

# MEDIEVAL EUROPE IN MOTION

The Circulation of Artists, Images,  
Patterns and Ideas from the Mediterranean  
to the Atlantic Coast (6<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries)

Edited by

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*Introduction* by GERARDO BOTO VARELA

*Conclusions* by XAVIER BARRAL I ALTET



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*The Court Ladies' Role in the Transmission of Artistic Models.  
Some Cases in the Kingdom of León in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century*<sup>1</sup>

The research team I am working on, within the Instituto de Estudios Medievales of the University of León, has for a long time been researching the royal patronage in the kingdom of Castile and León during the Middle Ages. Since the first time we got in contact with this topic, we have been aware that, in most cases, it was not the monarch himself the one who used to commission and manage the works which he is attributed with as their promoter. There were around him a number of people who participated more directly in artistic creation: the persons who were mainly responsible for the buildings constructed in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as for their sculptural decoration, are to be sought amongst the bishops and noblemen in the court environment and the ladies of the royal family.

The bishops' place next to the monarchs is quite well known, both in the aspects relating to their devotions and the relationship between the monarchy and the church, on the one hand, and in diplomatic issues, on the other. They played an exceptional role in Castilian and Leonese politics; participated in the ecclesiastical reordering of the Kingdom, a task which Bernard of Auch commenced from Sahagún and continued from the Primatial See of Toledo; and were close to the monarch in the governance of the State. They were members of the royal curia and found in the court the appropriate frame for their political alliances. All of them gathered the heritage necessary to promote building schemes in their respective cathedrals. Their job as artistic promoters and mentors of iconographic programmes has been the subject of attention on numerous occasions.<sup>2</sup>

In many cases the nobles who participated in the court's cultural environment shared the royal family's artistic inclinations, whether because they tended to emulate royal behaviour, or because of their own devotional, aesthetic interests, or as way to gain prestige. Their participation in artistic production in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries was, no doubt, less outstand-

<sup>1</sup> This research paper has been carried out within the I+D+i Project, ref. HAR2010-19480, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. It would not have been possible without the collaboration of Manuel Valdés and Concepción Cosmen.

<sup>2</sup> It would be too long to give a comprehensive list of publications on this topic. Among the bishops who promoted the reformation and decorum of their cathedrals we can highlight the name of Diego Peláez of Santiago de Compostela, who led the first project in his see, in which the chapel of the Saviour could have acted as a true *Speculum principis*, whereas the two adjacent ones, those of St. John and St Peter, might contain a *Speculum monachorum* (V. NODAR FERNÁNDEZ, *Los inicios de la catedral románica de Santiago: El ambicioso programa iconográfico de Diego Peláez*, Xunta de Galicia, Santiago de Compostela 2004). More historiographic interest has been aroused by the renowned bishop Diego Gelmírez (d. 1140), who took over the construction of the cathedral (M. A. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ, «Didacus Gelmirius, patrono de las artes. El largo camino de Compostela de periferia a centro del Románico», in M. A. CASTIÑEIRAS GONZÁLEZ [ed.], *Compostela y Europa: la historia de Diego Gelmírez*, [exhibition], Skira, Milan 2010, pp. 32-97).

ing than that of the prelates; which is why researchers have been less attracted to it. However, we can find cases as significant as that of Count Pedro Ansúrez, one of the solid pillars Alfonso VI counted on to design his State politics.<sup>3</sup> Various publications have also highlighted the nobility's contribution to the expansion of the Cistercians in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula through the founding of monasteries.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, Medieval Historiography has had something to do with the interest that gender studies have aroused over the last few decades. The concern to get to know women's role in the world of art has revealed the importance of female patronage, particularly in court environments. Queens consort could easily afford to commission sumptuous projects and, besides, had much more time than their husbands to develop literary interests and to enrich themselves in different fields. They were, therefore, potential promoters or artists' clients.

In most cases, royal matrimonies used to imply that the bride moved from her country of origin to her husband's, and was accompanied by a large entourage carrying her belongings or objects she wanted to keep next to her in her new home. I am not going to insist on these aspects, as they are dealt with in another paper in this same volume; however, it is necessary to recall that a princess's appearance with her retinue from a more or less distant country no doubt opened the way for some kind of contact with that country's culture and art. Together with her there could arrive luxury metal or ivory objects, illuminated books, fabrics, etc., and even artists. A very well known case is that of Princess Theophanu, whose matrimony with Otto II facilitated the presence of Byzantine culture and art in Germany.<sup>5</sup> We can also find some cases in the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula. One of the most significant is that of Eleanor Plantagenet (also called Eleanor of England). The English princess's arrival in Castile in 1170 to marry Alfonso VIII coincided with the revival of troubadour poetry, promoted in various courts by the most outstanding members of Eleanor of Aquitaine's family. In the artistic field the English influence is appreciated in the *scriptoria*, and the foundation and endowment of the monastery of Santa María la Real de las Huelgas, near Burgos, reminds us of her parents' involvement with the abbey of Fontevrault.<sup>6</sup>

Even though it is true that on various occasions Historiography has considered the

<sup>3</sup> The count's interest in artistic works is shown in his foundation of and donations to the Collegiate Church of Santa María de Valladolid and the monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos. The tombstone he commissioned for the sarcophagus of his son Alfonso, who died in 1093 and was buried in the monastery of Sahagún, is a unique work of the Spanish Romanesque sculpture from the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. (M. C. COSMEN-M. V. HERRÁEZ, «Algunas cuestiones en torno a la escultura del noroeste peninsular en la época de Alfonso VI», in *Alfonso VI y su legado*, Actas del Congreso Internacional del IX centenario de Alfonso VI [1109-2009], Instituto Leonés de Cultura-Diputación Provincial de León, León 2012, pp. 201-214; A. MIGUÉLEZ CAVERO, «La Impaginatio como punto de partida: la relación entre texto e imagen en la cubierta del sarcófago de Alfonso Pérez procedente de Sahagún», in M. E. MARTÍN LÓPEZ-V. GARCÍA LOBO [eds.], *Impaginatio en las inscripciones medievales*, Universidad de León, León 2012, pp. 71-98).

<sup>4</sup> M. V. HERRÁEZ, «Soberanos, señores y damas. Los promotores del Císter en el Reino de León», in G. CAVERO-J. CELIS (eds.), *El Císter en el Reino de León*, Instituto Leonés de Cultura-Diputación de León, León 2012, pp. 21-33, esp. 26-33.

<sup>5</sup> J. YARZA LUACES, «Clientes, promotores y mecenas en el arte medieval hispano», in *Patronos, promotores, mecenas y clientes*, Universidad de Murcia, Murcia 1992, pp. 15-47, esp. 24-25.

<sup>6</sup> D. OCÓN ALONSO, «El renacimiento bizantinizante de la segunda mitad del siglo XII y la escultura monumental en España», in *Viajes y viajeros en la España medieval*, Actas del V Curso de Cultura Medieval celebrado en Aguilar de Campoo (Palencia) del 20 al 23 de septiembre de 1993, ed. Polifemo, Madrid 1997, pp. 265-290, esp. 274-278.

## The Court Ladies' Role in the Transmission of Artistic Models. Some Cases...

cultural and artistic resonance which a foreign princess's appearance might mean for a kingdom, it has scarcely echoed the possible consequences which a lady's trip and her knowledge of the outer world might have for her place of origin. And even less if the lady in question was not the queen herself.

In this volume, which deals with the circulation of artists, works and models in the Middle Ages, and particularly in relation with the transmission of the latter through promoters, I would like to present the role which may have been played by two women, very little known in artistic Historiography, belonging to different generations of the Leonese royal family: Infanta Elvira, a daughter of Alfonso VI (d. 1109), and Infanta Constanza, a daughter of Alfonso VII the Emperor (d. 1157). They were not queens but princesses whose matrimony with foreign magnates might have furthered the arrival, in their places of origin, of novelties which were fashionable in their new environment. The relationships they kept over the years with various members of their family and the trips they made to the Leonese territory, at different times indicate a fluent contact and an open way of communication between their paternal and marital homes.

The concurrence of their weddings, and their subsequent residence in progressive centres, with the appearance of artistic novelties in León, may have been a mere coincidence, as there is not documentation which attests to the contrary, but at least we must consider it as one of the circumstances contributing to the transmission of workshops, artisans and/or models from one place to the other.

### 1. *The Arrival of Toulouse Workshops in León Around 1100*

Fernando I and his queen, Doña Sancha, converted the monastery of San Juan and San Pelayo, later dedicated to St. Isidore, into the centre of the Castilian and Leonese royalty and set their palace, palatine chapel and mausoleum there.

The monastery of San Pelayo was the head of the Leonese "Infantado", an institution through which the royalty remained linked to male monasteries and nunneries they had founded and which became the heritage of their female descendants. The Infantas Urraca and Elvira, daughters of Fernando I and Sancha, rejected getting married in order to be able to be *dominae* of the Infantado, and through that link with the royal court, they acquired a political and economic power which their mother, Queen Sancha (d. 1071), had already enjoyed, and which would be inherited later by their great niece, Infanta Sancha (d. 1159), the sister of Alfonso VII the Emperor.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> A. VIÑAYO GARCÍA, «Reinas e infantas de León, abadesas y monjas del monasterio de San Pelayo y San Isidoro», in *Semana de Historia del monacato cántabro astur-leonés. V Centenario del nacimiento de San Benito*, Oviedo 1982, pp. 123-135; G. DUBY, «Women and Power», in T. N. BISSON (ed.), *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania 1995, pp. 69-85; S. H. CALDWELL, *Queen Sancha's "Persuasion": a regenerated León symbolized in San Isidoro's Pantheon and its treasures*, Global Publications, Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Binghamton-New York 2000; T. MARTIN, *Queen as King. Politics and Architectural Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain*, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden 2006, pp. 30 and ff.; E. KLINKA, *Le pouvoir au féminin dans la Castille médiévale: une deuxième voie?*, in «e-Span-



Fernando I of León and Castile developed a whole artistic policy at the service of the Leonese imperial idea and centred it around the compound of San Isidoro.<sup>8</sup> After his death in 1065, it was his wife, Sancha, and, later on, his daughters, the *infantas*, who continued to develop the representative image of the monarchy around the same enclave.<sup>9</sup> The examples of royal generosity they could emulate were numerous: from some Spanish Visigothic kings to the Asturian monarchs to their nearest forefathers: Ordoño II and Alfonso V for the case of Sancha; and for the case of Fernando, his father, Sancho the Elder of Navarre.<sup>10</sup>

As for Fernando I's daughters, researchers have highlighted Infanta Urraca's role as the great promoter of Leonese Romanesque art. Basically she was responsible for the "monumentalisation" of the funerary compound which was situated at the western end of the church and for commencing to build the new temple dedicated to St. Isidore between approximately 1080 and 1101, the year of her death.<sup>11</sup>

The works of the fully Romanesque church must have finished, at least in their basic aspects, before the disturbances initiated in 1112, that is, before the war provoked by the disagreements between Queen Urraca, Alfonso VI's daughter, and her Aragonese husband, Alfonso the Battler (or the Warrior: Spanish, "el Batallador"). The conflict had special repercussions in the capital of the kingdom: the Basilica of St. Isidore was looted – the royal coffers were empty and its treasures were necessary to defray the warfare expenses. The queen

ia» (2006), <http://e-spainia.revues.org/324> (latest upload: April 3, 2012); E. KLINKA, *Sancha, infanta y reina de León*, «e-Spainia» 5 juin (2008), <http://e-spainia.revues.org/11033> (latest upload: october 8, 2012); S. SÁENZ-LÓPEZ PÉREZ, *El mundo para una reina: los mappaemundi de Sancha de León (1013-1067)*, en «Anales de Historia del Arte» ext. vol. 317 (2010), pp. 317-334; G. BOTO VARELA, *Las dueñas de la memoria. San Isidoro de León y sus infantas*, in «Románico: revista de arte de amigos del románico» 10 (2010), pp. 75-82; T. MARTÍN, *Mujeres, hermanas e hijas: el mecenazgo femenino en la familia de Alfonso VI*, in «Anales de Historia del Arte», ext. vol. 2 (2011), pp. 147-179; J. T. SCHULENBURG, «Female Piety and the Building and Decorating of Churches (ca. 500-1150)», in T. MARTÍN (ed.), *Reassessing the roles of women as 'makers' of medieval art and architecture*, Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden 2012, pp. 245-274, esp. p. 262.

<sup>8</sup> The bibliography on Fernando I and the compound of San Isidoro is quite extensive; that is why the reader is referred only to the latest publications: J. WILLIAMS, *San Isidoro Exposed: the vicissitudes of research in Romanesque art*, in «Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies» 3.1 (2011), pp. 93-116; E. FERNÁNDEZ GONZÁLEZ, «Imagen, devoción y suntuosidad en las aportaciones de Fernando I y Sancha al tesoro de San Isidoro de León», in *Monumentos singulares del románico. Nuevas lecturas sobre formas y usos*, Actas del XIII Curso de Iniciación al Románico (Aguilar de Campoo), Fundación Santa María la Real, Palencia 2012, pp. 163-197.

<sup>9</sup> Queen Sancha outlived her husband and finished the works of the temple commenced by him, as is recorded in a *roboratio* located on the outer western wall of the temple (V. GARCÍA LOBO, «La escritura publicitaria en la Península Ibérica. Siglos X-XIII», in *Inschrift und Material. Inschrift und Buchschrift. Fachtagung für mittelalterliche und neuzeitliche Epigraphik. Ingolstadt 1997*, Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, München 1999, pp. 151-190, esp. pp. 151-156 and fig. 138). Alfonso VI broke away from the mausoleum which contained the bodies of his parents and his brother García and chose the monastery of St. Benedict in Sahagún for his burial place, as is recorded in a letter dated in 1080 (A. GAMBRA, *Alfonso VI. Cancillería, curia e imperio*, León 1998, vol. II, doc. 69, pp. 175-176). The *Primera Crónica Anónima* specifies that the monarch «[...] conjuró a sus hermanas...e aún a todos los de su parentela, y mayores de su casa, que adon quiera que el postrimero día se fallase el suo cuerpo, fuese enterrado acerca de San Fagun [...]». M. V. HERRÁEZ (coord.), *Esplendor y decadencia de un monasterio medieval. El patrimonio artístico de San Benito de Sahagún*, Universidad de León, León 2000, pp. 56 and 57).

<sup>10</sup> E. FERNÁNDEZ GONZÁLEZ, «Imagen, devoción y suntuosidad en las aportaciones de Fernando I y Sancha al tesoro de San Isidoro de León», cit., esp. 165-167.

<sup>11</sup> Her epitaph reads, «amplavit ecclesiam istam et multis muneribus ditavit».

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was forced to ask her most faithful bishops, those of Oviedo and Astorga, for economic help.<sup>12</sup> Under these circumstances, it is unthinkable that they could have faced such a major work as that of the transept; so we are led to think that it had been erected before 1112, and, together with that, the most fundamental parts of the construction must have ended too.<sup>13</sup> Notwithstanding, it is clear that the construction of the building went on subsequently until it was finished off. Infanta doña Sancha, Alfonso VII's sister, «superedi[fic]avit ecclesiam hanc» and to this stage of the works correspond the signature of one «Petrus tallador», recorded in a 1136 document,<sup>14</sup> the news about the architect Petrus Deustamben and the consecration of the temple in 1149.<sup>15</sup> So probably the works carried out at the time could have consisted of the necessary repairs – a consequence of the serious conflict – and the vaulting of the nave.

The sculpture executed in the Panteón de los Reyes (Pantheon of the Monarchs) can be considered as a pioneer work as far as the introduction of Romanesque visual arts in the northwest of Spain is concerned. The Infantas Urraca and Elvira, commendataries (“comendatarías”) of St. Isidore by virtue of the Infantado institution, may have counted on specialised workshops, no doubt from the south of France. The formal analysis of the capitals leads us to the sculpture in the abbey church of Saint-Sever and the collegiate one of Saint-Gaudens, which, on their turn, are indebted to the great workshop of Saint-Sernin in Toulouse.<sup>16</sup>

We do not know what ways drove to seeking those workshops, responsible for the first stage in the Leonese Romanesque sculpture. The most plausible working hypothesis points in the direction of Bernard de Sédirac as the link through which the *infantas* could have got in contact with masters and sculptors from his place of origin, the town of Auch. This Cluniac monk arrived, in 1080, at the monastery of the Santos Facundo and Primitivo of Sahagún to become its abbot; and he had been entrusted with the mission of establishing the Roman liturgy in the monastery. He kept a close relationship with the royal family, who used to retreat to the village of Sahagún at Easter and other solemn festivities.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Chronicon Mundi*, ed. J. PUJOL, Madrid 1926, pp. 310-312; *Crónica del Emperador Alfonso VI*, ed. M. PÉREZ, León 1997, p. 79; G. CAVERO-E. MARTÍN, *Colección documental de la catedral de Astorga I (646-1126)*, León 1999, doc. 598, p. 427; and C. COSMEN, «La importancia de las fuentes documentales para el estudio del templo catedralicio astorgano en la Alta y Plena Edad Media», in *La Catedral de Astorga*, Astorga 2001, pp. 58-59. See also C. DE AYALA, *Sacerdocio y Reino en la España medieval*, Sílex ediciones, Madrid 2008, p. 377.

<sup>13</sup> T. MARTÍN, *Queen as King: Politics and Architectural Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain*, cit., pp. 137-174, dates the construction of the transept in the second decade of the 12<sup>th</sup> century; G. BOTO, «Morfogénesis espacial de las primeras arquitecturas de San Isidoro. Vestigios de la memoria dinástica leonesa», in *Siete maravillas del románico español*, Fundación Santa María la Real, Palencia 2009, pp. 151-193, situates it chronologically between 1120 and 1145; M. V. HERRÁEZ-M. C. COSMEN-M. VALDÉS, *La escultura de San Isidoro de León y su relación con otros talleres del Camino*, in «De Arte» 12 (2013), pp. 41-56, assign it an earlier chronology in accordance with the historical circumstances and the study of the sculpture.

<sup>14</sup> E. MARTÍN, *Patrimonio cultural de San Isidoro de León. Documentos de los siglos X-XIII*, León 1995, doc. 31.

<sup>15</sup> This record is registered on the architect's tombstone, located in the Salazars' chapel, and in the inscription of the dedication, which is in the south arm of the transept.

<sup>16</sup> T. W. LYMAN, *The Pilgrimage Roads Revisited*, in «Gesta» 8.2 (1969), pp. 30-44; J. CABANOT, *Les debuts de la sculpture romane dans le Sud-Ouest de la France*, Picard, Paris 1987, p. 16; M. DURLIAT, *La sculpture de la route de Saint-Jacques*, Mont-de-Marsant 1990, pp. 183-196; J. L. SENRA GABRIEL Y GALÁN, «Architecture et décor dans le contexte de la colonisation clunisienne des royaumes septentrionaux de la péninsule ibérique», in *Hauts lieux romans dans l'Europe (XI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, Cahors 2008, pp. 11-70.

<sup>17</sup> Madrid Biblioteca Nacional, *Breve Historia del Monasterio de Sahagún, de los siglos IX al XI*, ms.

## María Victoria Herráez Ortega

Some of the capitals in the basilica of San Isidoro still remind us of models utilised in the Pantheon.<sup>18</sup> However, the most interesting prototypes lead us to outline the work of a great workshop which links the Royal Collegiate Church directly with Toulouse and Jaca, as is shown in a recent publication.<sup>19</sup>

The presence of a Toulousain workshop is detected, for instance, in the north door of the transept, where there is a magnificent figurative capital, on which we notice the work of a great master acquainted with ancient models. Many elements drive us to discover a kinship with the Jaca art: its general idea, its Dionysiac theme and the presence of pythons as well as the profile of the abacus –characterised by its quite moulded caulicles rounded off with volutes, and by its semicircular dado all inscribed with concentric lines. However, this sculptor's roundish carving and manner of working is not the same as that of the so called "Master of Jaca". In these aspects that capital is better related to another from the old Jaca cathedral which is kept now in the church of Santiago in the same city. The latter work came out, no doubt, from the same hand as a corbel in the same cathedral which represents an angel. Professor Serafín Moralejo had already related this corbel to the altar and a cymatium in the Basilica of Saint-Sernin.<sup>20</sup> We would be speaking, then, of a Toulousain sculptor who executed both works and might have moved to León to work in the royal church.

This workshop's trace can be found in an important number of Isidorian pieces which present similar features, even though their making does not come from the same hand in all the cases. Regarding their carving, the capitals with lions situated on the main pillars of the crossing follow the same lines. The felines' heads refer us again, even in their smallest details, to the capital in the church of Santiago in Jaca already mentioned and therefore to the master of Saint-Sernin, who was working at the cathedral of that city around 1100. Those heads are connected, at the same time, with the right corbel of the Puerta del Perdón at San Isidoro. The lion represented there, with identical face features, shows a characteristic mane with disorderly pointed locks and an angular superciliary arch. Again we can find referents for this image in Toulouse – at the Porte Mièzeville. Another striking trait it shows is its neck – carved as small feathers which have quite marked rachises – a detail which appears on the wings of a figure on the Toulousain capital in Jaca.

The sculptural work at Saint-Sernin, which I have been referring to, must have been executed from the 80s of the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the first decade of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The latter date has been assigned by most recent research to the Porte Mièzeville.<sup>21</sup>

How could a direct relationship have been established between León and the workshops in the south of France, and particularly Toulousain ones, about 1090-1100?

18659-35, ff. 44r.-45v.; M. V. HERRÁEZ ORTEGA (ed.), *Esplendor y decadencia de un monasterio medieval. El patrimonio artístico de San Benito de Sahagún*, Universidad de León, León 2000, p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> J. L. SENRA GABRIEL Y GALÁN, «Architecture et décor dans le contexte de la colonisation clunisienne des royaumes septentrionaux de la péninsule ibérique», cit., esp. pp. 22-25.

<sup>19</sup> A study on this workshop can be seen in M. V. HERRÁEZ-M. C. COSMEN-M. VALDÉS, *La escultura de San Isidoro de León y su relación con otros talleres del Camino*, cit.

<sup>20</sup> S. MORALEJO ÁLVAREZ, *Une sculpture du style de Bernard Gilquin à Jaca*, in «Bulletin Monumental» 131 (1973), pp. 7-16.

<sup>21</sup> Q. CAZES-D. CAZES, *Saint-Sernin de Toulouse. De Saturnin au chef-d'œuvre de l'art roman*, Odyssee, Graulhet 2008, p. 285.

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I have already mentioned that, in 1080, abbot Bernard of Auch arrived at the monastery of San Benito in Sahagún in order to renovate the liturgy and to try and introduce the Roman rite. The ways of communication with the southwest of France were, therefore, open, and that can account for the incoming of the first French ateliers at San Isidoro. But ten years later there occurred an event ignored by art Historiography and which, however, helps to explain the links established between Toulouse and León precisely at that time. In 1090 Doña Elvira, born from the extramarital relations of Alfonso VI and Jimena Muñiz, got married to Raymond of Saint-Gilles, who succeeded to the dignity of count with the name of Raymond IV of Toulouse.<sup>22</sup> Apparently the Castilian and Leonese king himself supported his prospective son-in-law against the pretensions of the Aragonese Sancho Ramírez, who was defending his right to inherit that county.<sup>23</sup>

Elvira Alfónsez (d. 1157) must have been quite young when she was married to the Toulousain count. However, the betrothal and the wedding may have contributed to the fact that the *dominae* of the *Infantado*, her aunts Urraca and Elvira, heard about the works which were being executed at Saint-Sernin and it may have facilitated the arrival at the Leonese stoneworks of some of the masters who had been trained in Toulouse. After the early death of her husband, in Tripoli, in 1105, Doña Elvira returned to the kingdom of León. The entry of her death, on a June 16 in the Obituary of the León Cathedral, is a sign of the relationship the Infanta had with her place of origin.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. The Presence of Workshops from the Île de France in the Kingdom of Castile and León in the Third Quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century

The monumental sculpture from the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century presents serious difficulties to study, due mainly to the scant information afforded by the documentary sources. However, the research carried out over the last few decades has gained important progress in the knowledge of the Castilian and Leonese late Romanesque sculpture and has modified the chronology attributed to some sculptural groups, placing it in the third quarter of the century. Thus the dating of the monastery of Silos has been put earlier: from the 80s suggested by Dr. Lacoste to the 70s pointed out by Dr. Valdez del Álamo;<sup>25</sup> the crypt of the Santiago

<sup>22</sup> A. QUINTANA PRIETO, *Jimena Muñiz, madre de Teresa de Portugal*, in «Revista portuguesa de História» 12 (1969), pp. 221-280.

<sup>23</sup> R. JIMÉNEZ DE RADA, *Historia de los hechos de España*, ed. J. Fernández Valverde, Madrid 1989, libro VI, cap. XX, p. 245. See also T. W. LYMAN, *The Pilgrimage Roads Revisited*, cit., p. 42.

<sup>24</sup> Archivo Catedral de León, Obituario C18, n.d. Cf. M. HERRERO JIMÉNEZ, *Colección documental del archivo de la catedral de León. X. Los obituarios medievales*, Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", León 1994, p. 420.

<sup>25</sup> J. LACOSTE, «Nouvelles recherches à propos du second Maître du cloître de Santo Domingo de Silos», in *El románico en Silos. IX centenario de la consagración de la iglesia y del claustro*, Silos 1990, pp. 474-475; E. VALDEZ DEL ÁLAMO, «Relaciones artísticas entre Silos y Santiago de Compostela», in *Actas del Simposio Internacional O Pórtico da Gloria e a arte do seu tempo*, La Coruña 1991, pp. 199-202.

de Compostela cathedral has been dated back to before 1168;<sup>26</sup> the chronology of the North Door of the Lugo cathedral has been accurately fixed in 1177; the dates of the monasteries of Carrión and Aguilar de Campoo have been established before that of Piasca, which is dated in 1172; and the second project of the church of San Vicente in Ávila has been dated between 1165 and 1170.<sup>27</sup>

The analysis of the sculptural models which spread in León and Castile starting from 1140 onwards has led to record the presence of workshops from Burgundy in several centers, like the Cluniac monasteries of San Pedro de Oña and San Pedro de Arlanza.<sup>28</sup> In other centres the masters show the assimilation of Burgundian formulas, particularly in the treatment of fabrics, which permitted them to reveal the anatomy of figures by using wet drapery techniques.<sup>29</sup>

Though it is true, as I have just mentioned, that the Burgundian current seems to have led the Castilian and Leonese sculptural panorama in the third quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, there exists a group of sculptures in the dioceses of Oviedo and Astorga on which we can detect the introduction of French formulas from a different origin. We are referring to pieces, mostly decontextualised, which belong to their respective cathedrals and to the parish church of Santa Marta de Tera (in the province of Zamora). They correspond, no doubt, to a stage previous to the Pórtico de la Gloria in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela and are located in buildings which counted on royal patronage or the protection from court personages. The connections between the sculptures in these three places, as well as the introduction in them of novel formulas coming from the Île de France, may be accounted for through the common promotion of these works and the special relationships of some members of the royal family with Parisian environments.<sup>30</sup>

As for the pieces in the cloister of the Oviedo cathedral, we are interested in four reliefs located on the south wall: St. Nicholas, a female figure, a churchman and an evangelist (?). The plaques had been used as a refill for the masonry of the Gothic cloister and were

<sup>26</sup> M. L. WARD, «El Pórtico de la Gloria y la conclusión de la catedral de Santiago de Compostela», in *Actas del Simposio Internacional O Pórtico da Gloria e a arte do seu tempo*, cit., pp. 43-52; J. D'EMILIO, «Tradición local y aportaciones foráneas en la escultura románica tardía: Compostela, Lugo y Carrión», in *Actas del Simposio Internacional O Pórtico da Gloria e a arte do seu tempo*, cit., pp. 83-94.

<sup>27</sup> A discussion about these aspects can be found in D. RICO CAMPS, *El románico en San Vicente de Ávila (estructuras, imágenes, funciones)*, Nausica, Murcia 2002, pp. 178-184.

<sup>28</sup> S. MORALEJO ÁLVAREZ, «Cluny et les débuts de la sculpture romane en Espagne», in *Le gouvernement d'Hugues de Semur à Cluny*, Actes du colloque scientifique international publiés par la Ville de Cluny et le Musée Ochier, Mâcon: Buguet-Comptour, Cluny 1990, pp. 405-434; J. L. SENRA GABRIEL Y GALÁN, «El monasterio de San Salvador de Oña. Del románico pleno al tardorrománico», in *Actas del II Curso de cultura medieval. Alfonso VIII y su época*, Aguilar de Campoo 1992, pp. 339-354; and ID., *La irrupción borgoñona en la escultura castellana de mediados del siglo XII*, in «Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte» 4 (1992), pp. 35-51.

<sup>29</sup> It is the case of the masters of Ávila, Compostela, Carrión and Lugo. D. RICO CAMPS, *El románico en San Vicente de Ávila (estructuras, imágenes, funciones)*, cit., pp. 164-165.

<sup>30</sup> A study of this group of sculptures is to be found in C. COSMEN, M. V. HERRÁEZ Y M. VALDÉS, «La escultura monumental tardorrománica en el reino de León. Evolución e innovaciones introducidas por los círculos cortesanos a mediados del siglo XII», in C. RÜCKERT-J. STAEBEL (eds.), *Mittelalterliche Bauskulptur in Frankreich und Spanien. Im Spannungsfeld des Chartreiser Königsportals und des Pórtico de la Gloria in Santiago de Compostela*, Vervuert/Iberoamericana, Orlando 2010, pp. 119-132, col. "Ars Iberica et Americana" vol. XIII.

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retrieved during the restoring and cleaning works carried out after the Spanish Civil War. The figures are mutilated – their heads are missing and in many cases so are their hands. They are not the product of exceptional work, but the making of their garments is delicate and the treatment of the draperies seeks to show certain luxury, as their pleats are qualified with a series of soft parallel incisions.

The interest in analysing these works lies on two reasons. In the first place, they are pieces chronologically situated earlier than the rest of the monumental sculpture in Oviedo, which is also dated in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, as is the case of the Cámara Santa and another two plaques located above the door of the chapter house. In the second place, they present formal traits which permit us to establish a possible relationship with the sculptures on the portals of the church in Santa Marta de Tera.

We do not know the exact chronology of when the cloister in the Oviedo cathedral was built, but we do know that the chapter house was being used already in 1144. The renovation of the see must have been initiated during the time of bishop Pelayo (1098-1129 and possibly in 1142-1143), as the refectory was already in use in 1136.<sup>31</sup> Building activities were continued under his successor, Martín II (1143-1156), a prelate who was very close to the royalty, from which he knew how to gain support for the new building. Thus, Alfonso VII granted two donations to the church – in 1150 and 1154 – but it was probably his natural daughter, Infanta Urraca, who most favoured the cathedral, after she established her residence in Asturias, where we know she was already installed in 1153 at the latest.<sup>32</sup>

The church of Santa Marta de Tera was granted by King Fernando I to the bishop of Astorga in 1063, thanking bishop Ordoño (1062-1066) for his services in the *translatio* of St. Isidore's body from Seville to León.<sup>33</sup> This shrine became famous on account of the miraculous healings which occurred there, and was converted into a devotional centre not only for the popular classes but also for the members of the royal family. During the central years of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the church received donations from Alfonso VII and the Infantas Elvira and, her daughter, Teresa. Later on, Fernando II maintained Santa Marta's privileges, enlarged its properties and protected it against other powers in the area.<sup>34</sup>

The building of the temple is not documented. The sculptural decoration in the sanctuary is similar to the works executed in the second building stage at San Isidoro de León; that is why it can be dated back to the first decades of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. However, the sculptures which interest us in this study are those that today are part of the north and south portals, although originally they might have belonged to the early entry of the western façade, the

<sup>31</sup> E. CARRERO SANTAMARÍA, *El conjunto catedralicio de Oviedo durante la Edad Media*, Real Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, Oviedo 2003, pp. 81-88.

<sup>32</sup> M. RECUERO ASTRAY, *Alfonso VII, Emperador. El imperio hispánico en el siglo XII*, Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", León 1979, pp. 228, 229 and 235; F. J. FERNÁNDEZ CONDE, *La reina Urraca 'la Asturiana'*, in «Asturiensia medievalia» 2 (1975), pp. 65-94.

<sup>33</sup> G. CAVERO DOMÍNGUEZ-E. MARTÍN LÓPEZ, *Colección documental de la catedral de Astorga I (646-1126)*, Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", León 1999, pp. 303-306.

<sup>34</sup> A. QUINTANA PRIETO, *Santa Marta de Tera*, Quintana Prieto, Zamora 1991, pp. 84-99; G. CAVERO DOMÍNGUEZ-E. MARTÍN LÓPEZ, *Colección documental de la catedral de Astorga II (1126-1299)*, Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", León 2000, pp. 64-65, 115, 117, 162 and 175-176.



chronology of which would be later than that of the sanctuary.<sup>35</sup> We are referring to three images: one, located on the north portal; and two, on the south one. The first one represents St. Jude, as the inscription on its phylactery reads: IUDAS FRAT(E)R S(I)MON. The other two correspond to St. Peter, who is holding the book and the remains of what might have been the keys, and St. James, depicted as a pilgrim and identified by means of the inscription SANTIAGO APOSTOLUS on the nimbus.<sup>36</sup>

This workshop, which was active at Santa Marta de Tera during the third quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, is characterised by the convincing nature of its forms. In spite of their rigid conception, the personages hint at a gentle *contraposto* when facing sideways, while their arms and hands turn gently to the opposite side. Their anatomy seeks expressive representations, which, in the case of their heads, are achieved through the plasticity of their features. Their hair, whether in the shape of curly locks, as is the case of St. Peter, or straight, as St. James presents it, constitutes a feature as outstanding as the formula to represent their eyes. The carver set different planes to sculpt a short forehead, very marked superciliary arches and circular eyes with excavated pupils, circled with thick eyelids. Each face is framed by a powerful beard, whimsical and orientalising in the case of St. Peter, and rounded, like his hair, in the case of St. James. Their hands are so thick and clumsy, their palms so big, and their fingers, so bulky that they are seen as the most noteworthy parts of the whole composition. The lower part of their legs is missing.

The treatment of their garments is peculiar. The personages are wearing robes which are adjusted to their thighs in an attempt to interpret the wet drapery technique. On top of the robe, their mantle creates gentle, regular pleats to reveal the shape of their arms. The search for overrefined effects is clearly perceived in the representation of the cuffs which end St. James's shirt – on turning on his arm, they communicate a sensation of lightness.

The representation of qualities in their garments provides us with one of the formal standards of the atelier working at Tera, and this leads us to establish a connection with the Oviedo works mentioned above. On both sets of works we can appreciate the fine incisions which run parallel to the thicker pleats as well as the undulations of the mantle which break into a zigzag along an axis, creating a curious sensation of chiaroscuro. There exist other details which reinforce this connection: among them, an evident sensation of plasticity and volume on the wristbands. It is caused by the fan-like pleats which cover each figure's right arm both in Oviedo and in Santa Marta. It is also worth mentioning how the sculptor of the figure of St. Peter tied his mantle on the right shoulder – in the same way as the master of Oviedo did it on one of the Asturian images.

It is not easy to establish a relationship between both workshops, except for the details mentioned. The greatest difficulty is founded on the fact that the figures in Oviedo do not

<sup>35</sup> Apparently, this western door had to be remodelled at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century or early in the 13<sup>th</sup> century because there occurred some catastrophe. Cf. F. REGUERAS GRANDE, *Santa Marta de Tera. Monasterio e iglesia, abadía y palacio*, Centro de Estudios Benaventanos "Ledo del Pozo", Zamora 2006.

<sup>36</sup> The text, almost illegible, of the effaced inscription has been deciphered by Dr. Vicente García Lobo and Dr. Natalia Rodríguez and is collected in C. COSMEN-M. V. HERRÁEZ-M. VALDÉS, «La escultura monumental tardorrománica en el reino de León. Evolución e innovaciones introducidas por los círculos cortesanos a mediados del siglo XII», cit., p. 123.

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show the Burgundian tendency to represent anatomies underneath their clothes, which can be noticed on the Tera sculptures; but it is particularly unfortunate that we cannot compare the facial features, so characteristic in the Zamoran church and, unluckily, missing in Asturias.

If the treatment of the garments drives us to connect the workshops which were active at the Oviedo see with those at Santa Marta, the heads of the images at the Zamoran temple lead us to the Astorga cathedral.

Only a number of sculptural fragments from the Astorga Romanesque cathedral have reached us. They could have been part of supports, arcades, decorative boards, capitals, abacuses, corbels and cornices belonging to different parts of the building constructed in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The documentation surviving in the cathedral archives is very scant: there are traces of the construction of a new church in documents from the time of bishop Pelagius (1097-1120), but there is almost no news in the following decades. From 1159 onwards there appear, again, contributions from private persons to the works of Santa María and privileges granted by Kings Fernando II (1157-1188) and Alfonso IX (1188-1230). These privileges were very likely in relation with the refurbishing of the cloister galleries.<sup>37</sup>

Among the extant fragments, the following are outstanding: a head, the hair of which is surrounded with a band in the classic manner, perhaps because it refers to an Old Testament personage; and a foot, wearing a sandal with very fine crossing bands and of identical classic inspiration. Both pieces could have made part of a group of column statues, whose serious faces with a contained expression and wearing garments made of thick fabric which falls in almost vertical pleats seem to be the product of a stage earlier than the most outstanding works erected in the Castilian and Leonese territory at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

The countenance of the figures surviving on the portals of Santa Marta de Tera can be connected to the Astorga head in the manner of their superciliary arches and eyelids, as well as the hollow to insert the iris and the expression wrinkles which come down from the nose to the mouth corners. The different quality of the material is what makes the Astorga piece acquire a more delicate aspect, but the comparison of both carvings highlights their great likeness.

The Astorga workshop must be, no doubt, connected with French ateliers. But the surviving sculptural remains do not look like the works executed in Burgundy or in Chartres in the middle of the century, as has been appreciated occasionally, but, as Dr. Cosmen has pointed out, they are closer to the column statues in the abbey of Saint-Denis, executed for the western portal before 1140.<sup>38</sup> The master who created the Saint-Denis heads and those that sculpted that in Astorga and those in Tera used very similar formal and expressive resources. The oval face; the treatment of the eyes, hair and beard; the rictus of the mouth; and the detail of the band with incised edges reveal a kinship between the workshops of the French abbey and the master of the Astorga cathedral.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> E. CARRERO SANTAMARÍA, «La claustra y la canónica medieval de la catedral de Astorga», in *Actas del Simposio. La catedral de Astorga*, Centro de Estudios Astorganos, Astorga 2001, pp. 85-156, esp. pp. 111-112; M. C. COSMEN ALONSO, «La importancia de las fuentes documentales para el estudio del templo catedralicio astorgano en la Alta y Plena Edad Media», cit., 49-84, esp. pp. 58-63.

<sup>38</sup> C. COSMEN ALONSO, «La importancia de las fuentes documentales para el estudio del templo catedralicio astorgano en la Alta y Plena Edad Media», cit., esp. p. 67.

<sup>39</sup> About the Saint-Denis heads, the following can be seen among others, M. C. ROSS, *Monumental sculp-*



Between 1150 and 1157, the year of the death of Alfonso VII the Emperor, there are records of several royal donations to the five episcopal sees of his kingdom.<sup>40</sup> In about 1150, following the royal initiative, a certain group of noblemen who were close to Alfonso fostered the works of the open stonemasonry works in the region. The bishops and some of the Leonese *infantas*, supported by the monarch, also backed the building projects with donations or some other kind of specific protection.

It is necessary to highlight, in this ambience, the generous activities of some of the court ladies. The author of the *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris* considered Queen Berengaria and Infanta Sancha, the Emperor's wife and sister respectively, «promotoras de la construcción de iglesias de Dios y de monasteries de monjes...» («promoters of building God's churches and of monasteries for monks and nuns...»)<sup>41</sup> In a second generation we can mention Infantas Doña Urraca, nicknamed "the Asturian" – who was brought up by her aunt, Doña Sancha – and Doña Constanza, who came to be the queen of France (1154-1160).<sup>42</sup>

The bishops and the high nobility supported Infanta Doña Sancha's promoting activities – and this fact closed, again on the court's ladies, the social circle involved in the artistic patronage.<sup>43</sup>

Our historical sources allow us to justify the political and religious relationships of the diocese of Oviedo with that of Astorga and with the court. Martín II, who came from Santiago de Compostela, occupied the see of Oviedo between 1143 and 1156, formed part of the royal circle since his appointment, and his relationships with the bishops of Astorga – first, with Arnaldo, until 1152; and then, with Pedro Cristiano, until 1156 – were constant.<sup>44</sup> The three prelates were close to Alfonso VII in dedicating temples, holding curias, assemblies and councils, like those in Palencia (1148) and Valladolid (1155), and were a permanent support at times of war against the Muslims, as can be deduced from two donations given to bishop Arnaldo by the Emperor in 1150 and 1152.<sup>45</sup>

*tures from Saint-Denis. An identification of Fragments from the Portal*, in «Journal of the Walters Art Gallery» 3 (1940), pp. 90-109; W. STODDARD, *The West Portals of Saint-Denis and Chartres: Sculpture in the Île-de-France from 1140 to 1190*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1952; W. SAUERLÄNDER, *Sculpture on Early Gothic Churches: The State of Research and Open Questions*, in «Gesta» 9 (1970), pp. 32-48; L. PRESSOUYRE, *Une tête de reine du portail central de Saint-Denis*, in «Gesta» 15.1-2 (1976), pp. 151-160; F. JOUBERT, *Recent Acquisitions, Musée de Cluny, Paris. Tête de Moïse provenant du portail de droite de l'abbatiale de Saint-Denis*, in «Gesta» 28.1 (1989), p. 107; and P. Z. BLUM, *Early Gothic Saint Denis. Restorations and Survivals*, University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford 1992.

<sup>40</sup> M. RECUERO ASTRAY, *Alfonso VII, Emperador*, cit., pp. 228-240.

<sup>41</sup> *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, 12, ed. M. PÉREZ GONZÁLEZ, cit., p. 68. To this group of patron ladies we can add Doña Elvira, the daughter of Alfonso VI and Zaida, born in about 1102, who protected the church of Santiago de Compostela and also those of Astorga and Tera, as said above.

<sup>42</sup> *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, 32, 74.

<sup>43</sup> M. V. HERRÁEZ-C. COSMEN, «Los promotores del arte cisterciense en León», cit., pp. 67-72.

<sup>44</sup> M. RISCO, *España Sagrada*, vol. XXXVIII, Madrid 1793 (facsimile ed., Madrid 1986), pp. 145-156; J. M. QUADRADO-F. J. PARCERISA, *Recuerdos y Bellezas de España. León*, Imprenta de Repullés, Madrid 1855 (facsimile ed., Diputación Provincial, León 1989), p. 101.

<sup>45</sup> A. QUINTANA PRIETO, *El obispado de Astorga en el siglo XII*, Centro de Estudios Astorganos "Marcelo Macías", Astorga 1985, pp. 249-357; G. CAVERO-E. MARTÍN, *Colección documental de la catedral de Astorga II (1126-1299)*, cit., docs. 731 and 753.

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Martín II agreed with Arnaldo and Pedro Cristiano, in 1150 and 1154 respectively, in such sensitive and conflicting issues as the territorial borders of the dioceses of Oviedo, Lugo and Astorga. Pedro Cristiano was in Oviedo to confirm the donation given by Gontrodo Pérez, the mother of Infanta Doña Urraca, «the Asturian», to the monastery of Santa María de la Vega.<sup>46</sup> After the death of her husband, the Navarrese king Don García, in 1150, the *infanta* returned to Oviedo; his father gave her Infantado properties and she established herself in the Asturian royal palace, where she appears as «régime» – that is, regent or controller. She remained in her palatial seat, located next to the church of El Salvador, at least until 1161, when she transferred those buildings to the cathedral. The document which records the magnificent donation refers to the royal family's interest in the upkeep of the building when it says that the benefit of the donated goods must be spent «in edificium et restauraciones ecclesie ovetensis».<sup>47</sup>

Through the documents mentioned above and the personages who confirm them, we can appreciate that Doña Urraca gathered around herself a court of which the successive bishops of Oviedo as well as those of León and Astorga were assiduous members. Also to this select group belonged her aunt, Infanta Doña Sancha, whose Infantado properties in Asturias linked her closely to Oviedo.

In this courtly atmosphere, in which the *infantas* played a preeminent role, we must not fail to mention the figure of Doña Constanza. This daughter of the Emperor must have been very close to her aunt, Doña Sancha, from her childhood. We find her close to her aunt at the dedication which took place at San Isidoro de León in 1149.<sup>48</sup> Later on, her matrimony with King Louis VII of France was arranged in 1153; and in November of this same year she set off from Soria with the entourage that went with her as far as Orléans. She got married there and was crowned queen by the archbishop of Sens.<sup>49</sup>

From her residence in Paris she made frequent trips to Spain. She very likely accompanied her husband on the pilgrimage he made to Santiago de Compostela at the end of 1154. Her presence in Castile is also attested to by documents in November-December of 1156 and again in July 1157.<sup>50</sup> She seems to have remained between 1158 and 1160 in France, where she died in the latter year on giving birth to her second daughter. It is significant that she was buried in Saint-Denis, away from her husband, who opted for the abbey of Barbeau as his last resting place.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>46</sup> M. RISCO, *España Sagrada*, cit., pp. 145-149; A. QUINTANA PRIETO, *El obispado de Astorga en el siglo XII*, cit., pp. 333-335; and F. J. FERNÁNDEZ CONDE, *La reina Urraca 'la Asturiana'*, cit., p. 80.

<sup>47</sup> F. J. FERNÁNDEZ CONDE, *La reina Urraca 'la Asturiana'*, cit., pp. 90-91; E. CARRERO SANTAMARÍA, *El conjunto catedralicio de Oviedo durante la Edad Media*, cit., p. 92.

<sup>48</sup> This information can be deduced from the commemorative tombstone transcribed by J. M<sup>a</sup> QUADRADO-F. J. PARCERISA, *Recuerdos y Bellezas de España. León*, cit., p. 101.

<sup>49</sup> P. RASSOW, *Die Urkunden Kaiser Alfons 'VII' von Spanien*, Berlin 1929, doc. 46; M. RECUERO et al., *Documentos medievales del Reino de Galicia. I. Alfonso VII (1116-1157)*, La Coruña 1998, doc. 155; M. RECUERO ASTRAY, *Alfonso VII, Emperador*, cit., p. 192; and A. LUCHAIRE, *Institutions monarchiques de la France sous les premiers capétiens (987-1180)*, Picard, Paris 1891 (reed. Culture et Civilisation, Brussels 1964), p. 146.

<sup>50</sup> A. LUCHAIRE, *Institutions monarchiques de la France sous les premiers capétiens (987-1180)*, cit., p. 295; and M. RECUERO et al., *Documentos medievales del Reino de Galicia. I. Alfonso VII (1116-1157)*, cit., docs. 175, 176, 178 and 181.

<sup>51</sup> A. ERLANDE-BRANDENBURG, *Le roi est mort. Étude sur les funérailles, les sépultures et les tombeaux des rois de France jusqu'à la fin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Arts et métiers graphiques, Genève-Paris 1975, pp. 77 and 162.

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Doña Constanza may be a key to account for the presence of new sculptural formulas from the Île de France in the dioceses of Oviedo and Astorga. Her stay in Paris during the central years of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, her interest in the abbey of Saint-Denis – in which some works to remodel the sanctuary and also the western massif had been carried out very recently and had been promoted by abbot Suger – and her frequent trips to Spain, where she kept close connections with the members of the Leonese court who were involved in the tasks of artistic promotion (ladies of high nobility and the bishops of Oviedo and Astorga), are the elements necessary to favour artistic contacts in both countries.