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Ajuntament d'Inca



#3



Modernism in Inca

Speaker: Pere Rayó Bennàssar, historian.

Modernism, the artistic movement that developed in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century, reacted extremely imaginatively against historicism and naturalism. It materialised in a decorative language inspired by nature: in architecture, it sought out functionalism using new materials like glass, iron, ceramics, etc.

Modernism is considered to have started in Mallorca in 1901, the year of the project of the Gran Hotel, the work of Lluís Domènech y Montaner, and to have ended in 1914, when Gaudí abandoned the restoration work on the cathedral. However, we can find a popular modernism that occupied nearly all of the first third of the 20th century. In the absence of a bourgeoisie to support it, as was the case in Catalonia, modernism arrived more as a decorative fashion, in particular in the decoration of façades, without modifying the structures of the buildings.

In Inca we find three currents of modernism: an *art nouveau* modernism, undulating and floral; a *breakaway* modernism of straight, austere and rational lines; and a historicist modernism. The most abundant one is the popular modernism executed by anonymous master builders who imitated the new tendency.

The architects and master builders

Some important architects and master builders who were sometimes linked to modernism worked in Inca. We are referring to:

Jaume Alenyar Ginard (1869-1945). He executed important modernist works in Palma in collaboration with the architect Gaspar Bennàssar Moner. As a municipal architect of Inca, he developed prominent town planning projects. Alenyar's works in Inca related to modernism are:

- **The Kiosk in Els Pins square**, now Mallorca square. Later it was the municipal library (demolished building).

- **Sa Quartera⁶ (1918-1920)**, which has a historicist exterior with a rooftop railing with plant ornamentation. Functional interior.

Francesc Roca Simó (1874-1940). His best-known modernist works are Can Casasayas and Pensió Menorquina (Palma). His relationship with Inca is reduced to two buildings:

- **General Luque barracks,⁵ main pavilion (1909)**. Neo-Gothic historicist influence in the central part of the façade.
- **Martí Bernat Morell house⁶ (1925)**. The plant decoration is concentrated at the top of the façade and the windows. The two doorways of the ground floor (that of the house and the garage) are flanked by carasses, large monstrous faces.

Guillem Reynés Font (1877-1971). The son of the master builder Gaspar Reynés Coll. He was a diocesan architect and collaborated with Antoni Gaudí and Joan Rubió on the restoration work of the cathedral and that of the Lluç sanctuary, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Coronation of the Virgin Mary. In Inca he designed three modernist works:

- **Can Fluxà⁷ (1910)**. Modernist details in the concave lines of the doorways and windows and the coloured strips that frame them.
- **Can Mir⁸ (1914)**. Bay window on the corner, now gone. Floral decoration based on small tiles and the use of wrought iron.
- **Teatre Principal⁹ (1914)**, which practically disappeared with the restructuring by the architect Francesc Casas in the year 1945.

Josep Oleza Frates (1897-1971). He was a municipal architect of Inca, where he designed a large number of works executed in rationalist style. The works with modernist characteristics are:

- **Can Janer¹⁰ (1926)**. A building in which the corner, with a curved wall and balconies, is the most relevant part. Details of *art nouveau* modernism.
- **Can Florencio¹¹ (1935)**. Inspired by *breakaway* modernism, especially on the corner.

Sebastià Riusec Llompart, "es Pollenci", a relevant figure in terms of Inca's architecture at the beginning of the 20th century. His buildings with modernist influences are:

- **Former Hotel Domingo/Paris centre¹² (1910)**. Plant ornamentation on the enclosing wall at the top of the façade.
- **Can Amengual/Cas Metge Cifre¹³ (1913)**. A stately home in which the main



modernist elements are found on the interior and in the courtyard with *art nouveau* decoration.

- **Ca n'Ensenyat**.¹⁴ A stately home with modernist details in the garden, where the small ceramic tiles are combined with a more classicists language.

Historicist modernism

Involving the alliance of modernism with a previous historicist style. In Inca, we find two constructions from the Neo-Moorish historicist trend:

- **Former Inca Cycling Club**¹⁵ (late 19th century). Pre-modernism. The historicist influence is revealed in the horseshoe arches on the façade.
- **Can Beltran**¹⁶ (1909). Oriental and floral decoration.

Popular modernism

The outsides of the buildings are ornamented with plant and floral decoration or with ceramic material. Wrought iron appears on bars and balconies with curved shapes.

- **Former dyeworks of Bartomeu Fiol**.¹⁷ Polychrome, ceramic tiles and geometric and floral motifs on the bars.
- **Can Fiol/Can Ramis**¹⁸ (1923). Plant and anthropomorphic ornamentation on the façades, typical of *art nouveau* modernism. The female face of the corner stands out.
- **Can Ribot**¹⁹ (1926). Geometric and floral decoration above the door and windows.
- **Can Marquès**.²⁰ Outstanding for its mullioned windows and the polychrome ceramic panels of the top floor.



- **Can Piritis**²¹ (1909). Polychrome ceramic panels under the windows of the first floor and the porch.
- **La Florida**²² haberdashery. *Art nouveau* modernist decoration on the counters.
- **La Lealtad**²³ Modernist ornamentation on the counter.
- **La Giralda**²⁴ Ceramic tiles with plant motifs on the façade.
- **House of the photographer Fiol**²⁵ Chromatic alternance of voussours in the three arches of the ground floor and balconies with curved lines in the porch.
- **Cas Baster**²⁶ (1922). Decoration with green tiles above the windows.
- **Can Fullana**²⁷ (1912). Remarkable for the two bay windows of what was the Banc Agrícola of Inca. The one on the corner, made of iron, was inspired by typical *art nouveau* modernist elements. By contrast, the one in Els Hostals street is closer to the *breakaway* current in its characteristics.

- **Cas Metge Amengual/Can Domènech**²⁸ (1919). Interesting modernist bars.



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