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SAINT MARY'S COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF XÀTIVA: PICTURES, PROJECTS AND FACTS

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INTRODUCTION

In 1732 the mathematician and architectural expert Juan Bautista Corachán, faced with the loss of the original plans and in light of the works already built, was summoned by the jurors of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva to give his opinion regarding the continuation of the temple. In his report[1], he concluded, that it would be better to "improve the building making use of modern techniques but maintaining the flare of the old parts already constructed". This advice perfectly explains the intrication of the various constructive phases undergone by the church of Xàtiva over more than three centuries. A complex architectural palimpsest, the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva is the result of a series of intertwining construction and design phases alternated with long periods of inactivity brought about by different causes such as the finding of rocky soil under the construction site, an unstable financing system based on piecework, long conflicts regarding the exchange of land or the impetus of earthquakes; evidencing the correlation of the ups and downs of its construction with the social and economic circumstances experienced by the city of Xàtiva in modern age.

The Collegiate Church was designed in 1596 and was constructed starting from the apse. The works came to a halt in the second decade of the XVII century; later on, in a second phase, spanning between the years 1683 and 1705, construction was resumed with a new impulse affecting mainly the transept and façades as well as the joining of the transept with the apse. Works stopped again with the Spanish Succession War and the fire of Xàtiva in 1707, and were not resumed until 1732, when thanks to various reports, including the aforementioned report of Corachán, the chancel and the transept were vaulted and the nave and two adjacent bays were erected. These works were not completed until 1777 after a series of long interruptions. From 1777 onwards the building was extended with a series of projects and works that lead to the construction of the dome, the jaspers tabernacle, the main façade and the belfry, and the west end bays. These works went on until the first decades of the XX century, as can be evidenced by various photographs of the time. Also in 1885 a new dome was erected after the collapse of the one built in the XVIII century due to an earthquake. No wonder then that the learned Orellana at the end of the XVIII century – representing without doubt the widespread opinion of the valencian people – wittily remarked the extended delay of the "sumptuous" work of the Collegiate Church: "...if others (likewise large) can count their growth in years, this one can count it in centuries", coining the Valencian saying "this is going to be like the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva" meaning it is a never ending construction.

This Collegiate Church, of such tedious construction, has never seen fulfilled the monumental expectations for which it had been designed and conceived. Nowadays it stands somewhat faded, not at all corresponding to the purpose it was once given by its promoters and architects. Nevertheless, sparks of said intentions can be seen in the façades and in certain structures of the building, containing evidence of its historical and artistic importance in the Spanish architecture. The long list of renowned architects and builders attest the architectonic significance of its construction. Pedro Ladrón de Arce, Francesc Figuerola, mosén Joan Blas Aparici, mosén Casimiro Medina, José Sierra, fray Alberto Pina, José Francisco Ortiz y Sanz "the Vitrubian", Ventura Rodríguez or Pedro Arnal. Likewise, its construction its supervised and reported by prominent individuals such as the mathematician Juan Bautista Corachán, the infantry lieutenant colonel Felipe Gavilá, Jaime Bort, the chief architect of the Cathedral of Murcia, the Valencian architects José Vilar de Claramunt and José Herrero, the academic Vicente Gascó and in the XIX century Joaquín Cabrera and Juan de Madrazo. Furthermore, the architects who participated in its construction proudly undersigned documents in other regions of Spain as chief architect of the Collegiate Church. In fact, having directed the works of the Church was such a praiseworthy merit in one's career, that the architect and friar Alberto Pina used such distinction to become a member of the Royal Academy of San Carlos.

The Collegiate Church was without doubt among its contemporary citizens the main temple - aspiring to be Cathedral- of the second most important city of the ancient Kingdom of Valencia, and a close competitor to the medieval Cathedral of Valencia from a modern architectural point of view. It has its own particular Collegiate typology, more akin to that of a Cathedral than a Parish Church, with three naves and spacious side chapels –those linked together at the side of the nave-, a protruding transept, a dome standing on powerful piers, an apse enclosed by a polygonal wall of nine sides with a wide ambulatory and radiating chapels and a slender chancel with open spaces between its pillars. Its rigid interior made of stone and articulated with the syntax of the classical orders has a vertical appearance and follows the Escorial aesthetics, especially in the transept piers. This character has been pointed out by the historians who have

[1] These are a set of unedited texts conserved at the Real Colegio del Corpus Christi in Valencia, "Apuntamientos del Dr. Coratjá", in the manuscript*Miscellanea Mathematica* of the Mayans Library, vol. no. 460, pages. 455-464. They are transcribed in the chapter "Texts and Documents about the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva".

written about it, as Tormo in 1923: “its sober interior similar to that of El Escorial calls the attention”. Its renaissance vaulting is an example of modern stone-cutting, at a time, when this type of construction was not longer used in the Valencia area. The chancel and the radiating chapels were admired by architects and experts who studied them. They acted as an incentive for the revival of stereotomy in the XVIII and XIX centuries, as can be seen in the aisles next to the transept and in the spiral staircase of the belfry. The façades attest the intermittent building process during more than three centuries, with several types of styles: from the classical renaissance of the beginning of the XVII century in the apse door, the modern oblique baroque of the late XVII century in the northern and southern façades of the transept, to the eclectic main façade of the second decade of the XX century, a hasty compromise solution.

One of the most important and complex matters encountered by the analysis of the Collegiate Church is to discern what was built during each of the construction phases so as to clarify and study the ideas behind the original projects throughout the long time of its construction. No matter how many new pieces of evidence are found – such as the reports by the mathematician Juan Bautista Corachán in 1732- o the amount of revealing historical drawings –such as the project of the Collegiate Church by friar Alberto Pina in 1760-, all documented information surrounding this long and complex constructive period remains incomplete. Little is known about the precise intentions behind the first project in 1596 and in 1683. Without doubt, these are two decisive moments affecting the core construction and future configuration of the Collegiate Church. Despite the lack of documentary evidence, it is amazing how much information can the careful observed extract by examining the fabric of this magnificent building and understand a bit more the guidelines and architectural culture so relevant at the time and place of its construction. Thus a long historiographic future awaits this building, generously giving out new information to the studious who, like the jurors, experts and architects of the first quarter of the XVIII century must have found out when they tried to elucidate the idea behind the original project, –referred to by Corachan as “the ancient part”. Because there were no drawings or documents they had no other choice than to study what had already been built and were compelled to “connect and improve” newly added parts.

I. THE DESIGN OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH: PRELUDE AND TRACES

From mosque to Christian temple

The Collegiate church of Santa Maria, a former mosque, was the main religious building in the city of Xàtiva, but unlike what had happened in the majority of Valencian towns, it had kept part of its original Islamic architecture, which had gradually been Christianised since the thirteenth century. The particular hybridisation of historical shapes and structures was described in mid sixteenth century by chronicler Martín de Viciana. In 1564, he referred to it as the largest church in the city; it remained "mosque" of the Muslims built by them, in seven almost quadrangular bays with a belfry with ten good bells. The main chapel is dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, for whom a solemn ceremony is held on her feast day…" He mentioned many other chapels as well, such as the Santa Ana and Fiebres chapels, or the Borja chapel. He also alluded to the chapel of Sant Bartolomé, which was ordered to be built by Cardinal Jaime de Casanova, and to other chapels of illustrious families from Xàtiva such as the Castellars and the Joans. According to Viciana, all of them were "beautiful and notably decorated with lovely altarpieces and endowed with good revenues".[2]

The only illustrated image we have of the church before its total refurbishment begun in the late sixteenth century is an image of the outside, although it is not very precise. It was furnished by Wijngaerde in his 1563 drawing of Xàtiva, in which we can make out a large church with a high pitched roof which seems to be marked with buttresses between the windows, and with a belfry that stands out very noticeably. In the illustration, we can also make out the presence of several main chapels that had been added onto the primitive structure and that by the mid sixteenth century were almost considered independent churches juxtaposed onto the original structure. One that stands out is the Santa Ana chapel, a funerary chapel that was ordered to be built by Cardinal Alfonso de Borja in the mid fifteenth century before he was chosen to be pope under the name of Callixtus III. Its remains, known through a photograph dating from 1902 and the sculptural fragments that are conserved in the city museum, are proof of its magnificence. It was used as a communion chapel until the late eighteenth century, when it was totally dismantled when the extension of the new collegiate church building was being designed. Boix narrates in 1856 how "lost already amongst the modern structures, the remains of a chapel, called the Cardinal's chapel" were found.[3] Of the chapels that were reformed in the late fifteenth century, another prominent one is known as the Chapel of the Fiebres, founded in 1497 by Francisco de Borja, bishop of Teano, Treasurer of Alexander VI, president of the Apostolic Chamber and Cardinal of Cosenza. His coat-of-arms and inscription, the latter with perfect epigraphic Latin characters, are conserved in one of the chapels in the ambulatory of the current Collegiate Church.[4] In addition to the aforementioned chapels, we have proof of renovations in other spaces in the collegiate church in the early sixteenth century, such as the sacristy that had been remodelled in 1510 and some chapels that had also been modified at later dates, namely in 1523 and 1532, according to indirect information from documents. However, we are unaware of whether significant changes had already been introduced in its architecture or whether they were more decorative renovations, as we assume they were. Perhaps the remains of mouldings and Ionic capitals that have been found in the construction sites of the outside roof of the ambulatory were associated with some of the chapels that were built or refurbished in the sixteenth century. Two of these Ionic capitals – with a characteristic and simplified straight cushion and barely noticeable volutes with tiny incisions in the stone –

[2] See the section with texts and documents on the church of Xàtiva.

[3] Begun in around 1451, it must have been built rather quickly, because by 1452 the grille work and stained glass windows were installed and Joan Reixach was commissioned to create the altarpiece, which fortunately still remains. We can indirectly relate it with the Hospital chapel, as although the Callixtus chapel had at least two bays, it was covered with tierceron rib vaulting from imposts or brackets, two of which are conserved, identified with Sofonias and a Moses. It is reached through a crocketed arch flanked by pinnacles, with an angel bearing a Borja coat-of-arms. A keystone with a Calvary is also conserved, which, just like the other sculptural remains, is highly refined and has an utterly original composition.

[4] It was presided over by the tablet by Pinturicchio, sent from Rome, with the image of the owner and donor, until it was moved to the new collegiate church in 1774 and sent to Valencia to be restored in 1818, where it remains until today as part of the Fine Art Museum collection. The chapel also stood out for other interesting pieces, and especially for being complemented by an altarpiece commissioned to the Hernandos in 1511, presumably the end of an altarpiece with a Roman-style structure. We do not know whether this contract was truly fulfilled due to the lack of information on its subject and the loss of Xàtiva's painting heritage, but in any event it demonstrates an early interest in the Renaissance ways these artists displayed. It also allows us to explain the commission, which are do know for sure Yáñez fulfilled, on a later date of the enormous pala of the Last Judgement, which was housed at the collegiate church until 1936 and is known through old photographs. About this chapel, Gómez-Ferrer, M. and Corbalán de Celis, J., "Un contrato de los Hernandos para la capilla de les Febres de la Seo de Xàtiva en 1511" *Archivo Español de Arte*, May-June 2006, vol. LXXIX, no. 314, pp. 157-168.

are closely related to the ones used in numerous buildings in Xàtiva back in the first half of the sixteenth century (courtyard of the Almudín, the Borja home).[5]

One of the main reforms undertaken in the sixteenth century – in terms of important architectural structure – was on the belfry. In 1536 and 1537, a man who would later emerge as one of the most important masters from Xàtiva in the first half of the sixteenth century, the master builder, carpenter and bricklayer Ausias Piquer, was commissioned to build an arch between pillars in order to install a clock in the belfry.[6] This may well be the structure that juts out above the prismatic volume with its two spaces for bells, as can be seen in the aforementioned drawing by Wijngaerde, with the pillars and capitals also commissioned to the same master. The belfry was one of the remains that was left standing at the same time, along with the entrance to the right nave of the temple (Gospel side). Even Boix described it in 1857 as "blackened and sombre", despite the fact that the last body that had threatened ruin a few years earlier had been removed.

Next to these chapels or belfry, the inside of the Collegiate Church continued to exhibit important remains of its Islamic past, which in the sixteenth century made it an object of curiosity and even at times admiration as a paragon of an ancient Arab art, of a past splendour that was "mosaical" and decorative.[7] Beuter, Viciana, Miedes and Escolano all alluded in their works to the inside of the Xàtiva church, highlighting the remnants of the mosque and in particular the remains of reliefs and Arabic calligraphy that still adorned its pillars and arches. Thus, Beuter, who wrote prior to Viciana, in his *Primera Part de la Història de València*, published in 1538, insisted on the image of the mosque that the Collegiate Church still had: "And in this way on the pillars of the collegiate church of Xàtiva, which still remain the same as they were in the time of the Muslims, when it was a mosque, are found many golden letters written and those who still know how to read say that it says Veyt Allà, which means, as mentioned before, House of God".[8] This text was repeated in the immediate translation into Spanish in 1551 when Beuter pointed out that "there are still, around the pillars in the main church which is now and was then that mosque, many Arabic letters that are testimony to this". The agreement and adjudication for the complete overhaul of the church, dated in 1596, once again emphasises this matter, as it indicates that the old church was "built in the place where the Muslim mosque had formerly been, and thus on some parts of the walls and arcades there are Muslim letters written"[9], insisting that this is slightly untoward as it is found in the largest church in the city the size of Xàtiva. Later, in 1610, Escolano once again mentioned its Muslim origins, and even though by then construction on the new collegiate church had already begun, its remains were still in full view given that the demolition was gradual and progressive. Escolano defined it as "a sumptuous building from those times made with mosaic with many reliefs and mouldings".[10] Escolano had taken this description from the previous one dating from 1584 by chronicler Bernardino Miedes (1520-1589)[11], when he wrote the *Historia del rey Don Jaime*. He copied these words almost verbatim; for example, when he describes the conquest of Xàtiva by King James I, he points out that "the king decided to knock the mosque to the ground and build a new temple on the same site laid out like he had done in the city of Valencia. But after all of this is amply recognised, finding it very spacious and sumptuously built of mosaic work and relief, it was highly sought after by the queen and prelates, with all the other gentlemen who followed them; and much more so by the

[5] Bérchez, J., and Gómez-Ferrer, M., "Arquitectura de la época Moderna en Xàtiva" *Historia del Arte de Xàtiva* (at press).

[6] Sarthou Carreres, C., *Datos para la historia de Játiva*, 1933, p. 303. year 1536: "master woodworker Ausias Piquer, agrees with the jurors to raise the clock tower to the last part of the belfry, to make the upper part and pillars and in 1537 "a promise made by master Ausias Piquer to make an arch in the belfry to reinforce the pillars on which the clock rests, for a price of 25 gold ducats"

[7] The term "mosaical" used repeatedly by Valencian authors to describe the Arab remains of the collegiate church of Xátiva falls within the general lines of the word as used in sixteenth and seventeenth century Hispanic culture to refer to works which were predominated by a prolific decorations that were either Hispanic-Muslim, Gothic or Plateresque. During the seventeenth century, with the rising Solomonism that dominated Spanish Baroque culture, the term "mosaical" took on a vaguely polysemic nature as it also referred first to works with a biblical origin and simultaneously to a remote historical origin (see Marías, F., "Haz y envés de un legado: la imagen de lo islámico en la cultura del renacimiento y el barroco", *La imagen romántica del legado andalusí*, Barcelona, 1995, p. 111). The sequence, in simplified form, of this complex semantic process can be followed by comparing the definition given by Sebastián Covarrubias in 1611, in his *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana*, which centres on the prolifici decoration of Taracea works – "certain antique endeavour, which is once again in vogue, of small glass stones dyed in a variety of colours, which once embedded on the wall with a certain strong polish, make different patterns and figures" – with the one furnished in the *Diccionario de Autoridades* in 1732 in which the decorative meaning of mosaic is relegated to second place, giving way to highlighting the more strictly architectural and Solomistic meaning as upheld by Juan Caramuel de Lobkowitz and Tomás Vicente Tosca, who cites "Order of architecture, which is not one of the five main ones. It consists of columns, which rise in the form of flames, and make waves, revolving like spires. Its inventors must have been Jews, and for this reasons these columns are named mosaical or Solomonic, taking the name of the legislator Moses and the wise King Solomon).

[8] Beuter, P. A., *Primera part de la Història de València*, 1538, edition by Escartí, V.J., Universitat de València, 1998, p. 186.

[9] An agreement cited repeatedly when discussing the renovation of the Collegiate Church. See Sarthou, C., *Datos para la Historia de Játiva,* p. 347. Due to its importance, it is contained in the appendix on texts and documents on the Collegiate.

[10] Escolano, G., *Década Primera y Década Segunda de la Historia de Valencia*, (1610), 1972 edition, Department of Modern History, University of Valencia, ninth book, p. 1162.

[11] This description can be found in Ventura Conejero, A., "La consagració de l'antiga mesquita en 1248", *Papers de la Costera*, 11, 1998, pp. 12-17, coming from a text by Bernardino Gómez de Miedes, *La Historia el rey don Jayme de Aragon*, Viuda de Huete, 1584, chapter 14, book 14.

mayor, and most prominent Muslims in the city, who would not let such a unique and rare building to be demolished, and that they wanted it to be the main temple in the city for Christians if it remained standing. (…) And with the temple in it thus purified and once again consecrated, it was dedicated to the name and invocation of the most holy Virgin Mary, and even today it remains in its entirety." In any event, the problem of the Muslims loomed over this Collegiate church, which still bore the imprint of Islam throughout the entire sixteenth century, a century of forced conversions and militant indoctrination. As Christianised as the mosque may have been, or as widely admired as the Hispano-Muslim antiquities that it harboured might have been, the threat of its – infidel - religious imagery still lurked, liable to bear witness to the identity of the Muslims. Along these lines, in 1551, Viciana reported that the mosque of Xàtiva was a site of pilgrimage by Muslims: "we must not forget that the Muslims so venerated the main mosque of Xàtiva that they came to it in pilgrimage from far and wide". It should, then, come as no surprise that at the end of the century, in the spirit of the Counter Reformation, there was a particularly strong drive for a complete overhaul of the Collegiate church to replace the last of the great mosques still standing in Valencia.

The beginning of construction. Agreements and financing

"On 26th October 1595, the Jurors agreed to build a new temple; this agreement was confirmed and signed by the particular and general councils on 17th and 18th of this month and year,[12] and both councils conferred power and authority on the city to draw up the design and oversee the construction as it belonged to them… In the year 1596 the city made the new design and wooden model which it kept in its archive, and work began the same year." Thus Enrique Menor, city councillor, narrated the beginning of the new collegiate church of Xàtiva in his "Noticia y sueldo del real derecho de fábrica", a manuscript dating from 1772 which is conserved in the town archive.[13] Despite evidence of some errors in the accuracy of the dates, perhaps due to an error in transcription, this report may well refer to the deliberations held by the Jurors on 16th October 1596, which are kept in the Xàtiva town archive. These deliberations show the unanimous approval by the city representatives to permanently tear down the ancient mosque and replace it with a temple worthy of a town the size of Xàtiva: "It is known how several times it has been determined that a Collegiate church shall be once again built in this city, in the place where the Muslim mosque used to be where there are still Arabic letters written on some parts of walls and arcades, and this is not an opportune building for the main church of this city, for this reason we want it to be built as it should be… and to adorn this city, because we see that all our neighbouring cities have built new churches over the old ones they had".

This agreement, repeatedly cited as one of the little failsafe evidence of when construction began[14], gave authorisation to start building the church as best seen fit, and it will be for the use and honour of the city" and it granted authority to the Jurors to hire the people whom they chose to build the church by piecework (as opposed to the more costly day's wage). The difficulty financing this project was one of the serious problems plaguing the Collegiate church throughout the entire time it was being built, prompting both several hiatuses in the process and changes in design, all faithful reflections of the city's economic status. Raising the funds needed through a variety of taxes was a stratagem used in the months following this deliberation, with subsequent agreements in 1597 and 1598.

Three taxes fed the financing of the building:[15] the meat levy, the liquor levy and one-third of the milling tax. To this was added the 100-pound yearly revenue paid by Patriarch Ribera every year of his life, and the so-called "*capsou*" tax on bequests and legal wills, namely one *sueldo* per pound, so that residents did not have to be charged.

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[12] It is impossible for the date of deliberation to be cited as 26th October, and then to refer to the 17th and 18th of the same month and year, so it is more logical that the original date of deliberation was 16th October and then the following days, the 17th and 18th. There is proof that the deliberation took place on 16th October 1596, which is the only one that has been conserved by notary Domingo Monfort, so that the text by Enrique Menor may refer to this text, although it may also refer to prior texts, since as the minutes of the deliberation indicate, this matter had been discussed on other occasions.

[13] This text, cited by Sarthou, is actually excerpted from the book by Boix, V., *Xátiva. Memorias, recuerdos y tradiciones de esta antigua ciudad*, Xativa, 1857, pp. 413-414.

[14] Sarthou, C., *Datos para la historia de Játiva*, pp. 346-348.

[15] Our thanks to professor Pablo Pérez for the information gleaned from a lawsuit with the town of Benigànim, in the Archive of the Kingdom of Valencia, henceforth ARV, Royal Audience, Trials in the Third Part-Appendix, file 6089. This is the second lawsuit between the town of Benigànim (which had become separated from Xàtiva in 1602through royal privilege) and Xàtiva, about the division of annual expenditures between both towns. Benigànim accused Xàtiva of having doctored the censuses to cover a series of expenses, including the new Seo.

Charitable donations from private individuals paid the work of the unskilled labourers, especially while laying the foundations, which in some cases was done free-of-charge.[16] From the very start the community got involved in the construction: "At first when the foundations of the building were being laid," testified notary José Menor, "a rich man from this city came along with 25 or more men, and he acted as captain. Forming a company, they came to work on the building, and the captain paid them all". The same testimony comments on the presence the Duke of Gandía[17] at the construction site of as well as his economic contributions to building the Seo. The masters and specialised stonecutters, on the other hand, worked for a day's wage, paid for by these taxes, and if the coffers were ever empty, the work was temporarily paralysed.

The figure of Patriarch Ribera takes on special prominence in the gestation of the collegiate church of Xàtiva. It is common knowledge that he promoted the construction of churches in a number of different towns, and in particular those with a significant Muslim population, by handing over cash, facilitating the payment of certain taxes and contributing holy ornaments with the goal of attracting the new converts.[18] In the specific case of Xàtiva, after his pastoral visit in 1574, he provided precise architectural instructions for the remodelling of what was then the Arrabal Mosque, which had been turned into the rectory of Sant Joan's quarter.[19] Thus, it should come as no surprise that he placed special efforts on building a temple such as the collegiate church, the main church in the second largest town in the Kingdom of Valencia, bearing in mind that it was to replace what could be regarded as the last of the great mosques still standing. His active presence in laying the cornerstone on 22nd January 1598, according to Porcar's account book[20], and one year earlier, in 1597, according to testimony gathered for a lawsuit in the town of Benigànim[21], only serve to confirm his special interest in building this temple, which was extremely important religiously speaking, with dimensions approaching that of the cathedral of Valencia and which clearly exceeded the usual size of temples built in the diocese – probably the largest of those designed in its time and within Valencia – and of the not at all negligible liturgical complexity of its architecture. Not for nothing can one sense in these early building endeavours of the Collegiate church of Xàtiva the idea of erecting a temple that though in line with the characteristics of the Collegiate emulated the idea of a modern cathedral, in terms of both its height – both architectural and cultural – and its time and place. There is evidence of architectural uses and modes in this Collegiate church that must be viewed in relation to Patriarch Ribera's immediate environment, such as the presence in it of the famous architect Francesc Figuerola, also a famed stonecutter, who had close ties to the most significant construction work in his prelature, namely the complex of the Royal College of Corpus Christi. Also pointing in this direction is the exceptional conception of the art of stonecutting in this early collegiate design. We are only aware – albeit fragmentarily – of what was built in this first phase which affected the polygonal apse with nine sides, with nine radiating chapels opening out into a broad ambulatory.

From the time the first stone was laid in 1597 or 1598 until the year that work first slowed down, which might be dated at around 1609-10, dovetailing with the expulsion of the Muslims and the consequent economic setback in a town like Xàtiva with such a plentiful Muslim population, construction continued intermittently until it permanently came to a halt in 1626. A building of this size required a large plot of land, and if we bear in mind that it was built in one of the most populous neighbourhoods in Xàtiva, with a motley assortment of homes, we can easily see that the first steps would have centred around purchasing the homes needed to prepare the land for the apse of the Collegiate church, the site where construction began.[22] Once the land was ready, one of the problems arose that would most hinder the normal pace of construction of the Collegiate church for centuries, namely the complex foundations over an irregular, rocky soil. Shortly after the foundations were begun, they had to be driven one-third deeper to make them more

[16] On sheet 564rº is the testimony of notary José Menor who indicated that although he was not living in Xàtiva when construction got underway, he understood that every day a company went out in the city, with its captain, second lieutenant and other officials to work on the construction site and carry materials free-of-charge. When he returned to Xàtiva, Menor participated in the company commanded by captain Joan Francesc Sanchis. Others testified that some of the captains were motivated to work on the construction site because of their faith.

[17] Idem, sheet 564rº. Captain Francesc Sanchis had a tent brought for the Duke of Gandía, who remained in Xàtiva to support the construction work, testifying that the Duke spent many ducats on the building.

[18] Document cited by Boronat, P., *El Beato Juan de Ribera y el Real Colegio el Corpus Christi*, Valencia, 1904, pp. 369-370, is included in several donations, for towns such as Mirarosa, near Setla, Facheca, in the Seta valley, and Perpugent, in the province of Alicante, and Benimuslem, near Alberique, benefited from these contributions.

[19] Gandía Álvarez, E., "De Xàtiva foral a la ciudad de San Felipe" in *Xàtiva. Historia breve*, 1997, p. 116, points to the text where the Patriarch indicated how one of the arches had to be undone and rebuilt, how the roof tiles had to be repaired, both those facing the belfry and those above the main altar, and how the sacristy had to be enlarged and benches for the well-off men to be installed.

[20] Porcar, J., *Coses esvengudes en la ciutat i regne de Valencia*, 1589-1629, edition by Castañeda, V., Madrid, 1931-32.

[21] ARV, Royal Audience, Trials of the Third Part-Appendixes, file 6089, sheet 685rº, tells how the first stone of the new Seo was laid on the feast day of Saint Vincent in 1597, an event that was attended by Patriarch Ribera.

[22] In the aforementioned lawsuit with Benigàmin, many witnesses living in the outlying towns and villages mentioned told how their medium-sized homes were purchased by gentlemen from Xàtiva.

solid and safe, and given the hardness of the land, significant amounts of both money and time had to be allocated to these unforeseen rectifications.[23] Several witnesses called to testify in the Benigànim lawsuit in 1636 all mention how building on the Xàtiva church got underway three or four months before that of the church in Benigànim (1598), and they recall how one of the master builders who came to check on the foundations in Xàtiva was the master mason who was supervising the construction in Benigànim.[24] Once these initial hurdles were cleared, construction must have proceeded at a relatively fluid pace. Thus, a written document from the chapter house addressed to the city Jurors, dated in 1599, complaining about the inappropriate placement of the back door of the ambulatory, known as the Mercat door, for the canons reports on the date of its construction and its architect, Pedro Ladrón. The chapter expressed its concern for "the disadvantages arising from making the door behind the main altar in the new building, where Pedro Ladrón, master builder, is starting to build it".[25] Likewise, a will that has been discovered that has previously been unpublished from the Albero family, some of whose members were depositories and administrators of the taxes created to defray the costs of the collegiate church, reports on the situation in around 1600, when work on some of the radial chapels in the church must have been fairly advanced and the apse space reconsidered.[26] Through the testimony of Pere Llois Albero, resident of Xàtiva and son of Luis Albero, doctor in law, we know that he purchased the rights to one "of the new chapels that was already built at the apse of the altar and flawlessly rendered" with an altar devoted to Our Lady of Angels.[27]

The testimony from the 1636 Benigànim trial provides other information of interest about this first phase, such as the approximate figure of what had been spent on the new Seo building. According to one witness, the annual expenditures totalled 4,000 pounds, whereas another witness calculated the total cost, not counting the prices of the houses torn down and the costs of laying the foundations (also excluding the expenses for rectifying these foundations) at around 60,000 pounds.[28] Despite the hiatus in construction, the city continued to yield the income from the site for some time, which was spent on other decorations, metalsmithing or smaller construction work on the old church, as well as on whitewashing the walls. After the death of Patriarch Ribera, the new stumbling block that arose was the lack of space to continue construction due to Archbishop Isidoro Aliaga's opposition to ceding the houses that were then called "del Palau" or "del Delme" which the archbishopric owned behind the old church. This matter was not resolved until 1683, when they were exchanged for the Archdeacon's House owned by the chapterhouse of the Seo. In theory, the archbishop refused to merely be given a house that was already built in exchange for tearing town the house; in reality his agenda was to be given a new house. Once this exchange was conducted, the chapterhouse sold the "Palau"[29] to the city, and after it was demolished construction could once again resume much more easily. The current main sacristy and chapterhouse occupy the land where this house once stood.

The master builders of the Collegiate church

Many different master builders must have participated in the decisions on the design chosen, and we may regard them as the masterminds of these decisions. We know the names of some of them, whose biographies both show their importance in architecture and shed light on their personalities. They are

[23] ARV, Royal Audience, Trials of the Third Part-Appendixes, file 6089, sheet 1011vº, "having digged the foundations for the new Collegiate Church of Xàtiva, they thought they were uneven and some masters came to see them and decided to regulate them, so half of them were filled about the thickness needed by the wall over it"

[24] ARV, Royal Audience, Trials of the Third Part-Appendixes, file 6089, 1112vº-1113rº. This information is of interest given that we are unaware of the exact date when construction of this church got underway, although it was thought to be in around 1602, the year when Benigànim separated from Xátiva's jurisdiction. We do know the name of the master builders who worked starting in those years on the church, namely Vicente Abril and Tomás Lleonart Esteve, masters with outstanding reputations that had worked on important buildings in Valencia such as the Hospital General, the San Martín belfry and the Lliria parish church. Despite the fact that Benigànim continued to use a traditional-style layout, with a single nave, chapels between buttresses connected by small passageways, a polygonal presbytery and ribbed vaulting, it is possible to trace as certain influence in its height parallel to that of the collegiate church in Xátiva. The tall Doric pilasters with entablature of triglyphs and metopes, without having the height and classical distinction of those in the Collegiate church of Xátiva, do show a similar way of operating using the classical vernacular when laying out the insides of churches that differ considerably from the abiding mediaeval habits which were still frequently seen in other churches in the region.

[25] González Baldoví, M., *Museos de Xàtiva*, Valencia, 1992, p. 49.

[26] The inscription dated 1600 that figures on the shaft of the pilaster in the corner of the north façade or the ribbed staircases, which is identical to another similar numerical calligraphy dating from 1700 which can be seen on the other end of the façade, seems, however, to be a vague antequem term, possibly placed when work on the façade began.

[27] Archive Protocols of the Patriarch of Valencia, Notary: Jerónimo Otra, signature: 16632, 3rd of August 1600, testimony by Pere Llois Albero, resident of Xàtiva

[28] Benigànim trial, ARV; Royal Audience, 6089, sheet 1015 rº and 1220 rº.

[29] Escolano also discusses the existence of this house in 1610: "in former centuries Xàtiva also had the bishop's seat, the testimony of which is the Episcopal house, which still today stands behind the old church".

increasingly interrelated, and some of them were active in the most prominent works built in Valencia. Juan Pavía was from the city of Xàtiva. In the late eighteenth century Llaguno linked him to the Collegiate church due to his architectural prestige of the works of his time, and Tormo did the same in 1923. The designer of the new sacristy for the church in Ontinyent[30], master builder of the royal property in the city including the castle and the castle-convent in Montesa[31], he was a renowned architect who in 1591 was used as an expert consultant in the deliberations for building the Puente del Mar bridge in the city of Valencia.[32] He entered into contact with Juan Inglés, great master of the diocese of Cartagena, who was in Valencia at the time to collaborate in the decisions on the construction of the aforementioned bridge[33], and with Francesc Figuerola, author of the designs that would be sent to the court to be supervised by Juan de Herrera. Likewise, he must have known Patriarch Ribera's master builders, and that year he went to supervise the Salvador church in Cocentaina, which had been built by the Terol brothers on the Patriarch's orders, modifying the initial design by Gaspar Gregori[34]. This entailed accepting the classicist and typological customs linked to what was employed around the Patriarch's church.

A master builder who does seem to be linked to the initial work on the Collegiate church of Xàtiva is Pedro Ladrón de Arce, born in Almansa and trained at several different construction sites in the diocese of Cartagena and in Almansa itself, where he was in charge of both the church of the Assumption in 1587 and the reservoir in 1590.[35]

There is documentation of his working at the Collegiate church of Xàtiva three years after construction got underway, that is, starting in 1599 when the back doorway to the ambulatory was built, work that apparently began that same year. He remained in Xàtiva until 1603, when he moved to Lorca, as he had been called to examine one of the arches in the Collegiate church of San Patricio.[36] He remained at the archdiocese of Cartagena, given that in the following year there is evidence that he was working on construction of the Santiago church in Orihuela until 1607.[37] An expert stonecutter, he would decide on the Annunciation doorway in the cathedral of Orihuela built by Juan Inglés, and he may well be the author of the doorway of the church in Almansa, which closely resembles the one in Orihuela, beginning to build it before Figuerola took over. He was also called to resolve complex construction problems. He took part in complex problems involving vaulting, working on the important Santiago church in Orihuela, where the main vault was being finished, which once again highlights his contact with Juan Inglés. Perhaps we can claim that he was one of the master builders linked to the construction of the Collegiate church in Xàtiva from the very start, because he is cited as main master of this undertaking. He is one of the personalities whose training and definitive participation in Xàtiva is worthy of further examination.

Francesc Figuerola is the third of the master builders related to the construction of the collegiate church in this phase. A renowned architect and stone designer, he participated actively in the most important works undertaken in the last decade of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. Although in recent documents he has been cited as having been born in Mora d'Ebre in the province of Tarragona[38], in the prominent project involving building the Puente de Mar bridge in Valencia, with its complex stereotomy which he designed in 1591 and which Juan de Herrera approved from court, he is mentioned as the "master mason from Xàtiva".[39] Without discarding the possibility that he was from near the Ebro river, as is the case of other stone masons/architects from this area, such as Juan Inglés, with whom he was related in the deliberations around the designs of the aforementioned bridge, the most important fact worth highlighting is that around this time he was settled in Valencia, and in particular in the towns near Xàtiva such as Montesa, where he replaced his father in the construction of the parish church,

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[30] Bernabeu Galbis, A., *Arte e Historia en la iglesia de Santa María de Ontinyent*, Ontinyent, 1988. Twice cited with errors in the transcription, he appears first in the text, p. 34 as Joan Xamà, and later in the appendix, p. 129 as Joan Pama. By the dates, the reference to his being from de Xàtiva and the presence of master builder Ferriol alongside him, with whom he also worked in Montesa, there is no question that it is referring to se Joan Pavía.

[31] ARV, Mestre Racional, signature: 7621, "To Joan Pavia and Bernat Ferriol master masons and Pere Andreu carpenter fifty reals from Castille, for four days that they have been in the castle for Montesa recognosing the necessary works to be done in the castle and the timber needed for them".

[32] Valencia Municipal Archive, Manuals de Consells, A-118, 22nd and 28th August 1591.

[33] Information from the AMV, Libros de la Fábrica Nova del Riu, ll-ll1, 2nd October 1591.

[34] The new-style church permanently eliminated the polygonal presbytery and replaced it with a flat apse. It also used walled vaulting that imitated the traditional Gothic vaulting.

[35] Pereda, M.J., "La iglesia de Santa Maria de la Asunción de Almansa", *Cuadernos de Estudios Locales*, Almansa, April 1989.

[36] Espin Rael, J., "Los maestros de la obra de la Colegial de Lorca" *Boletín de la Junta del Patronato del Museo de Bellas Artes*, year V, no. 5, 1926, p. 69.

[37] Nieto Fernández, A., *Orihuela en sus documentos I*, Murcia, 1984, p. 23.

[38] Piqueras García, R., "Francisco Figuerola "maestro de cantería" entre los siglos XVI y XVII. De Mora d'Ebre (Tarragona) a Almansa (Albacete)" *Instituto de Estudios Albacetenses*, (at press), includes the architect's will dated 1632.

[39] AMV, ll-ll1, 11th May 1592 "To Francesc Figuerola, stone-cutter from Xàtiva, 4 pounds, 15 s. y 10 d. money from Valencia for his drawings of the bridge of La Mar of Valencia, to send to his Majesty"

the likely reason why he would be widely believed to be from Xàtiva. At that time, he had give up working on the church in Ayora, perhaps with the intention of moving to the capital city of Valencia in the quest for better contracts, although at the end of his life he would once again supervise the project, at least the tower. Figuerola[40] was closely linked in the architectural decisions about the purchase of the columns for the cloister of the college, and especially about realising the staircase with complex vaulting, one of the most complex works in modern Valencian stereotomy. His ties with the construction of the Collegiate church in Xàtiva seems to be upheld through documentation in 1619, when as he was called to undertake the doorway of the Assumption church in Almansa, he was cited as "Francisco de Figuerola, master stone cutter who has built the main church in the city of Xàtiva".[41]

Figuerola's career and his relationship with Patriarch Ribera can be traced quite precisely, as his work in Valencia is accurately documented starting in 1591. In that year he was linked to construction of the city's bridges, although the intensity of these works fell as of 1595. From that year on, there is evidence of his issuing decisions for the Lliria[42] town hall in January 1597, and building kitchens in San Miguel de los Reyes.[43] In 1598, Figuerola vied with Joan Pavía to build the sacristy at the Santa María church in Ontinyent, which was ultimately assigned to the latter[44], who then returned to Valencia to get directly involved in the college of the Patriarch. He was initially in charge of the important jasper gate of the church in this college, which was never finished and was ultimately replaced by a bronze balustrade. In July 1599, Figuerola took charge of examining the columns that the Patriarch bought and ordered to be transported from Cartagena and Alicante for the cloister of the college. In August of the same year, 1599, he hired what would be one of the most prestigious architectural works of his time, the vaulted staircase in the College of the Patriarch, undoubtedly the most monumental one in Valencian architecture. Through this staircase, a supreme example of the achievements of modern Valencian stereotomy, Figuerola showed how an architect who was also an expert stonecutter could resolve the complex stereotomy of its rampant vaults suspended in the air, of bold and elevated deviations, in courses running perpendicular to the wall of the case, with its complex edges made of voussoirs in V shape. His profile as an architect who was also an expert stonecutter rises with information such as his presence at a variety of rulings about other construction sites in the city of Valencia, such as the one in December 1599 surveying the site where the new Portal del Rey (King's Gateway) was to be built. When the extension of the staircase for the Patriarch's school by one more stretch was proposed in 1602, he was not put in charge of it, leading us to deduce that he was no longer in the city.

We can pinpoint the dates of his presence in Xàtiva with almost total confidence as being between 1600 and 1609, when there is a gap in the documentation of his activities in the city of Valencia, solely broken by his appointment in April 1603 as expert to choose of the designs of the apse of the Santos Juanes parish church. In view of this information, as well as of his masterful skills as a designer and expert in complex designs, so clear too in the idea of the apse of the collegiate church, it is not unreasonable to regard Figuerola's architectural profile as one of the ones that was closest to the conception of the design of the original Collegiate church in Xàtiva. In 1609, when the Muslims were expelled, and perhaps the year of the first hiatus in construction of the Collegiate church, we can once again find documentation with evidence that he was supervising the church in El Palomar, a town quite close to Albaida, and thus still near Xàtiva. Between March and May 1610 he was in Valencia supervising the repair of the shipyards. But starting in June 1610 he was in charge of the piecework on the construction of the church of the Jerome convent in Murta, where there is proof of his presence until 1619, when, as supervisor of the construction of the doorway on the church in Almansa, he was acknowledged as main master of the Collegiate church of Xàtiva. Thus, perhaps he was supervising both sites, the one in Murta and the one in Xàtiva, or perhaps the one in Xàtiva was truly the one that made him worthy of the prestige for which he was known. He would remain in Almansa until at least 1622, when he proposed modifications on the original design of the doorway, or perhaps until 1624, when the work finally finished. The last news we have about him linked him to the jasper and marble work of the tabernacle on the main altar in the Valencia cathedral, contracted in 1603, as "*magister canteriae et architectura*"[45] (master in architecture and stonecutting), where a certain Joan Figuerola, perhaps his son, is also mentioned as associate. He died in 1632, with his will written before a notary in Almansa, the town to which he would remain linked. His property included "books and

[40] A brief outline of his most important works can be found in Bérchez, J., and Gómez-Ferrer, M., "Real Colegio del Corpus Christi o del Patriarca" in *Valencia. Arquitectura religiosa*, Valencia, 1995, pp. 168 and 169.
[41] Information provided by González Baldoví, M., *Museos de Xàtiva*, op. cit.
[42] Martí Ferrando, L., *Historia de la muy ilustre ciudad de Liria*, Lliria, 1986.
[43] Arciniega, L., El *Monasterio de San Miguel de los Reyes*, Valencia, 2001, Vol. 1 p. 157.
[44] Bernabeu Galbis, A., *Arte e Historia en la iglesia de Santa María de Ontinyent*, 1989.
[45] Pingarrón, F., *Arquitectura religiosa del siglo XVII en la ciudad de Valencia*, Valencia, 1998, p. 106.

papers of my art" and "two books on art" which he had lent, which might be linked with the stonecutting solutions that were used in the chapels of the apse of the Collegiate church in Xàtiva.

A stonecutter by the name of Francesc Sanchis also worked alongside Figuerola. They probably had ties as they were both from Almansa. The documentation tells us of highly interesting biographical details for helping us to understand the everyday life of the architecture from there. It reveals to us how from a young age this Francesc Sanchis accompanied his father –Andrés Sanchis, also a stonecutter – on his frequent trips to Xàtiva and how they interacted with the stonecutters working on the Almudín.[46] Starting in 1605, Francesc Sanchis was a resident of Xàtiva and worked on the new building of the Seo[47], we assume in the capacity of stonecutter under Figuerola's orders. Other stonecutters involved in the work also belonged to one of the most prominent stonecutting families in Xàtiva for the entire sixteenth century, the Riberas.[48] At the head of the stone piecework was Vicent Ribera[49], who earned more than other employers at the Seo building site. We also know the name of the master carpenter in those years, Feliu Candel. Both Candel and Ribera worked together on other construction sites in Xàtiva at the same time, such as the slaughterhouse.

Renaissance Stereotomy: The apse of the Collegiate Church

Those who research into the constructive past of the the Collegiate Church between approximately the years 1597 and 1626, their attention is caught by the solemn classicism of its apse, this is specially manifest in its radiating chapels, or in the monumental and liturgical flare of its polygonal ambulatory, with its bays organised in trapezoidal sections and with walls, arches, pilasters, and architraves executed with an accurate syntax of the Doric order. Although it is not easy to distinguish what was constructed in the first phase from what was built later on between 1683 and 1705, bearing in mind the peculiar blending of those two moments, it is possible to venture –even as an hypothesis- that the initial project of the Collegiate Church inferred from the apse —nine-sided polygonal wall, triangular-shaped buttresses, rectangular radiating chapels vaulted with barrel and saucer-shaped vaults, ambulatory and slender chancel with openings between the pillars - corresponds to the same model as that of a church with three naves, side chapels, transept (perhaps non-protruding), and maybe also a dome (the features of which are not known). All of which was projected in accordance with the modern and thorough art of renaissance stone cutting.

Juan Bautista Corachán in his report dated 1732 to proceed with the works of the naves and justifying the need to adapt the Collegiate Church to "modern" masonry constructive techniques, praised the special skill of the "ancient masters" that initiated the works of the Collegiate Church, specially those who constructed the chapels. "The ancient masters -wrote Corachán- relied on sound materials that they could work skilfully on, something that does not happen nowadays. They also had rules to calculate vaults and arches; something which has also been lost; and which even the most qualified of workmen today, as I have seen, are unable to do. Thus what was before considered a good choice would now be reckless". One must bear in mind that at the time of the beginning of the construction of the Collegiate Church modern renaissance stereotomy applied to vaulting was not at all usual in the Valencian area[50] —as can be attested by the only example available seen in the apparelled vault of the apse of Saint Martin's Church—. Having said that, there was a propitious atmosphere for the development of renaissance stereotomy as can be inferred from the original project of the Church of the Patriarch College. This project, which was later on altered, was awarded to Guillém del Rey in 1590. It was devised to be made completely of stone, including the saucer-shaped vault with an open oculus over the transept arches, an option which was five years later replaced by the current dome over a drum[51]. The assumption that the projected Collegiate Church was to be made entirely of stone is also supported by the background of the architects that were in charge of the works, stone cutting experts, and some of them expert draftsmen, as is the case of Francesc Figuerola,

[46] Information from the ARV, Royal Audience, file 6089, sheet 625vº.

[47] There remains a quern of the works on the collegiate church in the 17th century in AMX, legacy 629/17: "mid november year MDCVIIII". In the documentation of the piecework Vicent Ribera and Francesc Sanchis are cited as earning more, and later others such as Agosti Sanchis, Martin Saval, Juan de Maça, Juan Andrés and Pere Tordera.

[48] We are aware of the name of Pere Ribera, stonecutter from Xàtiva who in 1490 made the boundary cross in Simat de la Valldigna. And especially Joan Ribera, who repaired the castle and in the mid-sixteenth century was in charge of the Almudín building site.

[49] He was in charge of the stonecutting in the castle in 1595 and the construction of the slaughterhouse until 1604.

[50] Bérchez, J., *Arquitectura renacentista valenciana*, Valencia, 1994, p. 84.

[51] Bérchez, J, "La iglesia de Canals y la difusión del Renacimiento técnico en la arquitectura valenciana (A propósito de la bóveda 'fornisa')", *Tiempo y Espacio en el Arte. En Homenaje al prof. A. Bonet Correa*, Vol. I., Madrid, 1994, pp. 525-536; Bérchez, J. and Gómez-Ferrer, M., "Real Colegio del Corpus Christi ..., opus cit. pp. 156-171.

closely related to the Patriarca College. Furthermore, various architects representing the Orihuela-Murcia school of architecture such as Jerónimo Quijano and his protégé Juan Inglés (at the time working in the city of Valencia), and also Pedro Ladrón, who worked in the diocese of Cartagena, extended the art of renaissance stone cutting throughout the south of the Valencian archbishopric of which this Collegiate Church was to be the southernmost exponent. Indeed, in the city of Xàtiva, with a long standing tradition of masonry and carpentry, the Collegiate Church was due to be the first example of this type of architectural work. Another undisguised fact favouring the use of stone against masonry was that there was a desire to differentiate the new Christian Collegiate Church from the old Muslim mosque, a concept to be embedded in the cultural and architectural classes. This was depicted nicely in Beuter's chronicles when he said "clay is with what the Moors build".[52]

The apse fabric responds to these features. Nine-side polygonal apse, containing nine rectangular chapels with straight walls between the triangular buttresses. Between the radiating chapels and the pillars in the chancel, there is a wide ambulatory with nine sides, seven with trapezoidal shape and two near the transept, rectangular in plan, but almost square in elevation. Today we know that the chancel, configured by tight pillars, eased the communication between the ambulatory and the chapels thanks to a wide open screen with windows openings between the pilasters, enabling various uses: it provides a private restroom in the chancel, and an open and walk-through space through the ambulatory – bear in mind that the lowest opening is at floor level and it is reasonably high enabling people to pass. It was possibly remodelled in the early nineteenth century, when the jaspers tabernacle was installed to facilitate its sight from the ambulatory. They maintained the upper windows with their corresponding musical angels and used the rear arched of the second opening level to emulate doorjambs. The evidence of this former transparent screen in the chancel is seen in Friar Alberto Pina's blueprint of the Collegiate Church in 1760. This evidence can also be witnessed from the traces of the mouldings recently restored. We now understand documentary evidence, such as that provided by Corachán in 1732 -"those windows on the chancel are lifeless"- or that provided by Ortiz y Sanz in 1804 -" a set of windows, openings, transoms, and clerestories, that don't give any light and are worthless". Some decorative details such as the framework of the third level opening with a pyramidal finial between a broken scroll pediment and stone spheres on pedestals have a composition akin to the classicism of the first building phase of the Collegiate Church, evoking compositions used in the Church of Patriarch College, in particular, the marble doors in the transept. Its role as a source of light to illuminate the ambulatory and its dark chapels, explains the assumption that the initial project comprised a dome over a windowed drum.

In the bays adjacent to the transept and in particular those of square plan in the ambulatory – referred to by Corachán in 1732 as "transparent chapels" in front of Saint Vincent's altar and the ante sacristy – the pilasters and its corresponding arches were wider and higher than the rest of the chancel. The ones present today, are semi-elliptical and are referred to by mathematicians, including Corachán as "high peak". It is possible that they were built in this first phase or at least were projected in a simplified way without the width and double pilasters that flank them today.

The chapel vaults were also built during this first phase. There is documentary evidence, as mentioned above, that towards 1600, a family acquired one of the new chapels for burial. The seven new rectangular chapels are vaulted with transversal barrel vaults apparelled with rhomboidal, rectangular, parallels and circle cut stone designs. A style that evokes the rectangular cut-stone vaulting in Vandelvira's manuscript. The two bays next to the transept, the chapel of Saint Vincent and the sacristy hall, both of rectangular plan, gain further architectural significance when we consider the fact that they are vaulted with stone saucer-shaped vaults. Consequently and without forgetting that we are only hypothesizing, we can assume that a similar stone vaulting was foreseen for the ambulatory and the chancel. Another fact that explains that these chapels were to be vaulted in stone can be seen in the recent restoration works on the ambulatory roofs. It seems that these roofs were originally thought to be left as paved terraces, with a slight slope, but without tiles, that were added later. The roof was filled with masonry and stones that increased their height on which the tiles were placed.[53] The accuracy of the stone cuts that belongs to this first phase, besides been very evident in the chapel vaulting, it is also present in other less transited parts. The spiral staircase which allows access from one of the chapels to the afore mentioned roofs, it is conceived with a bold stereotomy, as can be seen in the hemispherical vault or in the rampant arch to access the roof. The same applies to the other spiral staircase that accesses to the higher roofs, using similar stereotomy.

The classical syntax of the front of chapels and chancel, also belong to this first phase. Its severe renaissance classicism can be seen at least in the imposts, which are conceived as architraves, especially

[52] Beuter, P.A., *Primera part de la Història de València*, 1538, ed. 1998, p. 187.
[53] In this filling, together with many irregular stones, there are some interesting pieces suchs as mouldings and two Ionic capitals.

on the side where the ambulatory chapels stand and whose Doric pilasters with moulded shafts and semi-circular arches with a classical design extend reaching the upper side of the impost. The elevation in the chancel side, adopts a tight disposition of pilasters, frequently used in numerous churches with rectangular bays in the Valencian area at the time.

The outside door of the ambulatory, executed by Pedro Ladrón from 1599 onwards, has many details from Serlio. It is flanked by Ionic columns over pedestals and entablature with a correct three fascias architrave and a convex frieze, with delicate relief mouldings on the spandrels and on the inner side of the jambs and arches. They are adorned with alternate rectangular and round coffered decoration, or spheres flanking the central superior horizontal niche, in line with Serlio's decorative motifs that were very fashionable at the time. The decoration of the lateral walls of the chapels next to the transept, with their peculiar moulding, is also taken from the rustic ornament of the Fourth Book of Serlio. This specific ornamental display, used in the apse, wit its Serlianism, it is visible in other churches of the area, on which the architects of the Collegiate Church also worked. Thus, the façade of the Annunciation Church in Almansa, executed by Pedro Ladrón as well as by Figuerola, also shows, although in a less elaborate way, similar Doric columns, with rusticated molding, circles with protruding axes, or a shell motif. In nearby Canals, the lower part of the façade of the parish church (1623-34), employs Doric columns emulating a triumphal pattern, similarly as to the chapels next to the transept having central mullions on the frieze. Even in the parish church of Hellín we find the interlaced fretwork, also present in Saint Vicent's chapel, both of which can be traced back to Serlio

Saint Vicent's chapel and the ante sacristy are without doubt, two of the most important parts of the Collegiate Church. They represent a fine example of brilliant architectural works. The chapter is a particularly dazzling example of the art of stone-cutting with embedded stone ornamentation. Its magnificent saucer-shaped vaults, with geometrical designs, are enhanced by an apparelled vaulting with key-stones formed by an open-shell pendant decorated with a pearl. Lateral walls have alternating flat and wrought diamond work, that extends to the upper parts of the wall, particularly reaching the blind-windows, where the moulding acts as a if they were closed shutters –"the futile fake windows"- so much criticised by Ortiz y Sanz in 1804- a stone trick, some times used by architects. Both chapels, show double Doric columns on the sides over high pedestals, serving as an altar in that of Saint Vicent and as a doorway in the ante sacristy. Here, the classical Doric order is not quite pure, and Vignola's version is used quite freely. Especially evident in the floral decoration on the echinus, metopes with delicate floral ornament, or the egg and dart mouldings over the abacus of the capital, or over the frieze in a band under the dentils.

Saint Vicent's altar suggests a decorative and architectural conception more akin to the first decades of the seventeenth century, having its central niche located between little embedded Doric columns, a resource often seen as very avant-garde in the first decades of the seventeenth century and applied in the retables and in the famous façades of the churches of Saint Miguel de los Reyes Monastery or el Carmen. Dating to similar period is the ornamental display that crowns the altar, full of square panels with scroll and strip moulding, garlands, masks and sphinx with flower vases. The sacristy door, although follows a similar composition, shows greater distinction and contains more creative sculptoric work. The powerful scrolls, the accurate geometrical design on its square panels, the artistic quality of the sphinxes or the richness of the fruital garlands, suggests the work was undertaken by an important sculptor, probably a disciple of Nicolas de Bussy, who worked in 1680, in the nearby main façade of Saint Mary's church in Elche. This ornamental approach is similar to the transept doors that began construction in the second phase of the building of the Collegiate Church in 1683.

Another matter of more architectural significance is the maladjustment evidenced in the rectangular bay of the ambulatory next to the transept. There, the chancel pillars are abruptly interrupted, because the pilasters in this rectangular bay have been enhanced, -possibly to give place to a new double pilaster articulation- leading up to an elimination of both parts of the lateral arch ring and part of the pilaster. Also, we can observe, in this same spot, the existence of massive pseudo-arches, in reality powerful stone flying buttresses, that help sustain the principal load of the new piers, foreseen in the remodelation initiated in the last decades of the seventeenth century.

Ambulatory and Liturgical Renewal

The model of an apse with a ambulatory which can be seen in the Collegiate church of Xàtiva may well have had a significant precedent in the one found in San Patricio de Lorca (Murcia), not only because it is a collegiate church but also because both projects had the same master builders. The collegiate church

in San Patricio de Lorca[54] was a work of surprising dimensions for a town that also once aspired to become an independent diocese. The early design, dating from around 1535-36, most likely by Jerónimo Quijano, shows a church with three naves, chapels between the buttresses, a ambulatory with chapels, a transept that did not show on the floor plan, and a solution that initially did not seem to call for a dome over the crossing. The original design had eight pillars in the presbytery (which were later reduced to six), just like those found in the presbytery in Xàtiva. However, it should be pointed out that there are certain details distinguishing them, such as narrower radial chapels grouped by pairs as they correspond to the pillars of the presbytery. This is what links them with the tradition of the cathedral of Murcia, and indirectly with the cathedral of Valencia, as well as with the way of organising the entire space with embedded columns as opposed to with pilasters, as in the Xàtiva church. The tradition of Gothic apses in cathedrals and temples with three naves, such as the Barcelona cathedral or the Santa María del Mar church in the same city, as well as the Gerona cathedral or the nearby cathedral of Tortosa would be closer to the layout of the spaces, pillars and the overall design of the apse of the Collegiate church in Xàtiva. The one in Xàtiva seems to be a modern reworking based on the categories of classical vernacular along with Renaissance stonecutting. With its presbytery featuring eight conical pillars projecting in a radial fashion around the trapezoidal bays of the ambulatory, they only separate in the layout of the chapels, which are rectangular and separated by solid triangular-shaped buttresses in the Xàtiva church, instead of the polygonal shapes found in mediaeval churches. Also important is the abiding solution in several different apses of the rectangular shape of entering them with a buttress on different sides to ease the transition of the polygonal or apse design, one inclined and rectilinear and the other straight, as well as the airy design of the intermediate spans with higher, more open arches.

Returning to the guidelines behind the original design of the Collegiate church of Xàtiva, the presence of a powerful ambulatory with chapels must be linked to the pretension to be a cathedral, which reigned from the start of its construction. We can also hold that the most immediate typological reference, even what was emulated, might generically be the cathedral of Valencia, as well as the exceptional parish churches like the Santa Catalina church. The sequence of churches with ambulatories around Valencia in the modern period was quite extensive, especially in the southern part of the bishopric. For instance, in the church in the town of Santiago de Villena, in the late fifteenth and part of the sixteenth century, the enlargement of the mediaeval temple was begun by including discreet ambulatory housing funerary chapels with a Renaissance flavour. A similar procedure can be seen in the El Salvador church in Orihuela, a collegiate church transformed into a cathedral in the early sixteenth century. Just after the collegiate church of Xàtiva, starting in 1610the San Nicolás concathedral was built in Alicante, designed by Agustín Bernardino, with a passage way inserted into the chapels of the ambulatory, which was perforated to connect all of them with a sort of passageway. The same holds true for the Assumption basilica in Elche, with a model quite similar to the one in Alicante. The apse of this basilica also has an ambulatory built based on the design by Genovese architect Francisco Verde in around 1672.[55] To the north, the church in Vistabella (Castellón) (1604-1640), with three naves and no lateral chapels, also introduced a peculiar ambulatory with a straight apse that surrounded a polygonal three-sided presbytery, with three broad trapezoidal bays and pentagonal chapels on the periphery, using the resources of Renaissance stonecutting to achieve this.[56]

Far from being a delayed element from the mediaeval tradition, since the late sixteenth century and first few decades of the seventeenth century, the ambulatory took on a new liturgical and architectural vitality in Spain that would last well into the eighteenth century. The most significant examples of this include the Calahorra cathedral in La Rioja (1595), Orense (1615) and Oviedo (1621) in its polygonal variation; the ones in the cathedral designed by Juan de Herrera for Valladolid (1580) and the cathedral in Salamanca (1589) in its orthogonal guise, heir to the cathedral in Seville. Very important, too, was the fusion of the *Hallenkirche* typology – which lifted its vaults to the same height as the main chapel – with the polygonal ambulatory, gestated by Diego de Siloé in the cathedral of Granada based on the one in Sevilla and whose influence extended to those in Málaga (1528), Guadix (1563) and Baza (1528-1533)[57]. The phenomenon was exclusive to Spain; however, as in other regions such as Milan, it was also important, especially during the prelature of Carlo Borromeo[58], who was so concerned with placing value on liturgical

[54] About this church see Gutiérrez-Cortines, C., *Renacimiento y arquitectura religiosa en la antigua diócesis de Cartagena*, Murcia, 1983, pp. 215-236.
[55] Navarro Mallebrera, R., *Los arquitectos del Templo de Santa María de Elche*, Alicante, 1980.
[56] Bérchez, J., *Arquitectura renacentista valenciana*, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-92
[57] Bérchez, J. y Marías, F., "La recuperación del deambulatorio en la España del siglo XVII", in *L'architecture religieuse en Europe au Temps des Réformes,* Université de Paris-Sorbonne, Paris, 2005 (at press).
[58] Patetta, L., "Permanenze medievali a Milano nei secoli XVI e XVII", in *Presenze medievali nell'architettura di età moderna e contemporanea*, ed. Giorgio Simoncini, Guerini, Milan, 1997, pp. 144-145.

spaces from ancient Christianity. Putting the ambulatory at the forefront was also decisive in such important examples as the one in the Sant'Ambrogio e Carlo al Corso church in Roma (1612), designed by Onorio and Martino Longhi in home to Carlo Borromeo and of the Lombardy churches in the Milanese style, and Francesco Borromini's design for the San Paolo Fuori le Mura basilica (1650).

An expression of this modern vogue in ambulatories and the renewal that seemed to view the original models of the Christian architectural tradition of this place from an operational standpoint, in this case in Valencia, from the height and complexity of the architecture of the time, would be the *Advertencias para los edificios y fábricas de los Tenplos...*, issued by the Valencian synod in 1631 presided over by archbishop Isidoro Aliaga.[59] In it, when it refers to the form of the temples "famous or of the collegiate churches that must be more than a bay", it asked for proportions large enough "for the part that represents that top of the cross [with an elongated shaft]", so that "enough space remains behind the main chapel(for what is known as the back altar) for the procession of this main chapel to go around it, as takes place in the Metropolitan Church of Valencia and in many others, which, in addition to the authority this confers on the building, is extremely convenient for many of the things offered in churches". I will return to discuss this later when examining the location within temples of the tabernacle chapel used to store the Eucharist in vessels with consecrated forms: "In the churches that had a back altar, which surrounded the main chapel, this must have the tabernacle placed behind the main altar without it occupying the back altar".

In these instructions, some of the ideas which would prevail on this particular religious space emerged explicitly – perhaps the most careful is the documentary references alluding to the Spanish ambulatory in the modern age. The more generic terms include the "authority" and "great convenience" of the temples, along with other more specific ones, immersed in a post-Tridentine religion and referring to the use of the church as a solemn space devoted to processions and religious ceremonies where they key factor was the connection between the main altar and the apse of the temple, and simultaneously the fluid reverberation of the voice and musical chants intoned in the processions. It also led to an improved layout and liturgy in the apse as the doctrinal expression of the Counter Reformation ideals, in the space devoted to the Eucharistic sacrament, which in turn alluded to the original mediaeval Christian cathedral in the city of Valencia. It was unquestionably the sum of these factors to those brought about by extending the number of private chapels and thus opening up the inside of the temple without disturbing the celebration of the divine offices, or the more theological ones such as the possibility of recreating the compositional climax of the circular ambulatory of the mythical Anastasis the that of the hierosolymitan as "Templum Domini", which continued to furnish both liturgical and architectural modernity to the ambulatories in the modern age. Indeed, it can be claimed that many of them must have been present in the design of the collegiate church of Xàtiva, and not for nothing was one personage who figures decisively in its gestation Patriarch Ribera.

[59] *Advertencias para los edificios y Fabricas de los Templos, del sinodo del arzobispo de Valencia Isidoro Aliaga en 1631. Estudio y Transcripción*, ed. F. Pingarrón, Valencia, 1995.

II. BAROQUE AVANT GARDE AND MODERN CLASSICISM

The architect and mathematician Joan Blas Aparisi

Master of the construction of the Xàtiva's Collegiate Church between 1683 and 1705, the priest Juan Blay Aparisi y Polop, born in Enguera (Valencia), is often referred to as the "great mathematician", or "professor of mathematics and master of the works of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva". He is a leading character in baroque architecture in Valencia, and his influence grew significantly all across Spanish baroque architecture and culture. His talent was soon spotted in 1757 by Manuel Gómez Marco (1698-1766) – a mathematician himself and disciple of Tosca, as well as secretary of the Royal Academy of Santa Barbara–, and was considered one of those architects that "still preserves the taste for Architecture". He was historically mistaken for a Mercedarian friar of the same name, Joan Aparisi, who was a senior lecturer in mathematics at the University of Valencia from 1674 until his death in 1696. However, our Joan Aparisi is documented to have lived at least until 1702, when there is evidence of him working in Murcia were he delivered plan drawings for the construction of the old bridge of Murcia. The document dated in 1702 mentions he was 49 years old, which implies he must have been born in 1653, and also mentions he was a mathematics professor and director of the works of the Collegiate Church[60]. There is also data on the architectural works he carried out in the Collegiate Church when the works are resumed in 1682-83. Furthermore, there is proof of him having a benefice on the altar of Saint Julian and Saint Basilisa in the Collegiate Church since 1677.

His influence in civil and hydraulic architecture at the time was quite relevant as can be inferred by the prestige gained among his peers. One of his most significant piece of work is the sea port of Valencia. On March 8, 1700 there is proof of a deferred payment of 300 pounds to Joan Blay Aparisi for the design work of the stone bridge of Valencia[61]. The document also mentions that in 1685 he was present in the execution of the works, a work which he had to cancel to attend his business at the Collegiate Church, as may be inferred from his absence in continuing the works in 1689. The following year in 1686, he moves to Elche as an expert in architecture to work with Melchor Luzón, a Royal engineer. He was hired to revise the plant that Joan Fauquet had delivered for the construction of the "east end of the church and high choir" [62]. The document refers to him as "Joan Blas Aparicio professor in mathematics and head of the works of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva". This piece of news is important because the new ambulatory of the archiprestal Church of Saint Mary is another singular master piece, executed in with a modern and complex stereotomy with arches and vaults that describe intricate geometrical torsions. His services are required once again by the count of Altamira to carry out some works in an acequia in Ontinyent in 1688. He appears in his capacity as "architectural engineer and master of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva" [63]. Tormo also attributes him the design of the tower of the Church of Biar which was erected in 1698 and the hermit of the Virgen of Gracia in the same town, towards 1704[64].

His activity in the city of Xàtiva must have been quite significant. In 1692, he gave the indications, plans and elevations for the church of Montesa. The written conditions shows he clearly mastered the technique of stone laying and masonry, something not at all commonplace[65]. He appears once again in 1697 as expert in hydraulic architecture to give his opinion in the breaking of Tibi's dam in Alicante, built a century earlier[66]. Regarded as a "great mathematician and a man of great intelligence in these matters" he delivered drawings for the dam that were very valuable in Valencia[67]. A revealing example of his architectural skill is the the technical report he wrote on the Old Bridge(Puente Viejo) of Murcia[68], where together with Vicente Soler Verdú, master mason of the collegiate Church and town hall of the city of Alicante, he examined the drawings for the new bridge in en 1702. They both gave an alternative solution modifying the the previous proposals and delivered a new set of drawings and conditions for the construction of the bridge. Through the written conditions, he demonstrates his wide training and skill in hydraulic works and building techniques, such as the arrangement with oblique articulation, that he will employ in Xàtiva. Chapters 49 and 50 about the balusters with its correspondant moldings, as well as the spheres in the bridge, with its plinths and necks, had to follow the oblique rules, one aspect that the other

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[60] De la Peña, C., *The Old Bridge of Murcia*, Murcia, 2001

[61] Unpublished documentation that completes the news provided by Teodoro Hernández ("Los novatotes ante la problemática portuaria de Valencia en el siglo XVII", *Estudios dedicados a Juan Peset Aleixandre*, Valencia, 1982, pp. 353-374), who thought that one of the experts who gave his advice on the complex works of the docks of the port of Valencia was the mercedarian mathematitian Juan Aparisi, who was called in Onteniente in 1689. Whereas what realy occured was that the person consulted for advice was Joan Blay Aparisi, our character, and whose role in this work is far greater that what until now thought of, since he carried out the design and attended the works personally in 1685.

[62] Navarro Mallebrera, R., *Los arquitectos del Templo de Santa María de Elche*, Alicante, 1980, p. 58.

[63] Archivo Corona de Aragón, Legajo 875-191, 3 de abril de 1688.

[64] Tormo, E., *Levante*, Madrid, 1923, p. 261.

[65] Cerdà, J., "L'església parroquial de Montesa. Gènesi i evolució constructiva (1686-1702)" *Papers de la Costera*, 12, 2001, pp. 65-80.

[66] Camarero, E., Bevià, M y Bevià, J.F., *Tibi, un pantano singular*, Valencia, 1989, pp. 34-36.

[67] The drawings were sent to Valencia and after much disccusion the ones from mosén Juan Aparicio were finally chosen because they were considered "the strongest, of best art and more convenient". At present there are 4 hand-signed drawings that are in the Archive of the Corona de Aragón. However, the works were suspended and were not resumed until 1726.

[68] De la Peña, C., *El puente Viejo...,* opus cit.

propositions did not take into account[69]. Aparisi, probably resided in Xàtiva until at least 1701, the year in which he lives in a house in calle del Portal del Lleó. There is also literature that relates him with the new works of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva in 1693 when he is asked to build the two mills in the quarters of Mercado and Barreres built to get some revenues in order to pay the works of the Collegiate Church.
However, the most important event that attests the value of Aparisi as a modern and innovative architect and designer is the new works undertaken in Xàtiva's Collegiate Church when these were resumed in 1683, and that were latter interrupted in 1705 when the war of Succession broke out. This work stands as a fine example of the *novator* renovations that took place in the Valencian culture at the time. The works were resumed in 1683, when the archbishop of Valencia permitted the exchange of his Palau by the House of the Ardiacà, and after this its demolition, which was absolutely necessary to prosecute the works. It was then that the board of members appointed priest Joan Aparisi as director of the works. He was assisted by Sebastià Daniel and a workforce of twenty men[70]. Thanks to some unpublished documents we know that Aparisi counted with the cooperation of masters that later became expert stone masons and exponents of the new mathematical and oblique stereotonomic culture, with adepts such as Domingo Laviesca[71] and Juan Garafulla[72].

During those years, work went on intensely in the apse and transept, as well as in the sacristy and the chapter house. However, it was in the transformation of the first project and in the building of the transept façades were Aparisi's work was to be decisive, and today considered an outstanding example of modern architectural Hispanic culture, nowadays referred to as baroque.

Those who admire the Collegiate Church, are always surprised by the slim classical articulation of its interior, especially in the transept piers, with couples of pilasters of an unusual Doric order that break all the rules of proportion, with its high pedestals, slender grooved shafts and detailed carving in capitals and entablature. Many authors writing about this particular elongated and svelte arrangement of the Doric order in the Collegiate Church have also expressed their awe and surprise. Ortiz y Sanz in 1804[73], a declared Vitruvianist as well as an expert of the church (he was in charge of the direction of the works at the time), in his academic dissertation, was alarmed at the "mistake" in the "Doric pilasters of *eighteenth diameters*, i.e. of thirty-six Doric modules" (when the canon was a maximum of ten diameters). A different reaction came from Elias Tormo in 1923, when praising the Collegiate Church as one of the "most important buildings of the rigid classicism of the sixteenth century" he commented on "the particular creativeness" of its interior, in particular, "the incredible liberty for lengthening the pilasters without any respect for the canon of the Tuscan order". The text also suggests the architect that continued the building to be the one responsible for this imaginative arrangement. There is no documentary evidence that can help us ascertain if this stretched version of the Doric order was already in the mind of the first masters of the building at the beginning of the seventeenth century, or if it was the result of the ensuing renovation that took place between 1683 and 1705.

However, a close examination of what was built in this second phase, enables us to hypothesize that Aparisi's intervention in the interior of the Collegiate Church was very active. It has generally been assumed that he merely continued with the initial project of the late sixteenth century and that had only made a personal contribution in the transept façades, and perhaps also in the crossing piers. However, it seems today that his contribution was much larger, and that he made considerable changes to the original project. A first hypothesis is based on the idea that it was during those years that it was decided to elevate the church further. In the sanctuary, this entailed the thickening of the pilasters (something which may have already began). The elevation would mean a further slendering of the columns of the interior Doric articulation, which without doubt parts with the modular criteria of the classical orders. As we are reminded by Ortiz y Sanz, this is perhaps the exponent of the Doric order with more modules in Spanish architecture. Whether, the elongation of the Doric pilasters was an idea that came about in the initial first years of the seventeenth century or whether it belonged to the period in which Aparisi resumes the works, what is clear is that the original plan was changed by Aparisi. In his new project, a huge dome over a drum serving to bring light into the church (perhaps having in mind the Cathedral of Valencia) was to have a leading role.

This new alternative would justify the need for thickening the pillars in the intersection between the chancel and the transept. This hypothesis is reinforced by the corrections seen in the two bays next to the transept –"the transparent chapels" mentioned by Corachán in his report in 1732 -. In those bays, one can appreciate an interruption in the proportion and rhythm of the arches and pillars when compared to the rest.

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[69] The project was not executed, and was postponed due to a series of events such as the change of the corregidor of the city and due to the lack of funds. The works were finally resumed in 1717.

[70] González Baldoví, M., *Museos...* opus cit., p. 49.

[71] By an unpublished testament, conserved in the Archivo de Protocolos del Patriarca de Valencia, notario: Pere Meseguer, signatura: 12122, writen February 17, 1687, we know he was serverly ill at the Xàtiva's Hospital, which supports the hypothesis of his stone work at the Collegiate Church. The testament is not ratified and Laviesca was active at least until 1739, working in top proyects in the city of Valencia such as the tower of San Bartolomé, the doorways of Santos Juanes or the chapel of San Pedro and the main portal of the catedral.

[72] We thank Ricardo Sicluna these and other biographcal references from the Archive of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva, QLnº6, LB, which cites mosén Joan Blay Aparisi on 19 January 1692 as godfather of one of the daughters of Juan Garafulla**,** *pedrapiquer*. Igualmente su presencia en Xàtiva y su relación con Aparisi se debió sin duda a su participación en la obra de la Colegiata. Garafulla belonged to a family of canteros who worked actively in the area of Castellon, and where they intervened in many fachades such as the one of the Parish Church of La Jana and years later in the one of Alcalà de Xivert. Both these examples contain oblique declinations.

[73] Ortiz y Sanz, J.F., "Oración a las Nobles Artes", en *Distribución de premios de la Real Academia de San Carlos de Valencia, celebrada en 4 de Noviembre de 1804*, Valencia, 1805, pp. 84-85.

There is a severe cut in the arch as well as in the pilaster that sustains it. Said cut could have been originated by the need of thickening the main piers (and maybe also because they were meant to be made higher) in order to support the trusses of the dome. And because there was a need to classically articulate the new solution. This idea is supported by the existence of "arches that do not lean on their springers, but act as buttresses thrusting the pilasters from the inside as if they were going to pull them down", as Ortiz y Sanz explained in 1804. Those arches can be considered massive pseudo flying buttresses that abut in the new piers at an intermediate height, enlarging the arches of the bays next to the transept and presbytery. This constructive solution would have helped to distribute the thrusts caused by the elevation of a dome over a drum and also by the unsteady foundations of the Collegiate Church over the rocks. This projected dome over a high and lighted drum is also drawn, maybe with a new design, in Fray Alberto Pina's project in 1760, and in Jaime Perez's façade project in 1778, based on one project by Ortiz y Sanz, when the dome was not yet built.

The unusual protruding transept is related to the Cathedral of Valencia, but the classical articulation of the new interior is linked to the Church of El Escorial, especially if we look at the coupled Doric pilasters in the crossing piers. Having said that, the ten modules of the Doric order employed by Juan de Herrera[74] in El Escorial are no way near the eighteen modules used in Collegiate Church, as pointed out by Ortiz y Sanz. Corachán in 1732, when he had to think about continuing the project by way of looking at what had already been built (due to the loss of the original drawings as a consequence of the war), found the clue for the continuity and articulation of the aisles in the bays next to the transept. Specifically, in the so-called "transparent chapels", whose thickened pillars towards the ambulatory, allowed the harmonic articulation of Doric double pilasters, with a tectonic integrity. Those pilasters are organised by a double system of arch and pier, and pilaster and entablature, even though the pilasters have too many diameters and the arches in the chancel (possibly belonging to the first phase) are semielyptical.

It was in these chapels and in the crossing piers where the classicist articulation of the Collegiate Church was accomplished. It was a kind of classicism that linked the renaissance style of the late sixteenth century with the "modern" baroque classicism of the seventeenth century in accordance to the same classic model used in the Church of El Escorial. The resemblance with the aesthetics of the Church of El Escorial is somewhat mitigated by the big difference in slenderness of the pilasters, and by the particular decorative conception of the Doric order: a "dentilled" Doric order emulating that of Marcellus's Theatre in Rome, as depicted by Serlio, Vignola or Philibert de l'Orme in the sixteenth century, as well as by Antoine Desgodetz in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, the coupled use of the dentilled Doric order is more akin to a modern canon of classical orders. It is especially evident in the pilasters on the piers, flanked by slight rustication or by the pilasters in the plain walls of the transept (having "an entablature with eleven trygliphs and twelve metopes"; again Ortiz y Sanz). The profuse employment of trygliphs, metopes, dentils and sophit in the cornices contributes to disaggregate the original and purified classicism derived from the El Escorial, provoking a more stylized image, closer to the architectonic culture of the seventeenth century. This admiration and endorsement of the Escorial's classicism, linked to a Solomonic vindication, in the late seventeenth century, was also present in Juan de Caramuel's *Architectura Civil Recta y Obliqua* (Vigevano, 1678). This was a very well known book to Aparisi, as it is evident in the overall design of the transept façades.

Oblique Architecture Manifesto

The façades of the Collegiate Church transept are one of the first examples of an intelligent employment of the oblique architectural principles developed in Caramuel's *Architectura civil…* alien to the orthodox and canonical classicism. The chapter leaded by the Spanish Juan Caramuel Lobkowitz (Madrid, 1606 - Vigevano, 1682), theologian, mathematician and scholar in architecture, follower of the New Science, through his *Architectura civil…*, was without doubt one of the most significant episodes of the Spanish baroque architectonical culture, as well as of other Italian, non-roman areas. He strongly supported the oblique principles ("whereby God ordered that rivers should flow obliquely through the valleys"). He was also an advocate of "mosaic" architecture –"the oldest example of oblique architecture can be found in the windows of Solomon's temple" concluding that these "oblique works were rare and little known in Antiquity, but in our times have been well executed by some architects, although yet not well explained by anyone". He emphasized the importance of including in his theoretical corpus of oblique architecture, the skewness of the stone-cuts (skewed arches or skewed elliptical churches), of such importance in medieval and renaissance European tradition, and at the time object of accurate study and application in projective geometry. As a mathematician follower of the New Science, he did not accept Vitruvius authority. He abandoned the common canonical renaissance conception of the classical orders, in favour of a selective consideration of the Roman Antiquity, providing a creative and evolutive interpretation for the classical orders according to the cultural enthusiasm of his times. "The ancient masters were free to carve the stones as they wanted – he wrote in his treatise following Dechales- passing this legacy on to us, the moderns, so that we can carve them as well without following classical laws". This led to the addition of new orders such as the Salomonic, Gothic, Atlantic, Paraninfic and Athic to the five canonical renaissance orders. He did not

[74] Bustamante, A., y Marías, F., "El Escorial y la cultura arquitectónica de su tiempo", *El Escorial en la Biblioteca Nacional*, Madrid, 1985, pp. 135 and next.

only strictly adhere to the canon of renaissance orders but also, he articulated all the elements of architecture in its oblique morphology, being this one his most important achievements. Caulicoulus, acanthus, abacus, fillets, metopes, trygliphs, volutes in the ionic order, were carved with inclined configurations following the principles of oblique architecture. Caramuel, in his on particular way, accomplished a type of classical architecture filled with geometrical fury, articulating obliquely not only the particular syntax of the classical orders, but also the morphology of classical architecture, with its balusters, cornices, acroterions and statues, with curved, inclined or polygonally dynamized plans and elevations. Caramuel's treatise is an example of the intellectual attitude of a modern theologician, concerned about transferring to architecture some of his erudite and empirical ideas. Ideas that sometimes confronted with prestigious Roman works, of which he was aware because of his close friendship with Pope Alexander VII. He made critical remarks concerning Bernini's works, and more precisely regarding the building of Saint Peter's colonnade.

The embodiement of Caramuel principles in architecture was immediate, especially in cities, but also in rural villages, where erudite personalities in academies and cultural gatherings accepted modern mathematics. Therefore, there was a quick response and acceptance in the Valencian cultural life of the second half of the seventeenth century, imbued in this "raptus geometricus". One of the highest expressions of this phenomenon were the Collegiate Church transept doors, as well as the dissemination of these ideas thanks the works of the mathematician Tomás Vicente Tosca (Treaty XIV of *Architectura Civil* and Treaty XV of stone-cuts from the *Compendio Matemático*, V, Valencia, 1712)[75].

The portals projected and constructed by the mathematician and architect Joan Aparisi are very significant, because their monumental scale can be considered a stepping stone to a new way of building in modern baroque culture in the seventeenth century. This architecture aims to portray the mathematical and physical awareness and culture of the time, and without doubt was built with close consideration to the Treatise. It is a type of architecture that translates Caramuel's theories into stone, as if it were a theorem or mathematical corollary, not devoid of certain baroque artificiality. It is intended to show unseen points of view of the human eye, microscopic glimpses only possible with today's optics. A type of architecture intended perhaps only for the divine eye.

Considered as an oblique paraphrase of the traditional type of a retable-façade, its silhouette is crowned by a mixtilinear profile. The dynamic portals and windows counteract with the plain wall. For the first time in Spanish architecture, the oblique principles applied to the different portal levels were used with a monumental sense. Both façades are very similar. A very sharp and narrow street leads to the North façade, and its portal is opened over a flight of steps with balusters, built years later. Its first section, rusticated and articulated with Doric pilasters, subjecting the portal doorjambs, entablatures together with their corresponding trygliphs, metopes and cornices to curves and obliqueness. The portal plan establishes for the first time, a trapezoidal scheme that polygonally dynamizes the elevation of the portal, but in a rather different way than the Italian curvilinear school. It follows Caramuel's advice on straight oblique plans ("without right angles"), which are especially appropriate for contemplating Xàtiva façades sideways from the adjacent narrow streets.

Aparisi endeavoured to make manifest the particular beauty of obliqueness - so beloved by Caramuel when he talks about inclined walls - avoiding flat walls by means of projecting exterior buttresses with obtuse angles and by adapting the syntax of the orders to be oblique. He followed the logic of geometry in the construction of pilasters over pedestals, shafts, capitals, entablature and even the finials with pine cone forms, deforming the semi-straight and semi-oblique sides. The rear arch, later referred to by Tosca (1712) as "divaricado", is also an important architectural feature. It is flanked by two great columns with graceful pinnacles at the top. It has coffered mulions with roses in its intrados –greatly successful in subsequent baroque Valencian architecture- and a curvilinear shape in both superior and inferior niches. This canopied niche with its flanking pilasters, adopts a natural perspective, not artificial, according to the curvilinear design of the arch, creating an oblique order, with inclined capitals and an arrière-voussure of careful stereotomic carving. The same obliqueness is applied to the upper section, with its pedestals, columns, entablatures, volutes, vases or spheres, and to the flowery decoration of the lateral scrolls and to the framing of the upper window, possibly built on a later phase. Even the Doric pilasters of the façade angles are organized with the logic of the new Atic order, with its quadrangular composition as illustrated by Caramuel. Everything in this façade follows an oblique tendency where even the straight composition is treated with a new and modern classicism.

One of the places with a more baroque flare is the sacristy and the chapter house next to the south façade, on the hill side, finished in 1700, where the oblique principles are implemented generating an illusionistic atmosphere that invites the spectator to move. Aparisi, following Caramuel, suggests an architectural trick, without doubt motivated by the scarce and oppressive visibility of this space, explained later on. This area of the Collegiate Church pays a historical and Solomonistic tribute to the last bay of the Cathedral of Valencia built with certain obliqueness in the fifteenth century. The exterior wall is articulated with an entablature and a parapet with pyramids and spheres in a skilful skewed shape. This leads to an

[75] Tosca widely approves Caramuel's work, to such and extent that he began his treatise dividing architecture in "straight" and "oblique". It provides a systematization of the disperse architectural opinions of Caramuel. In spite of his admiration for Caramuel, Tosca, also closely followed the Treatise of Claude-François Milliet Dechales (*Cursus seu Mundus Mathematicus*, Lyon, 1674) and breaks away from some of Caramuel's ideas. Besides, Tosca gave a mathematic and constructive status to Caramuel's oblique theories, systematizing from the optical oblique point of view the art of stone cutting, "the intelligence of obliquity that exists in vaulting", taking into account "all types of arches and vaults", constructive aspects whose technical and geometrical complexity had not been totally developed by Caramuel.

orthogonal vision of the façade, that once altered, acquires deforming effects on the composition. This baroque architecture employed by Aparisi in the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva, with its silent kinetic intention, is praised by the erudites avid of geometric perception. It embodies a dual reality, popular and learned, and forces the surprised viewer to move in order to inquire "with the eyes and the intellect" -as Caramuel wrote- about unusual and elusive points of view. One can see circles deformed into ellipsis, squares transformed into rhomboids, or pyramids of perfect square base distorted in elongated shapes.

The Collegiate Church was admired with curiosity by the professional and architectural circles in the same way Caramuel's work exerted a strong influence in mathematic, university and academic circles. Its avant-garde geometrical design was probably an incentive for the architecture of its time, more interested in enriching with ornamental elements the orthogonal classicists structures. In the Collegiate Church, the impact of these oblique principles was profound, as it can be appreciated in the transept windows over the portals, possibly built in the first half of the eighteenth century, in the marble washbasin of the sacristy and in the portal of the chapel in the aisle adjacent to the transept. This later work evokes Pina's manners and his architectural training, embedded in his reports on oblique culture[76]. One must not forget that the last oblique piece of work is the tabernacle project of Pedro Juan Guisart, in 1778, with the capitals and bases of the columns skewdly carved in an ovoid structure. This was a late tribute to Caramuel's critics to the straight layout of Bernini's columnate as well as a late tribute to the Collegiate Church which could be considered from the late seventeenth century as a sanctuary of oblique architecture.

The early and deep acceptance of Caramuel's theories in the Collegiate Church can't be compared to what was built in other areas of the Spanish geography, whether in the peninsula or overseas. His influence was important, leaving his imprint on the architecture of the time[77]. In the same town of Xàtiva, there are minor oblique echoes in several façades (church of the ex-convent of Saint Onofre, -1715 onwards- La Merced church -1734). The Tuscan columns of the courtyard in the Alarcon Palace of Xàtiva from the first decades of the XVIII century are another clear example of the application of the oblique principles. The columns have an ellipsoid section and yet a circular appearance when seen from the trapezoidal courtyard plan. The area of Valencia was deeply affected by these oblique architectural ideas as can be seen in the façades of several churches in rural villages built in stone with mixtilinear profiles. They employ accurate stereotomy in the cornices, with straight and oblique inclinations, and monumental skewed pinnacles, such as the hermitage of the Ermitana Virgin in Peñíscola (Castellón, 1708 and 1714) or in La Jana (Castellón) (first half of the eighteenth century).

The most representative architects of the Spanish Baroque (Pedro Ribera, Vicente Acero, Friar Alberto Pina, Francisco Guerrero y Torres among others) did not hesitate in introducing some glimpses of Caramuel's theories in their work. However, these features failed to take into account the more difficult structural conception of oblique architecture, when applied for instance in arches and vaults. These structural features were generally associated to a revival of the art of stone cutting that took place in the last years of the seventeenth century and first half of the XVIII century leaded by a group of expert architects. Therefore, the portal of the Jesuit church of Saints Justo y Pastor of Granada (1719), carved the lateral Corinthian columns with an accurate obliqueness. Another Jesuit church, Saint Eufemia del Centro (ancient church of the Jesuit convent) in Orense, of the first half of the eighteenth century, built by Friar Plácido Iglesias, gave a greater complexity to its façade, disseminated over a curvilinear space and employing radically skewed Ionic and Corinthian orders. In Huesca, the main portal of the Sanctuary of San Juan de la Peña (1675 onwards) emphasizes the particular straight declination of the Ionic volutes ("never drawn by anyone", according to Caramuel). The Solomonic order with its polygonal jasper Ionic capitals, is used with a "mosaic" intention in the portal of the church of the monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet (Tarragona), probably built in the first years of the eighteenth century. In Barcelona, the Dalmases palace in Moncada street, built towards 1699 by Pau-Ignasi de Dalmases I Ros, a learned bibliophile, chronicler of Catalonia, patron of the historical and literary Academy of the Distrustful, has in the open staircase of the courtyard, a precise stereotomy in arches of unequal plinths, and Solomonic columns with skewed bases and capitals. The use of oblique principles is more convincing in the staircase of the Mercader palace, also in Barcelona, built around the mid XVIII century. It shows a peculiar stereotomy that seems to be mathematically sarcastic, in open competition with the principles of Vitruvian decorum, bantering with the tectonic role of the classical column. In New Spain, Francisco Guerrero y Torres made use of this same irony when he built the double spiral staircase of the Palace of the Counts of San Mateo de Valparaíso (1769-1772). Here the original arrangement of arches and Doric columns are displayed along the spiral staircase with an ascensional obliquity.

Several Italian works in the south and north of Italy early adopted the oblique architecture of Caramuel. Guarino Guarini's own work *Dell'architettura obbliqua, Disegni d'architettura...*, Turín 1686, and *Architettura civile*, Turín, 1737, attempted to use Caramuel's ideas, which are mentioned several times. Guarini devotes several drawings of his treatise to these themes, sometimes criticizing its dogmatic application and explaining with great detail the method for drawing an oblique capital or volute. In the Sicilian area, the Scala Nuova of the Collegio Massimo (ca. 1679-1687) of Palermo, possibly built by the Jesuit architect Angelo Italia, demonstrates an early knowledge of Caramuel's work, with inclined Doric

[76] Bérchez, J. y Gómez-Ferrer, M., "Visiones y mentalidad arquitectónica de un maestro del siglo XVIII. La descripción Breve de las Medidas y Magnificencia... del convento de Santa Clara de Játiva por Fray José Alberto Pina" *Ars Longa*, 14-15, 2005-2006, pp. 195-216

[77] Bérchez, J., "El texto de Caramuel y su incidencia en la práctica arquitectónica de su tiempo", *L'enciclopedismo e le sue architetture Juan Caramuel y Lobkowitz 1606-1687*, Vigevano, 2007 (in press).

capitals following the inclination of the staircase. Giovanni Biagio Amico (1684-1754), also echoed Caramuel's theories in his treatise *L'Architetto prattico* (Palermo, 1726). A somehow ingenious application of Caramuel's ideas is to be seen in some works of Sicilian architecture in the first half of the eighteenth century, such as the façade of the church of Sant Erasmo(1741-1743) in Capaci, with a curved entablature of oblique trygliphs. In Naples, the architect Ferdinando Sanfelice (1675-1748) employed scenographic open staircases in the courtyards with oblique arches and pilasters in several palaces, including his own, in Via Arena della Sanitá (ca. 1725), and also in the Palaces of Lo Spagnolo (1738) and Fernandes (ca. 1740). In some of these, such as in the Palace of Lo Spagnolo, the inclination of the staircase even affects the arrangement of capitals and entablatures. In northern Italy, apart from the façade of the Cathedral of Vigevano built by Caramuel himself, there are some projects in the Venetian area that also reflect with great soundness the impact of oblique theories. The architect Antonio Gaspari (ca. 1670-1738), disciple of Baldassare Longhena, is without doubt the most representative character with works that reflect the experiences of Caramuel's theories. His project for San Vital (ca. 1700, Venecia, Correr Museum) or "Pianta prima" of Duomo in Este (ca. 1688, Venecia, Correr Museum) with his strong oblique geometrism in several parts of the church is both an advocacy to obliqueness as well as an avant-garde response of Caramuel's theories to Bernini's church of Saint Andrea. The cathedral of Este, built between 1688 and 1720, has an oval ground-plan extended over a longitudinal axis with a deep absis and four rhomboidal chapels obliquely linked to the curved segments of the oval plan. This work fully exploits all of Caramuel's theoretical ideas, with an oblique richness only comparable to that of the façades projected by Aparisi in the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva.

Resumption of the Works after the War of the Spanish Succession

In 1705, the War of the Spanish Succession brought the Collegiate Church works to halt, and serious doubts were cast over its completion. The Collegiate Church was not affected by the Fire of 1707 that caused significant damages in other parts of the city; however, the works did not resume either. In 1708, the old church had been slightly renovated[78] and religious services were resumed. The administrative and economic process started to recover[79]. Nevertheless, a series of circumstances hastened the decision for continuing the works. On March 30, 1728, part of the roof and a pillar of the old church, -from which just three bays remained-, fell down and the church was severely damaged[80]. This forced decisions in favour of the continuation of the works that went on encountering many difficulties and problems, as evidenced in several reports and inspections. During the eighteenth century the undertaking of the Collegiate Church was a complex enterprise, involving intricate structural, composite and building matters, yet nothing different to what was happening in other buildings of the Valencia area at the time.

The inspection of the state of the old church after its collapse by priest Casimiro Medina, Jacinto Torres, Blas Soler, Pedro Cuenca, Francisco Adam and Miguel Martínez[81], provides us with the names of some of the architects that were responsible for the works of the Collegiate Church during these years. One of the most important of them was priest Casimiro Medina Uríos (Xàtiva, 1671), whose biography is sometimes mistaken with that of his son, also an architect and geometrician with the same name, Casimiro Medina (Xàtiva, 1700-1763)[82]. This made it unclear as to who did what task. Orellana[83] praised the father: "a person who studied a lot from books and drawings". Although his real contribution to the works has not yet been given much consideration, his role must have been quite significant, since from the mid eighteenth century there is evidence of him providing plans and drawings for the Collegiate Church. Nevertheless, those were rather precarious times, in which there were economic difficulties even for carrying out simple repairs; and religious masons from the Convent of Saint Onofre were asked to repair the roof or damaged pillars in exchange for alms[84].

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[78] The first signs of evidence regarding the works make reference to very simple reforms carried on the roofs and the sacristy washbasin. In 1714, an image of Saint Vicent Ferrer was placed in the first chapel to the right of the ambulatory that had been founded by Pedro Benlloch Borja.

[79] On March 8, 1708, five canons commenced religious services again. In November, the King demanded the return of properties, in order to recover the rents and imposts that the church had over the city. In 1715, the administration returned appointing new members, such as the collector or the person in charge of the candles and lamps, called "luminero" or the chapel musicians. Sarthou, C., Datos … opus cit., p. 101

[80] This situation is explained in Viñes, E., *La Patrona de Játiva*, 1923, pp.162-163 and also by Sarthou, C. The original documents are conserved in the Municipal Archive of Xàtiva, Chapter books, nº15, 1728, 28 March 1728 and 1 April 1728. The roof fell down over Saint Rosa's altar near the clock house, while the aisles next to the minaret were also in danger of falling apart. The pillar over Saint Francisco Javier's altar was also affected and it was necessary to shore it up to prevent the arches from collapsing.

[81] To these names, we can add those of Bernardo Beneyto, Jose Guerola, Nolasco Martínez, Juan Jordán and Tomás Mesquita, who also inspected the church.

[82] Faus Prieto, A., *Mapistes. Cartografia i agrimensura a la València del segle XVIII*, Valencia, 1995, pp. 84-85; Orellana, M. A., *Biografía Pictórica Valentina*, Valencia, ed. 1967, pp. 363-364.

[83] Born in Xàtiva, he entered into priesthood after becoming a widower. He had a son of the same name, who also became an architect and who continued his father's works. This fact makes it difficult to discern who did what and to draw an accurate biography. Possibly, it was the son the one that accompanied Pina in the inspection of the church of Oliva in 1755.

[84] AMX, Chapter Book of 1728, nº15: "they shored up the pillar with enough timber in order to secure it, after this, they started with the reparation of the roofs that had fallen down on the thirty of the last month. The altar of Saint Rosa, next to the clock house was damaged but also another piece next to the belfry was in danger of collapsing, so they decided to pull it down. They had to do some other works and as there was no money for this, they had to count on the religious masons from the convent of Saint Onofre of this city".

A series of decisions were taken between 1730[85] and 1 January 1732, date in which the ceremony of placement of the first stone was repeated for the third time. The burocratic, administrative and financing procedures[86] started all over again and the works "for closing the main piers next to the sanctuary" [87] were resumed. This time they seemed very determined. However, after a while, serious drawbacks were encountered due to the loss of the plans and drawings during the war.

The main dilemma faced by the Surveyors of the works was if they should cover what had already been built, say the sanctuary and transept, or whether they should continue with the rest of the bays in the main nave and aisles. The solution was left in the hands of Juan Bautista Corachán (1661-1741), renowned "novator" from Valencia[88], expert in architectonic matters, and mathematic professor in the University of Valencia from 1696 to 1720. They called him in 1732 with the explicit desire of asking for help to determine what to do. The presence of Corachán in Xàtiva at this exact moment was not an exceptional fact. Corachán had been called in to provide solutions for rebuilding of the city of Xàtiva after the fire of 1707 together with the mathematician and Oratorian priest Tomás Vicente Tosca. They were called as experts to discuss Macanaz's proposal. During the last years of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth century, they were called to inspect all the important civil, urban, hydraulic or religious works in the Valencia area. The most significant ones were the façade of the Valencia cathedral, the port of Valencia and the Olivera theatre. They also gave many reports on architecture, which explains their knowledge concerning these matters[89]. Corachán expresses in the Collegiate report his interest for architectonic issues and his dexterity in providing reports: "The experience of over 50 years has shown me that the election of a drawn plan is not the same as the election of an engraving".

Unpublished documents including a series of letters sent by the administrators to Corachán and the technical reports that Corachán wrote have been exceptionally valuable to help us follow the building process of the Collegiate Church. At the beginning he was asked to provide a first opinion on how to proceed with the construction of the church, more specifically "how to link the work already done with the new one, so that the difference would go unnoticed". Corachán's answer seemed adequate but not detailed, and the administrators asked him for a more detailed opinion, saying: "the paper sent to us is enough to understand what the masters should do in order to continue properly with the works, but, perhaps due to our lack of knowledge, this information seems too little, and we beg you for a more detailed explanation that enables us to better comprehend your ideas". After receiving the second and more detailed paper, they recalled the complexity of the work and decided to only vault the existing parts instead of continuing with the extension of the church. "For the moment –they said- we will only cover what has already been built, adding a choir, between the transept piers and the old church and placing the organ in one of the arches of the sanctuary". They concluded saying that they would keep the paper for the future should they decide going ahead with the continuation of the church.

The document was an erudite paper based on a visual inspection of the works and some contemporary designs, especially a plan and elevation attributed to Casimiro Medina[90], thanks to which "the ideas of the ancient master builders could be considered". There were also "three beautifully designed plans which made manifest the skill of the old masters". Although Corachán had seen these plan drawings he refused making use of them in order "to avoid being influenced by them and to allow him to get a better understanding of what had already been built". Surely, "the original design and wooden model" preserved in the city's archives in 1596, were already lost. There is not a single mention to a wooden model and the designs do not seem to be the original ones. The report would be taken into account at a later date when they realised the difficulty of connecting what had already been built with the bays next to the transept. But for the moment, it was only used to determine the actual problems and appraise the situation of the building.

In fact, the transept walls reached up to the cornices, the two transept piers next to the presbytery were already built, but the two next to the nave bays, were not, and besides this space was not yet vaulted[91]. According to Corachán, the building of the new bays was conditioned by a series of clues provided by what had already been built: its width and height should be the same as the adjacent chapels of the sanctuary, Saint Vincent's and the ante sacristy, not minding if the transept was protruding. For this statement, he relied on "Sebastiano Serlio's plan of Saint Peter of Rome, in the Third Book, sheet number 21, because the aisles in the main nave are the same size as those in the sanctuary, in spite of the protruding transept". The bay next to the transept was too narrow, because it was already determined by

[85] In June 1730, the spare scaffolding timber was sold. Since May 1731 there were some reparations in the chapel of Saint Martin and new benches were placed for the members of the Municipality. The two mills that provided rents for the church started to function again, as well as the collection of the tributes and the Committee of Surveyors of the works etc

[86] They also counted with the revenues coming from bullfights that took place in several squares of the city, especially in Saint Pedro's square which was wide enough and in the Collegiate square, so they had to prepare the houses in this square in order to be able to watch the bullfights, AMX, document number: 2197

[87] AMX, Chapter Books, nº18, 17 October 1731.

[88] Ximeno, V., *Escritores del reino de Valencia*, Valencia, 1747-49, vol. 2, pp. 267-268; and Navarro Brotóns, V., *Tradició i canvi científic al País Valencià modern*, Ed. Tres i Quatre, Valencia, 1985, pp. 65-115.

[89] His wide architectural knowledge and his modern attitude towards the ancient authors, Vitruvius included, is expressed in a report on a hydraulic issue in 1729. Bérchez, J., *La difusión de Vitruvio en el marco del neoclasicismo español*, estudio introductorio a la ed. del *Compendio de los diez libros de arquitectura de Vitruvio*, de Claude Perrault, Murcia, 1981, pp. xv-xvi.

[90] During his first visits to San Felipe, Corachán did not know of their existence. He became aware of the existence of the drawings the eve of his return to Valencia, and used them later on to support his proposals.

[91] This report contradicts the argument based on Montaigu's plan that considered that in 1721 the sanctuary and the crossing were already vaulted.

the size of the main existing piers. In order to disguise this, it was advised that the choir should be placed in the same spot as in the Valencia cathedral. This idea would also correct the arrangement of the pilasters; although Corachán had proposed to use double pilasters on the transept and to use simple pilasters in the rest of the nave. Corachán suspected this variation would not be accepted by the administrators since, in Corachán words, "it meant changing the ancient part already built".

According to his statements, the original idea had been to build six bays on the principal nave: "six aisles on the sides of the main nave, (I believe in memory to the twelve apostles) as I have seen in many churches and as it is in correspondence with the site). The idea also was "to communicate the side aisles". This aspect had especial significance because the Collegiate Church had no cloister, and it provided the possibility for processions and other ceremonies to take place. This idea should also consider the preservation of the existing Pope's chapel, although he does not mention how to communicate this chapel with the rest of the church.

Furthermore, Corachán informed about the vaulting system: rowlock arches and timbrel vaulting, following Fray Lorenzo de San Nicolás calculations of the thrusts and Tosca's *Curso Mathematico*[92] for the width of the walls. He assured that the ancient builders knew a lot more about vaulting calculations: "the ancient builders knew how to make stronger vaults and they were wise in Mechanics and Static laws". He concluded his report by saying: "The person continuing the works was afraid of vaulting the building". He considered that one of the most important worries of the masters was the strength of the walls and abutments.

After this report, works went on, starting with the vaulting of the sanctuary, hoping to continue with the rest of the bays later on. The works were directed by José Sierra, called in the documentation "Master of His Majesty's Royal Works" and "professor of Architecture" [93], who ordered the vaulting of the presbytery, in the first place. In a report sent to the Town Council in December 1734[94], he stated that "the sanctuary and its chapels were about to be vaulted and adorned". During this same year he was commissioned building a choir and two atriums in a space that was to be covered by the dome, in the centre of the transept; but he advised against this decision on the grounds that caused too many inconveniences. "In the first place, if this is to be built, the sacred services could not be celebrated and the priests will not be able to enter into the choir, because of the extreme risks while building the two transept piers, the arches, the transept walls, the vaults and the roofs and the rest of the works. During the building, there is risk of stones, bricks, masonry, water or other materials falling down. This has already happened while building the vaults in the sanctuary, and we see them every day; the roofs can come falling down severely injuring priests and other religious service assistants. Besides, there is a lot noise from the worker's loud voices and shouting".

He also pointed out the difficulty of placing the giant scaffolding that was needed if the choir was built: "We have to consider that the huge scaffolding for the transept piers, arches and the rest of the works, can not be placed if there is a choir and atriums, because we have to dig deep until we find solid rock. There is also the risk of timber collapsing and the roofs coming down…".

It was at this time when the baroque decoration of the sanctuary vault was started. This idea corresponds to what Sierra said in his report: that the "presbytery and its chapels were about to be vaulted and adorned". From this comment we can assume that the idea was also to extend the decoration towards the ambulatory vaults, nowadays very plain and simple. This decoration was criticised by academicist Ortiz y Sanz in 1804: "a very high entablature, with perverse and excessive moldings" or "Curved arches that over the pilasters and entablature come up to the top of the sanctuary vault, totally carved and decorated with strange figures, and little pearled straps." From an actual point of view alien to the uneasiness that this decoration provoked in Vitruvianist Ortiz y Sanz, these decorations over the lunettes, barrel vault and hemispherical vault, do not have many things in common with a standardized version of baroque decoration. They show a great quality in design which reaches its highest peak around the windows, with "estipites" in the curved cornices, and children among baroque luxurious decorations, almost rococo, that remind Juan Bautista de Borja's style in Alicante. Contemporarily, in 1744 or 1745, the painting of the pendentives was commissioned to a young José Vergara. We only know the sketches, but it is sufficient to assert the decorative purposes, although the dome had not yet been built.

As the works on the Collegiate Church went on, in 1746, the administrators asked for the presence of some architects to evaluate the extreme bad state in which the ancient church was[95]. The

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[92] He precisely analysed the thrusts of the vaulting system, considering that as they were timbrel vaults, the thrusts were exerted against the sprandels and against the walls that divided the main nave and the aisles. Those thrusts were at the same time absorbed by the chapels thrusts, so they did not need too wide walls neither buttresses.

[93] This master is constantly mentioned in the municipal documents, as building and inspecting all kind of works. We know about his title in 1733 as "Master of His Majesty's Royal Works, of the Royal Palace, city and Kingdom of Valencia", "professor of Architecture, and one of the six masters named by the Royal and Supreme Council of Castille for official appraisals, in the Spanish Kingdom". He inspected the river walls from the Rovella's dam until the Bridge of El Mar in Valencia AMV, Books of the New Works of the River (1590-1814) ll.ll (81 vol.), A.M.V. ll.ll. 45, p. 45. In 1735, after having been appointed "master of the Collegiate Church of San Felipe, known before as Xàtiva" he inspected the church of Montaverner, planned by Casimiro Medina and built by José Tormo. This in Cárcel, M., *Relación sobre el estado de las diócesis valencianas*, Valencia, 1989, Esplugues, J., *Memòries d'un capella del XVIII*, Institució Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia, 2002, p. 116. We thank prof. Yolanda Gil these references.

[94] This report is in AMX, Chapter Books, nº 21, año 1734, 15 december, 1734, considering a report done in 7 september 1734

[95] This report in Viñes, E., *La patrona...,* opus cit ., pp. 161-162, coming from AMX, document nº 629/4, "it is true that the old church is about to fall and it stands miraculously. In this old church, there is a extreme lack of space, because it is so small that it is very difficult to continue with the liturgical services" This in the Apendix of Texts and Documents about the Collegiate Church.

technical inspection was carried out by Felipe Gavilá, infantry lieutenant colonel, Jaime Bort, architect and director of the cathedral of Murcia, Casimiro Medina, architect of Xàtiva, and the Valencia architects, José Vilar de Claramunt and José Herrero. They all analysed the situation of the old church bearing in mind is was intimately attached to the new one, and that any demolition would affect both parts. The experts agreed in the initial appraisal of the building site: "The new church was in danger due to the lack of walls supporting thrusts in the west side and for safety reasons it was urgent to complete what was already initiated. The old church should be demolished to allow for more room and to build the next two chapels on each side, enabling the walls and vaults in the western transept to be secured". [96]

They concluded that for the stability of the building it was necessary to start as soon as possible the bays next to the transept in the northern part. This would give peace mind knowing that what had already been built was safe and sound. From this report, we also know that the presence in Xàtiva of architects of such an importance as Jaime Bort, José Herrero and José Vilar de Claramunt, was not limited to the inspection of the old church; they also gave ideas for the construction of the new one. All of these architects counted with a wide experience in complex building processes. Jaime Bort in the Cathedral of Murcia: José Vilar de Claramunt had participated in the decisions after the sanctuary and the dome collapse of the Hermit of el Lledó in Castellón in 1739, and he had also informed about the parish church of Alcalà de Xivert. He had also built churches in Alcoi, Riola and Sollana. José Herrero contemporarily had given the drawings for the renovation of the parish church of San Martin, and the Communion Chapel of Elche, in 1745, a year before the inspection of the Collegiate Church.

Friar Jose Alberto Pina "Chief Architect of the Collegiate Church"

Friar Jose Alberto Pina (1693-1772)[97] was an outstanding architect in his time, very well trained in theory and practice, as can be appreciated from many of his architectural works, detailed reports using accurate technical and artistic literature, construction appraisals, designs and plans, and by the thoroughness with which he wrote architectural documents and budgets. His presence at the very works of the Collegiate Church must have been an important part of his training. This training was probably similar to that given in the old days to master masons in ancient cathedrals, when the Chapter offered its master masons highest architectural training. When he presented himself as merit academician in the Academy of San Carlos at the end of his days, the directors of the Section of Architecture (Vicente Gascó, Antonio Gilabert) admired and respected him. In his letter he affirmed that he had "trained several architects of this Kingdom" and although he presented several plans, the most renown was that of the Collegiate Church.

He was born in Moyuela (Aragón), and his training took place in the circle of architects from Zaragoza, that worked in the most important buildings of the beginning of the eighteenth century. Before arriving to Valencia, he had built twenty four churches in Aragon, one of them in La Luna (Zaragoza) that followed the *hallenkirche* model. When he settled in Xàtiva, he started the church of the Carmelite convent –which had been destroyed in the War of the Spanish Succession- and he soon obtained the title of architect. In 1769, at the end of his life he was appointed as merit academician. Of his extensive building activity in the Valencia area, we could point out the church of the Virgin in Gorga (Alicante 1742-45), the finial of the belfry in the church of Saint Mary in Onteniente (Valencia, about 1745), the church of the carmelites in the same town (1760-1771). Also his reports and examinations in Saint Mary of Oliva's church (1755), the approval of the designs for the northern cloister of San Miguel de los Reyes (Valencia, 1763) and the designs delivered for the archpriestal church of Villarreal (Castellón, 1752) and also his project for the Escuelas Pías, in Valencia, at the end of his life. In all these projects, he employs a modern classicist baroque architecture with a mathematical flare, getting ahead of the local constructive methods. But without doubt, it is in Xàtiva where his work is more expressive. He was appointed the Chief architect of the Collegiate Church, and also of many other important buildings –religious, civil, military or public- that were accomplished in the middle of the eighteenth century[98].

The Collegiate Church was the work that gave him more prestige, as he himself pointed out when applying to enrol in the Academy of San Carlos in 1769[99]. He stated that by this time he had been in charge of the building for over 30 years, and that he had trained many architects, such as his nephew Friar Francisco de Santa Bárbara (1731-1802) or Jaime Pérez, who continued the Collegiate Church. Friar Francisco de Santa Bárbara, Carmelite in the Xativa's convent, was trained in mathematics and architecture by his uncle, and was the author, as Orellana tells us, of an unpublished translation of the very important stereotomy treatise of Mathurin de Jousse *Le sècret d'architecture…* La Flèche, 1642), which was expanded with texts by Tomás Vicent Tosca, Friar Lorenzo de San Nicolás and Bernard Forest

[96] After doing a revision on the original documentation, these reports are in AMX, Legajo 629/4. They are recorded in the apendix of Texts and Documents on the Collegiate Church.

[97] Bérchez, J., *Arquitectura barroca valenciana*, op.cit., pp. 156-160.

[98] About Pina's work and in particular his architectural ideas considering the report on the Santa Clara's convent: Bérchez, J. And Gómez-Ferrer, M., "Visiones y mentalidad arquitectónica de un maestro del siglo XVIII…", op. cit. pp. 195-216.

[99] Archivo Academia de San Carlos, legajo 63, nº 37, document of friar Jose Pina asking his admission as an academician of merit in architecture: "and I am the eldest architect in this KIngdom, havind designed and directed many buildings, and I have been directing for thirty years the Collegiat Church of San Felipe"

de Belidor. The book is actually preserved in the Municipal Archive of Xativa under the title of *Secretos de Arquitectura, (Secrets of Architecture)*, and was property of the Cuenca family[100].

Pina assumed the difficult decision of continuing the church that since Corachán's report in 1732 nobody had been able to assume. He was in charge of the building since 1738-39 until his death in 1772. He experienced the difficulties encountered after the disastrous earthquake in 1748, and saw the beginning of the new bays in the principal nave. He also designed an ambitious cathedral project in 1760 coinciding with the time when the church was petitioned to became a Cathedral. A plan and an elevation pertaining to this petition are still conserved today. He reinterpreted the architecture of the apse and sanctuary into a three aisles configuration with side communicated chapels, slightly narrower than the transept, so this one still protruded. In the interior articulation, Pina continued the particular classicist flare that had characterised the previous century. He articulated the transept piers, naves and chapels, with double Doric gigantic pilasters. He placed slender Doric pilasters on each side and at the same height of the rectangular pillars, except the ones in the main nave, which have shallow vertical grooves like the ones in the transept and in the piers under the main dome and under the transversal arches of the barrel vault. He also added some flying buttresses on the exterior of the main nave vault. He continued the timbrel vaulting of the main nave, but in the four chapels, adjacent to the transept, he made use of the ancient stone model of the Saint Vincent's chapel and the ante sacristy, with its sauce-shaped rectangular coffered vaults. This resumption of the stone cutting techniques that is evident in these chapels, is an exceptional fact, considering that we are in the mid eighteenth century and near the city of Valencia. This was a time, when all the buildings employed the modern timbrel vaulting techniques with gypsum decorations. This isolated example of stereotomy is linked to the inclination of admiring local architectural examples of old times. This inclination gave rise to a kind of neo-stone cutting art in the eighteenth century that studied ancient techniques. This precise aim was sustained by the architectural renovation that took place thanks to Tosca, with its *Compendium Matematicum*, and Corachán, with his inspections and reports. Proof of this is his fondness for past stone cutting techniques. This was also evident in learned disciples of the next generation as can be seen in modern stereotomic renovations undertaken by José Herrero in the Communion Chapel of Saint Mary of Elche, in line with the vault of the church of Santiago of Orihuela. Also in the recovery of the "vaulted" staircases of San Miguel de los Reyes, that Felipe Rubio did in his project for the Custom House of Valencia, or in the staircases of the archbishop's palace of Orihuela, following the example of the staircase of the Santo Domingo's College. [101] In the same way, the chapels constructed under Pina's direction in the Collegiate Church, are referred to the already mentioned admired saucer-shaped vaults of the apse. It is also possible to consider that a kind of stone cutting atelier aroused in the Collegiate. It contributed to the training of master builders such as the Cuenca's or friar Francisco de Santa Bárbara, which explains the existence of a translation of the stereotomy treatise by Mathurin de Jousse's, mentioned by Orellana, or what is the same, the manuscript book, property of the Cuenca family that still exists. Evidence of this, is the election for the chapels next to the transept of a type of stone vaulting similar to the vaults which are called in the manuscript "Rectangular coffered vaults with cuts in a barley shape" which is the same as the one called in the French treatise *Le sécret..* as "Voute en pendentif barlong et les coupes rondes", with rhomboidal stone cuts. [102]

After the 1748 earthquakes that severely harmed some of the main buildings in Xàtiva Pina wrote several reports describing precisely the status of convents, churches or civil buildings, detailing the damages and the specific proposals for their repair. The one dedicated to the Collegiate Church[103] is very interesting and gives us an account of some of the principal problems regarding technique and of the specific difficulties of the works. Pina observed that before the earthquakes, the building had already experienced some problems attributed to the fast pace of its construction, because between 1732 and 1748, the sanctuary and the transept were vaulted, and the two main piers were constructed, as well as the arches and the pendentives. Pina pointed out the existence of cracks in pillars, arches and vaults of the crossing, even before the earthquake, and attributed them to the "hastily construction of the two main attic piers and to the lack of strength in the walls under the vaults". Also "because the walls and vaults had been done with heterogeneous materials, because the walls were made of stone, masonry and mortar and the vaults and arches were made of bricks and gypsum". He mentioned the difficulties of working with so much gypsum, "which causes large swells in the walls and cracks leading to a collapse, as experience has shown to many architects". He also said that in the Collegiate Church there had been some falls "because of the gypsum and also because of the carelessness of the stone masons who put the stone in the main piers". As a consequence of all these errors, there were two main cracks in the northern façade of the transept and another one in the internal angle between west and north.

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[100] AMX, Book 995, Manuscript with 39 drawings, distributed in 4 chapters. It has a leather cover and it can be read "[…] the 13 March of […], his great grandson Francisco Cuenca y Barrera, doctor in surgery; and in the first page it is written: "28 July 77, my nephew died […], he gave it to López y Cuenca. Papers that I inherited from my father Francisco Cuenca y Barrera, Doctor in Medicine and Surgery that was born in th 5 july 1818 in San Felipe of Xàtiva, province of Valencia and died in 8 april 1878 in Mentrida, province of Toledo while he was the doctor of the town. In the next page there is the title: *Secretos de Arquitectura. Tratado geometrico que comprehende lo mas usual y corriente de la Montea y cortes de cantería*" (Secrets of Architecture. Geommetrical Treatise about the most usual stereotomic cuts. It was written in the Monastery of San Miguel de los Reyes, year, 1766.

[101] Bérchez, J., *Arquitectura barroca valenciana...,* opus cit., pp. 88 and 90.

[102] *Secrets of architecture*, opus cit. drawing 31, similar to that of Mathurin de Jousse, *Le Secret*… p. 141, and literal translation of the text

[103] AMX, Leg. 2557. Texts and Documents about the Collegiate Church.

Nevertheless, the earthquake of March 23rd caused very specific damages: the fall of two crosses on the north and south façades, damages in the roof of the northern side and the fall of one of the spheres and the breaking of another. A new earthquake on the April 2nd widened the already existing cracks on arches, vaults and façades, and the roof over the crossing that had to be rebuilt, because the internal walls had been very affected.

One of the most interesting aspects of Pina's report is that in which he provided the measurements of the dome and lantern, which he said should reach up to the cross on the top, 224 palms high, (about 50 meters), much higher than it is today, because it was intended to be constructed over an ambitious drum, that was not built in the later reconstruction of the nineteenth century. The fall of the original dome after a new earthquake in 1885, and the replacement by the actual metallic dome, prevents us from determining its exact original shape. We can just about imagine it from indirect graphic sources, which differ according to the importance given to the drum, that seemed to be less important than what was originally projected. The lithography published in the book by Boix from a photograph taken in 1858, although shows the dome from a big distance, rendering it possible to visualize a huge lantern and a little drum.

Pina was linked to the Collegiate Church in the years after the earthquake. In 1750, he designed the main wooden altar for the image of the Virgin, which is placed now, with some alterations due to the civil war, in the transept[104]. In 1753, he wrote the layout for the stone stairs on the northern façade of the transept, that were to be built by stone mason José Cuenca[105]. After concluding the works, the first August of the same year, the church was officially inaugurated. With a solemn procession presided by archbishop Mayoral, the Blessed Sacrament and the Virgin Mary were transported from the old church to the new one. "They walked out the door to the church square and entered it through the new stairs, they walked along the ambulatory and arrived to the sanctuary by the arch before the sacristy…"[106]. In 1755, according to the inscription placed on a stone in the exterior wall next to the northern portal of the transept, the wall had started in 1737, when the first stone on the pedestal of the column that should close the choir was placed. Therefore, at this moment it was possible to use the ambulatory, the sanctuary, the transept, while the connexion with the two bays was not yet made.

Cathedral drawings

Friar Alberto Pina was also in charge of delivering a full project with plan and elevation that would help Xàtiva become the head of a new diocese. In 1760, the desire of pursuing the Cathedral status is renewed, and a series of reports that insisted on the exceptionality of the building were presented to the court. "The building of the new church is magnificent, made of stone in Doric order. Its dimensions exceed those of the Cathedral of Valencia" [107]. The reports insisted in the already known ecclesiastic and historic reasons, as well as in the number of inhabitants, the number of convents, the income etc. Among all the reports presented by the chapter of the Collegiate Church, the convents of the city or the Municipality, there was one addressed to the King in 23rd December 1760, of extreme importance.

The project was signed by the chapter and canons of the Collegiate Church and included a set of exceptional documents. On one hand, a Geographic Map of Jesuit Francisco Casaus, coloured "to help visualise with great ease the lands of the new diocese". On the other hand and with much more significance for the architectural history of the Collegiate Church, a plan and elevation, signed by its architect and Director, Friar Jose Alberto Pina. These documents reveal an evident intention for building a cathedral church: "when one looks at the plan and elevation it is clear that it is for a cathedral". This plan and elevation are preserved in the National Historical Archive of Madrid[108], and they are of the greatest importance to understand the real aim of the building: "the most magnificent and beautiful of the Kingdom", as it is stated. Both drawings are signed by "Friar Jose Alberto Pina, Carmelite, architect, Master of his Majesty and Director of the works" and are dated on 16th November 1760.

Without doubt, those were the plans that Pina presented nine years later to the Royal Academy of San Carlos and that were admired by the Directors of Architecture Vicente Gascó and Antonio Gilabert. With these drawings Pina laid down the cornerstone of the future profession of architect, i.e. the ability of presenting architectural ideas by means of an academic drawing. His drawings were very well presented,

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[104] González Baldoví, M., already stated in *Museos de Xàtiva*, 1992, pp. 54-56 that this was the retable preserved in the transept. Viñes in *La Patrona…* opus cit… made the mistake of thinking that it was the one carved by Antoni Tomas in 1652-54. Its gilding and finishing was postponed when a proposal was made to replace it for today's tabernacle. Nowadays it has a modern image of the Jesus Nazarenus.

[105] Documents preserved in AMX, legajo 2198, "Statements about the stairs that have to be done in the new works of the Collegiate Church regarding the stone work", signed in 10th May 1753 by Jose Alberto Pina. Another document nº 2199, titled "Statements about the building of stairs and wall besides the streets on the northen façade of the Colegiate Church" signed in 9th May 1753 also by Pina to prepare the building place for the stairs. They are transcribed in the apendix of Texts ans Documents about the Collegiate Church.

[106] This is taken from Viñes in his work *La Patrona...* opus cit., pp. 164-166, where he describes with great detail the procession on that day after a document conserved in the collegiate church archives.

[107] Reports partially quoted by Sarthou in his appendix of the cathedral intentions for Xàtiva. Some of the most important ones are in the Archivo Historico Nacional, sección: Consejos, 118867

[108] Historical National Archive, Maps and Plans, 1117 and 1118. They had been published without any reference in Cadiñanos, I., "Documentos para la Historia del Arte en la Corona de Aragón. III y IV. Reinos de Valencia y Mallorca" *Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar de Ibercaja*, vol. XCVIII, 2006, pp. 7-167.

colourful and with perspectives. Thanks to his geometrical representation and functional use of colour, he provided detailed views of the building and its construction process that helped visualize the projected execution of the Collegiate Church and the various phases that were to be completed.

The plan has a long explanatory text that includes the numbers of the different parts of the project, and three colours for the phases of the building. In yellow what had already been built, ambulatory and sanctuary, and the transept except the dome over the crossing, which was not yet built. In "dark red", what was under construction at this moment, the two bays adjacent to the transept and in "faded red" what was not yet built, the two last bays and the façade flanked by the belfries. The system of representation was very meticulous[109]. It included the indication of the recesses of the wall and the architectural orders designed from a high point of view. It closely represented architectural details such as the skewed door and washbasin of the sacristy, the spiral staircases of the apse or the trapezoidal portals of the transept façades, designed with blue and yellow lines. Pina himself told in the text that the Collegiate Church was built in a very fine stone and rigorous Doric order", praising "This magnificent church which is singular in Spain and abroad". And in fact, the project shows the true intentions of building a cathedral. The project was completed by a series of spaces, such as Chapter House, offices, an impressive choir that occupied the two central bays of the main nave, archives, etc. The specific desire of being superior to the cathedral of Valencia is felt in this project.

The architectural conception of Friar Alberto Pina for the Collegiate Church was completed with the longitudinal elevation that reveals the existence of a transparent screen of windows and doors between the tight pillars of the sanctuary, and whose prints are now seen after the restoration. The existence of the window frames are now visible at the last level of arches. This longitudinal section also reveals that Pina proposed a modification of the severe Doric articulation of the church, including some baroque changes. He broke the massive and continuous Doric entablature, with projections over the double pilasters and recesses of frieze and architrave in the space between the pilasters, diminishing the number of metopes and trygliphs. Another zone of interest in Pina's drawing was the dome over the crossing, which had been postponed and which in 1760 was not yet built. Pina draw an ambitious dome over a high drum and lantern, over pendentives decorated with rocaille, according to the decoration of the rest of the presbytery, which repeated the ornament in the protruding nerves of the dome interior that converge in a high lantern. This projected dome –before only imagined by the gigantic piers of the transept or by the absence of light in the apse- that was also designed in the later façade project of Ortiz y Sanz and Jaime Perez, - discovers a quite heavy articulation of the drum with thick pairs of pilasters, which was one of the obstacles for its definitive construction. It also allows us to see the elevation of the two octagonal towers, with its successive levels articulated by Tuscan pilasters, and the same order in the façade.

The same file that holds Friar Alberto Pina's drawings contains a series of answers to the petition of the Collegiate acquiring the status of a cathedral. One of the letters, signed by archbishop Mayoral, on October 20th, 1760 was very harsh, as well as some others written by the canons of the Valencia cathedral. In spite of counting with the services of the lawyer from the Royal Council, Pedro Laforcada, Xàtiva was forced to drop the idea the following year. There were further attempts in 1795, but at this time the replies were even more overwhelming, and Xativa was definitely to abandon this aspiration.

The only thing left to do now was the completion of some of the architectural proposals presented in the drawings; but even these were left in mere intentions. After Pina's death, the priority was to connect the two parts of the church, the whole area of the apse, presbytery and transept and the new bays of the nave with its corresponding aisles and side chapels, although the dome, façade and many other auxiliary pieces were not yet built.

In 1777, the possibility of uniting both parts became a reality. In a statement signed by Francisco Agulló, administrator of the works, to the Town Council, it said: "The church is about to demolish the wall that divided the part already built with the last aisles lately concluded, so that the organ also could be placed. The ecclesiastic chapter has transferred the religious services to the Pope's chapel or the Communion Chapel and there is a corridor now for communicating the church with that chapel" [110]

The pastoral visit of 1778 evolved round the difficulties of obtaining revenues which had always slowed the progress of works, and the lack of the adjacent chapels: "The church has no sources of income but the short rights over the sepulchres. It is thanks to the devotion and piety of the parishioners who have contributed with alms that we owe the construction of a three aisles church, begun in January 1733. Thanks to them the choir is rightly placed and the temple ready to celebrate with dignity and convenience all the ecclesiastic services. It only lacks for its perfection two chapels in the aisles." [111]

To dream about the final conclusion of the church seemed impossible. Erudite Orellana in his biography of Casimiro Medina, *Biografía Pictórica,* he wrote: "such a sumptuous church that was started in the century of 1400 with high spirit and worthy plan proceeds at such slow pace, that there doesn't seem to be an end to it. There is a proverb in this Kingdom, and not a modern one, to speak about works that never end, in limousine or Provençal language: "that will take as long as the Collegiate Church of

[109] As an example one can refer to Vicente Acero's project for the Cathedral of Cádiz (1725) or Felipe Rubio's project for the Custom House of Valencia (1762).

[110] AMX, (Chapter Books), nº63, 14th June 1777. The two bays adjacent to the transept were to be annexed and in the meanwhile the Pope's chapel was to be used, because it still stood standing.

[111] Cárcel, M., *Relación sobre el estado de las diócesis valencianas*, Valencia, 1989, p. 1109.

Xàtiva. The main façade is still to be finished, and only God knows if it will be completed by the beginning of the next century. A long time will pass until a door is needed. There are still two or three chapels missing on each side before reaching the entrance. The work was indeed conceived with high spirits. And while some works (equally large) count their construction in years, this one can count it in centuries…"[112]

[112] Orellana, M. A., opus cit., p. 364.

III. THE COLLEGIATE IN THE TIMES OF ENLIGHTENED ACADEMICISM

The Jaspers Tabernacle. The work and its praise

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century and first decades of the nineteenth century the works on the Collegiate Church were greatly influenced by the artistic moment of the time. Its already per se long a constructive process was affected by the often tiresome halts and the new circumstances brought about by the newly created illustrated academicism: Continual intervencionism and control of projected works, specially those of religious character; classicist redesign subject to architectural revision in accordance with Antiquity architecture; the raising of issues stemming from new competencies and professional qualifications regarding architectonic work, that would equally affect sculptors, architects, master masons, and also individuals belonging to cultural and architectural spheres; or a protagonistic activity of some Illustrated Valencian priests, such as Francisco Fabián y Fuero, seen in the works projected in their archbishopric. The proximity of the city of Xàtiva to that of Valencia paved way for these circumstances to appear relatively quickly and their effects were soon to be noticed on the construction of the Collegiate Church.

The Collegiate Church of Xàtiva was greatly influenced by the architects of the Royal Academy of San Fernando, especially after the Royal Order of 23 November 1777 by virtue of which this institution was granted full powers to exclusively supervise all types of architectural projects, including those undertaken in Valencia. And although this competence was passed on to the Royal Academy of San Carlos in 1784; the Royal Academy of San Fernando continued exerting great influence on the works of the Collegiate Church. To all this we have to add the fortuitous and personal influence of José Francisco Ortiz y Sanz, "the Vitruvian" as he was called ironically in court. This individual played an important role in the cultural and architectural panorama, and largely influenced the future of the Collegiate Church; first as a vicar, and later on as dean. This period, apart from the works undertaken, offers a wide range of writings and commentaries referring to the Collegiate Church, such as those made by the prestigious architect Ventura Rodríguez who openly spoke about the oblique fickleness of Spanish baroque architecture, and Xàtiva as the place where obliqueness reached its maximum splendour. All these factors show once again the generous capacity of the Collegiate Church for arousing commentaries and leaving documentary evidence of the architectural events that happened in the region during that time. The master lines of the Collegiate Church, forged over more than one and a half centuries, offered no chance of intervention. However, there were still parts of the interior to be finished, in particular the tabernacle of the chancel, the façade and the belfry. All of which were unavoidably affected by the cluster of circumstances mentioned above.

At the inauguration in 1753, the sanctuary was probably presided by the main altar piece designed by friar José Alberto Pina, which was later on replaced by the current tabernacle, paid by the patroness of the works Ms. Victoria Albero. At first she intended to gild the wooden altarpiece, but in 1776[113] she was prompted to change her decision and opted for the construction of a tabernacle made of a variety or marbles, "one of the most exquisite and fashionable materials of this century". The original idea was expressed in a letter by the archbishop of Valencia, Francisco Fabián y Fuero, who recommended that: "other sumptuous construction required a corresponding altarpiece as graceful as this"[114]. For this reason the scholar and sculptor Pedro Juan Guisart was brought to Valencia, and on 17 March 1777 took measurements at the Collegiate Church for its design. Juan Guisart was born in Bohemia and was an early student of the Royal Academy of San Carlos in Valencia. He is the exponent of the first generation of artists that came out from the famed Valencia Royal Academy, portraying a versatile and somewhat cosmopolitan baroque style stemming from the important Valencian tradition from the mid sixteen century that was not adverse to the new academic classicism. Guisart, as well as other of his academic colleagues of his generation, excelled in architectural adornation, a profession that afforded him one too many conflicts throughout his academic career and of which the project of the tabernacle of marble was no exception.

Guisart's project can be understood looking at the general composition of the tabernacle, and by looking at some details of the construction corrected or pointed out by the architect Ventura Rodríguez. We know indeed, that on 29 July 1777, Ms. Victoria Albero presented Guisart's work to the chanons together with a favourable report (not devoid of some minor amendments) from the architect Ventura Rodríguez, issued personally to her on 20 June the same year[115]. This document acknowledged that Pedro Juan Guisart's design "revealed ingenuity, fancy and inventivness, and shall be well executed in accordance with the rules and good practice of architecture and sculpture". However, he later continues:

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[113] On the subject of the tabernacle there is published as well as unedited bibliography. Data already published in Pascual y Beltrán, V., "The altarpiece of the Collegiate Church of Xátiva" *Valencian Art Achive*, 1919, pp. 65-72 largely a summary by José Povo, *Alegación por los administradores de la Fábrica de la obra Nueva de la iglesia colegial de la ciudad de San Felipe en el pleyto con el cabildo eclesiástico de dicha ciudad y el Real convento de Santa Clara… sobre que se confirme la sentencia de vista de 5 de febrero de 1783 en la parte que declaró deber el heredero de Victoria Albero concluir y perfeccionar el retablo.. con arreglo al diseño o dibujo formado por D. Ventura Rodríguez y aprobado por la Real Academia de San Fernando*, Valencia, por Onofre García, 1786.

[114] Unpublished documentation from the Archive of the Royal Academy of San Fernando, 34-3/2, Letter of the Archbishop of Valencia, Francisco Fabián y Fuero to Ms. Victoria Albero, Gestalcampo, 8 September 1777. Refer to the section Texts and Documents on the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva.

[115] Report extracted by Sarthou in *Datos...*, opus cit., apéndice III, p. 34.

“Yet these do not permit bases and capitals to be of oblique plan and of irregular design, as abused by some modern architects. Furthermore, they should be equilateral and straight following the example set in Antiquity”. He also criticised some details of the design of the altarpiece such as the pedestal that supported the Virgin's niche “devoid of ornamentation” and the “lack of support for the two statues of the Virtues that stand next to the edicule”. He neither thought adecquate the design of the tabernacle for the Blessed Sacrament nor the lack of shelves for the candle sticks.

The fact that the bases and column capitals of the tabernacle conceived by Guisart followed the principles of oblique architecture leads us to believe that the project for the tabernacle, conceived as a baldachin, of a clear elliptical structure fronted by open columns, Corinthian antae, must have been devised in an oblique manner. Covered by a slightly spheroid vault fixed in the trapezoidal structure of the sanctuary. The approach to this project bring to mind a homage paid not distant past of the Collegiate Church and to Aparisi, his virtuoso obliqueness displayed in the transept façades. It is also possible to see glimpses of a certain classicist and modern sensitivity of orders in his compositive intentions articulated with a severe irregular geometry, very Hispanic, following the path started by Juan Caramuel de Lobkowitz in his *Architectura civil recta y oblicua, i*n the previous century. The conception of a monopteron ellyptic temple with the capitals and bases of its Corinthian columns obliquely articulated, -although considered more as a retable- echoes the critical comments made to Bernini’s ellyptic collonnade in the Saint Peter’s square in the Vatican. Caramuel in his treatise criticised the lack of corresponding geometry with the architectural order, because it did not use curvilinear sections with oblique deformations.

Ventura Rodríguez, who expressed a radical admiration of the Roman, redirected the project along classical lines by invoking “a straight alignment as done in Antiquity”. This remark worded by one the highest representatives of the eighteenth century Spanish Classicism such as Ventura Rodríguez gains, is full of historical significance. As opposed to the superficial and irksome illustrated criticism to Hispanic baroque culture centred almost exclusively on excessive adornation, as brought forward by Antonio Ponz, Ceán Bermúdez or Ortíz y Sanz himself, Ventura Rodríguez's critical remark reached higher cultural grounds and had greater repercussion, and not only “*minores gentium*” using Llaguno's words[116], such as academic sculptors, skilled in architect decoration and the art of design, embraced by a classicist and architectonic culture[117].

Guisart's design, aside from some mere punctualisations, was finally approved. Still, the chanons proposed that the opinion of the archbishop of Valencia, Francisco Fabián y Fuero, should be heard. An enthusiast and carefully observant of artistic control measures approved by the government of Floridablanca, and dislike for the works carried out by adornist sculptors, however academic these were, Fabián y Fuero replied on September 8th, 1777, saying he had seen the design and had returned to the author together with Ventura Rodríguez's original paper, but observing that it had not been approved by none of the leading academies, neither the Academy of San Carlos nor of San Fernando, and therefore should be sent to either of them for approval[118].

The person in charge of speeding the issue inside the government of Xàtiva was José López, priest appointed by Doña Victoria Albero who on October 4th, 1777[119] wrote a letter to Antonio Ponz, secretary of the Academy of San Fernando, explaining the construction process of this marble altar. In this letter she expressed that the measurements and design had been carried out by Pedro Juan Guisart, and that were sent and revised by Ventura Rodríguez who had accepted them with a couple of amendments. She also stated the archbishop desire for it to be approved by the Academy as soon as possible considering the advanced age of Ms. Victoria Albero. Ponz[120] sent all the papers again to Ventura Rodríguez asking him to write in paper all the amendments that were needed so that Guisart could have everything clear, and also asked for the approval of the Academics Miguel Fernández and Pedro Arnal; an approval that was granted on November 21st of the same year[121]. This was practically the final design in which only the originally projected statues of David and Esther had to be replaced by those suggested by José López, i.e. statues of San Joaquín and Santa Ana, that were finally accepted. At the end, the archbishop would thank Antonio Ponz for his interest in the matter and the quick approval of the project, and promised to send him samples of the marbles and stones that were to be used in the construction[122]. The works would commence soon after, although suffered many interruptions due to the opposition of the heirs to continue the works when the patroness died in 1780. The long lawsuit finally resolved that the works be completed, which took place between 1806 and 1808.

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[116] Bérchez, J., *Arquitectura y academicismo en el siglo XVIII valenciano*, edited by Alfons el Magnànim, Valencia, 1987, pp. 212-13.

[117] It is significant to note that the Valencian sculptor and adornist Manuel Tolsá who had a parallel biography to that of Guisart, but with a carreer developed in mexico, displays a very similar architectonic culture, sentitive oblique developments in his work. Véase Bérchez, J., “Manuel Tolsá en la arquitectura española de su tiempo”, Exhibition Catalogue, *Tolsá, Gimeno, Fabregat. Trayectoria artística en España. Siglo XVIII*, Generalitat Valenciana, Valencia, 1989, pp. 62-63.

[118] Document cited in note 138.

[119] Unpublished documento coming form AASF, 34-3/2, Letter from José López, canónigo de la colegiata de Xàtiva to the Academy of San Fernando, 4 October 1777. Refer to section "Texts and Documents of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva.

[120] Unpublished document coming form AASF, 34-3/2, Letter from Antonio Ponz to Ventura Rodríguez, Madrid, 6 October 1777. Refer to the section "Texts and Documents of the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva.

[121] Recogido en Tramoyeres, L., “Epistolario artístico valenciano”, *Archivo de Arte Valenciano*, p. 113.

[122] Unpublished documentation from the Archive of the Royal Academy of San Fernando, 34-3/2, Letter of the Archbishop of Valencia, Francisco Fabián y Fuero to Ms. Victoria Albero, Gestalcampo, 10.12.77. Refer to the section Texts and Documents on the Collegiate Church of Xàtiva.

One of the leading causes for the delay in the works in the tabernacle is the controversy and tensions that took place within the Royal Academy of San Carlos in Valencia, due to the bitter opposition between academic architects and sculptors on professional competence regarding the architectural adornation, and also due to the mistrusts perceived by Madrid as regards to the conflictive internal affairs inside the Valencian Academy. This lead to the immediate enactment of a Royal Order on 23 November, 1777 which established that all religious projects shall be presented before the Royal Academy of San Fernando for approval, recommending the presentation of a report when using wood, in particular in retables and altar ornaments. No wonder then, that archbishop Fabián y Fuero, who had shown a clear predilection for the use of marble during his Mexican prelacy in Puebla, in the works carried out under the auspices of this archbishop wrote to the Secretary of the Academy of San Fernando on December 10th, 1777, praising "at he divine providence for such wise and accurate use of adornments and materials in churches and civil buildings (...) to prevent fire" referring to the jaspers tabernacle.

Another person who gave his opinion on the initial design of the tabernacle was José Ortiz y Sanz, main vicar of the Collegiate Church since 1774, who wrote a report on Guisart's first drawing in which he pointed out some faults with regard to the general rule of classic architecture[123]. Ortiz y Sanz would follow with interest all that related to the works on the Collegiate Church, at least until 1778 date in which he departs to Italy to translate Vitruvious. On his return he is officially named director of the works in 1788.

Of this tabernacle we know the engraving of 1819 that reads: "Devised by Ventura Rodríguez of the Royal Academy of San Fernando and Juan Guisart of the Royal Academy of San Carlos Fr. Vicente Cuenca of the Royal Academy of S. Fernando placed it.- Francisco de Paula Marti f the Royal Academy of S. Fernando engraved it", a neat way of expressing the long process followed until it was finally installed. A model made of wood, cardboard and stucco is also conserved at the current Municipal Museum, it is somewhat rugged and incomplete, and it was probably made to be presented to the patroness of the altar tabernacle with no other intention than to help her visualise the works she was patronising. There is a reference to the aforementioned model in the lawsuit that ensued when the heirs opposed continuing sponsorship of the altar. As often was the case with these types of work, soon the doubt arouse regarding it ideal placing. It was long discussed whether it would be more appropriate to place it under the arch of the sanctuary so it could be contemplated from all three naves and to make use of the extra space to have an apsidal retrochoir or whether it was better to put it further back against the far end, as it is placed today. To this end, a full scale model made of reed, paper and canvas and easy to handle parts was ordered so it that could emulate the perspective and could be moved to be "tested during services".

We are already aware of some of the minor details of its construction, such as the hewing of the stone, most of of which originated from the quarries neat Buxcarró, the same place from which the eight main columns and pilasters were extracted. Contemporary descriptions[124] portray an extraordinary sensivity and a particular admiration of: "its marbles of light and dark ochre, with yellowish spots that the sculptors call "white of the egg". It is also ornated by some dark, reddish or brownish yellow festoons"

They also transmit the astonishment of the population when the chariots arrived carrying the columns. Black marble came from Callosa de Ensarriá and were used to melk the column bases and some interior veneering, "so fine and dark that when put against its white linear incrustations and yellow and red meshwork garlands similar to golden velvet, endows the human eye a wonderful gift". Other nearby quarries provided other marbles and jaspers, less white than those from Carrara.

Various specialists that worked in the Collegiate Church were also responsible for its execution. The placing of the marble was initiated by Jaime Pérez, and followed by Vicente Cuenca. The scuplture work was executed by José Esteve Bonet and José Gil. Esteve Bonet is credited for the sculptures of San Joaquín and Santa Ana, as well as the saints San Gabriel and San Rafael standing on the upper part of the tabernacle. Gil is attributed the statues of the virtues and the children. The centre was taken up by the gothic statue of the Virgin of Xàtiva that was restored in 1655 by the sculptor of the same city, Anthoni Tomás. Although the one in place today is a replica.

Towards the mid of the nineteenth century, el Madoz[125] would leave a detailed report on the same, yet it is likely the report contained strokes and handwriting of Vicente Boix: "The collosal retable of an elliptic figure is placed in the presbytery. It is linked to the polygonal form of this sanctuary in a perfect symbiosis, and the two vaults with their artistic arrangement; a delight for the viewer's eye. This magnificent tabernacle made totally of jaspers, except for its gilded adorns, vault and decorative statues, was erected over an elliptical plan on a black Callosa stone base. It is 2 and a half palms high, and has pedestal 5 and a quarter palms high. It is veneered with various jaspers with straight white Carrara marble moulding. The bases supporting the statues of a Saint Joaquín and Santa Ana are one palm and 8 fingers high, standing on black stone. On the other two pilasters and 8 columns of Buixcarro stone, a quarry that is two hours away from Xàtiva in the Barcheta surroundings. The columns with 26 palms of height are very impressive, as they are made of just one single piece of stone, and its Corinthian capitals are just over 3 palms. They support an entablature with architrave, frieze and cornice, about 7 palms high. Over this, there is a plinth of three fingers high, and closing the work four columns in the middle and two

[123] This reference is from Goberna, F., "El degà de Xàtiva Josep Ortiz i Sanz (1739-1822)", *Papers de la Costera*, 11, April, 1998, pp. 70-90, which cites the document coming from a private archive belonging to the Montesinos family.

[124] Tramoyeres, L., "Epistolario…, opus cit.

[125] Madoz, P., *Diccionario Geográfico-Estadístico-Histórico de Alicante, Castellón y Valencia* (1845) edition of 1987, T. I., p. 391.

pilasters on the side: their diameter is 28 palms with a radius is 17. It is crowned with clouds and a panel with bearing the name of the Virgin Mary. There are two angels in adoration, and over the cornice and the two central columns, the statues of Saint Michael and Saint Gabriel, and over the lateral ones, two flower jars beautifully designed. This tabernacle is 82 and a half palms high and 48 wide".

From theory to practice: José Francisco Ortiz y Sanz at the Collegiate Church

Upon the death of Friar Jose Alberto Pina in 1772, the works of the Collegiate Church were continued by Jaime Pérez, the executive director of the works until his death in 1788, and the stone mason Francisco Cuenca, who was referred to in the documentation as "the surveyor". The ensuing period brings about the crossing of leadership regarding who is in charge of the works of the Collegiate Church. A new player comes into scene en 1792, the architect Vicente Gascó, director of the architectural section of the Royal Academy of San Carlos, and an important person inside the cultural circles of the illustrated academicism in Valencia. During this time conflict reached a new peak, especially between José Ortiz y Sanz and Vicente Cuenca, who discredited one another not only on a professional basis, but at personal level too. These clashes were further fuelled by a series of Royal decrees and enactments brought about by the illustrated academicism intended to solve discrepancies regarding the competencies of the Academy and the Guild, and the lack of understanding between the various architectonic formations derived from the theory of architecture and from actual construction practice.

The presence of José Francisco Ortiz y Sanz (1739-1822) at the head of the works of the Collegiate Church is full of significant cultural interest. He was the author of one of the most important Spanish architectural works in the eighteenth century, author of the translation and commentaries of the *Ten Books on Architecture of M. Vitruvio Polion*, published by the Royal Printing House in 1787. He also translated other pieces of work such as the two first books of Palladio (Madrid, 1797) and the *Viage Arquitectónico-Anticuario de España, or the latin-hispanic description of the old Saguntine theatre* (Madrid, 1807). Ortiz y Sanz enrolled early in the Academy of San Carlos and formed part of it since its early years in 1766 to the time it became a consolidated institution around 1784. This period is dominated by architectural criticism, the renewed appraisal of Antiquity and the desire to lay the foundations of architectural design based on classic treatises. It was in this atmosphere, and living in Xátiva, where he undertook the enterprise of translating Vitruvious and was also the time when he became fully aware of the architectural issues surrounding the Collegiate Church of which he had been main vicar since 1774. Ortiz y Sanz was an impulsive man, and departed to Italy to translate Vitruvius, fixing his residence there until 1784. Then he returned to Madrid to take care of the printing and publishing of his work. Ortiz had excellent relations with important people in the illustrated artistic and cultural circles (Eugenio Llaguno, Antonio Ponz), and soon became a member of the Royal Academy of San Fernando, reaching a position of Honours Member in 1806 due to his work in architecture. This is the highest title for the practice of architecture awarded by any Academy at the time.

In his speech at the Royal Academy of San Carlos in 1804, Ortiz y Sanz severely criticised Valencian Architecture and in particular that of the Collegiate Church, basing most of his critics on the virtues of Vitruvian racionalism. He said "the fatal errors of the artistic sense and of nature of things, appreciated in your noble profession, oh¡ young architects, are only a slight example of the many errors committed by our ancestors. If time permits, you will be able to recount even more errors, as I am doing now, keeping in my memory many that I see. And I am so fortunate in this, because only need to observe my own church, which is completely full of them. Pedestals roughly carved, Doric pilasters of eighteen diameters, i.e. of thirty-six Doric modules, a very high entablature, with perverse and excessive moldings, arches that do not lean on their springers, but act as buttresses thrusting the pilasters from the inside as if they were going to pull them down. Curved arches that over the pilasters and entablature come up to the top of the sanctuary vault, totally carved and decorated with extravagant figures, and little pearled straps. And an entablature with eleven trygliphs and twelve metopes. A set of windows, openings, transoms, and clerestories, that does not provide any light and are worthless. Huge flower vases in the chapels and sanctuary, in imminent danger of falling down and provoke a disaster. I do not want to bother you, dear youngsters, and I omit many more errors, that come up from the bad election of the site, the bad quality of materials, the bad distribution of spaces etc…"[126]

The management of the building works of the Collegiate Church, and in particular of its façade, was very complicated, because the master builders had to face how to materialise their architectural theoretical knowledge.[127] Although, Ortiz y Sanz was not the effective Director of the works until 1788, he had already been acquainted with the Collegiate Church since his appointment to the Vicary in 1774. An earlier possibility of a report on the jaspers tabernacle has also been considered, but not totally proved. During his long stay of more than six years in Rome, he continued to be in touch with the Collegiate works. There is a letter from the administrators to Ortiz dated in January 10th 1788, when he was still in Rome, that informs us that he had drawn a design for the façade, which had been extremely useful for

[126] Ortiz y Sanz, F.J., "Oración a las Nobles Artes..., opus cit.

[127] Bérchez, J., *La difusión de Vitruvio en el marco del neoclasicismo español...*, op. cit., pp. xlvii-lxxii; Goberna, F., "El degà de Xàtiva Josep Ortiz i Sanz (1739-1822)", *Papers de la Costera*, 11, abril, 1998, pp. 70-90.

another two architects, one drawn by Jaime Perez and another by Francisco Cuenca. The letter[128] says as follows: "Dear sir, we are very satisfied with the great appreciation that you have always manifested for our church, because you have not only been its Vicar, but also you have prepared a design for the plan and elevation for the Collegiate façade, precisely when you were most occupied with the works entrusted to you by the King in Rome. We are eager to hear from your wise advice, and hereby send you for examination some alternative designs for the façade. We commend to your great intelligence and trust you will choose the best one. (…) Yours has no possibility of being chosen because the portico protrudes too much and enters into the square. There is not enough space for it and demands demolishing a full unit. But your design has been used as a guideline for the one drawn by Jaime Perez, your friend and much appreciated director of the works, (now deceased). He had designed an alternative façade without the portico. Francisco Cuenca, his successor, has also provided another version. We send you all three designs, so you can examine and choose the best one; or even better, perhaps draw a new one. This will enable us to present it to the Academy of San Fernando for its approval as required by law. We await your, and in the meantime we shall keep open the foundations ready to be filled …"

The main drawback of Ortiz's was the presence of a portico or open loggia that entered into the square in front of the church and compelled the demolition of a full block of houses. The façades drawn by Jaime Pérez and Francisco Cuenca, based on this one, repeated basically the same scheme but without the portico. At least one of them, signed by Jaime Pérez is conserved and shown in the Collegiate Church Museum.

The design of the façade signed by Jaime Pérez and based on the one sent from Rome by Ortiz y Sanz, can be considered as a simplification, an academic "invention", or an adapted version of Carlo Maderno's composition for saint Peter's in Rome. The central front has four Doric semicolumns and a protagonist triangular pediment, while the sides, slightly recessed have pilasters in the corners, corresponding with the towers. With regard to the interior, the façade employs a Doric order, which has abandoned the particular Doric model from the Marcellus Theatre, in favour of a severe Doric entablature with vigorous trygliphs and mutiles. The whole project is based upon the use of a correct Doric order, which unifies the whole composition. As can be seen in a square plan of the same date, preserved in the archives, there was a narthex closely related to the one used by Maderno in Saint Peter's façade. The Xativa façade broke with the persistent and traditional Vignolesque conception, of a two storey-façade, introducing the giant order, as in other contemporary façade projects, (church of el Temple in Valencia, parish church of Sot de Ferrer, near Segorbe). It was loyal to the Valencia tradition of two towers, even though they were integrated in the façade's composition as belfries and were articulated with pilasters. The dome was also drawn over a huge octagonal columned drum, with tiles and a lantern on the top. It is also possible that this façade project had in mind the dome projected by Pina some decades before, in order to give luminal coherence to the interior of the sanctuary and ambulatory.

A meeting was held in order to approve the façade's project, in August 1788, after Ortiz y Sanz return to Xàtiva[129]. He remained in town, directing the works, and was in charge of the foundations of the tower and façade, which had remained opened for a long time. He was appointed director the 7th December of that year, although he soon left for Madrid on account of an infirmity. He could not follow closely the works, and from the capital misadvised the filling of the cementation, because he thought that the foundations in the last pillars were not well executed. He pointed out that Pina was responsible for not having trained Jaime Pérez better[130], and for the errors he committed in this part of the building. He seemed to be very interested as well, about the problems encountered by Francisco Cuenca on the tower foundations, as he stated in his letters.

Works went one extremely slowly and differ considerably from the initial design of façade and towers projected by Ortiz y Sanz. He was aware of the situation and wrote in 1794: "the most important part has not yet been built, and it will be executed without the previous vigour of the Doric order. The ornaments and articulation of pilasters and columns can still be changed and improved. I say this because my design can be changed as much as you want, and even be spoiled, if everyone's opinion is accepted". In eight years, only the first rows of the façade's plinth have been built. He regretted the situation: "I know that the works will not reach the cornice until the twentieth century. And consider, how much architecture will change for better or worse in those 200 years, and how many masters will work in the Collegiate Church".[131] This letter predicted a situation that with time became true, and gives an indication of the difficult period that Ortiz must have lived. He even hinted that if his plans were not followed, it would be better to appoint another Director. Nevertheless, he continued asking for the exact measurements in order to be able to study the works and give Cuenca his best advice. He even asked for money to travel to Xàtiva and inspect the works personally. But we can observe the modifications of Ortiz's project in the arrangement of the square, designed by Jaime Pérez, in which the portico's plan is drawn without the front columns, which had been substituted by pilasters.

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[128] Letter partially mentioned in Goberna, F., "El degà…" opus cit., but revised in the original documentation, held in ARV, Escribanías de Cámara, nº8, year 1810. Letter of the administrators of the Collegiate Church of San Felipe to Ortiz y Sanz, January 10th 1788. In the appendix of Texts and Documents about the Collegiate Church

[129] Chapter Book, nº 74, 19 y 20th August, 1788.

[130] Goberna, F., "El degà... opus cit." "I am afraid that is not properly done, being a quite important place for the church and cracks might open. I tell you because I saw the way the last pillars were made, and is not worthy of imitation. It is not Jaime's fault, but Pina, who did not trained him better…"

[131] Ver Goberna, F., "El degà... opus cit.

In 1791, the academic architect Vicente Gascó went to Xàtiva to inspect the ruinous state of the churches of San Juan and Santa Tecla. But soon after, the governor asked him to inspect also the Collegiate Church and to inform on the works. Gascó gave his report three years later, in 1795, after visiting the works in 1792 and after having studied "the drawings". The report[132] recalls the evident difficulties experienced and how the ambitious projects of Pina, continued by Jaime Pérez and Ortiz y Sanz, had been drastically reduced. Gascó, after having seen the drawings of the works that were still to be built, said: "I have noticed that the drum is very heavy, because the walls and columns are too thick and because it is also too high. So if this drum is built it will be too heavy for the arches underneath, so it has to be changed. The drum that has to be built should be smaller, with just some little and horizontal windows, and even to do this, there is need to inspect the arches and make sure they can sustain the dome". He also proposed a reduction of the height in the towers and their reinforcement. In relation with the façade – possibly the one designed by Ortiz y Sanz and Jaime Perez which has survived- he advised on drastic change. He considered it "too coarse for a church devoted to the Virgin Mary, because the pilasters are too wide, and the cornices are too protruding". He advised on the use of another order, according to the rigid modal signification of the classical orders, "It is better for this type of church and for its dedication to use an Ionic, Composite or a Corinthian order". He left aside the omnipresent Doric order which up to this moment had been used in the Collegiate Church. He recognised that the "communion Chapel with its sacristy, the Chapter House, the archives, and the staircases for communication of all the office rooms, had not yet been built". And also "the last two bays at the west end of the church only had the pillars executed, but had no arches, neither vaults".

This conclusive report, accompanied by a detailed budget of how much would it cost to finish the works is the reason that explains the demand of an extraordinary subsidy in 1791. There was an urgent need of two hundred and eighty thousand pounds, appealing to the already known concepts of "beauty and magnificence", "admiration of the foreigners", "the beauty of his art and capacity", because the charities were insufficient.[133] This was yet another failed attempt to try to raise the Collegiate Church to the rank of a cathedral.

Since 1795, Francisco Cuenca was assisted by his son, friar Vicente, but they were just master masons, and did not pass any academy examinations, and therefore were not allowed to make designs. The administrators asked for authorization in Madrid where they counted with Ortiz y Sanz's support. In 1796, the plans and elevations of the façades were redrawn and were reviewed by the Director of the Academy of San Fernando, Pedro Arnal who gave his approval and signed them[134]. The neoclassical architect Pedro Arnal executed the drawings for the façade, as it was recognised by Ortiz y Sanz[135]. Those plans were in Xàtiva "in the room where the administrators met, hung on the walls behind a frame, with the signature of Pedro Arnal, and with the inscription of Luis Paret that stated that they had been approved on 31st March 1796 by the Commission of Architecture of the San Fernando Academy. There is also another inscription where you can see the front and elevation taken by the letters ABCD and has the same signature of Pedro Arnal" [136].

Francisco Cuenca isued a report in 1796 which described the situation of the façade. It had to be decided which kind of Doric adornment in trygliphs and metopes should be placed, in correspondence with the interior of the church or in relation to the Virgin Mary, to whom the Collegiate Church was dedicated. They even considered the possibility of including some of the city emblems in the tympanum[137]. The open loggia, that Ortiz y Sanz had initially projected, was finally eliminated.

The end of stone cutting: the spiral staircase

Francisco Cuenca initiated the belfry once the filling of the foundations were finished, and work was continued by his son Friar Vicente, who was said to have "followed the construction of the belfry at a great pace, and to have built a beautiful and admired internal staircase"[138]. According to an inscription carved in its base, the first stone was placed in July 2nd 1796. The completion of this interior staircase marks the end of the architectonic culture displayed during the long constructive process of the Collegiate Church. It is in fact, a wonderful model of the accurate implementation of the stereotomic principles that were to accompany the long constructive period of the Collegiate Church. This wide spiral staircase has a circular centre and straight steps made of a single piece of stone that works itself up the spiral staircase in a dexterous display of the art of stone-cutting. This type of spiral staircase can also be interpreted as an example of an academic reinterpretation on Roman Antiquity, in particular of the Trajan Column. It is also

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[132] Reports conserved in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, sección: Consejos, 23155. In the apendix of Texts and Documents for the Collegiate Church

[133] Documents in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, sección Consejos: 37403. Appendix of Texts and Documents about the Collegiate Church

[134] In AMX; Legajo 165, cited with an error in Goberna with nº167, it is to be found in a 3 june 1796 by Francisco Cuenca, that mentions the plans: "Executing an order of the administrators I have compared the foundations opened with the plans for the façade and towers that had been sent from Madrid with the approval of the Royal Academy of San fernando, and everything is correct"

[135] Bérchez, J., *La difusión de Vitruvio en el marco del neoclasicismo español...*, opus cit., p. lxxii.

[136] Document from ARV, Escribanías de Cámara, 1810, umpublished certification of Luis Antonio Meliana, 22 march 1811.

[137] Goberna, F., "El degà..., opus cit.

[138]"Letter of the Governor and Town Council, after having seen the letter addressed by Jose Ortiz y Sanz, dean of the Collegiate Church of this city, asking back the directions of the works" dated on 13 september 1809.

possible to sense the presence of the Vitruvianist Ortiz y Sanz behind this project. On the other hand, the spiral staircase is very much in line with the Collegiate Church's architectonical scene of the time. The stereotomic Spanish culture was maintained during the years of Alberto Pina's direction, when Francisco Cuenca was trained. In this regard, it is interesting to note that among the books found in Cuenca's library there is a treatise titled *Secretos de Arquitectura* (*Secrets of Architecture*), written in San Miguel de los Reyes in 1766. It is a manuscript translation by friar Francisco de Santa Barbara of the French treatise *Le Sècret d'architecture…* (La Flèche, 1642) by Mathurin de Jousse. In the manuscript, there is a drawing dedicated to this type of spiral staircase with circular centre[139], that literally copies the text and the design of the same staircase called in the French treatise "Vis à jour de pierre". Of all the staircases in the French book, which dedicates several pages to this architectural element, the Spanish manuscript only includes one, and it is precisely the one built in the Collegiate Church. The design of the staircase is both functional as enjoyable. Its spacious rest areas enriched by means of windowed balconies pays much consideration to the viewers ascending the steps. Whilst going up the stairs one can enjoy the wonderful views of village and the mountain. It exhibits skewed moldings and brief decorative touches all along the cylindrical structure, including the balusters, the handrail, and the expressive mascarons of the dome.

The building of the tower was shrouded by a sour and long conflict of professional competences. A recurring issue brought about the changes during the illustrated classicism propitiated by the influencing characters who were involved in the Collegiate Church's building process at the time. The works continued slowly until the death of Francisco Cuenca. Then, he was substituted by his son Mercedarian friar Vicente Cuenca, but encountered many problems due to the unclear issues regarding the direction of the works[140]. It is true, that since 1798, friar Vicente Cuenca had obtained the title of Architect from the Royal Academy of San Fernando after having failed in Valencia thanks to the help of archbishop Juan Francisco Ximènez del Río. He had assisted his father until his death in late 1805, and he had been named director of the works in January 26th 1806, when he was appointed just ahead of his cousin Francisco Cuenca, who also attempted to get the position.

Ortiz y Sanz was upset by this appointment that he thought should fall onto him, considering he had been the director of the works since 1788. At this moment, the conflict gained further momentum, deriving into a long lawsuit that was finally resolved against his favour in the Court of Valencia[141]. This was a very discouraging episode for him, in particular considering he had to remain closely in touch with the works after he was named Vicar of Xàtiva in 1804; a place we he temporarily resided, alternating his residence between Madrid and Valencia. Since the appointment of Vicente Cuenca, Ortiz y Sanz was withdrawn from the Collegiate works. He only got involved in the design of the choirstalls, carved by the sculptor José Cotanda in 1807. During those years, the works on the façade were postponed in favour of finishing the jaspers tabernacle, probably because the columns and architectural pieces lying around the church were constantly interrupting sacred services[142].

There are several files dated in 1809 regarding the bitter accusations between Ortiz y Sanz and friar Vicente Cuenca, which stress the difficulties encountered from the despairing slow pace of the works and the lack of active management by Ortiz y Sanz, who was practically absent during all the years he was supposed to be the director of the works. In fact, he only followed up the works sporadically; the rest was limited to sending correspondence and delivering drawings.

The accusations made by Ortiz y Sanz against Cuenca were not only related to the works but also to his ecclesiastic status and the incompatibility of earning salaries. But in most cases accusations were made adducing evidence of his professional inadequacy in some of the works[143]. But the administrators defended Vicente Cuenca, praising what he had done for the Collegiate Church "he has not stopped even an instance, he has concluded the magnificent jaspers tabernacle in accordance to Ventura Rodriguez's plan, he has removed the old altarpiece, and has placed the new one gaining the admiration of the engineers and of all the people who saw the machines used to pull up columns and pilasters of such incredible weight, improving the sanctuary as it is now. He has placed the new choirstalls, providing the choir with great comfort and space than before. He is building one of the towers at a great pace, and has designed an interior staircase admired by everyone".

They criticised Ortiz y Sanz for the slow pace of the foundations, and for the sluggish solution given to the difficulties encountered when rocks appeared underneath. He had believed that these rocks were old foundations of an ancient building, and brought the works to a halt: "Following his advice, the foundations of the façade and towers were excavated, but he stopped the works when he encountered some flat rocks, placed there by nature, to provide some savings to the construction; but in the end the excavations were filled, wasting much resources, without need."

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139 Design. 25 of the manuscript, *Secretos de Arquitectura* and pp. 180-181 of *Le Secret...*

140 There is documentary evidence of this long lawsuit in the Archive of Xàtiva, file nº 220, and in the ARV, Escribanias de Camara, nº8, year 1810. There are also further documents outside Xàtiva that provide supplementary information on this affair.

141 Documents conserved in those archives, especially the letter of José Ortiz y Sanz copied by the king's secretary Vicente Esteve and the report of the governors and administrators of the Town Hall of Xàtiva regarding the affair of the direction of the Collegiate Church

142 In AMX, document: 629/8 there is a report from Francisco Cuenca on the presence of architectonical remains and columns that belonged to the tabernacle and were in the interior of the Collegiate Church, 13 july 1798

143 Ortiz y Sanz called some witnesses –lawyers Vicente Ignacio Morales, Ignacio Gil, and Raymundo Ferrer, the architect Francisco Cuenca, and the sculptor Blas Esteve- that declared against Vicente Cuenca, saying that he had done some works in Benigànim and in the Dominican convent of Xativa, "misleading the works and going against architectural art"; while they praised the architectural abilities of Ortiz y Sanz, calling him "a well-known man in architecture. This document only in ARV, Escribanias de Camara, nº8, 1810

In 1814, Ortiz y Sanz was still confronting the two Cuencas, friar Vicente and his cousin Francisco[144]. Friar Vicente had become the effective director of the Collegiate Church, following the works of the tower, giving designs for altarpieces, while the façade was interrupted. Yet Ortiz y Sanz referred to him as "of short intelligence for architecture". He insisted that a new Royal Law prohibited important buildings in the capital of a province to be built by non-academics, stressing that he was indeed an academic of architecture, and that friar Vicente was not[145]. This struggle between Ortiz y Sanz and the Cuencas, became unbearable when the true problem of building the façade and towers, nave and aisles, rendered impossible the finishing of the Collegiate Church.

In 1852, the works were again interrupted because there was no agreement reached on how the bell tower should be finished. It had been started in 1796, but at that time had stopped at the cornice of the third level. They had doubts as to how to resolve the access to the belfry, which was at an angle to the tower. There were two projects, one by Vicente Marzo and another by Francisco Cuenca, that differed in the way of building the spiral staircase[146] A commission was named by Juan de Madrazo and Joaquin Cabrera for inspecting the works and analysing the drawings and the two alternatives[147]. The report is a very detailed presentation of the two constructive options. It shows the perfect technical knowledge of the San Fernando academician Juan de Madrazo, an excellent medievalist, who had restored the Cathedral of Leon. The report signed by both architects concluded that all that had already been built was correct "according to art of architecture principles and in harmony of the rest of the work, carried out with great care and attention to detail". Their opinion was that for greater strength, the spiral staircase should be continued maintaining its axe but diminishing his diameter, from 8 to 5 palms. The proposed method called for an absolute knowledge of stone cutting techniques ("it is necessary to be knowledgeable about the design of the stone cuts") in accordance to the practice used in some Gothic cathedrals. They took for granted that the Collegiate masters knew how to do it. Nevertheless, works continued very slowly and the tower was not finished until 1877, by José Zacarías Caamaña.

In 1857, Boix recounts that "the main aisle and façade had not yet been finished and that the tower had the belfry finished. The main entrance to this beautiful church is on the epistle side and is plain but impressive. Next to it, the old dark tower still stands and on the other side, lost among the modern construction, there are the remains of the cardinal chapel, a work from the times of Pope Calixtus III". In a lithography taken from a photograph published in 1858 by Boix in his book, one can admire the old and new belfries, the last one under construction. The former one, as it is stated on friar Vicente Cuenca's report in 1816, was in a critical state, leaning towards the north and with huge cracks caused by the weight of the bells and clock that was later removed. We can assume that the works on the Collegiate Church were paralysed and so will remained, specially after the definite fall of the dome in 1885 due to a new earthquake. The construction of a new dome was immediately started by the architect of the Diocese, Antonio Ferrer, but this time employing a metallic structure. It was totally finished in 1888.

By the end of the nineteenth century, as it is seen in a photograph, only two of the lateral aisles were vaulted and there were still two bays of the nave and two aisles to be finished. The nineteenth century was not a time for building cathedrals, as it was not time for transforming Collegiate Churches in cathedrals either. Evidence of this is that the present façade the project of which had been changed several times was never ended. The initial project was continued by Caamaña in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, finishing the three big portals, but it was later altered by Luis Ferreres. This change explains the disruption of the semi-columns in the upper level, which originally were to be placed over an arched portico, which was never built. With independence of the unfinished character of the Collegiate church façade, one can say that the last decades of the nineteenth century, with its French neomedievalism were not a good moment to finish such a work. Projected and developed in the classical style of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even in the first half of the nineteenth century, -in spite of all the interruptions-, the Collegiate Church is an outstanding example of the tectonic use of the classical orders. It underlines some aspects of classical architecture such as the persistent art of stone-cutting, the Counterreformation severity, the ambitious typology of ambulatories, the architectural lesson from the monastery of El Escorial, the mathematization of classicism, or the presence of the academicist and illustrated reforms. To all these we have to add the frustrated aim of the Collegiate Church becoming a cathedral. As a last statement, we use Tormo's words, written in his *Levante* guide in 1923, "the Collegiate Church has just been finished, after a very yielding, but constantly renovated, building process".

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144 Partial references to this in Esteban, J. "Xàtiva i la transició professional en l'arquitectura del segle XVIII al País Valencià", *Papers de la Costera*, nº3 y 4, 1986, pp. 93-104, who is mistaken about the personality of the said Francisco Cuenca, who is Friar Vicente's cousin, instead of his father

145 Ortiz y Sanz was of the view that the law catered more for the buildings than for their location, "because we can find sumptuous buildings in cities that are not capitals as for example in this city". This letter in Enguera, J., "Epistolario artístico valenciano, Vicente Velázquez, Joaquín Martínez y José Ortiz", *Archivo de Arte Valenciano*, 1917, p. 152

146 The documents about the expertise made by Juan de Madrazo and Joaquin Cabrera about the works on the spiral staircase in Archivo de la Academia de San Carlos, Leg. 61 s/n. Documents included in the Appendix of Texts and Documents about the Collegiate Church.

147The problem aroused because of the big dimensions of the spiral staircase. Although it was smaller in size than the central one, because it was at an angle, it caused some difficulties. The walls at the angles were insufficient in the tangential points and this weakened the construction, because in spite of having a spiral vault in the inside, the steps worked as trusses, but were unable to absorb vibrations. They showed two different ways to solve this problem. The easiest way was to make a smaller spiral staircase in another angle. But the wisest solution was to diminish the diameter of the actual staircase and make use of the case and the vault