

SOME REFLEXIONS ABOUT THE FRENCH AND “FRENCH-STYLE” IN ARCHITECTURE IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA IN THE TRANSITION FROM THE MEDIAEVAL TO THE MODERN ERA

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Resumen

La ininterrumpida circulación de artistas, de obras y de modelos de un lado al otro de los Pirineos a lo largo de toda la Edad Media y buena parte de la Moderna, y las relaciones dinámicas y dialécticas que generaron estos flujos tanto en sus lugares de origen como en los de recepción, acabaron posibilitando la aparición de fenómenos sumamente ricos e interesantes, fruto de múltiples aportaciones, interacciones y transferencias, que no solo no se ajustan a la geografía de las naciones de la Europa moderna, sino que tampoco parecen responder a las taxonomías y periodizaciones estilísticas al uso. Tratando de trascender todas estas coordenadas, perseguimos analizar el fenómeno protagonizado por los canteros y entalladores que atravesaron los Pirineos para trabajar en la Península Ibérica a lo largo de los siglos XV y XVI, prestando una atención especial a cómo fue percibido por quienes asistieron a su génesis y evolución.

Palabras-clave: Gótico, Renacimiento, Arquitectura, Estereotomía, Península Ibérica.

Abstract

The uninterrupted circulation of artists, works and models from one side to the other of the Pyrenees throughout the Middle Ages and most part of the Modern Age, and the dynamic and dialectic relationships generated by these flows both in their places of origin and in the receiving places finally allowed the appearance of extremely rich and interesting phenomena. These episodes, result of multiple contributions, interactions and transfers, not only don't reflect the geography of the nations of modern Europe, but also don't seem to follow the usual stylistic taxonomies and periodizations. Trying to transcend all these coordinates, we aim to analyse the phenomenon whose protagonists were the stonemasons and carvers who crossed the Pyrenees in order to work in the Iberian Peninsula throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, paying special attention to how it was perceived by the ones who witnessed its genesis and evolution.

Key-words: Gothic, Renaissance, Architecture, Stereotomy, Iberian Peninsula.

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The Pyrenees have never comprised an unbreakable barrier, rather it was merely the birth and progressive consolidation of two grand modern nations to either side of these mountains that conveyed on them the title of border, a process that actually came about over a period of several centuries. Conflicts and armed confrontations, the progressive militarization of either side, not to mention the signing of successive agreements, forged at centres of power ever further from the mountain chain, and signed with the goal of establishing precise boundaries all would lead to a secular permeability of the “border areas”. Nor was the process – full of milestones including the Treaty of the Pyrenees (signed in 1659) – halted by dynastic unification, which indeed led to the coining of that well-known phrase *‘il n’y a plus de Pyrénées’*, an expression attributed variously to the Marquis de Castellidorsíus, a Catalanian diplomat who, with unvarnished enthusiasm, rushed to proclaim Philip of Anjou as King of Spain, and to Louis XIV, proud grandfather of the very same gentleman of Anjou. In fact, the process would continue throughout the 18th century and well into the 19th. In any case, it must be noted that the effort made to convert this mountain range into a border, if not unbreakable, at least controlled, failed to halt migration – in either direction – even in the most difficult of times, such as those experienced first in the Peninsula and, later, across Europe in the latter stages of the first half of the last century (Morales Lezano, 2010: 22-45; Jané, 2017).

For our purposes, the flow went back and forth constantly throughout the Mediaeval and Modern Eras, albeit the extensive knowledge about the flow into the Peninsula – with evident peaks that

can easily be explained through the contexts of both departure and arrival – could lead one to a distorted understanding of the phenomenon².

These migratory phenomena enabled transfers of all kinds to occur, naturally inclusive of cultural and artistic fads³, which would continue unchecked in both directions in much the same way. However, our field – imposing a compartmentalized sequential historical structure – has sought to fit them into specific moments, linking them to the rise and pursuit of each of the “styles”, almost exclusively focusing on a study of arrivals from the other side of the Pyrenees, i.e. positing a system that has relegated the Iberian Peninsula to a singularly passive role in all this (Marías, 2005: 28-30). In fact, the non-stop toing-and-froing of artists, works of art and models and the ensuing dynamic, dialectic relationships in both the points of origin and destination, would lead to the rise of phenomena that were both enriching and stimulating. These incidents are the consequence of multiple contributions and interactions that not only fail to fit with the geography of the modern European nations, but equally seem to have little to do with the stylistic taxonomies or periodizations in use. Therefore, from this author’s perspective, an effort needs to be made to transcend all the factors present and analyse them, while paying particular attention to how they were perceived by those present for their genesis and evolution. On occasion, these witnesses were able to distinguish with accuracy the features of these phenomena and, in addition, the personal contributions of the participants to the issue.

Herein, the aim is to examine a lengthy, wide-ranging phenomenon in depth, focusing

² The large number of studies over the years analysing the phenomenon of French immigration into different areas of the Iberian Peninsula, particularly in the 16th century, allow for ambitious generalisations to be made (Salas Auséns, 2003, 2009).

³ In line with the concept as developed in Guilloüët (2009).

exclusively on events taking place across a period lasting from the end of the 14th century to the back-end of the 1500s or early 1600s. The key figures of the time were stone masons, who received fundamentally practical training in the techniques of their craft, taught in work crews or workshops that moved about with utter freedom, going where the market required them. They worked in into two closely related fields, which only nowadays we insist separating: architecture on the one side and sculpture on the other. These trades adapted to the scarcity or complete lack of stone in particular areas, making use of other materials, such as wood or gypsum, as they sought to meet the demands of their clients.

Some of these craftsmen travelled over the Pyrenees, but once on the other side, set to work in teams comprised of craftsmen of different origins, many of them local, amongst whom transferences and exchanges were both inevitable and multifarious.

Contemporary documents, such as those on the construction of Saint Augustine Chapel for La Seo Cathedral in Zaragoza (1417-1422), erected by Master Isambart (doc. 1399-1434) and his overseer Pedro Jalopa (*ca.* 1386/1391-1443)⁴, reveal that these groups worked in perfect harmony, following a hierarchy determined by the level of training – and capability – of each of the members of the group. They were led by the Master who, having completed a lengthy and complex training process, was in a position to contract building works (with all the ensuing

financial burdens involved), design them and create the layouts, produce the templates required to carve the blocks of stone necessary to materialise the building, and oversee the work assigned to his subordinates. It is worth noting that the master would be directly involved in all the tasks that needed to be undertaken for the business at hand, from the simplest, initial matters – e.g. extracting stone from the quarry, roughing and working the blocks – to the most specialised of work, i.e. notching and elaborate statuary. Likewise, it must not be forgotten that



Fig. 1 - Daroca (Zaragoza). Old collegiate church. The 'Corporales' Chapel. Triple ciboria (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

in some specific cases the work was only considered complete upon receiving its corresponding pictorial adornment⁵, as was the case of the triple ciboria for the "Corporales" chapel in the old collegiate church in Daroca (Zaragoza) (Fig. 1), undertaken at the same time by the very same crew working on the Saint Augustine oratory for the cathedral in Zaragoza.

⁴ For the work undertaken by this crew, see Ibáñez Fernández (2011a, 2014). For documents on the construction of this chapel, see Ibáñez Fernández (2012a: 99-201, docs. 1-23).

⁵ For the timeline of the chapel, see the assessments in Aguado Guardiola *et al.* (2012). On pictorial adornment, which saw the adoption here of the same techniques that had just been used for the Champmol Charterhouse (sponsored by the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy), see Aguado Guardiola *et al.* (2014).

The architectural renewal of the 15th century

The work undertaken by crews on the move, such as that led by Isambart, marks the start of an interesting renewal in architecture that would end up affecting all the kingdoms across the peninsula (including Portugal) and last on into the 1440s. Over this period, the Peninsula would become a favoured location for experimentation, where professionals of diverse origin would, based on a mastery of the art of stone cutting, prove capable of trialling new stereotomic solutions, or positing original architectural sub-types (e.g. stairways) and conceiving interesting structural types for both civil (the *Lonja de Mercaderes* – the Merchants' Exchange) and religious sphere. This latter ranged from a type of single-nave funerary chapel with a polygonal apse of three walls, with a notable sense of centralisation in elevation, thanks to the use of compound vault solutions (comprised of ribbed, triangular vaults or squinches, and tierceron vaults) as first encountered in the construction of the Santiago Chapel at Toledo Cathedral (ca. 1435-1438) (Fig. 2), which would then be used for chevets for a number of ecclesiastical buildings; to the striking inscribed Latin cross cathedral design – with straight east wall – proposed for the *Magna hispalense* (1434) (Fig. 3), which would be further used in the construction of other buildings of the same type on either side of the Atlantic (in Salamanca, Jaén, Valladolid and Mexico) over the

course of the 1500s. Echoes of this can still be found in later projects, such as the plans for the Pilar Cathedral in Zaragoza in the last quarter of the 17th century.



Fig. 2 - Toledo. Cathedral. Santiago Chapel. Vaulting system (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

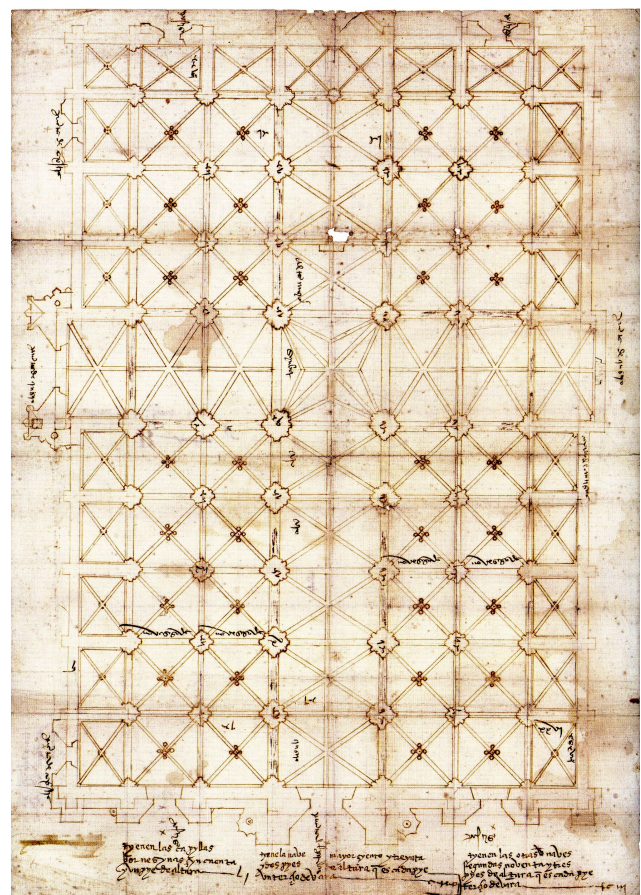


Fig. 3 - Traça of Seville Cathedral (Begoña Alonso Ruiz y Alfonso Jiménez Martín).

Different phenomena arose out of these experiences, such as the stereotomic revolution which grew out of Valencia and its sphere of influence thanks to the work of Masters such as Francesc Baldomar (doc. 1425-1476) and Pere Compte (doc. 1454-1506), which would undergo notable later development on the other side of the Pyrenees and extend through the Mediterranean. Then, there was the overtly elaborate decorative version that was developed in and around Toledo by craftsmen including the aforementioned Jalopa, Hanequin of Brussels (doc. 1418-1471/2), Egas Cueman († 1495) out of Brabant, or the Breton Juan Guas († 1496). There was even a version that arose in and around Burgos, particularly after the German master Hans von Köln (ca. 1420-1480) arrived in the Castilian city in the early part of the 1440s (Ibáñez Fernández, 2016a, 2016b).

Structure and décor

By that stage, an understanding of architecture had been developed that was captured in the *Compendio de architectura y simetria de los templos* text, a manuscript that was based around a core of six chapters written by Juan Gil de Hontañón (ca. 1470-1526) for his son Rodrigo (1500-1577), or by Rodrigo from the experiences passed down by his father (Gómez Martínez, 1998: 20-25), which would later be collated, ordered and expanded in the early 1680s by Simón García (1681-1683)⁶.

An analysis of this work reveals that the author understood that a distinction should be made between “science” and “art” when talking about architecture. For them, “science” arose from a

sequence of knowledge based on both practical experience and scientific exercises, calculations and demonstrations. This knowledge then comprised an abstract immutable system of relationships that could not be disregarded that was then expressed in the design, i.e. in the architectural plan, and fleshed out in the structure.

They felt the structure, which could be undertaken freely under no other conditions than those imposed by the developers, the monetary funds available and, of course, its feasibility, could – and, indeed, should – be left unadorned. Based on a thoroughly late-Mediaeval concept, they understood that “art” – the embellishment of the structure – could respond to any decorative repertoire or vocabulary. It was an element that depended on people’s tastes and the uses made at any particular time – it was not governed by unchanging, eternal laws, so it was ancillary and, ultimately, superfluous.

This separation of structure and décor, and the way in which these were conceived, reveal why craftsmen who were used to employing “modern” repertoires, i.e. Gothic, had no objection to accepting – and including among their work – the new “al romano” decorative style that made its way to Spain from Italy in various ways and through different channels during the second half of the 15th century. This phenomenon must have occurred on either side of the Pyrenees almost simultaneously but it is perfectly evident in the production of many of the craftsmen who crossed the mountain range to work in the Iberian Peninsula around the turn of the 15th century.

⁶ The manuscript was published in two separate editions. The first focused on the first six chapters, i.e. those directly related to the Gil de Hontañón family (Camón, 1941), while the second came with a transcription and a facsimile of the whole manuscript (Bonet Correa *et al.*, 1991). For the artistic persona of Simón García, see Rupérez Almajano (1998), and Bonet Correa (1999).

Their number included the Burgundian Philippe Bigarny (ca. 1470-1542), who is presumed to have had a traditional educational background, which enabled him to participate in both constructive and, naturally, sculptural pursuits. He was to engage in this later activity with rather more energy and, consequently, has received greater attention in the artistic literature. However, the true extent of his qualities as a stone craftsman was revealed through documentary sources that linked his qualities with various architectural enterprises (Del Río de la Hoz, 2001: 285-288)⁷, and was even reflected in his own sculptural work. Indeed, his first documented work on this side of the Pyrenees – a relief portraying Christ on the road to Calvary on the retrochoir in Burgos Cathedral (1498) (Figs. 4 and 5), for which he was provided a *patron* undertaken by *maestre Simon* [Simon of Cologne (ca. 1454-1511), son of Hans von Köln], which the Burgundian promised to *facere en perfeccion de mucho mejor obra* (Martínez y Sanz, 1866: 107; 282-283), – reveals the depth of his stereotomic knowledge. It would be shown above all in the way in which he resolved the issue of the span of the door in the walls of Jerusalem using an “arco en esviaje” (oblique-angled arch) made from a single piece of stone, something at once consequential and eloquent. However, this marvel has failed to garner him anywhere near the attention received for his other interesting – and early – antiquary cutting frame⁸.

In any event, it is interesting to note that for certain students of the early 1500s these late



Fig. 4 - Burgos. Cathedral. Relief portraying Christ on the road to Calvary. General view and detail (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 5 - Burgos. Cathedral. Relief portraying Christ on the road to Calvary. General view and detail (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

mediaeval constructions which included elements of the new Italianate decorative repertoire (sporadically and superficially) must have been markedly “French” in nature, impeding these creations from being acknowledged as “al romano” or “a la antigua” in style. In fact, one tends to feel that the second Count of Tendilla sought to prevent his brother

⁷ Nowadays, he is credited with the Presentation or Lerma Chapel project for Burgos Cathedral (1519-1522), which was covered using a vault system which would be developed over the next few years. The fact that its usage was considered for the construction proposal for the second crossing tower in the same cathedral [preserved in the National Historical Archive in Madrid (ca.1539-1540)] lends credence to the idea that this means of graphic representation may indeed have been the work of Bigarny, long linked by the literature to the design of the structure that was finally built (Ibáñez Fernández *et al.*, 2016: 180-186).

⁸ Indeed, the span was framed by two pilasters which featured a *candelieri* decoration on the jambs and were crowned by two capitals, probably Corinthian in nature. Bridging the span, two cyma mouldings frame the cornices, with images of Hercules and Antaeus, and the mythological hero defeating the Nemean lion, over which runs the entablature, with a frieze decorated with *putti*, and fortified coping with merlons and crenellations, which present a fine, carefully delineated cut ashlar.



Fig. 6 - Gaillon (Eure). Castle. Portico attached to the Grand' Maison (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

Cardinal Diego Hurtado de Mendoza's tomb from being finished in just such a way when he wrote to Alonso Rodríguez, Master of Seville Cathedral (doc. 1477-1513, † 1513), informing him that he did not wish that the part which had already been made by the time the missive was sent – dated to 15 October 1505 – could be mixed with *ninguna cosa francesa ni alemana ni morisca*, [puesto que pretendía] *que todo [fuese] al romano* (Pérez, 1988: 407-408; Marías, 1989: 239, note No. 65; Szmolka Clares *et al.*, 1996: 504; Szmolka Clares *et al.*, 2015: 504⁹. His wish must have been satisfied as the burial monument was given over to Domenico Fancelli, who, for this reason, moved to the Andalusian capital in 1509 (Lleó Cañal, 1979: 99-103; Morales, 1992a:

185-187; Morales Chacón, 1996: 31-34).

In the same way, one could interpret the difference between sculptural work done *à la mode Française* and *à l'entique*, as noted in the entry for the agreement reached with mason Pierre Delorme for the carving of the stone trimming intended to frame the medallions sculpted by *messire Paguenin* – Guido Mazzoni, the sculptor from Modena – for the décor of Gaillon Castle, executed on 25 April 1509¹⁰. Indeed, everything seems to suggest that in a context such as that of the construction of the lavish recreational residence ordered built by Cardinal Georges I d'Amboise on the banks of the Seine in Normandy (Fig. 6) (Chirol, 1952; Weiss, 1953; Smith, 2003;

Thomas, 2003; Bardati *et al.*, 2003; Hamon, 2006; Pagazini, 2008), enriched with works of art imported from the Italian peninsula and the craftsmanship of workers from the same area, a clear distinction can be made between what could be achieved using the local traditions (late mediaeval in origin) in response to the wishes of the developer, while aiming to adopt, albeit it superficially, the models offered among everything brought together to construct the building, and genuinely Italian parts – whether imported or built on site by Italians – undertaken in “the ancient way”, and raised to the level of archetype.

⁹ On the interpretation of the contents of the letter, see indications in Jiménez Martín (2006: 92-93; 2014: 191-192).

¹⁰ “Pierre de Lorme, maçon, a fait marché à monsieur de Sauveterre de faire et tailler à l'entique et à la mode française de pierre de Vernon les entrepiez qu'il faut à asseoir les medailles baillées par messire Paguenin, icelles asseoir soubz la tarasse basse du grant corps d'ostel, livrer toutes matieres, moiennant huit livres tournois piece, qui en sera paié aud. de Lorme, avec dix livres tournois outre lesd. VIII pour entrepié, ainsi que plus à plain est contenu et déclaré ou marché sur ce fait et passé le XXV^e avril mil cinq cens et neuf.” (Deville, 1850: 405). For the document in the context of the castle construction work, see (bibliographic reference) A light was shone on the importance of the evaluation in the entry in Ibáñez Fernández (2012b: 77, note No. 306).

The perception of the coexistence of not just a vocabulary but rather forms of expression, perfectly differentiated complex languages, as demonstrated in those references from the beginning of the 16th century, invites one to examine the field of linguistics in order to understand what was happening in architecture at this point in time, during the Humanism-dominated cultural revolution that was the Renaissance. Among other things, this revolution was characterised by a desire to return to the forms offered by the classical antiquity. It took little time for people to accept that re-establishing widespread use of Latin was infeasible and opt to regularize the various languages that had spread across the Old Continent even before Latin fell into disuse. They were organised based on that language, by means of the creation of grammars and dictionaries – for Spanish, Portuguese and French. Equally, architecture never fully saw a return to the forms as practised by the Romans, rather, starting from the various construction methodologies forged across the Late Mediaeval period, it aimed to respond to the challenges put forth by the adoption – and also the adaptation – of a series of archetypes that were to take considerable time to define. Thus, buildings continued to be constructed based on the practices developed to that time, just that the distinction between structure and decoration that had enabled the superficial adoption of a new “al romano” decorative vocabulary would have to permit, first of all, the enrichment of buildings through the inclusion of largely autonomous old fashioned two-dimensional structures that could be integrated (façades, apertures for lighting) or otherwise (altarpieces). All of these were created based on ever more complex and elaborate models, provided steadily more often in printed form. Secondly, there was the appearance of

various initiatives in favour of “redefining” the groined vault in a more classical fashion. However, a most notable phenomenon would arise when people tried to apply the construction methods used to that point – and in particular, from the perspective of this article, the stereotomics developed across the Iberian Peninsula after over two centuries of transferences back and forth over the Pyrenees – to give material shape to complex structures, closed using new Italianate construction solutions based on formal, spherical geometries. These solutions could no longer be found by resorting to the proven efficiency of groining: though in some specific cases solutions “por cruceros”, i.e. ribbed solutions derived from groined vaults, were adopted, others were concluded using the carving and assembling of “piezas enterizas” (single pieces) (Ibáñez Fernández, 2016b: 57-64).

Two-dimensional structures

The first segment should include work undertaken by many craftsmen arriving from the other side of the mountains, starting with the most advanced creations by Bigarny. Such is the case of the entryway to the church at Our Lady of Mercy monastery in Casalarreina, La Rioja (*ca.* 1515-1519) (Fig. 7) (Del Río de la Hoz, 2001: 132-141; Alonso Ruiz, 2003), which reflected the late mediaeval training of this master in terms of his concern, openness and flexibility when using models that were antiquarian in nature. In this case, aside from a set of cards printed in Ferrara or Venice around 1463 (González de Zárate, 2011), he must have used repertoires of formal models which appeared architectural in nature yet lacked any structural sense. They were conceived as mere archetypes to be applied



Fig. 7 - Casalarreina (La Rioja). Our Lady of Mercy Monastery Church. Entryway (Levantamientos Arquitectónicos y Arqueológicos).

decoratively, similar to those that Diego de Sagredo would collate in his *Medidas del romano*, published, perhaps not coincidentally, where the epitome of Gothic decoration was implemented, i.e. in Toledo, in 1526. Strangely enough, this work offers an interesting sketch of the Burgundian as a

singularissimo artifice en el arte de escultura y estatuaria: varon assi mesmo de mucha experiencia: y muy general en todas las artes mecanicas y liberales: y no menos muy resolutivo en todas las sciencias de architectura (Sagredo, 1526: f. AV r.).

In this section, it is also worth examining the work undertaken by various craftsmen arriving in Aragon and Navarre somewhat later. Such is the case of Gabriel Joly of Picardy (doc. 1514-1538,

† 1538), known in particular for his altarpieces, which reveal a progressive upturn in his budget, due in no small measure to his work with Italian colleagues, such as Giovanni (Juan de) Moreto (doc. 1520-† 1547), or those who were “pseudo-Italian”, like Gil Morlanes *el Joven* (doc. 1514-† 1547), or Esteban de Obray of Normandy, author of the splendid alabaster entryway for Santa María in Calatayud (Zaragoza), contracted in 1525 and concluded three years later (Fig. 8) (Ibáñez Fernández, 2011b, 2012b).



Fig. 8 - Calatayud (Zaragoza). Santa María Church. Entryway (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

This roster could also include Nicolau Chanterene (doc. 1511-1551, † 1551) who, as is known, would travel from Portugal to Aragon – making contact with Joly – to acquire the alabaster necessary to create the altarpiece for Our Lady of Pena (*ca.* 1527-1532) (Fig. 9) (Abizanda y Broto, 1915: 156; Serrano *et al.*, 1989: 120; Días, 1996; Serrão, 2001: 143-145; Grilo, 2004: 400; Ibáñez Fernández, 2011b: 128-131;

Flor, 2018); a piece that manages to show very clearly that he had received comprehensive late mediaeval training, based around a profound understanding of the geometry pursued in the practice of quarrying, as can be seen when analysing the angled interplay of perspectives – architectural, foreshortened – which he used to create the structure of the altarpiece, as much as some of the architectural frameworks or backgrounds to the scenes contained in its panels, like that used to frame the depiction of the Birth in the attic (Fig. 10) (Cabezas, 2004).

Towards a “classical redefining” of the groined vault

Both Juan de Juni (doc. 1537-1577, † 1577) and Esteban Jamete (doc. 1535-1565, † 1565) belong to the next generation. Leaving aside the question of where the former was born insofar as the link between the surname and the place name Joigny suggested by Gómez Moreno is being reviewed (Urrea, 2006: 4; Arias Martínez, 2008: 10), it is of interest to recover the information collated by Loperráez at the turn of the 18th century, according to which he would have come from Rome to Porto to undertake the construction of



Fig. 9 - Sintra. Our Lady of Pena Monastery (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 10 - Sintra. Our Lady of Pena Monastery. Detail of the attic (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

the Bishop's Palace in that city, ordered constructed by Pedro Álvarez de Acosta, who occupied the residence from 1507 – though effectively from 1511 – to 1534¹¹. These references have served to link the appointment of this pastor as Bishop of León – he would take

¹¹ *La buena educacion que le dió su tio (el cardenal Jorge de Acosta), sus talentos, y la instruccion que alcanzó por el trato que tuvo con los hombres mas grandes de la Corte de Roma, formáron en él un corazon magnánimo, y un conocimiento general de las ciencias y las artes. Con esta buena disposicion empezó á formar varias ideas, y lo primero que determinó fué el levantar de nuevo las casas episcopales, porque las que habia eran muy antiguas, y con pocas comodidades, y no hallando Maestro que le acomodase á sus grandes ideas, hizo venir de Roma al Arquitecto Juan de Juni, que las construyo en breve, y tan magnificamas, que son de las mejores del Reyno de Portugal. En nota, Loperráez señala que Juni fue tambien Pintor y Escultor, y executó todas las obras que costó este Prelado, así en Oporto, como en el Obispado de Osma [Loperráez Corvalán, 1788: 413].*



Fig. 11 - León. Cathedral. Cloister. Vaulting system (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 12 - León. San Marcos Convent. Sacristy. Vaulting system (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 13 - León. Cathedral. Cloister. Vaulting system. Detail (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

possession of the seat in the same year¹² – to the arrival of the artist in the city¹³. However, according to some studies, Juni must already have been working there at the time (Campos Sánchez-Bordona *et al.*, 1998: 240, 251, 254), while others find no connection between the two facts, given that Acosta was not to reside in his newly appointed destination (Arias Martínez, 2008: 12). At any rate, Juni is documented in León in the 1530s, as are Jamete and other craftsmen of French origin, at the time of the intriguing attempt to “redefine” the groined vault in a classical form, tackled in various construction projects begun around this time under the direction of Juan de Badajoz *el Mozo* (ca. 1495/1498-1552), such as the renovation of the cathedral cloister, begun in 1536 (Fig. 11), or the construction of the sacristy at San Marcos convent (ca. 1538-1549) (Fig. 12) (Campos Sánchez-Bordona, 1993: 213-226, 349-376; Campos Sánchez-Bordona *et al.*, 1998: 246-247; Campos Sánchez-Bordona 2013: 67-77).

In these and other works, such as the cloister for the San Zoilo Benedictine Monastery in Carrión de los Condes (Palencia), begun in 1537, whose stonework attests to the presence of Jamete at least¹⁴, the groined vaults were undertaken in a totally new way (Fig. 13). This used pendant keystones that, on occasion, took the form of inverted cauldrons, anchored to the diagonal ribs by means of Ionic-style moulding, similar to those arrayed – in two dimensions – on the

¹² *En el año de mil quinientos treinta y tres le nombró el Rey D. Manuel de Portugal por Capellan mayor de las Infantas, y muriendo el Rey ántes de empezar á exercer el oficio, lo dio á otro su sucesor D. Juan el III; pero pudo tanto la virtud y buena fama del Obispo, que fue electo para dicho empleo por voto y parecer de todo el Consejo Real; con cuyo motivo vino a España á acompañar á la Infanta de Portugal Doña Isabel, hija del Rey D. Manuel, que casó con el Emperador Cárlos V; y habiendo vacado poco tiempo despues el Obispado de Leon, hizo el Emperador presentacion en él, del que tomó posesion en diez y siete de Abril de mil quinientos treinta y quatro, y aunque no residió en el Obispado por seguir la Corte con la Emperatriz, hizo muchos beneficios á la Iglesia y á los pobres, y dio cincuenta doblones de á diez escudos de oro viejo al Monasterio de S. Saturnino para que levantaran la sacristia que se habia quemado, como tambien ornamentos, cálices, y demás vasos sagrados* (Loperráez Corvalán, 1788: 414).

¹³ Loperráez doesn't say exactly this (see note No. 25), but others seem to deduce it from his words in González (1974: 12), and in Arias Martínez (2008: 12).

¹⁴ When Jamete was questioned by the inquisition during his time in Cuenca, the prisoner stated that he had travelled from León *a Carrión de los Condes donde estuvo al pie de quatro meses e trabajo en el monesterio de San Gil* (sic, for San Zoilo) *que es de benitos al oficio de talla* [Dominguez Bordona, 1933: 25; Turcat, 1994: 23]. For a study on the work, see Zalama Rodríguez (1990: 94-96).

voussoirs, some secondary pendant keystones, with oblique-angled carved pots, in line with the geometry of the vault. The decoration is sculpted and often figurative, and aside from making use of the hypertrophied keystone bases, it extends across the wider areas on offer across the severies. This solution has been considered evidence of a possible Franco-Burgundian affiliation (Campos Sánchez-Bordona, 1993: 99-100; Gómez Martínez, 1998: 155), especially with the oblique-angled elements, and was to serve as a starting point for further experimentation. Such is the case of the vaults in brick, plaster and wood by the Corral de Villalpando, whose solutions were notably daring technically, and expansively decorated, in which a clear French influence has been detected (Gómez Martínez, 2001).

Once more: “modern” and “French-style”

In any case, just like Bigarny, Juni would essentially orient his professional career towards sculpture, though, as was the case with the Burgundian, the effects of his thoroughly late mediaeval upbringing were also in evidence in his sculptures. All it takes is an examination of the stone altarpiece of the Birth, found in one of the corners of the cloister at San Marcos Convent in León (with its disputed timeline) (Fig. 14). Its leading image is remarkably similar to that carved by Chanterene to crown the Pena altarpiece. This detail makes one wonder if he might not have worked in Portugal before travelling to León (Arias Martínez, 2008: 13-16). It could only have been undertaken, as with the possible Portuguese archetype, based on a profound understanding of geometry

bound to a stereotomic praxis (Fig. 15).

Juni would use stone again for other commissions, such as the tomb of Archdeacon Gutierre de Castro, in the cloister of the old Salamanca Cathedral (*ca.* 1539-1540) (Fig. 16)¹⁵. For this piece, starting from his own professional training, he undertook one of the first – and wholly free-form – attempts to adapt the Italian

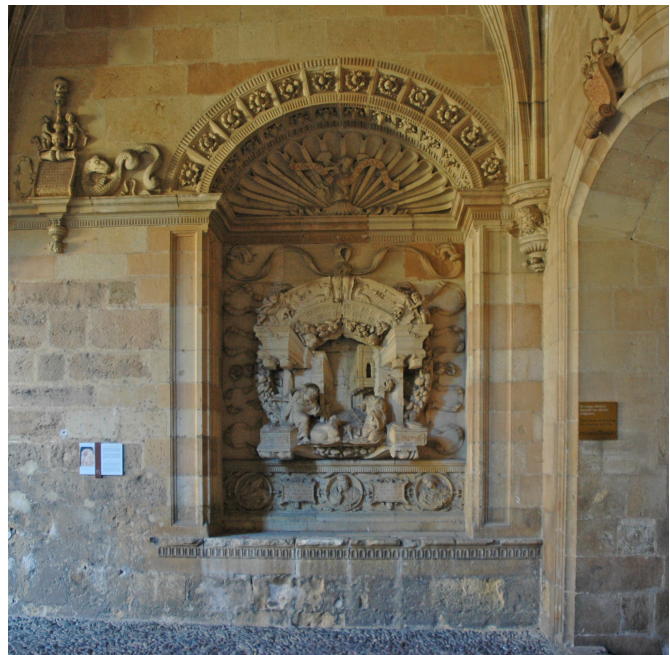


Fig. 14 - León. San Marcos Convent. Cloister. Altarpiece of the Birth (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 15 - León. San Marcos Convent. Cloister. Altarpiece of the Birth. Detail (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

¹⁵ Martín González dated it to around 1540 (1954: 18-19; 1974: 133-142). It is now known that Gutierre de Castro paid 200 ducats for his tomb in 1539 (Castro Santamaría, 2014: 1.555, note No. 60).



Fig. 16 - Salamanca. Old cathedral. Cloister. Tomb of Archdeacon Gutierre de Castro (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

system of the classical orders that, now codified, began to spread at that time thanks to the publishing of the *Regole* by Serlio (1537). On this occasion, Juni managed to constitute a far more elaborate structure than that in León, though without paying attention to compositional requirements or proportionality, which should have been observed when applying the new system, with a heavily ornate sculpting which, unbound by any norm, overflowed the frames of the arcosolium. The result is similar to those of other French creations of the period. These include the western doorway for Saint-Pierre-ès-Liens Church in Riceys-Bas (Aube), and the altarpiece of the Passion for Saint-Laurent church in Bouilly (Aube), dated to 1559 (Boudon-Machuel, 2017: 157-161, 187-191).

These traits would characterise the structures of his ligneous altarpieces, in which his Spanish

contemporaries would bind the “French character” believed to lie within his work. Such, it seems, were the effects of the statements provided by some of the witnesses appearing on behalf of Francisco Giralte (ca. 1510-1576) in the suit against Juni for the contract for the main altarpiece for “La Antigua” church in Valladolid, which lasted from 1545 to 1550 (Martí y Monsó, 1898-1901: 326-350). Thus, Miguel Barreda, who painted imagery, stated that the design presented by Juni showed that he was not

oficial perfecto en escultura, ny brutescos, ny arquitectura, por que antes [parecían] sus obras ser a lo moderno que a lo Romano que [entonces se usaba].

In his opinion,

Fran.^{co} Giralte [era] de mas ciencia y mas fundada que el dicho Juni porque [sabía] este testigo quel dicho Giralte lo [había aprendido] de Berruguete y de otros maestros muy entendidos en Ytalia y sus obras [daban] testimonio dello, y el dicho Juni lo [había aprendido] en Franzia y su arte del [daba] a entender a los que lo [sabían] o [entendían], como este testigo, que no [era] de tanta arte ny zienza como lo que Xiralte [sabía] (Martí y Monsó, 1898-1901: 333).

The painter Jerónimo Vázquez thought along similar lines. For him,

Giralte [era] mas perfecto oficial y maestro en figuras y arquitectura, y en todo lo demas del arte, y mas general quel dho Juan de Juny, porque la obra y arte del dho Fran.^{co} Giralte [era] ytaliana y muy fundada, y la del dho Juan de Juny [era] francesa; adding that entre todos los maestros y oficiales que [sentían] del dho arte, [tenían] por mas perfecto lo ytaliano que no lo [...] francés (Martí y Monsó, 1898-1901: 334).

It is clear that these statements are anything but unbiased, yet commensurate to those made by some of the witnesses provided in turn by Juni, such as the testimony of Llorente (Lorenzo) de Herreros, who made railings, for whom the

italianos called to judge the designs presented by each of the two litigants determined

q la traça del dho Juan de Juny hera de mucho arte... como una dama muy graciosa..., e que la otra hera un asno cargado de oro que no tenya arte ny proporcion consigo (Martí y Monsó, 1898-1901: 339-340).

In any case, these testimonies reveal that in the Castile of the mid-1500s, “French-style” in architecture and other related fields was still linked to everything that could be posited and undertaken from the perspective of freedom inherent in late mediaeval customs. Lacking the designs presented in court, the work produced by Juni reveals that this freedom was sustained both in his personal approach to the system of classical orders – employed without thought for the norms that should have governed their use – and in the boundless approach to decoration used on the altarpiece (Fig. 17).



Fig. 17 - Valladolid. Cathedral. Altarpiece of la Antigua (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

In search of a new geometry

Everything seems to indicate that these features could also be seen in the work of those colleagues who continued to work in the field of architecture for the most part, such as Jamete or João de Ruão (ca. 1500-1580). Beyond contending with the usage of the Italian system of classical orders, these craftsmen found themselves compelled to satisfy the challenge of creating complex spaces, using their stereotomic knowledge, which were enclosed by means of new vaulting systems and domes. Thus, having worked in León and other centres of Spanish art, such as Chinchilla and Úbeda, under the orders of some of the fathers of what is now known as modern stereotomics, such as Jerónimo Quijano (ca. 1490-1563) and Andrés de Vandelvira (ca. 1504/1509-1575), Jamete participated in the development of the domed solution for the staircase in Seville town hall (ca. 1544-1545) (Morales, 1981: 41-42, 84-85, 103; 1992b: 151-152; Turcat, 1994: 46). He found a way to link the interior with the cloister at Cuenca Cathedral using the so-called “Arco de Jamete” (Fig. 18), a massive gateway that rests, against all structural logic, on two large brackets suspended from the wall, which leads to an auspiciously decorated hallway. This was covered over by an oval vault comprising two semi-circular domes joined by means of a section of barrel vault, of which, sadly, just the first few segments have survived (1546-1550) (Fig. 19) (Rokiski, 1985: 146-149; Turcat, 1994: 176-184; Palacios Gonzalo, 2003: 228-229). Lastly, he was involved in the construction of the reliquary chapel for Sigüenza Cathedral (Guadalajara), which also features an extensive amount of sculpted work on the upper sections of its walls and is enclosed by means of a solution that includes a fine “capilla redonda en vuelta redonda”, in Vandelvira’s words, also



Fig. 18 - Cuenca. Cathedral. "Arco de Jamete" (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 19 - Cuenca. Cathedral. Hallway of the "Arco de Jamete" (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 20 - Sigüenza (Guadalajara). Cathedral. Reliquary Chapel (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

featuring a recessed coffer (Fig. 20)¹⁶.

In turn, Ruão is linked to an interesting experiment in "redefining" the groined vault undertaken in one of the chapels in the "Claustro do Silêncio" in Santa Cruz de Coimbra Monastery (1543) (Fig. 21) (Craveiro, 2011a: 128). Here, applying geometry and quartering related to those intended for the vaulting for *voûtes modernes* in *la mode Française*, as with the tierceron with five keystones solution included in *Premier tome de la architecture* by Philibert de l'Orme (1514-1570) (Fig. 22) (De l'Orme, 1567: IIII, VIII, ff. 107 r-108 v), the master solved the vault problem by carving "piezas enterizas" (single pieces), meaning that none of the ribs, not the diagonal ones – in the shape of stylised "abalaustradas" columns – or the imitation curved ones running across the voussoirs as Ionic mouldings, are real or effective and neither is the vault as it is groined. These items can only be materialised with extensive stereotomic knowledge, certainly not in the possession of whoever tried to reproduce this solution in one of the side chapels at Angels Convent Church in Montemor-o-Velho, given use needed to be made of groining (Fig. 23).

It must have been even more complicated to undertake the construction work on the Santísimo Sacramento Chapel in the old Coimbra Cathedral (*ca.* 1566) (Craveiro, 2011b: 122-123), which required the demolition of the Roman apse prior to building the new oratory. As with the designs of the early 1400s, a single nave was built - with a curved east wall on this

¹⁶ Reference documents on the construction of the space date from 1534 to 1574 and they include the names of various craftsmen, among them a master Esteban 'imaginario', identified by Pérez-Villamil as Esteban de O Bray (Pérez-Villamil, 1899: 130-134, 320-326), and by Chueca Goitia as Esteban Jamete, as there is anthropomorphic support (Chueca Goitia, 1953: 153). Fernando Marías did not accept this possibility, as his presence is not mentioned anywhere in the notorious inquisitional process (Marías, 1983: 211, note No. 74). However, we now know that even if he was not there, he had a close connection to the company at the very least. Indeed, he delivered the design for his railing in 1561 (Rokiski 1983: 419-426).



Fig. 21 - Coimbra. Santa Cruz Monastery. "Claustro do Silêncio". Chapel (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

occasion – with a notable sense of centralisation in elevation, no longer in line with compound groined possibilities. In this case with the concave chevet, enhanced by the enveloping nature of its stone altarpiece, an exquisitely resolved formula needed to be developed. It would comprise two carefully quartered pendentives and a spectacular recessed "capilla redonda en vuelta redonda" (Fig. 24). This was undertaken by carving "piezas enterizas" (single pieces), not dissimilar to the vaulting – on four pendentives – to enclose the Wise Men Chapel at the San Marcos Convent in Coimbra just a few years later (*ca.* 1572-1574) (Fig. 25).

By that stage, after centuries of transferences, the stereotomic development in the Iberian Peninsula was being used for the option developed to construct El Escorial Monastery (1563-1584), a rather more sober alternative from a decorative point of view. Observers like Juan de Arfe y Villafañe (1535-1603) tended to criticise work of this nature, where the structures were unnecessarily loaded with

menudencias y resaltillos, estípites, mutuos, cartelas y otras burlerías que por verse en los papeles y estampas flamencas y francesas,

[seguían] los *inconsiderados y atrevidos artífices*, y *nombrándolas invención* [adornaban], o por mejor decir [destruían], *sus obras, sin guardar proporción ni significado* (Arfe y Villafañe, 2010: 7).

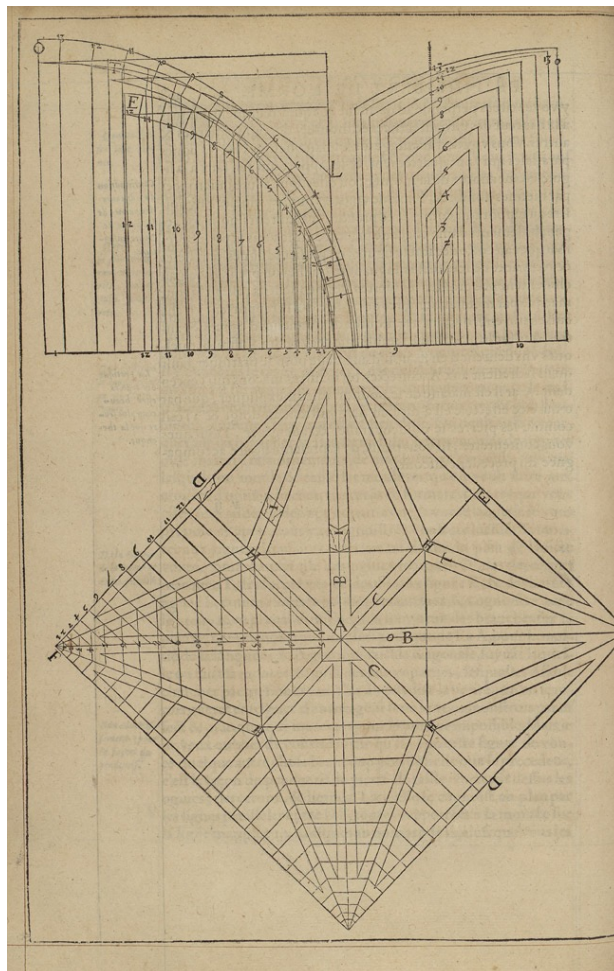


Fig. 22 - Philibert de l'Orme. Voûte moderne a la mode françoise (De l'Orme, Ph., *Le premier tome de l'architecture de Philibert de l'Orme conseiller et avmosnier ordinaire du Roy, abbé de S. Serge lez Angiers*, Paris, Federic Morel, 1567, IIII, VIII, f. 108 v).



Fig. 23 - Montemor-o-Velho. Angels Convent. Church. Side chapel (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 24 - Coimbra. Cathedral. Santísimo Sacramento Chapel (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).



Fig. 25 - Coimbra. San Marcos Convent. Wise Men Chapel (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

And lastly... two visions head-to-head

Arfe did not examine technical matters, perhaps because he understood that the stereotomic heritage coming together at that time could no longer be assigned any specific “nationality”. However, it is highly significant that Louis de Foix (doc. 1561-1603/1604) tried to arrogate

himself an important role in the stonework at El Escorial – not supported by documentary evidence – to further his career upon his return to France¹⁷. Ironically, there he would end up producing structures that would also have deserved a critique from Arfe, amongst which the Cordouan lighthouse (1594-1606). Indeed, the walls of the chapel – unavoidably central – were overly elaborately designed, being enclosed via a coffered dome, made by carving “piezas enterizas” (single pieces) (Guillaume, 1970).

In any case, it must be noted that some of the stereotomic solutions developed in the construction of this monastery would be judged to have been French. Indeed, Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588-1657), who visited the Philippine Foundation in 1626, noted that the well-known vault for the “sotacoro” in the church – a “capilla caudrada en vuelta

redonda”, i.e. a pendentive vault enclosed using concentric layers, albeit undertaken using a very flat ramp – (Fig. 26), was finished *alla francese* (Marías, 2005: 27-28; López Mozo, 2003: 1.330-1.334). This view of this erudite Italian may have been conditioned by the lowered profile of the vault, associated with the *mala manera*

¹⁷ The information passed on by Louis de Foix to Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617) would end up collated by Claude Perrault (1613-1688) in the preface to his translation of *The Ten Books of Architecture* by Vitruvius, first published in 1673 (Marías, 2005: 25-26). For more about this character, see Grenet Delisle (1998); Buisseret (2002: 16-21); Fradier (2016: 214, 219-220, 234-235, 250).

franciosa since at least the time of Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571)¹⁸, was the subject of significant attention from French writers such as l'Orme¹⁹; nevertheless some of the French architects and theoreticians of the 1600s were not so naïve. Out of self-interest and actively involved in the national construction movement set in motion during the reign of Louis XIV, they tried to appropriate modern stereotomics as applied to masonry such as that of El Escorial, putting the use of such in service to an “ancient” or “Italianate” architecture as if it were a French characteristic through and through. This would lead to notions such as the *architecture classique à la française* appearing as largely in force (Marías, 2005: 26-27).

By contrast, the assessment by Arfe once more linked exuberant decoration and not following norms with the “French-style”, although this was done by citing printed sources and models, which led to a particular understanding of “French-style” in Spanish architecture of the 1500s (Chueca Goitia, 1953: 318-321; Marías, 1989: 447-448). From this come concepts such as “Renacimiento a la francesa”, used first by the Spanish literature (Gómez Martínez, 2001; Ibáñez Fernández, 2007, 2012c), and later adopted by other European regions (Nobile, 2015), as a differentiator when analysing those



Fig. 26 - San Lorenzo de El Escorial Monastery. Church. Vaulting system of the “sotacoro” (Javier Ibáñez Fernández).

artistic movements – primarily architectural – over the course of the 16th century, whether effected by French masters or by following French models. These would be identifiable and, consequently, could be characterised according to the abundant embellishments, built without concern for classical rules, comprised among others by various elements of architectural morphology, such as micro-architecture, aerial architecture and anthropomorphic pillars.

In the end, the different perception, reading, understanding and conception of “French-style” in Modern Era architecture on either side of the Pyrenees ultimately seems to show that consciously or not, our realities and cognitive and intellectual capacities enable us to contribute disturbingly decisively to establishing borders where none existed that perhaps only appear insurmountable. Responsibility seems to lie with us.

¹⁸ Here, Cellini is referring to the format in anse de panier of the golden gate at Fontainebleu which, in his opinion *era grande e nana, di quella lor mala maniera franciosa; la quale era l'apertura poco più d'un quadro, e sopra esso quadro un mezzo tondo istacciato a uso d'un manico di canestro* (Cellini, 1973: lib. II, XXI, 312). On the widespread use of a lowered vault in French architecture in the Modern Era, see Pérouse de Montclos (2001: 139-146).

¹⁹ De l'Orme also paid particular attention to *anse en panier* constructions in wood (De l'Orme, 1561 : II, ff. 37 r-53 v), and to *voute toute ronde, & surbaissée en façon de four* (De l'Orme, 1567 : IV, XV, ff. 117 r-118 v).

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