

## Spanish Falange in the Philippines, 1936–1945

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The Spanish Civil War not only influenced the Philippines as a major international issue in the newly born Commonwealth, but also aroused a passionate following and bred bitter disputes among the local Spanish community. Perhaps one of the most significant consequences of the Spanish War in the Philippines was the formation of the section of *Falange Española de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista* (or FE de las JONS), shortly after the Civil War started in July 1936. Through Falange's existence, lasting almost a decade, can be traced also the definite decline of the Hispanic legacy in the islands.

The activities of the Falange centered from the beginning on sending aid in various forms to the nationalist camp in Spain. Ignoring the Edicts of Neutrality, funds were sent, as well as clothes, tobacco and other products.<sup>1</sup> The Falange also mobilized the Spanish community in the islands loyal to the Nationalists, celebrating Franco's military victories or other important events, and also setting up some parallel organizations, like a women's section, youth section, and others for children, as well as the so-called *Auxilio Social* or Social Aid, dedicated to providing charitable aid for Spaniards in need of housing or food.

The Falange affiliates numbered some 800 in its best times during the Spanish Civil War, but the number was reduced to 200 during the Japanese occupation. Based mainly in Manila, it had an organization also in Iloilo and affiliates in places like Cebu or Camarines, where the *Auxilio Social*, which founded in Manila the *Hogar José Antonio* for giving charity, was also active. The feminine section and three youth sections completed the affiliated organizations. The

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Falange published two reviews, *Yugo* (Yoke) from 1938 to 1941, and *Legazpi* for children.

The high point of Falange activities came toward the end of the Civil War up to the year 1941, when communications with Spain were severely restricted. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, its activities were limited only to the celebration of masses or "Te Deums." The vestiges of the organizations disappeared completely after the defeat of Japan by the Allied forces.

The relevance of the Falange Party in the Philippines does not appear only from its importance among the Spanish community itself, but also in the mingling of the Spaniards with the rest of the Filipino society. *Mestizos* and Filipinos of Spanish ancestry also considered themselves members of this group, participating actively in the affairs of the community. The Hispanic legacy that resulted from three hundred years of colonial rule, from Mexico or Madrid, continued even after the last Spanish governor left Manila, characterized by an evolution similar in some aspects to that which transpired in the Latin American republics after their independence in the nineteenth century. The influence of Catholicism, the rule by an elite, *Mestizos* or *Criollos*, with a big percentage of Spanish blood in their veins, are some of these legacies.

There is no research yet about what happened to this heritage and how Spanish culture or the Spanish community mingled with the Filipino society in the twentieth century. Therefore, let us take an overview of the situation in the Commonwealth period.

In the field of economics, the Spanish firms experienced a "golden age" from the beginning of the American period (as the book published by the Tabacalera Company on its centenary boasts), thanks to exports to the United States. In politics, one of the main groups which helped elevate Manuel Quezon to the presidency of the Commonwealth was characterized precisely by its ties with Spain, being called the "Spanish Party." From the social aspect, there were a great number of Philippine nationals—*Mestizos*, *Cuarterones* (those having 25 percent Filipino blood), etc.—who felt proud of their Spanish ancestry. In the cultural field, two aspects remained profoundly established in the society after 1898, language and religion. It is not necessary to refer to religion further, as this is self-explanatory, but regarding the Spanish language, it should be remembered that this was not only the language of the upper classes. Widely spoken in the country, in administration and business affairs, its obvious decline after four decades of American rule was not as dramatic as some authors

suggest. The circulation of newspapers shows that although the English newspapers largely outsold the Spanish ones in the archipelago, this was not clearly the case in Manila, where *La Vanguardia* and *El Debate*, with circulations of 18,129 and 13,606, respectively, sold jointly more than the most popular English newspaper, *The Philippines Herald* and the Tagalog *Mabuhay*, with a circulation of 23,741 and 21,492, respectively (McCoy and Roces 1938, 17). With only close to a total of 5,000 Spanish citizens in the archipelago, most of the approximate 81,000 issues of the Spanish papers sold daily in 1939 were bought mainly by Filipinos.

Returning to the Falange activities, let us study them in three main periods of the Falange's development, as the conditions for their political struggle changed dramatically due to the overall context.

### The Spanish Civil War

The founder of the Falange in the Philippines was Ignacio Jiménez, a famous pilot married to an Elizalde who was part of a team that flew over the Atlantic Ocean to Buenos Aires in 1926. The organization was then called the *Fundación Falange Española*.<sup>2</sup> Soon after, Jiménez left it when he decided to travel to Spain, to become the first person from the Philippines fighting in the Iberian Peninsula. But *Fundación Falange Española*, was only one of the groups of Spaniards that actively backed Franco's rebellion. The leading organization was centered around the unofficial diplomatic representation of Nationalists in the Philippines and the two leaders that set it up: Andrés Soriano and Enrique Zóbel de Ayala, as Consul and Vice Consul, respectively. Thus, from the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, the most prominent representatives of this so-called "Spanish-Filipino oligarchy" led the moves to support the Franquistas, establishing the so-called *Juntas Nacionales* to channel aid to Spain. These oligarchs clearly dominated the *juntas*. The Junta de Manila, for instance consisted of (aside from Soriano and Zóbel de Ayala) the presidents of the *Casino Español* and the Chamber of Commerce, the rector of the University of Santo Tomás, a superior of a religious order (they alternated the role among themselves), the president of *Hospital de Santiago*, the most senior Spaniard in the city and the representative of the Spanish Falange.

The Falange, therefore, had a relatively weak role in the Philippines, contrary to the situation in nationalist Spain, where it was experi-

encing dramatic growth and therefore grabbing a good deal of power. Thus, to try to achieve an evolution similar to that in the Iberian Peninsula, Martín Pou y Rosseló, a young Mallorcan lawyer who, after having taken part in the first weeks of the Civil War, was visiting in the Philippines, was appointed head of the Falange in the islands. The move by the secretary of the Falange abroad, José del Castaño was aimed at giving a more political meaning to the substantial charitable help received from the Philippines, trying to modify the "profoundly conservative and antifalangist course" (González Calleja 1989, 121) given by the Soriano-Zóbel de Ayala leadership.

Early on, Martín Pou was able to start his work, thanks to the support of the group of pro-Francoists. Thus, for instance, he was provided an office at the Casino Español of Manila and affiliation to Falange was encouraged among employees of Spanish firms, like *Tabacalera*. But, from the beginning, Martín Pou could not act freely in establishing the Falange in the Philippines. Each day he had to report his activities to Andrés Soriano, to whom the rest of the members of the ruling board of Falange were close, if not direct employees.

Martín Pou's aspiration for a kind of independence for the Falange in its activities, can be traced in the minutes of the meetings of the *Junta Nacionalista de Manila*,<sup>3</sup> which soon resulted in bitter dispute. The new leader showed himself as a ruthless foe, convincing the Conservatives that it was necessary to change their leader in order to place Falange again under its influence. Afterwards, pulling strings in Spain to obtain Pou's ouster as Chief of the Falange in the Philippines, they received the dismissal of Pou from his post, in a telegram sent by Miguel Angel de Muguero, chairperson of the diplomatic cabinet in the Headquarters of General Franco, and close relative of Andrés Soriano. However, since Muguero had not appointed Pou, the Falangists rejected the order and asked his superior in the Falange, Castaño, for a confirmation of his position. Castaño, upon learning what had happened, defended Pou without reservation and therefore the Falange in the Philippines acquired a somewhat autonomous position aside from the oligarchs.

The discrepancies in the Philippine experience had their correlation in Spain and therefore it is pertinent to see in more detail what was happening in the Franco regime in Spain. Just as on the Republican side among Liberal Republicans, Socialists, Communists, Anarchists or Catalan and Basque Nationalists, the differences among all the groups that backed Franco's Nationalists were very wide.

Monarchists, Traditionalists or Requetes, Agrarians or Falangists, had little to share in common except their fervent anticommunism. Franco tried to unify all the groups under the Falange, adding a "T" for *Tradicionalista* to their name mentioned above and becoming FET de las JONS, but the rivalries persisted. Falange soared greatly in popularity and a number of militants, traditionalist groups still held power in some important spheres of government in the "New Spain," such as the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Little documentation about the Philippines was shared in Spain by the Falange and the Foreign Ministry, as we can see in their respective Archives, siding each group with their counterparts in the islands.

In 1938 the conflict among the Nationalists had its ups and downs, remaining without a clear winner. The relations between Soriano and Pou were difficult, but the coming into the picture of Adrián Got, president of the Casino Español and director of the *Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas*, who temporarily headed the unofficial Franquist diplomatic representation (Andrés Soriano had left for a visit to Spain), increased the tension to a point where it became publicly known. The 18 July 1938 celebration of the second anniversary of the Franquista uprising was held separately, by the unofficial Consulate in the morning and by the Falange in the afternoon.

The Falange "does not recognize the authority of this representation [unofficial nationalist]"<sup>4</sup> was the reason given by Adrián Got when he complained to Spain. It was an accurate remark because the Falange aspired to achieve hegemony by itself over the Spanish community, therefore creating a kind of dual structure. The highest Franquista authorities shared completely this idea. Never should open fighting abroad be allowed among the Spanish community, was their main concern. The official position was, in the Philippines as well as in the conflicts that arose in the Spanish colonies in Latin America, that in case of conflict, the diplomatic consulate had priority over the Falange. They could not articulate their differences with the official representation although the latter's behavior might be contrary to the Falangists' interest. Along these lines Castaño reprimanded Pou: ". . . our behavior in the foreign countries, although inspired by a deep feeling and Falangist spirit . . . has to be of a more moderate tone."<sup>5</sup>

Due to this priority of rank among Spanish institutions abroad, the unofficial consulate finally won in this dispute with the Falange and in the autumn of 1938 the removal of Pou was definite, after almost one year of conflict. Again the order originated from the

general headquarters of Franco, but this time the Falangists could not do much but accept it. The powerful families won in this struggle against the new group belligerent to their hegemony, having won the highest rank in importance as embodying the diplomatic representation. It was also because of the bigger resources they could muster in relation to the Falange. For example, Soriano made a trip to Spain and used coded communications while on this trip to communicate with Manila, while the Falangistas had to rely solely on air mail correspondence, as a result of which some important letters fell into enemy hands, Republicans or Conservatives, who distributed them publicly.

Pou finally left the Philippines in December 1938. The tensions cooled, and after his departure the heads of the Falange met with Soriano, promising him their loyal following and cooperation. But the problem did not end with Pou's departure because the confrontation that had arisen was too bitter and, more important, the alternative to the traditional power in the Spanish community that had been established by Pou could not be avoided after his departure. The Falangists in the Philippines softened their mood temporarily, but the Falange in Spain, which was at the height of its power when the Civil War was about to end, did not accept such a defeat. The Falange Headquarters succeeded in having its chosen candidate, Alvaro de Maldonado, named as the first Consul of the Spanish Government after Franco was recognized by the United States and, furthermore, gave suggestions to their partisans in Manila to the extent of fighting against the antifalangists elements of the community.<sup>6</sup>

The Conservatives had the upper hand in the Philippines and the Falangists were at the peak of their influence in Spain—such was the situation when the Spanish Civil War ended on 1 April 1939. This definite end of the struggle in Spain changed totally the political context and provoked a complete turnover in the targets aimed at by the Falange. For this reason it might be helpful at this point to further analyze the internal quarrels during 1936 to 1939. We might consider three main factors: the socioeconomic, the ideological-political and the nature of the community's relation with Spain.

The socioeconomic context of the conflict appears obvious as the wealthy families joined the same side against the Falange. What was at stake was the leadership and distribution of power among the Spanish community. The Sorianos, Zóbel de Ayalas or Elizaldes had, until the Falange came to a position to dispute it, the undisputed



leadership of the community. Martín Pou attempted to replace that conservative leadership with a Falangist one or at least to put the Party on the same level, sharing power and influence with them, as in Spain. This attempt of the emerging Falangist power provoked the friction with the Consulate, which was usually a clear representative of the traditional power. Obviously the group led by Andrés Soriano would be damaged if the Falangists succeed in attaining their objectives. So the unofficial Franquista consul had to do what was possible to limit the growing force of a group which intended to erode their influence.

In the activities of the Falange it can clearly be perceived that it was their intention to erode the existing leadership, which until then the powerful families had maintained. In this intention to give a "Falangist touch" to the activities of the community, as an alternative to the oligarchs, Pou planned to "develop the trade and the exports in accordance to the interests of the "new state" (González Calleja 1989, 124) that is, to create a different choice in the field of trade, which had been developed only by the Spanish Chamber of Commerce. Also, he urged a compulsory affiliation to Falange of all those desiring to obtain nationalist passports or the *Cédula de Nacionalidad* (Certificate of Nationality). The Falange was, therefore, trying to grab some of the functions typical of a diplomatic representation, such as the need to register. These ventures failed, but others succeeded, such as the setting up of the Auxilio Social, to compete with the activities of the *Fondo Benéfico Español* (Spanish Charitable Fund), created in 1917 by the wealthy families, the foundation of the Hogar José António for the same purposes, or the issuing of their own publications.

The ideological differences between the two groups were also profoundly distinct. The powerful families or Filipino-Spanish oligarchy, stalwarts of King Alfonso deposed in 1931, can well be considered as very conservative, perhaps even reactionary, reflective of the trend of those times, but they can hardly be considered fascists or pro-Nazi. The Falange, as happened to the fascists in Italy or the Nazis in Germany, was supported mostly by the middle and lower-middle classes, as they themselves pointed out, and the wealthy families could scarcely see their class interests defended by the Falangist ranks. The totalitarian ideology with a planned economy and the anticapitalist discourses made by the Falange could never be accepted by the Sorianos and the Zóbel, even simply as a propaganda

slogan to appease the common people. Last but not least, as representing a "new" political movement, the Falange always claimed the old rightist parties as its main political enemy. A definite triumph of the Falange—in Spain or the Philippines—had to be feared not only by the left, but also by the rest of the former political parties. The international context also divided both Falangists and Conservatives. If the Falange aligned with the Italians and the Germans, the wealthy families felt greater gratitude towards the colonizer, the United States. They could understand, and even share, the anti-French and anti-British sentiment then predominating in Spain, but they could not forget that their fortunes had increased dramatically since the end of the Spanish regime.

The end of the American guidance foreseen in 1945 is also related to these fights, especially in the matter of what role Spain would play in relation to the community: affinity or dependence. The Spanish-Philippine oligarchy had already lived in the Philippines for generations, where it had held a great deal of power, and therefore its feelings toward Spain could be of identity or affinity, probably of a close relationship, but never of dependence. With them, Madrid could try to exert a cultural influence over an independent Philippine Republic, but never a political one. The Falange, on the other hand, whose supporters were mostly first-generation Spaniards, could be more receptive to a stronger influence from Spain. Some of the declarations of Pou—himself appointed from the Peninsula—clearly show this idea, assessing that in the Philippines "one has to comply with everything that the Falange (from Spain) asks, no matter what it costs, and in spite of that the adversaries try to demean us."<sup>7</sup>

A conflict also divided the two groups on the kind of relation to Spain, but the analysis of this dispute can not be reduced simply to one between *peninsulares* and *insulares* (Bacareza 1980, 127). The Falange and its social classes, attempting a change in their relation with the powerful families, had to welcome any support in its dispute, no matter where it came from.

Definitely, the existing oligarchy was not willing to share its privileges with newcomers, did not want to weaken its excellent ties with the American colonial government, nor was it willing to subordinate itself to any regime in Spain. Tabacalera's president Adrián Got probably summed up the conflict when he reproached Pou for not understanding the "singularity (*idiosincrasia*) of the Spanish colony in the islands."<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to know if Pou understood the situation well or not, but what he attempted to do was to change it.



## The Beginning of World War II

The period from the end of the Spanish Civil War to the beginning of the Pacific War was also very intense in the life of the Falange and the Spanish presence in the archipelago. Shortly after the Spanish war ended, the European War began, and with it totalitarian movements acquired new strength. The hopes of creating a pro-German "new world order" became increasingly possible in the face of continuous German victories on the battlefields. In Spain, the expectation of a definite Axis triumph resulted in the Falange reaching the height of its power and its radicalism. The appointment in November 1940 of the falangist Ramón Serrano Suñer—its principal exponent in those years—as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, seemed to be an impetus toward those expectations. In his oathtaking, he clearly set the key role that the Falange in foreign countries would have. It should serve as an instrument that would shatter the old classical democracy, promoting more aggressive action abroad that would give spirit to the recovery of territories and the "imperial aspiration" of the new Spanish state (Delgado 1988, 49).

Going back to what occurred in the Philippine Archipelago, 1939 was a relatively tranquil year in the relations between the somewhat suppressed Falange and the powerful families. The newly appointed Consul, Alvaro de Maldonado, although apparently a Falangist, worked towards the unity of the Spanish colony. But the appointment of a new provincial chief in December again changed the situation. Felipe García Albéniz went in Manila, apparently to complete the task that Pou had started, and thus the fights in the Spanish community were revived. From his arrival in Manila dressed as a Falangist and executing the handraising salute, he received renewed attention of American counterintelligence and with it the conflict among Spaniards expanded from the community.

Revenge, denunciations and anonymous accusations thrown in all directions were routine in a kind of "civil war" that took place among Spaniards in the Philippines. Seemingly the conflict among the Nationalists themselves was more bitter than the one between the Nationalists and the Republicans. With the increase of violence, the Falange aroused the antagonism of a new group that had remained neutral in the Falange's differences with the wealthy families during the Civil War: the religious orders. The Dominican Father Silvestre Sancho, rector of the University of Santo Tomás and resolute nationalist who gave Franco the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa* from the

University, himself declared to the Spanish Consul Alvaro de Maldonado that "the best should be to suppress Falange in the Philippines."<sup>9</sup>

It is not evident if there was a clear strategy of the Falange to provoke violence and to create instability from which they expected to obtain benefits, as had happened in Spain before the war. But in the Philippines the renewed confrontations harmed the Falange itself because the Falange finally provoked the intervention of the American police, which expelled García Albéniz from the islands in September 1940. This police intervention must have been the reason for the change of Falange policy whereby the organization itself restricted its open propagandistic activities, which were conducted more quietly thereafter. Consul Maldonado, who also turned against García Albéniz and his people, noted that "The Falange here has shouted a lot, and now they are trying to hide themselves."<sup>10</sup>

Since then, the Falange no longer carried out its activities openly in public in the Philippines. In its documents the reason for that change in attitude is not clearly stated, although later it was justified as an internal decision. Possibly it was ordered from Spain trying to calm Washington's irritation, as America was then the only country that could financially help Spain, shattered after a three-year war. It is also possible that they continued to maintain the same goals, but by other means. In the world, the power of the Axis was at its peak, after France had been invaded by German troops, and this fact contributes to the latter option.

The response from Madrid to the conflict in Manila came in November 1940, soon after Serrano Suñer's taking over the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Naming only one person for both posts of consul of Spain and chairman of Falange in the Philippines should be the solution for unifying the leadership of the community. Therefore, Consul Maldonado was transferred to Shanghai, and a new person was assigned to Manila: José del Castaño, formerly mentioned as the head of Falange abroad during the Spanish Civil War. The appointee for consul in the Philippines and the consul for Cuba, were Falangists. The news was carried in the official organ of Falange, *Arriba*, in a commentary on the first page, which said that "The Falange . . . has begun to direct the destiny of Spain in the world . . . both of them will look after the lands that buried the last Spanish flag."<sup>11</sup> Genero Riestra, appointed to Havana, never was allowed to occupy his post and, in the Philippines, the name of Castaño could not sound well to the American authorities or to the wealthy families because of his

past backing of Pou. Probably it was the most inappropriate nomination in order to unify the community.

But Castaño had little time to serve in the Philippines quietly. He arrived in the archipelago in July 1941, and the war in the Pacific started in December. The world situation made it more difficult to carry out Falange activities. The atmosphere for its work was not very favorable, with the American authorities becoming increasingly suspicious, and Castaño was careful not to arouse the suspicion of the authorities, neither in Spain or the Philippine. He prepared to launch an organ, *Amanecer* (Dawn), less ideological than its predecessor *Yugo*, whose last issue was published in November 1941 after sales had declined largely. Also, the magazine *Vértice* (Vertex) in Spain was urgently asked not to publish any information about the Falange in a special Philippine issue, "in order to avoid possible harm to our organization here."<sup>12</sup>

Let us now pay attention briefly to the objectives of the Falange during these years, which went beyond what they pursued during the Civil War. The autonomy and the alternate leadership that they previously aimed for had been reached, thanks to the support from Madrid. In the second issue of what is considered the most influential review in Spain on foreign matters, *Mundo*, in a report which was dedicated to the Falange in the Philippines, can be read: "The Head Office of Manila (Felipe García Albéniz) has finally won, along four years of intense internal vicissitudes, over the resistance that some groups attached to the free will (*albedrío*) and the bossism (*caciquismo*) opposed to the political purification;"<sup>13</sup> the reference to the oligarchy represented by Soriano was implicit.

The aim pursued by the Falange when García Albéniz arrived in Manila was that "all Spaniards abroad must work under one order only."<sup>14</sup> Up to what degree they fought to achieve this and what its consequences were is difficult to point out, but this could have been one of the motivations which more definitely influenced in the long run the weakening of ties between Spain and the Philippines. There was a surge of people renouncing Spanish nationality in 1941, mostly in the second semester. This change from Spanish citizenship, mostly to Philippine citizenship, had an undeniably opportunistic economic motivation: to defend its properties. It was widely thought in the Philippines that Madrid would enter the war on the side of the Axis and therefore the properties of the Spaniards would be confiscated, just as had happened in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) or in the

British Straits territories (Malaysia) in the case of Italian or German properties. It was also to influence heavily the perspective of future independence for the Philippines, which would limit the ownership of properties or business by foreign nationals.

Aside from considering the important economic aspect of this massive change in nationality, this fact had a political side, important in the long run for the abovementioned weakening of ties. First, because Manuel Quezon himself encouraged the change of the Spanish elite to Filipino citizenship in an attempt to help the formation of an upper class in view of the forthcoming independence. Second, because nobody got back his Spanish nationality after the war, so far as is known. The role that the Falange had in the massive renunciation of Spanish nationality is yet to be clarified and is controversial. The fact is that Republicans, Conservatives and even Falange sympathizers were compelled to do it because of the circumstances.

Most of the prominent members of the "Spanish-Philippine oligarchy" took on Filipino nationality, like Andrés Soriano, António Brias or Enrique Zóbel's sons.<sup>15</sup> It is difficult to know exactly how many applied for new citizenship, partly, as we have pointed out, because it is difficult to distinguish clearly the Spanish (or Portuguese) from the rest of the population due to the widely spread phenomenon of mestizos and, partly because it was much more difficult to know how many Spanish citizens lived in the islands outside of Manila. A trip to the capital could be used, for instance, to register two or three children. The data to calculate the number of people moving depends on the source. The consul during 1940 and 1941, Alvaro de Maldonado, reported afterwards that the number of Spaniards was reduced from 5,000 to 2,000, but he was not in Manila when this process culminated and probably exaggerates. Meanwhile Francisco Ferrer, counselor of the Consulate during the Japanese occupation and former director of the Falangist organ, *Yugo*, reported that the decrease was only 400 persons, from 3,500 to 3,100, but he could have been trying to diminish its importance when reporting after the Pacific War was over. The real total has to be between these two numbers, but what is clear is that most of the members of these wealthy families definitely left their Spanish nationality and that, therefore, the community as such lost its influence and economic power, aggravated by the fact that had it had already been diminished some years before due to the failure in investments in gold mines and in the stock market.

Two other aspects related to the Spanish Falangists in these years were made known by American propaganda: the desire to retake, repossess or recover the Philippines on the part of Spain, and the participation of the Falange as a "secret army of the Axis" in the American continent as well as in the Philippines. Both of these points deserve to be given special attention because they were widely accepted before and after the war in the Pacific. They also strongly influenced the weakening of Filipino ties with Spain after independence, although the information that was provided came mainly from press reports and since then there has been no serious study to check its veracity.

The first of these accusations was the presumed Spanish desire to dominate the world as in the time of Philip II. Among those dominions would be the Philippine Archipelago (Hamilton 1944, 467). That accusation certainly was based on the propaganda so widespread in the Axis countries, where a furiously militant Falange triumphantly proclaimed "Through the Empire toward God" when the hope to establish a New World Order seemed likely. Undeniably anti-British and anti-French, the attitude taken toward the United States, and therefore the Philippines, is more equivocal, although its involvement in the war effort helping England made Washington appear progressively as a clear enemy of the Falangists. Probably some of them dreamed of this return of the Philippines—or that of Cuba, or both territories—to Spanish domination, but what we do not know is whether this idea was representative in some way of general policy or if there was anything else other than propaganda with reference to the Philippines.

In Spanish documents indications are found that the Philippines was also considered as a possible battlefield for world domination. The pro-Axis newspaper from Madrid, *El Alcázar*, featured an article about a supposed conquest of the archipelago by Spain, provoking a controversy in Manila, which the official and immediate denial of Consul Maldonado (without consulting Madrid first) failed to dissipate.<sup>16</sup> Besides, the magazine which we have already cited as expressing the opinions of the regime on foreign matters, *Mundo*, started to publish historical articles wherein the role of Spain in the conquest and discovery of the new world was emphasized, giving special attention to the Pacific Islands and the Philippines. Certainly the attention from Spain on the Pacific Area (almost forgotten since 1898) soared largely, and this obviously had a political implication, as is shown by one of the editorials from *Mundo*:

The Spanish domain (*Sobre-España*) . . . from the Pyrenees to the Philippines, the great Spain reborn by (Generalissimo) Franco that does not feel distant from what moves the planet at the present time, looks towards the Pacific and America with doubled attention.<sup>17</sup>

However, the existence of expansionist plans toward the Philippines is a further step that can not be verified. There has not yet been found documentation confirming that these aims were assumed in some kind by the Franco regime. In the same manner that there can be found indications to suppose these "dreams of empire" over the Philippines, others can deny them, as it is in the fact that nothing referred to the region was included in the list of territories claimed unofficially by Spain in the book *Reivindicaciones de España* in the event of a possible victory of the Axis. The book divided into chapters according to the territories claimed by Spain (mostly in North Africa), and including the justifications for such claims, does not make any reference to the Philippines. The closest mention is to the French-Spanish-Philippine expedition to Cochinchina (Vietnam) from 1857 to 1862, but it is merely given as complementary information and clearly states that Spain did not have any territorial ambition there (Areilza and Castiella 1941, 7).

The possible Spanish designs on the Philippines had to rely on various surmised facts difficult to occur, such as a kind of retreat or defeat of the United States in the Philippines and obtaining something like a consent from the Japanese Empire—perceived also by Spain as the hegemonic power in the region—to establish the Spanish flag over a territory which Japan would also claim hegemony over if the US retired for any reason. Although it seems impossible that such a conjunction of factors would materialize, we should consider the troubled conditions of the time. Spain, then, had an ideal image of Japan until the summer of 1941—when Tokyo refused to follow Hitler in the attack of the Soviet Union—that could make this thinking possible (Rodao 1943, 400–413).

Probably, however, more important and more widely accepted than the dreams of some Falangists to return and replant the Spanish flag in the Archipelago was the desire to gain a major influence for Spain after the planned independence of 1946. This desire could be perceived to have greater prospects, considering that hispanization in the islands had been maintained relatively well until then. Last but not least, the press releases about the Spanish aims over the Philippines, and the rest of the propaganda of that time could very



well have originated in German agencies, with the intention of preventing the further involvement of Washington in the European conflict by creating a menace at its back door, as the Far East was then. Or it could have been that these editorials and propaganda were designed only for the falangist crowd without any other aim. The American intelligence service dismissed these as "mere pep talks designed for home consumption" (Chase 1993, 34-35).

The supposed collaboration of the Falange in the Philippines with the Axis for Germany's victory in the conflict appears to be even less documented. A book published in English and Spanish during the war, *Falange, the Secret Army of the Axis in the Americas*, by an American journalist, Allan Chase, remains up to the present as the major source of information about the topic. Although the book has no footnotes, it shows a profound knowledge of the situation. This fact, as well as his vagueness when referring to his sources of information, suggests that a lot of data he received came from American intelligence, which had long watched the Spanish community. Obviously, among the stuff supposed to be provided to Chase there had to be some true data.

In Chase's book, the Falange in the Philippines is said to have been led by the Nazi agent for German expansion in Latin-America, General von Faupel, who presumably sent secret orders to Castaño. Among these orders was one instructing their partisans to infiltrate the Civilian Emergency Administration with the end in view of weakening American strength and thus facilitating the Japanese advance. No proof was found after the war about this, nor of any of the other accusations made against the Falange, as shown in a report of the 37th Combat Detachment, one of the first CIC units to enter Manila.<sup>18</sup> Neither through the documentation in Spain can be traced such orders from German agents. As for data that could corroborate the possibility of such a nexus of Falangist-Nazis in the Philippines, we can only speculate that there was a growing nervousness among the Falangists after the German attack of the Soviet Union in the spring of 1941. As an example, in the month of July, Castaño received, as did the rest of the provincial Falangists heads, an order from his superiors in the Falange to create a school of propagandists or "Falange Missionaries," as well as to culminate the process of control over the Spanish community by not submitting the proper official documents of the Consulate, like passports, "to those who don't show the receipt for fees (to the Falange)."<sup>19</sup>

After the outbreak of the war and until the arrival of the Japanese troops, the Falange closed its office in Manila and it had only three members in Cebu, who were accused of being "fifth columnists." There are no contemporary testimonies of what happened then, but it seems that the Falange participated in some of the streetfights which occurred in those days. In May 1942, in one of the first letters that Castaño wrote to his superiors in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he stated that:

if those circumstances had lasted more than the three weeks that it took for the Japanese to arrive in Manila, some of our comrades would have been the object of attention, or at least they would have suffered more hardship than they had.<sup>20</sup>

### The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines

The temporary victory of the Japanese Army was a "kiss of death" for the Falange. Although it was a political triumph for them, it also marked the end of its effective existence, not only in the Philippines, but also in the Americas. The Pearl Harbor attack aligned most of the governments in the Americas with the United States and therefore the Spanish attempts to stimulate "pan-Hispanism" as an alternative to "pan-Americanism" promoted by Washington failed completely. The increased pressure on Madrid in the form of cutbacks in the shipments of oil and other essential products from the United States forced Franco's government to suppress quietly the Falange activities abroad from the beginning of 1942.<sup>21</sup>

In the Philippines, on the other hand, Spain benefited little from the political amity between the government. The Spanish period was attacked by the new Japanese propaganda as being similar to the American one, and the political friendship between Madrid and Tokyo did not help very much in the treatment of Spaniards because of the reticence of the Japanese rulers toward westerners, the same as had happened to Germans and Italians.

The Falange activities, therefore, were limited to some gatherings without any political significance, like conferences or Masses. Auxilio Social kept on working, but with a lack of funds that compelled them to distribute the food weekly, instead of daily, and distribute plain food at that. The only benefit from the Japanese rulers was permission to show some films previously banned as fascist propaganda,

the most political one being on the burial of the Falangist leader, José Antonio Primo de Rivera. The activities of such a group practically ceased, and Castaño noted that, once the war had finished, their office "was not visited by any Japanese . . . and we maintained such a discreet presence that the name of Falange did not appear in any newspaper during the whole period."<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps the principal benefits enjoyed by the Falangists during the Japanese occupation were of an indirect character. They were not harmed by the arrival of the new rulers, and thus they won in their strife against the powerful families, who were placed in a weak position after their leader, Andrés Soriano, joined the United States forces. As such, the Falange gained control of Spanish institutions, like the Hospital de Santiago and the Casino Español. Also, Castaño tried to avail of this good relation with the Japanese to get rid of some of leftist Spaniards when the military authorities asked him for names. Apparently, he was the only foreign representative who did that. This can be demonstrated by a letter written by Castaño to the Spanish Minister in Tokyo, a city that was the only channel Castaño had to communicate with Spain and in whose Archives the letter reads:

. . . right after the occupation of the Japanese forces, the chief of military police asked me for some names of the Spanish "red" elements residing here. The number of these elements that could be considered active and whose behavior against the national cause was conspicuous not only during our war but until the entrance of the Japanese forces, I don't think will exceed a dozen. Majority of them were interned in the building called "Villamor Hall" by the Japanese military police, together with elements of other nationalities considered undesirable for political reasons. After some weeks most of them were set free but a group of them who were charged with more serious offenses were transferred to the military prison of Fort Santiago. Among these were Benito Pabón y Suárez de Urbina, whose conduct in the red zone [*Zona Roja*, during the Spanish Civil War] was so conspicuous and José María Campos, old secretary of the so-called House of the Republic in Manila.<sup>23</sup>

Those who were detained for a longer time were Benito Pabón and Rafael Antón (whose journalistic pseudonym was Ramiro Aldave), who were set free in the autumn of 1942 for health reasons despite pressure from Castaño that they should continue to be detained in prison. There seems to be no proof that those denounced by Castaño were executed by the Japanese army, nor that Castaño deliberately denounced Filipinos or Americans, although some of

those he denounced at that time may have been of different nationalities aside from Spanish, without his knowing it. Besides, one should point out that the responsibility of Castaño in the detention of Pabón and Antón was not his alone, inasmuch as he was also urged from Madrid "to request those authorities to continue to detain Benito Pabón and Rafael Antón who were guilty of crimes against civil law, with maximum security and with orders from Spanish authorities for extradition at the opportune time."<sup>24</sup>

Another fact of collaboration that was highly publicized after the Japanese occupation, which can also be clearly confirmed in the same Archives, is this congratulatory message sent to the commander-in-chief of the Japanese Imperial Army in the Philippines after the fall of Corregidor:

On behalf of the Spanish community of Manila I have the honor to extend to your Excellency our most sincere congratulations on the recent and decisive victories of Mindanao and Corregidor. May now this country under the protection and guidance of the great Japanese nation enjoy the benefits of lasting and prosperous peace . . . For the hard work still lying ahead, the Spanish community of the Philippines pledges once more her full enthusiastic cooperation with Japanese military authorities.<sup>25</sup>

This clear collaborationist conduct of Castaño at the beginning of the Japanese occupation poses the question whether the Spaniards in general were also collaborators. It is obvious that this depended on each person and that the individual position of each had more importance than that of the group. What is certain is that the Filipino masses (not the elite, however, because they collaborated with the Japanese from the beginning in order to safeguard their interests as well as to avoid the emergence of a new social class who would displace them) perceived a greater affinity of the Spaniards toward the Japanese. There is proof of particular cases in which Spaniards benefited economically by providing materials or food to the Japanese forces just as there were some Spaniards who were executed or assassinated by the guerrillas in Camarines or in the Visayas because of their collaboration with the Japanese. Often the reason for execution by guerrillas was personal and not ideological or political (also, for the rivalries of the Falange with powerful families, it is necessary to keep in mind the confrontation between the Soriano and the Ferrer families). But Castaño himself, in the only secret report that could be sent to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs without Japa-

nese censorship, states that the attitude in the Philippines against the Spaniards was political and not racial, pointing to the fact that no Spaniard was assassinated by the guerrillas in the island of Negros. Certainly, the Spanish community in this island was composed basically of Basque landlords, affiliated to the moderate and republican Basque Nationalist Party and therefore not Franquist (not even leftists). Some of them were guerrillas themselves.

The collaborationist attitude of Castaño in Manila was the reason for the verbal note of protest from the American Embassy in Madrid to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately after the replacement of Serrano Suñer in September 1942, emphasizing that the Spanish diplomat was "engaged in activities inappropriate to his position as Consul of Spain."<sup>26</sup> After pointing out that because of Castaño, an American, three Filipinos and four Spaniards were imprisoned, and that after them Benito Pabón was still in prison, the note from Washington ends stating that it hopes that Castaño "... will deport himself in a manner becoming a representative of a neutral country and, in particular, will use his position so as to alleviate, rather than to increase, the sufferings of American and other persons interned in Manila."<sup>27</sup>

The note did not have an immediate effect—Pabón was already free—partly because the new high officials in the Foreign Affairs Ministry did not know about the case and the text of the note was considered meddling in Spanish internal affairs, and therefore, was answered in a slightly brusque manner. However, Castaño was informed of the protest, and this pressure from Washington in the affairs of East Asia was not forgotten. At the end of April 1943 when Madrid decided to sever all forms of cooperation with Japan—like refusing to renounce the right of extraterritoriality in China or to elevate the mutual legations in Tokyo and Madrid to the rank of embassies—one of the offshoots of American pressure was to urgently order Castaño to ask for the freedom of Pabón. For the authorities in Madrid, if the Philippines had been considered before as a part of an area of predominant Japanese interest, now they began to consider it as within a territory of American influence. With this change, the Spanish political stand towards neutrality obliged the officials to retreat from their earlier intentions to extradite Spanish Republicans from Manila to Madrid.

The existence of the Falange in the Philippines ended completely with the arrival of American troops who put Consul Castaño under arrest for eleven days, and later also arrested Chancellor Ferrer,

giving the case much publicity. After his release, Castaño had to return to Spain as soon as possible and Patricio Hermoso became in charge of the Falange to assure its inaction, since Castaño himself prohibited any kind of activity. The only organization that survived temporarily was the Auxilio Social for the purpose of distributing food to aid the Spanish community.

### Conclusions

Probably, the Falange was the most important organization of Spaniards ever created in the archipelago. If not strong in financial power or influence, definitely it was powerful in number. Ninety percent of the Spanish nationals affiliated with them, as claimed by the Falangists at their peak of influence, can be exaggerated. The affiliates were used as a political weapon by some prominent persons. The employees of Tabacalera were ordered to affiliate and then disaffiliate when it became convenient to the company managers. However this shows that grouped around the party were a big proportion of pro-Franquists, as well as how vivid the effect of the Civil War was among the Spaniards in the Philippines.

The Falange conflict with the Conservatives was not exclusive to the Philippines. There were plenty of similar conflicts in the Spanish communities all over the Americas and even in Spain. This provoked violence. In the summer of 1942, a Falangist threw a bomb at the conservative Minister of War, killing one person. The Falange tried to become the Spanish institution in the islands and therefore it was inevitable that conflict or competition with other Spanish institutions dedicated to the Spanish community would arise, such as with the Spanish Consulate. But the conflict also had a social aspect. Since the Consulate and other Spanish were dominated by the traditional well-to-do families, the Falange represented the middle and lower-middle strata of the society, or what the founder José Antonio himself called, "the modest middle class" (Payne 1965, 63). Therefore it can be classified as an episode of social struggle between the upper classes of the society and those trying to replace them. It was a process similar to that in Italy or Germany, but not in Japan, where there was no dispute of this type. We can surmise, therefore, that this was a process typically European inside an Asiatic society.

The participation of Filipinos in the Falange activities can give us some clues about a possible penetration of the Falange ideology in



the whole archipelago. However, this is a topic yet to be researched, as well as the influence or secret activities of the Axis as a whole in the islands. In the case of the Falange, as we have seen, the lack of a reliable way to communicate with Madrid was its weakest point, because its messages were taken by other Spaniards. Without enough money for coded telegrams, the Falange had to rely on the Foreign Ministry to do it. And when the Falange controlled this Ministry, it was the United States who was its enemy.

Soriano appears as a key person in the life of the Falange in the Philippines, first helping it to organize and later indirectly pulling strings against its leaders. There is no proof that Soriano or other qualified representatives from the Spanish-Filipino oligarchy adhered to the Party by paying monthly fees or similar dues, although it is probable they did, or did the handraising salute during the Spanish War. However, it is necessary to point out again what happened in Spain as the key factor in their behavior. Every anticommunist was their ally, and therefore it was natural for the Conservatives to have the Falange as their temporary "bedfellow." The participation of Soriano employees and persons close to him in the Board of the Falange during the first stages of its life can give us a hint about the intentions of Soriano: to drive this party out of the Philippines for his own benefit for his own interests. This was similar to what Franco tried to do and definitely succeeded in doing in Spain after May 1941, managing to placate the revolutionary aims of the Falange and placing at the top people who were more "Franquist" than "Falangist." But Soriano failed. In 1941, the breach between the Falange and the wealthy families was already too wide. But also the situation in the Philippines and Spain was different. The change of citizenship was a possibility outside Spain, but not within. The most intense period for the Falange in the Philippines produced a different reaction than that in Spain. Its opponents, leftists as well as conservatives, could dissolve their bonds with the Franco government, which could not be done in Spain. Therefore, the policy of the Falange of trying to guide politically the Spanish communities abroad had a consequence in the long run: those who did not share their narrow ideological frame had to renounce their former nationality.

Soriano's example can be considered representative of the rest of the wealthy families. When the Spanish Civil War broke out, they shared the strong anticommunist point of view of the Falange, but shortly afterwards they, by themselves, moved away, first from the Falange Party, later from the Madrid regime and finally, some of

them, from their own bonds to Spain. One usual question in the interview for change of nationality was to explain the reason why they previously backed a totalitarian regime while later desiring to join a country with a democratic ideology. The answers given range from continuing to defend the Franco regime to denouncing it and even expressing indirectly shame at being a Spaniard as they extolled the Filipino fight against Spain forty years before, therefore equating the Franco regime and Spain itself. Afterwards, once World War II had ended and when the Franco regime became diplomatically isolated, the image of Spain as a backward country did not help very much to renew the ties between the newly born republic and its former colonizer.

It has been mentioned that the coalition that raised Manuel Quezon to the presidency of the Commonwealth in 1935 was characterized in part by the connection with things hispanic. One decade later, in the first presidential election after the end of the war, it was essentially the same group (backing again Andrés Soriano and including Douglas MacArthur) which was one of the main backers of Roxas, helping him to win the presidency against the incumbent Osmeña. The generational gap was slight, but Roxas, having been educated in the University of the Philippines, meant a change compared to the former power coalition: a closer link to the United States. Moreover, there was no longer a "Partido Español." With the arrival of Roxas, the coalition that backed him to the presidency lost one of its previous characteristics: the hispanic identity. To be called "Kastila" was not anymore a source of pride.

### Notes

#### ABBREVIATIONS

AEET: Archives of the Spanish Embassy in Tokyo. In process of being sent to AGA.

AMAE-R: Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Archives. Renovated Section.

AGA-AE: General Archives of the Administration. Foreign Archives Section.

AGA-SGM: General Archives of the Administration. "Secretaría General del Movimiento" Section.

NARS: National Archives and Records Administration.

PRO-FO: Public Records Office. Foreign Office Section

1. The funds had to be substantial, although we do not know the exact figures. To avoid the Edicts of Neutrality, the money was sent to a Juan T. Figueras, a resident of Biarritz (south of France), who forwarded the money afterwards to the Nationalists through the diplomat Federico Oliván. See Andrés Soriano to the Ministry of For-

Foreign Affairs of the Nationalist Government, Manila, 4 April 1938. AMAE-R. Box 1004, folder 7, hereafter referred as AMAE-R-1004-7 and so on.

2. The Neutrality Act promulgated by the United States government did not allow a more explicit terminology. The Foundation was established with Ignacio Jiménez, Mariano Olondriz, Ramon López-Pozas, Felipe Fernández and Joaquín Orio as members of the Board. A copy of this document can be seen in *¡Arriba España!* (n.d. [1939], n.p.).

3. Minutes of the meetings of 8, 13, and 25 January and 8 February, in Soriano to Secretary of Foreign Relations (Nationalist), Manila, 26 March 1939. AMAE-R-1004-7.

4. Adrián Got to Secretary of Foreign Relations, Manila, 8 July 1938. AMAE-R-1004-7.

5. Castaño to Martín Pou, San Sebastián, 29 July 1938. SGA-SGM-27.

6. "Since (Adrián) Got has ceased to be representative (Consul) of Spain, you don't have to grant him any consideration." Castaño to Patricio Hermoso (Provisional Chief of Falange), San Sebastián, 21 December 1938. AGA-SGM-27.

7. 18 July 1938 speech.

8. Adrián Got to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Manila, 27 July 1938. AMAE-R-1004-7.

9. Consul Maldonado to Foreign Affairs Ministry, Manila, 1 January 1941. AMAE-R-1736-22.

10. Maldonado to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Manila, 1 January 1941. AMAE-R-1736-37.

11. "La Falange en la Diplomacia," 5 December 1940.

12. Castaño to the Serrano Suárez, Manila, 8 September 1941. AMAE-R-1736-28. This issue, of excellent quality, appeared in 1942, without any reference to Falange, as requested by Castaño.

13. "Falanges españolas en el Archipiélago Filipino," Madrid, 20 May 1940.

14. Speech of García Albéniz to the youth of Falange, in *Mundo*, *ibid.*

15. Information about this can be found in the dispatches from Soriano to the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Manila, 10 September, 8 October and 12 November 1941. AMAE-R-1736-14. About Soriano, see also the folder "Soriano, Commonwealth, 1942-1945." Entry 2, Box 52. NARS, Record Group 126.

16. Maldonado to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Manila, 8 October 1940. AMAE-R-1736-38.

17. "La Guerra en el Pacífico," 20 October 1940.

18. The report, based on interviews, described the Falange as a propagandistic movement, although probably they could not have access to coded documents. "The Falange in the Philippines," report from the 441st Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment. February 1945. CIDT-441-02. Monthly Report of Activities. NARS, Record Group 94, Box. 18339. Copy of the documents provided by Rico Jose.

19. Sandoval (National Delegate of Exterior Falange) to Castaño, Madrid, 27 July 1941. AGA-SGM-76.

20. Castaño to the Foreign Affairs Ministry through the Spanish Legation in Tokyo, Manila, 20 May 1942. AEET.

21. Hoare (British Ambassador in Spain) to Foreign Office, Madrid, 23 January 1942. PRO-FO-371-31264.

22. Castaño to the National Delegate of Foreign Falange, Madrid, 19 July 1945. SGA-SGM-76.

23. Castaño (unsigned) to the Spanish Minister in Tokyo, Manila, 14 July 1942. AEET.

24. Serrano Suñer to Mendez Vigo, Madrid, 9 February 1942 (Re-transmitted to Castano the same day) AEET. The intention in Madrid was to repatriate them to be able to have a judgment later. It was said that Benito Pabón had been in the Tribunal that condemned Jose Antonio to death.

25. Manila, 7 May 1942. According to the son of Jose del Castaño, the Japanese were the only ones who solicited the greetings and Castaño's doubts were dissipated by the chancellor of the Consulate and old editor of the magazine *Yugo*, Francisco Ferrer. Personal interview, Madrid, 12 March 1992.

26. American Embassy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Madrid, 26 October 1942. AMAE-R-1736-33.

27. Ibid.

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