

# **The Heroic North**

**The image of Finland and the Continuation War in the texts of Agustín de Foxá**

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Tutkimus käsittelee espanjalaisen kirjailijan ja Espanjan Suomen-asiainhoitajan Agustín de Foxán Suomi-kirjoituksia vuosilta 1941-1943. Tutkimuksessa käsitellään Foxán Suomi-kuvaa ja näkemyksiä jatkosodasta.

Tutkimusaihetta lähestytään historiallisen kuvatutkimuksen keinoin ja arvioidaan, millaisen kuvan Foxá muodostaa suomalaisen yhteiskunnan ja kulttuurin eri osa-alueilta ja jatkosodasta. Foxán Suomi-kuva liitetään Espanjan 1930- ja 40-lukujen historialliseen kontekstiin, jota määrittelevät sisällissodan (1936-1939) perintö, francolaisen hallinnon pyrkimykset sekä modernisuuden ja perinteen välinen ristiriita.

Tutkimuksen aineistona ovat Foxán Suomea käsittelevät kirjoitukset, jotka on julkaistu Foxán kootuissa teoksissa vuonna 1971. Alun perin tekstien pääosa on julkaistu 1940-luvulla kahdessa espanjalaisessa lehdessä: konservatiivisessa ABC:ssä ja Falangin virallisessa lehdessä Arribassa. Osa teksteistä on runoja ja näytelmiä, jotka on julkaistu eri ajankohtina.

Foxán kirjoituksissa esitetään Suomi usein idealisoituna, myyttisenä pohjoisena maana, jonka kansanperinteen ja luonnon kuvaukset saavat ajoittain myyttisiä piirteitä. Toisaalta kulttuurisen modernisaation tuoma yhdenmukaistaminen esitetään negatiivisena piirteenä, joka uhkaa suomalaisen kulttuurin omaleimaisuutta.

Suomalaisten kulttuurin ja kansanluonteen kuvaus ja sotapönnistykset Neuvostoliittoa vastaan muodostavat idealisoidun kuvauksen, jonka vastapainona on Neuvostoliiton järjestelmän, kulttuurin ja toimien haitallisuus. Neuvostoliitto edustaa materialistista, moraalitonta ja brutaalia järjestelmää. Vanha venäläinen kulttuuri esitetään kuitenkin pääosin positiivisessa valossa ja Suomeen sijoittuneet venäläisemigrantit esitetään kotimaansa menettäneinä.

Neuvostoliiton-kuvauksessa on yhtäläisyyksiä falangistien tapaan esittää Espanjan tasavallan toimet sisällissodan aikana ja Foxá vertaakin Viipurin ulkoasua neuvostomiehityksen jälkeen sisällissodan aikaiseen Madridiin. Sekä Neuvostoliittoa että Espanjan tasavaltaa yhdistävät Foxán kirjoituksissa esteettisen ymmärryksen puute, vulgaarisuus ja moraalittomuus.

Dikotomia kristillistä sivilisaatiota edustavien Suomen ja Francon Espanjan sekä sitä uhkaavan bolševistisen Neuvostoliiton välillä on jyrkkä ja ilmenee monin eri tavoin.

Avainsanat: Espanja, Suomi-kuva, toinen maailmansota, jatkosota, matkakirjallisuus, espanjankielinen kirjallisuus

## Table of contents:

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
1.1 Introduction to the topic .....	4
1.2 Research task and methods .....	5
1.3 Sources .....	10
1.4 Preceding studies and literature.....	13
<b>2. Agustín de Foxá and his context</b> .....	<b>17</b>
2.1 Agustín de Foxá – writer and diplomat from a troubled Spain.....	17
2.2 Diplomatic relations between Spain and Finland.....	20
2.3 Falange and literature .....	23
2.4 North and south as dimensions of thought .....	26
<b>3. Finland as poetical north</b> .....	<b>29</b>
3.1 Finland – ”an enormous Vinuesa” .....	29
3.2 Good soldiers and down-to-earth people .....	34
3.3 Food and drink .....	36
3.4 Kalevala – the mystical epic of the poetical North .....	39
<b>4. Finnish society</b> .....	<b>41</b>
4.1 “Feminist country” .....	41
4.2 The soulless progressivism threatens the mythical north.....	44
<b>5. Finland, the outpost of Europe</b> .....	<b>52</b>
5.1 Anatomy of the Finnish hero.....	52
5.2 Soviet hordes as a threat to the European civilisation.....	54
5.3 Spanish prisoners in Nastola .....	62
5.4 Soviet Union as an analogue to the Republican Spain.....	66
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>Compliments</b> .....	<b>71</b>
<b>Resumen en español</b> .....	<b>72</b>
<b>Sources and literature</b> .....	<b>74</b>

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction to the topic

When I tell Spanish people that I am researching writings of Agustín de Foxá, they say the name rings a bell. Unfortunately, this is probably because there is a street in Madrid named after Foxá just next to the Chamartín Railway Station. Foxá is not widely known, despite that his literary works had a significant influence during the turbulent years of 1930's.

Agustín de Foxá was a writer and diplomat, who wrote a huge amount of articles and literary works while working as a diplomat abroad. His stay in Finland was not an exception and it is said that it is one of the most known of his periods abroad, above all because Italian writer Curzio Malaparte made him the protagonist in one of the parts of his novel *Kaputt*<sup>1</sup>. Foxá published his first literary works in the beginning of the 1930's and was recruited to the Spanish diplomatic corps. In Madrid, Foxá participated in the Falange movement, emerged in the beginning of the 1930's, mostly contributing to its literary circle<sup>2</sup>. This background has made Foxá a controversial figure in the modern, democratic Spain that is not comfortable with its authoritarian history<sup>3</sup>.

Foxá was positioned in Finland from 1941 to 1943. Spanish Civil War had made him even more fierce anti-communist and he had worked for the government of Francisco Franco just from the beginning of the war. Finland of that era was an interesting place for someone of his like. Heroism of the Finnish people impressed him and he admired those features in the Finnish culture, which resulted in the way Finns were acting in the frontline. When he saw Finnish soldiers in the frontline and occupied Soviet areas, he thought that they were fighting for the same cause than Franco's troops in the Spanish Civil War.

From the Spanish point of view, Finland is situated in the extreme North. The extreme north has been filled with stereotypes during centuries, forming a hazy mental landscape which leads the way southerners see the North. These stereotypes can be used in aim to create an

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<sup>1</sup> The role of Foxá in the novel was contradictory. Mainer 1971, 295-296.

<sup>2</sup> About Falangist literary, see Chapter 2.3.

<sup>3</sup> More about this controversy, see page 15.

image of a heroic people of the North, which fights bravely against the threat that Soviet communism was thought to draw over the European civilisation.

## 1.2 Research task and methods

The aim of this work is to analyse the image of Finland in the texts of Agustín de Foxá and find out, what the texts tell about Finno-Spanish cultural encounterings in general, about Foxá and the Spain of his time. Forming an image of another nation or region is a complex process and the image has its functions and goals. For instance, travel literature about other countries has often been seen as comments to the status quo of the author's home country. Examples of this kind of works are Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* and Alexis de Tocqueville's writings from America.

My study of Agustín de Foxá's image of Finland will be done by studying his writings. The aim is to examine, what kind of things Foxá writes about Finland and the Finnish culture and which kinds of conclusions one can make of this. The aim is to trace discourses that produce a mythical northernised image of Finland and explain, what purpose it served. The northernising discourses can be recognised by using theories regarding North and South as mental geographies, where fact and fiction merge forming a literary *topos*: These kinds of conceptions usually lead our notions of other regions, even if we tried to convince ourselves that our conceptions base only on hard facts.<sup>4</sup>

Approach of this study is historical image research, which examines, how one nation has seen another. Nowadays, this kind of notions could be examined by a Gallup poll. This can not be done in a historical research, so we have to study *images*. According to Olavi K. Fält, *image* is a more general and non-specific concept than *opinion*. On the other hand, the image is more long-lasting<sup>5</sup>. William Buchanan and Hadley Cantril have introduced a concept of the image as a mental map, which describes reality, but is not reality itself. The mental map is created by

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<sup>4</sup> Stadius 2005, 24-25.

<sup>5</sup> Fält 1982, 10.

receiving and filtering information, as we have a tendency to receive especially that information, which supports our existing conceptions, i.e. stereotypes<sup>6</sup>.

Images and mentalities are closely affiliated. Images emerge from cultural factors – what is seen good in one's culture is seen good in other cultures and if the other lacks the quality, the result is a negative image. There can be found the factors, as well practical as intellectual, and the necessities, which cause the generation of a certain image. This approach should be extensive and the research should be extended even far to the past to understand the reasons of a certain image formation.<sup>7</sup>

Historical image research examines what an image is like, how and why it is formed, what purpose it serves, what changes have taken place in it, and what all this tells about its creator.<sup>8</sup> One way to understand historical image research is to divide it into three categories: 1.) images of distant cultures, (2) images of neighbouring peoples, which includes the enemy image, and (3) images of politically influential persons in various times and cultural contexts<sup>9</sup>. The historical image research tells often more about the creator of the image than about its subject.<sup>10</sup> The question in the image research study is to trace empirically the dynamics of the way one sees an *other*. Otherness can be caused by many factors, whether ethno-cultural, geographical, political et cetera. Division between *us* and the *others* can take place as well inside region as between them: the *other* can be seen either *here or there*; also the *own* can be seen in other regions, in form of emigrants or related ethnic groups, for instance.<sup>11</sup>

One of the classical works of image study is Edward Said's *Orientalism*, published in 1978. Said suggested that western travelogues and other narratives about Orient (meaning Islamic world) formed an *orientalising* discourse, thus reproducing Orient as an other by means of language. This was connected to the fact that West had colonised a great deal of the region. By the discourse, the European culture was able to manage and even to produce the Orient politically and sociologically during the colonial period<sup>12</sup>. Another classical example of the colonial encountering studies is to examine the way Africans were described in European

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<sup>6</sup> About the theory of North and South as dimensions of thought, see Chapter 2.4.

<sup>7</sup> De Anna 1991, 27.

<sup>8</sup> Fält 2002, 8.

<sup>9</sup> Alenius-Fält-Jalagin 2002, Preface of *Looking at the Other – Historical Study of Images in Theory and Practise*.

<sup>10</sup> Fält 2002, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Knuuttila & Paasi 1995, 57.

<sup>12</sup> Baine Campbell 2002, 265.

travel narratives and schoolbooks<sup>13</sup>. Accounts of European travellers from places like Africa had often a racist tone and showed the other cultures as much inferior than ours<sup>14</sup>.

These kinds of descriptions serve as propaganda, they legitimate certain political aims: for example, the colonisation of those areas can be justified by convincing people that our society is the only genuinely civilised one<sup>15</sup>. The language is a tool to produce the *other* rather than only to describe it. That's why post-colonial research tradition has had a great importance to historical image studies, as it has given tools to problematise the earlier representations of colonised areas and cultures.<sup>16</sup>

However, the Hispano-Finnish cultural encounterings are outside the conventional colonialist contexts. As intra-European cultural encounterings they lack the typical colonialist features. Hence, notions of hierarchies of races or civilisations are not having remarkable role in this field. Notion of *borealism* has been invented, however, to describe a *northernising* discourse of the North, following somewhat the example of orientalism. But in intra-European cultural encounterings, one must be ready to accept that starting points are not similar to those within the colonial power–colony parity. Peter Burke, in a critique to a study regarding Anglo-Swedish encounterings, underlines the necessity of understanding cultural encounterings as gradual phenomena, in which the geographical, cultural and mental distances cause different degrees of cultural encounterings, which should be recognised. He advises to avoid strict juxtaposition of the *own* and the *other*. It means simply, that for other Europeans, Sweden or Finland just aren't completely strange nor inferior.<sup>17</sup>

The notion of *borealism*, if held sacrosanct and searched in determined way, has a danger of exaggerating the drasticity of the cultural encountering between Spain and Finland. They are both Western European cultures, although more remote than British and Scandinavian cultures. It should be noticed also that in examining the Spanish view of an *other*, not the same presuppositions can be used than when examining an Anglo-Saxon view, which has been the most usual target for colonial encountering-studies. Apart from the shared Western

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<sup>13</sup> Kaartinen 2001, 391-392.

<sup>14</sup> Western depictions of other cultures showed the encountering as hierarchic: e.g. in school books there were pictures of white people, "negroes" and gorillas showing their expressly hierarchic relation. Knuutila & Paasi 1995, 46.

<sup>15</sup> Aims of expansion can explain depictions of other people as barbarians and uncivilised. See De Anna 1997, 218-219.

<sup>16</sup> Baine Campbell 2002, 263.

<sup>17</sup> Burke 2000, 713.

European foundations, there are special features in North-South -encounterings, which will be presented later<sup>18</sup>.

Creation of an image is a two-way process. In times of war, foreign reactions are important for belligerents. Sympathies of the world play a great role – they can win diplomatic support as well as donations and volunteers from abroad. The authorities of Finland were very keen to give as good image of the country's war struggles as possible<sup>19</sup>. Entertaining foreign diplomats and journalists was done and Foxá also participated in many of these wine and dine suppers hosted by Finnish officers and government officials. There is a supposedly remarkable possibility that the foreign observers at least partly reflected the opinions reinforced by the Finnish officials in their accounts, because giving a good image of itself was especially important for Finland during the first decades of the independence and during the Second World War<sup>20</sup>.

So, my study consists roughly of two phases: to recognise the northernising discourse, the image of Finland as *north* and then to recognise, why this image has been formed and what is it like exactly. The first dimension is, how Foxá as a *southerner* views a *northern* country and culture. This view of the *north* is seen as a part of more extent concept of the *North-South dichotomy* in Europe in the history of ideas. How Foxá's writings reflect elements of these dimensions of thought? What kind of elements typical for Southern discourses of the North can be recognised in Foxá's texts? Can there be found traces of *borealism* in a sense comparable to other discourse systems such as orientalism?

To do this, subquestions are formed in a thematic way. The subquestions ask, what kinds of elements are presented about the Finnish nature, how the Finnish people, culture, folklore and society are depicted and what kind of elements receive the biggest attention. From these, general overlines will be recognised as well as that what the mythical northern Finland of Foxá is like. The examination of the people and the society is mainly dealt with in Chapters three and four.

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<sup>18</sup> See Chapter 2.4.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Lähteenkorva & Pekkarinen 2004, 436-441.

<sup>20</sup> Lähteenkorva & Pekkarinen 2004, 24-25.



Another phase consists of tracing the ideological purposes and other factors behind this northernising image. As Foxá was part of the Falangist movement and he had served the nationalist government right from its beginning in 1936, I analyse how his image on Finland serves his ideological purposes. Thus I will arrive to the theme of the Continuation War. Here, the most important question is, how the Continuation War was depicted. The question is of purposeful reproduction of *otherness* for political purposes<sup>21</sup>. It is my hypothesis that Foxá's writings try to reproduce the image of Soviet Union and its inhabitants as an *other* and demonise it. This served very well the political agenda of the administration of Francisco Franco which had its legitimacy in its claim to have saved Spain from the demon of the communism<sup>22</sup>. The study gives thus a lot of attention to the Soviet Union. The image of Soviet Union is not in itself a subject of this research, but because it formed an important component of the antagonism of the war and because it is widely described, it is strongly present in the study. Foxá doesn't, however, draw a comprehensive image of the Soviet Union, as he didn't spend time there: the communist country is present only as an enemy image in his texts. The Chapter five deals with the image of the Continuation War and the dualism between Finland and Soviet Union.

The study gives a microhistorical perspective to the social layer of Foxá. Microhistorical approach doesn't require that the examined target, in this case travelogues, should be widely read or celebrated. Still, by examining someone, however modest, we can perceive common features of even a whole social reference group of the examined historical period. By examining the individual, microhistory opens a view to the general and vice versa<sup>23</sup>. Some of Foxá's texts were widely published in Spain's most read newspapers, but some were writings published only later in completed works of him. This work doesn't cover all influences of Spanish images of Finland in 1940's, it has representativity – it represents the Spanish way of seeing the North. By studying the texts of Agustín de Foxá about Finland one can study reflections of the Spanish traditionalist circles of the time and its way of thinking, i.e. to reconstruct a part of their mentality. It is useful to keep in mind, that this mentality was not shared by all Spaniards of the time<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> De Anna 1991, 29.

<sup>22</sup> Halstead 1980, 44.

<sup>23</sup> Immonen 2001, 19.

<sup>24</sup> This is quite likely, given the fragmentation of the Spanish political and intellectual life of the time.

This is done by contextualisation. The job of a researcher is here like a weaver while interpreting other works and constructing the suitable context for the analysis<sup>25</sup>. In my case, I construct a context that derives from the intellectual and social history of Spain of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, remarked by series of conflicts and turbulences and interlaced to general European and universal trends. I try to connect Foxá's thinking not only to the official ideology of the Falange, but also to the Spanish right wing conservative ideology in general<sup>26</sup>.

So, the research task needs a comprehensive approach. My guideline is that “*everything depends on everything*”, as citing literary researcher Tarmo Kunnas, who has studied French writers' fascist leanings in his doctoral thesis in 1972. This two-way relation means here that without understanding the political background one can not understand Foxá's writings and without understanding his concept of life and aesthetic preferences, one can not understand his political opinions.<sup>27</sup> Interpretation in this kind of research can not come, however, from outside the text, but must base on its semantical entity, which is built on the text's cultural ground<sup>28</sup>.

### 1.3 Sources

Sources of the study are comprised by Foxá's writings on Finland, published in a collection of all his works, the three-volume *Obras Completas* (Complete Works) and archive sources from the Foreign Ministry of Spain. First of the volumes of *Obras Completas* includes poems, novels and theatre plays, the second articles and essays and the third conclusion of the articles, essays and family correspondence. First edition of *Obras Completas* was published in 1963, but the edition I use is published in 1971. All of the volumes include texts from Finland. The second volume is the one which includes most of the texts dealing with Finland, as the majority of them were articles published in Spanish newspapers. These articles about Finland exceed to roughly 70 pages, dealing with nature, culture and reflections about the ongoing Continuation War. Many of the articles were published in Spanish newspapers *ABC*

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<sup>25</sup> Hyrkkänen 2002, 201-202.

<sup>26</sup> About the tense relation of the revolutionary, anti-capitalist fascism and reactionary, counter-revolutionary conservatism in the Falange movement, see Chapter 2.3.

<sup>27</sup> Kunnas 1972, 17.

<sup>28</sup> Varto 1991, 37

and *Diario Arriba* (the partisan newspaper of Falange) and some were apparently unpublished prior to being included in the *Obras Completas*. *Obras Completas* were published by Editorial Prensa Española, the same company that published the ABC newspaper.

ABC was an important conservative newspaper, which was considered a supporter of monarchist and conservative values. Foxá maintained close ties to the direction of ABC and was personal friend of the paper's owners. He belonged to the same aristocratic circles, who were well represented in the administration, the diplomatic corps and other high sections of the society. Foxá was committed devoutly to journalist work. Newspapers were an important publishing channel for him. One reflection on his appreciation of journalism is that he considered his efforts to bring poetry to newspapers one of his most important contributions to the literature.<sup>29</sup> It is obvious that in that time Foxá's writings in ABC were an important source for Spaniards to read about Finland.

Some of the writings were published as a book already in 1949 under the title *Un mundo sin melodía – notas de un viajero sentimental* (A world without melody – notes of a sentimental traveller). This book includes a slightly more narrow selection of articles, while the *Obras Completas* (Complete works) is an extended compilation, including all articles published in ABC and other texts<sup>30</sup>. Because all of articles about Finland included in *Un mundo sin melodía* are included in the volume II of the *Obras Completas* as well (but not vice versa), I use the texts from *Obras Completas*. *Un mundo sin melodía* was, however, first time when Foxá's Finnish articles were published as a book together with other articles, forming a colourful, typical fin-de-siècle novel<sup>31</sup>.

Therefore the source material includes three parts: 1.) articles about Finland, 2.) theatre play *Norte y Sur* (North and South), 3.) familial letters and 4.) selection of poems which deal with Finland. The first part, the articles, are the most important part of the material due to its extent. The articles include a lot of accounts of the war, the relation between Finland and the U.S.S.R., but also about Finnish culture: the mystical northness, traditions and the climate. One very interesting article is about the encountering between Foxá and Spanish prisoners of war in Nastola. The Spaniards were refugees to the Soviet Union, having been sent there as

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<sup>29</sup> Sagrera 1967, 77.

<sup>30</sup> Foxá 1971b., 8-10.

<sup>31</sup> Sagrera 1967, 167-171.

teenagers during the Spanish Civil War and who had eventually been made prisoners at the Karelian front.

The second part is the play *Norte y Sur*, written by Foxá in Finland. The play takes place apparently in Finland, although it is not mentioned in it. It has four characters: Sonia and Andres, who are cousins, their teacher of Finnish, Mario, who is surprisingly of Italian background and Karin, who is aunt of Sonia. Sonia, Andres and Karin are of Russian background and they had fled to Finland after the October Revolution of 1917, or more exactly they were spending a prolonged summer vacation in Terijoki when the revolution took place in St.Petersburg. The play starts with an interpretation of poems of Kalevala, which serves as practising Finnish for them (in play the poems are in Spanish). In the play the characters talk about differences of Finland and Russia and North and South. The lines include political references, while it deals with the dichotomy between the West and the East. The play was presented in the *Teatro Español* of Madrid on 24 June 1944, just a year after Foxá's departure from Finland<sup>32</sup>. The play was also showed in 1955 in the Spanish TV<sup>33</sup>. The play is found in the first volume of *Obras Completas*.

The third part consists of familial letters written by Foxá to his parents and siblings from August 1941 onwards to May 1942. The letters include accounts about Finland and his observations about the nature, the country and its habits, as well as narrations of the life of diplomatic corps with its cocktail parties. The letters count more or less same stories as the articles. The letters were as far as I know, unpublished prior to the publishing of the compilation (1963 – Foxá died on 1959). The character of the letters as a source differs from the other sources, as they were private and not public. The outline of their content is not much different from the articles or the *Norte y Sur*, except some references to the family and their common experiences. The familial letters are found in the third volume of *Obras Completas*.

Foxá's writings about Finland can be classified as *travel literature*, although his essays, letters and perhaps poems suit better this classification than his theatrical work. Authors of the travel literature, and in generally they who write about other countries and cultures, have the power to influence the minds of the lectors. Especially in older times, when travelling was a rare privilege, the travel authors had a role of telling people about foreign countries. The writer

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<sup>32</sup> Foxá 1971a, 561.

<sup>33</sup> Sagrera 1967, 135.

has to take into account his audience and write in a style suitable to the cultural and social climate of the time, which reflects in his/her writings. The travel writings become so a melting point of the writer's and the lecturers' preferences.<sup>34</sup>

Apart of these published sources, I use the archive sources to study, how Foxá's actions as a diplomat corresponded with the view transmitted by his writings. Archive sources of the actions of Foxá exist in the General Archive of Administration of Spain (Archivo General de la Administración – AGA). The sources in the administration include Foxá's correspondence with the Spanish ministry of foreign affairs, the Finnish authorities as well as diplomatic corps of other countries. As Foxá was charged of economical affairs, a large extent of his actions were related to the economy. However, the economical policy does not mean that it wouldn't have place for sympathies with political leanings.

#### **1.4 Preceding studies and literature**

The context of Foxá strives to two or more main directions: first there is the tradition of South European and especially Spanish travellers in Nordic countries. Then there is tradition of the historical image studies. Moreover, Foxá is connected to tradition of fascist, traditionalist and conservative ideologies. Research tradition is hence quite heterogenous and consists mostly works of history science and literary research.

Spanish images of Finland have been studied mostly in the context of early 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the case of Ángel Ganivet. Peter Stadius has studied Spanish travellers in Scandinavia in the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century and their images of the North in his doctoral thesis *Resan till norr. Spanska Nordenbilder kring sekelskiftet 1900*. Stadius examines the images of the North as a part of North-South dichotomy in Europe in the history of ideas. Stadius examines travelogues of eight Spanish travellers, including Ángel Ganivet, a Spanish diplomat in Finland and the author of *Cartas finlandesas*, the Finnish letters. Stadius takes into account the special characteristics of the literary sources and thereby the genre of travelogues between fact and fiction becomes an essential part of reproduction of the literary *topos* and stereotypes.

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<sup>34</sup> Stadius 2005, 24.

In the Spanish travellers' image of the North, the traditional, old clichés and stereotypes become connected to the contemporary social topics. The labour movement, emancipation of women, modernism, secularised school system and industrial development are a part of Spanish view on Norden. Stadius reflects the travelogues to the context of contemporary Spain, of *fin del siglo* era<sup>35</sup>. Thereby, Spanish images of the North reflect by great extent the circumstances of Spain itself.<sup>36</sup>

Agustín de Foxá has been studied by some literary researchers, who are interested also in the political and historical connections of his works. Foxá was studied during the Franco régime, as according to bibliographies most of the works concerning him were done prior to 1970's. One of the most complete works is Luis Sagrera y Martínez-Villasante's work *Agustín de Foxá y su obra literaria* (A. Foxá and his literary work), which was published in the publication series of the Spanish Foreign Ministry, *Cuadernos de la escuela diplomática*<sup>37</sup>. The work includes as well biographical as literary aspects. Sagrera writes, that writer Luis Calvo, who wrote a prologue to *Un mundo sin melodía* of Foxá, found roots of the work in Foxá's rebellion against the sterility and uniformity of his time and against the prodigies of machines, i.e. modernity and belief in technology.

Research of Agustín de Foxá could be divided roughly to two parts: first there are the studies of the Francoist Spain, when Foxá's ideological leanings were considered generally *comme-il-faut*. Secondly, there is a newer wave of studies which eye his works as part of the falangist literary movement<sup>38</sup>. The latter, post-franquist research tradition is represented partly by researchers of Spanish philology and literature. The book *Vencer no es convencer*, edited by Albert Mechthild and published in Germany in 1997, deals with the ideological manifestations of the Falange-orientated literary movement.

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary from the death of Foxá was celebrated in 2009. This caused an increased attention towards him. Articles were published and literary acts organised. The subject has

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<sup>35</sup> End of the century: situation in Spain was complicated after the collapse of the colonial empire. The general atmosphere was cynical and disillusioned. In philosophy, "the problem Spain" was to be solved. See Stadius 2005, 119-128.

<sup>36</sup> Stadius 2005, abstract of the doctoral thesis :

<http://notes.helsinki.fi/halvi/tiedotus/vanhatvaitokset.nsf/0/a158eab12a29796ec22570e6002e26e1?OpenDocument> (seen 13/01/2009)

<sup>37</sup> Sagrera is himself a diplomat as well.

<sup>38</sup> To read about the role of art in Spanish Civil War and its aftermath, see *The Spanish Civil War – A Cultural and Historical Reader* (edited by Kenwood, Alun) Berg Publishers, 1993.

provoked debate: In October 2009, the city government of Seville refused the use of municipal civic centres for homage literary acts for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Foxá, which caused accusations of political discrimination towards the city government and the leftist party Izquierda Unida, whose representative denied the use of the civic centre<sup>39</sup>.

The article *Baile en Capitanía de Agustín de Foxá: Poetización de la propaganda franquista*, by Cerstin Bauer-Funke, examines the mentioned play of Foxá and its reflections of the Francoist propaganda. In the play, Foxá draws a connection between the ideals of the Carlist movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to those of the Falangists, sympathising both against modernists and republicans. According to Bauer-Funke, Foxá shows the old, traditional values as virtuous and pure and ridicules those seeking for modernism. An interesting fact for my study is Bauer-Funke's observation of the image of women portrayed in *Baile en Capitanía* (Dance in the Captaincy). To Foxá, a good woman was one who is modest, ready to sacrifice herself for the good of the fatherland and after the death of his spouse, spends rest of her life in mourning. The image of a perfect woman of Foxá corresponds greatly with the ideals of the *Sección femenina*, the feminine section of the Falange, however these kinds of ideas were not unfamiliar neither to other political movements. Funke calls this a poetization of the past.<sup>40</sup>

Apart from this, Foxá is studied as an example of the falangist literary movement by José Carlos Mainer. He writes about the role of Foxá in the falangist literature in his book *Falange y literatura – antología*, published in 1971. He has since worked with the theme in various articles, for example in *Conversiones sobre la imagen del fascismo en la novela española de la primera postguerra*, published in the book *La Novela en España (Siglos XIX-XX)* (edited by Paul Aubert), where he comments Foxá's novel *Madrid de corte a checa* as reflection of the glorification of the pre-republican past<sup>41</sup>. Although the first edition published in 1971 is old, its comprehensive approach makes it essential for the research of the falangist literary movement.

There are some other examples of southern views of Finland as well. One to mention, which has relevance regarding this study, is Italian Lino Piazza, who visited Finland in 1924 and

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<sup>39</sup> "Los convocantes del homenaje a Agustín de Foxá denuncian a Medrano por prevaricación", Diario de Sevilla, 9 October 2009.

<http://www.diariodesevilla.es/article/sevilla/534944/los/convocantes/homenaje/agustiacuten/foxaacuten/denuncia/n/medrano/por/prevaricacioacuten.html> (seen 13/01/2009)

<sup>40</sup> Bauer-Funke 1998, 150-154.

<sup>41</sup> Mainer 2001, 185.

published the book *Il paese dei trentacinquemila laghi* (Land of 35 000 lakes). The work is not very well known, but Pirkko Kanervo has written an article about it in the journal *Settentrione – Rivista di Studi Italo-Finlandesi*, Finnish review of Italian philology. According to the article, in 1920's the predominant image of Finland in Italy was still that of the uncivilised, remote Lapps, not far from the Fenns of Tacitus. Piazza wanted to change this image and stated that Finns were highly educated, hard-working and tidy – but on the other hand melancholic and dark-mooded. Piazza was also frightened of the climate. Piazza called that Finland should have closer relations to the Latin civilisation. He also stated that not only Germany and Great Britain should benefit from the trade with Finland.<sup>42</sup> As representing the inter-war period, Piazza's views offer some possibilities for comparison to those of Foxá.

Another Italian, who has written records from Finland, was Indro Montanelli, war correspondent of *Corriere della Sera*, whose writings from the Winter War were published in a Finnish book called *Sankareiden sota* (The War of the Heroes – WSOY, Helsinki 1995). The book is made by translating parts regarding Finland from Montanelli's compilation work *Dentro La Storia* (Inside the Story – RCS Rizzoli S.p.A., Milan 1992), which includes also texts from other places. Montanelli's writings, ordered chronologically in the work, describe the Finnish war struggles and the Finnish society worked in the time of crisis. According to the prologue, Montanelli showed an independent touch, defiant of the official Italian foreign policy, which maintained friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. at the time<sup>43</sup>. Agustín de Foxá's writings share many interfaces to those of Montanelli: many of his articles were also published in an important newspaper and they also were dealing with a war, though Continuation War. While Montanelli maintained an independent attitude, contrasting the official Italian foreign policy, Foxá did not do the same – he didn't have to, because the official attitude of Spain towards Finland was the one he also shared.

Another side of the phenomenon of travelogues is the purposeful attempts of Finnish government to build a positive image of Finland. Pekka Lähteenkorva's and Jukka Pekkarinen's work *Ikuisen poudan maa – virallinen Suomi-kuva 1918-1945*<sup>44</sup> is the most comprehensive presentation of this. Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen write about Finnish policies to promote Finland abroad, in Spain as well. In the book, they write about some

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<sup>42</sup> Kanervo 2003, 82-84.

<sup>43</sup> Montanelli 1995, 5.

<sup>44</sup> The land of eternal sunshine. The official image of Finland 1918-1945.



foreign journalists who wrote articles about Finland. Italian journalists were numerous in Finland during the 1920's and 1930's and their reports were mostly positive, especially regarding the nature – although the food got some negative comments<sup>45</sup>. In the early 1930's many foreign newspapers condemned the rise of the Lapua movement in Finland, but the Italian press was an exception – for an obvious reason<sup>46</sup>. Another Southern European journalist described in the book was Yugoslav Alfred Fiser, whose views on Finland were slightly different: he noticed a militaristic tendency in the country as well the way of locals to dedicate themselves for hard work<sup>47</sup>.

Moreover, Saara Mattila's master's thesis examines these policies particularly in Spain and Italy. Promoting Finland in Spain was done for instance by delivering books and organising movie displays and photo expositions<sup>48</sup>. The work draws a good example of Finnish attempts to influence in southerners' views of us, but it doesn't tell, however, how the message was received by the Spanish audience.

## **2. Agustín de Foxá and his context**

### **2.1 Agustín de Foxá – writer and diplomat from a troubled Spain**

Agustín de Foxá, the Spanish diplomatic representative in Finland from 1941 to 1943, was born in 1906 to an aristocratic family in Madrid. The line of his family can be traced back to the times of Charlemagne, when his ancestors got a vassalage in Catalonia. At the age of nine, he inherited the title of Count of Foxá from his father. He was also the Marquis of Armendáriz. It was hence obvious that, given the traditional aristocratic structure of the Spanish society of that time, Foxá belonged to the elite of the society. In his youth, Foxá became interested in Arts and Literature, becoming an enthusiastic poet.<sup>49</sup> He became active

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<sup>45</sup> Lähteenkorva & Pekkarinen 2004, 140-141.

<sup>46</sup> Lähteenkorva & Pekkarinen 2004, 143-144.

<sup>47</sup> Lähteenkorva & Pekkarinen 2004, 154.

<sup>48</sup> Mattila 2000, 53-54.

<sup>49</sup> Sagrera 1967, 15-17.

participant in the literary circles of Madrid: his first poetry book was published in 1930, at same time that he started in the diplomatic career.<sup>50</sup>

Foxá started his diplomatic career in 1930 and his first posting was in Bucharest, from where he soon was transferred to Sofia. He also started to collaborate with the Spanish newspaper ABC, to which he wrote articles from abroad. In Bulgaria he received a recognition for his efforts to improve the relations between Bulgaria and Spain<sup>51</sup>. However, after the collapse of the monarchy in 1931 Foxá returned to Spain in spring 1932 to work in the Spanish ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was the time when the Spanish society entered to very turbulent times. Foxá became active in politics, being first a member in a monarchist youth group called *Juventudes Monárquicas*, with whom he was involved in a violent conflict at Cine Europa, where republicans were holding a meeting.<sup>52</sup>

Foxá became soon involved to the *Falange* movement, the Spanish branch of fascism, which emerged in 1933<sup>53</sup>. Foxá had been a personal friend of Falange leader José Antonio Primo de Rivera, son of General Miguel Primo de Rivera, who had been the dictator of Spain in the 1920's. The Falange ideology mixed the upper-class belief on traditional lifestyles to some kind of progressivism, seeking to restore the greatness of the Spanish Empire.<sup>54</sup> Foxá participated in a circle of Falange-orientated poets together with Primo de Rivera. With other poets, Foxá participated in the creation of Falange's official anthem, *Cara al sol*.<sup>55</sup> Foxá wrote letters also to the anthems of the Falange youth organisation and the Division Azul<sup>56</sup>.

Foxá participated also into the making of the falangist review *Jerarquía*, considered to be imitation of the Italian fascist review called *Gerarchia*<sup>57</sup>. Foxá, along with other poets, created a poetic outlook to the movement. Stanley Payne describes that the movemetn had an intellectual air at its beginnings, but in 1936, after the win of the left in parliamentary

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<sup>50</sup> Mainer 1971, 295-296.

<sup>51</sup> Sagrera 1967, 41.

<sup>52</sup> Sagrera 1967, 33.

<sup>53</sup> Payne 1970, 38.

<sup>54</sup> Sagrera 1967, 33-34.

<sup>55</sup> The music was composed by Juan Tellería and lyrics provided by the collective effort of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, Agustín de Foxá, Dionisio Ridruejo, José María Alfaro and Pedro Murlane Michelena. Sagrera 1967, 35.

<sup>56</sup> Sagrera 1967, 37.

<sup>57</sup> Payne 1999, 258.

elections, it started to slide towards an escalating use of violence, which precluded the Spanish civil war.<sup>58</sup>

In 1936 Foxá was assigned to the Spanish consulate of Bombay, but due to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, he never got to India. As a Falange activist, Foxá was in danger of persecution from behalf of the Republican government, as he was stucked in Republican-controlled Madrid, but thanks to his personal connections in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was accepted to continue his diplomatic career. Luis Sagrera writes that Foxá was in June 1936 in danger to be executed by the republican militia, but he was saved because of his diplomatic passport<sup>59</sup>. In august 1936, he was assigned to Bucharest to represent the Spanish Republic. However, after leaving Spain, Foxá telegraphed to a representative of Franco that he wanted to serve the nationalist block instead. When he arrived to Romania, he was nominally representing the Republic, but de facto worked for the government of Franco. After the double play for few months, Foxá returned to Spain to serve in Franco's administration during the Spanish Civil War.<sup>60</sup>

During this period, in 1938, Foxá published a novel called *Madrid de Corte a Checa*, (Madrid from court to Cheka<sup>61</sup>). José Carlos Mainer suggests that the novel is partly autobiographical: it describes the rise of the anti-republican sentiment among conservatively-minded university students. The novel describes the republic as vulgar and begrudges the pre-democratic happy days, when the aristocracy could live in peace<sup>62</sup>. This was the only novel Foxá published and his writings were more concentrated to poetry, theatre plays and newspaper articles.

After the Spanish civil war, Foxá's diplomatic career continued in Rome in 1939, where he stayed until 1941. He was, however, withdrawn from Rome after some happenings that seem to have remained little unclear. According to Stanley G. Payne, he had mocked the fascist regime, calling it "*a burlesque of the Nazis*". Mussolini, hailed by the Italian fascists as "*Fondatore dell'Impero*" (founder of the Empire), was termed by Foxá "*Affondatore*

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<sup>58</sup> Payne 1970, 49.

<sup>59</sup> Sagrera 1967, 43.

<sup>60</sup> Sagrera 1967, 44-48.

<sup>61</sup> The name refers to revolutionary tribunals that persecuted supporters of the nationalist movement, which were called *Checa* after the Soviet state security organisation Cheka (ЧК - чрезвычайная комиссия). About checas, see e.g. Beevor 2006, 142.

<sup>62</sup> Mainer 1971, 97-98.

*dell'Imperio*” (sinker of the empire)<sup>63</sup>. Luis Sagrera y Martínez-Villasante suggests also a couple of other theories, but anyway Italy demanded him to leave<sup>64</sup>. He was, however, one of the directors of the monthly magazine called *Legiones y Falanges* together with Italian Giuseppe Lambrossa – the magazine was edited in Rome and was published from 1940 to 1943, being an example of the friendly Italo-Spanish relations at the time<sup>65</sup>.

Foxá was assigned to Helsinki on July 8, 1941 and he entregated his credentials on September 2. He stayed in Finland until 1943, observing hence the first section of the Continuation War, in which Finland made an offensive to conquest large areas in Eastern Karelia<sup>66</sup>. Foxá served in Finland as representative of commercial affairs, dealing however with political affairs as well. As an infatigable writer, Foxá contributed many writings during his stay in Helsinki – various letters, articles, and a screen play *Norte y Sur* (North and South). This was, however, not exceptional for him, as he had written one of his earlier works, *La niña caracol*, while in Bulgaria. Foxá was given controversial attention at Curzio Malaparte’s novel *Kaputt*, a partly fictional novel describing the Eastern front of the World War from Ukraine to Finland (Malaparte worked as war correspondent for *Corriere della Sera*). In *Kaputt*, the character of Foxá is dark-minded, brutal and obsessed by death, “*Cruel and gloomy as an all good Spaniard*” (Cruel y funesto como todo buen español)<sup>67</sup>. For his work as a diplomat, Foxá was granted the decoration of Order of the Lion of Finland (Suomen leijonan ritarikunta)<sup>68</sup>.

## 2.2 Diplomatic relations between Spain and Finland

For most of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the diplomatic relations between Finland and Spain were cordial, but distant. Most of the affairs were generally about commercial affairs, such as trading agreements, customs and issues of sailors and the few companies that traded between the nations<sup>69</sup>. Finland had had its legation active in Madrid since 1918, save a couple

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<sup>63</sup> Payne 1999, 339.

<sup>64</sup> Sagrera 1967, 49-50.

<sup>65</sup> Mainer 1971, 46.

<sup>66</sup> Sagrera 1967, 53.

<sup>67</sup> Lentzen 1995, 145-150.

<sup>68</sup> Sagrera 1967, 74.

<sup>69</sup> Website of the Finnish embassy in Madrid: <http://www.finlandia.es/public/default.aspx?contentid=67205> (seen 18/04/2009)

of years in the early 1920's and the years of the Spanish Civil War<sup>70</sup>. PR activities to increase the Spaniards' consciousness about Finland was also an important goal for the Finns. Spain had had a consulate in Finland since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even before the independence, founded in 1888. The consulate was moved to Riga in 1898, when Spain reformulated its diplomatic presence in the Russian Empire<sup>71</sup>. It is probably because the distance between the nations that there weren't serious matters of controversy between the nations, while the most serious was probably the tariff dispute in early 1920's, caused mainly because Spain could not export wines to Finland due to the Prohibition law<sup>72</sup>. It is still not exaggeration to state that Spain was not considered a focal point of the foreign policy of Finland, or vice versa.

The internal politics of Finland influenced to the relations to Spain. When the Spanish Republic decided to substitute its chargé d'affaires in Finland, franquist José Gómez Acebo by a devout republican Isabel de Palencia, the latter was attacked fervently by the Finnish extreme right<sup>73</sup>. Aitor Yraola states that Palencia was excluded from the Finnish Independence Day celebrations of December 6 and considers this a pro-Franco action from behalf of the Finnish government<sup>74</sup>. In the other end, the ambassador of Finland had left Madrid to flee the Civil War and was installed to Lisbon<sup>75</sup>. The installments in Madrid were left to the responsibility of Francisco Cachero, the secretary of the embassy. Cachero gave asylum for nationalist republicans, which caused tension between Finland and the Spanish Republic, although Cachero acted independently<sup>76</sup>. Finland denied also visas for writers wishing to travel to the Second International Writers' Congress, a Republican anti-fascist literary meeting held in Valencia in 1937<sup>77</sup>. Finland did not recognise diplomatically the administration of Franco until March 31, 1939, when the Civil War was over<sup>78</sup>, but it established unofficial connections to the nationalists in November 1938<sup>79</sup>. Finland was among the latest to give an official recognition to the Franco administration, but it didn't help the

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<sup>70</sup> Paasivirta 1988, 110.

<sup>71</sup> Gallego Morell 1965, 171

<sup>72</sup> Website of the Finnish embassy in Madrid: <http://www.finlandia.es/public/default.aspx?contentid=67205> (seen 18/04/2009)

<sup>73</sup> Palencia was accredited also to Sweden. Juusela 2003, 68-70.

<sup>74</sup> Yraola 1994, 135.

<sup>75</sup> Website of the Finnish embassy in Madrid:

<http://www.finlandia.es/public/default.aspx?nodeid=36826&contentlan=1&culture=fi-FI> (seen 21/04/2009)

<sup>76</sup> Nationalist refugees had also clashed with republican security forces and thrown bombs from windows of the embassy building. See Juusela 2003, 63-65.

<sup>77</sup> Yraola 1994, 135.

<sup>78</sup> Website of the Finnish embassy in Madrid:

<http://www.finlandia.es/public/default.aspx?nodeid=36826&contentlan=1&culture=fi-FI> (seen 21/04/2009)

<sup>79</sup> Finland sent its representative to Burgos, capital of the nationalists. Franco sent José Gómez Acebo as the nationalist representative in Finland. Juusela 2003, 72.

Republican cause in the same way as, for example, Denmark, which gave asylum for Spanish republican exiles. Yraola suggests that the Finnish policy on Spain was characterised by an anticommunist attitude and secret sympathies towards Franco.<sup>80</sup>

During the Winter War, the Axis adopted officially a neutral approach to the Soviet Union because the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Spain did not, however, share this view and the country declared sympathy towards Finland. The Soviet attack decreased the prestige of Germany in Spain and the country made a small amount of arms available for the Finns<sup>81</sup>. Given the attitude of Finland towards the new regime of Spain and the latter's sympathies to the Finns' struggle against Soviet Union, the relations between the nations were good when Foxá arrived in Finland.

Foxá arrived in Finland in September 1941, succeeding Fernando Valdés, who was transferred to become the Spanish representative in Manchukuo<sup>82</sup>. The Continuation War had started on June 25, 1941 and Finland was fighting alongside Germany<sup>83</sup>. The possibility of Spain joining the war was a hot topic, as Hitler would eagerly had had it as an ally. The Axis had supported Franco in the Civil War, but Spain decided not to join the war. Instead, Spain sent a volunteer military unit, The Blue Division (División Azul), to fight alongside Germans in the Eastern Front near Leningrad. The strength of the division was initially 18 694 officers and men. The unit was trained by Germans and functioned under German command, although technically subordinate to Spanish authorities.<sup>84</sup> One of the reasons of the nonbelligerence of Spain was its bad preparation for war, because it was still recovering from the Civil War. However, there were certain sympathies towards the Axis and above all towards the fight against communism.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Yraola 1994, 135.

<sup>81</sup> Payne 1987, 256.

<sup>82</sup> Fernando Valdés to the vice consulates of Spain in Finland on 31/08/1941. Caja 12096, Leg . no 183, Embajada de España en Helsinki, AGA.

<sup>83</sup> See e.g. Lavery 2006, 124.

<sup>84</sup> See e.g. Payne 1987, 282.

<sup>85</sup> Payne 1987, 266.

### 2.3 Falange and literature

Fascist elements in Spanish society emerged relatively late in comparison with Italy, for example. First steps in creating organised fascism were taken in early 1930's. La Falange Española de las JONS (*Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista*) was founded in October 1933<sup>86</sup>. Its ideology based on national-syndicalism, which had been mostly elaborated since 1931 by Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, a young intellectual originally from Zámora, a quite remote city near the Portuguese border. Ledesma published a paper called *La Conquista del estado* (conquest of the state), named after the Italian fascist publication. National syndicalism advocated hierarchy, class co-operation and corporatist representation and opposed parliamentary democracy, which it depicted bourgeois. It was influenced by integralism, which meant that society is an organic entity. Ledesma's attempt was at first to create a non-marxist revolutionary force suitable for the needs of traditionalist rural communities.<sup>87</sup>

The real burst into practice was taken in 1933, when José Antonio Primo de Rivera lead the foundation of La Falange, which merged in 1934 with JONS<sup>88</sup>. Primo de Rivera accused liberal capitalists for exploiting the workers; liberal democracy, he said, meant that workers were free to die of hunger. On the other hand, socialism went astray because it was based on materialist interpretation of life and history and it included the proclamation of the dogma of class struggle<sup>89</sup>. In 1937 Franco wanted to make Falange the new ruling party, but wanted to reinforce its conservative tendencies. Hence it was decided to merge the Falange with Carlists, an old ultraconservative movement based on a dynastic dispute of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the new organization was called the *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS* (often referred to as FET)<sup>90</sup>. This merge, together with the influx of opportunistic new members to its files during the Civil War, caused its transformation from an anti-capitalistic fascist movement to more reactionary one, but not less violent direction<sup>91</sup>.

Literature became an important tool for falangists in order to promote their ideology. The Falange leader Primo de Rivera started to convene a literary circle at Ballena Alegre, a

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<sup>86</sup> Payne 1970, 38.

<sup>87</sup> Payne 1970, 13-14.

<sup>88</sup> Payne 1970, 47.

<sup>89</sup> Payne 1970, 38-39.

<sup>90</sup> Payne 1987, 171.

<sup>91</sup> Falange's program from 1934 for example declared that the party opposed the capitalist system, exploitation of weaker classes by the stronger ones and called for an improvement for the poor rural dwellers. See e.g. Kenwood 1993, 42-44.

literary café in Madrid. This circle, called sometimes “José Antonio’s literary court”, was frequented by Foxá, together with for example Dionisio Ridruejo, one of the most prominent Falange-orientated writers<sup>92</sup>. Primo de Rivera sought to develop an aesthetic approach to politics. His desire was to show the falangist ideology as a continuum of the philosophist tradition emerged from the happenings of 1898: Primo de Rivera sought to convince thinkers and writers of the Generation of 1898 and *regeneracionistas*, such as Miguel de Unamuno and José Ortega y Gasset to his cause. They were not convinced to support the falangist ideology, but young students were often responding fervently to Falange propaganda, filled with a vocabulary of mystical exaltation, sacrifice and violence, national mission and emotional revolution.<sup>93</sup> Rhetoric of the carlist novels of Ramón del Valle-Inclán and Nietzschean concept of a superrace or “select minority” served as inspiration for the nationalist literary movement<sup>94</sup>.

Literature was an essential tool for all participants of the Spanish Civil War, its precedings and aftermath. Poetry was an essential part of literary expression, especially among the Republicans. Poems about the war were often published in the press and famous poets, like Pablo Neruda, participated in contributing them. An advantage of poems was that it took less time to write them than novels or theatre. There were roughly 8 500 poems on war published on the Republican popular press. Theatre was an important tool for political purposes as well, though it was produced in a lesser quantity. Novels of Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell and paintings of Pablo Picasso were other examples of artistic works with political meanings.<sup>95</sup> One of the biggest cultural heroes of the republican side was poet Federico García Lorca, who was murdered by nationalists in 1936 and whose murder caused an international outrage<sup>96</sup>.

When the civil war erupted, literature was an essential tool for both sides. The republicans promoted the idea of the new Spain as socialist state without social classes, capitalism and chains of the tradition. Alun Kenwood writes that the artists transformed the Spanish Civil War into an allegory and a fight of ideas. The war became a battleground of Democracy versus Fascism, Catholicism versus Communism, Innovation versus Tradition etc.

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<sup>92</sup> Payne 1970, 49.

<sup>93</sup> Payne 1970, 49-51.

<sup>94</sup> Kenwood 1993, 30.

<sup>95</sup> Kenwood 1993, 27-29.

<sup>96</sup> Kenwood 1993, 32.



Sometimes, the war was presented also as a conflict between East and West, Light and Darkness and Life and Death, in a more universal meaning. Formidable artists such as Pablo Neruda, Joan Miró, Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell and Pablo Picasso commented the war in their works and supported the republican side.<sup>97</sup> The nationalist side counted with a lesser number of prominent artists and Foxá was among the first line of nationalist propaganda art with his novel *Madrid de corte a checa*<sup>98</sup>.

After the Civil War ended, the need for nationalist propaganda didn't vanish: The new objective was to convince Spaniards of the Nationalist cause.<sup>99</sup> Cerstin Bauer-Funke has studied Foxá's theatre play *Baile en Capitanía*, which she sees as "*poetization of the Francoist propaganda*". In the play eternal values, like the absolute sovereign, old laws, Catholic religion, classical literature and traditional lifestyle are those that virtuous people defend and even give their lives for them. Foxá draws an ideal of a courageous, noble and just hero, which in the play is incarnated in the personage of Don Luis, a Carlist officer who fights against the liberals<sup>100</sup>. Feminine version of this heroism is the fiancée of Don Luis, who, when Don Luis dies in a battle, dedicates the rest of her life to the mourning<sup>101</sup>. The mourning means that after his lover had sacrificed his life for the righteous cause, the woman does the same. In *Baile en Capitanía* the antithesis to the heroism of traditionalist Carlist personages are the progressivists, who have a materialistic view of the world and are depicted in generally bad light: a personage called Elvira represents liberally oriented person and is depicted as "*ugly and eager to sell her heart for luxury, for beautiful dresses and posh life*" and her lover – superstitious and doubtful, for not being a Carlist<sup>102</sup>. Francisco Franco had unified forcedly La Falange with Carlist movement in 1937, which didn't please all falangists, because Carlists were very conservative. Bauer-Funke suggests, that Foxá's decision of depicting 19<sup>th</sup> century and Carlists aims to legitimate this merging<sup>103</sup>.

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<sup>97</sup> Kenwood 1993, 29-30.

<sup>98</sup> Kenwood 1993, 29.

<sup>99</sup> Mechthild 1998, 7.

<sup>100</sup> Bauer-Funke 1998, 158-159.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Bauer-Funke 1998, 153. The lover is told to be "*amigo de las logías*", friend of the lodges, referring to the Masonic Lodge, which was detested by Franco and the Falange.

<sup>103</sup> Bauer-Funke 1998, 156.

## 2.4 North and south as dimensions of thought

What does the North represent for the southern people? According to Peter Stadius, southern perspectives on the North have a long and profound historical roots. Stereotypes regarding the other are created by historical facts, rhetoric, legends and misunderstandings, forming a hazy mental landscape. These stereotypes can be understood as literary topos, where the fact and the fiction are mixed, but which influence the people's thinking and become thus reality. Some discourses of the other can be defined empirically: a spatial dimension, i.e. what geographical and ethno-cultural facts are the origins for the image, or a temporal dimension, i.e. how an image of certain places can change from time to time. Stadius gives an example of temporal dimension the image of Russia, which varied hugely from the times of Peter The Great, when Russia was regarded as an ordinary European empire, to the times of the Soviet Union, when the west regarded it as Evil Empire, drawing thus links to the barbaric Asiatic tribes, like the Huns.<sup>104</sup>

The image of the North in the South have their roots in ancient times, when Tacitus' work *Germania* and ancient Greek texts described the Germanic tribes, drawing an image of unspoiled Barbarians, who loved the freedom, practiced monogamy and had honest nature. However, Tacitus also describes the Germanic tribes as a potential enemy and underlines their raw manners, brutality and what he saw a less civilised culture. These depictions influenced the southern views of the north for a long time.<sup>105</sup>

Protestantism became an important factor in Southern views on the north, especially during the religious wars of 17th century. Swedish armies of Gustav II Adolf, who fought the catholics, were described as somewhat semi-barbarian peripherian Europeans and were thought to be descendants of Goths, and were however respected as warriors<sup>106</sup>.

Mental conceptions of different geographical areas (whether exactly or loosely defined) have been influenced by climate theories, which have been popular. First of the notable climate theories was the one of Aristotle. In Aristotle's climate theory, the North was associated with the element of water (others were fire, earth and air), to the humour of phlegmatic (others

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<sup>104</sup> Stadius 2001, 5.

<sup>105</sup> Stadius 2001, 8-10. Tacitus described also the Fenns, on whom researchers have debated whether they were Finns or possibly Sami people. See e.g. De Anna 1997, 217.

<sup>106</sup> Stadius 2001, 11-14.

were choleric, sanguine and melancholic) and to the quality of moist (the hot, the cold, the dry). This supposedly explained what was thought to be the character of the Northerners: phlegmatic, rigid and cold. The Aristotelian climate theory persisted for centuries in the Classical world.<sup>107</sup>

In The Enlightenment period, the climate theory of Montesquieu had a great importance. In *Esprit des Lois* (1748) Montesquieu draws a causality between the climatological factors and characteristics of the society, including the customs, laws and national spirit. Montesquieu saw the North as home of cool, laborious and independent people; meanwhile the South was home to corrupt, immoral people who commit more crimes: *“Of the more vivid passions multiply the crimes: everyone is searching to take those advantages that please them, even at the expense of others”*<sup>108</sup>

The centre of what was considered the European core region, was shifted northwards from the Mediterranean area to the present France, the Low Countries, the German areas and the British isles. Many of these regions were also protestant. The qualities added to the North in the Ancient times and during the Renaissance, gave way to an image of sober, laborious and independent people. Sometimes the South itself was target to images showing it in the semi-peripheric way. This swift is presented in Thomas Jefferson’s letter to the Marquis of Chastellux in 1785, where he lists the differences between the people in the North and in the South, giving thus one example of outline of these characteristics.

**Differences between the North and the South according to Thomas Jefferson (1785)<sup>109</sup>**

In the North they are:	In the South they are:
- cool	- fiery
- sober	- voluptuary
- laborious	- indolent
- independent	- unsteady
- jealous of their own liberties, and just to those of others	- zealous for their own liberties, but trampling on those of others
- interested	- generous
- chicaning	- candid
- superstitious and hypocritical in their religion	- without attachment or pretensions to any religion but that of the heart

<sup>107</sup> Stadius 2001, 10-11.

<sup>108</sup> Stadius 2001, 16-18.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

In Romantic period, the North was seen as pure and free. Peripheral areas were seen in a positive light, inspired by Rousseau's anti-civilisation theories, which presented the remote and non-civilised as the synonym of freedom. Romantic views are seen in Giuseppe Acerbi's travelogues to Sweden and Finland in the turn of 19th century. For Acerbi, the Finnish people were prototypes of "noble savage", who lived a simple life in modest circumstances but had a high morale and were reliable. However, he was disappointed at the Sami people, describing them as untidy and interested in alcohol. This coincidence underlines the importance of pre-fabricated images or *denkschablonen*: in this case one of the unspoiled North. The North has to be like it was imagined, otherwise the result is disappointing.<sup>110</sup>

From the Spanish perspective, the end of 19th century saw the rise of Catalanian modernism, which admired the North and considered it as a modern alternative for Southern, catholic conservatism. This admiration centered much around the art, with admiration of such artists as Ibsen and Wagner, all "northern" from the Spanish viewpoint<sup>111</sup>. Some of the Spanish travellers to the North, especially those during the turn of 20th century, saw the North as a progressive role model for Spain. However, not all regarded the North in that way: for some, the Catholic culture was still more respectable than the Protestant one and the North a periphery far away from the cradle of civilisation, the Mediterranean.<sup>112</sup>

As new tendencies come and go alongside their respective periods, the old patterns continue their life as sub-currents of thinking. These patterns can be refused consciously but still be potential sources for intuitive reactions of people. Creating of stereotypes has neither become less frequent these days: while the old patterns are forgotten, new ones are invented: one could mention the DNA tests as an example<sup>113</sup>. Some of the patterns are also long-lasting, such as catholicism/protestantism parity, which has although lost some of its importance lastly but not yet in 1940's.

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Stadius 2005, 82-85.

<sup>112</sup> Stadius has formed three categories of Spanish images of the North: the traditionalist, the progressive and the Pan-Latinist image. The first one saw the North as peripheric and underdeveloped region. See Stadius 2005, 188-189.

<sup>113</sup> Stadius 2001, 26.

### 3. Finland as poetical north

#### 3.1 Finland – ”an enormous Vinuesa”

Coldness is an essential part of most of travelogues from northern countries<sup>114</sup>. Agustín de Foxá’s writings are not an exception. The first article of *Un mundo sin melodía – notas de un viajero sentimental* is called *Motivos sobre el frío* (Reflections about the cold). In this article, published in ABC in January 1942, Foxá writes about the Finnish winter, describing the obscurity and the coldness, as well as narrating about the life of the city dwellers of Helsinki during wintertime. He writes about the low temperatures of the Finnish winter, stating that in temperature of -20 C the coldness turns to pain. Foxá seems to use a very poetic style of language, underlining the exotic forms of the Finnish nature: the frozen sea, the trees like porcelain, the crystal shine of the snow and the aurora borealis.<sup>115</sup> The poetic style is an interesting detail in this kind of articles. In the article about Christmas, same kind of approach is recognisable. The north, especially Lapland, is shown in a mystical light – Foxá writes that in Finnish Christmas, the mystique of the North plays the same role here as saints and dramatic traditions in the Catholic South. The mystique of the North is represented by natural characteristics; Foxá mentions the reindeers and the aurora borealis. The mystique of the north is why the Finnish Santa Claus is said to come from the North (Lapland), whereas Italian *La Befana*, as an example of a Catholic tradition, gets its mystique from its pagan fascination of an old witch, conclude Foxá.<sup>116</sup>

While thinking about the southerners’ views on the North, the climate and the nature plays an essential role. According to Peter Stadius, conceptions of natural circumstances shape the mental landscape. In Romantic times, the Northern romantic landscape was expected to be mountaineous, wild and untouched by Man – landscapes which are found e.g. in Norway. The mental landscape becomes a literary *topos*, place where fact and fiction may mix and which uses the natural conceptions as its ingredients. The result is, according to Stadius, *a northernising discourse of the North* in a same sense that Edward Said had suggested the

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<sup>114</sup> Stadius 2005, 153.

<sup>115</sup> Foxá 1971b, 236-237.

<sup>116</sup> In the article, Foxá compares Italian, Romanian and Finnish christmas traditions. Foxá 1971b, 230.

*orientalisation* of the Orient.<sup>117</sup> The time of Foxá wasn't at the Romantic times, but the ingredients of his presentation of Finnish nature shares some of the characteristics of the romantic Northern landscape. The presentation is, however, very much in line with the image that Finnish tourist agencies have been willing to transmit of the country.

However, not all of Foxá's narratives present the Finnish nature as a mystical fairy-tale land. A good deal of the text is practical, descriptive narration of the natural circumstances of the country. For example, in the article *Motivos sobre el frío* Foxá describes the wintery Helsinki and the frozen sea. He writes about the possibility to travel on ice: in some winters it had been possible to walk to the coast of Estonia on ice. He writes about children playing on sunny winter days and the Helsinki tramways which reminded him of a train to Cercedilla, a town in the Guadarrama Mountains near Madrid. Foxá writes that the Finns drink alcohol to survive the cold. However, Foxá adds a Lappish poem in the end of the article, which suggest that coldness is a whelp of a snake, meaning that it's a nasty phenomenon<sup>118</sup>:

*"A snake gave its milk to the cold,  
an adder was its wet-nurse."*

Foxá states that the weather of Finland is strange, with its endless obscurity of the winter, when sea is like stone, the explosion of vegetation at Spring and the Midnight Sun, to mention some. The summer is for him the best weather and he writes to his brother Jaime that the Finnish Summer is the most beautiful in Europe. He states that the geography of Finland is much more polymorphic than that of the South<sup>119</sup>. Apparently the Finnish landscape has some of the features of the mystical Northern landscape, typical in the northernising presentations of the North. However, he sees likenesses to Spain as well: in his first letter from Finland to his parents, he describes Finland as "*an enormous Vinuesa*", which refers to his family's *veraneo* (summer holiday) place in the province of Soria, a mountaineous and woody area, that shares some similarities to the Finnish nature. He seems amazed of the local nature as full of pine trees, ferns, other vegetation and wildlife.<sup>120</sup> While travelling in

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<sup>117</sup> Edward Said studied the Western images of the Orient during the 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and traced an exoticising discourse of representing the Orient as an other. See Stadius 2001, 6-7.

<sup>118</sup> "*Una serpiente dio su leche al frío, una vibora fue su nodriza.*" Foxá 1971b, 237-238.

<sup>119</sup> Foxá 1971c, 247.

<sup>120</sup> The Spanish had a tradition of *veraneo*, i.e. to go for summer vacations out of cities. Foxá 1971c, 218.

Ostrobothnia, Foxá compares the flat landscape of the region to those of Spain, where the *meseta* plateau share the same characteristics:

*“Ostrobothnia has a less Nordic appearance, more like the land of Spain. The immense Finnish forests are not any more at both sides of the track. There are less lakes and the landscape opens, smiles and brightens up in the remote blue horizons”*.<sup>121</sup>

The nature sets hard circumstances for living, especially in countryside. Foxá visits a farm in Lapland and depicts it in article *La granja del viejo Nurmela* (The farm of old Nurmela), published in ABC on December 31, 1942. Nurmela is a farmer, who has some reindeers and who fishes in the “wide and wild” Kemijoki River. On the wall of his house, a sign says: *“Life is a battle from cradle to grave”*<sup>122</sup>.

Foxá writes that Finnish architecture is mostly dominated by wood as material. Most of the cities are comprised by wooden houses. Viipuri is one of few cities of stone, and Foxá admires the continental style of architecture of the Carelian town, its old buildings of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and its French-style park of Monrepos. Foxá visited the city just after it was reconquered by Finnish troops and laments the condition of the city, with its smokey ruins. Although Foxá saw the city as destroyed by Soviet decadence, his image of earlier, Finnish Viipuri, was certainly that of a true European city.<sup>123</sup> Viipuri is actually almost the only town of which architecture Foxá notes in that light. In Hämeenlinna, Foxá writes only about Hotel Aulanko, surrounded by lakes and forests. His view of Oulu seems also very positive neoclassical, tidy wooden houses painted in white. Whileas Viipuri represents Central European style, Oulu is more northern in its style: beautiful blonde girls walk barefeet on the seaside and chat with sailors and the atmosphere is happy and laid-back<sup>124</sup>. In the easternmost corner, there were the villas constructed by the Russian aristocracy prior to the 1917 revolution, including the house of famous painter Ilya Repin in Terijoki<sup>125</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> *“La Ostrobothnia tiene una fisonomía menos nórdica, más de tierra de España. Los inmensos bosques finlandeses ya no nos acompañan a ambos lados de la vía. Hay menos lagos y el paisaje se abre, sonríe, se alegra en lejanos horizontes azules.”* Foxá 1971b, 276.

<sup>122</sup> *“Flama on Taistelna Kehdosta Hantaan asti – La vida es una lucha que comienza en tu cuna y terminará en tu sepulcro”* Foxá 1971b, 267.

<sup>123</sup> Foxá 1971b, 269-271.

<sup>124</sup> Foxá 1971b, 276.

<sup>125</sup> Foxá 1971b, 261-262.

End of the winter was a joyous happening and was celebrated with Walpurgis Night and First of May celebrations, witnessed by Foxá in article *El Domingo de los dioses* (The Sunday of the Gods)<sup>126</sup>. In the article, Foxá tells that because of its northern situation and isolated forest dwelling, Finland resisted paganic for a much longer than Mediterranean countries and the Walpurgis Night was one of the Pre-Christian traditions still living strongly. In Foxá's accounts, First of May was a festivity of students and former students and he supposes that "those who hadn't studied" were sad: "*Because this is also a party with moral for the lazy and the ignorants.*"<sup>127</sup> The streets were full of people conversing lively with each other, in a Latin mood, as Foxá puts it. It was, thus difficult to realise that this was the same city that had been frozen and dark during the wintertime.<sup>128</sup> The spring was like a reward for Nordic people.

Long duration of the Winter is a focal point in formulating differences between the North and the South. In his play *Norte y Sur*, Foxá puts one of the protagonists to pronounce the poem cited on previous page and the scene continues by the line "*Nine months we walk on the snow like candyfloss, like those in Heaven*" by Karin, one of the protagonists of the play. The play takes place in Finland and includes four characters: Sonnia, her aunt Karin, Andres and Mario, who has moved from Italy to Finland. While discussing about differences of North and South, Sonnia explains: "*I was happy about our kingdom, our Midnight Sun, our aurora borealis, our immense forests bordered by lakes, our rivers to the Artic Ocean, in which jump the salmons of the rose colour.*" But Mario has convinced Sonnia that actually the South is more attractive: he has talked her about the vineyards of Naples, the emerald green sea of Capri, the Colosseum etc. Sonnia says that he made her to understand that the Northern Spring was poor, the Sea without colour and the roses without perfume and she thereby started to admire the South.<sup>129</sup> Differences mentioned in this dialogue are partly related to the climate, but include also cultural factors, as for instance when Sonnia mentions the beauty of the songs of Mario.

It could be observed that differences between four seasons are more remarkable in Finland than in Spain. This can be also seen in Foxá's texts. Interfaces to the observations of other Southern European travellers can be seen. Almost all of Italian and Spanish travellers

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<sup>126</sup> Published in ABC on June 21, 1942.

<sup>127</sup> "*Porque ésta es también una fiesta con moraleja para los perezosos y los ignorantes*", Foxá 1971b, 274.

<sup>128</sup> Foxá 1971b, 273-274.

<sup>129</sup> Foxá 1971a, 569-572.



examined have paid attention to the coldness of the Finnish climate. In a sense, the coldness makes the Northern Europe exotic, something beyond the conceptions of the Southerners. Whether the coldness is regarded positively in the spirit of Montesquieu's Climate Theory, or not, is an ambivalent matter. On the other hand, Foxá underlines the ability of Finns to survive in the cold climate, but on the other, there is a feature of the noble savage in the way the cold is so omnipresent and –potent and in the way the coldness is fought: alcohol and furs<sup>130</sup>. Generally, views on the Finnish climate presented by Foxá follow more or less the same general outlines that those of the Spanish and South European travellers usually<sup>131</sup>. There is nothing negative regarding the coldness, but somehow the Finnish nature is presented in a way that could be compared to descriptions of extreme natural conditions elsewhere, e.g. in Sahara. It might be supposed, that the Finns have been seen in a similar light than the bedouins of Sahara, as an exotic and romantically heroic people living in extreme circumstances. As we will see in chapter 4.2., Finnish people were living quite much like other Europeans, after all, but the nature made a significant difference, contributing to a mysticising image of the northern country.

According to the climate theories which had predominance in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the cold climate was regarded as beneficial for the development of the society. Cold climate was associated with social progress, high productivity, democracy and overall wealthiness. Peter Stadius has found out that Spanish travellers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century regarded the cold climate and hardships it caused as beneficial, as they created robust men who could endure hard work and difficult conditions. It was believed that the natural hardships had made the Nordic countries so wealthy that they were.<sup>132</sup> Foxá's writings follow the same tradition. Especially he interlinks the Finnish ability to survive in the cold and their well organised warfare. For Foxá, one could state, success in battlefields meant the same than progressive social structures had meant for earlier travellers.

Peculiar natural circumstances have always been a fruitful soil for the creation of national identity, as well as advertisements for touristic or PR purposes. For Spain, for instance, one of these national natural landscapes is (beyond the Mediterranean coasts) the *meseta* with its

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<sup>130</sup> Foxá 1971b, 236-238.

<sup>131</sup> Views of Spanish travellers in the turn of the 20th century, see Stadius 2005, 151-154.

<sup>132</sup> Stadius 2005, 151-154.

donquijotesque windmills and vast open spaces<sup>133</sup>. By creating an image of mysticised northern nature, Foxá creates an image of finnishness, which has analogues to the true Castilian Spanishness in the way that he reminds that people are inherently connected to their natural environments. The nature is the first, yet not the only, phase in the creation of Finland as a mysticised, northern heroic nation.

### 3.2 Good soldiers and down-to-earth people

The war is a constant background for Foxá's observations. It acts as a frame to the Finnish course of life during Foxá's stay, 1941-1943. Thereby one of the most essential qualities of the Finns is the courage and good spirit as soldiers and citizens. The men fight in the frontline and the women work bravely in the domestic front as well as in the *Lotta Svärd* organisation in the front. In article *Motivos sobre el frío* (Motives about the cold) Agustín de Foxá writes about life in wintertime Helsinki, admiring the ability of Finns to live normal life amidst of the war:

*"But the people doesn't get scared. The streets are full and children play and skate in Brunnsparcken and Kajsaniemi"*<sup>134</sup>.

The city was crowded by playing children, fur-wearing women and front-line soldiers. Countrywomen in their enormous winter coats and fur hats, have come to sell christmas decorations made of pine branches, paper and painted cones and people are getting around by sleighs even in the city. Foxá writes that coldness brings countryside to the city: squirrels, weasels, pine martens and astrakhans can be seen between the tramways in form of furs.<sup>135</sup> The tone of the article, published in ABC in January 1942, reminds by this part articles of tourist magazines, representing thus travelogue genre, although a report from a wartime country naturally doesn't attract tourists to the zone. In a sense, however, Foxá tells how attracting Finland could be in pacific circumstances. The article is written in December.

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<sup>133</sup> Especially the falangists cultivated a myth about "True Spain" that has its heartlands among rural dwellers of Castile. Also the early national-syndicalist activists came from Castile, like Ramiro Ledesma Ramos from Zámora and Onésimo Redondo from Valladolid. See Payne 1970, 11-12, 16.

<sup>134</sup> "*Pero la gente no se atemoriza. Las calles están llenas y los niños juegan y patinan en Brunnsparcken y en Kajsaniemi.*" Foxá 1971b, 237.

<sup>135</sup> Foxá 1971b, 235-238.

Despite the temperatures of -20 degrees, people live normally and “are not scared”. City is also remarked by the war invalides; but Foxá writes that they are “*happy lads who raise their glasses of coloured licors, mesimarja and suomarain made of forest berries, without worrying their lost legs and arms [...]*”<sup>136</sup>.

Foxá writes that the Finnish people is among of the cleanest peoples in the world. In article *Los Korsus*, published in May 1942 in ABC, Foxá writes about Finnish sauna and its use in the front-line. He tried himself the sauna with a Finnish officer, bathing in 70 degrees and after that going to cartwheel in the snow. He then describes principles of the sauna: he concludes that it is probably a remaining of a pagan purification rite and a kind of confession to the body. In the sauna people are naked, even those of different sexes. Foxá writes that nakedness is a natural state for the Finns: “*it can be seen in their statues, in their customs and paintings*”, “*but it is a nakedness without sin*”, he adds. Sauna is sacred for the Finns – because as Foxá cites a Finnish author – “*it is the only delight of the poor*”. It means that it is a simple pleasure which didn’t require wealth to enjoy. For Foxá, this symbol of Finnishness represents something pure, original and elemental. He writes that the elements of the sauna – the fire, the stones, the water and the plant (bath whisk) were the very original elements of the Earth.<sup>137</sup>

In the Karelian front, Foxá listened to an orchestra of soldiers at a dugout. Orchestra played accordion and kantele and Foxá describes played songs, like *Vartiossa* and *Only under the stars* as melancholic<sup>138</sup>. When visiting a Russian villa in Karelian isthmus, Foxá was again witnessing musical performances of Finnish soldiers. He attended to a supper organised in the villa. Accompanied by vodka, Finnish songs *Ice of Lake Eldanka* and *Wind passing by spruces* were played. Again, Foxá writes that the music was melancholic by its mood. The presence of Foxá was paid attention and one of Finnish officers sung a song of Finnish sailors, memorizing the ports of Spain<sup>139</sup>. Life at Finnish front line was freshened up with cultural activities, giving it a more human outlook.

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<sup>136</sup> “*Hay también muchos mutilados; muchachos alegres que levantan sus copas, con sus coloreados licores, el mesimarja y suomarain de frutas silvestres, sin acordarse de sus piernas y brazos perdidos en las nieves de Carelia*”. Foxá 1971b, 237.

<sup>137</sup> Foxá 1971b, 253-254.

<sup>138</sup> “*Unos soldados...nos cantan melancólicas canciones de Carelia...un sargento ha cantado la triste “vartiosa”, la hermosa canción de centinela, Solo bajo las estrellas.*”. Obras Completas, vol. II, 256.

<sup>139</sup> Foxá 1971b, 263.

Finnish culture is also more modest than the Spanish or Mediterranean ones. In his article *Navidades* (Christmas), published in ABC on December 23, 1941, Foxá writes about Christmas celebrations in Helsinki, including the big Christmas tree in front of the Lutheran cathedral. He suggests that the tree replaces the images of Roman Catholic church, “*because the lands of the north don’t like much the images, they have no paintings or statues in their churches and the liturgy of their masses lack the drama [of the Catholic religion, AK] [...]*”<sup>140</sup>. The Roman Catholic religion has conserved more decorative outlook of its processions than the protestant one, although Lutheranism is not considered as extreme in puritanism than some other protestant churches. Presence of the tree, however, adds some peculiar Nordic appearance to the Lutheran traditions.

In conclusion, Finnish people were down-to-earth and ready to live in extreme circumstances. Even the dwellers of bourgeois cities were not so foppish than the inhabitants of the cities of some other countries might have been. Simplicity and robust image of northerners was not a new idea, as it had dated back to the times of Tacitus, as well as other earlier conceptions. Especially in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the warlikeness of the northerners was underlined the South, seeing northerners as descendants of Goths – a view wasn’t a coincidence with the Protestant – Catholic wars. Finns were also shown as robust in Foxá’s depictions. Foxá didn’t show Finns as uncivilised, but it certainly served as stylistic reinforcer to underline the qualities of Finns. It must be understood, however, that although the image of Goths was originally denigrating and propagandistic, the robustness in later accounts have had a different meaning. From Enlightenment period onwards, the nordicness represented mostly positive values, as in the case of the Catalan modernism.

### **3.3 Food and drink**

Food and drinking culture is another aspect of the Finnishness, an essential part of a proclaimed national self image. Foxá’s texts about Finnish food are numerous, but quite superficial. Foxá attended to many suppers with diplomats and Finnish officials, which he describes briefly, but concentrates on other issues than what was actually eaten. Foxá contents

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<sup>140</sup> “*Porque los países del Norte, que no aman mucho las imágenes, que no tienen cuadros, ni estatuas en sus iglesias, y cuya liturgia carece del drama de la misa [...]*” Foxá 1971b, 230.

himself to describing the Finnish dishes and specialities – opinions on whether the Finnish food is good or bad, can not be found. In the front, Foxá dines with a colonel, together with other diplomats and foreign personnel.

Foxá describes the menu: “*Fishes of Ladoga; a portion of meat with lingonberry jam, a marmelade made of a sour berry, same colour than redcurrant, and typical wheat porridge, milk and sugar. In the fourth part, we are served soup. Everything is accompanied by strong vodka and big glasses of cold milk, which some officers mix up with the alcohol.*”<sup>141</sup>

It is difficult to compare Foxá’s observations to those of other Spanish travellers in Nordic countries. Some of the travellers studied by Stadius had a clearly negative attitude towards nordic gastronomy. Spanish specialities like *salchichón* or *chorizo* sausages were considered more tasty than nordic sausages. In the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Spanish travellers had observed that northerners tend to prefer quantity over quality in the food and in alcohol as well. Ángel Ganivet had even presented a theory that people in colder climates need stronger alcohol than those in warm ones. These kinds of observations have a tendency of reproducing usual stereotypes of the northerners.<sup>142</sup> Foxá, however, doesn’t compare Finnish food to that of Spain. He doesn’t miss Spanish specialities in Finland. It is obvious that the exceptionality of the time influenced in Foxá’s narrations. In a belligerent nation the epicurious snobbery wasn’t a principal issue.

Alcoholic culture of Finns is a topic Foxá doesn’t deal with directly by describing it in wondering way or comparing it to the Spanish habits. There is no chapter called Finnish alcoholic culture, but instead, alcohol is present in quite many of his articles. Foxá describes for instance, how officers who are on vacations gather in the bar *Adlon* in Hotel Kämp to socialize. The officers socialize with blonde women and drink toasts of snaps, “*rude alcohol to fight the cold*”, as Foxá writes, and also typical Finnish liqueurs. In the bar, an officer, veteran of Spanish Civil War, raises a toast for honour of Francisco Franco<sup>143</sup>.

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<sup>141</sup> “*Peces del Ladoga; una carne con su poulukka, la mermelada de agria fruta silvestre, color grosella, y el típico puuro de trigo, leche y azúcar. En cuarto lugar nos sirven la sopa. Y todo regado con un fuerte vodka y unos grandes vasos de leche fría, que algunos oficiales mezclan con el límpido alcohol.*” Foxá 1971b, 256.

<sup>142</sup> Stadius 2005, 163-164.

<sup>143</sup> Foxá 1971b, 237.

In many occasions, toasts are raised in suppers Foxá attends. Vodka is always the drink – in a supper in the front of the Karelian isthmus, after Finnish troops have parried a Soviet offensive, a Finnish officer comes to the foreign guests in the morning and solemnizes the Easter by a toast of vodka<sup>144</sup>. In an article written from the front, Foxá narrates that he spent a night in a dugout, where a Finnish captain kept watch of the stove, drinking snaps from a bottle, singing Karelian songs and imitating deridingly the political commissars of the Soviet Army and their attempt to agitate the mariners and soldiers.<sup>145</sup>

In a trip to Rovaniemi, Lapland, Foxá observes local men walking drunken and zigzagging in the streets<sup>146</sup>. Spanish alcoholic culture is more based on wines and there have been speculations whether southerners regard the Finnish alcoholic culture as less desirable. Although Foxá mentions the use of snaps and liqueurs, he doesn't evaluate or moralize Finnish alcoholic culture. On the contrary, Foxá associates toast-drinking soldiers to the conservation of good spirit and courage.

Earlier Spanish travellers had noticed the consumption of alcohol in Finland. For instance, Ángel Ganivet had written that Finns showed a great enthusiasm towards alcohol and if the government of the country really had liked to make the people happy, it should have had deregulated the sale of alcohol. Ganivet regarded alcohol as some kind of lubricant that kept the wheels of the Finnish society rolling – that the common people were happy to commit themselves to toiling in exchange to get drunken on their freetime.<sup>147</sup> As Foxá's mentions of alcoholic culture were just simple descriptions, without more profound reflections of its social role, his texts doesn't give so dark, even nihilist picture of the phenomenon. His mention about the role of alcohol as inspiration in the war might, however, be understood as a slight sign of a similar thinking. It is believable that Foxá didn't pity Finns for their alcoholic culture as Ganivet possibly had done.

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<sup>144</sup> Foxá 1971b, 263.

<sup>145</sup> Foxá 1971b, 256.

<sup>146</sup> Foxá 1971b, 288.

<sup>147</sup> Ganivet 1964, 182-183.

### 3.4 Kalevala – the mystical epic of the poetical North

Foxá wrote an article about Finnish national epic Kalevala, which was published on March 8, 1942 in ABC. In the article, titled *El “Kalevala”, gran epopeya del norte* (Kalevala, the great epic of the north), he describes stories of *Kalevala* and meanings of its poems. He writes that the epic reflects echoes of pagan culture and mysticity:

*“the small pagan verses sound like drops of resin, forestal chants with names of cows, digne as princesses [...] and in this mist of lake, a world of playful forestal divinities, demons of stone, goddesses of naked divinities of air and seas...”*<sup>148</sup>

Foxá describes *Kalevala* quite profoundly in the article, telling about its stories – about Väinämöinen, Joukahainen and other characters of the epic. He writes about the poem about Aino, who is chased by Väinämöinen, the leader of the community, who wants to have her as his wife. Foxá uses his poetic skills by adding his own interpretations in the way he describes the poem, in which Aino drowns herself in the water:

*“Embracing the rock (oh, the stone against her smooth breast!), she drowns herself to the sea”*<sup>149</sup>

The importance of Kalevala is significant for Foxá. He was caught into the world of Kalevala and its nature-inspired mystical poems. He writes admiringly about the character of Väinämöinen, who knows *“the most difficult magic formulas, powerful and strange words, hidden in the language of a white reindeer, in the mouth of a squirrel, in the flight of a swan”*.<sup>150</sup>

He also writes about the gatherer of the epic, Elias Lönnrot, and the importance Kalevala had in the history of Finland: Soon after its publication (1835), writes Foxá, *“would follow the political unity, the independence and the heroic war of 1940. Because, once again, verses of the poets excite and guide the swords.”* reflecting the fact that Kalevala launched the Finnish

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<sup>148</sup> Foxá 1971b, 243.

<sup>149</sup> “[...] *Luego, abrazada a la piedra (¡oh, la roca contra su dulce seno!), se hunde en el mar...*” Foxá 1971b, 244.

<sup>150</sup> “[...] *aquel que conoce las fórmulas mágicas más difíciles, las palabras extrañas y poderosas, ocultas en la “lengua del reno blanco, en “la boca de la ardilla”, en el vuelo del cisne.*” Foxá 1971b, 243.

national awakening and cultural nationalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, preluding political independence movement.<sup>151</sup>

Foxá seems to be impressed by Kalevala to the point that it influenced his own writings beside the descriptive article in ABC. He uses rhymes of Kalevala in play *Norte y Sur*: the characters are reciting poems of Kalevala in the beginning of the play. Natural elements, depicted in a similar way than in Kalevala, play an important role in the creation of a mythical northernness, telling about mysterious Finland of misty crystal lakes etc. It seems that Kalevala inspired him so much that he even imitated it in some of his poems. One could say that it's not unusual, as many writers abroad have been inspired by it. Kalevala is an essential part of the creation a poetized image of Finland by Foxá; one of the most important parts together with nature and sauna.

Myths had an important role in the propaganda of fascist and fascist-leaning ideologies. Ulrich Prill has examined the myths and mythography of the Spanish falangist literature. He cites Ernesto Giménez Caballero, one of the most important theoreticians of the Falange, writing about the need of an almost mythical impetus of propaganda, which should be transmitted by the art. This art, having religious characteristics, had to have a core of transcendental character. Prill writes also that Walter Benjamin's formula that fascism sought to the esthetisation of politics, was served by the use of myths.<sup>152</sup>

The Nazis for instance used old Germanic symbols in order to find their aesthetic approach. One of the most important myths is based on femininity and is represented by Aino in *Kalevala*. Ulrich Prill writes that Giménez Caballero, among other fascist writes, saw the people of masses as like women; They have to be lead and offered passions, wars, booty and ecstasy<sup>153</sup>. It seems that for Foxá the reason to depict *Kalevala* was more the will to present a curious northern epic instead of looking to build ambitious propaganda, but the myths can be used in that way as well and at least it serves in the creation of the mythical image of Finland.

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<sup>151</sup> Foxá 1971b, 242-244.

<sup>152</sup> Prill 1998, 167-168.

<sup>153</sup> Prill 1998, 175.



## 4. Finnish society

### 4.1 “Feminist country”

*“Few countries are more feminist than Finland. Here you find women as conductors of tramways, dentists, doctors, mail carriers, women as masons stained by chalk and bricks, in their pale blue overalls with a zipper.”*<sup>154</sup>

Foxá wrote in article *Viaje al frente del Ladoga* (Trip to the front of Ladoga), published in ABC on May 22, 1942, that women accomplished important tasks in the society, even those which were usually understood as men’s professions. The war had mobilised the women as well – while the men were at military, the women had to take on civilian tasks. This notice is interesting, because the notion of women promoted by Falange was that of a housewife, not of a worker.

Hard work has not, however, made the women to lose their femininity:

*“Exactly at the barber where I get my beard shaved, a mason woman comes in. But calm down: The hard work of stones and chalk has not made her to lose her femininity. She has come to curl her beautiful blonde hair; that way, while working with a chimney or a cornice, she can fall in love with some of her fellow workers.”*<sup>155</sup>

Women are also present at the front, where *Lotta Svärd* volunteers accomplished supportive tasks<sup>156</sup>. In Taipale, Foxá enjoyed a supper with a Finnish colonel, served by the colonel’s daughter, who was a *lotta*. This inspires Foxá to write that the Finns go to war with their

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<sup>154</sup> *“Pocos países más feministas que Finlandia; aquí hay mujeres conductoras del tranvía, dentistas, doctores, carteros y mujeres albañiles, manchadas de cal y ladrillo, con su mono azul pálido con cremallera.”* Foxá 1971b, 249.

<sup>155</sup> *“Precisamente en la peluquería donde me afeito acaba de entrar una mujer albañil. Pero uno se tranquiliza; el duro oficio de la piedra y la cal no le ha hecho perder su feminidad. Porque ha entrado a rizarse su bello pelo rubio; así, mientras termine una chimenea o una cornisa, podrá enamorar a sus compañeros de andamio.”* Foxá 1971b, 249.

<sup>156</sup> *Lotta Svärd* was a voluntary auxiliary paramilitary organisation founded officially in 1921 and dissolved in 1944. The organisation supported the Civil Guard (suojeluskunta) during the interwar period and played an important role during the Second World War. The organisation was named after a fictional character in a poem of Johan Ludwig Runeberg. Website of Syväranta Lotta Museum: [http://www.lottamuseo.com/eng/eng\\_historiaa.htm](http://www.lottamuseo.com/eng/eng_historiaa.htm) (seen 22/01/2010)

family. Although the *lottas* carried out some military duties such as anti-aircraft observing, their main focus was in service tasks.<sup>157</sup>

Presence of the *lottas* make it possible, that “every Finnish soldier has a rifle in the hand”, because the women liberate them from the auxiliary tasks. The feminine presence sweeten the army, with the “*gift that feminine eyes always give to the courageous*”, adding thus virility to the troops<sup>158</sup>.

Foxá tells his lectors, that the task of *lottas* was to heal wounded soldiers and the organisation was named after one character of Runeberg’s work, a woman called Lotta Svärd, who followed her lover to the war. Lotta healed wounded soldiers and offered them wine, except to one foppish officer, who invented pretexts for not going to the battleground. When someone who had fought alongside her lover came to her, Lotta Svärd gave him a more full glass of wine, saying “*Take one glass for the battle of Lapua and two glasses for the battle of Ruona*”. When a veteran soldier from the first line enters Foxá’s dugout, he writes that the actual Finnish soldiers are like “*sons of the heroes of Runeberg*”.<sup>159</sup>

Despite their presence in the front-line, Foxá doesn’t describe *lottas* as unfeminine or tough. On the contrary, he underlines their feminine qualities – their beauty and their dedication to nurture the combating men<sup>160</sup>. It seems that for Foxá *lottas* were heroic women who wanted to participate in defending their country. Their presence in the front line suggests that they were ready to put themselves in danger to fulfill their duty. They combined this way the virtue of nurturing women and that of courage.

Earlier Spanish visitors had paid attention to the women’s position in Finnish society (as well as in other Nordic societies). In the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ángel Ganivet had remarked the equal position Finnish women used to have compared to their Southern European counterparts<sup>161</sup>. The research of Peter Stadius shows also, that other Spanish travellers of that era had considered Nordic women educated and independent. The Nordic women liked also

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<sup>157</sup> Foxá 1971b, 260.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> “*Toma un vaso por la batalla de Lapua y dos vasos por la de Ruona [...] Los soldados finlandeses de hoy son hijos dignos de los héroes que cantó Runeberg.*” Foxá 1971b, 261.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Stadius 2005, 174.

outdoor activities more than Spanish women and they were physically stronger<sup>162</sup>. For Spaniards of that time, an emancipated woman was typically “northern”, but not exclusively Scandinavian (she could also have been Anglo-Saxon or Russian). For these travellers, Scandinavia was a model for Spain – they would like their home country to develop to the same direction<sup>163</sup>. Foxá’s depictions regarding women of don’t differ from the earlier Spanish travellers. Position of woman in Nordic societies was still in 1940’s much more emancipated than in Spain, where the emancipation could really take place only during the latter decades of the Franco régime. While some of the previous travellers saw the Nordic model a direct example for Spain, Foxá doesn’t make this kind of statements.

Foxá’s views on women can be reflected upon the background of the idea of woman of the falangist ideology. This idea was based on patriarchal principles. The role of women was to nurture and serve their husbands and families. *La Sección Femenina*, the feminist branch of The Falange promoted these ideals. The falangist image of women was opposed to that of the Republic, which was marked by the presence of active feminists. The woman had to serve men, who worked hard in labour or in war. The notion on genders of the Falange was based on the traditional *machismo*: the men who served their duties were rewarded by the attention of women. As Sofía Rodríguez López puts it, the falangist idea of woman was traditional, sacrificed and abnegated for the favour of the family and the Francoist ‘new state’. Dionisio Ridruejo, an important Falangist writer, had written that feminist women, who participated in ardent demonstrations were dispossessed of the noblesse, the happiness and the destiny, disturbing the public life.<sup>164</sup>

Foxá had dealt with the image of women previously as well. His conceptions had been pretty much in line with the overall Falange conception of femininity. In *Baile en Capitanía* (Dance in Captaincy) Eugenia, who represents the ideal woman, chooses her spouse for political reasons: She rejects to marry a progressivist despite that he’s rich. Another quality that Foxá adds to the good femininity is the dedication to mourning after the lover has dead<sup>165</sup>. The image of *lottas* in Foxá’s Finnish writings seem to be in line with the image of woman in this theatre play. The *lottas* nurtured soldiers and the original Lotta Svärd had refused to nurture a coward soldier. The *lottas* also gave up modern comforts in the frontline.

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<sup>162</sup> Stadius 2005, 157.

<sup>163</sup> Stadius.2005, 173-174.

<sup>164</sup> Rodríguez López 2004, 488-489.

<sup>165</sup> Bauer-Funke 1998, 154-155.

The important role of women in civilian professions and so called feminism of Finland adds another, a ganivetian element to Foxá's image of Finnish women<sup>166</sup>. On the other hand, women are active and not helpless, and on the other hand their duty is to nurture and to reward good men. Ganivet had written that a masculinised woman is an aesthetic catastrophe<sup>167</sup> and albeit Foxá didn't use so negative approach, he underlined that women should be feminine, which Finnish women were. The fact that Finland was one of the pioneering countries of women's rights, having extended the suffrage to women already in 1907, gives to understand that although Foxá had promoted a traditional image of women in *Baile en Capitanía*, he showed the emancipated Nordic society in a positive light, hence he didn't detest the active role of women in the society.

#### **4.2 The soulless progressivism threatens the mythical north**

The mystical North of ancient and natural traditions were, however, giving way to the modernisation, the strong phenomenon of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The modernisation had an effect of standardising lifestyles worldwide. The modernising side of Finland was remarked by Foxá in article *Las Casas de Madera* (Wooden houses), published in ABC in 1945, when he was already out of Finland. In the article, Foxá tells about a visit to a factory that produces pre-made, easily transportable wooden houses. Foxá wonders the fact that those pre-made houses didn't have foundations. He compares the transportable to traditional ones, strongly detesting the previous. Foxá writes:

*"The transportable houses are a phenomenon of our times: they fit well with the television that brings to our bed a horse race from Sydney and the increasing quickness of transportation [...] and the man is about to lose the few roots which used to connect him to the earth."*<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ángel Ganivet was one of the travellers studied by Stadius – he had paid attention to the independent position of women in Finland.

<sup>167</sup> Stadius 2005, 173-174.

<sup>168</sup> *"Las casas transportables son un fenómeno de nuestra época; armonizan con la televisión que traerá a nuestra cama las carreras de caballos de Sidney y coincide con la rapidez asombrosas de los medios de transporte [...] Y es que el hombre va perdiendo las pocas raíces que aún le únían a la tierra."* Foxá 1971b 291.

The idea that Foxá wants to underline in the article is that the man must be connected to his natural landscapes and cultural heritage:

*“That’s why we love our old houses [of Spain], those of chalk and stone, with balconies of iron [...] and would never live in these wooden houses, without age and roots, reminding barracks, in which you can’t be born nor to die.”*<sup>169</sup>

The industrial-like housing didn’t apparently please Foxá. Or he possibly uses the opportunity to defend the ‘eternal Spanish values’ and the Spanishness, as represented by the stereotypical architecture (the chalked houses of Southern Spain, or Castilian village houses made of stone) to the lectors of the conservative newspaper.

Foxá depicts factories, especially when writing about Soviet Union, as dirty and producing harmful products, such as weapons. He uses the factory as a metaphor of spiritless modernism. Apart from depicting Soviet factories as producers of arms used in destruction of Europe, he writes also sarcastically that they are temples of the new religion of matter, finding thus a way to blaspheme the materialist bolshevism.<sup>170</sup> The tendency of the Soviets to build on positivistic ideas and the notion of modernity, is used by Foxá generally as an argument against them, as a sign of spiritlessness.<sup>171</sup>

Apart from the industry, the modernisation in people’s everyday life is a topic that Foxá pays attention. In his article about Lapland, entitled *Lapin lumot* and published in October 1942 in ABC, Foxá describes Lapland for his Spanish lectors. He writes about the meaning of Lapland for Finnish and Nordic cultures and the nostalgia that many Nordic people feel to Lapland and its wholesome nature. He tells about the history of the region – about the gradual withdrawal of the Sami people towards the north and the decrease of the number of them. The Sami people were disappearing completely from existence by losing their traditional lifestyle, assimilating to the majority population and also by physical degeneration. Foxá suggests that there is a “spiritualised explication” to the extinction of the Sami: he writes, that they feel intuitively, that they don’t have any more “a mission in the history of the world, because they

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<sup>169</sup> “Por eso nosotros amamos nuestras viejas casas; las de cal y canto, con balcones de hierro [...] Y jamás habitaremos en esas casas de madera, sin vejez ni raíces, con algo de “roulotte” y de barraca, donde no se puede ni nacer ni morir.” Foxá 1971b, 291-292.

<sup>170</sup> Foxá 1971b, 266.

<sup>171</sup> Description of the Soviet factories might be more meant to serve as an Anti-Soviet propaganda rather than an argument against industrialisation in general. Anti-Soviet conceptions are further examined in Chapter 5.2.

know that they aren't any more from this world"<sup>172</sup>.. The Sami have moved to cities and started to adopt modern lifestyles. He writes also about their traditional lifestyle, which was still practiced by a small number of people. This included shamanism, which Foxá witnessed a few kilometres away from Rovaniemi, by meeting a traditional Lappish healer:

*"His receipt is actually quite different to those of our doctors, surrounded by microscopes. The Lappish healer sends the soul of the diseased to the infernos to find the spirit who caused the illness. In most of the cases, the soul finds understanding with the spirit and the illness ceases. This is the way the Lappish healer works: like a friendly mediator of the spirit world."*<sup>173</sup>

This vanishing of special characteristics of peoples was a development that did not please Foxá. He writes that his time, the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was characterised by a "hate of folklore" and of local colour.

*"All peoples want to appear modernised and americanised – soon it will not be worthwhile to travel at all."*<sup>174</sup>

The phenomenon was not uniquely happening in Lapland, but in whole world. The natural beauty and the mysterious, exotic traditions gave, however a sharp contrast to the process of standardising modernisation, industrialism and western globalisation to Lapland. The mysterious Lapland was giving way to boring, modern western culture:

*"Even here the bicycles replace the reindeers, the bus of Petsamo the sleighs and silver foxes are raised in farms like chickens."*<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> "Los lapones desaparecen, porque saben, intuitivamente, que no tienen ya ninguna misión en la historia del mundo, porque conocen que ya no son de esta tierra." Foxá 1971b, 280.

<sup>173</sup> "Su receta es realmente un poco más complicada que la de nuestros médicos, rodeados de microscopios. El médico lapón envía el alma del enfermo a los infiernos para que encuentre el espíritu que ha producido su enfermedad. La mayoría de las veces el alma del enfermo se pone de acuerdo con el espíritu maligno y el mal cesa. Así el médico lapón obra en el mundo subterráneo como una especie de amigable componedor." Foxá 1971b, 279-280.

<sup>174</sup> "Todos los pueblos quieren aparecer modernos y americanos, y dentro de unos años no valdrá la pena viajar." Foxá 1971b, 279.

<sup>175</sup> Foxá 1971b, 279.

The detest of “Americanisation” is an interesting feature in Foxá’s accounts. Anti-Americanism has been usually associated to the communist propaganda during the cold war or extreme islamists in recent decades. Foxá’s cold attitude towards “Americanisation” is not, however, the same thing. He doesn’t detest the United States per se, but instead the imitation of it and losing of the own traditions<sup>176</sup>.

In another article about Lapland, titled *Rovaniemi*, Foxá writes about a rich Lappish man he sees in the town. The man was told to own more than 4 000 reindeers and is walking on the streets wearing a tie and a cap. Foxá is disappointed for this, even more because he hears that the man is rich

*“I contemplate him and I am disappointed, because he wears same kind of clothes than we do, a blue tie and a cap [...] he [Captain Leppo, the guide of Foxá<sup>177</sup>] adds, disillusioning me, that the man has a current account in The Bank of Finland”<sup>178</sup>.*

Foxá’s reaction to find modernity in the remote arctic town was disappointed. All of the mystical Finnish folklore that he had encountered when bathing in the sauna or reading Kalevala, was not part of the life of the northern city-dwellers. When seeing gypsies in the town, he is happier. He writes that the gypsies are like representatives of South in the extreme North. He states that Finnish gypsies are like those in other places: in Sacromonte of Granada, in Turkey or Greece, or the street vendors of Bucharest. *“As a diplomat I feel certain solidarity with them: because they are like poor diplomats, proletarian ones, who wander the world.”<sup>179</sup>* Their music, writes Foxá, reminded flamenco, which was yet another glimpse of south near the polar circle.<sup>180</sup>

The use of word proletarian might sound strange, even blasphemy from the pen of a falangist. I believe, however, that the negative attitude towards money was due to Foxá’s antagonism towards positivist thought, concretised in progressivist ideas of the time. Instead of positivist

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<sup>176</sup> United States and other American nations had their own traditions and Foxá appreciated them, although his notions from his stay in Uruguay could be an interesting topic as well. The idea of Foxá was, however, that Europe was not America and his notion of integralist building on traditions will be examined further on.

<sup>177</sup> Foxá mentions that he was guided by a Finnish captain Jaakko Leppo, who worked for the propaganda agency of the Finnish state. See Jutikkala 1997, 34.

<sup>178</sup> Foxá 1971b, 282.

<sup>179</sup> *“Como diplomático siento una cierta solidaridad con ellos; porque ellos son como unos diplomáticos pobres, unos diplomáticos proletarios, recorriendo el mundo.”* Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Foxá 1971b, Ibid.

ideas, or the detest of materialism that Foxá shows, he regards the spirit as something that a people must look for. For Foxá, the spirituality was a bigger virtue than the material well-being.

Foxá's reluctance towards modernism can be seen also in his article *Huellas de Ganivet* (Footprints of Ganivet), published February 7 1942 in ABC. In the article, Foxá interpretes ideas of writings of Ángel Ganivet, famous Spanish writer and diplomat in the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Foxá writes that Ganivet wanted to underline the meaning of culture, moral values and metaphysics instead of materialism, citing him that "*positivism and pure reason were not only sources of knowledge*" and that "*the culture of a nation can not be measured according to its railroad networks*"<sup>181</sup>. Foxá writes that Ganivet had been disillusioned for Spain of his time, because the Spaniards tended to admire technological development too much and ignored spiritual values and ideals, finally ending up in spiritual conflicts. Foxá writes that Ganivet would be happy to see the Spain that emerged from the Civil War, "fecund of ideals" and of glory, which was manifested by the courage and heroism of The Blue Division, "*ready to die for their faith and bring to practice that wonderful phrase of José Antonio, that says 'the shortest line between two points go by stars'*"<sup>182</sup>.

Foxá argues that spirituality and moral values are more important than technological positivism and considers admiration of the latter as irresponsible and harmful:

*"Now, after the positivistic crime of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it seems that the modern thinking returns to the old paths; biologists, physicians, medicians, mathematicians, recognise again, that the world is much more mysterious than it was thought to be, that the reason only is nothing, that it's necessary to count with faith, with intuition, with moral values."*<sup>183</sup>

The contradiction of technological advances, modernisation and spiritual values is important theme in Foxá's texts. Foxá's texts about Finland were not the first time this kind of

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<sup>181</sup> Foxá 1971b, 241-242.

<sup>182</sup> "*Veinte mil españoles están dispuestos a morir por su fé [...] cuando hermosamente e imantado de fe y de misterio la geometría euclidiana dijo que 'la linea más corta entre dos puntos pasa por estrellas'*" Foxá 1971b, 242.

<sup>183</sup> "*Ahora, tras el delito positivista del XIX, parece que el pensamiento moderno vuelve a los viejos caminos; biólogos, físicos, médicos, matemáticos, reconocen, de nuevo, que el mundo es mucho más misterioso de lo que se pensaba, que la razón sola no es nada, que es preciso contar con la fe, con la intuición, con los valores morales.*" Foxá 1971b, 238-242



contradiction emerge. Already in his play *Baile en Capitanía*, which was published during the Spanish Civil War, Foxá maintains very critical attitude towards the modernism and its devotees. The characters who admire modern amenities and detest the traditional and historical values, are shown in a negative light, as greed and unspiritual, but also as less attractive as persons<sup>184</sup>. There are few examples of the drawn dichotomy, the one cited in previous footprint and the one of a dialogue between an engineer and a poet: the poet represents what Foxá sees as eternal values (including the classical literature and the religion), whereas the engineer admires the modernisation and the technological progress. Foxá shows the engineer as someone who does not understand the eternal values and his aura is thereby less aesthetic than the poet's. The arrangement in *Baile en Capitanía* reflects the struggle between traditionalists and liberals, a main feature of the Spanish political and intellectual history from 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Nominally the play takes place in 19<sup>th</sup> century, during the Carlist conflicts, but many interfaces to the era of Spanish Civil War can be seen and it was Foxá's purpose to show the Falange and Franco as continuator of Carlists' cause (as palladin of traditional Spanish values – not speaking out of the dynastic question, which was the original cause for the Carlist movement).<sup>185</sup>

The period of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was remarked by a rapid technological development and modernisation. In the same time, the development coincided with avantgardist art and new political tendencies. Development in Spain was also retrospective in some sense<sup>186</sup>. A traditionalist counter-movement had emerged, however. Many philosophists were worried about the contradiction between narrow technological knowledge and general culture. Most notably, Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset was concerned that the new era just enjoyed about mechanically produced technological advance, without paying enough attention to the further cultivation of its prerequisites, which were above all knowledge of the pure science and general culture. Dedication to the science itself had given way to simple admiring of technology *per se*<sup>187</sup>.

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<sup>184</sup> In the play, one of two sisters is oriented to traditional values and she's described to be beautiful and elegant, while her sister, detesting the traditional and admiring the modern, is described as ugly and dressed without elegance. Bauer-Funke 1998, 152-153.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> In general terms, the Spanish society had developed slowly, but on the other hand some regions were developed rapidly and there were big socio-political controversies. See Payne 1987, 3-4.

<sup>187</sup> Ortega y Gasset 1957, 109-113.

Foxá wanted to emphasize and favour spiritual values and traditions. These traditions can be, however, ingredients for a developed society as well. Despite his poetic admiration of the traditional Finnish lifestyles, Foxá doesn't detest phenomena of the modern life per se. For instance, regarding the amenities of urban lives one can state that it is certain that urban centres are essential for a developed society and thereby they may exist despite that the 'national spirit' would strive to a more traditional and natural lifestyle. That's why Foxá thought, in my opinion, that the developed cities of Finland were a display of the strength of the Finnish people to create needed progress. Foxá did not oppose the progress itself, but progressivism as a more fundamental ideological concept. In *Las Casas de madera* Foxá suggests metaphorically that everything needs foundations – houses made of concrete or stone and societies made of traditions and 'national spirit'. The necessity of the latter is presented in many of his articles and writings.

Traditionalist principles and integralism were essential ideas for the Falange, especially after it was merged with the extremely traditionalist Carlist movement. Integralism is a political idea, that sees the society as an "organic unity", which means that everything must be built on existing traditions. Integralism became popular among the fascist movements around the world, especially with the Brazilian Integralist Action (Ação Integralista Brasileira). Integrity of the nation and a strong sentiment of national spirit was an essential point for this kind of movements<sup>188</sup>. On the other hand, Foxá's integralist conceptions resemble to cultural conservative pattern. Cultural conservatives appreciate especially the tradition of ancient and christian civilisation. According to them, progressivists have made a mistake by destroying worthful traditions by their rigid actions. Refusing the tradition makes an individual a rootless nihilistic. The traditions, according to cultural conservatives, create a humane person, who is still adjusted to the needs of the present day. This kind of ideology does not in itself advocate violence or repression nor stand against democracy.<sup>189</sup>

It is good to be noted also, that although Spanish Falange ideology underlined the meaning of traditions, many European fascisms emphasized also the mass society and admiration of progress. Ortega y Gasset, whose thinking was partly based on same Spanish traditionalist and aristocratic foundations than that of Foxá's, refused fascist dictatorships, which he saw

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<sup>188</sup> Hennessy 1976, 265.

<sup>189</sup> About cultural conservatism, see Suvanto 1994, 328.

just a manifestation of the uncivilised mass era<sup>190</sup>. Also Franco was refused by him. Fascists and other totalitarian regimes admired futurism and progress as they were trying to establish a new kind of man. On the other hand, Spanish falangism and also Italian fascism were quite heterogenous, so a general fascist conception of modernity is difficult to define.<sup>191</sup> In this sense, Foxá's conception regarding modernity is more conservative and elitist than fascist, if such a division was even meaningful given the heterogeneity among the Spanish fascism.

Spanish images of the North reflect the course of the country's history. Peter Stadius has concluded in his work, that the Spanish images of the North he researched can be divided into three categories: traditionalist, progressivist and pan-latinist views. The traditionalist image viewed North as periferic, underdeveloped and barbarian. The progressivist image saw Nordic countries as examples of good social policies and an example for Spain. The panlatinist view combined elements of both of the previous categories and shared same ideas that the panlatinist movement emerged in 19<sup>th</sup> century in France and Spain. Panlatinist image defended southernness and Mediterranean culture in a situation where it was seen threatened after Spain's defeat in the war against United States in 1898<sup>192</sup>.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century, the progressivist Spaniards viewed sometimes northern countries as an examples of progress and modernism. For example, the Catalan modernists of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century admired northern art and culture, considering it an alternative for the old and conservative Spanish culture<sup>193</sup>. These different ways of seeing North in Spain reflect the fragmentation of Spanish political-intellectual field of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The long battle between the liberals and the conservatives was the main line of the Spanish history of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a factor that can be used to explain almost every larger historical event of that time<sup>194</sup>. Foxá's views continue the traditionalist/conservative line, but do not include any chauvinistic or disparaging approach towards the Finnish culture. Hence, if it was necessary to use Stadius' classification system, Foxá could be classified as a panlatinist, because he was a devout supporter of the Spanishness and the Roman catholic and Southern European culture, but didn't really show Finland or the Protestant Northern Europe as inferior.

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<sup>190</sup> Ortega y Gasset 1957, 122.

<sup>191</sup> About Italian fascism, Härmänmaa 1998, 207-208. About the heterogeneity of the Spanish National Movement, see e.g. Payne 1970, 200.

<sup>192</sup> Stadius 2005, 188-198.

<sup>193</sup> Stadius 2005, 82-83.

<sup>194</sup> This contradiction had complex roots and lead eventually to the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist dictatorship, which were a continuum of the tendencies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century struggle. See e.g. Payne 2006, 2

## 5. Finland, the outpost of Europe

### 5.1 Anatomy of the Finnish hero

Foxá is impressed, when visiting frontline dugouts (*korsu*), when witnessing Finnish soldiers to hold sports events in frontline, like Greco-Roman wrestling.

*“The Finnish soldier, who baths in sauna three times a week, do all the sports in the first line, because he doesn’t want the dirtiness or laziness to take over. But it requires a lot of moral energy to cultivate the body in this way, because it is possible to die in a sudden shooting.”*<sup>195</sup>

In the dugouts, champions of different sectors of frontline compete against each other and Foxá witnesses the semifinals of the Championship of the Ladoga Front.

In the front, Finnish soldiers try to keep their conditions as good as possible. The dugouts are elaborate, tidy and comfortable. The soldiers have made furniture: beds, tables, chairs, closets. *“It’s a full world underground.”*<sup>196</sup>. Foxá admires the good qualities of Finnish soldiers. He writes that Finns are courageous soldiers, who, *“like all heroic peoples, do the war with good humour”*. Name of the famous anti-tank weapon, fuel-filled Molotov Cocktail is an example of Finns’ humorous attitude towards war. Foxá writes, how Finns are excellent in winter warfare in forests, with their skies, knives and brave heart, which makes them invincible in the nocturne terror in the big frozen forests.<sup>197</sup>

Sacrifice for the fatherland was greatly admired by the fascist literature. Ulrich Prill has noted that this sacrifice had a major role in the creation of the notion of *hero* in the fascist literature. Conception of the hero had also something transcendental in its character: The hero was half-

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<sup>195</sup> *“...por que el soldado finlandés, que se baña en el vapor de la sauna tres veces por semana, cultiva en primera línea todos los deportes. No quiere que la suciedad o la holganza le invadan. Pero se necesita mucha energía moral para cultivar así el cuerpo que se puede entregar definitivamente a la tierra en unos segundos de tiroteo.”* Foxá 1971b, 252.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> *“El finlandés, con la nieve, se encuentra en su elemento. Es, sin duda, el mejor soldado de invierno y bosque; con sus esquís, su “puko” montero y su bravo corazón, es invencible en el terror nocturno de los grandes bosques helados.”* Foxá 1971b, 237.

divine in the same way than in ancient Greek tradition. It can be concluded that the divine in the hero came from protecting the fatherland, which meant not only a home country, but something more and something mythical<sup>198</sup>. Prill cites for instance Rafael Duyos Giorgieta's poem, in which a dying hero says that the life didn't mean anything for him, but victory, courage and saving Spain were his will. Sacrifice is always present in the war and Foxá admired also the readiness of Finns to sacrifice their lives: they didn't run away from the frontline, although that happened also. Heroism and acceptance of violence was also an important pillar of fascist ideologies elsewhere, especially in national socialist Germany. Heroic death was an important part of this belief. For national socialists, the dignity of the peoples had to be proven in battlefields<sup>199</sup>.

Foxá presents the heroic nature of Finnish soldiers of earlier times as well. He writes about Gustav Adolf Becker, an adventurer and mercenary of Finnish origin in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in his article *Las Oscuras Golondrinas en Helsinki* (dark swallows in Helsinki)<sup>200</sup>. Becker fought as a mercenary in the Spanish army in Morocco. In 1880's, Becker got to know personally the Spanish queen María Cristina, who lamented the lack of a proper musical composition to the poem called *Las Oscuras Golondrinas* of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, a famous Spanish poet. Becker then wrote to Fredrik Pacius in Finland, who composed a partiture to the poem, and titled it *Las Oscuras Golondrinas en Helsinki*. Presentation of the partiture was a success in Spain and the queen decided to award Pacius by bestowing him the Order of Isabel the Catholic.

Foxá admired the story of Becker, calling it "*a beautiful story of a poetry-loving queen and a hero dialoguing with a Finnish musician about a light verse of few swallows*". He then continued, that the past was like this – of civilised Europe – not yet brutalised by marxism.<sup>201</sup> Foxá had a tendence of glorifying the past, admiring especially the conservative forces of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>202</sup>. The portrait of Becker, which Foxá draws in the article, combines the courage in battlefields and plea for action: Becker was, according to Foxá, bored in the Finnish guard and that's why he headed abroad: to Morocco, Serbia and Mexico. In Spanish and Serbian armies Becker fought against muslims. But he was also a civilised man, speaking eleven

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<sup>198</sup> Prill 1998, 171.

<sup>199</sup> Kuparinen 1998, 231.

<sup>200</sup> Published on April 8, 1942 in ABC.

<sup>201</sup> Foxá 1971b, 247-248.

<sup>202</sup> The 19th century was remarked by repeated civil wars fought often between conservatives and liberals. See e.g. Payne 2006, 2.

languages and apparently knowing the culture as he could write to Pacius.<sup>203</sup> The image of Becker as drawn by Foxá, reminds the image of medieval idealistic noble knight, who fought for the religion and the king in home and in crusades. Knowledge of the culture, however, separated Becker from being just a mere warrior keen to kill enemies. Image of Becker is above all *noble*, modern version of a virtuous knight on a white charger.

## 5.2 Soviet hordes as a threat to the European civilisation

*“In the light of aurora borealis,  
oh, the silence of the snow!  
The white soldiers, skaters with their fine skis,  
With the mountain “puukko”,  
They open the throats of Russians  
In the daunting night of forest.”<sup>204</sup>*

This quite violent extract is from a poem *Guerra en el norte* (War in the North), which Foxá wrote in October 1941. The poem touts the courage of the Finnish people in its fight against an enemy which is an Asiatic monster and adversary of the European civilisation. The poem contains verses touting other heroic European peoples who fight against Soviet Union, including Axis powers from Germany to the puppet state of Slovakia, including also Spain, which was non-belligerent, but undoubtedly anti-bolshevist. The idea is clear: Spaniards, Finns and Germans fight among other European nations against Soviet Union, which is described as a country of “*greasy tanks and dirty factories and the night of the evil materialism*”.<sup>205</sup>

*“Against them rises Europe: The Siegfrieds,  
the musical forests of Germany;  
From sunny Spain the ardent  
falanges, who in Ebro first humiliated the Neva; And from Italy  
(which is all of garden and architecture*

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<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Puukko = stabb. *Guerra en el norte*. Foxá 1971a.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

*where to die is hardest) the fearless soldiers;  
and from Hungary the noble  
horsemen of Pusta[...]*”<sup>206</sup>

According to this poem, which was written in October of 1941 in Viipuri, Foxá sees the Axis’ war struggles were like a crusade against the infidel bolshevist nation. Foxá writes that Europe stands against them, which was not true, of course, as e.g. Great Britain, France and Greece had fought against the Axis. The fall 1941 was also the most optimistic part in the Axis’ war struggles, as their offensive was advancing in Eastern front and would stop only during the following winter. Spain was also quite pro-Axis in this part of war and would change its attitude only farther on, when the Axis’ defeat would become likely. Thereby, this quite daring poem (Finland had proclaimed that it fought a separate war and did not want to alineate itself with its co-belligerents in a political union) reflected firstly the general situation of the war, but also evidently Foxá’s personal desire to see bolshevism destructed. The phrase “Falanges who in Ebro first humiliated the Neva” reflects that Soviets were actually the enemies of the “True Spain” in the Civil War. They were defeated<sup>207</sup> and would now, hopefully, face their definite end<sup>208</sup>.

When Foxá writes about what he sees in the frontline, he underlines the contradiction between the clean Finnish soldiers and their enemies, the Soviet army, whose soldiers are dirty. Foxá writes that against the clean army of Finland stands one of the dirtiest armies of Europe:

*“There is a distinguished smell of the Russians. A sour smell, produced probably by some kind of food, the clothes, the boot grease. As a Finnish officer says, the sauna is the border. Where it ends, the area of slaves start”*<sup>209</sup>.

Russia has also a sauna tradition, but Finnish army paid an extraordinary effort to the cleanliness during the war. Foxá writes that while Finns do war with good humour, the Soviet soldiers are forced to fight and while captured, act cowardly and low-mindedly<sup>210</sup>.

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<sup>206</sup> *“Contra ellos se alza Europa: los Sigfredos, las musicales selvas de Alemania; de España soleada las ardientes falanges, que en el Ebro primeras humillaron al Neva; y de Italia (toda ella de jardín y arquitectura donde es morir más duro) los audaces soldados; y de Hungría los señores jinetes de la Pusta[...]*” Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Battle of Ebro was the decisive battle of the Spanish Civil War, fought from July to November 1938 – after their victory, Nationalists advanced to Catalonia and isolated the Republic only to Madrid.

<sup>208</sup> About analogues to the Spanish situation, see Chapter 5.2.

<sup>209</sup> Foxá 1971b, 254.

Soviet soldiers and their society is generally depicted as immoral. Foxá condemns the materialistic foundations of the Communist society and suggests that it creates general immorality, even evilness. Foxá tells about a Russian POW who asked to talk to a priest. The prisoner convinced the priest of his piety and religiosity and had long conversations with him. Finally, however, the prisoner stabbed the priest to death<sup>211</sup>. Foxá writes that the story has become popular in Finland, and suggests that the Bolshevism has managed to kill the sense of religion from many Russians. He tells another example of a prisoner, who kept keenly reading a bible to see how the story ends<sup>212</sup>.

In his article *Viaje al Frente del Ladoga*, Foxá writes what his Finnish guides had told him about actions of the Soviet Army:

*“They tell me how Russian aviators fly with their forced paratroopers, ignorants on where they are going; a tragic flight, in which the paratroopers, by a sudden movement by the pilot, will soon find themselves without base, diving into abyss. With their enormous contempt of human life, the Soviets launch this way these true human bombs, these missiles of blood.”*<sup>213</sup>

Soviets did not appreciate the human life. They were ready to sacrifice ruthlessly their soldiers, which made their actions to appear in bad light in general. Large reserves and bad leadership lead to this waste of soldiers. For Finns, who had a small army, this kind of action was strange and it had harmful consequences on war struggles of the Soviets as well. Casualties of the Soviets in the front of Finland 1941-44 (including casualties against Germans in Northern Finland) were around 256 000 dead or captured and 382 500 wounded, whileas Finland lost around 60 000 men (including the War of Lapland)<sup>214</sup>.

In addition to these concrete accounts from the frontline, the war has a more abstract dimension as well for Foxá, in which different ideologies and conceptions of world battle. The contradiction between Finland and its enemy is held in very visible role. Foxá tends to

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<sup>210</sup> Foxá 1971b,

<sup>211</sup> Foxá 1971b, 258.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> *“Me cuentan que los aviadores rusos vuelan con sus paracaidistas forzados ignorantes de dónde van; vuelo trágico, en el que de pronto los paracaidistas, por medio de una palanca movida por el piloto, se encuentran sin suelo, precipitados en el abismo. Con su enorme desprecio de la vida humana, los soviets lanzan así estas verdaderas bombas humanas, estos proyectiles de sangre.”* Foxá 1971b 250.

<sup>214</sup> Manninen 1994a, 181-182.



create in several occasions dichotomies depicting the enemy with bad qualities and the Finnish with good ones. One of the biggest dividing factors is religion. While Finns are Christians, Russians have chosen the marxist materialism:

*“Russia is not any more a pure protestant and pagan forest, with its sauna and bible. In Russia, there is a madness of alcohol, a social Christ, a mummy in Kremlin and some jews squaring the field.”*<sup>215</sup>

There are plenty of examples, where Foxá puts face to face the pure and clean North Europe with its religion and high moral and the Asiatic and immoral Russia. The mummy of Kremlin refers to Vladimir Lenin, who was embalmed in his mausoleum at the Red Square. The theme of the mummy is present also in the poem *Guerra en el Norte*, in which Foxá writes that the mummy is “Asiatic”, drawing thus a dichotomy between Europe and non-Europe and excluding Soviet Union from the previous.<sup>216</sup> Asia is the antithesis of Europe, manifested by the rage of its hordes and eagerness to humiliate Europe.

In the article *Rojo y blanco* (Red and white) Foxá describes his visit to an exposition of booty of war in Töölö Exhibition Hall, Helsinki. Many kinds of military machines and weapons had been taken by Finns and Foxá complains that despite of the pacifist rhetorics of bolsheviks, Soviet Union had prepared such a military machine: *“During the last twenty years they have been thinking nothing but war”*<sup>217</sup>.

Foxá writes that meanwhile Spanish communists and other western pro-Soviets had visited Soviet Union and admired the notion of development created by the Soviet propaganda and Soviet representatives had become legitimate diplomats in the west, the country had been preparing to demolish Europe:

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<sup>215</sup> *“Porque Rusia ya no es el puro bosque protestante y pagano, con su sauna y su Biblia. En Rusia hay una locura de alcohol, un Cristo social, una momia en el Kremlin y unos judíos cuadrículando el campo.”* Foxá 1971b, 259.

<sup>216</sup> *Guerra en el norte*, Foxá 1971a.

<sup>217</sup> *“Estos pacifistas, estos internacionalistas, durante veinte años únicamente han pensado en la guerra.”* Foxá 1971b, 223-224.

*“Meanwhile, they greased the crawlers of tanks, which like Siberian mammoths are disposed to assault Europe; and the half Chinese small horses of Mongolia were neighing eager to pasture on the ruins of the cathedrals of Reims and Burgos.”*<sup>218</sup>

Foxá pays attention to the dates of disappeared and executed people in Soviet Union. In the exposition, there were photographs and dates of 72 bolshevik leaders killed in the Great Purge of 1937-38. The propaganda, which also had been confiscated by Finns, was according to him, hypocrite as it claimed that *“Soviet armies were saluted as liberators”* in occupied Estonia, despite that *“150 000 Estonians were killed after the occupation”*.<sup>219</sup>

In *Rojo y blanco* (Red and white), Foxá writes about the material of the anti-religious campaigns of Soviet Union, which was visible in the booty of war exposition. He writes that Yemelyan Yaroslavsky, editor of atheist Soviet newspaper *Bezbozhnik*, wanted to “erase the heaven” and was responsible to the closure of 50 000 churches, assassinations of tens of thousands of priests and the demolition of the beautiful iconostases of Moscow and of converting the Saint Isaac church of St.Petersburg into an antireligious museum.<sup>220</sup> In Stalin’s time, religion had actually been revived partly, especially during the World War, in order to reinforce patriotism. On the other hand, the church had been persecuted strongly and tens of thousands of priests, nuns and other religious activists were sent to the Gulag, which meant death for them.<sup>221</sup>

In the Carelian isthmus, Foxá visited the house of Ilya Repin and depicts this visit in article *La casa de Riepin* (The house of Repin), published in ABC on June 3, 1942. Foxá writes in an enthusiastic tone about the house, which he depicts as absurd, colourful and “without contour nor limits”. The Soviets had, when they occupied the area in 1939, repainted the house and removed the cross from the tomb of the painter.

*“But in this Holy Week of Christianity (which is like any week for the terrible city we see in front, a [working] week of 56 hours for the Soviet stakhanovists with their rock drills),*

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<sup>218</sup> *“En tanto, se engrasaban los rebaños de tanques, como mamuts siberianos dispuestos al asalto de Europa, y los caballitos medio chinos de Mongolia relinchaban impacientes por pacer junto a las ruinas de las catedrales de Reims o de Burgos.”* Foxá 1971b, 224.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Foxá 1971b, 226.

<sup>221</sup> Froese 2008, 8.

*we have come to pray on this tomb, which belongs to an old Russian who believed in the Resurrection.*”<sup>222</sup>

Pre-Revolutionary Russia with its religion seems to be acceptable to Foxá, unlike the Soviet Union. In theatre play *Norte y Sur*, a Russian refugee in Finland, called Andrés, has chauvinistic opinions when he insists that it is worthless to learn Finnish, because “*Russian is spoken by 200 million people from Arctic lands to orange trees and vineyards of Crimea*”. Andrés and his family had prolonged their stay at their summer villa in the Karelian locality of Terijoki in 1917 and avoided thus the October Revolution. Mario, an Italian, says that they would have to stay in Finland because Russia has transformed into another world and it would be easier to go to New York or Australia than to St.Petersburg. After that, Andrés swears that tsarism will be restored some day.<sup>223</sup> There is also a certain continuum visible in some of Foxá’s accounts on Finno-Russian relations. Although he depicts the old Christian Russia more acceptable, he writes about the centuries of Finno-Russian hostilities:

*“Everywhere, the pug of the bear of Russia: Houses, bridges, farms all destroyed, forests ripped down. It is Russia, once again, the eternal enemy since hundreds of years. Didn’t they sing in these lands already in 14<sup>th</sup> century about the tragedy of invasions of Russians of Novgorod?”*<sup>224</sup>

Same kind of conception is also present in Foxá’s poem *Viipuri o el último castillo de Europa* (Viipuri or the last fortress of Europe), where he writes that Viipuri is a solid fortress; “*How many hordes have you seen to break their foam of rage towards your solid stone*”. The nomads of the cold steppe should never prevail in these lands<sup>225</sup>. Although Foxá doesn’t mention in this poem directly that Russians are the “hordes” breaking their “foam of rage” against the walls, it can be understood between the lines that this was the case. The castle of Viipuri had been built on 13<sup>th</sup> century as an outpost of the Swedish Kingdom and its main purpose was to stand against Novgorod, with which Sweden competed for the dominance of

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<sup>222</sup> “*Pero en esta Semana Santa de la cristiandad (que es una semana cualquiera para la terrible ciudad que vemos enfrente, que es una semana de cincuenta y seis horas para los stajanovistas soviéticos, con su perforadora), nosotros hemos venido a rezar sobre esta tumba, bajo la cual duerme un viejo ruso que cree en la Resurrección de la carne.*” Foxá 1971b, 265-266.

<sup>223</sup> Foxá 1971a, 567-568.

<sup>224</sup> “*Por todas partes, la zarpa de oso de Rusia: casas, puentes, granjas destruidas, bosques arrasados. Es Rusia, una vez más, el eterno enemigo desde hace cientos de años. ¿No se cantaba ya por estas tierras en el siglo XIV la tragedia de las invasiones de los rusos de Novgorod?*” Foxá 1971b, 250.

<sup>225</sup> *Viipuri o el último castillo de Europa*, Foxá 1971a.

the territories of the modern day Finland. The castle, built during the Third Swedish Crusade, would mark a border between the East and the West.<sup>226</sup>

In *La granja del viejo Nurmela* (The farm of old Nurmela), Foxá writes that Russia doesn't even have a name in Finnish language, but it is referred to as "*Venaya*", which means simply enemy<sup>227</sup>. Some of Foxá's accounts indicate thus that this was a border between West and East and between European civilisation and Asian hordes. He writes often about the physical outlook of Russians, which he depicts often as Asiatic or Mongolid, with their "yellow skin and Chinese-alike eyes"<sup>228</sup>. These racial depictions of Asian-looking Russians are the only element in Foxá's accounts that could be understood as racist, although it is not obvious. His overall notion of the East European civilisation is not clear neither, albeit his tendency of depicting Russia has negative elements. Other sources indicate that he appreciated Orthodox religion, citing it as civilised, so the question is not so simple<sup>229</sup>. Foxá suggests that Finland and Russia are eternal enemies, but it doesn't mean that another one would be *bad* or *wrong* per se, but instead to present it as their destiny: even to the extent that violence could be actually inevitable<sup>230</sup>. It might be also one way to create mythicness to the image of a country: an image of a mythical vendetta that takes place between these nations.

The arrangement of prolonging summer holiday away from the soil of the revolutionary regime in *Norte y Sur* is similar to that in Foxá's novel *Madrid de corte a checa*, in which the protagonists stay in Biarritz, just next to the Spanish border after the left has taken over the Spanish government. The protagonists criticise the new government for its vulgarity and new secular policies<sup>231</sup>. Terijoki, where the Russian white émigrés had stayed after the bolsheviks had made the revolution in St.Petersburg, is an exact analogue as a safe haven to the Biarritz of *Madrid de corte a checa*. To Foxá, the situation of the white Russian émigrés in Finland is what could have happened for Spaniards, if the Republic had prevailed in the Civil War.

*Asianness* as the antithesis of *Europeanness* is an interesting setting. Foxá's notion of Europeanness doesn't necessarily correspond with the modern idea of it. For Foxá, the

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<sup>226</sup> Korpela 2004, 102.

<sup>227</sup> Foxá 1971b, 287.

<sup>228</sup> "[...] *Jamarillentos, mongólicos, con los ojos achinados, los prisioneros rusos.*" Foxá 1971b, 276.

<sup>229</sup> Foxá served as diplomat in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, which both he appreciated much. His appreciation of the pre-revolutionary Russian culture can also be interpreted this way.

<sup>230</sup> See for instance Kunnas 1972, 137.

<sup>231</sup> Mainer 1971, 97-98.

christian religion is a solid backbone of Europeanness, i.e. in including and excluding nations from it. It doesn't mean, however, that Foxá would have snubbed other religions. For instance, he writes about the pagan faiths usually in a positive light, depicting them as original and spiritual beliefs and an essential part of the virtuous nature of northern peoples. His speech *Despedida a los amigos* (Farewell to friends), which he held in 1947 for his friends when leaving Spain to go to Argentina, gives also to understand that his notion of the traditional, oriental and islamic culture of Turkey is positive – islam was the natural belief for the Turks<sup>232</sup>. I believe that while writing about Asian hordes, who seek infatigably destruction for civilised peoples, does not refer strictly to the Asian people, but he is using a metaphor of uncivilised and raging people. Image of Asian nomadic people as barbarians is old in Europe. The Huns, the Avars, the Mongols and the Hungarians have all beared the emblem of invasive barbarians. It is hence easy to create an enemy image by appealing to these old stereotypes. The poetic expression blurs even more the border between exact reflection and playing with mental stereotypes. Foxá's way of depicting Soviets as "Asian hordes" seems to be hence mostly a way to play with the old, well-functioning enemy image, by interlacing the Soviets with some well-demonised historical peoples, who used to conquer lands moving in hordes.<sup>233</sup>

Foxá's accounts of Soviet Union underline his anti-revolutionary attitude. Anti-revolutionism is an attitude that stands against revolutions, because they break the natural state of things. Instead, it can be seen that he considered policies basing on integralist ideas a better way to develop societies. Russia had made a mistake when it abandoned the traditions of Old Russia and embraced the new bolshevist ideology, anticlericalism and worship of the technological progress. Dangers of breaking traditions with socialist and secularist policies was already manifested in preceding Falange literature, including *Madrid de corte a cheka* of Foxá. Primo de Rivera had called marxism and republicanism manifestations of "Anti-Spain" because of its controversy towards supposed old traditions<sup>234</sup>. In Foxá's texts about Finland, one can see that the same had happened to Russia. As Soviets had been eager to destroy religion from Russian society, they had been converting the country as Anti-Russia.

A general feature in the fascist literature is that violence is regarded justified, if there is a good cause. Primo de Rivera had written that violence can be accepted, if there is an ideal that

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<sup>232</sup> *Despedida a los amigos*, Foxá 1971a.

<sup>233</sup> People tend to receive information that suits their stereotypes. See Fält 1982, 10.

<sup>234</sup> Böcker 1998, 16.

justifies it. Same kind of ideas were presented by fascist theoreticians, writers and politicians in other countries as well, as the study of French writers by Tarmo Kunnas indicates.<sup>235</sup> In the case of Finland and Agustín de Foxá, the nature of Soviet Union acts as a justification for the violence. Some of Foxá's poems even praise violence, which makes them even more pro violence than the Finnish war propaganda. On the other hand, accepting violence in the war is not solely a fascist feature, especially when it's considered self defence as in the Winter War, in which Finland's heroic war struggle received international admiration<sup>236</sup>. Accepting violence is hence not per se a signal of fascist tendencies, but while the justification lays largely on notions of the Soviets as a godless and materialist society and as an enemy for what can be understood "spiritual values" of the European civilization, interfaces to fascist thinking models emerge.

### 5.3 Spanish prisoners in Nastola

The Soviets had betrayed their supporters also in the case of Spanish refugees of the Civil War. Foxá writes in article *Quince españoles en Nastola* (Fifteen Spaniards in Nastola) about a group of Spanish youngsters who was made prisoners of war by Finns in the front of Karelia<sup>237</sup>. The Spaniards had been living in Soviet cities after they were transferred from Spain at the age of twelve years during the Spanish Civil War. The youngsters had been recruited to the Red Army by a betrayal:

*"One afternoon – says Luis Suárez from Gijón – when we went to play football in one field in Leningrad, they said that they want to teach us how to handle some machine guns; they put us to a garrison and dressed us up as soldiers"*<sup>238</sup>

The officers gave them equipments, a piece of bread and ninety bullets to each and they were eventually sent to the front in Petrozavodsk. Out of seventy men in their unit, only fifteen had

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<sup>235</sup> Kunnas 1972, 137.

<sup>236</sup> About foreign reactions to the Winter war, see e.g. book *Talvisota muiden silmin* (edited by Holmila, Antero) (Atena, 2009)

<sup>237</sup> The article was published in November 26, 1941 in Arriba.

<sup>238</sup> *"Una tarde – me dice Luis Suárez, de Gijón – que íbamos a jugar al fútbol en un campo de Leningrado, nos dijeron que querían enseñarnos el manejo de unas ametralladoras; nos metieron en un cuartel y nos vistieron de soldados."* Foxá 1971b, 233.

survived. The Spaniards were also of very young age – for instance, Foxá writes about one fourteen-year-old boy, who died in the battle.<sup>239</sup> Young age of the Spaniards and the betrayal by which they were brought to the front supports the idea that Soviets did not value human life at all and their soldiers were fighting not for patriotism, but simply forced and cheated.

Foxá writes that conditions were good at the prisoner camp:

*“One can not ask for more generosity from Finland regarding the treatment of the prisoners. Here are dispensaries, health care, clothing and shoes. In the barracks there are lighting and heating. And between the pines, a typical Finnish sauna is steaming.”*<sup>240</sup>

The reality of this claim can be questioned. Foxá visited the camp during the winter 1941-1942, which was the time of the highest mortality among the prisoners of war (2 526 died in January, 2 695 in February and 2 423 in March). In total, 18 550 Soviet prisoners of war died, which is 29% of all P.O.W.. The deaths were often caused by malnutrition and the situation improved in summer 1942, when portions of the prisoners were increased. Sometimes, Finns had a sentiment of revenge towards Russians and didn't want to treat them well.<sup>241</sup> A sign of the inadequate nutrition situation might have also been the fact that Foxá himself sent potatoes for the Spanish prisoners<sup>242</sup>.

However these young Spaniards fought alongside Soviets, it seems that Foxá didn't consider them villains to the franquist cause. He realised that they were transported to Russia at a very young age and didn't consider them responsible for fighting in the Red Army. He attempted then to get them to swear fealty to Franco, and if they would, they could be repatriated to Spain. According to the article, the youngsters were keen to hear about Spain of Franco and they were eager to get copies of *Arriba*, the falangist newspaper. Foxá cites one prisoner saying that they would like to go back to Spain for Christmas<sup>243</sup>.

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<sup>239</sup> Foxá 1971b, 232-233.

<sup>240</sup> *“No se puede pedir más generosidad a Finlandia en su trato con los prisioneros. Aquí están sus boticas, su enfermería, sus sastrerías, sus zapateros. En las barracas hay luz y calor. Y entre los pinos humea la sauna, el típico baño de vapor finlandés.”* Foxá 1971b, 232.

<sup>241</sup> Manninen 1994b, 282-283.

<sup>242</sup> Caja n:º 12114, Prisioneros en Rusia 1941. Embajada de España en Helsinki, AGA.

<sup>243</sup> Foxá 1971b, 233-234.

The diplomatic documents which I have been able to see, indicate that Foxá tried to get a transit visa from several countries for the repatriation of some of the prisoners. At least some were finally able to return to Spain with a mutual understanding between Finnish and Spanish authorities. The article of Foxá published in *Arriba* had made the relatives of the youngsters cited in the article to ask from Foxá news about the prisoners.<sup>244</sup>

Foxá's attitude towards the young Spanish prisoners was apparently that they had had very bad luck for being deported to Soviet Union. He writes about their homelands in Spain in a romantic way: The youngsters come from "amidst of the cider apples of Baracaldo" or from "Santander, where the sea foams cheerfully"<sup>245</sup>. In the article of *Arriba*, he doesn't blame them for anything. Instead, he writes lamentingly about the life of the Spaniards in Soviet Union:

*"They lived in Leningrad, in "houses of children" – cold, numbered houses without the warmness of home, without parents, parties, birthdays, turrón<sup>246</sup>, confetti, without grandparents counting old stories, without oration, without mystery, without the Three Wise Men<sup>247</sup> or old photographies or bonds of the First Communion."*<sup>248</sup>

The education in Soviet Union was concentrated in praising the socialist system and the Revolution of October and in denunciation of all before it save some historical figures who could be described as Pro-Soviet or Proto-Soviet in some way. Foxá writes that rather than education, it was political propaganda. He writes that the situation of the Spaniards worsened after Franco won the Civil War, because the Soviets thought that they could not be used anymore as political agitators back home.<sup>249</sup>

In general, Foxá thought that the life of these Spaniards had worsened a lot when they were moved to Soviet Union. Their childhood in Soviet Union is depicted as meagre and unhappy.

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<sup>244</sup> Many of the documents deal with the repatriation of a prisoner called Celestino Fernández, to whom Foxá asked transit visas. I have not found out, whether Fernández finally arrived to Spain, but it seems likely as there were mutual agreements between Finland and Spain. Caja no. 12114, Prisoneros en Rusia. 1941. Embajada de España en Helsinki, AGA

<sup>245</sup> Foxá 1971b, 232.

<sup>246</sup> Turrón = A traditional Spanish candy made of honey, almond, sugar and the white of egg.

<sup>247</sup> In Spanish *Reyes magos*, who have a central role in the Spanish Christmas traditions.

<sup>248</sup> "Vivían en Leningrado, en las "casas de niños"; unas casas frías, enumeradas, sin calor de hogar, sin padres, ni fiestas, ni cumpleaños, ni turrón, ni confeti, sin abuelos contando viejas cosas, sin oración, sin misterio, sin Reyes Magos ni antiguas fotografías, ni lazos de primera comunión". Foxá 1971b, 233.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.



As things like turrón have been traditionally more than essential for the Spanish children, the article gives an impression that childhood in Soviet Union was even inhuman. While the catholic faith was an important bonding institution in Spanish society, the lack of religious activities gave the same impression. For a war propaganda, this kind of presentations were not rare. Also the Finnish war propaganda depicted the life in Soviet Union as inhuman. Dehumanisation is a part of creating an enemy image. Depicting an enemy state as scornful of human qualities comes close to dehumanising it.<sup>250</sup> Foxá depictions of Soviet Union shared also other interfaces to Finnish wartime propaganda<sup>251</sup>.

In Foxá's accounts regarding the Spanish prisoners in Nastola there are several features, which serve to the image forming; firstly, the Finnish prisoner camp and the military administration are depicted in a positive light, giving an impression of a benevolent belligerent who has been obliged to imprison the young Spaniards; secondly, the youngsters, despite of being of republican background, embrace the franquist/nationalist ideology, having been involuntarily abducted to the Soviet Union and to its communistic lifestyle, and lastly, the Soviet Union is the real malefactor of the story. Especially the second point could be viewed critically, as the youngsters were in a desperate situation where they were ready to embrace any kind of salvation possibility. The exact course of the occurrences of the prisoners is an interesting question and could be studied further by using Finnish archive sources<sup>252</sup>.

In this sense I see that Foxá's accounts on the Spanish prisoners and their life in Soviet Union served as propaganda: The cited article manifested in the Falange newspaper to the Spanish audience, that republicans who had sent their children to Soviet Union had made a huge mistake having sent them first to inhuman childhood conditions and after that they had ended up in a Finnish prisoner camp.

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<sup>250</sup> Luostarinen 1986, 440-441.

<sup>251</sup> For instance, the notion that education was abysmal and the religion was replaced by political propaganda. Luostarinen 1986, 237.

<sup>252</sup> The prisoner camp of Nastola was in function until November 1944 according to Ohto Manninen (1994b). After the Continuation War, prisoners were returned to the Soviet Union. How many Spaniards returned, remains unclear for me at the moment.

## 5.4 Soviet Union as an analogue to the Republican Spain

Foxá draws a negative image of Soviet Union in his texts. In the lands that Finns liberated in the war, Soviets had done mostly damage. The damage done to Viipuri makes it to believe that same kind of undesired policies, which were described in previous chapter, were done everywhere in Soviet Union. In many ways, Foxá's accounts on Soviet Union are similar to the way he had written previously about the Republic of Spain and the regions it had controlled.

The arrangement of prolonging summer holiday away from the soil of the revolutionary regime in *Norte y Sur* is similar to that in Foxá's novel *Madrid de corte a cheka*, in which the protagonists stay in Biarritz, just next to the Spanish border after the left has taken over the Spanish government. The protagonists criticise the new government for its vulgarity and the new, secular policies of it<sup>253</sup>. Terijoki, where the Russian white émigrés had stayed after the bolsheviks had made the revolution in St.Petersburg, is an exact analogue as a safe haven that Biarritz is in *Madrid de corte a checa*. The protagonists are between two lands – they are not fully integrated to their place of refuge, but they don't feel comfortable to go back home either. Actually, after the revolution, their homeplace isn't the same anymore<sup>254</sup>. To Foxá, the fate of the white Russian émigrés in Finland is what could have happened for Spaniards, if the Republic had prevailed in the Civil War.

City of Viipuri was reconquered by the Finns in 1941. Foxá visited the city and wrote an article, titled *Dos Horas en Viipuri* (Two hours in Viipuri), which was published in June 1942 in ABC. Foxá writes that this Hanseatic city of the Carelian Isthmus created a splendid civilisation and culture during the Middle Ages. Foxá writes that the old Finnish Viipuri was by all means admirable city: it had splendid architecture, old history and a prosperous economy. The meaning of it was important to Finland as the leading exporting port of wood. Unfortunately, the Soviet occupation destroyed the city: "*From whole districts there is nothing left than chimneys [...] Dwellings of Soviet bosses are blatant rubbish. They smell*

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<sup>253</sup> Mainer 1971, 97-98.

<sup>254</sup> Andrés, one of the Russian refugees in *Norte y Sur*, doesn't learn Finnish and in other forms also keeps nostalgising Russia, especially the Old Russia with its tsars. He'll never become a Finn, but Russia will be closed forever for him. Foxá 1971a, 567.

like the Red Madrid: of smut, rags, cold food and ash.”<sup>255</sup> Churches in Viipuri were transformed as cinemas or conference and dancing halls. Foxá writes that in exchange of all this destruction, Soviets brought very little to the city: “For exchange to these ruins, what has Russia brought here? Some propaganda posters; some plaster statues – the bronze and the marble are too noble materials for Soviets – of Lenin and Peter The Great! That is, to say, the dream of Stalin; The Empire in service of the Revolution.”<sup>256</sup>

Foxá compares Viipuri to Madrid, which was held by Republicans until the bitter end of Spanish Civil War, an anathema for Nationalists. Madrid was considered a traitor of its “Castilian destiny” because of its blatant progressivism. In *Madrid de corte a cheka*, Foxá laments that Madrid had transformed from the romantic city of pre-1931 to a meeting place of “great losers” and pathetic intellectuals.<sup>257</sup> In many ways the way Foxá depicts reconquered Viipuri and Soviets’ negative legacy there resembles the way he depicted Madrid in his novel *Madrid de corte a cheka* and how other Nationalist writers wrote about the Spanish capital as well. Viipuri was an ancient Finnish town that supported real Finnish values (Its towers and walls broke the attacks of Asian Hordes in Foxá’s poems), which had been taken over by bolsheviks. In the same way, Madrid had experienced this blaspheming destiny.

Similar approach is visible in his article *Viernes santo en los suburbios de Leningrado* (Good Friday in the suburbs of Leningrad, published June 7, 1942 in ABC), in which Foxá laments the situation of the old Russian city under the Soviet rule. He tells about the history of Russia, for instance that when Constantinople fell in 1453, Moscow was to become the Third Rome. First it was Peter The Great, who reformed Russia quite ruthlessly, but it was the bolshevism that finally destroyed the Russian soul: “It was the Leninist St.Petersburg (St.Petersburg that wanted to call itself Leningrad) that by organising the October Revolution finished with the old spirit of Moscow and closed down the hundreds of churches of it.”<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> “De barrios enteros sólo han quedado en pié las chimeneas [...] Las habitaciones de los jefes soviéticos son una abigarrada basura. Huelen a Madrid rojo; a hollín, a trapos, a comida fría, a ceniza.” Foxá 1971b, 270.

<sup>256</sup> “A cambio de esta ruina, ¿qué ha traído Rusia? Unos carteles de propaganda; unas estatuas de yeso – el bronce, el mármol, son materias demasiado nobles para los soviets – de Lenin y de ¡Pedro el Grande!; es decir, el sueño de Stalin; el Imperio al servicio de la revolución” Foxá 1971b, 269-270.

<sup>257</sup> Nationalists claimed that the “True Spain”, based in the Castilian highlands, supported nationalists. For that, Madrid in the middle of two Castiles being republican was an anathema for them. Mainer 1998, 182-185.

<sup>258</sup> “Fue el San Petersburgo leninista (el San Petersburgo que quería llamarse Leningrado) quien al organizar la revolución de Octubre acabó con el viejo espíritu de Moscú y cerró sus cientos de iglesias.” Foxá 1971b, 266-267.

The way that Foxá depicts the house of Repin and the city of Viipuri in general has very much in common with what he thought of the republican Madrid. Actually, Luis Sagrera writes that the house of Foxá's aunt in Madrid, in which Foxá had resided in 1936, was found after the war pillaged, but decorated with a bad quality portrait of Lenin and a picture of the bombardment of Gernika, among other things<sup>259</sup>. Additionally, the Finnish depictions of the recaptured territories were of a similar tone, underlining the chaos and the bad condition of buildings and other infrastructure<sup>260</sup>.

## Conclusions

The image of Finland transmitted by the examined writings of Agustín de Foxá reflects his cultural background as a Spaniard, and as a member of the conservative upper class, as well as that he had been on the payroll of the nationalist government of Franco right from the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. The situation in 1941-1943 was highly exceptional, which reflects in the way Foxá writes about Finland. Had the things been differently, maybe the image would not have been like it was, but it can't be known. Because of the exceptional time, Foxá's conceptions on Finland can't be fully compared to those of the Spaniards of other times, although I believe that they share some common features – especially those emerging from Roman Catholic tradition do not vanish quickly. As a conservatively-minded person, Foxá carried this tradition more strongly than his more liberal compatriots.

Northernising, slightly exoticising image of Finland is created in Foxá's texts. Thorough his articles, Foxá depicts Finnish nature with a mysticising tone, depicting it as pure and wild, but despite its hostility, as natural surrounding of the Finnish people. Southern stereotypes on the north have included usually the idea that extreme circumstances in the northern nature has created a robust and hard-working northern people. In Foxá's ideas, Finns are truly depicted as hard-working and also robust in the sense that they are able to defend their country heroically, but not in a sense that they would be barbarians or overly aggressive. Finns are neither depicted as noble savages, as Foxá underlines their christianity and their belonging to

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<sup>259</sup> Sagrera 1967, 43.

<sup>260</sup> See Luostarinen 1986, 237-244.

the western world. Finns are depicted as remote, but still ultimately belonging to the same christian family as the Spaniards.

Foxá admires the war struggle of the Finnish soldiers, which he depicted as heroic. He associates Finnish soldiers with all good virtues, like stating that they did the war with good humour. He tells his Spanish lectors about the keen sport activities of the Finnish troops and about their cleanliness, giving an impression of a healthy and virtuous army. Finnish soldiers also showed a sense of sacrifice as they seemed not to complain about their hardships, but instead were maintaining a good humour, “*without worrying the legs and arms they lost to the snows of Karelia*”. On the other side, he depicts Soviet soldiers as dirty and immoral, who are brainwashed to oppose all good values, like Christianity. Spanish youngsters, evacuated to the Soviet Union during the Spanish Civil War and taken as POW by the Finnish troops after they had been mobilised to the Karelian front, had ensured him about the brainwashing nature of the Soviet society. For him, those Spaniards remained, however, mostly innocent for their fate and he worked for getting them back to their homeland.

Women were present at the frontline as well as in many sectors of the civilian society, including the traditionally masculine professions at construction sites. The notion of the woman is an essential part of Foxá's image of Finland. The Finnish woman is at the same time active, courageous and feminine. They are able for hard work but they hadn't lost their femininity. Their presence at the frontline as *lottas* sweetened the army and improved its battle moral. Foxá uses the term feminist to describe the important role of women in the Finnish society. Especially the role of *lottas* as sacrificing healers of soldiers correspond with the falangist idea of a woman, manifested for example in the action of the Feminine Section of the Falange. Their presence in the labour market outside their homes didn't however fit this idea and the image of the Finnish women is generally more active than what was promoted in Spain by the falangists and conservatives.

The traditional habits of Finns are depicted as admirable and pure and their growing tendency to the modernity as lamentable. Especially the development in Lapland, where the Sami people were gradually giving up their traditional lifestyles, is greeted with disenchantment by Foxá. His admiring depiction of ancient Finnish habits, such as sauna or the traditional lifestyle of the Sami are contrasting the detest towards modern things, which are present in some of his depictions about Finland, and primarily in his view of Soviet Union. One of the

main deficits of the Soviet culture and their ideology was their tendency of modernism, which Foxá describes as brutal, unspiritual and unnatural. The worship of the modern had led the Soviets to do horrendous things in their occupied territories, e.g. to destroy churches. When Finnish soldiers liberate Viipuri, the way Foxá describes the recently freed city is dominated by disapproval of the actions that Soviets had done there. His depiction of Viipuri is similar to his novel *Madrid, de corte a checa*, in which he describes Civil War era Spain and its capital being captured by the republicans. Foxá added pretty much the same qualities to both of these towns: unaesthetic modernity and the rule of the vulgar classes, above all. Madrid, like Viipuri, were cut off from their natural position as heartlands of Spanish and Finnish national identities. Republican Madrid was a traitor for the falangists whileas Viipuri wasn't, as it was annexed involuntarily to the Soviet Union, but the result was the same.

The depiction of Viipuri is perhaps the clearest analogue of Foxá's Finnish texts to the situation of Spain. There are other examples of more indirect analogues as well, but Foxá's text about Viipuri, and of Russia as well, gives to understand that they were a warning example for other countries, above all Spain, what would happen if bolsheviks get the power and a revolutionary regime starts to displace the eternal values of a nation. These eternal values, according to Foxá, included religion, which in the case of Russia, was Eastern Orthodoxy. This culture was wiped out by bolsheviks – an example of this are stories about Ilya Repin and other Russian exiles in Finland, who were stuck in their villas on the Finnish side of Karelian isthmus, when the bolsheviks took power in St.Petersburg. This, interestingly, makes another analogue to Foxá's previous production, to the same *Madrid, de corte a checa*, in which protagonists were stuck in the Biarritz, France, after the Republic had taken power in Spain.

The republican Spain had already fallen, when Foxá wrote his texts about Finland and Franco would remain in power for more than thirty years after Foxá's spell in Finland. Franco's government needed, however, a constant propaganda to convince the Spaniards that he was the legitimate leader of Spain. Winning the Civil War wasn't solely enough to do it: Franco needed to be regarded as the saviour of Spain. This was the main goal for the falangist and other Pro-Franco literature after the Civil War. Foxá's texts of Finland fitted in this function well, because they showed an example of a nation that had not found its saviour and had consequently ended up occupying cities from other nations and destroying them with ugly statues and demolition of churches.

Foxá's image of the Finno-Soviet war can be seen either as a comment to Spain's internal affairs, which could be understood given the personal background of Foxá, or as a comment to international affairs; that Foxá would have been Pro-Axis and he would have liked to see Germany to conquer Soviet Union and destroy bolshevism thereby. He would certainly have liked to see the bolshevism destroyed, but I think that his interest towards the internal affairs of Spain was much greater than his ambitions to support the axis generally. Some of his writings were strongly Pro-Axis, but I would state in light of this research, that his aim was mainly to influence to the internal affairs of Spain and convince the Spaniards of the evilness of the Soviet communism.

## **Compliments**

I started this work back in Spring 2005, while I was exchange student in Spain and became interested in the Finno-Spanish relations. The formulation of my research task and my knowledge of Agustín de Foxá owe much to the help of Mr. Francisco De Miguel Álvarez, who worked in the Embassy of Spain in Finland, with whom I had many discussions when formulating my research task and gathering the material. De Miguel showed great dedication to the topic and provided me much important information. I would like to thank as well Mr. Timo Riiho, who was the Director of the Finnish Ibero-American Institute in Madrid, who gave me some advice as well in the beginning of the project. Moreover, I have also received good help from my friends during the project. The Department of History of the University of Eastern Finland deserve also compliments for their readiness to support this project.

## Resumen en español

En este trabajo se examina la imagen de Finlandia transmitida en los escritos de Agustín de Foxá. Agustín de Foxá fue un escritor y diplomático español, nacido en 1906, que fue destinado a Finlandia como encargado de negocios entre 1941 y 1943. Había frecuentado en los círculos literarios de la Falange durante los años 30, participando en la creación del himno del movimiento, *Cara al Sol* y durante la guerra civil había publicado su novela “*Madrid de corte a checa*”, lo que fue una manifestación fuertemente antirepublicana. Antes de ser destinado a Helsinki, había servido como diplomático en Bucarest y en Roma.

Estos antecedentes influyeron mucho en la imagen que Foxá creó de Finlandia. El país había entrado en la Guerra de Continuación contra la Unión Soviética. Foxá visitó el frente en Carelia, conversó con oficiales finlandeses y vio lugares como la ciudad de Viipuri justo después su reconquista por los finlandeses. Para Foxá, Viipuri recién retomada era una analogía a Madrid, que según los nacionalistas había sido maltratada cuando estaba bajo el control de la República. Según Foxá, Madrid había sido encontrada en las mismas condiciones cuando fue tomada por los nacionalistas: llena de estatuas feas de Lenin y otro kitsch soviéticos caracterizados por falta de la esteticidad.

En muchos aspectos la relación bélica entre Finlandia y la Unión Soviética tenía mucho que ver con el antagonismo entre los nacionalistas y los republicanos. Foxá admiró lo tradicional y lo que vio como el espíritu verdadero de un pueblo. En sus artículos, Foxá creó una imagen mitificada de Finlandia, la imagen de un Norte exotizado, caracterizado por su naturaleza y por su folklore compuesto de la sauna y del “*Kalevala*”, entre otros. A Foxá no le gustaba la modernización que amenazaba la cultura indígena del Sami y que estaba transformando a Finlandia en un país occidental más, pero en general para él Finlandia era un país admirable por sus tradiciones y sobre todo por su lucha contra la Unión Soviética.

En la Guerra de Continuación, Finlandia representaba las virtudes de la cristiandad y de las tradiciones, mientras que la Unión Soviética representaba el modernismo brutal e immoral. El ejército finlandés es descrito como limpio (gracias a su uso de la sauna), deportivo (los soldados practicaban deportes en el frente) y de buena moral. Los finlandeses estaban listos para sacrificarse, como por ejemplo las “*lottas*” (mujeres que trabajaban en el frente curando a los soldados heridos). Para Foxá, las “*lottas*” representan la mujer ideal. Los soviéticos, por



su parte, eran lo contrario: sucios, cobardes e inmorales. Foxá escribe que la adoctrinación antireligiosa ha convertido a algunos soviéticos en unos monstruos inhumanos que son, por ejemplo, capaces de matar a puñaladas a un padre que les da cura pastoral.

Una parte muy interesante de la guerra Fino-Soviética de 1941-1944 era, desde un punto de vista español, la presencia de jóvenes españoles en el frente, que acababan en un campamento de prisioneros de guerra en Finlandia. Los jóvenes habían sido enviados al exilio a la URSS durante la Guerra Civil española. Foxá trabajó mucho con este tema, arreglando la repatriación de algunos de ellos. Publicó también un artículo en “Arriba”, el periódico de la Falange, en él que describió las condiciones de los prisioneros y sus antecedentes en la URSS. La imagen que se da en este artículo sobre su infancia es que era casi inhumana, sin el calor del hogar, sin religión y con una educación que era más propaganda que educación. Las condiciones en el campamento, por su parte, eran buenas según Foxá.

Los textos de Foxá, cuya mayoría fueron publicados en los periódicos ABC y Arriba, y que más tarde fueron coleccionados en libros “*Un mundo sin melodía – Notas de un viajero sentimental*” (1949) y las “*Obras Completas*” (1963) de Foxá, forman parte de la literatura de la época de la Guerra Civil. Los textos servían para legitimizar el gobierno de Franco, para convencer a los españoles que la victoria de los nacionalistas era necesaria. Esto se hace mostrando la destrucción que producía la Unión Soviética con sus agresiones contra un país tan simpático como fue Finlandia con su naturaleza mística y su exotismo nórdico.

Los textos contienen muchas referencias y analogías a la historia de España. Algunos de ellos contienen de mismos elementos que las obras anteriores de Foxá: por ejemplo, el tema de la emigración que ya era presente en su novela *Madrid de corte a checa*. Rusia es una analogía a España: aunque los soviéticos sean descritos como inmorales y corruptos, la vieja civilización rusa es descrita con admiración. Los exiliados rusos en Finlandia habían perdido su patria después de la revolución rusa: algo que para Foxá representaba lo mismo que si en España hubiera triunfado la República.

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