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# NEW KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARÍA IN CARMONA<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to present some of the most significant conclusions resulting from my doctoral thesis on the Church of Santa María de la Asunción in Carmona. The main aim of my thesis was to conduct a detailed study of the building and movable heritage since its foundation to the present day. The structure of the discourse is divided into four broad sections summarising the evolution of the church through the ages, beginning with a brief description of the remains dating from the mosque on which the new Gothic church was built and ending with the latest interventions carried out in the contemporary period. This paper makes references throughout to specific findings regarding the architectural origins, the construction process, different phases of the works, the master builders involved, and subsequent renovations. It also analyses the building material, pillars, envelopes and decorative programmes that define the church's appearance today.

**Keywords:** Cathedral Gothic, Hoces, Vilches, Riaño, Tabernacle, Muñiz.

## 1. Introduction

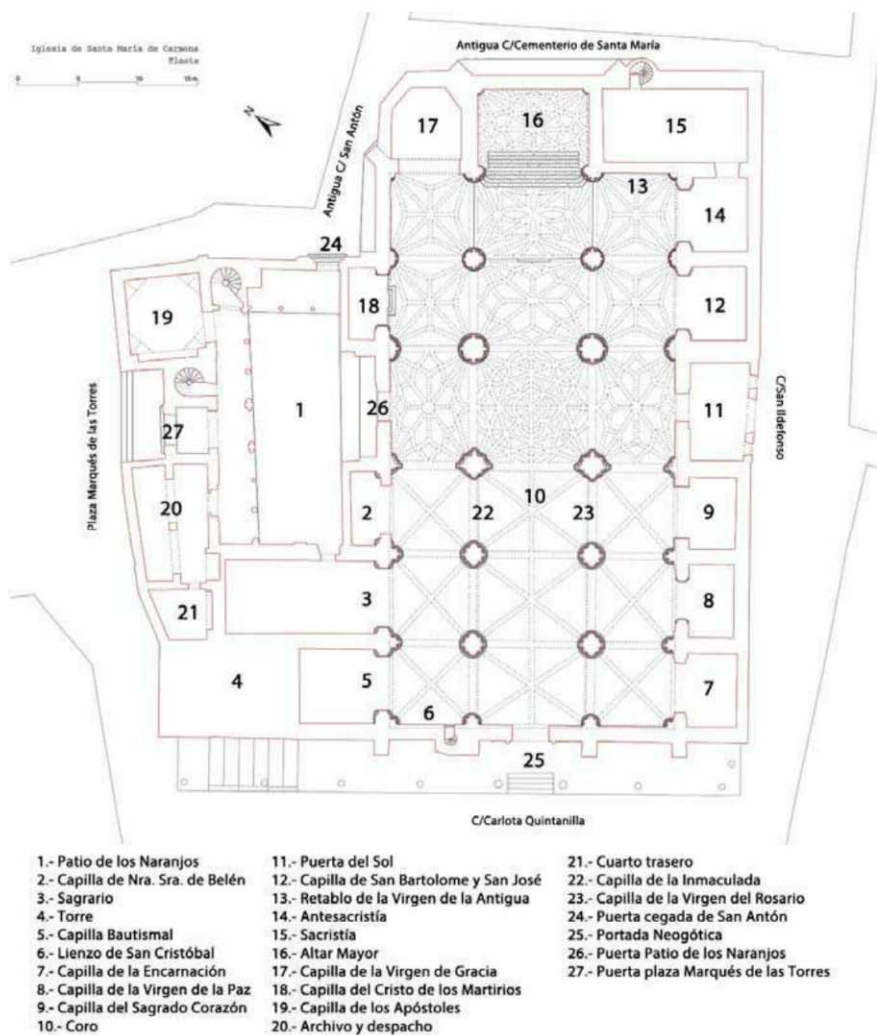
The church of Santa María in Carmona is one of the finest examples of Andalusian Late Gothic architecture and bears great similarity to the cathedral in Seville. However, in spite of its artistic merits and the ample historiography dedicated to Carmona and its historical heritage, the church had never been the subject of a monographic study. Consequently, there was a perceived need to analyse the building from a new, multi-disciplinary perspective that would not only include the milestones in its construction history and movable heritage but would also focus on the church's cultural history, the context in which it emerged, the people behind the project, and the social, political, economic and cultural situation of Carmona at the time.

The starting point for that narrative was the founding of the parish after the conquest of the city by Ferdinand III on 21 September 1247 (Baptista, 1628). Throughout the Late Middle Ages parish life revolved around the old converted Islamic building. The proposal to build the large Gothic church that still defines the monument's profile today did not emerge until the end of the 15th century and it was directly related to the construction of the cathedral in Seville. The second largest religious building in Christendom became a test bed for the building and decorative formulas that years later the same master builders who supervised the construction of Seville's cathedral would use in other major churches in the archdiocese. Jerez de la Frontera, El Puerto de Santa María, Aracena, Morón, Utrera and Carmona were just some of the centres that formed part of this transfer of ideas, and so marked was this phenomenon of influences that it gave rise to what came to be known as *Cathedral Gothic* (Rodríguez, 2007).

Works on the main church in Carmona began between 1481 and 1490 under the supervision of the master builder Juan de Hoces. The construction process started at the main entrance and advanced in stages, reaching completion between 1543 and 1546. The building we see today is organised around a rectangular floor plan with a flat east end, a nave and two aisles divided into five bays (square in the aisles, rectangular in the nave), a crossing, and ten private adjoining chapels. Viewed from above, it adopts the form of a Latin cross with the elevation of the nave and transept arms, and a majestic crossing vault crowns the latter structure. There are three entrances: the "Puerta del Príncipe" (Door of the Prince) on the west side, the "Puerta del Sol" (Door of the Sun) on the south side, and the "Puerta del Perdón" (Door of Forgiveness) on the north side, this being the one most commonly used (Fig. 1).

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<sup>1</sup> This paper relates to a new R&D&I project entitled *Diego de Riaño, Diego Siloe and the Transition from the Gothic to the Renaissance in Spain. Architecture and City: Technique, Language and Spatial Conception* (HAR2016-76371-P). Lead researchers: Juan Clemente Rodríguez Estévez and Antonio Luis Ampliato Briones.



**Fig. 1** Floor plan showing the main spaces. Church of Santa María. Carmona. Plan drawn up by Antonio Luis Ampliato, Pilar Gimena and Eduardo Acosta

### 1.1. State of the Question

This church is therefore one of the most important buildings in the Andalusian Late Gothic and, as such, it has received a great deal of attention in national historiography since the beginning of the 17th century (Carmona, 2012). As the foundations of the Modern Age were established, various places in the kingdom became interested in perpetuating their historical memory, ancient origins and the cultural identity of their population, even going so far as to try and demonstrate a classical affiliation that often never existed (Lleó, 1993; Amores et al. 2008). In the case of Carmona, this interest in highlighting the town's genealogy is best exemplified by the work of Fray Juan Salvador Baptista Arellano, *Antigüedades y Excelencias de la Villa de Carmona y Compendio de Historias*, published in Seville in 1628, which contains the first known description of the Church of Santa María (Baptista, 1628).

The defence of the origins of Carmona as a territory was also reflected in the new theories about enlightened positivism that emerged in the 18th century (Lería, 1997), but it was not until the late 19th century that the first studies on the church were published, motivated by the initiatives that were launched in Spain at the time to promote the conservation and restoration of monuments. The first one of note was the book *Historia de la ciudad de Carmona desde los tiempos más remotos hasta el reinado de Carlos I*, published in 1886 by Manuel Fernández López and considered to be a seminal reference for any historical analysis of Carmona from its origins to the dawn of the Modern Age (Fernández, 1886). This publication contains significant documentary evidence about the construction of the church, most of it extracted from the municipal archives of Carmona. Barely four years later Sebastián Gómez Muñoz, parish priest of Santa María, published *Memorias de un monumento* (Gómez, 1890). Motivated by a far-reaching restoration of the church, this work contains the first technical reports on the building's state of repair carried out by professionals from the fields of architecture and the fine arts.

In the 20th century the advent of policies to protect and preserve all national heritage gave rise to various initiatives to inventorise immovable and movable cultural assets in the province of Seville. These projects led to the publication of guides and catalogues, some of which include descriptions of the history of the construction of buildings in Carmona and the town's heritage based on earlier scientific studies of the available documentation. Of particular note is the volume on Carmona found in *Catálogo arqueológico y artístico de la provincia de Sevilla*, published in 1943 by professors José Hernández Díaz, Francisco Collantes de Terán and Antonio Sancho Corbacho (Hernández et al. 1943) as the first inventory on the town. Decades later knowledge of the town was updated in the publication *Guía artística de Sevilla y su provincia y del Inventario artístico de Sevilla y su provincia*, written by lecturers from the Art History Department such as Alfredo Morales Martínez, Enrique Valdivieso and María Jesús Sanz between 1981 and 2004 (Morales et al. 2004). More recent works to mention in this context are *Carmona, ciudad y monumentos*, by Antonio García Rodríguez, José González Isidoro and Juan Fernández Lacomba, which is currently the most up-to-date guide in existence (García et al. 1993), and the book *Carmona Barroca. Panorama artístico de los siglos XVII y XVIII*, by Francisco Herrera García, Fernando Quiles García and Consuelo Saucedo Pradas, which provides the most up-to-date guide on Carmona art in the 17th and 18th centuries (Herrera et al. 1997).

Having selected the appropriate documents to carry out the aforementioned studies, many of these researchers went on to publish catalogues of documentary references on various topics that fell outside the scope of their own field but which provided future researchers with a starting point for their work. Examples are the two volumes by Manuel González Jiménez entitled *Catálogo de documentación medieval del Archivo Municipal de Carmona*. The first one, published in 1976, focuses on the period 1249-1474, while the second one, published in 1981, spans the period 1475-1504 (González, 1976; González, 1981). Another publication that provides a similar corpus is the book *Documentos inéditos para la historia del arte en la provincia de Sevilla: siglos XVI al XVIII*, by Carmona residents Esteban Mira Caballos and Fernando Villa Nogales (Mira and De la Villa, 1993). They are also the authors of *Carmona en la Edad Moderna. Religiosidad y arte, población y emigración a América* (De la Villa and Mira, 1999) and both texts constitute a crucial source for tracing documentary references to the church.

## 1.2. Objectives

The cumulative knowledge provided by the aforementioned contributions constitutes an indispensable corpus for the study of the church. However, there was previously no specific narrative examining the church in the historical context of the town and incorporating the latest research on the style of the building. The primary objective was therefore to conduct a detailed study of the building and its movable heritage since its foundation to the present day. Within this framework, my first focus was to analyse the Gothic characteristics of the original building, and I was able to achieve this aim thanks to my association as a full-time researcher and documentalist with the R&D&i project Seville Cathedral Gothic: Architecture and City in the Spheres of Influence of the Cathedral of Seville (Ref. HAR2012-35152; Lead researcher: Antonio Ampliato Briones). The detailed photographs and graphical survey carried out, as well as the results of the thermographic analysis and ground penetrating radar (GPR) study, have contributed to the existing knowledge about the Gothic building.<sup>2</sup> I also believed that a building of this nature required a systematic description not only of the Gothic sections but of the church in its entire complexity, including the parts annexed in later periods as well as its rich movable heritage, objectives that fell outside the scope of the R&D strategic plan. Likewise, I could not omit to explain the church's sensitivity to changes in its context, and I therefore set out to reconstruct a new cultural history of the building in light of its connection to the town of Carmona and to the unique identity of Lower Andalusia between the Middle Ages and the contemporary period.

## 1.3. Methodology and Work Plan

A multi-disciplinary working methodology was designed to undertake this study and address the building from a broad perspective, interrelating its historical and artistic components with the social, political and cultural components of its context. Based on this approach, a deductive-inductive reasoning method was developed and applied to the study of the sources as well as the analysis of the building and its movable heritage. Using the general historical, stylistic and social aspects as our starting point, we then examined much more specific details about the church. And vice versa:

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<sup>2</sup> All of these contributions will be published very soon in a book entitled *La obra gótica de Santa María de Carmona. Arquitectura y ciudad en la transición a la Edad Moderna* (Ampliato and Rodríguez (eds), in press).

analysing a structure or movable cultural asset enabled us to draw general conclusions. To achieve the objectives established, we devised a five-year work plan during which the first three were spent gathering information. Approximately 500 historiographical records were consulted and close on 1,200 documents were gathered. This information was analysed on two levels depending on the type of archive. In the case of documentary records that made sole reference to the building or its context, such as the actual parish archives and certain sections of the archdiocesan and municipal archives, we examined all the documents in great detail. For sources that we knew to contain an occasional specific reference, such as the Carmona Notarial Records and the archive of the San Fernando Royal Academy, we limited our analysis to the pertinent volumes with the aim of reviewing the relevant references in case they shed further light on the object of study.<sup>3</sup> In addition to these analyses, we consulted the collection held in the University of Seville Art Laboratory-Photographic Archive, where we examined 1,146 photographs of Carmona, including more than 250 of Santa María itself.

As well as studying documentary records, we used an analytical methodology to examine the building itself. My association with the R&D project was crucial in this respect because it not only enabled me to carry out my analysis from the historical and artistic point of view but provided me with access to formal studies in other fields of knowledge (architecture, archaeology and geology) and to state-of-the-art technology and equipment (total station, thermal imaging camera and GPR system) which generated valuable scientific results.<sup>4</sup> This last year has been spent conducting a critical analysis of the results, planning the structure of the publication and writing the final text.

#### **1.4. Structure of the Publication**

In planning the structure of the publication it became clear that the organisation of the text would need to reflect the evolution of the monument over time. The body of the discourse is therefore divided into four broad sections. The first one analyses the origins of Santa María and includes a detailed study of late medieval Carmona, beginning with the period of Islamic rule and ending with the establishment of Christianity and the attendant governmental and religious structures. The second section discusses the actual construction of the Late Gothic building, describing the initial works and the protagonists behind them and explaining how during the erection of the church, between the late 15th century and mid-16th century, the basic tenets of the Late Gothic style were gradually abandoned and replaced by the precepts of the Early Renaissance. The third section focuses on all the interventions carried out to the building and its movable heritage during the Modern Age, and the final section examines the changes and renovations that took place during the 19th and 20th centuries and, to a certain extent, forged the present-day appearance of the Carmona's main church.

## **2. The Church of Santa María: Art, Architecture and City**

All the information gathered from the bibliography, documents and critical analysis of the building has been interpreted and the conclusions drawn are presented here. This paper is the end result of that information gathering process and the analysis of the building itself. As the research progressed, it was possible to confirm some of the hypotheses we had formulated on the evolution of the building works, the relationship between the church and the town's history, the incorporation of the different chapels and sponsors, the renovations carried out, the annexes adjoined to the building, and the movable cultural assets that the church acquired through the ages.

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<sup>3</sup> Specifically, in the Parish Archive of Santa María in Carmona (APSMC after its Spanish initials), we mainly focused on the volumes concerning the administrative aspects of the construction. As such, we examined the Chaplaincy records (10 books from 1613 to 1859), Inventories (3 books from 1749, 1795 and 1905-1952), Accounts and Visits to the Construction (31 books from 1578 to 1964), Notarial Records (6 books from 1588 to 1850), as well as miscellaneous other documents such as the notebooks concerning the restoration in the late 19th century, ledgers of the brotherhoods based at Santa María, restoration reports, wills, family trees, dates, taxes, etc. In the Seville Archdiocesan Archive (AGAS) we consulted four sections: Pastoral Visits, Justice, Construction and Inventories. Using the keyword "Carmona", we accessed 46 boxes in the first of these sections, 62 in Justice, five in Construction and four in the Inventories section. In the Carmona Municipal Archive (AMC) we consulted the entire Municipal Records section, mainly focusing on the 44 files related to the period 1464-1554, the time span for the construction of the building. We also made more specific searches in later volumes of records, in other sections such as Requests and Memorials and Town Planning, and in the Notarial Records Archive (APC), where we found several references to artist contracts in 11 files from different offices. In addition we performed limited searches in the Seville Cathedral Archive (ACS), the Madrid branch of the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts (RABASF), the General Archive of Simancas (AGS), the Spanish Institute of Cultural Heritage (ACIPCE), and the Administration General Archive (AGA).

<sup>4</sup> Of particular importance in this context is the graphical analysis system developed by the research team led by Antonio Ampliato since it provides the reader with the most up-to-date set of floor plans, elevations and cross-sections of the church of Santa María in Carmona, all vital documents for its conservation in the future.

## 2.1. Origins: Santa María in the Middle Ages (Mid-13th to Late 15th Century)

This section on the origins of Santa María focuses on the mosque on which the Gothic church was subsequently built. There were very few records related to the old Islamic building and no detailed study. According to the Muslim geographer Al-Himyari, in the 14th century the mosque had a courtyard for ablutions, or *sahn*, which corresponds approximately to the orange tree courtyard we see at Santa María today, and a *haram* or prayer hall organised around a wide nave and six narrower aisles supported by solid marble columns and stone pilasters, none of which have survived (Romero, 1992). In 1943 the authors of the *Catálogo* referred to a possible Almohad origin in view of the characteristic pointed horseshoe arches lining the courtyard's north gallery (Hernández et al. 1943), an appreciation that has been endorsed by all the traditional historiography. As part of the R&D project on Cathedral Gothic, the archaeologist Alejandro Jiménez has published interesting results obtained from mensio-chronological and GPR studies of the courtyard and the use of a thermal imaging camera in the minaret (Jiménez, in press). This made it possible to determine the number of aisles (one nave and six lateral aisles), view the remains of the original minaret on the north side of the courtyard (Fig. 2.), confirm the use of two different brick models in two separate building phases in the ninth and tenth centuries, and even formulate certain hypotheses about the building's dimensions (approximately 39.28 x 26.7 m).

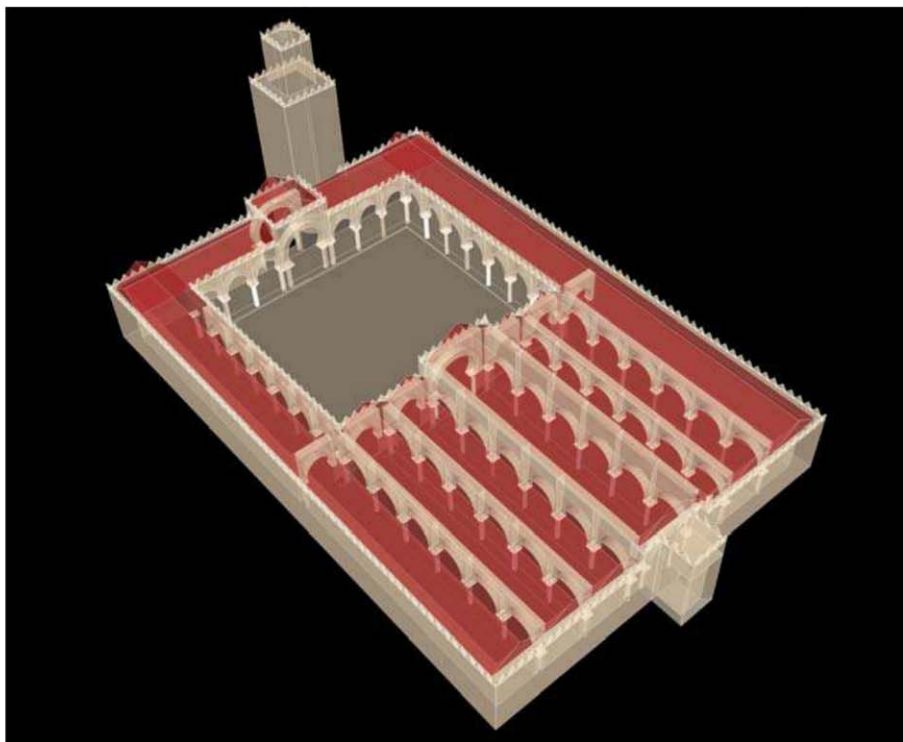


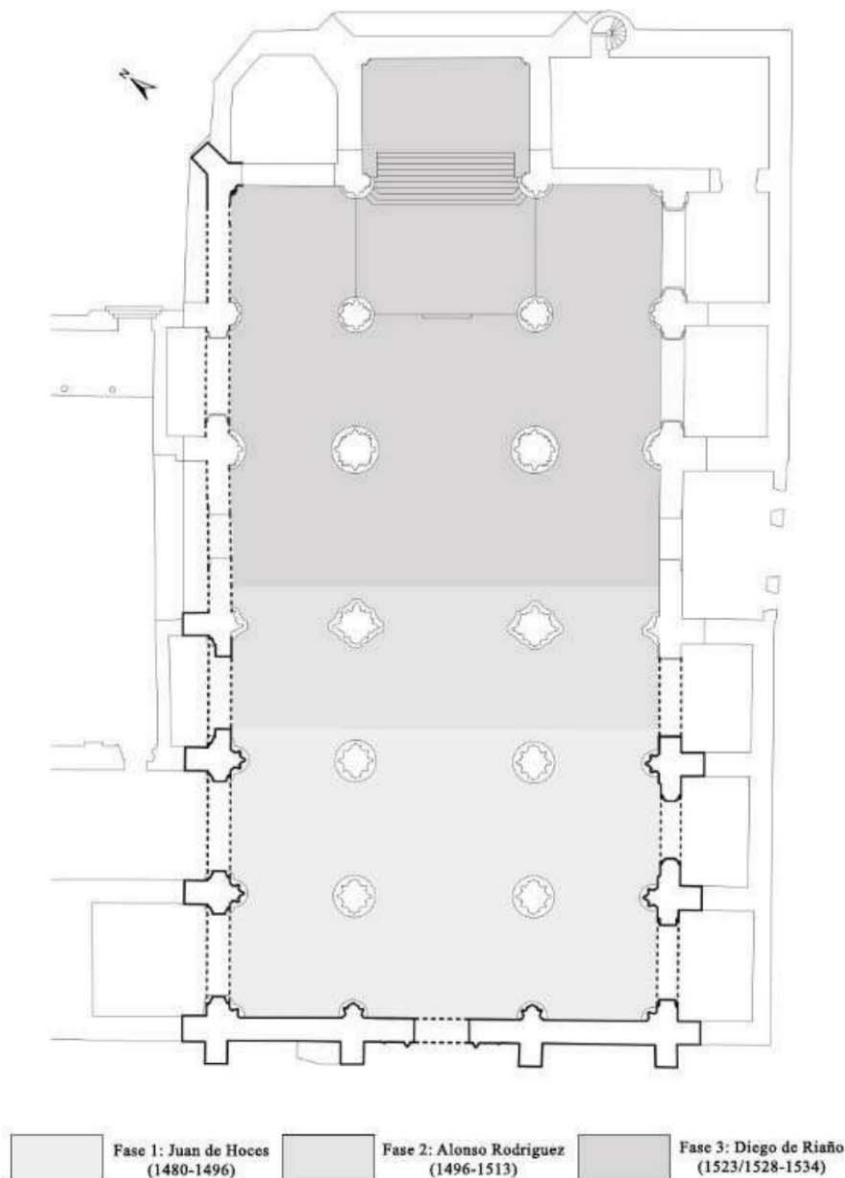
Fig. 2 Infographic of the great mosque of Carmona. Hypothesis formulated by Alejandro Jiménez

## 2.2. Construction of the Late Gothic Church (Late 15th to Mid-16th Century)

The second section examines the construction of the new Gothic church. Most of the existing historiography pointed to two clearly differentiated building phases, the first from 1424 to 1518 and the second from 1525 to 1551 (Fernández, 1886; Gómez, 1890; Hernández et al. 1943). In light of the research conducted, although the existence of works on the original parish church in 1424 was not ruled out, it was possible to confirm that these works did not correspond to the beginning of the Gothic church since the first stones must have been laid between 1481 and 1490. A new theory about the construction process was formulated, suggesting that the works began on the west side and advanced in stages towards the east end. By the second decade of the 16th century the first three bays had been completed, but at this point the original project was replaced by a new design that would modernise the overall appearance of the building. This new stage began at the east end and advanced westwards, merging with the initial part through the construction of a crossing, completed between 1543 and 1546.

Some interesting names are associated with this new construction phase, with sponsors such as Castellanos, Barreda and Vilches and masters like Rodrigo de Gibaja, Antón Gallego and the lesser-known Antón Gutiérrez. The records also confirm the crucial role played by the archdiocese of Seville,

thanks to which Santa María in Carmona was elevated from the status of a local construction to become one of a number of churches scattered throughout the dioceses that contributed to the *Cathedral Gothic* phenomenon. The new data provide a much clearer insight into the context in which the project emerged and developed, revealing how the constant economic crises and epidemics that swept the town took their toll on the building process. Documentary sources describe the poor quality of the local stone, the difficulty of transporting it to the church, the need to purchase block and tackle from more distant parts, and the shortage of experienced professionals on the site. Master masons were usually involved in dozens of building projects simultaneously, and it seems that those busy with the cathedral in Seville were often unable to spare the time to address the needs of the project in Carmona.



**Fig. 3** Floor plan indicating the successive building phases of the Church of Santa María, Carmona. Plan drawn up by Antonio Ampliato and Juan Clemente Rodríguez

The time span that has been deduced, the contextual circumstances surrounding the beginning of the works, and the stylistic features shared with the cathedral in Seville—capitals that follow identical patterns in the two buildings, similar-shaped windows and the clear formal resemblance of the supports—reaffirm the attribution of the original design to the master builder Juan de Hoces. His connection with the church must have ended with the first two bays of the nave and aisles because he died in 1496. Thereafter, the construction of Santa María passed to Alonso Rodríguez, also a master builder active at the cathedral in Seville, whose involvement in the works has been proven to correspond to the envelope around the section already built and the construction of the third bay (Fig.

3). Alonso Rodríguez brought a more up-to-date vision of the Late Gothic to Hoces's design, incorporating new formal devices such as those clearly perceived in the fourth line of pillars and on the west face of the crossing vault (Ampliato and Rodríguez (eds), in press). His involvement in Santa María is also directly linked to the names of the master surveyors mentioned above, who followed his instructions on the site. Of particular note in this context is the name of Antón Gutiérrez. Although it has not been possible to situate this master stonemason in a specific time span, he must have formed part of this first crew of surveyors and he was also the first in a long line of masters whose connection with Carmona and its main church is documented until at least the 17th century.

With the first three bays complete, the construction entered a new phase of works, now led by Diego de Riaño. Originally from Cantabria in northern Spain, this master builder arrived in Carmona in the 1520s and injected a modern note into the construction of the church. One of the first findings in this chapter in the history of the church revolves around the master builder's arrival in the town. The hypothesis formulated is that he reached Carmona in 1523—borne out by his association that year with another figure in Carmona—rather than in 1525 as recorded in the traditional historiography (Fernández, 1886; Gómez, 1890; Hernández et al. 1943). His contribution to the design of the pillars and vaults in the other bays is well-documented, but there was no interpretation of how his project evolved (Fig. 3). A theory on the new work plan that the master builder must have presented has therefore been formulated. Riaño proposed an alteration to the original east end by inserting another module, thus extending the boundaries of the original floor plan (Ampliato and Rodríguez (eds), in press). The construction must have begun at the chancel and advanced westwards to meet the first bay of the nave and aisles already completed. In this new phase, the stylistic parameters of the Gothic architecture gradually gave way to Renaissance forms, with the new style reaching its full definition in the decorative programme of the vault over the crossing. Unfortunately, the master's premature death in 1534 prevented him from seeing the completion of his work and it was probably his disciple Martín de Gainza who added the final touches between 1543 and 1546 (Ojeda, 2016). This proposed time span for the completion of this section is based on two key clues. The first is a documentary reference from 1543 in which the church council was asked to pay the "four hundred and fifty-three thousand maravedis" it had pledged to provide (Fernández, 1886), and the second is the accurate interpretation of the arms that appear in the crossing vault as corresponding to the shield of García de Loaysa y Mendoza, archbishop of Seville between 1539 and 1546 (Fig. 4). Records from this second building phase also refer to the economic support received from the Briones, Góngora and Quintanilla families, which built their chapels during this period, and to the involvement of the master surveyors Juan de Matienzo and Juan de Escalona as the builders who finally made it possible for Carmona to boast of having one of the finest examples of Late Gothic buildings in the province of Seville.



**Fig. 4** Heraldic programme. Keystone with the shield of García de Loaysa y Mendoza. Vault over the crossing. Church of Santa María, Carmona



### **2.3. *The Church in the Modern Age (Mid-16th to the 18th Century)***

This third section focuses on the evolution of the building and its movable heritage in light of the new artistic trends that dominated the whole of the Modern Age. With the nave and aisles completed as well as the first adjoining private chapels, two new construction projects were initiated, both of which lent the church a distinct Renaissance note: the sacristy and the main altarpiece. With regard to the former, the last phase of the works is documented as taking place in 1550, and based on this chronological margin and the stylistic connotations linking it to the cathedral, we attribute its construction to Martín de Gainza, a master builder active in Seville until 1556 (Rodríguez and Ojeda, in press). The second task was undertaken in the 1560s by the master craftsmen Nufro de Ortega and Bautista Vázquez the Elder, with input from painters of the ilk of Juan de Zamora, Antonio de Arfán, Pedro de Campos, Gonzalo Vázquez and Pedro Villegas (Hernández et al. 1943; Palomero, 1983). Widely regarded as one of the masterpieces of Sevillian Renaissance, this altarpiece has been analysed by numerous researchers but never in terms of the connection of its execution with the history of the construction of the church. In fact, the records confirm that the parish priests of Santa María were so keen to complete the overall structure of the church that they paid no attention to the construction of the sacrament chapel for over a decade. This third chapter describes the history of the chapel, from the process of its purchase by the alderman Rodrigo de Navarra in 1554 to its completion in 1580. It therefore traces the steps that led to the initiation of the works, records the difficulties encountered by the family to see the fruition of their project, documents the extraction of stone from the new local quarry "Nuestra Señora del Real", and even sheds light on a considerable number of masters, surveyors and foundation diggers, such as Juan Rodríguez, Cristóbal González, Francisco de Villaverde and Bartolomé Ruiz (Ojeda, 2014). The completion of the sacrament chapel also required the creation of a new processional monstrance on a par with its magnificence. To fulfil this aim, the beneficiaries of Santa María commissioned Francisco de Alfaro, one of the finest master silversmiths of the day (Hernández et al. 1943; Mejías, 2001). Although the existing historiography mentioned the processional monstrance, this new research has confirmed Alfaro's hand in other pieces of silverware, such as the parish cross and four candelabra previously attributed to someone else.

With the construction of the tabernacle chapel under way, the focus of the building works shifted to the centre of the church. Records from 1572 refer to the execution of a new choir in the third bay of the nave, which prompted discontent because the new structure made it difficult for the congregation to follow Mass (Hernández et al. 1943). Based on this reference, the research conducted formulates the theory that this fact marked the beginning of new decorative phase in this entire section of the church. The completion of the choir gave rise to the insertion of new chapels both in the choir structure—we refer to the Bartolomé López chapel on the Epistle side (1598) and the Carballar chapel on the Gospel side—and in the aisles. This phase ended on the Epistle side with the construction of the Sacred Heart chapel in 1599, sponsored by Juan de la Milla, and on the Gospel side with the insertion of the chapel dedicated to Saint Barbara, finished in 1602 under the patronage of the brotherhood of the same name, and the chapel of Our Lady of Bethlehem, completed in 1618 under the auspices of the Romera family (Rodríguez and Ojeda, in press).

During the 17th century several significant renovations were carried out to the building. One of the main interventions was executed by Bernardino de Lugo in 1627 in the original tabernacle chapel. Having ignored the space for several years, the church decided to move the monstrance and all its accompaniments to the new tabernacle chapel, freeing up the original chapel for storage purposes. This was greeted with indignation by Bernardino de Lugo, a descendant of the original sponsor, the alderman Rodrigo de Navarra, and he initiated legal proceedings against the parish, culminating in the latter's recognition that the space belonged to the Navarra family and that its renovation was their affair. It was not until the end of that century that the church embarked on a new project to repair the east end. According to the historiography, the sanctuary was in a state of ruin with "the stones in the vault beginning to separate and cracks appear", and this part of the church was finally restored by the master builder José García between 1697 and 1698 (Cruz, 1993).

The following years are the ones best documented in the whole of the church's history and thanks to the visit reports preserved in the parish archive confirm a large volume of interventions carried out in the brickwork, carpentry, ironwork, silverware, painting, gilding and ornaments. Accordingly, we suggest that the Virgin of Antiquity altarpiece was finished one year before the date indicated in the traditional historiography (Herrera et al. 1997), specifically by 10 April 1712. We have offered a new interpretation of the problems between the Barrientos family and the parish over the execution of the original altarpiece dedicated to Saint Francis Xavier, and we have even shed light on a series of announcements that allude to the possible existence of a new altarpiece structure in honour of the Immaculate Conception, probably begun in 1726. This study has also revealed the existence of significant works that disappeared over time, such as the original Baroque organ of 1743, a work by Domingo de Larracochea that suffered so severely during the Peninsular War that it had to be

replaced in the second decade of the 19th century, and the 18th-century Eucharistic monument that unfortunately was also "consumed", this time in the 20th century.

#### **2.4. The 19th-Century Renovation and Subsequent Transformations (19th and 20th Centuries)**

The final chapter concerns the evolution of the church in the contemporary period. This section focuses particularly on the execution of the organ that presides over the choir, previously attributed as an 18th-century instrument but which this research has confirmed to be a work made in 1824 under the authorship of Antonio Jiménez. The history of the parish during the 19th century is analysed, paying particular attention to the impact for Carmona of the coronation of Our Lady of Grace in the church in 1835 and the visits by several intellectuals during that century. Lastly, significant space is reserved for the study of the intense renovations that were carried out in the church at the end of the century to repair the damage caused by damp to the tower, vaults and rooftops. All of these repairs were promoted by the parish priest of Santa María, Sebastián Gómez Muñiz, and involved the master builder of Seville Cathedral, Adolfo Fernández Casanova, and the local surveyor Manuel Malvido. This research shed light not only on the details of the first wave of renovations, carried out between 1880 and 1883 (Gómez, 1890), but also on the second wave of interventions, previously unknown, which continued into the early 20th century and, thanks to the sponsorship of the Quintanilla sisters, included the addition of a new stage to the tower (Fig. 5) as well as the renovation of the first three bays of the church, the baptistery and the Christ of the Martyrs chapel.



**Fig. 5** Stone plaque with an inscription relating to the Quintanilla sisters' sponsorship of the works on the tower in 1893. Tower. Church of Santa María, Carmona

This last section also offers a photographic tour of the town in the first half of the 20th century through the images preserved in the General Research Section of the Art Laboratory-Photographic Archive, and it analyses the interventions that are largely responsible for the present-day appearance of the church, most notably the construction of the new museum in the upper galleries of the courtyard. Led first by the architect Rafael Manzano and then by Fernando Mendoza Castells, these works lasted for more than a decade in the final third of the 20th century. Between 1971 and 1981 six different projects were carried out, leading to the disappearance of some of the spaces that surrounded the courtyard in the contemporary period, the renovation of the entire upper gallery and installation of display cases, and the construction of the spiral staircase to access the space. All of these works clearly had an impact on the appearance of the gallery but nevertheless allowed the church to exhibit its rich liturgical heritage to visitors.

The result of these transformations is the Santa María we see today. The facts that shaped its history, the names of the people who were driving forces in its conception, the families who sponsored its construction and decoration, the legal proceedings that unfolded as part of parish life, the socio-economic aspects of the town, and the damages caused by human actions and natural phenomena all merited detailed examination to enhance public knowledge of the monument in all of its complexity. All of these factors form part of its history and yet Santa María has still preserved within its walls the

essential hallmarks of a Gothic building that emerged and developed in line with the stylistic dictates issued from the cathedral in Seville.

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