MINOR OR MAJOR? CASTILIAN TABERNACLE-ALTARPIECES AND THE MONUMENTAL ARTS*

¿ARTES MENORES O ARTES MAYORES? LOS RETABLOS-TABERNÁCULO CASTELLANOS Y LAS ARTES MONUMENTALES

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Abstract

This article explores the origins and distinctive features of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces. Less attention will be paid to the well-known examples of the fourteenth century (as for example the Castildelgado and Yurre altarpieces) and the focus will be on a number of poorly preserved, fragmented and altered examples of the late thirteenth century, for which proposals of reconstruction are provided in some instances. To investigate the origins of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces, this study centres on several thirteenth-century sculptures that were made prominent by being placed either before back panels or within baldachins. These displays are usually regarded as the forerunners of genuine tabernacle-altarpieces. In this context, special attention is paid to the images of the Virgin and Child in the church of Villalcázar de Sirga (Palencia). Concerning the distinctive features of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces, the text points out the relationship between the earliest tabernacle-altarpieces and the locally produced monumental and tomb sculpture, which in all likelihood served as a model for these early altarpieces.

Keywords
Altarpiece, tabernacle-altarpiece, Gothic art, Gothic sculpture, Gothic painting, Crown of Castile, Contrasta, Santa María de Mave, Toledo cathedral, Villalcázar de Sirga.

Resumen
Este artículo indaga en el origen y en los rasgos distintivos de los retablos-tabernáculo castellanos. Por ello se presta especial atención no tanto a los ejemplares bien conocidos del siglo XIV (como, por ejemplo, los retablos de Castildelgado y de Yurre) como a algunos ejemplares de finales del siglo XIII pobremente conservados, fragmentados y manipulados, para algunos de los cuales se ofrecen propuestas de reconstrucción. Con respecto al origen de los retablos-tabernáculo castellanos, el estudio se centra en algunas esculturas del siglo XIII que fueron dotadas, o bien de un respaldo que las destacaba, o bien de un baldaquino que las albergaba, pues se suele considerar a estos dispositivos como precursores de los genuinos retablos-tabernáculo. En este contexto, se presta especial atención a las imágenes de la Virgen con el Niño de la iglesia de Villalcázar de Sirga (Palencia). Con respecto a los rasgos distintivos de los retablos-tabernáculo castellanos, el texto destaca la relación existente entre los ejemplares más antiguos y la escultura monumental y funeraria de producción local, que con toda probabilidad sirvió como modelo para estos retablos primitivos.

Palabras clave
Retablo, retablo-tabernáculo, arte gótico, escultura gótica, pintura gótica, Corona de Castilla, Contrasta, Santa María de Mave, catedral de Toledo, Villalcázar de Sirga.

I. INTRODUCTION

By the mid-thirteenth century, the Crown of Castile extended over about two thirds of the Iberian Peninsula, almost completely covering its middle section and a significant portion to the west. Following the victory in the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) by King Alfonso VIII (r. 1158–1214) and the subsequent campaigns throughout Andalusia by his grandson, King Fernando III (r. 1217–52), Castile became not only the leading force against the Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula, but also the dominant power in the whole peninsula, offset only to

the east by the rising power of the Crown of Aragon. Moreover, since the 1220s, Castile was open to receiving Northern French Gothic art, and artists from this region produced works on Castilian soil that rivalled the great monuments of the French *domaine royal*. In this context, tabernacle-altarpieces, a type of early altarpiece that became fashionable in the medieval West *c.* 1200, were also created in Castile. The aim of this article is to present an overview of the origins of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces and to explore the extent to which they were a part of an overall European phenomenon or whether they developed their own distinctive features.

In 2018, I published an article on Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces that included a working list of thirty-three tabernacle-altarpieces (Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, pp. 78–79). Certainly, some of them are dubious, and many of them are so poorly preserved or altered that they can be considered little more than faint witnesses of the type. However, this list also included five tabernacle-altarpieces in which all four panels of their wings are fully or almost fully preserved: those from Castildelgado, Fuentes de Nava, Yurre, Zuazo de Cuartango and the so-called Chiale altarpiece of unknown provenance.[1] There are also two tabernacle-altarpieces in which all four panels of their wings are partially preserved: those from Arana (two altarpieces, named Arana I and Arana II).[2] And there are also three tabernacle-altarpieces in which at least three panels of their wings are partially preserved: those from Contrasta (?) and the so-called Wildenstein and Haupt I altarpieces of unknown provenance.[3] Most of these altarpieces come from average parish churches, but at least one of them is a royal commission: the taber-

[1] Those of Fuentes de Nava and Yurre are still *in situ* in the parish churches to which they belong, while the Castildelgado altarpiece is now in Barcelona, Museu Frederic Marès (inv. no 814), and the Chiale altarpiece is in a private collection. The whereabouts of the Zuazo de Cuartango altarpiece is unknown. The Castildelgado altarpiece is the only one that preserves not only its four panels, but also its baldachin and even its titular image. The latter remains in the village to which it belongs. Throughout the article, cities and villages of the provinces of the Basque Country are mentioned through their widespread Spanish forms (e.g., Yurre or Zuazo de Cuartango). The Basque place names, when existing and different from the Spanish place names, are provided for reference in the appendix, following the Spanish ones after / (e.g., Yurre/Ihurre or Zuazo de Cuartango/Zuhatzu Kuartango).

[2] The Arana altarpieces, which correspond to two successive arrangements made on the very same panels, were fragmented to be re-used in the Baroque altarpieces of the local parish church. These altarpieces have been transferred to the nearby parish church of Treviño.

[3] The Wildenstein and Haupt I altarpieces are in New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. nos 55.62a, 55.62b and 1977.94), and in Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie (inv. no Śr. 218), respectively. The whereabouts of the presumed Contrasta altarpiece is unknown.

nacle-altarpiece of the *Virgen de los Reyes* that has been presiding over the royal chapel of the cathedral of Seville since the time of its creation. Beyond surviving examples, the former Crown of Castile offers plenty of information about tabernacle-altarpieces in the form of documentary references[4] or depictions of them in other media (Fig. 1).[5] Moreover, pictorial transpositions that are loosely inspired by tabernacle-altarpieces also exist, as shown by the wall paintings of the chapel of San Martín or the recently discovered wall paintings of the chapel of Santa Bárbara,[6] both in the Old Cathedral of Salamanca. In addition, a contract for the fabrication of such an altarpiece has been preserved. It was signed in 1366 between the goldsmith Sancho Martínez and the cathedral chapter of Seville to create a tabernacle-altarpiece that was associated in the past with the *Virgen de la Sede*, the image of the Virgin and Child that still presides over the high altarpiece of the cathedral of Seville.[7] In other instances, a space left blank in wall paintings provides clues about the former existence and position of a tabernacle-altarpiece (Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, p. 57, fig. 3).

Even though my survey of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces is as recent as 2018, five more specimens have to be added to the working list offered then (a full, updated list is here provided in § 5). Two of them became known to me thanks to Jesús Muñiz Petralanda: a panel in the parish church of Olano, which had already been studied by Raquel Sáenz Pascual before its restoration allowed its recognition as a panel from a tabernacle-altarpiece,[8] and a baldachin from Mondragón, nowadays kept in the Museo Diocesano de San Sebastián (Fig. 2). The third one (two large unpublished panels in the parish church of Santiago el Real

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[4] Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, p. 43. They are mentioned as *capillas de fuste/madera* (wooden chapels).

[5] Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, p. 45. The thirteenth-century examples listed in this article must be supplemented with some fifteenth-century examples to be found in altarpieces by the Master of Los Balbases (a panel of the high altarpiece of the parish church of San Esteban of Los Balbases) and by Pedro Berruguete (a panel of the St Dominic altarpiece of the church of the Dominican convent of Santo Tomás of Ávila, now in the Museo Nacional del Prado, inv. no 615), just to mention works of genuine Castilian manufacture. In all these instances the side wings were simplified, as Verena Fuchß already observed in some early depictions of tabernacle-altarpieces (Fuchß, 1999, p. 150).

[6] https://www.salamanca24horas.com/texto-diario/mostrar/1341920/obras-restauracion-capilla-santa-barbara-catedral-sacan-luz-pinturas-murales-ocultas-durante-cinco-siglos (accessed 28 June 2019).

[7] Gestoso y Pérez, 1889–92, t. 2, pp. 191–192, note 1. See the contribution by Teresa Laguna Paúl in this volume for further details about this contract.

[8] Sáenz Pascual, 1997, pp. 253–258 (it had been previously mentioned by Portilla Vitoria, 1995, p. 717). The panel was subsequently restored and identified as part of such a structure, see Galdós Martínez de Osaba *et alii*, 2001, pp. 72–74; Sáenz Pascual, 2007, p. 350.

of Logroño) was brought to my attention by María Teresa and Pedro Álvarez Clavijo, while the fourth and fifth were brought to my attention by Alberto Velasco Gonzàlez: two panels that were auctioned as Aragonese by Alcalá Subastas in 2018 and two panels that were identified by him through a photograph in the Arxiu Mas of Barcelona.[9] The panel in Olano and those auctioned by Alcalá Subastas and known through the Arxiu Mas are significant as they prove the persistence of tabernacle-altarpieces in the fifteenth century, and the baldachin from Mondragón is significant as it provides an additional example of this rarely preserved structure.[10] But the panels in Logroño, that have been restored by the Government of La Rioja in 2019, are especially important as they challenge some of our assumptions regarding tabernacle-altarpieces: they are in a major city and church, they belonged to its medieval high altarpiece, from which its original titular image is still preserved in its present-day Baroque high altarpiece, and their size and weight defy the idea that tabernacle-altarpieces were always relatively modest structures: when opened, it could measure 362 x 406.6 cm (including the canopy). Even though they have lost the reliefs they once displayed, they are important testimonies of the early development of altarpieces in Castile (Fig. 3).

However, if a few months have enriched the working list of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces, a few months have also questioned one of the examples included in it, at least in the form I published it in 2018 (pp. 60–61, fig. 5). Indeed, the Contrasta altarpiece has proved to be a fake. I became aware of this work, whose whereabouts is unknown, through some photographs in the Arxiu Mas taken in 1956 in the Barcelona shop of the antiques dealer Ignacio Martínez.[11] In the notes accompanying the photographs, this work is identified as a triptych from Contrasta (mistakenly placed in Navarre instead of Álava). Even though, as I commented (Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, p. 50), it was clear that this work had been altered, I gave credit to this information as the *catálogo monumental* of the province of Álava written by Cristóbal de Castro in 1912–13 registered *un notabilísimo tríptico* (a most notable triptych) in the hermitage of Nuestra Señora de Elizmendi of Contrasta originally from either the hermitage of San Salvador or the hermitage of San Adrián, which both no longer existed at that stage (Castro,

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[9] Arxiu Mas, 47406. The notes accompanying the photograph identify them as Castilian panels of the fifteenth century and locate them in the Barcelona art market in 1963.

[10] Despite a list now comprising thirty-eight tabernacle-altarpieces, only six baldachins are known: Castildelgado, Gáceta, Garray, Mondragón, Seville and Villamanca (Fig. 13 Kroesen/Tångeberg, in this volume). To these the back panel of the baldachin of the Zuazo de Cuartango altarpiece could be added, even though it has been altered.

[11] Arxiu Mas, Gudiol-37227–37229.

1915, p. 192, pl. 53). Castro, whose work was severely criticised,[12] illustrated this reference with a photograph of the Yurre altarpiece, which is not mentioned in his text. I interpreted this as a mistake, justified by the poor quality of his work and by the presumable similitude of the altarpieces of Contrasta and Yurre, and I assumed that the reference to 'a most notable triptych' in Contrasta in 1912–13 and the existence of a triptych from Contrasta in Barcelona in 1956 were enough to accept this work. Following a close examination of the photographs in the Arxiu Mas, I must now say that it is possible that the panels come from Contrasta (even though I think it is unlikely that the panels alone could encourage Castro's enthusiastic words), but the reliefs on them never belonged to them: they are actually the missing reliefs from another altarpiece, originally in the Benedictine priory of Santa María de Mave, which is another outstanding Castilian example of an early altarpiece, but of the panel type rather than the tabernacle type (Fig. 4).[13] The Santa María de Mave altarpiece was transferred to the cathedral of Burgos some time before 1931, and it was barbarously plundered at some point (whether in Santa María de Mave, in Burgos, or in between, is uncertain), losing almost all its reliefs. Little more than a bare panel, it is now exhibited in the chapel of San Nicolás of the cathedral of Burgos. We have information on its original condition thanks to a photograph published in 1939,[14] and it is easy to recognise in it all the reliefs shown on the presumed Contrasta panels in 1956. In short, I now consider that the panels may be from Contrasta, but only the panels, devoid of all the figures and reliefs shown in the 1956 photograph (Fig. 5). I also believe that the date of *c.* 1300 I proposed for the ensemble in 2018 is still acceptable judging from the architectural features evidenced by the panels.

Despite the revision of the Contrasta altarpiece, the additions to the working list of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces and the remaining evidence concerning them provide plenty of material to explore some of the many questions posed by this widespread type of early altarpiece. These questions include: When and where did tabernacle-altarpieces originate? What sources inspired their creation? How did they spread? What was their legacy? Were they all originally Marian? Who commissioned them? Who produced them? Where were they displayed? How were they used? It lies beyond the scope of this article, and possibly beyond

[12] http://biblioteca.cchs.csic.es/digitalizacion_tnt/index_interior_alava2.html (accessed 28 June 2019).
[13] On this altarpiece, see Cook/Gudiol Ricart, 1950, p. 370, fig. 410; Ara Gil, 1999, pp. 65–67; Ara Gil, 2002, pp. 12–13, fig. 5; Ara Gil, 2006, pp. 180–181, fig. 1.
[14] Navarro García, 1939, pl. 157. Another photograph in Arxiu Mas, not numbered.

my abilities, to answer all these questions, but I want to discuss at least some is-
sues concerning their origins and their specific features in Castile.

2. THE SOURCES OF THE CASTILIAN TABERNACLE-ALTARPIECE

In 1967 Mojmír S. Frinta published the first major survey on tabernacle shrines,
following his experience restoring the panels of a Castilian tabernacle-altarpiece
in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York (the afore-
mentioned Wildenstein altarpiece). In the opinion of the Czech art historian and
restorer, tabernacle-altarpieces originated in small-scale sumptuous objects with
the same features. This caused the damage and, ultimately, the loss of almost all
medieval tabernacle-altarpieces, as features such as hinges and movable elements
were adequate for small-scale pieces, but not for larger ones (Frinta, 1967, pp.
104–106). His hypothesis did not gain too much support. Shortly afterwards,
Claude Lapaire published another major survey on tabernacle shrines where he
considered that tabernacle-altarpieces originated in standard panel-altarpieces
whose central section became emphasised by a baldachin (Lapaire, 1969, pp.
183–186), and three decades later Verena Fuchß maintained that tabernacle-al-
tarpieces emerged from the custom of highlighting cult images placed above or
behind altars, recorded since the High Middle Ages, and that precious objects in
ivory or in enamelled gold or silver with their very same features actually imitated
them (Fuchß, 1999, pp. 140, 145–146 and 153–154; in similar terms, Kroesen,
2014, pp. 160–164, and Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, p. 45). Certainly, none of these
objects predates the earliest tabernacle-altarpieces, even though precious objects
with movable elements existed long before and could have served as an inspira-
tion for them.

   This type of precious object, which accurately echoes tabernacle-altarpieces,
also existed in Castile, but only in very limited numbers (though many may have
been lost over the course of time). Moreover, they are not dated earlier than gen-
uine tabernacle-altarpieces and their features are related to foreign models rather
than local ones, which suggests that the development of Castilian tabernacle-al-
tarpieces was independent from the development of such precious objects, with-
out excluding the possibility of occasional influences. Probably the best-known
example of a precious object of this type in Castile is the reliquary of the *Virgen
del Cabello* (Virgin of the Hair), an Avignonese silversmith's work made in the
1330s for the Castilian cardinal Pedro Gómez Barroso, donated to the Dominican
convent of San Juan Bautista of Quejana by his nephew Fernán Pérez de Ayala on

the occasion of its foundation in 1378 (Cruz Valdovinos, 2007a, pp. 318–319) (Fig. 6).[15] Even though it shows the Virgin and Child enthroned (instead of standing, as was customary in France), the arrangement of the scenes displayed on its wings adheres to standard French models, with the Annunciation in the upper left compartment/s of the left wing, which did not influence Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces, where, as we shall explain, the arrangement and the choice of scenes differed (this even considering that the reliquary could have reached Castile shortly after the death of the cardinal in 1348 and that it could have influenced tabernacle-altarpieces produced in the area around Quejana by this date, such as, for example, the Castildelgado and Yurre altarpieces). Another outstanding work of this type, the reliquary of King Philip V of France (r. 1316–22) and his wife Queen Joan of Burgundy that is currently in the cathedral of Seville, reached this church only in the seventeenth century, so it is not relevant for the purpose of this research (Cruz Valdovinos, 2007b, pp. 319–320). Evidence of ivory objects of this type in Castile is also scarce, and, in this case, particularly controversial due to the presence of forgeries. The Gothic Ivories Project at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, registers only three specimens of this type from the territory of the former Crown of Castile.[16] The first one, in the cathedral of Burgos, is an early sixteenth-century Portuguese specimen that, due to its date and Renaissance style, is not relevant for the purpose of this research (Estella Marcos, 1984, pp. 221–222, fig. 52). The second and third ones, in the Museo Lázaro Galdiano of Madrid (inv. nos 2551 and 5704), testify to modern collecting, not to medieval imports and influences, and at least one of them is now considered a nineteenth-century fake.[17]

In spite of this, a Spanish (but not necessarily Castilian) origin has been proposed for some fragmentary ivory tabernacle shrines in international collections, such as two panels with scenes of the passion of Christ in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (inv. nos 71.175 and 71.176)[18] and one panel with scenes of the infancy of Christ in the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia (inv. no 01.04.51).[19] Whatever their origins (i.e., even considering the possibility that they are Span-

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[15] It is nowadays exhibited in the Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacro of Vitoria.

[16] http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/ (accessed 2 July 2019).

[17] http://catalogo.museolazarogaldiano.es/mlgm/search/pages/Main (accessed 2 July 2019). The statement about the non-genuine condition of inv. no 2551 in http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/ (accessed 2 July 2019).

[18] https://art.thewalters.org/browse/ (accessed 2 July 2019).

[19] https://collection.barnesfoundation.org/ (accessed 2 July 2019). Considering the arrangement of the scenes and their development, I am in doubt about the genuine condition of this work.

ish), they show no connections with Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces, which underscores the separate development in this territory of precious objects of this type and tabernacle-altarpieces. However, their presence in Castile was undoubtedly more abundant than extant examples suggest. An inventory of the cathedral of Toledo dated 1338 registers at least five related objects (Pérez de Guzmán, 1926, pp. 390, 395 414 and 415)[20] and many ivory images (Pérez de Guzmán, 1926, pp. 390, 398, 409, 414 and 415). Even more important is that this very same inventory provides information that is more likely linked to the purpose of this research, as it deals with a tabernacle placed at the high altar, thus moving the focus to what seems to be the real origin of tabernacle-altarpieces, according to Verena Fuchß: the desire to emphasise cult images placed above or behind altars.

Unfortunately, Toledo's inventory of 1338 is not as clear as we would like, but it mentions a great tabernacle at the altar of the Holy Saviour (i.e., the high altar of the cathedral), to which five small ivory images apparently belonged, specifying, moreover, that a black cloth was placed before it during Lent (Pérez de Guzmán, 1926, pp. 398 and 414).[21] These entries illustrate the placement, size, richness and use of this great tabernacle, but its purpose remains unclear: was it a tabernacle for the Holy Sacrament or was it a tabernacle for an image, and, as such, an altarpiece? Tom Nickson asked himself this very same question (Nickson, 2015, p. 162). I would go as far as saying that it housed an image, and, more precisely,

[20] 1.- 'Item una arqueta de ffaya en que auie un tabernaculo pequenno de marffil con un cruxifixo ençima e dos ymagenes que estan arrancadas e de dentro una ymagen de ssanta maria con su fijo e a cada parte dellas tablas sendas figuras de angeles' (Also a beech casket where there was a small ivory tabernacle, a Crucifix atop of it and two images that are torn off, and inside it an image of St Mary with her Son and to each side panels [and] corresponding figures of angels); 2.- 'Item un tabernaculo grande de marffil' (Also a great ivory tabernacle); 3.- 'Item un tabernaculo [*rotura*] do está la ymagen de marffil' (Also a [*missing*] tabernacle where the ivory image is); 4.- 'Item tabernaculo pequenno de madera cubierto de laton esmaltado a ymagenes e menguan la una parte del chapitel de encima' (Also small wooden tabernacle covered with enamelled brass with images; a portion of the spire above it is missing); 5.- 'Item un tabernaculo pequennuelo de madero con sus puertas en que ha una cruseta pequenna cubierta de plata dorada et en el tabernaculo ay dos casiellas en que ay en la una un poquiello de *lignum domini* et en la otra un pedaço tamanno como un garuanço del sepulcro de santa maria' (Also a very small wooden tabernacle with doors, in which there is a small cross covered with silver-gilt, and inside the tabernacle there are two small cases where there is a small amount of *lignum Domini* in the one and a portion of the tomb of St Mary of the size of a chickpea in the other).

[21] 'Item çinco ymagenes pequennas de marffil que semejan del tabernaculo grande que esta al altar de ssant saluador' (Also five small ivory images that seem from the great tabernacle that is at the altar of the Holy Saviour); 'Item un panno prieto para antel tabernaculo de sant saluador en quaresma' (Also a black cloth to [be placed] before the tabernacle of the Holy Saviour during Lent).

that it housed the image of the Virgin and Child that remains at the Late Gothic altarpiece presiding over the high altar of Toledo cathedral (the so-called *Virgen del Retablo*).[22] This would be an example of a phenomenon recorded also in Seville and probably in many other great churches too: the permanence throughout the centuries, despite successive rearrangements, of old and prestigious images traditionally associated with high altars. The image itself is not recorded in the 1338 inventory, and nor can the tabernacle itself be found there (it is recorded only through objects associated with it). However, following the entry detailing the black cloth to be placed before the tabernacle during Lent are two entries of additional black cloths for Christ and for the Virgin during Lent, thus suggesting that the tabernacle housed an image of the Virgin and Child (Pérez de Guzmán, 1926, p. 398).[23] The oldest reference to the arrangement of the high altar of the cathedral of Toledo in or before 1274, which is also the *terminus ante quem* for the completion of the high chapel, only mentions a Crucifixion (Nickson, 2015, p. 78). The *Virgen del Retablo* could have been made and placed there shortly afterwards, as it is apparently evoked, framed by a schematic tabernacle-altarpiece, in the miniature illustrating the royal privilege dated 1285 through which King Sancho IV (r. 1284–95) ordered his burial in Toledo cathedral (Fig. 7).[24] This miniature is thought to show the liturgical arrangement of Toledo cathedral including the royal chapel, with a Crucifix on its altar marking its dedication to the Holy Cross, and the high altar, dedicated to the Saviour, with a Virgin and Child on it.[25] Both the 1338 inventory and the 1285 miniature point to the pos-

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[22] On this image, see Durán Sanpere/Ainaud de Lasarte, 1956, p. 113, fig. 100; Pérez Grande, 2005, pp. 391–394. Contrary to the opinion of Durán Sanpere/Ainaud de Lasarte, who date it in the thirteenth century, Pérez Grande considers that it dates from the second half of the fourteenth century. Nickson adheres to the traditional opinion, admitting later alterations, which is also my opinion. Even more, Nickson believes that the silver flower that the Virgin holds in her right hand could be the one mentioned in a 1277 inventory (Nickson, 2015, p. 137).

[23] 'Item un panno prieto para ante jhesu xpo.' (Also a black cloth for before Jesus Christ); 'Item un rredondel prieto que viste a ssanta maria en quaresma' (Also a black short round cloak dressing St Mary during Lent).

[24] On this miniature, see Gutiérrez Baños, 1997, pp. 209–214. The resemblance between the Virgin and Child of the miniature and the *Virgen del Retablo* was noted by Nickson (2015, p. 137).

[25] The 'blueprint' condition of the 1285 miniature regarding the east end of the nave of Toledo cathedral was underlined by Nickson (2015, pp. 78–80). This is strengthened by the possibility of its Toledo production, considered very likely by Rodríguez Porto (2012, t. 1, p. 10). Nickson, however, considers that the altar with a Virgin and Child is not the altar of the Saviour, but the altar of the Virgin, which was situated in the choir: archbishop Gonzalo Pérez Gudiel, who is represented close to it in the miniature, was particularly devoted to it. But the *Virgen Blanca* extant on this altar is a standing image.

sible existence since the thirteenth century of an image of the Virgin and Child on the high altar of Toledo cathedral, an image housed in a tabernacle that, if we credit the 1285 miniature, had movable wings and that, at least in 1338, included ivory figures. This clearly underlines the role of cult images in the emergence of tabernacle-altarpieces.

3. THE ROAD TO THE CASTILIAN TABERNACLE-ALTARPIECE

The earliest Castilian tabernacle-altarpiece for which a precise date can be given is the one that presides over the royal chapel of the cathedral of Seville, created *c.* 1278.[26] Some other specimens can be dated to the late thirteenth century, or *c.* 1300, based on stylistic grounds. These include the Arana I and Contrasta altarpieces and the so-called Marès I (Barcelona, Museu Frederic Marès, inv. no 2225) and Wildenstein altarpieces of unknown provenance.[27] However, textual and visual evidence suggests that this type of altarpiece already existed by the mid-thirteenth century.

The *Milagros de Nuestra Señora* (*Miracles of Our Lady*), a collection of Marian miracles in Castilian narrative verse written by the priest Gonzalo de Berceo *c.* 1250, describes as follows the altar of the abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel when recounting the story of an image of the Virgin and Child, which was not damaged by a fire that ravaged the church (miracle XIV):

> Estava la imagen   en su trono posada,
> so fijo en sus brazos,   cosa es costumnada,
> los reïs redor ella,   sedié bien compannada,
> como rica reína   de Dios santificada.[28]

The reference to kings 'around the Virgin' does not appear in the versions of this very same miracle in other major collections of Marian miracles composed

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[26] See the contribution by Teresa Laguna Paúl in this volume.

[27] A panel formerly in the Gudiol collection should be added to these if it was really part of a tabernacle-altarpiece. On this panel, see Cook/Gudiol Ricart, 1950, p. 268, fig. 262; Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, pp. 54–55.

[28] Stanza 319, see Gonzalo de Berceo, 1985, p. 126 (English translation: 'The image was placed on her throne, her Child in her arms, as is customary; kings were around her: she was well accompanied, as is fitting to a rich queen sanctified by God'). A reference to bishop Tello Téllez de Meneses situates the composition of this particular poem before 1246.

in Castile in the thirteenth century,[29] nor in the Latin account that is regarded as the source for Gonzalo de Berceo's text.[30] When adapting his sources, the Castilian poet did not merely translate them, he also expanded them, making them suitable for Castilian verse and endowing them with a dramatic accent and local colour to make them accessible to his Castilian audience. Considering this, we can assume that the description he provides of the interior of the abbey church of Mont-Saint-Michel reflects Castilian contemporary churches, and that an image of the Virgin and Child surrounded by the kings was familiar to him. We can interpret this as a reference to an early type of altarpiece comparable to that in Oberpleis, Germany (although, to date, there is no known altarpiece of this type in Castile),[31] or, more accurately, to a tabernacle-altarpiece, where, in Castile and elsewhere, the kings were usually placed in the lower register of the left wing, thus completing a representation of the *Adoration of the Magi*.[32]

By visual evidence regarding the existence of tabernacle-altarpieces by the mid-thirteenth century, I do not mean direct representations of them: I mean images apparently influenced by them, especially the portrait of King Fernando III in the so-called *Tumbo A* of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, which is a cartulary collecting royal grants to the cathedral up to the thirteenth century where, as was customary, the portraits of the monarchs are placed at the beginning of the transcription of those documents issued by them. The portrait of King Fernando III on fol. 66v (Fig. 8), painted *c.* 1255, which is the date of the last document copied in the cartulary, shortly after his death in 1252, shows the monarch seated on his throne under a trefoil arch flanked on both sides by half trefoil arches that house the heraldry of Castile (to the left) and León (to the right).[33] As already noted by Serafín Moralejo, this creates the effect of an open triptych or, more accurately, of an open tabernacle-altarpiece, considering the

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[29] These are the well-known *Cantigas de Santa María*, a collection of Galician-Portuguese poems in praise of the Virgin composed at the request of King Alfonso X (r. 1252–84), where this miracle is narrated in *cantiga* 39, see Alfonso X el Sabio, 1986–89, vol. I, p. 156, and the *Liber Mariae*, a Latin treatise about the Virgin written by the Franciscan friar Juan Gil de Zamora, where this miracle is included in treatise XVI, treatise VI, miracle I, see Bohdziewicz, 2014, p. 432. In both versions, as in their ultimate Latin source, emphasis is on the fact that not even the cloth veil of the image was damaged during a fire that actually took place in 1112, see Delisle, ed., 1872, p. 142. This is mentioned by Gonzalo de Berceo in stanza 329 (Gonzalo de Berceo, 1985, p. 128).

[30] Published in Gonzalo de Berceo, 1985, p. 236.

[31] Fuchß, 1999, pp. 110–111, ill. 63; Le Pogam (dir.), 2009, pp. 24 and 29, fig. 11.

[32] On the possible origin of this arrangement in liturgical drama, see Forsyth, 1972, pp. 49–59.

[33] Sicart, 1981, pp. 99–100, pl. VIIa; Moralejo Álvarez, 2004 [originally published 1985], pp. 326–327; Rebollo Matías, 2019, pp. 139–143.

usual simplification of these complex structures in their pictorial renderings. This way of representing the now-deceased monarch is notable, as it is quite different from that in which all other monarchs had been depicted in this manuscript since the middle of the twelfth century. While all other monarchs, including his successor and current monarch Alfonso X, were depicted as warriors on horseback, Fernando III was depicted according to a visual strategy characteristic of religious imagery, a device that, in my opinion, has to be linked to the promotion of his sanctity, undertaken since the very moment of his death, even though it was not formally acknowledged until 1671 (Chamberlin, 2000, pp. 389–417). This way of presenting King Fernando III was echoed in another Galician cartulary, the *Tumbo de Toxos Outos*, ordered for the eponymous Benedictine abbey in 1289.[34] What is important for us in this context is that these miniatures suggest a well-established tradition of tabernacle-altarpieces by the mid-thirteenth century. Moreover, the miniature in the *Tumbo A* anticipates the display of heraldry in the side wings of the tabernacle-altarpiece of the royal chapel of the cathedral of Seville, as well as the installation of the royal effigy below a baldachin in it.

How this tradition became well established is more difficult to ascertain through actual artefacts. Following Verena Fuchß (1999, p. 147), a starting point could have been the placement of a panel at the back of an image located over an altar in order to provide it with greater emphasis. To the best of my knowledge, evidence of this is scarce and controversial in the former Crown of Castile, comprising the Romanesque wooden image of the Virgin and Child in the Galician church of Santa María de Pontellas and the Gothic stone image of the Virgin and Child that presides over the high altarpiece of the church of Villalcázar de Sirga (Fig. 9).[35]

The former was included by Cook and Gudiol Ricart in their well-known repertoire of Spanish Romanesque sculpture.[36] According to María del Pilar Carrillo Lista (1997, pp. 198–199, fig. 6), its back panel is a later addition, but this does not rule out a medieval origin.

Regarding the latter, there is no room for doubt, as its back panel, which was necessary so that censing angels could be placed flanking the head of the Virgin,

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[34] Archivo Histórico Nacional, Códices, L. 1002, fol. 18r. On this miniature, see Fernández-Pousa, 1944, pp. 416–417; Sicart, 1981, pp. 118–128, ill. 99; Gutiérrez Baños, 2019, pp. 86–88.

[35] The paragraphs about Villalcázar de Sirga have been written in a constant and fruitful dialogue with my colleague and friend Clara Feránдez-Ladreda, from the Universidad de Navarra, to whom I express my gratitude. Any mistake is my own responsibility.

[36] Cook/Gudiol Ricart, 1950, p. 380, fig. 431. According to Castillo López, 1925–26, p. 269, its height is about 80 cm.

was carved in the same stone block as the image itself. The church of Villalcázar de Sirga that it presides over was a popular Marian sanctuary favoured by the Castilian royal family in the thirteenth century. Miracles performed there by the Virgin were included in Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa María*,[37] and it has been widely debated whether this image or any other Marian image within this temple was the *Magestade* mentioned and praised in the *Cantigas*.[38] Concerning this, it must be noted that its installation in the high altarpiece is modern: it dates back only to the questionable restoration of the ensemble completed in 1946 (Rubio Salán, 1952, p. 38).[39] Before this, the image was located by a pier at the entrance to the chapel of Santiago, in the south transept (as shown in several photographs), but this was also a modern arrangement.[40] We thus have no reliable information about its original position and function, especially whether it was actually a cult image, and, if so, the titular image of this very important Marian sanctuary. Evidence is so poor that any statement is problematic. This image has been related to the workshop that carved the monumental south portal of the church, which, in turn, has been connected to the workshop operating in the jambs of the south transept of the cathedral of León since *c.* 1260.[41] This implies that, even if we were ready to accept that this was the titular image of this sanctuary, we should consider that at least three of the miracles recorded in the *Cantigas de Santa María*

[37] *Cantigas* 31, 217, 218, 227, 229, 232, 234, 243, 253, 268, 278, 301, 313 and 355, see Alfonso X el Sabio, 1986–89. Some of these *cantigas* were illustrated in the *Códices de las Historias*: in the *Códice Rico* (San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Real Biblioteca, ms. T-I-1, fol. 46v, which corresponds to *cantiga* 31) and in the *Códice de Florencia* (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, ms. B.R. 20, fols 18r, 37v, 96r, 105r and 111r, which correspond to *cantigas* 313, 253, 278, 301 and 227, respectively). Images depicted in these illustrations cannot be considered actual representations of the *Virgen de Villasirga*. On this sanctuary, see Fernández-Ladreda Aguadé, 2019, pp. 175–183.

[38] The reference to the *Magestade* in *cantiga* 253, verse 54. Other references to the titular image, explicit or implicit, are found in *cantigas* 31 and 355. References to its altar in *cantigas* 234, 268, 278, 301 and 355. Sánchez Ameijeiras, 2004, pp. 249–250, thinks that the image we are now discussing was the titular image of the sanctuary.

[39] As proven by a photograph by Luis Rodríguez Alonso in Arxiu Mas, Gudiol-39937 (a copy by the author in Archivo Histórico Provincial de Palencia). The image that was previously in the high altarpiece was a late medieval gesso sculpture of the Virgin and Child, now in the chapel of Santiago.

[40] As proven by a photograph by Luis Rodríguez Alonso in Arxiu Mas, Gudiol-39749 (a copy by the author in Archivo Histórico Provincial de Palencia), published by Navarro García, 1932, pl. 193, showing a previous location by the north wall of the bay preceding the northernmost apse of the church. This location also seems modern, as it looks intended for display, not with a liturgical or devotional purpose. In the picture this image is accompanied by others.

[41] Ara Gil, 1988b, pp. 53–54; Ara Gil, 1995, pp. 256 and 282. On the workshop of the jambs of the south transept of León cathedral, see Franco Mata, 1998, pp. 338–343.

took place before its creation.[42] Furthermore, its back panel, beyond providing support for the censing angels flanking the head of the Virgin, seems intended to facilitate the installation of the image in an architectural setting, which becomes clear when we compare this device with the one present in the images placed against the crossing piers, crowned by canopies carved in separate pieces. In short, I do not think that this image was created as an altar image, or that its back panel was created to provide emphasis to the sacred figures, but rather merely for practical reasons. I consider that this image was created for an architectural setting, but of what kind is uncertain.[43] In any case, its close iconographic relationship with the image carved in the south portal of the church[44] and with the one now in the chapel of Santiago,[45] to be discussed shortly, together with its probable influence in others, such as the presumed former titular image of the convent of Santa María de Belvís in Santiago de Compostela (Sánchez Ameijeiras, 2011, pp. 71–73, figs. 2–3), suggest that all these images refer to a common prototype, quite probably the genuine and now lost *Virgen de Villasirga* that was the object of widespread veneration during the thirteenth century.

Setting aside these problematic examples, a step forward in the development that led to tabernacle-altarpieces was the presentation of altar images within baldachins (Fuchß, 1999, p. 148). According to Pierre-Yves Le Pogam, from this stage on we could actually speak of tabernacle-altarpieces, even if movable wings did not exist yet (Le Pogam [dir.], 2009, p. 18). In the former Crown of Castile, if evidence of images with back panels is scarce and controversial, evidence of images within baldachins is, if not abundant, at least undisputed and magnificent, and includes two stone sculptures and at least one literary reference. Together with these, I would like to introduce a Portuguese example that accounts for a parallel development in Castile's neighbouring country, where, to the best of my knowledge, no other evidence of tabernacle-altarpieces is recorded (Fig. 10).

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[42] Those narrated in *cantiga* 229, which took place in the late twelfth century, and in *cantigas* 227 and 234, which took place during the reign of King Fernando III. It could be argued that this image was created as a renewal of the original one, keeping some of its features.

[43] Was it perhaps created as a 'copy' of the titular image of the sanctuary to be placed in a location more easily accessible to the pilgrims visiting the sanctuary?

[44] Both show the Virgin seated on a lions throne, which is a reference to Solomon's throne, a type of the Virgin herself.

[45] Both show the head of the Virgin flanked by censing angels. The image now in the chapel of Santiago shares with the image carved in the south portal the presence of an evil creature at the feet of the Virgin, underlining her role as the new Eve.

The Castilian specimens are the titular image of St Andrew of the female Cistercian abbey of San Andrés de Arroyo and the aforementioned Virgin and Child now in the chapel of Santiago in the church of Villalcázar de Sirga, both in the province of Palencia.

The former shows the seated effigy of the apostle holding the cross that identifies him under a canopy formed by trefoil arches. It was carved in a single stone block in the mid-thirteenth century, probably by the workshop responsible for the completion of the monastery (i.e., a workshop producing monumental sculpture), and it is outstanding as an early example of Castilian Gothic sculpture.[46]

The second one is regarded by the most recent scholarship as a copy of the image at Villalcázar de Sirga discussed above, which is in the high altarpiece of the church. As commented above, we should consider the possibility that both refer to a common prototype: the genuine and now-lost *Virgen de Villasirga*. In this instance, the image of the Virgin and Child is presented under a canopy formed by gabled trefoil arches and crowned by a truncated octagonal spire flanked by turrets (some of them missing).[47] This image was carved in a single stone block *c.* 1270–80, and its close stylistic relationship to the much-acclaimed tombs that in the very same church house the remains of the *infante* Felipe (a son of King Fernando III who died in 1274) and a woman of disputed identity (in my opinion, the second wife of the *infante*, who died before 1265)[48] suggests that it was carved by the same workshop (i.e., one producing tomb sculpture). This workshop is linked to the one working at a later date in Aguilar de Campoo, to which Antón Pérez de Carrión belonged, and whom we can identify through his signature. This image is now in the chapel of Santiago accompanying the aforementioned tombs, which were transferred here from the second bay of the church in 1926 (Andrés Ordax, 1993, p. 39), but its original setting is unknown.[49] Considering its

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[46] Ara Gil, 1988b, p. 183. This image was known to Verena Fuchß (1999, p. 148, ill. 116). It measures 129 x 43 x 43 cm.

[47] Ara Gil, 1988b, pp. 54–54; Ara Gil, 1995, pp. 256 and 282; Ara Gil, 1991, pp. 62–64; Sánchez Ameijeiras, 2004, pp. 249–250, fig. 6. It measures 174 x 60 x 38 cm.

[48] Sánchez Ameijeiras, 2004, pp. 246–248, identifies her as Beatriz Fernández, an illegitimate daughter of the *infante*, and considers that this woman was the patron of the ensemble. In my opinion, it is very unlikely that a woman in her 20s that should expect to marry commissioned her own tomb side by side with her father's tomb (in fact, she was still alive in 1321). Moreover, the heraldry displayed on the female tomb fits the lineage of the second wife of the *infante*, Inés de Guevara, see Menéndez Pidal, 2011, pp. 138–140.

[49] Its first recorded location, through a photograph by Luis Rodríguez Alonso presented above (see note 40), was by the north wall of the bay preceding the northernmost apse of the church. As commented above, this location seems modern.

technique (carved stone) and the presence of a canopy, some authors supposed that it belonged to the west portal of the church, either as a trumeau or as a tympanum image. This portal, mentioned in the records as the *puerta del Ángel*, was destroyed when the west front of the church collapsed in the eighteenth century. However, I think that we must consider it an altar image: an outstanding example of the evolution that led to the genuine tabernacle-altarpiece by emphasising a cult image placed above or behind an altar.[50] In this respect, I believe that the hypothesis put forward by Rocío Sánchez Ameijeiras is very thought-provoking: she suggests that the sculpture may have formed an ensemble with the tombs of *infante* Felipe and his second wife (his daughter in her opinion), and that this ensemble echoed in some way the arrangement of the royal chapel of the cathedral of Seville, where the *infante*'s parents were buried, their effigies in front of the tabernacle-altarpiece of the *Virgen de los Reyes* (Sánchez Ameijeiras, 2004, pp. 249–250). Whatever its original setting may have been, this image is undoubtedly a landmark in the development of the altarpiece in Castile and in the whole Iberian Peninsula.

Even though only two such images are known to us today, the existence of further examples of this type in the former Crown of Castile is suggested by at least one literary reference. In *cantiga* 4, which tells of the miracle of the Jewish boy from Bourges who went to the church accompanying his schoolmates and received Communion from the image of the Virgin, the boy refers to it as the one *que vi so o chapitel* (I saw under the canopy),[51] so suggesting a display similar to those extant in San Andrés de Arroyo and in Villalcázar de Sirga.

The Portuguese example of this type of monumental canopied image carved in a single stone block is the Virgin and Child known as *Nossa Senhora da Consolação* from the church of the Misericórdia of Guarda, but probably ultimately from the former cathedral of the same town, where it could have served as the

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[50] I rule out the possibility of a trumeau image, as I know no other example of a seated Virgin and Child as a trumeau image, and also the possibility of a tympanum image (for which an example is provided by the portal of the Navarrese church of Santa María la Real in Olite), as its polychromy proves it was a free-standing image.

[51] Alfonso X el Sabio, 1986–89, vol. 1, p. 64. This does not appear in the versions of the same miracle provided by Gonzalo de Berceo (miracle XVI, see Gonzalo de Berceo, 1985, pp. 132–136) and by Juan Gil de Zamora (treatise XVI, treatise I, miracle VII, see Bohdziewicz, 2014, pp. 376–377), nor in their ultimate Latin source (Gonzalo de Berceo, 1985, pp. 237–238), and, as argued above about Gonzalo de Berceo's miracle XIV, it can be considered a development of the local poet based on his/her own experience of church interiors. The illustration of *cantiga* 4 in the *Códice Rico* (fol. 9v) presents the whole altar ensemble under a baldachin.

titular image. It is now exhibited in the Museu da Guarda (inv. no D-23), where it is catalogued as a Romanesque sculpture from no later than the first half of the thirteenth century.[52] However, in spite of its archaic appearance, prompted by the difficulties of granite carving, it is, in my opinion, a Gothic sculpture from no earlier than the late thirteenth century: the intimacy and affective gesture of the Child, who extends his right arm to touch the shoulder of the Virgin, as if He were about to embrace her,[53] suggest such a late chronology, in accordance with the architectural design of the canopy, with gabled pointed horseshoe arches resting on columns.

4. DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE CASTILIAN TABERNACLE-ALTARPIECE

The images discussed so far show no traces of hinges, so they could not have had the movable wings that distinguish genuine tabernacle-altarpieces, even though they are related to such pieces. Setting aside their probable existence by the middle of the thirteenth century, the earliest examples of known or preserved movable wings are the aforementioned panels of the Arana I and Contrasta altarpieces and of the so-called Marès I and Wildenstein altarpieces of unknown provenance, datable, as stated before, to the late thirteenth century, or *c.* 1300.[54] Unfortunately, none of these altarpieces is fully known or preserved, but putting them side by side and comparing them with later examples and with related structures proves useful for investigating the origins and distinctive features of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces.

  From Arana I (all four panels partially preserved, but fragmented), only its reverse is known, painted with full-length figures of apostles; as its obverse was

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[52] Rodrigues, 1977, pp. 66–67; Ferrão, 2004, pp. 62–64, fig. 1. It measures 174 x 56 cm. The Virgin is seated on a lions throne. My thanks to the Museu da Guarda for providing information about this image, and to my colleague Carla Varela Fernandes, from the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, for generously sharing with me her knowledge about Portuguese medieval sculpture.

[53] Such a gesture is known to me only through the Virgin and Child of Tolbaños de Arriba (Burgos), see Martínez Martínez, 2016, p. 654. Martínez Martínez dates it to the second third of the fourteenth century and relates it to those high-quality images in which the Child catches the veil of the Virgin.

[54] The tabernacle-altarpiece of the royal chapel of the cathedral of Seville is not considered here since its panels, known through old descriptions and depictions, displayed no figures, but only heraldry.

completely reworked in the fifteenth century.[55] From Contrasta (three panels known through old photographs), only its obverse is known, but, as explained before, it is mystified by the addition of reliefs from elsewhere. From Marès I (one panel preserved, but barbarously altered, and another panel known through an old photograph) and Wildenstein (three panels preserved, two of them partially), both their obverses and reverses are known, but their obverses lack the reliefs they once displayed, while their reverses show traces of colour originally imitating jasper in Marès I and, extraordinarily, scenes of the passion of Christ in Wildenstein.[56] Considering the arrangement of their obverses and the spaces left there for reliefs, Contrasta, Marès I and Wildenstein were in all likelihood Marian altarpieces, and the way Arana I was reworked in the fifteenth century allows us to surmise that it was also a Marian altarpiece. If we accept this, all of the earliest extant panels from Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces correspond to Marian altarpieces, which is not extraordinary, as their leading role in the development of this type of early altarpiece is assumed. Their precise features can be determined by examining widely preserved fourteenth-century Castilian Marian tabernacle-altarpieces. These include the well-known Castildelgado and Yurre altarpieces[57] and also the Chiale altarpiece, recently brought to light and of unknown provenance.[58] The Castildelgado altarpiece (Fig. 11) is especially important for our

[55] On this altarpiece, see Sáenz Pascual, 2012, pp. 245–247 and 253–259, fig. 6; Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, pp. 64–68, fig.7.

[56] On the Marès I altarpiece, see Melero Moneo, 1991, pp. 432–433; Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, pp. 48–49, fig. 2. On the Wildenstein altarpiece, see Post, 1938, pp. 733–734, fig. 276; Post, 1941, pp. 547–550, fig. 253; Gudiol, 1941, p. 12, fig. 10; Cook/Gudiol Ricart, 1950, p. 271, fig. 263; Frinta, 1967, pp. 111–112, figs 9–13; Krüger, 1992, p. 19, ills 170–171; Baetjer, 1995, p. 146; https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/471722 (accessed 15 July 2019); https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/471999 (accessed 15 July 2019).

[57] On the Castildelgado altarpiece, see Frinta, 1967, p. 106, fig. 4; Lapaire, 1969, pp. 175 and 187, fig. 9; Yarza Luaces, 1991, pp. 393–394; Krüger, 1992, p. 19, ill. 172; Fuchß, 1999, p. 143, ill. 102; Ara Gil, 2006, pp. 185–188, figs 4–5; Kroesen, 2009, pp. 47–48, fig. 21; Muñoz Párraga, 2009, pp. 354–355; Bango Torviso, 2010, pp. 188–189 and 193–200, figs 145–156; O'Donnell, 2018, pp. 81–84, figs 9–11 and 13. On the Yurre altarpiece, see Enciso Viana *et alii*, 1975, pp. 60 and 621, photopgraphs 906–913; López de Ocáriz Alzola, 1989, pp. 188–191; Echeverría Goñi, dir. and coord., t. 1, pp. 125–126, t. 2, pp. 439–444; Franco Mata, 2007, pp. 254–255; Lahoz, 2013, pp. 175–178, fig. 58.

[58] On this altarpiece, see Mor, 2016, pp. 44–53; O'Donnell, 2018, pp. 75–113. O'Donnell designates this altarpiece 'The Saint Catherine panels', but I cannot agree with this proposal, as I consider that the figure of St Catherine nowadays displayed on one of the panels is a spurious addition. Therefore, I prefer designating this altarpiece after the art dealer who brought it to light in 2016.

purposes, as the scenes on its obverse were carved on the same wing panels, while the Yurre and Chiale altarpieces were made by fixing the independently carved scenes of their obverses on the wing panels. In the course of time, this led to restorations or alterations that placed erroneously some of the scenes. By comparing them with the Castildelgado altarpiece, it is possible to reconstruct their original appearance: Yurre was identical to Castildelgado,[59] and Chiale almost identical.[60] Further evidence is provided by the panel-altarpiece of Santa María de Mave in its original condition, as it showed an arrangement of figures almost identical to that of Marian tabernacle-altarpieces when opened.

The most distinctive feature of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces is the arrangement of the lower register of their obverses, as it is systematically repeated in all these examples: to the left, the three Magi adoring the Christ Child of the sculpture of the Virgin and Child presiding over the ensemble; to the right, Joseph (accompanying the Virgin and Child and so completing the scene of the *Adoration of the Magi*) and the archangel Gabriel and the Virgin forming the scene of the *Annunciation*. Each figure is presented on its own, under its own arch. Moreover, the oldest altarpieces, despite their poor condition, show another outstanding feature: their lower registers are significantly taller than their middle and upper registers (the tendency in the coming decades was to make them equal, as proved by the Castildelgado and Yurre altarpieces) (Fig. 12). In short, Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces emphasised the lower register, giving it more prominence through its height and through its iconographic choice, as the most important scenes were reserved for it, without considering their displacement from their 'logical' order in the overall narrative or even their sequence, as the *Adoration of the Magi* precedes the *Annunciation* (given that, as expected, we read from left to right). The placement of the Magi to the left of the presiding sculpture of the Virgin and Child was customary in other countries (Lapaire,

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[59] Their arrangement includes, from bottom to top and from left to right: the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Annunciation* (lower register); the *Magi before Herod*, the *Massacre of the Innocents*, the *Dormition of the Virgin* and the *Coronation of the Virgin* (middle register); the *Visitation*, the *Nativity of Christ*, the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* and the *Announcement to the Shepherds* (upper register).

[60] In Chiale the order of the *Magi before Herod* and the *Massacre of the Innocents* is reversed, and the *Dormition of the Virgin* is substituted by the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*. This permits placing in the space of the last one in the upper register the *Announcement to the Shepherds*, whose space, in turn, is occupied by the *Flight into Egypt*, not represented in Castildelgado and Yurre. In its original condition the lower register remained unchanged.

1969, p. 181), but the placement of the *Annunciation* following the *Adoration of the Magi* was not, and caused some discomfort, as the Virgin in isolation was relegated to the right panel of the right wing. This sometimes led to an alteration of the order of the figures of the right-hand side, placing the archangel Gabriel and the Virgin together on the left panel of the right wing and Joseph in isolation on the right panel of the right wing (but this caused another anomaly: Joseph witnessing the *Annunciation*). In the most modern examples of Castilian Marian tabernacle-altarpieces (those of Arana II, Olano, Alcalá and known through the Arxiu Mas, just painted and already corresponding to the fifteenth century), this arrangement was forgotten altogether and the *Annunciation* was placed at the beginning of the iconographic program, at the upper left of the altarpiece. This, finally, caused the Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces to lose their distinctiveness.

The arrangement of the lower register of the obverse of genuine Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces was heralded by Castilian tomb sculpture since the first half of the thirteenth century, as shown by several sepulchres from Palencia and Valladolid that popularised a scheme that was adopted by the earliest tabernacle-altarpieces and that culminated brilliantly in the friezes over the main portal of the church of Villalcázar de Sirga (Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, pp. 62–63) (Fig. 13).

In the absence of evidence about the possible role played by foreign influences in the emergence of Castilian tabernacle-altarpieces, it seems clear that major, not minor arts, played the most outstanding part in this process, which started by emphasising cult images placed above or behind altars and continued by adopting schemes previously tested in tomb and monumental sculpture.

5. APPENDIX: UPDATED LIST OF CASTILIAN TABERNACLE-ALTARPIECES

This list updates and, when necessary, amends, the one I published in 2018 (Gutiérrez Baños, 2018, pp. 78–79). For every tabernacle-altarpiece the following information is provided: city or village of origin and building of origin (or, if this information is unkown, the conventional name, between quotation marks, through which it is designated in this research); present-day location (if different of its place of origin or if the latter information is unkwnon); preserved elements; dedicatee; decoration of the obverse, specifying its technique; decoration of the reverse (this is always painted, with the exception of the interior set of wings of the tabernacle-altarpiece of the royal chapel of the cathedral of Seville); date. If

several tabernacle-altarpieces come from the same city of village or are designated through the same conventional name, they are differentiated through Roman numerals.

5.1. *Tabernacle-altarpieces of known provenance*

1.- Almazán (Soria), church of San Vicente (Almazán [Soria], Ayuntamiento): one panel. DEDICATEE: St Vincent. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Vincent (painting). REVERSE: without decoration. DATE: fifteenth century.

2.- Arana I (Burgos), church of the Asunción de Nuestra Señora (Treviño [Burgos], church of San Pedro): four incomplete panels, fragmented. DEDICATEE: presumably Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: without information (concealed or destroyed by the reuse of the panels for the creation of Arana II). REVERSE: St John the Evangelist, St Paul, St Peter and an unidentified apostle. DATE: thirteenth century.

3.- Arana II (Burgos), church of the Asunción de Nuestra Señora (Treviño [Burgos], church of San Pedro]: four incomplete panels, fragmented. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ (painting). REVERSE: pattern of stars (removed during restoration to make visible Arana I's reverse). DATE: fifteenth century.

4.- Astudillo I (Palencia), convent of Santa Clara (private collection): two incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: St Mary Magdalen. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Mary Magdalen (painting). REVERSE: St Peter (concealed or destroyed by modern overpainting) and jasper imitation. DATE: fourteenth century.

5.- Astudillo II (Palencia), convent of Santa Clara (private collection): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: an unidentified Dominican saint. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of an unidentified Dominican saint (painting). REVERSE: jasper imitation. DATE: fourteenth century.

6.- Astudillo III (Palencia), convent of Santa Clara (private collection): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: an unidentified saint. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of an unidentified saint (painting). REVERSE: jasper imitation. DATE: fourteenth century.

7.- Castildelgado (Burgos), hermitage of Nuestra Señora la Real del Campo (Castildelgado [Burgos], church of San Pedro y San Esteban – the titular image –, and Barcelona, Museu Frederic Marès, inv. no 814 – the remaining elements –): titular image, baldachin and all four panels. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child (*Nuestra Señora la Real del Campo*). OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ

and of the death and glorification of the Virgin (reliefs). REVERSE: plain black (overpainted). DATE: fourteenth century.

8.- Contrasta/Kontrasta (Álava/Araba) (?), hermitage of Nuestra Señora de Elizmendi, but ultimately either the hermitage of San Salvador or the hermitage of San Adrián (whereabouts unknown): three panels. DEDICATEE: presumably Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes lost, presumably at least scenes of the infancy of Christ (reliefs). REVERSE: without information. DATE: thirteenth century. N.B.: the reliefs displayed on the panels in old photographs do not belong to the presumed Contrasta altarpiece, but to the Santa María de Mave altarpiece, which is not a tabernacle-altarpiece.

9.- Covarrubias (Burgos), collegiate church of San Cosme y San Damián: titular image and one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: St James the Greater. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Jame the Greater (painting). REVERSE: without decoration. DATE: fourteenth century.

10.- Fuentes de Nava (Palencia), church of Santa María: all four panels. DEDICATEE: an unidentified bishop saint. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of an unidentified bishop saint (painting). REVERSE: plain red. DATE: fourteenth or fifteenth century.

11.- Gáceta/Gazeta (Álava/Araba), church of San Martín (Vitoria/Gasteiz [Álava/Araba], Elizbarrutiko Arte Sakratuaren Museoa – Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacro, inv. nos 617 and 619): titular image and baldachin, incomplete (canopy and part of the back panel). DEDICATEE: St Michael. OBVERSE: no panels preserved. REVERSE: *idem*. DATE: fourteenth or fifteenth century. N.B.: there is no conclusive evidence about this being originally a tabernacle-altarpiece, as only the upper section of the baldachin is preserved, but this is the most likely.

12.- Garray (Soria), hermitage of the Mártires (Garray [Soria], church of San Juan Bautista – the supposed titular image –, and whereabouts unknown – the baldachin –): titular image? (it is unlikely that the one presiding over the ensemble known through an old photograph is the original one) and baldachin. DEDICATEE: uncertain, Virgin and Child? OBVERSE: no panels preserved. REVERSE: *idem*. DATE: thirteenth or fourteenth century. N.B.: there is no conclusive evidence about this being originally a tabernacle-altarpiece, as the configuration of the ensemble known through an old photograph shows the altarpiece in a late medieval alteration, but this is the most likely.

13.- Heredia (Álava/Araba), hermitage of San Bartolomé (Vitoria/Gasteiz [Álava/Araba], Elizbarrutiko Arte Sakratuaren Museoa – Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacro, inv. nos 423, 424, 425 and 426): two incomplete panels, fragmented.

DEDICATEE: St Christopher. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Christopher (painting). REVERSE: plain red. DATE: fifteenth century.

14.- Jócano/Jokano (Álava/Araba), church of San Martín (Vitoria/Gasteiz [Álava/Araba], Elizbarrutiko Arte Sakratuaren Museoa – Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacro, inv. no 6): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: St George? OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St George? (painting). REVERSE: pattern of flowers. DATE: fifteenth century.

15.- León, cathedral (?) (León, Museo de León, inv. no 14): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: uncertain, St Catherine? OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Catherine (painting). REVERSE: plain red. DATE: fifteenth century.

16.- Logroño (La Rioja), church of Santiago el Real: titular image and two incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: St James the Greater. OBVERSE: scenes lost, presumably scenes of the life of St James the Greater (reliefs). REVERSE: plain red. DATE: fourteenth century.

17.- Los Balbases (Burgos), church of San Esteban (Burgos, Taller Diocesano de Restauración): two incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: an unidentified saint. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of an unidentified saint (painting). REVERSE: St Paul and plain red. DATE: fifteenth century.

18.- Medrano (La Rioja), church of the Natividad de Nuestra Señora (Calahorra [La Rioja], cathedral museum): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: uncertain. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Fabian (painting). REVERSE: St Fabian. DATE: fourteenth or fifteenth century.

19.- Mondragón/Arrasate (Guipúzcoa/Gipuzkoa), church of San Juan Bautista (San Sebastián/Donostia [Guipúzcoa/Gipuzkoa], Donostiako Elizbarrutiko Museoa – Museo Diocesano de San Sebastián, no inv. no): titular image and baldachin, incomplete (canopy and back panel). DEDICATEE: an unidentified Cistercian saint. OBVERSE: no panels preserved. REVERSE: *idem*. DATE: fourteenth century.

20.- Olano (Álava/Araba), church of San Bartolomé: one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ (painting). REVERSE: St Peter. DATE: fifteenth century.

21.- Pangua (Burgos), church of San Cornelio y San Cipriano (whereabouts unknown): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: unknown. OBVERSE: without information. REVERSE: St Peter. DATE: fourteenth century.

22.- Quintanar de Rioja (La Rioja), church of San Román (Santo Domingo de la Calzada [La Rioja], cathedral museum): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: uncertain, St Romanus? OBVERSE: St Romanus and scenes of his life? (reliefs). REVERSE: without decoration. DATE: fourteenth century.

23.- Seville, cathedral, royal chapel: titular image and exterior baldachin, incomplete (canopy, altered). DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child (*Virgen de los Reyes*). OBVERSE: no panels preserved, but known through records and representations in different media; interior panels, pattern of actual precious stones (silverwork); exterior panels, heraldry of Castile and León (silverwork). REVERSE: *idem*; interior panels, heraldry of Castile and León (silverwork); exterior panels, heraldry of Castile and León. DATE: thirteenth century.

24.- Villamanca (Álava/Araba), church of Santiago: titular image and baldachin. DEDICATEE: St James the Greater. OBVERSE: no panels preserved. REVERSE: *idem*. DATE: fourteenth century.

25.- Yurre/Ihurre (Álava/Araba), church of Santiago: titular image? (it is unlikely that the one presiding over the ensemble at present is the original one) and all four panels. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ and of the death and glorification of the Virgin (reliefs). REVERSE: pattern of flowers (overpainted). DATE: fourteenth century.

26.- Zuazo de Cuartango/Zuhatzu Kuartango (Álava/Araba), church of San Pedro (whereabouts unknown): baldachin, incomplete (back panel, altered), and four incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: St Peter. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Peter (painting). REVERSE: St Fabian, St Sebastian and pattern of stars. DATE: fifteenth century.

5.2. *Tabernacle-altarpiece of unknown provenance, but known whereabouts*

27.- 'Marès I altarpiece' (Barcelona, Museu Frederic Marès, inv. no 2225 – one panel –, and whereabouts unknown – one panel –): two panels, the one in the Museu Frederic Marès altered. DEDICATEE: presumably Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes lost, presumably at least scenes of the infancy of Christ (reliefs). REVERSE: jasper imitation. DATE: thirteenth century. N.B.: the reliefs displayed on the panel in the Museu Frederic Marès do not belong to this altarpiece.

28.- 'Marès II altarpiece' (Barcelona, Museu Frederic Marès, inv. no 711): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ (reliefs). REVERSE: plain blue-gray. DATE: fourteenth century.

29.- 'Suma I altarpiece' (Madrid, Museo Cerralbo, inv. no 31051): two incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: St Clare. OBVERSE: scenes of the life os St Clare (painting). REVERSE: Jeremiah, an unidentified prophet and jasper imitation. DATE: fourteenth century.

30.- 'Suma II altarpiece' (Madrid, Museo Cerralbo, inv. no 31051): two incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ (painting). REVERSE: *Annunciation*. DATE: fourteenth century.

31.- 'Wildenstein altarpiece' (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloisters Collection, inv. nos 55.62a, 55.62b and 1977.94): three panels, two of them incomplete. DEDICATEE: presumably Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes lost, presumably at least scenes of the infancy of Christ (reliefs). REVERSE: scenes of the passion and resurrection of Christ. DATE: thirteenth century.

32.- 'Haupt I altarpiece' (Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, inv. no Śr. 218): three incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: St John the Baptist. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St John the Baptist. REVERSE: St Paul and pattern of stars. DATE: fourteenth century.

33.- 'Haupt II altarpiece' (Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, inv. Śr. 219): one panel. DEDICATEE: an unidentified saint. OBVERSE: scenes of the life of an unidentified saint. REVERSE: St Paul. DATE: fourteenth century.

34.- 'Chiale altarpiece' (private collection): all four panels. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ and of the glorification of the Virgin (reliefs). REVERSE: St Peter, St Paul and jasper imitation. DATE: fourteenth century.

35.- 'Alcalá altarpiece' (private collection): two panels. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ (painting). REVERSE: destroyed by modern cradling. DATE: fifteenth century.

5.3. *Tabernacle-altarpiece of unknown provenance and whereabouts*

36.- 'Gudiol altarpiece' (whereabouts unknown): one incomplete panel. DEDICATEE: uncertain, St Giles? OBVERSE: scenes of the life of St Giles (painting). REVERSE: without information. DATE: thirteenth century.

37.- 'Mas 47406 altarpiece' (whereabouts unknown): two incomplete panels. DEDICATEE: Virgin and Child. OBVERSE: scenes of the infancy of Christ (painting). REVERSE: without information. DATE: fifteenth century.

38.- 'Mas C-93779 altarpiece' (whereabouts unknown): two panels. DEDICATEE: uncertain, Virgin and Child? OBVERSE: scenes of the death and glorification of the Virgin? (reliefs). REVERSE: without information. DATE: fourteenth century.

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Fig. 1. *Royal privilege issued by King Sancho IV in 1285.*
Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid.

Fig. 2. *Obverse and reverse of the panel of Olano*
(photos: Servicio de Restauración de la Diputación Foral de Álava).
Church of San Bartolomé, Olano (Álava).
Baldachin of Mondragón
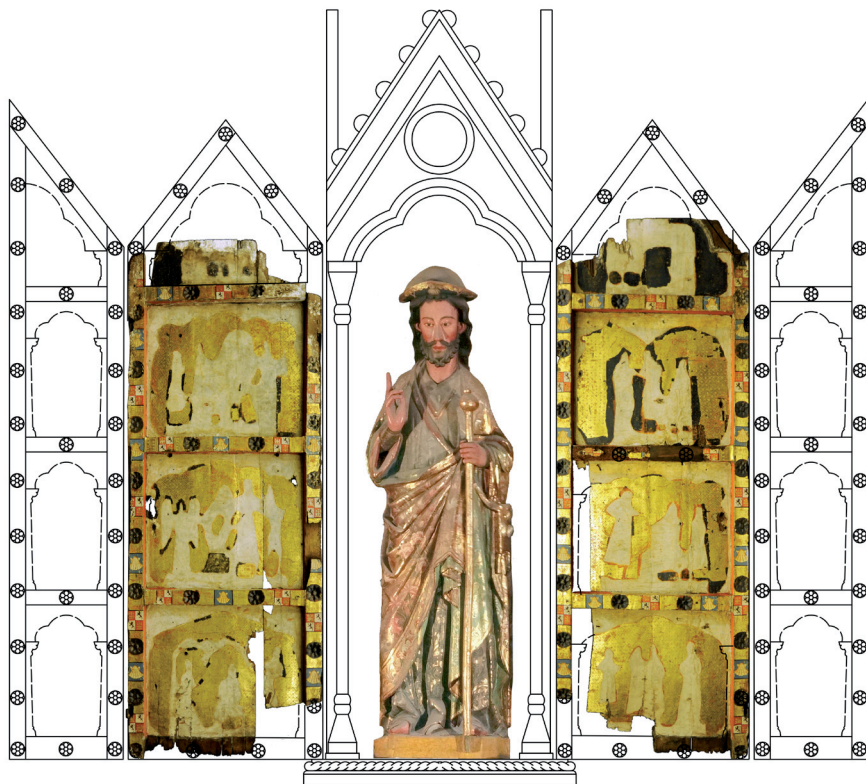(photo: Jesús Muñiz Petralanda). Museo Diocesano de San Sebastián, San Sebastián.

Fig. 3. *Reconstruction of the Logroño altarpiece*
(graphics: Francisco M. Morillo).
Church of Santiago el Real (high altarpiece – image – and nave – panels –), Logroño.

Fig. 4. *The presumed Contrasta altarpiece, condition in 1956*
(photo: © Fundació Institut Amatller d'Art Hispànic, Arxiu Mas, Gudiol-37227).
Whereabouts unknown.
The Santa María de Mave altarpiece, condition before 1931
(photo: © Fundació Institut Amatller d'Art Hispànic, Arxiu Mas, not numbered).
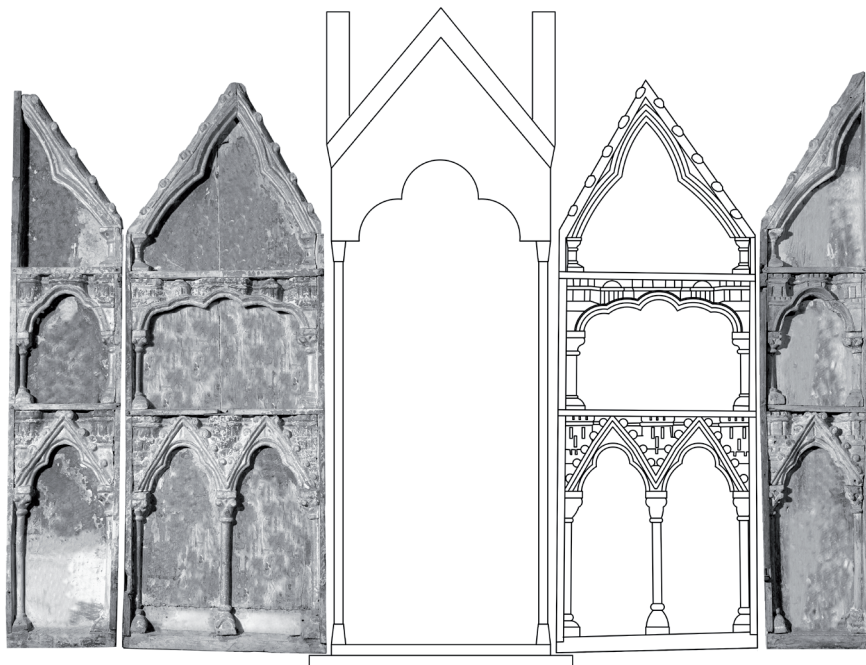Cathedral (chapel of San Nicolás), Burgos.

Fig. 5. *Reconstruction of the presumed Contrasta altarpiece* (graphics: Francisco M. Morillo). Whereabouts unknown.

Fig. 6. *Reliquary of the 'Virgen del Cabello' (Virgin of the Hair).*
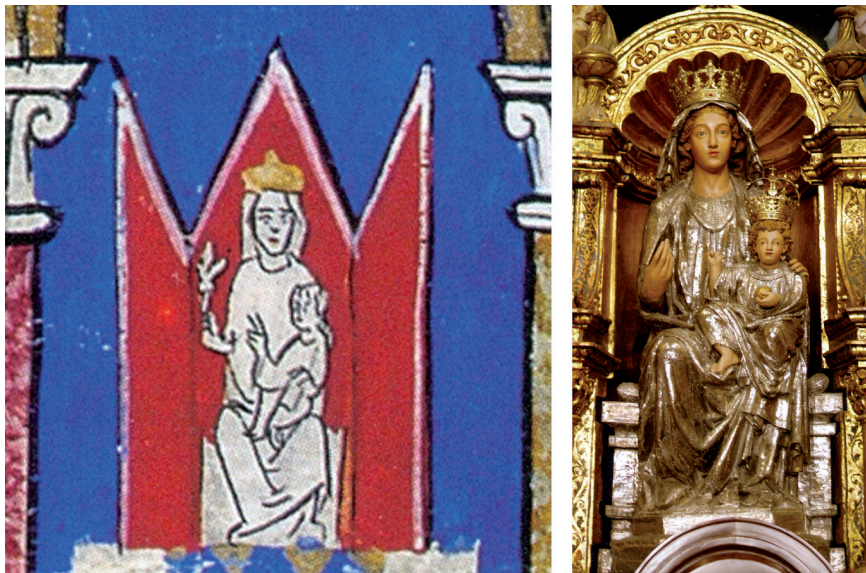Museo Diocesano de Arte Sacro, Vitoria.

Fig. 7. *Detail of the royal privilege issued by King Sancho IV in 1285.*
Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid.
Virgin and Child, called 'Virgen del Retablo'.
Cathedral (high altarpiece), Toledo.

Fig. 8. *Portrait of King Fernando III on fol. 66v of the Tumbo A.*
Cathedral archive and library, Santiago de Compostela (La Coruña).

Fig. 9. *Virgin and Child*
(photo: © Fundació Institut Amatller d'Art Hispànic, Arxiu Mas, C-31909).
Church of Santa María de Pontellas, O Castro de San Fiz (La Coruña).
Virgin and Child, condition before 1946 (photo: © ADPBU-PH-10777).
Church of Santa María la Blanca (currently high altarpiece), Villalcázar de Sirga (Palencia).

Fig. 10. *St Andrew*. Cistercian abbey, San Andrés de Arroyo (Palencia).
Virgin and Child. Church of Santa María la Blanca (chapel of Santiago),
Villalcázar de Sirga (Palencia).
Virgin and Child, called 'Nossa Senhora da Consolação'. Museu da Guarda, Guarda.

Fig. 11. *Reconstruction of the Castildelgado altarpiece* (graphics: Francisco M. Morillo). Museu Frederic Marès, Barcelona (altarpiece), and church of San Pedro y San Esteban, Castildelgado (Burgos) (Virgin and Child, called 'Nuestra Señora la Real del Campo').
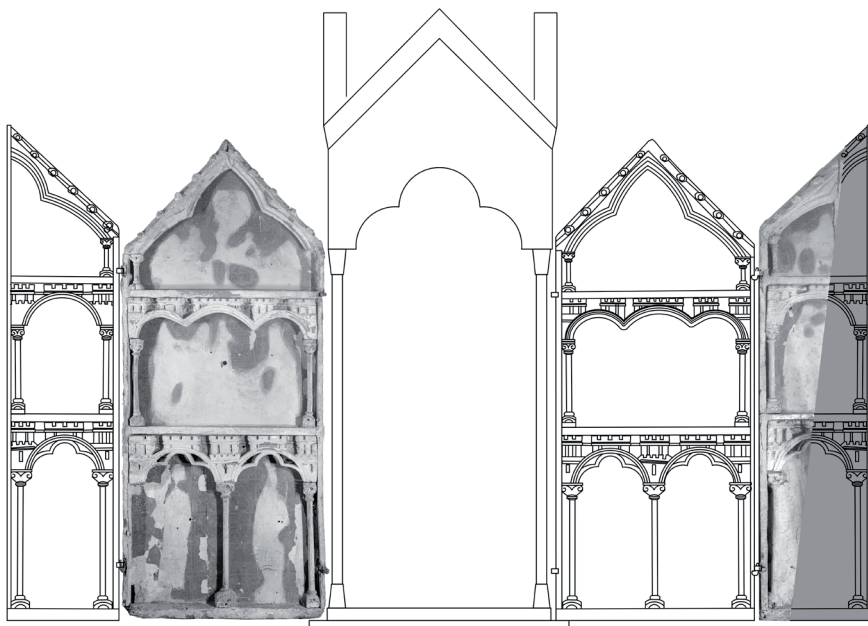
Fig. 12. *Reconstruction of the Marès I altarpiece* (graphics: Francisco M. Morillo).
Museu Frederic Marès, Barcelona (right panel of the left wing: nowadays altered),
and whereabouts unknown (right panel of the right wing).

Fig. 13. *South portal.*
Church of Santa María la Blanca, Villalcázar de Sirga (Palencia).