio of lithographs illustrate different Spanish architectural styles, while the fourth highlights a national tradition. The first print, serving as frontispiece (fig. 4), depicts a monumental fortified city entrance in Moorish style; the image is identifiable as the Puerta del Sol (Sun Gate) of Toledo, although it bears no caption or description and merely accompanies the introductory pages written by Escosura, which serve as the introduction to *España Artística y monumental* as a whole). It is followed by three images identified via captions: the Romanesque cloister at the Royal Monastery of Las Huelgas in Burgos (fig. 5); an interior image of the Gothic cathedral of Toledo (fig. 6); and the depiction of a popular tradition in 'A Market' (fig. 1). As a preview to the series, this first instalment underscores the dominance of architectural themes over other subjects, even within genre scenes such as that of the market. It also foreshadows a preference for religious monuments and the Castilian cities of Burgos and Toledo, which are prominently represented in over half of the lithographs. Finally, the instalment



Figure 5 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, painter; Benoist and Bayot, lithographers, *Claustrilla de Santa Maria de las Huelgas, en Burgos*, in Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. I, 1842, 1st set, 2nd t print. Image 290 x 380 mm, print 370-505 mm. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León

demonstrates that strict accuracy in the depiction of the featured monuments, so important for antiquarians, architects, and historians of architecture, was not a primary concern.



Fig. 6 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, painter; Bichebois and Bayot, lithographers, *Interior de la capilla mayor de la catedral de Toledo*, in Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. I, 1842, 1st set, 13rd print. Image 380 X 285 mm, print 505 x 370 mm. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León.

As previously noted, the church depicted in 'A Market' was non-existent, and, in fact, it is the only imaginary building featured in the entirety of the three volumes. However, this was not the only departure from reality in the work. Although the uncaptioned frontispiece illustrates a recognizable monument, the Puerta del Sol of Toledo in central Spain, the structure is curiously depicted next to the sea, most likely in the coastline of Algeciras in the country's southeast. This geographical incongruity, presumably an unintentional, albeit odd, error by the painter, was rectified years later

in the third volume (fig. 7).²⁵ However, other distortions are evident, such as in the depiction of Las Huelgas and Toledo Cathedral, where the exaggerated proportions, inaccurate details, and amalgamation of viewpoints impossible to attribute simultaneously to a single vantage point seem deliberate.²⁶



Figure 7 Genaro Pérez Villaamil, painter; Bichebois, lithographer; Bayot, figures. *La puerta del Sol*, in Genaro Pérez Villaamil and Patricio de la Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, Paris, Hauser, vol. III, 1850, 6th set, 1st print, Image 290 x 380 mm, print 370-505 mm. By permission of the Biblioteca Digital de Castilla y León.

²⁵ The Puerta de Sol in Toledo was built by the Knights Hospitaller in the fourteenth century. The lithograph is based on a painting by Pérez Villaamil, dated in 1838 (Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, cat. 2804). The subject of this print has been surrounded by confusion. One of the boats in the scene has Algeciras, the name of a city in the Andalusian province of Cádiz, inscribed on the hull, suggesting that this was the location of the monument. However, the door does not look like the Arab fortifications still standing in that city around that time. Despite the reference to Algeciras, this location was never proposed for the image in the print. When the painting that inspired it was exhibited for the first time, it was identified as a *Fragmento interesante de fortificación árabe* (Interesting fragment of an Arab fortification) after the Puerta del Sol ('Exposición de 1838', *Semanario Pintoresco Español*, 135, 10 Oct., 1838, 754). Pérez Villaamil, however, considered it to be a 'Torreón árabe cerca de Almería' (Arab tower near Almería), according to his handwritten note at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, and as well as the painting's title when it was exhibited at the Salon de París of 1842 (Wilhelm Ténint, *Album du Salon de 1842*, Paris, 1842, 53 and 108). More far off was the reviewer of *España artística y monumental* in *La France*, 14 June, 1841, who claimed that it depicted the remains of the gates of Tarragona in northeastern Spain.

²⁶ For more information about the lack of veracity in Pérez Villaamil's depictions of monuments in *España artística y monumental*, see Mateo, 'Pleasures', 321-26.

For the purposes of this paper, the most notable feature of the first issue is its emphasis on the history of Spanish architecture. In addition to the illustration of the imaginary church, Escosura's introduction includes a comprehensive account of the subject, while his commentary on Las Huelgas and Toledo Cathedral provides partial summaries. One might assume that such historiographic concerns straightforwardly indicate that *España artística y monumental* functions as a history of Spanish architecture in a traditional sense, as many have wrongly believed. Yet no one would have been more surprised by this claim than Pérez Villaamil and Escosura themselves. They neither possessed nor claimed any particular expertise in the subject, nor did they apply any historiographic criteria, whether chronological, stylistic, typological, or geographical, in structuring the remaining sets.²⁷ No doubt, they had an aesthetic appreciation of the monuments, and they clearly wanted these structures to demonstrate the architectural genius of Spain, serve as a source of inspiration for contemporary architects, and function to preserve their memory for future Spanish histories of their architecture, all of which are objectives stated in the introduction. But although these three rationales explain the high number of monuments depicted in *España artística y monumental*, they do not entirely warrant the historiographical emphasis in the first set nor do they justify the inclusion of the invented monument.

Pérez Villaamil's intention to illustrate the history of Spanish architecture via the imaginary church in 'A Market' is underscored by the contrast between the vague representation of the surrounding buildings and the meticulous delineation of the various architectural styles in the church itself (fig. 2). The fact that he succeeded in making these styles easily identifiable and arranged them in accurate chronological order shows a familiarity with the history of Spanish architecture, and yet several stylistic inconsistencies indicate a somewhat amateurish knowledge. His history of Spanish architecture commences in the Romanesque period of the late eleventh to the early twelfth centuries, as displayed in the church's massive apse, which is adorned with blind arcades and bears a strong resemblance to brick Romanesque churches found in Old Castile, especially in Toledo.²⁸ Partially overlapping the apse is a smaller structure displaying Islamic features such as the *alfiz*, pointed horse-shoe arches, and *sebka* wall decoration, all of them hallmarks of Almohad architecture in al Andalus (the

²⁷ Escosura states in *España artística y monumental* that Pérez Villaamil was more knowledgeable than him about the topic, remarking that the painter had devoted his laborious life to its study (III, 26). However, there is a noticeable absence of architectural drawings, especially floorplans, elevations, and cross sections, while only two lithographs illustrate architectural details. Some remarks by the painter, quoted by Escosura (III, 3-4), reveal that Pérez Villaamil was more interested in the decorative details of the buildings than their spatial structure, constructive elements, dating, or stylistic classification.

²⁸ The design of the apse with several rows of round arches is particularly reminiscent of Toledan Mudéjar churches, but significantly, it also departs from the latter in its omission of the polylobed arches typical of Islamic architecture and common in the Toledan examples.

Iberian territory under Islamic control) during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. As our gaze moves leftward, a pair of early Gothic windows appears in the same Islamic structure, creating a blend of Christian and Islamic forms that characterise Mudéjar architecture (a label applied to Islamic-looking Christian and Jewish buildings). The architectural design then transitions to a later Gothic style, evident in the tracery windows of the enormous adjacent chapel, nave and aisles of the church, and the tower rising on the structure's north side.

The evolution of Spanish architecture continues both westward and upward into the Early Modern Period. The lower sections of the west tower, in the forefront, showcase Plateresque-profile windows complemented by Gothic tracery. This style transitions in the tower's upper half towards an increasing classicism featuring more austere geometric profiles, pediments, and classical columns. The tower's form itself matures as it ascends, from the relative simplicity of Renaissance classicism at its base to an intricate Baroque interplay of volumes and ornamentation in its upper half, incorporating statues and Corinthian capitals, a design also mirrored in the dome over the crossing. Lastly, the south lateral entrance—directly visible to the observer—displays the most recent, though by then already outdated, Neoclassical style, featuring a door framed by a prominent pediment over Corinthian columns, flanked by smaller windows fashioned similarly.

Although the significance of *España artística y monumental* within Spanish architectural historiography is beyond the scope of this article, it is important to highlight the publication's departure from precedent as a result of its pioneering adoption of a historicist methodology, which will be explored here shortly. Notably, this methodology shifted the chronological starting point to the eleventh century and placed greater emphasis on medieval architecture, which contrasted sharply with traditional narratives that began in antiquity and prioritised post-medieval structures, such as the palace-monastery of El Escorial. Moreover, the architectural history depicted in the imaginary church was ahead of its time, predating by over a decade the Spanish studies that are now recognised by contemporary scholarship as the first to apply a historicist methodology.²⁹

²⁹ For the views on architecture in Spanish Romantic publications, see the following publications by Juan Calatrava: 'La visión de la historia de la arquitectura española en las revistas románticas', *Estudios sobre historiografía de la arquitectura*, Granada and Mexico City: Universidad de Granada and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2005, 185-236; 'La construcción romántica de la historia de la arquitectura española, 1829-1848', in Juan Calatrava ed., *Romanticismo y arquitectura: La historiografía arquitectónica en la España de mediados del siglo XIX*, Madrid: Abada Editores, 2011, 13-52. See also Ignacio Henares and Juan Calatrava, *Romanticismo y teoría del arte en España*, Madrid: Cátedra, 1983; Luis Sazatornil Ruíz, 'Historia, historiografía e historicismo en la arquitectura romántica española', AAVV, *Historiografía del arte español en los siglos XIX y XX*, VII Jornadas de Arte, Madrid: Editorial Alpuerto, 1995, 63-75; María Victoria Álvarez Rodríguez, 'Las revistas artísticas de la España isabelina en el panorama historiográfico

Historicist epistemology and the soul of Spanish civilisation

On the surface, there appears to be a contradiction in the fact that *España artística y monumental* was not a history of architecture and yet placed emphasis on that history in its first issue. Whether this constitutes an actual paradox, however, hinges on the value attributed to architectural history within this context. If architectural history, as an independent scholarly field, were deemed intrinsic to the project, then *España artística y monumental* would indeed be paradoxical, and also a failure. Alternatively, if the value of architectural history is deemed extrinsic, functioning as an ancillary discipline in service of another field of study, the apparent contradiction dissipates. Escosura's introduction demonstrates that the latter was the case. To him, monuments were not merely architectural accomplishments, but above all also sources of information about the history of Spain, a subject much more dear to him.³⁰ This viewpoint becomes increasingly clear in his introductory remarks, where he focuses on the challenges of chronicling the early stages of Spanish society, and not of Spanish architecture. He also later refers to his account of the evolution of Spanish architecture as 'a brief glimpse . . . into our history'.³¹ Moreover, Escosura goes a step further, declaring that *España artística y monumental* was 'a service that we make to the *history of the country*, by providing . . . *reliable means* to appreciate the *ancient Spanish civilisation* adequately'.³² 'At least,' he assures us, 'such is our ultimate belief.'³³ Given that neither Pérez Villaamil nor Escosura were historians in a traditional sense, their approach to architecture raises the question as to why a painter and a politician were so invested in national history in a publication ostensibly centred on national monuments.

The obvious answer to this question has to do with the historicism prevalent at the time. It must be emphasised, however, that this historicism went beyond its oversimplification as merely a keen interest in history and its methodology. Developed in Germany during the last decades of the eighteenth century, historicism had deeper

del siglo XIX: un análisis de sus diferentes planteamientos', in Antonio Juanes Cortés, and others, eds., *Teoría, metodología y casos de estudio*, Salamanca: Hergar Ediciones Antema, 2017, 723-746.

³⁰ Although Escosura never became a historian, he had a sustained interest in history since his childhood (Cano Malagón, *Patricio*, 13, 32). That interest was probably fostered at home, since his father was a respected historian who authored a highly successful work, *Compendio de Historia de España*, published in 1831, with numerous subsequent editions (Manuel Moreno Alonso, *Historiografía romántica española: Introducción al estudio de la historia en el siglo XIX*, Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1979, 535). Father and son, however, had different concepts of history.

³¹ 'esa rápida ojeada que acabamos de echar sobre nuestra historia', Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, I, 9.

³² 'un servicio que hacemos á la historia del país, facilitando . . . seguros medios para apreciar debidamente la civilización española', Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, I, 3; my emphasis.

³³ 'Tal es por lo menos nuestra íntima convicción', Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, I, 3.

philosophical implications that transformed the understanding of history, nation, national identity, and epistemology. Indeed, it comprised an intellectual movement that revolutionised the understanding of the human world at the time. In the words of philosophy historian Frederick Beiser, historicism recognised for the first time that

everything in the human world – culture, values, institutions, practices, rationality – is made by history, so that nothing has an eternal form, permanent essence or constant identity which transcends historical change. The historicist holds, therefore, that the *essence, identity or nature* of everything in the human world is made by history, so that it is *entirely* the product of the particular historical processes that brought it into being.³⁴

Pérez Villaamil and Escosura's fascination with history actually involved a nuanced engagement with this profound perspective, or 'philosophical history' as it was known in Spain, and its later, related historiographic trend, the 'history of civilisations'. In contrast to Enlightened views, this perspective implied that the national identity was not essential and had not remained unchanged since time immemorial. Instead, it had been engendered under specific circumstances at a particular point in the nation's past and was fluid, evolving in concert with shifting historical contexts.

Historicism also predicated a shift in the focus of historical inquiry, moving from individuals to societies, and from universally shared characteristics to unique national attributes.³⁵ Romantic historicists argued that these unique national characteristics stemmed from a single principle or idea – a distinctive national spirit, character, or soul. This principle was thought to shape and unify the various aspects of the nation, encompassing everything from language, institutions, and commercial practices to scientific progress, values, and beliefs. Hence, according to the historicists, the historian's task was to uncover this core principle, trace its origins, and illustrate its evolution and continuity over time.³⁶ In recasting the past from a remote, bygone entity into an integral part of the present, historicism argued that any aspect of the human world could only be fully understood by reconstructing its origins and evolution. Consequently, history emerged not only as the study of the past but also as an epistemological tool: the only methodical means to attain a truthful understanding of any aspect of the nation's current state. These views found their way into Spain in the

³⁴ Frederick C. Beiser, *The German Historicist Tradition*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 2; emphasis in the original. For an excellent summary, see the introduction, 1-26. The views about historicism expressed in this article are mostly extracted from the chapters on Herder, Humboldt, and Ranke.

³⁵ Leoussi, *Encyclopaedia*, 121-123. For a more in-depth analysis, see Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 106-109, 132, 281-284.

³⁶ Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt were critical in developing this view. Although the belief in a national spirit had already been argued by Montesquieu and Voltaire, they thought of it as essential, permanent, and unchangeable. See Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 168-184.

years preceding the publication of *España artística y monumental*, whether directly from the works of the German historicists or through French theorists of the 1830s, who wielded considerable influence on Spanish liberal intellectual circles.³⁷

For Escosura, the history of Spain was indeed essentially epistemological. 'Without a doubt', he tells his readers, 'there is a thought, a spirit, in every epoch of the history of peoples, that influenced all actions, imprinted its seal on all works big and small, that, in sum, is to the nations like the soul is to the body; and to understand and explain that thought is to write history'.³⁸ In this eloquent statement, Escosura not only acknowledges the existence of a dynamic national spirit infusing all aspects of the nation but also reinforces the epistemological interconnection between history and national identity. For him, the subject of history should be the evolution of the national soul across varying historical contexts. And conversely, the national soul could only be explained and comprehended by examining its history. It is under this light that we should interpret the historiographical concerns in *España artística y monumental*, as a direct consequence of the authors' preoccupation with the Spanish soul, a topic we will return to shortly.

Escosura's interpretation of history, nation, and national identity was more narrowly delineated by trends in Spanish historiography at the time, particularly the emerging field of the 'history of civilisations'. Although the verb *civilise* and the adjective *civilised* were terms with a long history, the noun *civilisation* was a relatively new concept at the time, popularised by French historian and politician François Guizot in his influential work *Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe* (1828).³⁹ His theories, like Romantic historicism itself, percolated in Spain through magazine articles during

³⁷ For an example of how widespread these beliefs were in Escosura's circle, see the introduction by Eugenio de Ochoa to the first issue of *Semanario Pintoresco Español*, one of the most influential Romantic magazines in Spain: Eugenio de Ochoa, 'Introducción', *Semanario Pintoresco Español*, 1, 1 April, 1836, 3-6.

³⁸ 'Hay indudablemente un pensamiento, un espíritu en cada una de las épocas de la historia de los pueblos, que influye en todos los actos, que imprime su sello en todas las obras grandes y pequeñas, que, en una palabra, es á las naciones lo que el alma al cuerpo; y comprender esa idea y explicarla es escribir la historia. . . .' Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 11.

³⁹ François Guizot, *Cours d'histoire moderne: Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'Empire romain jusqu'à la révolution française*, Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1828. This work was based on a series of lectures Guizot gave at the Sorbonne, where he was professor of history, in 1828. The verb *civilise* and the adjective *civilised* were used in European discourse since the sixteenth century, but the noun *civilisation* was a product of the Enlightenment and was adopted by the Spanish, French, and English languages during the second half of the eighteenth century. On the meaning of *civilisation* in Spain during the nineteenth century, see Javier Fernández Sebastián, 'The Concept of Civilization in Spain, 1754-2005: From Progress to Identity', in *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, 4, 1, 2008, 86-89; and 'Civilización: España', in Javier Fernández Sebastián, ed., *Diccionario político y social del mundo iberoamericano*, vol. 2: *Conceptos políticos fundamentales, 1770-1870*, Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales and Universidad del País Vasco, 2014, 205-212.

the 1830s, reaching a zenith after his *Histoire générale* was translated into Spanish in 1839. Since that time and until 1843, prominent Spanish politicians, writers, and intellectuals had turned their attention to the history of Spanish civilisation. They borrowed Guizot's general framework, but strongly rejected his understatement of the role of Catholicism, his insistence on a single uniform European civilisation, and his subsequent failure to recognise the distinct individuality of the Spanish Catholic nation.⁴⁰

The study of Spanish civilisation had found passionate proponents in the societal circles of Escosura and Pérez Villaamil around the time of the launch of *España artística y monumental*. Spanish perspectives on the topic had begun to take shape in Madrid's leading private cultural institutions—the Ateneo Científico, Literario y Artístico and the Liceo Artístico y Literario—in which both men played pivotal roles as founding members.⁴¹ Between 1839 and 1842, these cultural hubs, together with their counterparts in Barcelona and Valencia, championed the topic and published several courses on it. The year 1840 saw two important milestones: the Ateneo founded a chair dedicated to the field,⁴² and the first history of Spanish civilisation was published, with a pioneering focus on cultural and social aspects.⁴³ Simultaneously, the press became a platform for theoretical and methodological debates. Among the most notable examples were the influential essays by Jaume Balmes in his newly founded journal, aptly called *La Civilización*, in 1841, and those by others in the *Revista enciclopédica de la civilización europea*, which was co-founded by Escosura and his friend Eugenio de Ochoa in Paris in 1843.⁴⁴ Collectively, the published histories of Spanish civilisation from this brief period

⁴⁰ On the impact of Guizot in Spain, see Javier Fernández Sebastián, 'La recepción en España de la *Histoire de la Civilisation* de Guizot', in Jean-René Aymes and Javier Fernández Sebastián, eds., *L'image de la France en Espagne, 1808-1850*, Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle and Universidad del País Vasco, 1997, 127-149. One of the most influential reactions to Guizot in this regard was Jaume Balmes, *El protestantismo comparado con el catolicismo en sus relaciones con la civilización europea* (1842), which was quickly translated to other European languages. Notable was also Juan Donoso Cortés, *Ensayo sobre el catolicismo, el liberalismo y el socialismo* (1851).

⁴¹ On their involvement in these institutions, see Arias Anglés, *Paisajista romántico*, 60-70; Cano Malagón, *Patricio de la Escosura*, 36-38.

⁴² See Jose Antonio Maravall, 'La palabra "civilización" y su sentido en el siglo XVIII', in Maxime Chevalier, François Lope, and Noël Salomon, eds., *Actas del V Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, celebrado en Bordeaux del 2 al 8 de Septiembre de 1974*, Bordeaux: Instituto de Estudios Ibéricos e Iberoamericanos, Université de Bordeaux, 1977, 103.

⁴³ Eugenio de Tapia García, *Historia de la civilización española desde la invasión de los Arabes hasta la época presente*, 6 vols., Madrid: Yenes, 1840.

⁴⁴ See Jaume Balmes, 'La civilización', *La Civilización: Revista religiosa, filosófica, política y literaria*, 1, 1841 (published in four sections, labeled 'Artículo 1', 'Artículo 2', etc.), 3-13, 49-59, 97-108, 206-220; P. [Anon.], 'Consideraciones sobre la historia y filosofía de la historia', *Revista enciclopédica de la civilización europea*, vol. 1, Jan. 1843, 30-50 and vol. 3, March 1843, 1-27; Antonio Benavides, 'Reflexiones sobre las diferentes escuelas históricas, desde la antigüedad hasta nuestros días', *Revista enciclopédica de la civilización europea* 2, Feb. 1843, 21-54.

were, according to historian Javier Fernández Sebastián, the most prolific and original in nineteenth-century Spanish historiography.⁴⁵ Against this backdrop, *España artística y monumental*, with its explicit mission of contributing to the history of Spanish civilisation, emerged as another effort within this historiographic trend, as well as one of the most original, as it was substantiated by architectural monuments and communicated through an aesthetic experience.

For these Spanish historians and essayists, the concepts of civilisation and nation were interchangeable. Yet more crucially, civilisation implied a more comprehensive and nuanced way of envisioning the nation and was also inherently linked with the notion of progress.⁴⁶ In particular, the understanding of civilisation and progress underpinning *España artística y monumental* drew heavily from the theories of Fermín Gonzalo Morón, a *moderado* historian and politician greatly influenced by German historicism, whose perspectives on Spanish history found resonance with Escosura.⁴⁷ In his work *Curso de historia de la civilización de España* (1841-46), Gonzalo Morón conducted a detailed exploration of the concept of civilisation, emphasizing its importance in historical discourse and explaining the methodological approach required for its study. He praised the inclusive nature of treating the nation as a civilisation for its capacity to weave together various societal trends, including politics, economics, science, technology, society, culture, and religion. Of particular note was Gonzalo Morón's emphasis, following Guizot, on the critical role of moral progress, an element that he claimed had been ignored by earlier historians due to its subtle, hidden

⁴⁵ Fernández Sebastián, 'Recepción en España', 130. The principal histories of Spanish civilisation published in those years were Juan Cortada, *Lecciones de historia de España*, 1845 (lectures imparted at the Colegio Carreras de Barcelona in 1837), and *Historia de España*, 3 vols. in 1841-1842; Fermín Gonzalo Morón, *Curso de historia de la civilización de España*, six vols, 1841-1846 (47 lessons at the Liceo de Valencia in 1840, and at the Ateneo in Madrid); Pedro José Pidal Carniado, *Historia del gobierno y legislación de España*, 1880 (21 lessons, Ateneo in Madrid, 1841-1842). There were also histories of world civilisation published, such as Antonio Gil y Zárate, *Introducción a la historia moderna*, 1841 (lectures at the Liceo artístico y literario, in 1839); Alfredo Adolfo Camus, *Compendio elemental de la historia universal: Método de escribir la historia, fuentes históricas y espíritu de la historia*, 1842.

⁴⁶ Fernández Sebastián, 'Recepción en España', 145-146.

⁴⁷ Another critical influence on Escosura was his teacher Alberto Lista y Aragón (Cano Malagón, *Patricio*, 16-19). Lista had written an article as early as 1830 arguing the historicist view of history in an essay titled, 'Sobre el estudio de la Historia en España', *Gaceta de Bayona*, 5 Feb., 1830, 3-4. Although Escosura could not attend Gonzalo Morón's lectures—he was already in Paris by that time—it is highly likely that he was familiar with Gonzalo Morón's views, as both belonged to the same cultural institutions, shared political ideology, and plotted for the fall of Narváez's government. For more information on Gonzalo Morón, see 'Fermín Gonzalo Morón y Tirado', in the electronic form biographies (DB-e) of the Real Academia de la Historia, <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/20716/fermin-gonzalo-moron-y-tirado>, accessed 11 July, 2023. For the influence of German Romantic historicism on Gonzalo Morón, see Fernández Sebastián, 'Recepción en España', 136-137.

nature and the challenges in tracing it back to a single event or individual. More important, in his view only the methodology of a history of civilisation allowed for a full and adequate assessment of moral progress.⁴⁸ As he explained, the progress of a civilisation should be assessed on three distinct, hierarchically organised levels. The base level, the material level, concerned social structures and the satisfaction of material needs. The second level, the intellectual, spanned the arts, sciences, religion, and philosophy. The third and highest level, the moral level, focused on beliefs and values, which he considered of utmost importance insofar as real progress in the material and intellectual realms hinged on advances within the moral realm.⁴⁹ In this way, Gonzalo Morón reinforced the theoretical basis for the prominence that *España artística y monumental* gave to moral progress, which both he and the authors inextricably tied to Catholicism.

Architecture as the most reliable historical document

The inaugural issue of *España artística y monumental*, and indeed the entirety of the work, deliberately highlights medieval architecture. This focus dovetails with two tenets of Romantic historicism that comprise the bedrock of the publication's mission. As seen earlier, one aim of *España artística y monumental* was to furnish reliable sources of information for an objective history of the early stages of Spanish civilisation. This goal aligned with the first historicist tenet, emphasised by Johann Gottfried von Herder, of probing the origin of every human endeavour or creation and viewing the formative period as the seed harbouring all the distinctive traits destined to bloom into a mature civilisation.⁵⁰ According to *moderado* historiography, in Spain this formative period had begun in the late eleventh century and had attained maturity during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

The other tenet of Romantic historicism at the core of the mission of *España artística y monumental* was the ambition to elevate history to a science with a level of prestige and status akin to that held by the natural sciences since Antiquity yet with its own distinct methodology, standards of knowledge, and paradigms.⁵¹ One of the most relevant criteria was the commitment to the critical method, which discounted secondary sources as laden with biased interpretations and fabrications and instead promoted an exclusive reliance on authentic and objective primary sources.⁵² This

⁴⁸ Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, vol. 1, 72-73.

⁴⁹ Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, vol. 1, 69-110. Neither Guizot nor Morón were original in their belief that human beings should be considered as physical, intellectual, and moral beings, which was already argued by Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1795 (Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 192).

⁵⁰ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 115.

⁵¹ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 6-10, 14-18.

⁵² The critical method was already de rigueur in the second half of the eighteenth century but it was Ranke, following Herder and Humboldt, who turned it into the essential practice that justified the status of history as a science. See Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 256-261, 274-277.

requirement posed challenges for the study of periods predating the advent of printing, such as the Middle Ages, due to the scarcity or non-existence of written sources. With regard to such periods, as Escosura contended, historians were compelled to adopt an inductive method based on the scant surviving documents, among which architecture and its progression therefore proved to be the least speculative.⁵³

The belief that architecture embodied the physical and character attributes of particular populations can be traced back to Vitruvius' *De architectura*, written in the first century. However, it was the rise of historicism and the history of civilisations that transformed architectural monuments into reliable and highly informative historical documents that satisfied the rigorous standards of the critical method.⁵⁴ In Spain, this viewpoint was espoused in magazine articles penned by *moderado* liberals within the circles of Escosura and Pérez Villaamil in the 1830s.⁵⁵ The arguments set forth in these articles were profoundly shaped by a trio of closely connected French theorists: architects Léonce Reynaud and Léon Vaudoyer and politician Hypolite Fortoul.⁵⁶ Their perspectives were disseminated via publications that received considerable recognition in Spain and presented Spanish readers with fresh interpretations of architecture's ability to embody national identity.⁵⁷ For instance, these readers were introduced to

⁵³ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 3.

⁵⁴ It must be noted that we are considering standing buildings and not archeological remains, the latter of which had been considered a more objective historical document than texts since the Renaissance. See Gloria Mora Rodríguez, 'La falsificación histórica de España', *Revista de Occidente*, 410-411, 2015, 78-87. On the development of a historicist understanding of architecture in France, see Barry Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer: Historicism in the Age of Industry*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994, and David van Zanten, *Designing Paris: the Architecture of Duban, Labrousse, Duc, and Vaudoyer*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987.

⁵⁵ Most of these articles were published in the two leading Spanish cultural magazines at the time, *Semanario Pintoresco Español* and *El Artista*, whose editors and collaborators were in the circle of friends of Pérez Villaamil and Escosura. Some examples are Valentín Carderera, 'Bellas Artes', *El Artista* 1, 1834, 2-3; Usoz del Río, '¿Bajo qué sistema de gobierno prosperan más las Bellas Artes? Estado de éstas entre los antiguos y su carácter', *El Artista*, 2, 73-77, 85-88; Eugenio de Ochoa, 'De los artistas españoles', *Semanario Pintoresco Español*, 7 April, 1836, 25; Basilio Sebastián Castellanos, 'El clima y la forma de gobierno influyen extraordinariamente [sic] en las artes', *Observatorio Pintoresco*, 7, 5 Oct., 1837, 53-55.

⁵⁶ These three men were highly influenced by historicism, especially Fortoul. See Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer*, 119, 124-126.

⁵⁷ Spaniards looked at France for models for their own publications, such as *El Artista* (Madrid, 1835-1836), which emulated *L'Artiste*. Admiration for French publications and authors is also often singled out in Spanish works. For instance, *Encyclopédie Pittoresque* was highly praised by Eugenio de Ochoa as a model for *Semanario Pintoresco Español* (*Semanario Pintoresco Español*, 1836, 6); José Cávada y Nava expressed admiration for Fortoul in his *Ensayo histórico sobre los diversos géneros de arquitectura empleados en España desde la dominación romana hasta nuestros días*, Madrid: Santiago Saunaque, 1848, 259. Another great influence on Spanish historicist interpretations of architecture was Thomas Hope, particularly for his *An Historical Essay on Architecture* (London,

Reynaud's claim that architecture held 'the privilege and the power of representing society in all its aspects'.⁵⁸ Vaudoyer further enlightened them on architecture's critical role as a barometer of the progress of a civilisation,⁵⁹ while Fortoul reinforced these ideas with a compelling maxim: 'monuments are the true writing of the peoples'.⁶⁰

Escosura advocated the importance of monuments as historical documents with an eloquence unrivalled by his Spanish contemporaries.⁶¹ He characterised architecture as the art form that 'inevitably reflected the civilisation, power, richness, stability, and even religious beliefs of peoples'.⁶² 'To know the architecture of a people', he further insisted, 'is to know the people themselves, at least broadly and in relation to their degree of civilisation'.⁶³ Although he conceded that architecture alone was not a sufficient source of historical knowledge, he staunchly maintained that it was a necessary source without which 'a coherent understanding of the nature, character, and enlightenment of a state would be impossible'.⁶⁴ Even more important, Escosura unreservedly proclaimed that *España artística y monumental* was premised on this belief.⁶⁵ The assertion leaves no ambiguity: he and Pérez Villaamil regarded the monuments primarily as historical documents, not just as architectural achievements. This view made the accuracy of the representations and architectural drawings

1835), who was commended by José Amador de los Ríos ('Sobre la necesidad de escribir la historia de la arquitectura en España, y sobre la influencia de este estudio en el de la civilización española', *Boletín Español de Arquitectura*, 1846, 100-103).

⁵⁸ 'la puissance de représente la société sous toutes ses faces'. See Léonce Reynaud, 'Architecture', *Encyclopedie Pittoresque* (later *Encyclopedie Nouvelle*), Paris, 1, 1834, 770-778 (quote on page 772).

⁵⁹ Léon Vaudoyer and Albert Lenoir, 'Études d'architecture en France', a series published in *Magasin Pittoresque* 1839-1852.

⁶⁰ 'les monuments sont la véritable écriture des peuples'. Hypolite Fortoul, *De l'Art en Allemagne*, Lyon, Toulouse, Berlin, Frankfurt, Gourdon, Martegoutte, Cretzmann, Baer, 1841, 177.

Fortoul's maxim was also quoted in *Magasin Pittoresque*, 1842, 128. For more information about the perspectives of these French authors, see Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer*, 1994, 109-140.

⁶¹ Escosura's explanation was more articulate than that of Carderera, in 'Bellas Artes'; F. J. Parcerisa, in *Recuerdos y Bellezas de España* (Barcelona: Joaquín Perdaguer, 1839); and Antonio de Zabaleta, in 'Arquitectura', published in two consecutive issues of *No me olvides*: 11, 16 July, 1837, 5-7 and 12, July 23, 1837, 1-3.

⁶² 'la civilización, el poder, la riqueza, la estabilidad y hasta las creencias de los pueblos se reflejan irremediamente.' Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 3.

⁶³ 'conocer la arquitectura de un pueblo es conocer tambien [sic] al pueblo mismo, al menos en general y con respecto al grado de civilización en que se halla.' Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 10.

⁶⁴ 'con íntimo convencimiento que sin el auxilio de aquel importante ramo de los conocimientos humanos (la arquitectura), jamás podrá formarse cabal idea de la índole, carácter, é ilustración de un estado.' Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 10.

⁶⁵ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 10. Pérez Villaamil shared this belief, which we find expressed in the third volume, 1.

irrelevant as long as the buildings could be recognised and thus associated with specific historical contexts.

For the study of the Middle Ages, architecture emerged as the supreme historical document, outshining other artistic mediums such as poetry, the visual arts, and music, and even outperforming textual documents.⁶⁶ This perceived superiority of architecture was partly due to the limitations of other art forms. For instance, associating poems, musical compositions, and portable artworks with a specific time and place, as well as determining their original form, often proved challenging.⁶⁷ Artists and poets were also known to exercise artistic licence, which permitted their work to stray from reality. Moreover, their creations tended to express individualistic and subjective ideals, rather than the collective sentiments of society.⁶⁸ In contrast, architectural monuments stood as solid, reliable, and profoundly informative primary sources. The original place, form, and date of creation of these structures could be definitively established because they remained anchored to their creation sites, were generally believed to have stood unaltered since the Middle Ages, and were often easier to date via inscriptions on the edifices themselves. In terms of authenticity, architecture also surpassed written documents, whose scarcity made it unfeasible to compare them with similar texts to verify their authenticity, as demanded by the critical method.⁶⁹

In addition, French theorists maintained that architecture offered the most insightful and comprehensive perspective on any given civilisation. The knowledge provided by architectural monuments was societal in nature due to their public and communal status. These structures also imparted information about progress in the three realms, the material, the intellectual, and the moral. As these theorists argued, creating architecture required knowledge of a wide range of disciplines. Architecture also had a practical dimension and therefore reflected societal customs, material necessities, and community priorities that were firmly anchored in reality.⁷⁰ Furthermore, architecture had a distinctive ability to manifest a community's wealth and natural resources as well as its most deeply held values.⁷¹ Adding depth to this perspective, Fortoul made a bold claim: architecture was 'the image and the sum of the universe', encapsulating all human endeavours and artistic creations, each bearing the imprint of the human spirit. He even stated enthusiastically that 'there is no great

⁶⁶ This argument was articulated by many European and Spanish intellectuals. More to the point, it also was defended in Escosura's magazine in P. [Anon.], 'Consideraciones sobre la historia', vol. 3, 13-14.

⁶⁷ For examples, see Carderera, 'Bellas Artes', 3; Anon., 'Ancient National Poetry of Spain', *Foreign Quarterly Review*, 1829, 86.

⁶⁸ Reynaud, 'Architecture', 772.

⁶⁹ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 116.

⁷⁰ Reynaud, 'Architecture', 771-772.

⁷¹ Fortoul, *l'Art en Allemagne*, 172-177. Fortoul's views about architecture were informed by those of Vaudoyer, with whom he had undertaken the trip to Germany (Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer*, 109). On Reynaud, see van Zanten, *Designing Paris*, 48.

construction that is not the expression of a complete metaphysics'. In Fortoul's view, the history of architecture was a tangible chronicle of the progress of civilisation itself, for 'whenever you see architecture changing its forms, you can say that civilisation has been renewed'.⁷² Certainly, Pérez Villaamil's imaginary church seems an illustration of the latter argument by Fortoul in particular.

If *España artística y monumental* communicated an abstract truth—the national spirit—through a historical narrative authenticated by architectural evidence, it also employed another, equally effective mode of making that truth knowable: namely, the aesthetic experience. According to earlier Romantic epistemology, a complex and abstract concept such as that of national spirit could not be captured by words or be explained by reason alone. Instead, it had to be perceived through the senses and via particular realities in an act of immediate intuition. Therefore, the Catholic identity of Spain could not be conveyed by philosophy, religion, or the natural sciences, but only by art. From this perspective, artists were uniquely positioned to grasp the inner truth of reality and communicate it in sensible form through their work. The truth in question could then only be comprehended by the viewer through the exercise of the imagination and an intense aesthetic experience.⁷³

Pérez Villaamil's depictions and Escosura's words were skilfully crafted to elicit a potent aesthetic experience in line with the tenets of Romantic aesthetics. Escosura's commentaries about the patrons of the depicted buildings and the individuals interred in them excited readers' imagination and heightened their emotional reaction by triggering a cascade of spontaneous associations leading to moral insights about the individuals in question and events connected to them. At the same time, these emotional responses and moral insights were further deepened by the sublimity and picturesqueness of Pérez Villaamil's depictions of the monuments, whose exaggerated dimensions, ruggedness, broken profiles, and dramatic light effects were intentionally designed to evoke feelings of awe, wonder, and surprise in the viewer.⁷⁴

Pérez Villaamil, the painter-historian

The historical narrative drawn from the individual monuments in *España artística y monumental* would have fallen short of the expectations of Romantic historicists, who would have considered it a fragmented pastiche, bereft of a unifying principle. True history, these critics insisted, should transcend the mere recounting of events and their

⁷² 'l'architecture! elle est l'image et l'abrégé du l'univers.' Fortoul, *l'Art en Allemagne*, 174; 'car il n'y a pas de grande construction qui ne soit l'expression d'une métaphysique complète'; 'Autant de fois que vous verrez l'architecture changer ses formes, autant de fois vous pourrez dire que la civilisation s'est renouvelée'. Fortoul, *l'Art en Allemagne*, 177. See also Zanten, *Designing Paris*, 57-59.

⁷³ For more information on this epistemology, see Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 116, 136, 208-209, 268-271, 286.

⁷⁴ For more on the aesthetic experience provided by *España artística y monumental*, see Mateo, 'La mirada pintoresca' and 'The Pleasures'.

causes in order to illuminate the evolution of the national spirit from its inception to the present. With regard to architecture, a collection of stand-alone buildings, regardless of their chronological arrangement, simply could not effectively support such a narrative. The challenge called for a singular, comprehensive structure capable of embodying the critical continuum of the national spirit, concatenating its different epochs. Given the unlikely possibility of finding an existing monument capable of narrating such a national history, the only recourse was to create it. This could take a physical form, as demonstrated years later by Vaudoyer's design of Marseilles Cathedral.⁷⁵ Yet, there was a more economical and potentially wider-reaching alternative: a monument constructed not with stone but with ink on a print, such as Pérez Villaamil's imaginary church.

'A Market' demonstrates Pérez Villaamil's *modus operandi* as a historian. According to Romantic historicism, the historian's first task was to sift through evidence, assessing its authenticity and objectivity, a task accomplished in the print with the selection of architectural styles deemed by Escosura as 'truly indigenous'.⁷⁶ Pérez Villaamil's choice of a church over a palace or civic building further underscores his critical appraisal of evidence, reflecting Reynaud's assertion that religious architecture was the most cogent document of a civilisation, as nations invested all their available wealth, power, and knowledge in sacred architecture as a way of honouring and upholding their highest ideals.⁷⁷ The historian's second task, argued the Romantic historicists, was to combine and organise the evidence according to a single plan using the imagination, which Pérez Villaamil accomplished by organizing the evidence—architectural styles—within a single narrative: one building.

The critical role of imagination in the writing of history partially blurred the boundaries between historians and artists, both of whom used their imagination in arranging disparate elements into a cohesive composition in order to reveal the inner truth of reality. This shared dependence on imagination, it was believed, turned history into art. However, historicists clarified that this did not imply an equivalence between artists and historians. Despite both parties engaging their imagination, the historian's work was also a science, insofar as it was constrained by a reliance on authentic, factual evidence. Thus, whereas artists were free to present fantasies, historians bore the responsibility of objectively portraying a nation's spirit as it was realised through particular realities over time.⁷⁸ Accordingly, in the invention of his church, Pérez Villaamil was occupying a liminal space that skilfully reconciled both roles. Utilizing his imagination, he created a fantasy monument that simultaneously depicted a rigorous historical narrative in order to reveal the inner truth of Spanish Catholic identity.

⁷⁵ As Bergdoll argued, this cathedral was conceived as a didactic vessel for making national identity readable in architectural form (*Léon Vaudoyer*, 265).

⁷⁶ 'verdaderamente indígenas', Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 8.

⁷⁷ Reynaud, 'Architecture', 772.

⁷⁸ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 118, 168, 208-210, 266-267.

The history constructed in 'A Market' also aligns with other historicist expectations concerning history. Foremost among these was the portrayal of the nation's moral character—in this case, Catholicism as the driving force of Spanish civilisation.⁷⁹ Romantic historicism further posited that history should be narrated with broad strokes. Unlike the precision required in political history, the evolution of a national character, as seen earlier, extended over lengthy periods, often spanning several decades or even centuries. Thus, its progression could not be rigidly tethered to specific years, events, individuals, or places, and instead called for a more generalised narrative.⁸⁰ Furthermore, history should be told in an engaging manner that allowed the readers to relive and feel the past.⁸¹ Pérez Villaamil achieved the desired degree of engagement by capitalizing on the aesthetic allure of his image and tapping into a tradition—a market surrounding a church—familiar to Spaniards. This strategy brought to life the centrality of Catholicism in the daily lives of readers while transforming the abstract national identity into a concrete, material, and recognizable reality.

Finally, Romantic historicism asserted that history should emphasise a nation's distinctive character. In the case of Spain, this would involve distinguishing the nation from other Catholic nations. Pérez Villaamil bolstered this uniqueness through the depiction of architectural styles typical of Spain—Mudéjar, Almohad, brick Romanesque—brought together as a pastiche evocative of many Spanish churches. Escosura added another layer by narratively transforming the market into a vibrant tableau teeming with Spanish products and characters.⁸² Through his vivid description, readers were immersed in a rich multisensorial panorama brimming with details of the personalities populating the market, with their intrinsically Spanish goods, scents, sounds, and outfits: an Andalusian selling olive oil, a Sorian trading cloth, an Alcarrian advertising honey, a Valencian displaying faience, and an Extremenian pitching his chorizos, among many others. As Escosura points out, it was in these individuals and their utterances that the poetic character of the nation stood out.⁸³ Thus, through their combined visual and verbal strategies, Pérez Villaamil and Escosura captured, conveyed, and animated a historical narrative that was not simply Catholic but also distinctly and emphatically Spanish.

⁷⁹ Fernández Sebastián, 'Civilización-España', 207. For some examples from the era, see P. [Anon.], 'Consideraciones sobre la historia', vol. 3, 17-18; Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 9.

⁸⁰ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 194. This point was also defended by Guizot and Gonzalo Morón. Fernández Sebastián, 'Recepción', 136.

⁸¹ See, for instance, Herder's views in this regard in Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 136.

⁸² Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 16-17. It is also noteworthy that while the caption of the lithograph states it is 'A Market', the heading of Escosura's commentary labels it as 'A Market in Spain'.

⁸³ 'Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 17.

Rewriting the history of Spain: new beginning

Like all histories and memories, the history of Spain constructed in 'A Market' constituted as much a commemoration as an erasure of the Spanish past. In a striking departure from traditional Spanish historiography, it delayed the start of Spanish Catholic civilisation—and, according to Escosura, the Middle Ages as well—to the late eleventh century, the date of the oldest part of the church. Such a delay erased three celebrated episodes of the earlier Middle Ages: the Visigothic Kingdom (507-711), which marked the unification of Iberia under the first Catholic monarchy, one of the most popular foundational myths of Spain;⁸⁴ the Moorish invasion of 711 and the subsequent rule of the Umayyad dynasty, which included the Caliphate of Cordoba (929-1031) and its renowned cultural, scientific, and technological progress, unparalleled in medieval Europe; and the beginning of the *Reconquista*, the eight-century-long Christian military campaign to end Islamic rule in Spain, in the mythical victory over the Moors by the Asturian King Pelayo (718-c.737) at the Battle of Covadonga in northern Spain.⁸⁵

To understand how Spanish viewer-readers would have interpreted the historical narrative of 'A Market', we must take into account the fact that they did not contemplate the imaginary church in a vacuum but instead as the last monument in a sequence of images and commentaries. To understand this fact, it is crucial to reconstruct the experience of these reader/viewers in the first set. In the introduction, Escosura constantly relates architectural styles to general traits of the society, attributing the progress of these styles and traits not to individual actors or events—i.e. El Cid's conquest of Valencia—but to a slow process of transformation brought about by particular historical contexts. Following liberal histories of Spanish civilisation, especially that of Gonzalo Morón, Escosura dismisses the Visigothic and Asturian kingdoms because although they may have excelled on one or two levels of civilisation, they failed to do so on all three levels—material, intellectual, and moral—which was

⁸⁴ This foundational myth had a long history that began in the ninth century. See José Álvarez Junco and Gregorio de la Fuente Monge, 'La evolución del relato histórico', in José Álvarez Junco, and others, eds., *Las historias de España: Visiones del pasado y construcción de identidad*, vol. 12 of Josep Fontana and Ramón Villares eds., *Historia de España*, Madrid and Barcelona: Crítica and Marcial Pons, 2013, 21-26, 174-177.

⁸⁵ Pelayo and the Asturian Kings were considered descendants of the Visigoths, thus establishing a continuity that turned the expulsion of the Moors into a reconquest. The myth of Pelayo, like that of the Visigoths, dates to the ninth century. See Álvarez Junco and de la Fuente Monge, 'Evolución del relato histórico', 26-30. See also Martín Federico Río Saloma, 'Entre historia y hagiografía: la santificación de Don Pelayo en la historiografía española (ss. XVI-XVII)', *Revista de Historia (Concepción, Chile)*, 20: 1, 2013, 17-26. The term *reconquista*, and the subsequent exaltation of Pelayo, gained traction in the 1840s, fostered by liberal historians and foreigners. See Martín Federico Río Saloma, *La Reconquista: una construcción historiográfica (siglos XVI-XIX)*, Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2011, 160-190. See also Carolyn Boyd, 'The Second Battle of Covadonga', *History and Memory*, 14: 1-2, 2002, 37-64.

required, in his view, for an authentic progress of a civilisation.⁸⁶ Escosura argues that it was only during the final decades of the eleventh century that circumstances favoured the consolidation of a truly Christian society. It was not until then, he explains, that an empowered Church guided the Spanish troops to decisive victories that expanded Christian territory and led to increased wealth and improved life conditions. Those circumstances, he states, transformed Spaniards into a society less invested in war and more inclined toward intellectual endeavours, courtesy, and the cultivation of religious spirituality.⁸⁷

In the following pages, then, Spanish reader/viewers were transported to the celebrated eleventh century. The location of Las Huelgas in Burgos, for example, evoked memories from this era, given that Burgos was the capital of the kingdom of Castile and the birth and final resting place of El Cid, the exalted hero of the Reconquista and one of the most prominent figures of the eleventh century.⁸⁸ Notably, Escosura's commentaries on the monuments shift the emphasis from society to individual actors, thereby aligning with Gonzalo Morón's perspective that the history of a civilisation should interweave societal and individual elements of the human experience. This is because, as Gonzalo Morón argued, although society shapes individuals, it is often the endeavours of individuals that catalyse social progress.⁸⁹ Consequently, for both Gonzalo Morón and Escosura, although the history of Spanish civilisation was predominantly a social history, it also accommodated influential thinkers and leaders such as monarchs or bishops. It must be noted that these individuals earned recognition not inherently, due to their distinguished positions or military victories, but for their roles in creating different historical circumstances that

⁸⁶ Escosura acknowledges the intellectual achievements of the clergy during the Visigothic period, but considers its society immature, with little progress in the moral and material realms. Following Gonzalo Morón and Tapia, he views the Asturian kingdom as a period of regression due to its continuous state of war. Gonzalo Morón went as far as to assert that the civilisation of the Asturian kingdom was the most ignorant in Europe (Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 32).

⁸⁷ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 7. Gonzalo Morón also argued for the importance of the late eleventh-century shift (*Curso*, 5, 149-236). Not all the contemporary liberal historians shared this view, however. The progressive Tapia García recognised the importance of the Visigothic period but for political rather than religious reasons (*Civilización Española*, I, 58-62, 72-88). For Cortada, the eleventh century was a period of regression for Spanish civilisation (*Lecciones*, 112-119).

⁸⁸ Escosura explicitly points out that Burgos was the first capital of Castile. He does not provide the date for when this occurred, but educated Spanish readers would have known that this happened in the eleventh century (Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I 10). El Cid was born in Vivar, a small village near Burgos and was buried in the Monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, also in Burgos. He was a mercenary at the service of Christian and Muslim rulers but soon became glorified as the most important warrior of the Reconquista. His legend was magnified by the twelfth-century epic poem *El Cantar del Mio Cid*, and later by Pierre Corneille's *Le Cid* (1637).

⁸⁹ Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 9-10, 76.

would allow the germinated seed of Spanish civilisation to flourish. However, their impactful contributions are typically inferred rather than explicit. For example, Escosura's remarks on Las Huelgas praise the founder of the monastery, Alfonso VIII of Castile, well known among educated Spaniards for his remarkable territorial expansion and his definitive defeat of the Almohade Empire in the revered Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. These events were not merely tributes to his leadership and military victory, but above all were recognised as critical shifts for the progress of Spanish Catholic civilisation.

Escosura again guided Spanish reader's interpretation of the monument featured in the next lithograph: Toledo Cathedral. Aware that Spaniards were well versed on Toledo's role as the capital of the Visigothic kingdom and its importance as the primate diocese of the Spanish church ever since that time, he encouraged them to look at the cathedral as proof of the city's former splendour, prestige, and wealth. Also, by referring to people associated with the construction of the cathedral, or buried in it, he transformed the monument into a springboard for recalling the most impactful milestones of the Reconquista: the conquest of Toledo by Alfonso VI of Castile and León, in 1085; the victory at las Navas and the conquest of Seville, capital of the Almohade Empire, led by Alfonso VIII and Ferdinand III of Castile, respectively; and the end of al-Andalus thanks to the conquest of Granada by the Catholic Kings in 1492, the same year in which the monument was finished. This is only a sample of the historical memories sparked by Las Huelgas and Toledo Cathedral, but is sufficiently illustrative of how the monuments documented the formation of Spanish Catholic civilisation as a movement of fluid and unstoppable progress facilitated by the Reconquista with the support of the monarchy and the clergy.

Negotiating the Islamic past

Despite the predominant emphasis on Catholicism and the Reconquista and the marginalization of the Caliphate of Cordoba in this historical narrative, it would be reductive to conclude that *España artística y monumental* showed a generalised anti-Moorish bias. In fact, the relationship of Spanish liberal *moderados* with their Islamic past was far more complex and nuanced. Thus, Escosura saw no contradiction in expressing sincere admiration for the Caliphate's scientific and artistic progress, the refinement and noble ideals of its society, as well as the lessons it imparted to Europeans in mathematics, medicine, and industrial arts. He even conceded that architecture had flourished among the Moors and that it was worthy of admiration.⁹⁰ Nonetheless, much in the same way that he viewed Spain's Roman past, he considered the Caliphate to be a foreign, 'Arab' civilisation despite its development on Spanish soil.⁹¹ For him, Spanish identity did not hinge on geographical boundaries, a common

⁹⁰ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 6.

⁹¹ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 4, 8. This view of Roman Spain as a foreign civilisation was also shared by Escosura's teacher Alberto Lista.

procedure in previous and some contemporary historiography, but instead on Catholic values shared by all the members of the nation.

The fact that Pérez Villaamil and Escosura viewed the Caliphate as foreign, as did other members of their societal circles, did not imply their repudiation of a positive Moorish influence on Spanish civilisation. On the contrary, they deemed Spain's Islamic past a critical component of the singularity of their nation, but strategically acknowledged its existence only in reference to events following the collapse of the Caliphate, once the balance of power in Iberia had been definitively tilted towards the Christian kingdoms.⁹² Gonzalo Morón pushed the argument further, asserting with pride that Spain's Islamic past conferred upon her a superiority over other European nations. Having identified four great civilisations—Oriental, Greek, Roman, and Germanic or Modern—he contended that Spain was the only nation to have received contributions from all of them, and uniquely from the Oriental, which he recognised as the cradle of all civilisations. Moreover, in the medieval clash between the Christian and Oriental civilisations, he exulted, Spain constituted the lone stronghold where Christianity had triumphed, simultaneously carving out its Catholic identity in the process.⁹³

In acknowledging an 'Oriental' contribution to Spanish identity, these moderantist liberals skilfully navigated a delicate balance, one that continued to characterise Spain's Catholic identity at the time, by highlighting certain aspects of Moorish civilisation while deemphasizing others. Of primary significance was their calculated omission of religion-related aspects. For example, Escosura confined his admiration of the Caliphate to the material and intellectual spheres, adeptly sidestepping moral and religious elements to the point of refraining from any mention of Islam or mosques in his introduction.⁹⁴ The only form of positive Islamic influence recognised by Escosura was what he labelled as the Moorish 'religion of honour', characterizing it not by dogma but by secular ideals of chivalry, generosity, and courtesy. As the decline of Al-Andalus intensified from the eleventh century onwards, he explained, a process of fusion was sparked by the adoption of these Moorish ideals by the Christian warriors, who in the process were transformed from ruthless and ignorant combatants into refined and cultivated knights. The subsequent growing mutual respect between Moors and Christians, he argued, nurtured increased

⁹² Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, II, 27.

⁹³ Fernández Sebastián, 'Civilización-España', 208; Gonzalo Morón brings this issue all across his history, for an example see *Curso*, I, 198 ff.; III, 7-8, 12-13.

⁹⁴ The two terms each receive only one mention in the first instalment, in the commentary on Toledo Cathedral.

interaction between them, thereby fostering a cultural amalgamation remarkable for its perseverance in the midst of unyielding hostilities.⁹⁵

Escosura identifies the development of a unique architectural style in Spain, one in which 'the Arab and Gothic styles get mixed, blurred, and amalgamated', as irrefutable evidence of the confluence of Moorish and Christian civilisations.⁹⁶ Today, we refer to this hybrid style as Mudéjar, a misnomer predicated on the erroneous assumption that the monuments were built by Mudéjares (Muslims living in Christian territory). However, at the time *España artística y monumental* was published, the style in question had not been studied, nor had the label *Mudéjar* yet been coined.⁹⁷ Escosura, too, assumed that this style was the work of Muslims living in Christian Spain, but like others before and after him, he categorised them as 'Mozarabic', thereby feeding the term's confusion with Mozarabic architecture, which employed a different blend of Muslim and Christian styles and was associated with the Mozarabs (Christians living in al Andalus).⁹⁸ This lack of clarity regarding the distinction between Islamic, Mudéjar, and Mozarabic architecture is responsible for the numerous inaccuracies about Mudéjar monuments in *España artística y monumental*, some of which are wrongly dated to the Caliphate period.

Nevertheless, the relevant point here is not the factual accuracy of the information about Mudéjar architecture, but its perception as material evidence of a critical aspect of Spanish civilisation. This interpretation had already been briefly suggested by Spanish architect Antonio de Zabaleta in 1837, when he asserted that Spanish Gothic architecture constituted a national and distinctive style, due in part to its 'Arab' influence.⁹⁹ Zabaleta further lamented the lack of Spanish interest in an architecture that he referred to as 'an indigenous plant, so precious, philosophical, and

⁹⁵ Escosura also argues that this process of fusion was born of necessity, since Christians were aware of the superiority of Moorish civilisation (Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 7.) The notion of the process of fusion of both cultures had been already developed in studies of Spanish medieval poetry and romances.

⁹⁶ 'los estilos arábigo y gótico se mezclan, confunden, y amalgaman'. Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 9.

⁹⁷ Spanish historiography has traditionally credited José Amador de los Ríos with introducing this term in a speech titled *El estilo mudéjar en arquitectura*, read in 1859 at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid (published in 1872 by Imprenta de Manuel Tello, in Madrid). Subsequently, he came to be considered the pioneer of Mudéjar studies in Spanish scholarship.

⁹⁸ For examples of Escosura's use of the term Mozarab to refer to Mudéjar architecture see Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, II, 23, 26.

⁹⁹ The belief that Gothic architecture, and not just its Spanish version, had been inspired by Islamic architecture was widespread at that time. For more information, see Mateo, 'In Search of the Origin' and 'The Moorish-Gothic Cathedrals'.

legitimate on the soil that gave it origin or adopted it'.¹⁰⁰ In a sense, *España artística y monumental* seemed to be responding to Zabaleta's complaint. The publication offered a relatively more comprehensive—albeit still limited—analysis of the style and its evolution, as well as an unprecedented number of Mudéjar monuments. The authors of the work took pride in illustrating these overlooked buildings and yet struggled to furnish any meaningful information about them, for as they rightly claimed, there was none available.¹⁰¹ With this in mind, *España artística y monumental* stands as an unrecognised pioneer in shedding light on Mudejar architecture, doing so over a decade earlier than has been recognised by prior scholarship.

One of Escosura's most noteworthy and novel observations about Mudejar architecture pertained to its value as proof of Spanish Catholic tolerance towards Moors. That Moors had demonstrated respect towards Christians, particularly by allowing them to practice their Christian religion, was a view commonly held by liberals. However, the inverse notion—Christian acceptance of the Moors, and particularly of the Moors as people, as opposed to their cultural achievements—was less commonly expressed; and in any case, architecture was never brought into the equation as evidence.¹⁰² It is thus quite remarkable for Escosura to note that Christians had allowed Moors, despite their Muslim religion, to build not only their palaces but even the churches in which they practiced their faith. Through this comment, Escosura subtly highlights new evidence from Spain's formative period to endorse a liberal interpretation of Catholicism defined by tolerance and sincere spirituality, which sharply and intentionally contrasted with the bigotry and sanctimony associated with the Inquisition and its support from the absolute monarchy.¹⁰³

In short, the Mudéjar monuments featured in *España artística y monumental* offered a nuanced perspective on the Moorish contribution that confirmed Escosura's belief that in both architecture and history 'the past glories of the patria are intimately interwoven with the splendour of the Catholic religion'.¹⁰⁴ That interwovenness was

¹⁰⁰ 'descuidamos el cultivo de una planta indígena, tan preciosa, filosófica, y legítima en el suelo que le dio origen o la adoptó.' Zabaleta, 'Arquitectura', 2. His qualification of that architecture as philosophical is evidence of his historicist viewpoint.

¹⁰¹ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, II, 23, and 26.

¹⁰² The historian who paid most attention to this issue was the progressive Tapia, who emphasised the tolerance, respect, and desire to learn from the Moors during, for instance, the era of Alfonso X of Castile, and Archbishop Rodrigo in the thirteenth century, despite the fight against the Almohades (Tapia García, *Civilización española*, II, 182-185).

¹⁰³ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 7. In his commentary on Toledo Cathedral, Escosura also takes the opportunity to emphasise the fact that King Alfonso VI, after the conquest of Toledo in 1085, allowed Muslims to continue to practice their religion (I, 13). See also Tapia (*Civilización española*, II, 300-301) for an explicit contraposition of medieval religious tolerance and the Inquisition.

¹⁰⁴ 'se hallan íntimamente enlazadas las antiguas glorias de la patria con el esplendor de la religión católica.' Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 15.

asserted in two ways: by emphasizing the secular character of Islam—as embodied in palaces and fortresses that epitomised the ‘religion of honour’—or, more often, by subjugating it to Christianity, such as by incorporating Islamic features in Catholic religious buildings. Both strategies were foreshadowed in the first instalment, the former via the secular Sun Gate of Toledo and the latter by the imaginary church in ‘A Market’. In the church, the Moorish contribution, represented by a small structure with Almohade decorations, is significantly minimised by the magnitude of the Christian structure, as a visual metaphor of the supremacy of Catholicism over Islam. As Escosura clarified in the second volume of the work, Christianity’s superiority was further epitomised by the contrasting religious architecture of both faiths. The imposing magnificence of the Gothic cathedrals, he contends, had been born from the lofty ideals of the Catholic faith and far surpassed the unimaginative mosques, whose only appeal lay in their ornamentation, a deficiency he attributed to the inherent hedonism of Islam.¹⁰⁵

By the time Spanish reader-viewers of *España artística y monumental* would have encountered the lithograph of ‘A Market’, they would have already been indoctrinated in the value of architecture as a historical document, the societal developments that nurtured the development of a Catholic civilisation at the end of the eleventh century, the assimilation of the Moorish ‘religion of honour’, the tolerance exhibited by Spanish medieval Christians, and the favourable circumstances created by the Reconquista for the eventual maturation of Spanish civilisation under the Catholic Monarchs. This body of knowledge primed these readers to associate the styles of the imaginary church with specific historical contexts, allowing them to contemplate an orderly and cohesive narrative of their civilisation that, until that point, had been provided in a rather piecemeal fashion. Equally important, this monument provided readers with a road map that guided their interpretation of the individual edifices in *España artística y monumental* as further proof of the veracity of the historical narrative outlined by the church.

Performing cultural nationalism: Pérez Villaamil and Escosura’s political and social activism

The agency of *España artística y monumental*’s historiographical focus becomes more clear when it is placed in its wider historical context and the activism of its authors. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, Spanish society had been undergoing profound transformations as the country transitioned into a liberal constitutional monarchy while grappling with the decline of the empire and dwindling global prestige. The nation had weathered a series of adversities: the devastating Napoleonic invasion of 1808; the subsequent War of Independence that lasted until 1814; and two civil wars, in 1822-23 and 1833-39. During these tumultuous times, Spain created its first and second constitutions, in 1812 and 1837, unleashing a volatile political cycle in which periodic restorations of the absolute monarchy, in 1814-20 and 1823-33,

¹⁰⁵ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística y monumental*, II, 12, 27.

alternated with liberal uprisings and regimes, in 1820-23 and 1833-40. Controversial reforms, such as the abolition of the Inquisition and the disentanglement of monasteries, along with sporadic violent clashes with the clergy, alarmed traditional segments of Spanish society, whose indignation deepened during episodes of tense relationships with the papacy. The result was a kaleidoscope of governments that pitted the Catholic Church against Spanish politicians, ultramontane clerics against liberal ones, absolutist Spaniards against their liberal counterparts, and, within liberal ranks, progressives against *moderados*. Paradoxically, these conflicting groups sometimes found unity in certain causes, resulting in a political panorama fraught with contradictions. By and large, the rapid and pendular transformations experienced by Spanish society created a fertile ground for a robust cultural nationalism, energised by divergent visions of the national soul vying for primacy.

When the first set of *España artística y monumental* was released on June 1, 1841, Spain was at a critical political juncture. Just a few months earlier, in October 1840, progressive General Espartero had led an uprising, ousting the *moderado* government that had been closely allied with Queen Regent María Cristina. The upheaval triggered her abdication and subsequent exile, with a contingent of *moderados* joining her in Paris. Over the following three years, the moderantists strategised to regain control of the government, while progressives rolled out some of the most audacious policies the nation had ever seen, weakening the monarchy and relatively increasing the secularization of Spanish society. These bold initiatives stoked widespread outrage, at times even within progressive ranks.¹⁰⁶ From the *moderado* perspective, this was an intolerable situation that demanded a solution aimed at reunifying Spain, safeguarding its traditional values and unique identity, and propelling the nation forward.

Pérez Villaamil and Escosura were active participants in this context of political turmoil. Shortly after Espartero's coup, they fled to Paris, joining the circle of exiled *moderados* around María Cristina.¹⁰⁷ The fact that it was their second exile confirms a lifelong engagement with the liberal cause, which had been cemented early on, in 1823, when at the age of sixteen they individually resisted King Ferdinand VII's absolutist attempt to abolish the Spanish constitution of 1812. As a result of their rebellious actions, Pérez Villaamil endured wounds and imprisonment, while Escosura was exiled. Yet these hardships did not dilute their dedication to liberalism, and they

¹⁰⁶ For general information on these events, see Isabel Burdiel, *Isabel II: una biografía (1830-1904)*, Madrid: Taurus, 2001, chapter 1. For a more in-depth study of Espartero's revolt and its causes, see Javier Pérez Núñez, 'La revolución de 1840: la culminación del Madrid progresista', *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, 36, 2014, 141-165. For more information about the actions taken by the Partido Moderado, see Francisco Cánovas Sánchez, *El Partido Moderado*, Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1982, 3-20. For a short review of the role of progressives during the period of Espartero's regency see Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 558-560.

¹⁰⁷ Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 81, and Iniesta, *D. Patricio*, 15.

eventually aligned themselves with moderantism.¹⁰⁸ Escosura's political engagement extended to military involvement in support of María Cristina's daughter, the future Queen Isabel II, during a prolonged and violent dynastic dispute. After leaving the army in 1838, he transitioned to public service, where he led an unsuccessful attempt to suppress Espartero's uprising. During his exile in Paris, he played a significant role in aiding General Ramón María Narváez in overthrowing Espartero, an effort that earned him a position in Narváez's cabinet, heralding the onset of his political career.¹⁰⁹

Although he was less visibly involved in politics, Pérez Villaamil's allegiance to moderantism was deep enough for him to fear reprisals from traditionalists and liberal progressives.¹¹⁰ In 1830, when retribution against liberals was rife, he strategically relocated to Puerto Rico, only returning to Spain after an amnesty was declared in 1833. Settling in Madrid, he deftly climbed the social and artistic ranks, winning the favour of María Cristina, from whom he received an appointment as Pintor de Cámara and the medal of the Orden de Isabel la Católica, mere months before her abdication. During Espartero's revolt, Pérez Villaamil seemed to remain on the sidelines, but his calculated move to Paris, his visit to María Cristina after his arrival, and the subsequent honours and financial compensation he received from the Crown upon his return to Spain, all underline his unwavering loyalty to María Cristina and the *moderado* cause.¹¹¹

Pérez Villaamil and Escosura also engaged in Spanish social and political affairs through their participation in influential liberal *tertulias* (Spanish salons) and private cultural institutions in Madrid, such as the Ateneo and the Liceo, where they first met. These vibrant hubs hosted discussions on literature, philosophy, history, and the arts, facilitated the securing of patronage, and also acted as conduits for informal and conspiratorial discussions. Consequently, these cultural institutions were instrumental in forging connections between politics and intellectual and artistic pursuits among persons united by shared social objectives. Pérez Villaamil's and Escosura's involvement with the Ateneo and the Liceo is indicative of their belief in the core mission of both institutions: the betterment of Spanish society through the transformative agency of the arts, architecture, and the humanities, as educational tools capable of instilling lofty ideals in the population.¹¹² In addition, Pérez Villaamil was

¹⁰⁸ Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 25-35; Cano Malagón, *Patricio de la Escosura*, 19-23, and Iniesta, *D. Patricio*, 9-10.

¹⁰⁹ Cano Malagón, *Patricio de la Escosura*, 21-51.

¹¹⁰ On Pérez Villaamil's liberalism, see Xavier de Salas, 'Varias notas sobre Jenaro Pérez Villaamil', *Archivo Español de Arte*, 31, 1958, 296-298, and Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 25-38.

¹¹¹ Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 37-38 (on Pérez Villaamil's stay in Puerto Rico); 71-78 (honours bestowed on him by María Cristina before her abdication); 86 (honours received upon his return to Spain after his exile).

¹¹² Arias Anglés, *El paisajista romántico*, 49-51, 57, 60-70; Iniesta, *D. Patricio*, 51; Cano Malagón, *Patricio de la Escosura*, 113-114; and María Romero Cruz and María Sierra, *La España liberal, 1833-*

instrumental in establishing the Obra Social de la Caja de Ahorros in 1840, a 'moral institution' dedicated to the promotion of high ideals across various branches of education, charity, and culture.¹¹³ As he explained in *España artística y monumental*, architecture had an even broader transformative potential insofar as it also provided employment for unskilled workers, thereby mitigating their engagement in criminal activities.¹¹⁴

Despite the role that political, social, and artistic activism played in the lives of Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, the potential impact of Spanish political turmoil, as well as their own exile, on *España artística y monumental* has hitherto not been explored by scholars. However, these circumstances deeply affected them, magnifying their distress and anxiety about their homeland's future.¹¹⁵ They feared that Spain's distinctive identity would be eroded by what Escosura referred to as destructive political revolutions, in a veiled reference to Espartero's uprising. Escosura argued that these revolutions sought not merely to modify Spanish laws, customs, and mentalities, but also to shape Spain in the image of other European nations and thereby effectively destroy its unique national character.¹¹⁶ This anxiety is palpable in *España artística y monumental* and shapes the viewpoints articulated in the sets published during their exile. It is hard to imagine that both men would not have viewed their publication as a means to protect the Spanish moral identity they felt was threatened.¹¹⁷

The concern with history in *España artística y monumental* is directly tied to the authors' efforts to uphold their vision of Spain. According to Romantic historicism, history served not only to explain and validate a national civilisation and identity, but was also a fundamental source of lessons for guiding future actions. This dual understanding of history was often encapsulated in memorable maxims such as 'the past is the key to the present, and the mirror of the future', by historian Carl von

1874, Madrid and Zaragoza: Marcial Pons Historia and Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 2014, 163-172, 178, 193-204. For an analysis of the role of Spanish Romantic artists and poets as moral agents, see Raquel Sánchez García, 'How to be a Man of Letters', in Andrew Ginger and Geraldine Lawless, eds., *Spain in the Nineteenth Century*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018, 222-224.

¹¹³ On the social role of the Cajas de Ahorros, see Antón Ramírez Braulio, *Montes de Piedad y Cajas de Ahorros*, Madrid: Aribau, 1876. The qualification of the Obra Social de la Caja de Ahorros as a 'moral institution' is from Ramón de Mesonero Romanos in his *Memorias de un setentón*, Madrid: Oficinas de la Ilustración Española y Americana, 1880, 425. Another testimony of the institution's moral character can be found in a short article titled 'Moral individual' in the *Semanario Pintoresco Español*, 92, 31 December, 1837, 414.

¹¹⁴ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, III, 1850, 3-4.

¹¹⁵ On Escosura's unhappiness during his exile, see Iniesta, *D. Patricio*, 16-17.

¹¹⁶ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, II, 3.

¹¹⁷ Eugenio de Ochoa, who was living in Paris at this time, confirms the heightened patriotism of the exiled *moderados* in *El emigrado*, in *Los españoles pintados por si mismos*, Madrid: Gaspar y Roig Editores, 1851, 316.

Rotteck¹¹⁸, or Gonzalo Morón's assertion that history's purpose was 'to explain the present in order to dictate rules to the future'.¹¹⁹ This trust in history's instructive capacity had far-reaching repercussions that led to its transformation into a political science. As stated eloquently by Gonzalo Morón, 'History is destined to serve man as the lighthouse, helping him march through darkness and error towards the complete development and betterment of his individual and political existence'.¹²⁰ History thus emerged as an indispensable tool for politicians and statesmen, particularly those allied with liberalism. Many of them, such as Guizot in France, and Gonzalo Morón, Eugenio de Tapia García, and Antonio Benavides in Spain, were also historians, further underlining the intertwined nature of the two roles.¹²¹ A significant number of these historian-politicians were part of the social circles of Escosura and Pérez Villaamil in Madrid and Paris.

The emphasis on the medieval religious monuments of Castile in *España artística y monumental* was in itself a political proclamation of the work's moderantist alignment. Spanish liberal historians, both progressive and *moderados*, reinforced the politicization of history by seeking validation for their views rather than exploring new insights. Their respective conceptions of Spain's history, tailored to their political goals, offer an instructive dichotomy that helps to decode the *moderado* message embedded in *España artística y monumental*. Although both camps agreed on the significance of constitutional monarchy and Spain's Catholic identity, they diverged in their interpretations of power dynamics between the monarchy, parliament, and the Church. This divergence became even more evident with the tension sparked by Espartero's profound transformation of the relationship between the State and the Church.¹²²

Central to the differences between these progressive and moderantist narratives was their opposed understanding of progress. Progressives viewed progress as a forward-moving advancement of a society, underpinned by ideals of liberty, justice,

¹¹⁸ Charles von Rotteck, *Rotteck's History of the World: From the Creation to the Present Time*, Philadelphia: Leary & Getz, 1858, vol. I, 18. Available at Making of America digital library, <http://name.umdl.umich.edu/ABW4888.0001.001>. Von Rotteck's popular world history was published in Freiburg from 1813 to 1827.

¹¹⁹ 'explicar [sic] lo presente, para dictar reglas al porvenir.' Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 27.

¹²⁰ 'Destinada la historia á servir al hombre de luminoso faro para marchar al través de la obscuridad y del error hácia el completo desarrollo y mejora de su existencia individual y política'. Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 8.

¹²¹ For more information, see Fernández Sebastián, *Recepción*, 130; Fernández Sebastián, Fuentes Aragonés, and Álvarez Gila, *Diccionario*, 339-341. Gonzalo Morón's own historical writing was inspired by the desire to foster a love for history among Spanish youth as the future leaders of the country. Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 55. It is noteworthy that Antonio Benavides articulated this position in the magazine edited by Escosura in Paris. See Antonio Benavides, 'Reflexiones sobre las diferentes escuelas históricas, desde la antigüedad hasta nuestros días', *Revista enciclopédica de la civilización europea*, 2, Feb. 1843, 22.

¹²² Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 344. Alonso García, *La nación en capilla*, 155, 170-177.

equality, and national sovereignty, that was achievable through universal suffrage and the transformation of the monarch into a servant of the people. Progressive historiography was therefore mainly oriented toward recent history, and particularly the liberal struggle against absolutism during the 1830s. This historical focus was echoed in their artistic commemorative practices, which prominently featured the erection of monuments dedicated to the liberal heroes of that decade. In contrast, *moderados* adopted a defensive view of progress, one dominated by the restoration of traditional values such as monarchy and Catholicism. They advocated for a constitutional monarchy with power shared between the monarch and a parliament elected by census suffrage (restricted to the upper echelons of Spanish society). As a result, their historiography placed greater emphasis on religion and the monarchy, favouring narratives centred on medieval Castile, Catholicism, and the development of the Catholic monarchy that had culminated in the dynastic union of Queen Isabella I and King Ferdinand II in 1469. As is to be expected, the artistic commemorative practices of these *moderados* valorised medieval monuments and religious rituals. The predominance of Castilian medieval Catholic landmarks in *España artística y monumental* therefore encapsulated a broad spectrum of moderantist beliefs and perspectives that were familiar to Spaniards.¹²³

Performing cultural nationalism: the experience of the audience

The performance of cultural nationalism by *España artística y monumental* could only be realised through the response from the work's reader/viewers. That response was elicited in two ways. The reader/viewers first needed to be convinced of the authenticity of the Catholic identity of Spain being presented, a task that the publication accomplished by weaving the identity in question into a historical narrative and bolstering it with architectural evidence. Second, by juxtaposing past with present, the Spanish audience was alerted to the nation's current weaknesses, an effort that was facilitated by drawing sharp comparisons between an idealised medieval Spanish society and the moral decline of contemporary Spain, together with subtle encouragements to associate the physical state of the monuments with the vigour of the Spanish Catholic spirit. For example, the cloister in Las Huelgas was portrayed in a dilapidated state (fig. 5), showing its crumbling ceiling, missing floor stones, and overgrown vegetation, and its second story precariously propped up by a wooden beam. On its own, this image might have been construed as a simple romanticised depiction of picturesque ruins. However, when interpreted in light of Escosura's words, the print became a potent critique of the nation's accelerating secularization in the hands of the progressives, particularly with regard to their disentanglement policies and

¹²³ For information on progressive and moderantist historiography and commemorative practices, see María Cruz Romeo Mateo, 'Memoria y política en el liberalismo progresista', *Historia y política*, 17, Jan.-June 2007, 69-88; Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 451, 570-71; Rafael Zurita, 'El progresismo: Héroes e historia de la nación liberal', in Romeo and Sierra, *España liberal*, 317-376.

consequent destruction of religious property. Any Spaniard looking at this depiction of Las Huelgas would have immediately associated its dilapidated condition with disentanglement. He or she would also have been aware that disentanglement policies had been aggressively pursued by progressive liberals in the previous decade, only to be subsequently halted by the *moderados*. Moreover, fresh in the Spanish minds would have been the reality that, as many rightly anticipated or feared, Espartero resumed disentanglement as soon as he took control of the government, later extending it to the unprecedented expropriation of Church-owned estates.¹²⁴

Escosura does not address these policies in *España artística y monumental* directly, but instead manifests his disapproval implicitly, by denouncing the misguided values that supported indifference to, or approval of, the tragic destruction of monuments,¹²⁵ as well as by contrasting past and present in such a way that allowed readers to draw their own conclusions. For example, he praises Alfonso VIII of Castile for his patronage of religious buildings, Catholicism, and the Church while dismissing with palpable disdain those he describes as ignorant, frivolous, ill-willed, and 'incorrigible sophists' and condemning their characterization of Las Huelgas as a symbol of religious fanaticism.¹²⁶ True to his historicist methodology, he also admonishes Spaniards who voiced such opinions for their failure to judge the past on its own terms.¹²⁷ While many liberals disapproved of monastic institutions for a variety of reasons, Escosura argues that these same reasons were invalid in the historical milieu of the twelfth century. Drawing from *moderado* historiography, he claims that the lavish royal patronage of monasteries actually had a positive impact in that era. As he argues, the donation of land to monasteries rather than to members of the nobility had curbed the rise of feudalism, whose absence he considered unique to Spanish medieval civilisation.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Gumersindo de Azcárate, 'Olózaga: Origen, ideas y vicisitudes del Partido Progresista; El Parlamento desde 1840 hasta 1866', in *La España del Siglo XIX: Colección de conferencias históricas celebradas durante el curso de 1885-86*, Madrid: Liceo artístico y literario, Madrid, A. San Martín, II, 22; Cruz Romeo and Sierra, *La España liberal*, 327-328; Alonso García, *La nación en capilla*, 171-172.

¹²⁵ Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 12. Escosura's frequent indignation and sorrow over the destruction of Spanish religious monuments is related to the reappraisal of medieval architecture and ongoing effort to protect it, a process with parallels in other European countries that will be examined in more detail in the forthcoming book. For a comparison between Spanish and British attitudes toward the restoration and destruction of monuments, see Matilde Mateo, 'Sobre miradas y destrucciones: los británicos y la arquitectura medieval española', *Academia: Boletín de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando*, 90, 2000, 9-25.

¹²⁶ 'sofistas incorregibles', Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 12.

¹²⁷ The assessment of the past on its own standards was another tenet of Romantic historicism, defended by Herder, among others. Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 132-136.

¹²⁸ This argument was also defended by Gonzalo Morón and Tapia.

In turning the pages to the image of the main chapel of Toledo Cathedral (fig. 6), reader/viewers encountered a striking contrast to the ruinous state of Las Huelgas. Bedecked with intricate funerary monuments, the interior of the cathedral radiates grandeur and serves as an opulent backdrop for an elaborate Catholic liturgy. Escosura's commentary here encodes a multilayered condemnation of materialism and a defence of the role played by Catholicism in technological progress. He scornfully ridicules the ignorance and lack of any 'generous feeling' on the part of Spaniards who are unable to absorb the historical lesson imparted by this church with regard to Spain's glorious past. In a pointed critique of progressive materialism and secularization, Escosura lauds the interior of the cathedral for its profound spiritual impact, which he characterises as capable of causing visitors to cast aside 'the bitter theories of the scepticism of a century that imagines itself to be on the road to progress because everything is measured and everything is weighed'.¹²⁹ His statement also seeks to undercut the progressive view that religion has impeded Spain's technological progress: Escosura proudly asserts that only a fervent Catholic faith could have spurred human ingenuity to the lofty heights necessary to construct an edifice so wondrous that it defied comprehension.

Thus far, Spanish reader/viewers had been led on a symbolic journey from the contemporary decline of Spanish Catholic identity, as portrayed by the deteriorated Las Huelgas, to its medieval glory, represented by the magnificent Toledo Cathedral. The journey reached its conclusion in the realm of the imagination, with the alternative reality crafted by the imaginary church in 'A Market' (fig. 2). In this monument, the Spanish audience was invited to envisage an idealised state of affairs that also indicates the pathway toward national 'regeneration' — the term favoured at the time to denote the restoration of traditional ideals during a period of moral crisis.¹³⁰ The monument's immaculate condition presented a fictitious continuity of Catholic Spanish civilisation unmarred by disruptions or ruptures. In addition to sidestepping the Visigothic Kingdom, the Caliphate, and the Asturian kingdom, the invented church also erased the present (the Espartero government), with its unblemished condition offering a stark contrast with existing religious buildings, whose dilapidated state epitomised the nation's moral decay. The church's fictitious historical continuity confirmed the Romanticist tenet that the destiny of a nation was to develop its uniqueness across time.¹³¹ It also construed the idealised past as the mirror of the future, suggesting that Spain could only be regenerated by restoring a Catholic character defined by the projection of *moderado* values onto the medieval past.

Finally, the version of Catholicism advocated by *España artística y monumental* amplified its political agency as a unifying force in the a polarised Spanish society.

¹²⁹ 'las amargas teorías del escepticismo de un siglo que se imagina en las vías del progreso porque todo lo mide y todo lo pesa'. Pérez Villaamil and Escosura, *España artística*, I, 13.

¹³⁰ 'Regeneración', in Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 603-608.

¹³¹ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 184.

Although the belief that Catholicism was the bond holding the Spanish nation together was already deeply ingrained in Spain, *moderados* placed additional value on its potential to maintain social order.¹³² This emphasis on order delineated a rift between moderantist and progressive strategies for achieving national progress. As Espartero's rebellion and extreme policies had demonstrated, progressives contended that revolutionary methods—including revolts, insurrections, and even violent acts—were sometimes justified as a means of eliminating perceived obstacles to progress, such as the queen regent.¹³³ Conversely, *moderados* viewed such methods as the actual obstacle, arguing that political disorder had only further fragmented Spanish society; progress, they contended, had to unfold gradually, slowly, and peacefully.¹³⁴ Thus, the potential political agency of *España artística y monumental* was multifaceted: it reshaped Spaniards' perception of their own national identity, charted the way forward, decried Espartero's insurrection, and underscored the necessity of peaceful and orderly progress—one that was solely guaranteed by Catholic values.

As postulated by the Romantic historicists, the act of examining the past spurred a two-fold process of active engagement. The past would be shaped and conformed to the viewpoint of the present, and, conversely, historians and their audiences would internalise that past, empathizing and identifying with it, eventually becoming like it. It was precisely this transformative effect on audiences, the historicists contended, that turned history into an ethical enterprise capable of improving humanity, or, in the case that occupies our attention here, Spanish society.¹³⁵ Therefore, the imaginary church featured in *España artística y monumental* did not merely advocate for *moderado* values, but actively aided in the restoration of those values by seeking to expand the number of Spaniards who identified with them. Thanks to its printed medium, the work could also disseminate its message to a much broader audience than any single artwork or building was capable of reaching, and even if the high price of the publication made it unaffordable to the vast majority of Spaniards, it could nonetheless target members of the high bourgeoisie and aristocracy in positions of leadership and influence.

Moreover, the unique combination of verbal and visual discourses in *España artística y monumental*, together with the strategic sequencing of its featured monuments and their deliberate reinterpretation through the artistic medium, made the sophisticated performance of cultural nationalism in the first issue hard to match by other art forms or humanistic disciplines. The intense aesthetic experience furnished by the large-scale prints could not be reproduced by a poem or a novel due to the absence

¹³² Vicente Alguero, *El catolicismo liberal*, 22; Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 474.

¹³³ Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 558, 568; Azcárate, 'Olózaga', 24; Romeo Mateo, 'Memoria y política', 87-88.

¹³⁴ Fernández Sebastián and Fuentes, *Diccionario político*, 450-51, 487-490; Fernández Sebastián, 'Recepción', 139.

¹³⁵ Beiser, *German Historicist Tradition*, 192, 273-277.

of the visual component, while history paintings, historicist buildings, or monuments to national heroes lacked an accompanying verbal discourse necessary for guiding their interpretation. Even historical accounts of the nation and its architecture fell short in this sense, for although they provided comprehensive perspectives on the nation, they did not elicit any aesthetic experience.

By scrutinizing the first set of *España artística y monumental*, especially the church in 'A Market', this article has sought to explore broader issues critical to understanding the intricate nationalist dynamics found at the intersection of visual art, literature, history, and politics, found in similar Romantic publications. As we have seen, the church in 'A Market' illustrates how an imaginary monument could become an effective and unique instrument of cultural nationalism and help regenerate the nation by promoting a view of the Catholic soul of Spain in accordance with *moderado* liberal ideals. In creating his invented church, Pérez Villaamil engaged in an act of reconstruction in keeping with Gonzalo Morón's comparison of historians with builders and the nation with an edifice. The historian, the latter argued, 'should labour like a skilled and indefatigable builder, who assembles the necessary materials to reconstruct the ruined edifice'.¹³⁶ This comparison poignantly encapsulates not only Pérez Villaamil's own assumption of the role of historian-politician, but also the objective, meaning, and agency of the imaginary church within a project of national regeneration. In his uncommon invented monument, Pérez Villaamil skilfully presented a composite image that conveyed both nation-building, symbolised by the pristine church, and the means for its regeneration, namely history itself. His church became a symbolic embodiment of the nation's moral renewal along with serving as concrete and verified proof of the legitimacy of that renewal. By intertwining visual art, history, architecture, and national moral identity, Pérez Villaamil effectively communicated a persuasive message about the authenticity of Spanish Catholic identity and the importance of the nation's past in shaping its future.

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¹³⁶ 'debe ser el hábil é infatigable obrero, que reúna las piedras y los materiales necesarios á reconstruir el desmoronado edificio'. Gonzalo Morón, *Curso*, I, 59.

Matilde Mateo

The artist as historian-politician: ... cultural nationalism in Pérez
Villaamil and Escosura's *España artística y monumental* (1842-50)



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