

Materialkonzepte zweier spanischer Grablegen im Spiegel von Claus Sluters Werken für die Kartause von Champmol, in B. Borngässer Klein, H. Karge & B. Klein (eds.), *Grabkunst und Sepulkralkultur in Spanien und Portugal. Arte funerario y cultura sepulcral en España y Portugal* (Frankfurt am Main; Madrid: Vervuert, Iberoamericana, 2006), p. 95n13.

67. The Castilian convention of decorating tomb chests with narrative imagery, saints, weepers, and heraldry is demonstrated, for example, in María Jesús Gómez Bárcena, *Escultura gótica funeraria en Burgos* (Burgos: Diputación Provincial de Burgos, 1988).

68. See, e.g., K. Woods, 'The Master of Rimini and the Tradition of Alabaster Carving in the Early Fifteenth-Century Netherlands', in A. S. Lehmann, F. Scholten and P. Chapman (eds.), *Meaning in Materials: Netherlandish Art, 1400-1800* (Leiden: Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek, 2012), p. 62.

69. S. Nash, '«The Lord's Crucifix of Costly Workmanship»: Colour, Collaboration and the Making of Meaning on the Well of Moses', in V. Brinkmann, O. Primavesi, & M. Hollein (eds.), *Circumlitio: The Polychromy of Antique and Medieval Sculpture* (Munich: Hirmer, 2010), pp. 356-381.

70. See, e.g., Molina de la Torre, *Valladolid*, pp. 40-41. The ongoing debate over the quatrain on the Ghent Altarpiece illustrates the difficulties inherent in evaluating medieval inscriptions.

71. Caja 7, Expt. 13, ASCT, and Caja 2, Expt. 22, ASCT. Villaseñor claims that construction must have been ended by 1431 on the basis the bull, but it seems more likely that of the bull was obtained in advance of the chapel's completion. See Villaseñor Sebastián, 'Nuevas aportaciones', p. 1039.

72. See above and note 28.

73. Nicolás Francés, to whom the Saldaña Retable is attributed, is documented as having completed the huge *retablo mayor* of León Cathedral by 1434, making another commission in the run up to its completion unlikely. See Sánchez Cantón, *Nicolás Francés*, p. 9.

74. These children were Pedro Vélez de Guevara, circa 1442-1477; and Constanza Vélez de Guevara, circa 1443- 1505.

75. My thanks to Javier Martínez de Aguirre and Tom Nickson, whose explanations about the construction process and possible revisions to it have been extremely helpful.

76. The shields are unlikely to have been commissioned after Luna's return to court in 1443 as by then Saldaña had gone over to the rebels.

77. Clementina Julia Ara Gil, 'El siglo XV. Influencia europea y singularidad castellana', in A. García Simón (ed.), *Historia de una cultura: Castilla y León en la historia de España* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1995-1996), p. 115.

78. It may be that Pedro's and/or Ferrando's bones were interred in the crypt where at least five skulls have been found. Only the arms of Fernán López de Saldaña and his two wives appear on the stairs leading down to the crypt.

79. García de Salazar, *Las bienandanzas e fortunas*, p. 58.

80. Ceballos-Escalera y Gila, 'Generación y semblanza', pp. 181-83 and 188-90, notes 101-9.

81. This is documented in F-6, fols. 1-42v, CSyC RAH; M-71, fols. 214-218, CSyC RAH; and M-108, fol. 14, CSyC RAH.

82. Gonzalo de la Hinojosa, *Continuación de la crónica de España*, ed. Feliciano Ramírez de Arellano (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1966), p. 137. A Castilian dobla was worth 200 maravedis, and it was clearly considered at the time to be an extraordinary sum.

83. The right spandrel displays the arms of the Vélez de Guevara and Ayala families impaled dexter with the castle and lion of the monarchy. As this quartering is not found elsewhere in relation to Isabel Vélez de Guevara, these arms are likely to belong to Pedro, perhaps granted to him on account of the military service which led to his premature death in 1477. On this type of concession, see A. García Carraffa, *Enciclopedia heráldica y genealógica hispano-americana* (Madrid, 1919), 9: p. 204. These arms do not appear on the steps leading down to the crypt.

84. Ceballos-Escalera y Gila, 'Generación y semblanza', p. 196.

New Functions, New Typologies: *Inventio* in Valladolid's College of San Gregorio

DIANA OLIVARES MARTÍNEZ
UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA



Fig. 7.1
College of San
Gregorio, Valladolid
(1488–1496), main
courtyard.

Despite the considerable quantity of colleges built across Europe in the fifteenth century, no standard typology had been established when in the 1480s Alonso de Burgos, bishop of Palencia, decided to endow his great foundation in Valladolid, the College of San Gregorio (Fig. 7.1). Yet, as I will show, the layout of this purpose-built Dominican college differs significantly from other university buildings in late Gothic Castile. It was probably planned by the knowledgeable and experienced architect Juan Guas, who devised a new distribution of rooms based on a ‘double-L’ structure. Moreover, in order to meet the needs of the students and ensure the preservation of his own memory, Alonso de Burgos provided his foundation with the best artists in Castile, who lavished the college with a façade that truly celebrates *inventio*, and a magnificent decorative scheme that makes it one of the most important late Gothic buildings in Castile.

Inventio is one of the five steps needed to elaborate speech according to the art of rhetoric, a discipline that was essential to the education of every medieval student. It was a creative process which consisted in discovering (rather than creating *ex nihilo*) the most appropriate arguments in order to compose a speech that could charm, persuade or unsettle. Rhetorical notions of *inventio* may also help to understand the creative process that produced some of the architectural and sculptural novelties at the College of San Gregorio in Valladolid, a beautiful late Gothic building that now houses the Museo Nacional de Escultura.¹ Much of the *inventio* identifiable at San Gregorio stems from the fact that it represents a relatively new architectural type, the university college.

University colleges and architecture

In the fifteenth century university colleges were private educational institutions, generally founded by prelates or town councils to meet students’ need for housing. Colleges enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy in selecting their own members and managing their financial affairs. The European collegiate movement is a theme of cardinal importance for the history of medieval universities: colleges became a cornerstone for university development during the late Middle Ages, not only in the well-known universities

of Paris, Oxford or Cambridge, but also in Italy, Spain and Portugal.² Moreover, the officers, ecclesiastical dignitaries and regents who founded these colleges regarded their foundations as charitable and pious ventures that would enshrine their memory.³ These privileged institutions also guaranteed their members the best conditions for work and study, provided they were prepared to tolerate the highly disciplined environment.⁴ In other words, colleges aimed to establish a scholarly elite.

Until the fourteenth century, students lived where they could find accommodation compatible with their means. As this posed a major problem of discipline for university authorities, they decided that the long-term solution was to house them in purpose-built colleges where a strict way of life was imposed. Whereas previously classes had taken place in cloisters or in the naves and chapels of churches or cathedrals, new and specialised teaching spaces were built, and libraries became increasingly important. Wisdom was progressively building its own house. At first, extant buildings were reused as colleges, but gradually, buildings organised around a central courtyard came to be preferred, such as those founded by Robert Sorbon in Paris (1257), Walter de Merton in Oxford (1263) or Hugo de Balsham at Peterhouse, Cambridge (1284). Over the following decades, other important colleges in France and England started to erect new buildings.

According to Michael Kiene’s studies, the variety of local conditions resulted in multiple different solutions.⁵ The common element to collegiate architecture across Europe was not unity of type or style but the desire to create a functional space. Prototypes in England, France and Italy appeared almost simultaneously around 1370, giving importance to scholars’ lodgings, the library and, particularly after construction of the College of Spain in Bologna, classrooms. Functional challenges were met in similar ways, all aimed at separating collective and residential spaces to guarantee silence for studying.⁶

English colleges have their own special features, but even there, no model was uniformly followed. Generally, small and medium colleges were built in parts at different times, until a quadrangle—more or less square—was achieved.⁷ The most significant elements were the chapel and the hall. At Merton College in Oxford—whose first quadrangle was finished in 1379—the hall was not integrated into the courtyard, but it was an integral element of the courtyard of New College in Oxford (1380–1400) and in Queen’s College,



Fig. 7.2
College of San
Clemente, Bologna
(1367), main
courtyard.

Cambridge (1448).

Colleges spread in the fourteenth century to southern European universities. The evolution of French and Italian models is closer to those in Castile than the English prototypes. In 1359, the now destroyed College of Saint Martial in Toulouse was commenced, supported by Pope Innocent VI. Its regular plan included rooms on two floors around a courtyard with galleries, and it has been considered an important antecedent of the Spanish College in Bologna.⁸

Founded by the Spanish cardinal Gil de Albornoz in 1367 and designed for Spanish and Portuguese students, the College of Spain or of San Clemente in Bologna was a key reference for later university buildings across Europe.⁹ It was a new and regular building designed by Matteo Gattapone da Gubbio to meet all the needs of students. Its simple structure is organised around a central courtyard with galleries, two floors, and an axis of symmetry marked by a double-height chapel (Fig. 7.2). Scholars have not yet come to an agreement about the origin of this architectural prototype, and its innovative and functional constructive plan has been connected with monastic buildings, as well as with secular architecture such as urban palaces.¹⁰ Recently Amadeo Serra has proposed a link between the concept of cloister developed in the charterhouses and the individual collegiate cells in Bologna.¹¹ In any case, the Spanish College became a symbol and reference for Castilian colleges, although its influence was more a question of concept and institutional layout than a real architectural one.

The College of San Bartolomé in Salamanca was the first in Castile to be provided with a new and specially designed building.¹² Founded in 1414 by bishop Diego de Anaya (with the same statutes as the Spanish College), it had fifteen rooms around a courtyard with two floors: a chapel and kitchen on the ground floor, a refectory and library on the first. Although the original construction does not survive, old descriptions show that the layout of this college was different from the Spanish College. In fact, the original layouts of several colleges founded at the end of the fifteenth century are closer to Salamanca than to Bologna.

The typological experimentation that took place during the first decades of the fifteenth century in France and Italy led to the creation of a model for Castilian colleges that was



Fig. 7.3
College of Santa Cruz, Valladolid (1486–1491), façade.



Fig. 7.4
Portrait of Alonso de Burgos, College of San Gregorio, detail from the façade (ca. 1499).

first imitated in Salamanca, with the new building of its *Estudio* General or University, and later in other university towns. An example can be found in the plan of the College of Santa Cruz in Valladolid, founded for twenty students by Cardinal Mendoza and built between 1486 and 1491 after the model of San Bartolomé (Fig. 7.3).¹⁴

The College of San Gregorio in Valladolid

The college of San Gregorio, also in the city of Valladolid, was endowed by Alonso de Burgos in 1487 (Fig. 7.4). Although Alonso's origins are unknown, the assumption that he was a converso has persisted, especially because of his closeness to the Santa María family in Burgos (which includes heraldic similarities).¹⁵ Alonso de Burgos professed as a Dominican friar in the convent of San Pablo in Burgos, although he finished his degree in San Pablo of Valladolid where he became master and lecturer of theology. He became one of the confessors and closest collaborators of Queen Isabella when she was a princess, and he would develop an impressive career both at court, as the chief chaplain and Queen's confessor, and in the Church, as bishop of Córdoba, Cuenca and Palencia. His artistic patronage increased as his career progressed, as can be seen in Cuenca and Palencia.¹⁶ His heraldic emblem, the fleur-de-lis, populates keystones and triforium balconies, recording his generous gifts and reforms (Fig. 7.5).¹⁷ He nonetheless elected burial in a foundation related to the Dominican Order, the College of San Gregorio in Valladolid.

Alonso's choice of Valladolid was not casual. This Castilian city had continued to grow in importance since the beginning of the thirteenth century.¹⁸ Thanks to its central and strategic position between Burgos, León, Segovia and Toledo (among other



Fig. 7.5
Alonso de Burgos'
coat of arms,
College of San
Gregorio, detail
from the façade (ca.
1499).

reasons), it was frequently visited by members of the royal family, and was the target of important endowments from the most prominent religious orders.¹⁹ All these elements motivated the frequent presence of the court, which contributed to the development of an aristocratic neighbourhood close to the Plaza de San Pablo and to the installation of the Royal Chancery in the Vivero Palace in 1485.²⁰

These circumstances propelled the development of the University of Valladolid, which was first established in the thirteenth century, largely to satisfy the need for administrators for the court and lawyers for the chancery.²¹ New university buildings (demolished in 1909) were built there in the last decades of the fifteenth century, and the Colleges of Santa Cruz and San Gregorio became the first university colleges in the city.²² The foundation of these colleges belongs to a wider political project initiated by the Catholic Monarchs in the effort to control key institutions with close allies educated in their ideals and goals. The endowment of these colleges thus implied a decrease in both power and autonomy for the university.

The origins of San Gregorio go back to 1486, when the Dominican convent of San Pablo donated the land as an expression of gratitude for the 'many honours and favours they had received from the most illustrious lord Dr Alonso de Burgos', and for Alonso's financial support for the convent's refurbishment.²³ The College of San Gregorio did not have the category of a *studium* of the mendicant order; it was a university college devoted to Theology.²⁴ In the statutes drafted by Alonso de Burgos in 1499, he stated that his aim was to improve the clergy's learning by encouraging wisdom, preaching ability, and knowledge of the Scriptures in those with a natural talent for studying but a lack of economic resources.²⁵ To be eligible to study at San Gregorio, friars had to be aged

between nineteen and twenty-eight and have prior knowledge of grammar, logic, arts and theology, enabling them to follow lectures in theology, logic, and natural and moral philosophy. The statutes also describe parts of the building that have not survived such as the infirmary, lavatories, well and vegetable garden.

Thanks to political support in Rome provided by the monarchs, Alonso was able to obtain a papal bull confirming the foundation of a university college for sixteen (ultimately twenty) Dominican observant friars.²⁶ Work on the chapel started in 1487, and construction of the college began in 1488.²⁷ We can assume that it was carefully planned from the start. The college was in use by 1496, although some works were still in progress after the death of Alonso de Burgos in 1499.

It is very likely that the college was designed by Juan Guas, who was master of royal works and is documented as working in the chapel in 1488, together with Juan de Talavera.²⁸ As I argue below, the college must have been planned by a knowledgeable and experienced architect who was able to devise an ingenious variation on the distribution of rooms—someone like Juan Guas, with a considerable degree of *inventio*. Alonso de Burgos also hired many other leading artists for this project: Gil de Siloe created the altarpiece in the college chapel together with Diego de la Cruz, while Simón de Colonia built the sacristy, Alonso's funerary monument, and the chapel's internal façade.²⁹

The absence of documentation concerning construction, and the college's uncertain position between Gothic and Renaissance, probably explain the relative scholarly neglect of San Gregorio. It has traditionally been understood as an example of the Gothic tradition, whereas similar and closely contemporary buildings such as Santa Cruz were identified with the 'revolution' represented by the Renaissance (Fig. 7.6).³⁰ With no obviously



Fig. 7.6a. College of San Gregorio, main courtyard (above).

Fig. 7.6b. College of Santa Cruz, main courtyard (below).

Italianate features, San Gregorio was described by early twentieth-century scholars as 'decadent' or 'motley'.³¹ However, analysis of the Dominican foundation reveals that it can claim a number of innovations, especially in terms of its architectural layout. Its decoration shows the impact of new artistic vocabularies brought by architects and artists from northern Europe, who had recently established workshops in Castile, especially in Burgos and Toledo, and created decorative schemes with an unprecedented richness that did not go unnoticed (Fig. 7.7). Contrary to the judgement of twentieth-

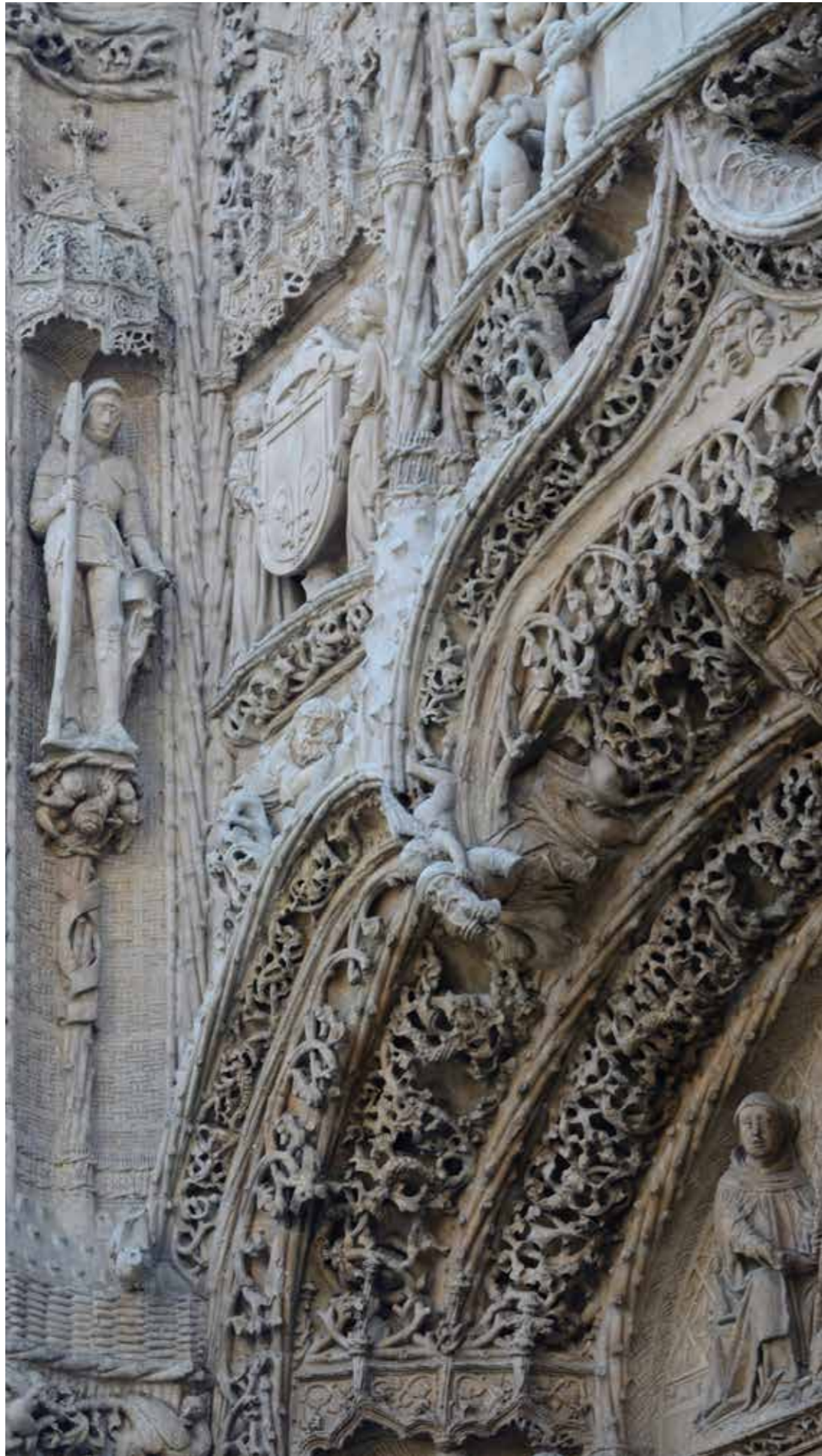


Fig. 7.7
College of San
Gregorio, façade
(detail) (ca. 1499).

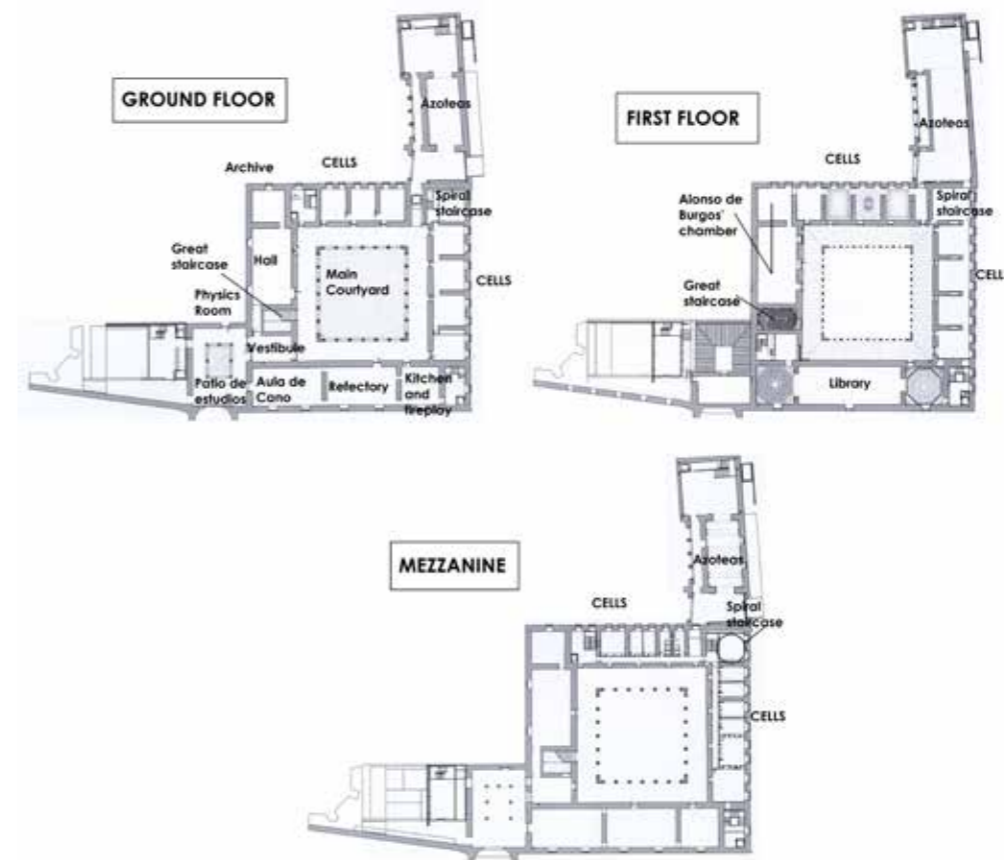


Fig. 7.8
College of
San Gregorio,
ground floor,
mezzanine and
first floor. Notes
from the author
over plans from
Nieto Sobejano
Arquitectos
published in
[http://arqa.com/
arquitectura/
internacional/
ampliacion-del-
museo-nacional-
de-escultura-de-
valladolid-espana-
html](http://arqa.com/arquitectura/internacional/ampliacion-del-museo-nacional-de-escultura-de-valladolid-espana.html).

century historians, this creative atmosphere was far from the cliché of decadence and exhaustion that was traditionally linked to the Spanish Flamboyant Gothic style.³²

In fact, if we turn to sixteenth-century travellers' accounts, the Italian elements incorporated into certain buildings as an erudite form of quotation—as boasted for Santa Cruz by some historians—were not seen as something novel, but as a point of continuity in the development of a local and eclectic tradition.³³ What is more, some of those who travelled to Valladolid gave similar descriptions for both colleges. For example, in 1517, Laurent Vital—a member of the party of Charles V—praised San Gregorio for its beauty and resemblance to the 'tall and bright' buildings of Flanders, making no equivalent comment about the Italianate features of Santa Cruz although he praised the latter's library for being finer and richer than San Gregorio's.³⁴

The layout of this purpose-built Dominican college differs significantly from other university buildings in late medieval Castile (Fig. 7.8). This is partly due to the fact that the college chapel, which was also the bishop's funerary chapel, lies outside the courtyard and is connected to the church of San Pablo. However, its main novelty is in the layout of the buildings around the courtyard, which, as we will see, represents *inventio* in response to the building's functions and patron's brief.

The façade of the College of San Gregorio leads to the Pátio de Estudios, one of the courtyards around which the quarters are arranged (Fig. 7.9). The statutes of 1499 distinguish two areas: the *escuela* or 'school', articulated by the Pátio de Estudios; and the *colegio* or 'college', by the main courtyard, where the residential quarters were located. In the *escuela* there were two big lecture rooms with gilded and decorated wooden ceilings, although only the Aula de Cano (a lecture theatre) remains. This small courtyard in turn gave access to the corridor that connected this area with the chapel, a lower hall and the chaplains' chambers. This distinction between the teaching area and the lodgings was



Fig. 7.9
College of San
Gregorio, Patio de
Estudios.

unparalleled in other university colleges, notably the Spanish College in Bologna or Santa Cruz in Valladolid.

The most striking aspect of this layout is the ground plan of the main courtyard and its remarkable distribution of spaces, functions, and levels.³⁵ Superficially it seems homogeneous, with four galleries around a square courtyard, famous for its characteristic twisted columns and decorated first floor. However, the courtyard contains a double-L structure that is quite different from what was usual in contemporary secular and religious buildings. The rooms in the southeastern and southwestern sides of the ground floor are high and have richly ornamented entrances. They include the archive, the assembly hall, the Aula de Cano with access from the Patio de Estudios, the refectory, the kitchen and the fireplace. Given that these two sides of the courtyard are widest, it follows that they were



Fig. 7.10
College of San
Gregorio, interior
of the Assembly
Hall (1488–1496).



Fig. 7.11
College of San
Gregorio, entrance
to Alonso de
Burgos' chamber
(1488–1496).

the most important.³⁶ They were also embellished with beautiful wooden ceilings (Fig. 7.10).

A great staircase was located between these monumental spaces, providing access to the first floor. As on the ground floor, both the southeastern and southwestern sides house the most important rooms, notably the magnificent library (which was already commonly located on the upper floor in other convents and colleges) and a room whose tripartite distribution brings to mind a monastic chapter house (Fig. 7.11). José Ignacio Hernández Redondo has recently made the convincing suggestion that these were Alonso de Burgos's private chambers.³⁷

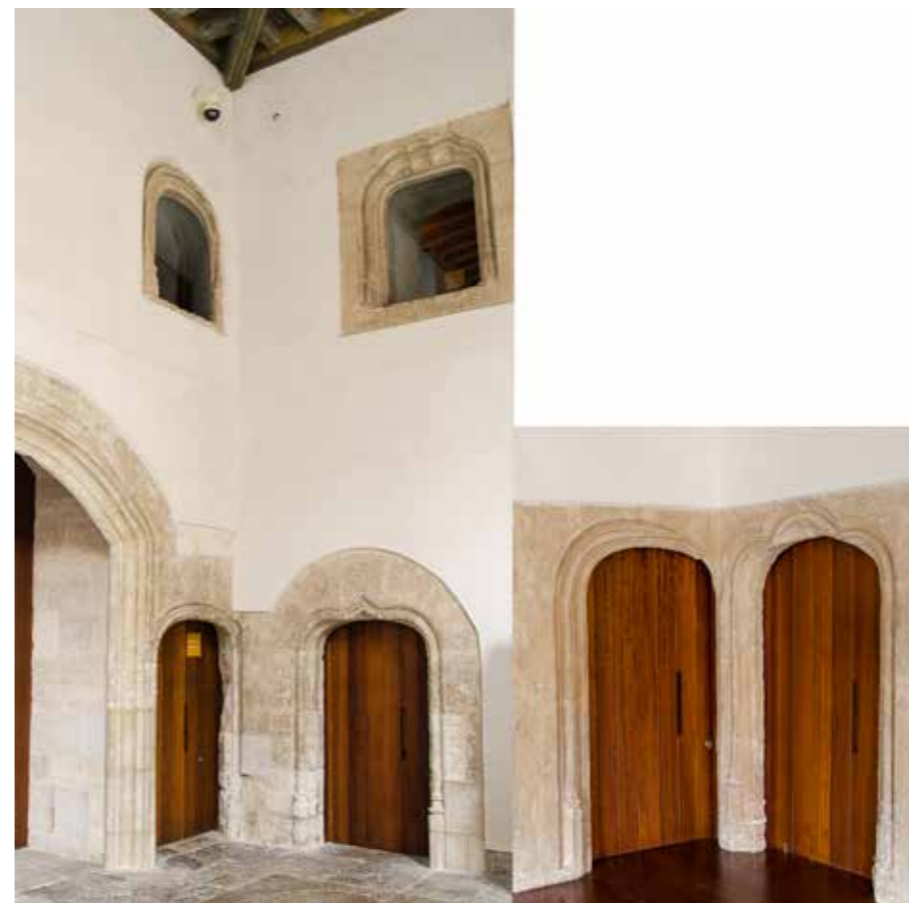


Fig. 7.12
College of San
Gregorio, window
and doors from
the spiral staircase
(1488–1496).



Fig. 7.13
College of San Gregorio, main courtyard (1488–1496).

In contrast to the two-floor arrangement of the southeastern and southwestern sides of the courtyard, the other two sides have three storeys: the ground floor, mezzanine and first floor. They housed the chambers of the students, rector and lecturers, all behind humbly but individually decorated doors. There were twenty-four cells with a study and a bedroom in each one, although the original arrangement of the cells, especially in the mezzanine, is still unknown.

Obliquely placed doors and windows in one corner reveal the existence of a now missing spiral staircase, which gave access to this residential area (Fig. 7.12). The use of these oblique elements was an architectural boast (indeed, it may be one of the first examples in Castile), which implies not only the designer's knowledge of recent architectural innovations in Valencia, but also his desire to make an erudite quotation referring to the *fenestras obliquas* of Solomon's Palace (1 Kings 6:4), together with the torch columns and the simulated textiles of the main courtyard (Fig. 7.13).³⁸

The main staircase is therefore located in the area of greater importance, with access from the main courtyard, and beside the vestibule that connects both courtyards.³⁹ It constitutes a magnificent space, the sole entrance to the main floor, where the most important rooms were



Fig. 7.14
College of San Gregorio, main staircase (1488–1496).



Fig. 7.15
College of San Gregorio, first floor of the main courtyard (detail) (1488–1496).

located. It was conceived as a place of representation which invited recreation, reflected refinement, and flaunted the patron's social power (Fig. 7.14). But its relationship to the building typology and distribution of rooms has not always been understood. Although the emergence of a first floor in monastic cloisters has been interpreted as a response to the change from common dormitories to individual cells brought on by the mendicants, they did not generate substantial staircases before the sixteenth century. In secular architecture, however, the notion of *planta noble* (piano nobile) led to the development of monumental staircases in French palaces, a structure that soon spread to other regions.⁴⁰ Through the course of the fifteenth century, the palaces of the Castilian nobility increasingly incorporated large and regular courtyards, with ceremonial chambers and galleries on the first floor, as at the Casa del Cordón (Burgos) or Cogolludo Palace (Guadalajara), and suitably grand staircases leading up to them.

San Gregorio was neither a monastic nor a domestic building. Thanks to the three-storey arrangement, the residential cells could be incorporated in one of the 'L's described above, leaving the remaining areas available for public spaces, including the staircase. This arrangement was similar to that developed contemporaneously in such noble palaces and castles as Manzanares el Real, el Infantado in Guadalajara and la Casa del Cordón in Burgos. Indeed, the residential area might be best compared with the efficient use of space in conventual architecture, whereas ceremonial areas more closely recall palaces.⁴¹

Hernández Redondo's idea that the bishop's chamber at San Gregorio was located on the first floor, linked to the library and near the staircase, would justify the palatial nature of the first floor. The entrance to the chamber is formed by a very ornate door between late Gothic windows, making this space stand out from the rest of the building (Fig. 7.11). The bishop's room would be located in the west corner, connected to the rest of the chamber and built over the archive room, which is covered with a stone vault. The layout and decorative richness of the first floor, dominated by the fleur-de-lis, further suggests that this room could have been used mainly as Alonso de Burgos' chambers (Fig. 7.15). The structure of these chambers—with a large hall and smaller, more private *retrete*—recalls a number of palaces in Castile and Navarre, and ultimately their French models.⁴²

Alonso de Burgos, who moved to Valladolid and even lived in the college, played an



Fig. 7.16
College of San
Gregorio, vaults
covering the chapel
(1488–1496).

active role in its construction.⁴³ One of the few surviving documents pertaining to San Gregorio is a protest from the bishop against the masons before the Royal Council: asking for an inspection of the works by other masons, Alonso de Burgos claimed that ‘the works in the chapel are bad and false, there are many holes and cracks; the chapel has so many flaws that it is in danger’.⁴⁴ The most striking feature of the chapel, built by Juan Guas and Juan de Talavera from 1487 to 1490, is perhaps the aisleless nave, covered by an innovative ribbed vault. Here, on the vault, the ribs of the western bay create a pattern of rotating squares, whilst the masonry is set concentrically in the vault webs of the unusual and irregular septagonal eastern bay (Fig. 7.16).⁴⁵ The keystones of the vault are decorated with the heraldry of the bishop and of the Dominican order, and an inscription covers the walls.⁴⁶ Besides the magnificent altarpiece by Diego de Siloe and Diego de la Cruz,⁴⁷

the greatest innovation in the chapel was, in all likelihood, the now missing funerary monument of Alonso de Burgos, carved by Simón de Colonia, who also designed the façade of the chapel that faces San Pablo.

The choice of funerary monument was one of the most important decisions made by princes, nobles and prelates, who sought materials, designs and artists of the highest quality.⁴⁸ Described in the sixteenth century by Antoine de Lalaing and Laurent Vital, the funerary monument of Alonso de Burgos was unique in Castile.⁴⁹ Made of alabaster (the stone of choice for elite tombs) and with an unusual design comparable to the ensemble of Miraflores, it consisted of a seven-metre tall monument featuring a portrait of Alonso behind a pulpit, in the act of preaching.⁵⁰ Even more striking is the identity of his listeners, all shown seated: the Catholic Monarchs, Prince Juan with Margaret of Austria, and the rest of their daughters (presumably Juana, María and Catalina), together with other important aristocrats. Bishop Alonso thus employed the greatest artists in the kingdom to create an extraordinary chapel that would perpetuate his memory by asserting his magnificence, drawing on an Aristotelian concept that was a common mark of power, ethics and virtue in fifteenth-century Castile.⁵¹

The façade of the college was the last part to be finished, and has also aroused most scholarly interest due to its profuse decoration, complex iconographic interpretations, and the difficulty of attributing it to particular artists (Fig. 7.17).⁵² It has generally been attributed to Gil de Siloe on account of its vegetal imagery which is similar to other works of vegetal microarchitecture that this artist developed in Burgos. Vegetal forms play a leading role in the façade, composed as an altarpiece in three storeys, and dominated by a huge royal coat of arms over a pomegranate tree emerging from a fountain (Fig. 7.18). It appears to have been conceived as an emblem, where characters such as wild men or soldiers stand together with more predictable figures, such as the founder (as donor) along with saints Gregory, Paul, and Dominic.



[left] Fig. 7.17
College of San
Gregorio, façade
(ca. 1499).

[right] Fig. 7.18
College of San
Gregorio, façade
(detail) (ca. 1499).

In my opinion, it is possible to identify a consistent and coherent iconographic programme in the portal that relates to the function of the building behind it, and that spells out a specific programme related to science, the acquisition of knowledge and virtue, constructed from literary metaphors, popular culture and visual models.⁵³



This programme, which I have explored elsewhere, must have been devised by Gil de Siloe—drawing on his experience of designing altarpieces in Burgos—with advice from a learned Dominican.⁵⁴ It would have been a creative process that established a new iconography of wisdom, appropriate to San Gregorio’s function as a temple of knowledge, and equivalent to the great sculpted façades of cathedrals and collegiate churches. It was the very first time in Castile that such a façade was created for a building other than a church, and, like a fine speech, it was intended

Fig. 7.19
College of San
Gregorio, wild men
from the façade (ca.
1499).



Fig. 7.20
College of
San Gregorio,
ornamental details
(1488–1496).

to charm, persuade and unsettle those that gazed upon it (Fig. 7.19). The choice of the topics and the multiple levels at which it can be read—its *dispositio*—correspond with the characteristics of a persuasive speech according to traditional rhetorical theory. Whoever designed the façade drew on both popular and high literary culture in order to create a façade that would communicate to different viewers, signalling the existence behind it of a building dedicated to knowledge.

As for the choice of architecture, in the period around 1500 this style was not only the preference of the majority of European elites but was also one where new forms and design strategies were employed.⁵⁵ The imaginative and novel use of ornament was as important for architects as the revision of spatial properties and structural challenges. The scholarly inattention suffered by such buildings stems in part from a long-standing dismissal of ornament and from prejudices against rich decoration as a symptom of decadence and decline.⁵⁶ From Paris to Vienna, Prague, Nuremberg, Strasbourg or Düsseldorf, these kinds of ornamental patterns—where microarchitecture achieved a great prominence—mark a resistance to Italian forms that were already known thanks to the circulation of prints and portable objects.

We might say that the decorative idiom of the College of San Gregorio, always described as ‘opulent’ and deeply rooted in the Gothic tradition, belongs to the much wider European phenomenon of *Astwerk* or ‘branches-work’, the Iberian reception of which remains largely unstudied.⁵⁷ The whole college abounds with vegetal imagery, from the courtyard to the façade, with angels, textile strips, pomegranates, pearls and fleurs-de-lis, all covering the stone like a tapestry (Fig. 7.20). Indeed, the choice of this architectural and ornamental style, closely connected with French and German designs, could be said to make San Gregorio a more original or distinct building than the markedly Italianate College of Santa Cruz, also in Valladolid.

San Gregorio was arguably Alonso de Burgos’s greatest artistic commission,

notwithstanding his patronage at Palencia Cathedral, or even at the convent of San Pablo in Valladolid. The fact that he did not come from a high noble family suggests, perhaps, that the heraldic exuberance of San Gregorio was a form of assertiveness in the sole place where the preservation of Alonso’s memory was guaranteed. He also sought to maintain his memory by means of portraits, at least of four of which were located in the confined perimeter of the college.⁵⁸ Magnificence was of a great importance in this endowment. It represents a new attitude towards the arts associated with the virtues of nobility, transforming architecture into the material expression of the founder’s splendour.⁵⁹ Inventio was central to that expression, both in the design of the courtyards and in the overtly rhetorical message of the façade.

1. The building was the main subject of my PhD Dissertation, ‘Alonso de Burgos y el Colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid: saber y magnificencia en el tardogótico castellano’, supervised by Javier Martínez de Aguirre and finished in April 2018 at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

2. Alan B. Cobban, ‘The Role of Colleges in the Medieval Universities of Northern Europe, with Special Reference to England and France’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 71 (1989): p. 50.

3. A. Gabriel, ‘Motivation of the Founders at Mediaeval Colleges’, *Beiträge zum Berufsbewusstsein des Mittelalterlichen Menschen* 3 (1964): p. 61.

4. Jacques Verger, ‘Patterns’, in Walter Rüegg (ed.), *A History of the University in Europe, vol. 1, Universities in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), p. 60.

5. Michael Kiene, ‘L’università nelle città europee’, in G. P. Brizzi and Jacques Verger, *Le Università dell’Europa dal Rinascimento alle riforme religiose* (Milan: Silvana, 1993), p. 32.

6. The topic of university colleges as an architectural typology around Europe has been studied by several authors. See Nikolas Pevsner, ‘Universities Yesterday’, *Architectural Review* 122 (1957): pp. 235–9; Konrad Rückbrod, *Universität und Kollegium. Baugeschichte und Bautyp* (Darmstadt: Brepols, 1977); Michael Kiene, ‘Die Grundlagen der europäischen Universitätsbaukunst’, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 46 (1983): pp. 63–114; ‘Die Bautätigkeit in den italienischen Universitäten von der Mitte der Trecento bis zur Mitte des Quattrocento’, *Mitteilungen der Kunsthistorischen Institut in Florenz* 30 (1986): pp. 433–92 and ‘Colleges, ‘Palaces of Wisdom’ and University Buildings in Europe before 1500’, in A. Savini (ed.), *Collegiate Learning in the Middle Ages and Beyond* (Pavia: Monduzzi Editoriale, 2012), pp. 57–68; Felipe Pereda, ‘El estudio y el problema de la tipología del colegio universitario’, *La arquitectura elocuente. El edificio de la Universidad de Salamanca bajo el reinado de Carlos V* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), pp. 17–75; Rui Lobo, ‘Urbanismo y arquitectura universitarios en la Península Ibérica. Algunos apuntes’, in Luis Rodríguez-San Pedro and José Luis Polo Rodríguez (eds.), *Imagen, contextos morfológicos y universidades. Miscelánea Alfonso IX*, 2012 (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2013), pp. 39–68.

7. Robert Willis, *The Architectural History of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: University Press, 1988); Robin Darwal, ‘The Medieval Buildings of University College, Oxford’, *Oxoniansia* 70 (2005): pp. 9–26.

8. Kiene, ‘L’università’, p. 27.

9. See, amongst others, Michael Kiene, ‘L’architettura del Colegio di Spagna di Bologna: organizzazione dello spazio e influenze sull’edilizia universitaria europea’, *Il Carrobbio* 9 (1983): pp. 234–42; Ignacio González-Varas, *Dietro il muro del Colegio di Spagna* (Bologna: Clueb, 1998); Amadeo Serra, *Matteo Gattapone, architetto del Colegio de España* (Bologna and Zaragoza: Publicaciones del Real Colegio de España, 1992); Amadeo Serra, ‘El Colegio de España en Bolonia y la arquitectura universitaria del primer Renacimiento en Italia y España’, in *España y Bolonia: siete siglos de relaciones artísticas y culturales* (Madrid: Fundación Carolina, 2006); Amadeo Serra, ‘Bolonia y la definición de un tipo en la arquitectura universitaria europea’, in Luis Rodríguez-San Pe-

dro Bezares and Juan Luis Polo Rodríguez (eds.), *Imagen, contextos morfológicos y universidades* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2013), pp. 19–38.

10. Konrad Rückbrod, *Universität und Kollegium. Baugeschichte und Bautyp* (Darmstadt: Brepols, 1977), p. 27; J. Winckelmann, ‘Università e Collegi. Sviluppo e modelli architettonici. Nota su un recente libro’, in Emilio Verdera y Tuells (ed.), *El Cardenal Albornoz y el Colegio de España* (Bologna and Zaragoza: Cometa, 1979), p. 37; Gottfried Kerscher, ‘Palazzi prerinascimentali: la rocca di Spoleto e il Collegio di Spagna a Bologna. Architettura del cardinale Aegidius Albornoz’, *Annali di architettura* 3 (1991): pp. 14–25.

11. Serra, ‘El Colegio de España en Bolonia’, pp. 22; 29.

12. Pereda, ‘El estudio y el problema’, pp. 27–31; Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, ‘Noticias documentales sobre el Colegio de San Bartolomé de Salamanca’, *Archivo Español de Arte* 302 (2003): pp. 187–205; Nieves Rupérez, *El colegio de San Bartolomé o de Anaya* (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 2003); Nieves Rupérez, ‘El Colegio de San Bartolomé antes de las reformas del siglo XVIII’, in Rodríguez-San Pedro Bezares and Polo Rodríguez, *Imagen, contextos morfológicos y universidades* (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 2013), pp. 159–210.

13. These ideas have been developed by Felipe Pereda. See *La arquitectura elocuente. El edificio de la Universidad de Salamanca bajo el reinado de Carlos V* (Madrid, Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), p. 44.

14. This building has been recently studied by Rui Lobo, although it requires a detailed and an up-to-date analysis. See Luis Cervera Vera, *Arquitectura del Colegio Mayor de Santa Cruz de Valladolid* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1982); Salvador Andrés Ordax and José Rivera Blanco (eds.), *La introducción del Renacimiento en España. El Colegio de Santa Cruz (1491–1991)* (Valladolid: Instituto Español de Arquitectura – Universidad de Valladolid, 1992); Miguel Ángel Zalama, ‘Arquitectura y estilo en la época de los Reyes Católicos’, in *La magnificencia de un reinado. Catálogo de Exposición* (Salamanca: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2004), pp. 127–40; Salvador Andrés Ordax, *El Colegio de Santa Cruz de Valladolid. Más de quinientos años de historia* (Valladolid: Diputación y Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, 2015); Rui Lobo, ‘El primitivo edificio del Colegio Mayor de Santa Cruz de Valladolid y la consolidación del tipo colegial castellano’, *Goya: Revista de arte* 352 (2015): pp. 192–207.

15. Pablo de Santamaría (formerly Solomon Ha-Levi) and his son Alonso de Cartagena (both of whom were bishops of Burgos) were all members of an extended converso family, most of whom bore the names Santamaría or Maluenda. All shared the same heraldic emblem: a single fleur-de-lis, representing the Virgin, which Pablo (the initial convert in the family) presumably chose to relate to his adopted Christian name. For more information on Alonso de Burgos, see Diana Olivares Martínez and Gema Palomo Fernández, ‘Escudos con flor de lis o la huella de un prelado promotor: Alonso de Burgos, obispo de Cuenca (1482–1485)’, *Lope de Barrientos. Seminario de cultura* 6 (2013): pp. 93–124; Jorge Díaz Ibáñez, ‘Fray Alonso de Burgos. Un prelado al servicio de la monarquía castellana en la segunda mitad del siglo XV’, in H. Vasconcelos and M. J. Branco (eds.), *Ecclesiastics and political state building in the Iberian monarchies, 13th–15th centuries* (Coimbra: Publicações do Cidehus, 2016), pp. 147–82.

16. The relationship between Alonso de Burgos's patronage and income has been studied in Diana Olivares Martínez, 'Los Reyes Católicos y la financiación de las empresas arquitectónicas de Alonso de Burgos', in María Dolores Teijeira et al. (eds.), *Reyes y Prelados. La creación artística en los reinos de León y Castilla (1050-1500)* (Madrid: Sílex, 2014), pp. 417-35.
17. Fleurs-de-lis can be found in the keystone of the transept vault in the cathedral of Palencia, as well as in the dismantled balcony from the triforium in the cathedral of Cuenca, among other locations.
18. Julio Valdeón, 'Valladolid de Villa a Ciudad', in *Valladolid. Historia de una ciudad*, vol. 1, *La ciudad y el arte. Valladolid Villa (época medieval)* (Valladolid: Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, 1999), pp. 181-92.
19. Adeline Rucquoi, *Valladolid en la Edad Media*, vol. 2, *El mundo abreviado (1367-1474)* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1987), pp. 519-24; Pascual Martínez Sopena, 'La capital del rigor. Valladolid y los movimientos observantes del siglo XV', in Javier Burrieza (ed.), *La ciudad del Regalado* (Valladolid: Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, 2004), p. 39.
20. María Antonia Varona, *La Chancillería de Valladolid en el reinado de los Reyes Católicos* (Valladolid: Universidad, 1981); Jesús Urrea, *La plaza de San Pablo: escenario de la Corte* (Valladolid, Diputación de Valladolid, 2003).
21. Elena Sánchez Movellán, 'La Universidad Medieval', in José María Palomares (ed.), *Historia de la Universidad de Valladolid* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1989), 1: pp. 25-72.
22. Amalia Prieto Cantero, 'El antiguo edificio de la Universidad', in *Historia de la Universidad de Valladolid*, 2: pp. 645-8; María José Redondo Cantera, *Una casa para la sabiduría. El edificio histórico de la Universidad de Valladolid* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2002).
23. *Libro Becerro del colegio dominico de San Gregorio de Valladolid*, códices, libro 1260, fol. 263, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid (henceforth AHN). The donation became effective from 9 January 1487. See Clero secular-regular, legajo 7872, AHN.
24. Traditionally, the Dominican friars studied at the universities of Paris, Oxford and Cambridge, but during the fifteenth century, students elected to study across Europe. The Western Schism forced the Observant friars to register in universities other than Paris, such as the Bologna Theology Faculty. With the Hundred Years' War, however, Spanish and Portuguese students were granted permission to register at Valladolid University, where theology was taught from 1418. See Santiago Aguadé, 'Las universidades y la formación intelectual del clero castellano en la Edad Media', in *Universidad, cultura y sociedad en la Edad Media* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad, 1994), p. 192.
25. The statutes (Clero secular-regular, carpeta 3500/5, pos. 3125, AHN) have been transcribed and studied in Jorge Díaz Ibáñez, 'Alonso de Burgos y la fundación y primeros estatutos del colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid. La regulación de la vida religiosa y académica de los dominicos observantes en la Castilla del siglo XV', *Cuadernos de historia del derecho* 23 (2016), pp. 41-100.
26. The bull was granted by Pope Innocent VIII on 15 December 1487 and is transcribed in Gonzalo de Arriaga, *Historia del Colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid* (Valladolid: Tipografía Cuesta, 1928), 1: pp. 68-9. See R. J. Clemente y B. Hidalgo, 'Colección diplomática del Archivo Histórico Dominicano de la Provincia de España', *Archivo Dominicano. Anuario* 34 (2013), p. 97n25.
27. The chapel's construction is recorded in an inscription. See Francisco Javier Molina de la Torre, 'Los estudios epigráficos desde la teoría de la comunicación: el friso de la capilla del Colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid', *Documenta & Instrumenta* 11(2013): pp. 141-70.
28. Registro General del Sello, legajo 148812,131. 1488, 12, 4, Archivo General de Simancas. See Esteban García Chico, 'Juan Guas y la capilla del Colegio de San Gregorio', *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* 16 (1949-1950): pp. 200-1; María López Díez, *Los Trastámara en Segovia. Juan Guas, maestro de obras reales* (Segovia: Caja Segovia, 2006).
29. *Libro Becerro del colegio dominico de San Gregorio de Valladolid*, Códices, L.1260, fols. 263-4, AHN; Anton Mayer, 'El escultor Gil de Siloe', *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones* 31 (1923): pp. 252-7; Filemón Arribas, 'Simón de Colonia en Valladolid', *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* 5 (1933-1934): pp. 153-66; Manuel Gómez-Moreno, 'A propósito de Simón de Colonia en Valladolid', *Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología* 30 (1934): pp. 181-4; Isabel Fuentes Rebollo, 'El maestro Simón de Colonia en San Pablo y San Gregorio (Nueva lectura documental)', *Boletín del Museo Nacional de Escultura* 3 (1998-1999): pp. 7-10.
30. See Zalama, 'Arquitectura y estilo'.
31. Vicente Lampérez y Romea, *Arquitectura Civil Española de los siglos I al XVIII*, vol. 2, *Arquitectura pública* (Madrid: Saturnino Calleja, 1922), p. 156; Manuel Gómez-Moreno, *Las águilas del Renacimiento español: Bartolomé Ordoñez, Diego Siloe, Pedro Machuca, Alonso Berruguete* (Madrid: Xarait, 1941), p. 185. For the historiography, see Diana Olivares Martínez, "'Del más abigarrado y barroco estilo Isabel". La historiografía como condicionante para el estudio del tardogótico hispano: el colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid', in Fernando Grilo et al. (eds.), *Da traça à edificação: a arquitetura dos séculos XV e XVI em Portugal e na Europa* (forthcoming).
32. See especially Begoña Alonso Ruiz, *Arquitectura Tardogótica en Castilla: los Rasines* (Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, 2003); Alonso, 'Los tiempos y los nombres del tardogótico castellano', in *La arquitectura tardogótica castellana entre Europa y América* (Madrid: Sílex, 2011), pp. 43-80.
33. Zalama, 'Arquitectura y estilo', p. 139.
34. José García Mercadal, *Viajes de Extranjeros por España y Portugal. Desde los tiempos más remotos hasta comienzos del siglo XX* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León – Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1999), 1: p. 672.
35. I have studied this in relation to the main staircase in more detail. See Diana Olivares Martínez, 'La escalera del colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid, espacio y representación', in *Sevilla, 1514: arquitectos tardogóticos en la encrucijada* (Seville: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 2016), pp. 369-81.
36. The southeast and southwest sides are wider than the northeast and northwest ones, giving clear proof of the different importance given to each area. For instance, the southwest side measures 10.6 metres in width whereas the northwest is 9.8 metres.
37. José Ignacio Hernández Redondo, 'El Colegio de San Gregorio, fundación de fray Alonso de Burgos: reflexiones y propuestas', in *Conocer Valladolid* (Valladolid: Real Academia de Bellas Artes de la Purísima Concepción, 2014), p. 101.
38. Based on Arturo Zaragozá, 'Inspiración bíblica y presencia de la Antigüedad en el episodio tardogótico valenciano', in *Historia de la Ciudad*, vol. 2, *Territorio, sociedad y Patrimonio: una visión arquitectónica de la historia de la ciudad de Valencia* (Valencia: Colegio de Arquitectos, 2002), pp. 165-83. I have explored this more deeply in 'Sapientia aedificavit sibi domum: el Colegio de San Gregorio de Valladolid y el imaginario salomónico', in Alexandra Uscatescu and Irene González (eds.), *En busca del saber: arte y ciencia en el Mediterráneo medieval* (Madrid: Ediciones Complutense, 2018), pp. 367-79.
39. See Diana Olivares Martínez, 'La escalera del colegio'.
40. Jean Guillaume, 'Genèse de l'escalier moderne', in Jean Guillaume (ed.), *L'Escalier dans l'architecture de la Renaissance* (Paris: Picard, 1985), p. 10.
41. The idea of specialization in fifteenth-century Castilian palaces has been developed by Elena Paulino Montero. See especially 'El Alcázar de Medina de Pomar y la Casa del Cordón. La creación de un palacio especializado nobiliario', in *Anales de Historia del Arte* 23 (2013): pp. 521-36.
42. For Castilian examples, see the Casa del Cordón and the so-called Felipe el Hermoso rooms; the 'retrait' had been used in the palaces of Olite and Pamplona in Navarre since the fourteenth century. See Paulino Montero, 'El Alcázar de Medina de Pomar', p.553; Javier Martínez de Aguirre, 'Lancelot en Olite: paradigmas arquitectónicos y referentes literarios en los palacios de Carlos III de Navarra (1387-1425)', *Anales de Historia del Arte* 23, número extraordinario 2 (2013): pp. 191-218.
43. In his will he refers to the sale of the houses where he had lived before his move to the college. See Jorge Díaz Ibáñez, 'El testamento del obispo Alonso de Burgos: religiosidad, construcción de la memoria y preeminencia eclesiástica en Castilla a fines del siglo XV', *Estudios de historia de España* 10 (2017): p. 134.
44. Registro General del Sello, legajo 148812,131. 1488, 12, 4, Archivo General de Simancas. García Chico, 'Juan Guas y la capilla', p. 201.
45. Juan Guas also set masonry concentrically in the vaults of San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo.
46. See note 27 above.
47. The altarpiece was made of walnut and included 'twenty-two stories and effigies of saints'. Its cost was comparable to Luis de Acuña's altarpiece in Burgos Cathedral. See Códices, L.1260, fols. 263-4, AHN.
48. Milena Bartlova, 'In memoriam defunctorum: visual arts as devices of memory', in L. Dolezalová (ed.), *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 473-86.
49. García Mercadal, *Viajes de Extranjeros*, pp. 423 and 674.
50. See Ethan Matt Kavaler, *Renaissance Gothic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 194.
51. C. Stephen Jaeger (ed.), *Magnificence and the Sublime in Medieval Aesthetics. Art, Architecture, Music* (New York: Pallgrave Macmillan, 2010); Begoña Alonso Ruiz, 'La nobleza en la ciudad: *Arquitectura y Magnificencia a finales de la Edad Media*', *Studia Historica. Historia Moderna* 34 (2012): pp. 215-51.
52. See especially María Lozano de Vilatela, 'Simbolismo de la portada de San Gregorio de Valladolid', *Traza y Baza* 4 (1974): pp. 7-15; Clementina Julia Ara Gil, 'Las fachadas de San Gregorio y San Pablo de Valladolid en el contexto de la arquitectura europea', *Actas del Coloquio La arquitectura gótica en España* (Göttingen: Vervuert, 1999) pp. 317-34; Felipe Pereda, 'The Shelter of the Savage: From Valladolid to the New World', *Medieval Encounters* 16 (2010): pp. 268-359.
53. For the notion of a 'programme', see B. Boerner, 'Sculptural Programs', in Conrad Rudolph (ed.), *A Companion to Medieval Art* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 557-76; Michel Pastoreau, 'Programme. Histoire d'un mot, histoire d'un concept', in Jean-Marie Guillouët and Claudia Rabel (eds.), *Le Programme. Une notion pertinente en histoire de l'art médiéval?* (Paris: Le léopard d'Or, 2011), pp. 15-25.
54. I give a fuller account of the iconography in my doctoral dissertation which I hope to publish shortly.
55. Kavaler, *Renaissance Gothic*, p. 4.
56. Ethan Matt Kavaler, 'Renaissance Gothic: Pictures of Geometry and Narratives of Ornament', *Art History* 29 (2006): p. 4.
57. See Pereda, 'The Shelter', p. 269.
58. On the façade, the altarpiece of the chapel, the tomb monument, and the door which linked the chapel to the church of San Pablo, as well as on the façade of San Pablo.
59. Alonso Ruiz, 'La nobleza en la ciudad', p. 216.