

Political Madness:  
 Juan de Orduña's *Locura de amor*  
 as a National Allegory  
 Santiago Juan-Navarro

BEGINNING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, JUANA I OF CASTILE, MORE generally known as "Juana the Mad," has continuously captivated the imaginations of historians, novelists, playwrights, musicians, poets, painters, and, most recently, filmmakers. Almost entirely forgotten as an historical figure three hundred years after her death, Queen Juana began to acquire near mythical status during the latter half of the 1800s. Spanish Romanticism, which persisted in its most reactionary tendencies in the fields of theater, historiography, and turn-of-the-century painting, saw in Juana not only the embodiment of stereotypical romantic motifs such as uncontrolled passion, alienation, jealousy, and necrophilia, but also, and most importantly, the personification of a purely nationalistic legend, according to which Juana's madness was seen as a consequence of the conspiracies plotted by Flemish courtiers during the period of consolidation of the Spanish Empire. The purpose of this essay is not to explore the formation of this national myth, but rather its appropriation by the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939–75) and specifically through the historical films produced by CIFESA, a production company that reached its peak in 1948 with the release of Juan de Orduña's film *Locura de amor* [Madness of Love].

*Locura de amor* debuted at a critical juncture during the ideological restructuring of Francoism. At the end of the 1940s Spain underwent a cunning political transformation designed to guarantee that Franco would remain in power for several decades. Following the violent collapse of European Fascism in 1945, the Spanish regime found itself in need of a drastic change in image. Though dominated by the Falange, the Fascist paramilitary party, together with other profascist groups, Spain adopted an authoritarian model of government characterized by the continuation of a purely figurehead monarchy, the

increasingly dominant presence of National-Catholicism, the promotion of *Hispanidad* (or *Spanishness*) as a cultural ideology designed to satisfy a frustrated imperial desire that was impossible to achieve politically or militarily, and, finally, the adoption of a pseudoconstitutional democracy meant to assist in garnering Spain's reintegration into the international community.

It is important to recall that in May 1945 the United Nations unanimously rejected Spain's request for admission into the world body, a decision that was ratified in February of the following year. The majority of nations participated in a diplomatic blockade of Spain, and withdrew their ambassadors from Madrid. This initial show of unity by the world community swelled the hopes of the republican liberals in exile who awaited the collapse of the Franco dictatorship under foreign pressure, as well as those of the monarchists who dreamt of the restoration of the monarchy under Juan of Bourbon. The hopes of both were shattered with the start of the Cold War in 1947. The democratic nations preferred a right-wing dictatorship they could control to a leftist regime within Moscow's sphere of influence (Tusell 1993, 129). Under the Truman Doctrine and its policy of containing communism, the United States was prompted to stabilize its relationship with the Spanish government in the 1950s. This would later open the door for Great Britain, France, and the remaining Western countries to officially recognize the Franco regime.

Franco reorganized his cabinet in July 1945 in a show of conformity to the new state of affairs in Spain. The secretary general of the Falangist Movement was eliminated from the new government, while the Catholic presence was increased. The Law Charter for Spaniards (*Fuero de los españoles*) was adopted, as was the Referendum Law, which would be applied only twice: to pass the Law of Succession in 1947 and a Spanish Constitutional Law in 1966. The Law of Succession established Spain as a monarchy as well as a representative Catholic state led by the *caudillo* Francisco Franco. Franco's cabinet would undergo a further reorganization in 1951, which, to the detriment of the Falangists, would establish the Catholic Nationalists as the architects of the foreign policy and economic program of the regime. The Concordat between the Spanish government and the Vatican was signed in 1953; two years later, Spain would achieve diplomatic normalization by entry into the United Nations.

Historical cinema produced in Spain during this period can be interpreted as an allegorical chronicle of the regime's political transformation from isolationism in 1945 to international recognition ten years later.<sup>1</sup> However, the subject matter chosen for the films produced during that decade was not taken from Franco's Spain or the

still-recent Spanish Civil War; rather, it centered on distant historical eras such as the Middle Ages, Imperial Spain, or the Napoleonic Wars. Of course, this insistence on times past was not accidental; it was in direct response to the desire of the regime to create a tailor-made, legitimizing genealogy for itself. The absence of a defined, stable political plan meant a constant renovation of Francoist ideology based on timeless conceptual constants whose foundation lied in the long history of Spanish reactionary thought. The nation's unity revolved around the hegemony of Castile, resistance to aggression by enemies foreign and domestic, equating the terms "Spanish" and "Catholic," and glorification of the military as the institution responsible for political stability and national peace.

A production company like CIFESA was an ideal conduit for culturally channeling this ideological message. At that time CIFESA seemed to specialize in "period" films that rewrote Spain's history from a nationalist and deeply reactionary point of view; for example, in *La Princesa de los Ursinos* [Princess of the Ursinos] (1947), *Locura de amor* [Madness of Love] (1948), *Agustina de Aragón* [Agustina of Aragon] (1950), *La leona de Castilla* [The Lioness of Castile] (1951), *Alba de América* [The Dawning of America] (1951), and *Lola la Piconera* [Lola, the Coalgirl] (1951). Through the use of an anachronistic, teleological, and providential point of view, the rise of Francoism was not only explained by these films, but explicitly justified as a preordained inevitability (Fanés 1982, 165; Font 1981, 306).<sup>2</sup> All of these films follow the same narrative outline: two tales are superimposed, one a love story and the other a political account, which serve as background for the omnipresent theme of the death or survival of Spain (Fanés 1982, 179). In an effort to provide a greater commercial appeal to the otherwise turgid, propagandistic discourse, these films were usually enhanced with features taken from some of the most popular genres of the time: melodramas, musicals, and adventure films. Of all those films, only *Locura de amor*, based on the eponymous work by Manuel Tamayo y Baus (1829–98), enjoyed a degree of international success (Fanés 1982, 168–69).

Juan de Orduña was given the job of directing a third adaptation of Tamayo y Baus's dramatic work. The first two adaptations had been silent films, one directed by Ricardo Baños in 1909 and the second by Miguel Villar Toldán in 1926. It was Orduña himself who pushed for this third version. The filming of *Locura de amor* started on October 20, 1947, and ended February 14, 1948, although CIFESA had long been interested in the project, having applied for permission to start production on October 11, 1944. The film was going to star Amparo Rivelles or Mary Carrillo as Juana, Armando Calvo as Felipe,

and Alfredo Mayo or José Sánchez as Captain Álar. There had also been talk of Rafael Gil as director, with Rafael Durán in the starring role. The script had been written by Manuel Tamayo y Baus, grandson of the original playwright, in collaboration with Alfredo Echegaray, but it had long since been forgotten, filed away by the Valencian production company four years previous, until at last it was rescued by Orduña.

### THE CHARACTERS ALLEGORY

Spain is a woman, and a great woman. And women, like Spain, at the height of their charm and fruitfulness, are reserved only for those brave individuals who know how to conquer and inseminate them.

—Ernesto Giménez Caballero

*Locura de amor* conforms to the allegorical norms of CIFESA's historical cinema. As with other films in that category, the story begins at a moment of crisis: the royal succession after the death of Isabel the Catholic and the insanity of her daughter Juana. This event is narrated and interpreted by means of consecutive flashbacks, which delay resolution until the closing scenes. By means of Captain Álar de Estuña's backward glance through time, the origin of Juana's insanity is explained as a consequence of the jealousy provoked by Felipe, and even more so, of the conspiracies orchestrated by his Flemish advisor, Filberto de Vere.

The character of Juana would serve as the model on which the rest of the female protagonists in the historical films produced by CIFESA would be fashioned. She would therefore be the first woman inducted into that "league of famous, heroic women (queens, heroines, saints, and mothers) who were surrogates for the motherland and exemplars of a woman's responsibility to defend her home and family in times of danger, through the abnegation and self-denial of physical and spiritual love" (Monterde 1995, 236). Whereas Tamayo y Baus's play begins *in medias res* with Juana's fit of jealousy on the eve of her departure for Burgos, *Locura de amor* adopts the characteristic structure of all of Orduña's historical films, which, according to Francisco Llinás, can be best described as a double redundancy. The film starts with the ending—Juana's madness—and by means of several flashbacks, the audience is informed of something that they already knew beforehand, namely the legend, deeply rooted in popular tradition since the nineteenth century, according to which the origin of Juana's madness is to be found in the jealousy provoked by her husband.

Consequently the narration lacks any suspense whatsoever; the audience's interest is maintained through empathy with the protagonist—the queen that went mad over love—and through the film's complex plot made up of a series of unrequited loves: Juana longs for her husband, her husband longs for the Moorish woman Aldara, Aldara longs for Captain Álar, and Álar longs in silence for Juana.

Juana's mental instability, her madness, alludes to the biological metaphors that were so in vogue within the long tradition of "regenerationist" discourse concerning "Spain's illness." According to this train of thought, which reached its climax at the end of the nineteenth century, Spain was seen as a sick organism afflicted with a "tumor" and in need of an "iron surgeon" (Richards 1996, 150). There were multiple inconsistent attempts at identifying both the "tumor" and the "surgeon." For José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955) the illness that plagued "invertebrate Spain" was the lack of a significant bourgeois class that could have championed modernity. Ortega also associates the "tumor" with the Catalan and Basque separatist movements, which he saw as part of the "progressive territorial fragmentation suffered by Spain over three centuries" (1972, 92). The "surgical politics" proposed by the lawyer Joaquín Costa could only be carried out by someone uniquely familiar with the anatomy of the Spanish people. His "iron surgeon" recalled the image of Plato's philosopher-king: a superior individual sent by providence to carry out the regeneration of his homeland. Franco would often be presented as that providential leader even though he did not remotely fit the profile of the cultured, anti-oligarchic politician that Costa envisioned as his messianic hero.

Other proposed remedies for this diagnosis were equally as radical and Franco's political machine never hesitated in appropriating them. They varied from the isolationism proposed by Ángel Ganivet (1865–98) to avoid "infection" from the "virus" of foreign ideas (Blinkhorn 1979, 16–68; Richards 1996, 153–54) to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship by means of a military coup (Primo de Rivera 1930 and 1936). Even though these pseudopositivistic diagnoses were formulated from very different, if not opposed, ideological stances, they were all fair game for the impassioned Francoist rhetoric of legitimation. As far as Franco was concerned the diagnosis was accurate: Spain suffered from an illness spawned by separatism, Masonic conspiracies, international communism, secularization, and political chaos and he was destined to be that iron surgeon who had been called upon to correct the situation. In the meantime, Spain should isolate itself from "negative influences" and remain under the protection of the church and the army, in much the same way as Juana

is portrayed during her confinement in Tordesillas in the opening moments of Orduña's film.

While the four flashbacks in *Locura de amor* narrate the events that triggered the queen's madness, the opening image, a painting by Francisco Pradilla, acts as an iconic prolepsis for the film's final moments: it ends with a *tableau vivant* of the same initial painting. As a result of this circular structure, in which the beginning mimics the closing and the story is told backward, the audience finds itself trapped in a temporal loop where history seems to have come to a standstill. Furthermore the allegorical subtext leads the spectator not so much to the origins of the Spanish Empire, but rather to a mystified version as seen from the lens of late Romanticism or, more accurately, the historical present of the film's production, namely the final years of the autarchy. *Locura de amor* ensnares the audience in a circular, recurrent version of history formulated during a period that was devoid of any dialectical counterpoint, and therefore, of any possibility for change (Seguin 1997, 232).

Within this atemporal fantasy beyond history (or historical fantasy lacking any temporal progression), Orduña presents us with a moral and political allegory: Spain has been isolated by the machinations of foreign powers as well as its overpowering, yet repressed, desire for international validation. Every character in this allegory is implicitly associated with aspects of the ideology that was predominant at the time the film was produced. Juana personifies the motherland "justly" driven mad by the infidelity of a king who has been manipulated by foreign agents intending to take power. The way in which the film portrays Felipe the Beautiful is not so different from the farcical perception Franco had of Juan of Bourbon. The depiction of young Carlos, on the other hand, reflects the hope that the Franco regime placed on Juan Carlos, son of the "legitimate" heir to the throne.

In *Locura de amor* Juana's plight is presented as a legitimizing precedent for the paranoid rhetoric of Francoism. During that time the regime found itself besieged by hostile forces that it believed misunderstood what it conceived of as a crusade to create a New Spain. The identity of that New Spain was to undergo numerous changes based on international circumstances and the tension between the political factions that supported the 1936 coup d'état, although its historical constants were to be found almost exclusively in the premodern past (Cano Ballesta 1994, 45–53). After the end of World War II, Franco and his right-hand man on ideological matters, Admiral Carrero Blanco, saw the restoration of a "figurehead monarchy" as the life preserver that would allow Franco to remain in power indefinitely. Juana's madness conveys the regime's own schizophrenia, which

simultaneously desired and despised official recognition from the Western democracies, while paradoxically attempting to modernize by returning incessantly to the age of the Catholic Monarchs for validation, which constituted the utopian ideal for their "New" Spain.

If they wanted the new regime to survive, then the restoration of a full monarchy was impossible because it would inherently exclude the military strongman Franco from power. The only feasible option was the implementation of a pseudomonarchy that would be loyal to the new institutional order that had emerged after the Spanish Civil War, destined to regain power only after the death of the dictator. In *Locura de amor*, the elaborate way in which this message is conveyed and justified is evident upon analysis of the characterization of the two individuals that personify the monarchy in the film: Felipe the Beautiful and Carlos V.

Queen Juana embodies the besieged motherland and Captain Álar de Estuñiga pertains to an extended lineage of great captains that Franco himself admired and with whom he deeply identified. It is Captain Álar himself who recounts the story of Juana to young Carlos, the future king and protector of the "eternal values" that Captain Álar defends. In the film, Álar maintains a strange love-hate relationship with the Moorish woman Aldara, which closely resembles the relationship maintained by the Franco dictatorship and the Arab world for years. Although Captain Álar is secretly in love with the queen, he knows that theirs is an impossible relationship, just as it was impossible in Franco's lifetime to establish a dynastic succession without destroying the ideological framework of Francoism, in which the institutional legitimation of the dictatorship within the history of Spanish traditionalism was equally impossible. Hence the "soft" or weak personality of Carlos, whose naiveté in the film borders on idiocy. The future emperor is consistently portrayed in accordance with the ideological characterization of Juan of Bourbon's son at the hands of the Franco dictatorship. As Franco's testament makes clear, Juan Carlos represented the continuation of the New Spain after the death of the dictator for the ideologues of the regime, a belief they maintained from the end of the 1940s until Franco's death in 1975.

In Orduña's film the image presented is that of a supervised monarchy, which relies on the unwavering support of a loyal and faithful admiral. The superimposition of Carrero Blanco onto the character of the admiral in *Locura de amor* becomes obvious through the words placed in his mouth and by his role as the main guarantor, along with Captain Álar, of the Eternal Spain that Francoism purported to defend. As in all allegories the plot is completely Manichean. The forces of good are led by Álar and the admiral who are faced

with the task of foiling the evil plan of the foreign enemy, the satanic Filberto de Vere, together with his domestic allies, the corrupt Don Juan Manuel and the Marquis de Villena, in a plot that brings to mind "the eternal Spanish response with those foreigners who try to tamper with their independence" (Preston 1994, 563).

#### A FIGUREHEAD MONARCHY

*The most well educated Kings were instructed with rigorous discipline alongside erudite men who were completely separated from worldly concerns. They thought only about their service to God, the good of their Country and the opinion that History would hold of the Prince.*

—Francisco Franco

(Response to a letter from Juan of Bourbon)

In both its form and content Orduña's film dramatizes in allegorical fashion the ideological project of Franco's New Spain. Structurally the narrative point of view is conveyed through the four flashbacks, which allow Captain Álar to give an up-to-date evaluation on the state of the kingdom to a young and weak monarch who seeks information and guidance. However, the events that are narrated lie beyond the character's limited scope and so, as with other historical CIFESA films, Orduña once again adopts an omniscient point of view. Consequently many of the events that appear throughout the four flashbacks undermine the narrative's credibility, since the captain could not have been aware of them. But if one chooses to see Álar's point of view as standing in for the regime's perspective, then the explanation for this lack of discursive coherence becomes evident. Captain Álar embodies the values that Franco adopted as the guiding principles for his life's work: duty and sacrifice. At all times Captain Álar shows his absolute loyalty to the queen, to the point of engaging in fights over her, first with Felipe, and later on with the conspirator de Vere. He tolerates Juana's fits of madness, including her threat to kill him during one of her jealous rages. The captain's tense relationship with Aldara, downplayed in the film when compared to the original Tamayo y Baus play, is especially interesting when analyzed in the context of the ambiguous relationship that the Franco dictatorship maintained with the Arab world throughout its existence.<sup>3</sup> Their relationship reaches its climax in the farewell scene between the two characters. After having saved the captain's life in a rather peculiar way, Aldara (played by an inexpressive Sara Montiel) and Álar seal a pact of eternal friendship. After listening to the captain's words of gratitude, Aldara replies, "When I return to Africa I

will also say: My eyes greet this morning's light because Álvaro, the greatest captain of Christendom, looks toward the East and thinks of me."

When seen in the context of Orientalist thought, so in vogue at the end of the nineteenth century, the words of the Moorish woman become all the more meaningful: the colonial subject lacks any identity apart from its reflection in the imagination of the mother country (Rivière Gómez 2000, 131). This romanticized view of the subaltern Other is closely associated, as in the most typical displays of Orientalist thinking, with its origins in the imperial past (the subject matter of the film) as well as in its neocolonial present (the allegoric subtext of the film). What makes this message even more interesting is that it is at precisely the height of Spain's imperialistic rhetoric that it loses its last remaining colonies in Africa. It is ironic that Franco felt obligated to emancipate these final colonies of the old empire—Guinea, the protectorate of Morocco, and Sidi Ifni—during his tenure. Additionally it is ironic that the dictator's final days coincided with the Green March that would put an end to Spanish hegemony in the Western Sahara (Fleming 1980, 133–49). Neocolonialist sentiment, therefore, had to limit its activities to the rhetoric of official speeches and the magic of cinema where it would appear through the sentimental filter of nostalgia. Films such as *¡A mí la legión!* [Follow the Legion!] (1942), *La canción de Aixa* [Aixa's Song] (1938), and *La llamada de África* [The Call of Africa] (1952) are part of a genuine tradition of films centered on Africa that are characterized by a certain "desert mystic" (Zumalde Arregi 1997, 311) inspired by French and Italian colonial cinema.

Captain Álvaro de Estúñiga plays a pivotal role in transmitting the film's ideological message. His point of view guides the narrative from beginning to end, and therefore provides a focal point for the propaganda apparatus that underlies the plot. On occasion, the character's access to information is so unbelievable that it borders on the ridiculous: for example, that a lowly captain would be permitted to counsel two monarchs, Felipe and then Carlos; that his wardrobe would be the most sumptuous of all, contrasting grotesquely at times with the simple garments of the emperor who serves as his main interlocutor; or that on his deathbed, Felipe would entrust Don Álvaro with the protection of the queen (i.e., the "motherland"). The boundless sublimation that the character undergoes together with his explicit association with military values confirms the projection of Franco's image onto the character of Captain Álvaro the entire time. What makes this excessive focus on Captain Álvaro even more absurd, something that was lacking in the original play, is that it reveals the diffi-

cult relationship that Franco had with the monarchy. Franco's professed devotion to Alfonso XIII and his paternal-filial relationship with the prince Juan Carlos were well known. However, Franco was also aware of the illegitimate and irregular nature of his monopoly on power within the traditions of the Spanish monarchy, a fact that was made apparent by his tense relationship with Juan of Bourbon. The unfulfilled love of Álvaro for Queen Juana can be interpreted as an expression of Franco's selfconscious awareness of his own political illegitimacy. His love should be repressed because he knows it to be an impossible. Though he cannot possess Spain, he can defend her from her enemies.

The portrayal of Felipe mirrors the stereotypical image of Juan of Bourbon held by Franco for many years. To Franco and his followers, especially Admiral Carrero Blanco, the potential heir to the Spanish throne was a misguided playboy who had been educated abroad and manipulated by ambitious advisers working for an imagined international conspiracy of Masonic and communist bent (Preston 1994, 568, 579). So it is not surprising that in *Locura de amor* the death of Felipe is presented as an almost divine punishment that allows for the pacification of the country: "It was the will of God. With his death the partisanship in Castile came to an end. Together, the nobility and the common people prayed, alongside your mother, for the king." There is an interesting casuistic inversion of events in the historical process recreated by the film. The continuity of the monarchy is assured by Carlos V, but only after having passed through the hands of a soldier like Álvaro who is presented as instrumental in the restoration of nationalist values.

In short, Álvaro is a representative of that soldierly class that Francoist cinema highlighted in their productions "in order to remind us that there are ways other than intrigue, slander and corruption to get ahead in the world" (Fanés 1982, 179). But one must not forget that his post as mentor to royalty implies his status as mentor to the audience itself, which, as in the rest of the historical films by CIFESA, is ultimately the final interlocutor of the regime's ideological discourse. As Félix Fanés points out, CIFESA's historical films "maintain an authoritarian, admonishing relationship with the audience" (1982, 179). Álvaro's off-camera narration at several points in the film further calls attention to this exemplary element presented through the four flashbacks around which the plot is organized.

Within this story line, the admiral serves as another heroic character with a similar function to that of Captain Álvaro as the queen's most faithful servant. During the period when *Locura de amor* was being filmed another admiral, Carrero Blanco, had already taken

over the reins of Franco's ideological machine. Carrero served as undersecretary to the president for thirty-two years.<sup>4</sup> His post consisted of being the dictator's main policy advisor, which in practice transformed Carrero into Franco's political alter ego and the *éminence grise* of the dictatorship (Fernández 1984, 8). Generally speaking, he was the most influential person in the regime and the only one to survive its many structural changes. The secret to his political longevity has been ascribed to the fact that he shared Franco's basic values: conservatism, nationalism, authoritarianism, and Catholicism. Also, his modesty and discretion allowed him to remain in the background so as not to overshadow the dictator (Tusell 1993, 168). However, his survival (until his death in a terrorist attack in 1973) was probably due to the fact that Carrero himself had been the real advocate of many of the changes that the Franco dictatorship underwent. More specifically he was the main architect of the authoritarian figurehead monarchy that ultimately displaced the other political alternatives promoted by various governing factions within the regime.

The most overtly political speeches in Orduña's film are reserved for the admiral. On two occasions the passionate reaction of the character to the political crisis of the kingdom leads him to call for a civil war. In response to the counsel of the Castilian nobles, he exclaims: "How can we help the Queen? Conspiring in her favor the way the King's followers conspire!" A frightened noble then shouts, "That would be cause enough for a civil war!" The admiral then paraphrases the legitimizing discourse of Franco's "Crusade" in a speech that is presented as a prophetic foreshadowing of the 1936 coup: "Even though we want to prevent it, it will happen any day now; the people are willing to take their rights by force. Even if war breaks out, we have to act with vigor!" A short time later, during a climactic scene when the court meets at the Cathedral in Burgos, the admiral repeats the same conspiratorial message. When Filberto de Vere invites the king to take the throne, the admiral stops him by saying that no foreigner should give orders in Castile. De Vere reminds him that the majority of the nobles support his appointment, but the admiral warns him that in Andalusia people have already revolted in support of Queen Juana and cautions him once again that "the wickedness or ambition of a few could bring about a civil war!"

Carrero Blanco, just as the admiral in Orduña's film, personified the fundamentalist reactionary thinking of the Franco regime, obsessed with safeguarding traditional values and opposing the perceived infiltration of foreign liberalism, which it associated with licentiousness, atheism, materialism, and freemasonry (Villacañas Berlanga 2004, 188, 195). In Orduña's film the admiral is portrayed as a cham-

pion of essential patriotic values and, together with Captain Álar, provides the only check on the ambitions of the Flemish courtiers. Although there is no proof that Carrero participated directly in Orduña's film project, such a relationship would not be surprising, since the undersecretary to the president was a close personal friend of the chairman of CIFESA, Vincente Casanova, and had a profound interest in history and in revisionist interpretations of it. Furthermore Carrero aided Sánchez Bella in the promotion of *Alba de América* (1951), the film that put an end to the series of historical "megaproductions" made by CIFESA.

### THE INTERNATIONAL MASONIC CONSPIRACY AND DOMESTIC ENEMIES

History offers us numerous examples of conspiracies that . . . courtiers tended to endorse to serve their own interests in order to lead the Prince astray.

—Francisco Franco

(responding to a letter from Juan of Bourbon)

The international isolation that Franco's regime was subjected to after World War II affected its political propaganda in two ways. On the one hand, it launched a campaign for domestic consumption that fashioned an image of Spain victimized by dark forces plotting against her. On the other hand, the government was desperately looking for a means of gaining acceptance abroad that would provide it with a façade of normality and lead to the end of the diplomatic blockade. Spanish cinema, which rarely penetrated external markets, reflected the domestic side of this dual propaganda effort. The countries with which Franco hoped to normalize relations—an essential step if he was to remain in power—were portrayed on the screen as the perpetrators of the fictitious international conspiracy that the regime believed existed. Therefore the daring spirit of the Spanish resistance against French occupation in the nineteenth century or the defense of the Alcázar in Toledo during the Spanish Civil War, were common subjects for the cinematographic productions of the period. What is interesting about this case is that the autarchical rhetoric, even as it disappeared from popular culture, lasted well beyond the years of the autarchy (1945–51), and would reappear in political speeches every time there was a national crisis. A few weeks before his death, in his last public appearance at the Plaza de Oriente (October 1, 1975), Franco continued to reference these imagined plots in order to discredit not only the liberal democracies, but even the Vat-

ican, because they had recently denounced the latest acts of repression on the part of the dictatorship (Ferrer Benimeli 2000, 246).

*Locura de amor* provided a new dramatic version of the timeless crusade that Francoism believed itself to be waging. In opposition to the forces of good personified by Captain Álar and the admiral, the sinister character of Filberto de Vere, the Flemish advisor to the king whose sole motivation is an unbounded desire for power, manipulates Felipe and the court against Juana and the Castilian nobles. In the film de Vere personifies the political intrigues that Franco and his followers so despised. He also provides a visual paradigm of the ambitious foreigner and usurper who appears physically in an almost diabolical pose. The composition of the shots tends to emphasize the evil nature of the character. The typical frame for scenes of intrigue utilize mid-range shots in which the villain appears behind the other characters, whispering deceitful things in their ears. In some instances the effect is comical, for example, in the scenes with the childlike and perplexed Felipe, who de Vere goads into giving free rein to his lust. The attempt at seriousness on the part of the director—the arrangement of the characters recalls the portrayal of the temptations of Christ or the kiss of Judas in Christian iconography—is often undermined by the histrionic gesturing of Fernando Rey in the role of Felipe the Beautiful, who in turn is portrayed as an absurd caricature of the scatterbrained womanizer that Franco and his court favorites associated with the figure of Juan of Bourbon. The film insists upon establishing an insurmountable dichotomy between the lust of the Flemish and the austere chastity of the Castilians. At the beginning of the film, the court at Flanders, and in particular the scene of Felipe's "hunting" retreat, is presented as nothing more than a brothel, in contrast with the monastic seriousness of the Castilian court. The almost complete absence of any sensuality in what is supposedly a love story is noteworthy. Any trace of eroticism is confined to the representatives of the anti-Spanish faction: the Flemish who embody decadent Europe, and Aldara, who personifies the last remnants of Moorish Spain on the eve of its definitive expulsion from the peninsula.

The fact that the death of the Machiavellian de Vere occurs at the hands of the Moorish princess in a surprising turn of events, and that his death serves, at the same time, to save the life of Captain Álar, offers an allegoric interpretation that cannot be overlooked. This sequence is especially significant as it constitutes a drastic deviation from the original play by Tamayo y Baus, in which the de Vere character is not assassinated, but slowly recedes from the action until he completely disappears from the text, and Aldara does not return to

"her homeland of Africa," but ends up joining a convent instead. The salvation of Captain Álar, the character meant to embody the *Caudillo* in the film, and in particular the farewell scene between him and Aldara, exemplifies the paradoxical relationship of the regime with the East and the stereotypical orientalist view of the "Moor" within the political imagery of Francoism.

It is well known that relations with the Arab world formed a key part of the "substitution politics" employed by Franco during the diplomatic blockade imposed on his government in 1945. As María Dolores Algora Weber points out, "the Arab world helped to fill the void that the Western world created for Spain" (1995, 303). For the League of Arab States it was also important that Spain stabilize its diplomatic relations with the West in order to consolidate the new territorial order that had emerged as a result of the decolonization process in the Middle East and, more specifically, the end of British rule in Palestine. The symbiotic relationship between Spain and the Arab states is dramatized in *Locura de amor* through the ambiguous relationship between Álar and Aldara. It is a relationship that culminates with a pact of eternal friendship consummated over the recent corpse of a corrupt Europe personified by Filberto de Vere.

In Orduña's film the importance of de Vere is exaggerated to the point where any connection to the original text that served as its inspiration is almost completely lost. In the play by Tamayo y Baus, the schemes of the Flemish courtier constitute but one of the many factors that trigger Juana's madness. But in *Locura de amor*, de Vere is the main culprit behind all the palace intrigues until the very moment of Juana's death. He is the one who encourages and sometimes arranges Felipe's love affairs; he urges him into ever more lascivious acts by questioning his virility. It is de Vere who bribes and blackmails the Castilian nobility into taking power away from Juana and acknowledging Felipe as the only monarch. It is he who organizes the evil plot around Aldara's letter, a plot that in the eyes of the court seals a general consensus concerning the queen's madness. In short, de Vere is the personification of the vague international conspiracy of which Francoism thought itself the victim, leading it to develop a xenophobic streak that bordered on paranoia.

Filberto de Vere's allies in the Castilian Court are the Marquis de Villena and Don Juan Manuel. Their participation in the Flemish conspiracy in exchange for privileges makes them perfect representatives of those courtiers to whom Franco alludes in the epigraph that opens the present section of this article. The same actors that play these two characters also portray the anti-Spanish factions in other historical films by Orduña. Manuel Luna (Don Juan Manuel) is the



wicked Jew, Isaac, in *Alba de América*, the epitome of the anti-Semitism that characterized the Franco dictatorship. In *La Leona de Castilla* he plays Manrique, a traitor who infiltrates the comuneros (individuals who banded together to defend their rights against the arbitrary encroachment of the Spanish monarchy in the 1520s) and sexually assaults the virtuous Doña María de Pacheco, who personifies the motherland in the film. Eduardo Fajardo (Marquis de Villena) plays Gastón in *Alba de América*, the archetypal lust-filled, scheming Frenchman who conspires to hand Columbus's enterprise in the West Indies over to the French kings. In *La Leona de Castilla* he plays another traitor, the cynical Tovar, who infiltrates the Comuneros and promises to undermine the unity of the Castilian nobles. Not only do the same allegorical archetypes and situations repeat themselves from film to film, but even in the manner in which the scenes are staged become repetitive. All of this strengthens the allegoric subtext, allowing the audience to immediately recognize the same actors in their recurring roles within an identical plot: Spain's eternal fight against anti-Spanish forces. As a result, the dual redundancy that Llinás emphasizes becomes even more evident. The audience, already familiar with the events portrayed in the film, is presented with a story line in which the ending is revealed at the beginning of the film through various prolepses, thereby creating a visual loop between the first and last frames, accompanied by an off-camera narrator that acts as an omniscient guide throughout the story. The flashbacks that narrate the background events of the story are used to emphasize one aspect or another of the plot, whose subtext is virtually identical in all the historical films produced by CIFESA. By utilizing the same actors in similar roles (Aurora Bautista and Amparo Rivelles as personifications of the motherland and Manuel Luna and Eduardo Fajardo embodying the anti-Spanish faction) favors the audience's identification with or rejection of the characters and the forces they represent. This formula could not last forever, and certainly due to its own redundancy, it was quickly exhausted. After the economic fiascos of *La Leona de Castilla* and *Alba de América* in 1951, CIFESA abandoned the historical genre and so began the decline of the production company from Valencia.

#### CONCLUSION: THE MADNESS OF A REGIME

*Locura de amor* was produced at a time when CIFESA was the official promoter of the Franco dictatorship and in a year (1948) when Franco's regime saw the restoration of a figurehead monarchy (the

Law of Succession had passed the year before) as a solution to the problems of domestic stability and international recognition. In Juan de Orduña's film the kings, Felipe and Carlos, are invariably depicted as weak dignitaries who require the protection and tutelage of soldiers with political experience. Queen Juana stands opposed to these puppetlike characters as a figure who rises above political matters, while demonstrating the archetypal characteristics of the heroic Spanish women depicted in CIFESA's historical cinema. Juana is the personification of the motherland in danger, driven mad by the conspiracies of foreign powers; her personal sacrifice will make Spain's salvation possible.

As with all historical fiction, especially that created for propaganda use, Juan de Orduña's film reveals more about the time of the film's production than the historical period to which it alludes. Historical cinema during Francoism fulfilled the need for iconographic legitimation and political propaganda of a regime imposed by force. CIFESA's culminating period (1945–51) coincided with a time of political crisis. Franco had to reorient his governing philosophy in a way that would progressively distance itself from the fascist ideology that he adopted immediately following the civil war (1939–45), as a means of acquiring the international recognition he so desired and that had been systematically denied to him by the world community up until that point.

As in all of the historical films produced by CIFESA, *Locura de amor* presents the coded allegorical worldview of Francoism, according to which Spain finds itself besieged by foreign powers and is compelled to recover its true identity from its sixteenth-century imperial past. Juan de Orduña's film portrays more than a madness of love; it reveals the madness of a regime that saw cinema as an ideal instrument for the legitimation of its imagined "New Spain" and the perfect vehicle for the exaltation of nationalist sentiment by means of allegorical celebrations of its own apotheosis.

#### NOTES

1. The allegorical dimension of Spanish cinema during these years can be explained by its role as the ideal transmitter of the government's ideology. As Domènec Font points out, during the autarchy, cinema, "along with education," represented "a very systematic, ideological, Francoist design" (1981, 293). Although many critics have mentioned this aspect of Spanish cinema in passing (Gubern 1990, 58; Heredero 1993, 171; Fanés 1982, 181; Sánchez Biosca 1989, 77), until now no one has produced a monographic study on the topic, which from our point of view is an essential element in understanding cinema during the autarchy.



2. The nature of CIFESA as an organ for state propaganda is beyond doubt. In its mission statement, the promoters of the company expressed their will "to continue the economic policy guidelines that inspired the Franco dictatorship" (Font 1976, 107). In 1942, the president of the company, Vicente Casanova, received the Cross of Military Valor from the minister of war himself "in recognition of his unselfish devotion to collaboration between the State and the cinematographic industry in promoting propaganda" (Font 1976, 107). Four years later (and two years before the production of *Locura de amor*), Casanova was elected to the Union's Executive Council and as a representative of the film production industry in Spain's Parliament.

3. Franco rose up through the military ranks during the African wars and his personal guards were referred to as his Moorish guard until the time of his death. Never in Spain's modern history had relations with the Arab world been so good. The closeness of this relationship was due in large part to the radical anti-Zionism of Francoism, as well as to the many political and cultural similarities between the two. Shannon Fleming points out that, "among the Arab states Franco recognized like minds: conservative, traditional monarchical regimes that opposed the 'godless' teachings of communism and the rootless secularism of Western liberalism" (1980, 133).

4. Javier Tusell points out that "the influence of the Undersecretary to the President was much greater than befitted his administrative post. . . . He played a decisive role in the formation of Franco's attitudes regarding certain political questions, and those attitudes turned out to be very important for the survival of the regime during its early years" (1993, 177). To a large extent Carrero was responsible for the marginalization of the Falange after 1941, and for the establishment of the regime within the structure of an authoritarian monarchy.

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