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This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of The University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

FROM VISIGOTHIC TO GOTHIC: A STUDY OF STYLES IN THE
CHURCH OF THE DIVINE SAVIOUR; VEJER DE LA
FRONTERA (CÁDIZ), SPAIN

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FROM VISIGOTHIC TO GOTHIC: A STUDY OF STYLES IN THE
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FRONTERA (CÁDIZ), SPAIN

BY
DOLORES COPPEL BOGARD
B.A., University of Texas, 1959

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Art
History and Criticism
in the Graduate School of
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Albuquerque, New Mexico
May, 1972

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FRONTERA (CÁDIZ), SPAIN

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Because all records have been destroyed, a comparative study is necessary in order to date the various building programs which have taken place in the Church of the Divine Saviour of Vejer de la Frontera. The different styles within the church range from Visigothic to Gothic, and individual discussions of each follow a general historical background of the area. Concomitantly, it is shown that Spanish architecture had a significance and a style of its own much earlier than is normally recognized.

The Visigothic element is confined to a study of four capitals, their column shafts, and their bases found in the Divine Saviour. Comparisons are made with other contemporary capitals found in the environs--in the Hermitage of Saints Justo and Pastor outside of Medina Sidonia, and in the Church of San Ambrosio near Vejer. The concurrent Byzantine influence and its effect are brought out, along with similarities found between the Divine Saviour and the Byzantine-influenced Visigothic Church of San Pedro de la Nave in Zamora.

The problem of whether or not there exist pre-

Reconquest remains within the church is dealt with by a general discussion of Muslim architecture in Spain and the Maghreb, and a subsequent analysis of Muslim features in the Vejer church. The conclusion favors post-Reconquest origins.

Mudéjar as a style is discussed with emphasis on various regional differences--the main geographical concern being the provinces of Huelva, Seville, Córdoba, and Cádiz in Andalusia. A comparative analysis of their styles with that found in the Divine Saviour indicates local variations as well as similarities (including the possible prototypes for Vejer found primarily in Jerez de la Frontera). A major accent is placed on the mudéjar style since it is the dominant one in the church under discussion.

The Gothic section follows the significant architectural works of the Gil de Hontañón family. Those details which correspond to features in the Church of the Divine Saviour are brought out in a general discussion of the cathedrals of Seville, Salamanca, Segovia, and Astorga. An extensive rebuilding program undertaken in the village church shows a diffusion of the Gil de Hontañón style from major cathedrals to minor provincial churches.

In summary, probable dates have been conferred on features which relate to churches with extant records, or those which have been previously studied and dated.

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INTRODUCTION

Considering the plethora of religious buildings in Spain and the dearth of literature on Peninsular architecture, my thesis topic may seem rather esoteric. The Divine Saviour is, after all, a rather remote, provincial church located in an obscure village high on a hilltop in Andalusia; and small parochial churches normally become objects of study only after the cathedrals and monasteries have been thoroughly documented. My reasons for selecting the Vejer parochial church are twofold: first, the Divine Saviour presents a composite of the architectural history of Spain from the seventh to the sixteenth centuries, thereby telling a more complete tale than a church representative of a single style; and second, by following the stages in the development of the church I can, hopefully, show that Spanish architecture did have a significance and a style of its own much earlier than is normally recognized, and that this style was manifested in many small parochial churches.

Aside from the Plateresque, the general attitude toward Spanish architecture has been that it was a continuation of Northern patterns somewhat modified to harmonize with a more congenial climate, but one which nevertheless spoke of followers rather than innovators. The Islamic element is always considered an alien art¹--never Spanish but rather the outcome of various infiltrations of Eastern

and North African peoples, many nomadic, who brought with them the art and architecture of their ancestors or of peoples they had previously conquered. This attitude reinforced the general lack of interest in the prolific archeological remains of the country. An additional deterrent to architectural interest is the tenacious hold that localism has always had over Spain. It greatly hampers the comparative study of styles and monuments on a national basis, the groundwork necessary for logical research. Thus to describe the thirteenth century as a time of flowering Gothic (as it was in France) and of the fourteenth as one of an incipient awareness of man and the Renaissance (as it was in Italy) is impossible in a Spanish context because general trends seem almost nonexistent. Romanesque churches were being built at the same time in the north that Mozarab churches appeared in the plains or Muslim minarets towered above mosques in the south. Making the problem of dating even more difficult was the large scale destruction of church property--including building records--during the Spanish Civil War.

Gradually, with new discoveries being made and new interests aroused, Spain's unique architectural history is becoming better understood. It must of necessity be explained in regional terms. The country is a complex of sharp contrasts. Verdant lushness gives way to almost desert wastelands, and the plains are counterbalanced by mountains

second in Europe only to those of Switzerland. The ancient laws and customs governing small localities strengthen a regional pride that even modern life cannot erase. The pride in heritage is not national in character but rather Galician, Catalanian, or Andalusian. Spanish unification did not, it must be remembered, come until the very end of the fifteenth century, and even then it was a nominal rather than an actual one. It is the local churches then, those small expressions of regional taste and tradition, which reveal the underlying realities of Spanish architectural history. All of which explains why the Divine Saviour is first an Andalusian building and only second a Spanish one.

Although the story of Spanish Christian architecture begins with the remains of a Roman villa in Mérida which was converted to serve as a place of worship, my thesis, in order to stay within the bounds of its topic, will begin with those churches constructed specifically for Christian worship in Visigothic times. The earliest examples of ornamentation in the Divine Saviour date from about the seventh century. Descriptions of sumptuous sixth and seventh-century Visigothic churches have been written by the men of that period--Isadore of Seville, Paul of Mérida, Gregory of Tours, and John Biclarense²--but nothing of them remains today. The only surviving examples are small parochial churches, and it is from these that one must cull the architectural informa-

tion of the period.

Again, when Gothic architecture was swiftly sweeping through the Peninsula it was in the small churches that the unique style called mudéjar was produced. Beginning as a joint expression of Gothic and Muslim architecture, mudéjar evidenced an appreciation of enduring Islamic features as well as a desire to vie with the grand cathedrals then being built in the Gothic style.

The Divine Saviour of Vejer de la Frontera is perhaps atypical of provincial churches, for rather than an example of one period it is a reflection of several. Thus instead of a clear statement of style it is a melange incorporating both the new and old that spans ten centuries. The church archives were burned in 1936, and the two or three volumes that miraculously escaped the holocaust (which destroyed the choir, paintings, and church records) are books relating to marriages and births. Nothing was left of the building data; consequently it must be through a comparative study that this thesis is written.

The name of the church is El Divino Salvador, or the Divine Saviour. It is variously called by the inhabitants of Vejer la parroquial or San Salvador. Another smaller church is still in use in the village but is of minor importance. A third church, an elegantly simple mudéjar edifice with a superimposed Baroque interior, has recently been sold

for destruction--a modern apartment building will replace it. Such an end will not be that of San Salvador; it seems to be fated merely for grandiose schemes of restoration that provincial pockets can only begin but never complete.

I am deeply indebted to the members of my thesis committee--Professors Bunting, Smith and Rodee--for allowing me to undertake what at times seemed to be an impossible task but one that fortunately developed into a very interesting and rather logical progression of study. Without their help and encouragement this project could never have been completed. I am thankful to the villagers of Vejer who gave so much of their time to help me get information I needed and to make my work lighter. Since I cannot include all the names in this short space, I would like to note with special appreciation D. Antonio Crespo, collector of art objects pertaining to Vejer, who generously shared his pictures, books and knowledge; D. Miguel Martinez del Cerro of Cádiz, known as, "the man who knows more about San Salvador than anyone else," who set me on the right path with suggested readings and introductions; D. Antonio Muñoz, a former mayor of Vejer, whose intimate and invaluable knowledge of the construction and history of the church was indispensable to this study; the priests who are in charge of the church for their permission to undertake an investigation which on many occasions disturbed the ethereal atmos-

phere which normally prevails there; and finally my husband
for his patience and understanding.

GILBERT
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NOTES

¹Spanish scholars, however, recognize the impact of Islamic art on Spain and its singular development within the country.

²Georgiana Goddard King, Pre-Romanesque Churches of Spain, Bryn Mawr Notes and Monographs VII (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Bryn Mawr College; London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1924), p. 24. See also Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta, Historia de España y su influencia en la historia universal (12 vols.; 2d ed.; Barcelona: Salvat Editores, S. A., 1953), I, 960.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of man on the Iberian peninsula can be traced almost completely within the environs of Vejer de la Frontera. The earliest records are those left on the walls of La Cueva del Tajo de las Figuras, Casas Viejas (Cádiz), some twelve miles from the village. These anthropomorphic and zoomorphic cave paintings are dim relics of the pre-history of this area. The schematized figures are said to be a product of the transition from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age, thus they were painted some time between 3000 and 1000 B.C.¹ Their divergence from Paleolithic cave paintings, such as the well-known ones of Altamira, is thought to stem from a later migration originating south of the straits, and in fact Tajo paintings relate more to those of Malta and pre-dynastic Egypt than to earlier Spanish ones.²

After men triumphed over the seas and made long voyages of conquest to new lands, the Iberian peninsula was discovered by the Phoenicians. They landed on the southern coast and established there the city of Gadir around 1000 B.C.³ The town, which today is known as Cádiz, is the capital of the province in which Vejer is found and is, perhaps, the oldest continuously inhabited city in Spain.

Of all the major peoples who have inhabited the Peninsula, only the Greeks and Celts ignored the area in which Vejer is located. The native Iberians, thought to be of two distinct cultural types,⁴ established themselves in the central plateau and in the south, which today is called Andalusia. Those in the south were the more advanced of the two, and although remains from the latter period are more common in the southeast, Vejer was also located in what has been called Turditania, the home of the southern Iberians.

The village later became the site of a fortress under the Romans, who had come to the Peninsula as allies of Saguntum in their struggle against the Carthaginians, thus opening the second Punic War. In a pattern that was to be repeated, allies became conquerors, and the Romanization of Spain began. The sea in the area of Vejer abounds in tunny fish, and the Romans exported large quantities of it to their homeland. Nearby Bolonia (Belos in Roman times) contains the remnants of a large fish processing factory from that era⁵--today the same business is carried on in the larger coastal town of Barbate, which nearly adjoins Vejer. In the old town of Belos recent excavations have revealed a temple dedicated to three gods--Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Although Roman remains in Baetica (the Roman name for the area in which Vejer is found) are very sparse, they do exist, and one could speculate that a Roman temple

may possibly have been located on the high ground where the church of the Divine Saviour stands today.

Of the barbarian hordes that came into the Peninsula through the Pyrenees, the Vandals were the first to settle in the south. Baetica of the Romans now became known as Andalusia: the name Andalusia is said to be derivative of Vandalucia.⁶ The sojourn of the Vandals was a short one, however; their exit was in sight when the Visigothic King Euric established his sway in Spain in the late fifth century. By 507 Alaric II, the son of Euric, had become the ruler of an area within the Peninsula from the Pyrenees to the Mediterranean, excluding the land of the Suevi in north-western Spain.

The Visigoths remained the longest and left the greatest heritage of all the barbarians who began crossing into Iberian soil in 499. They expelled the other groups in their advance--the Vandals fled to North Africa (429), the Alani were conquered and politically annihilated, and the Suevi, who were strongly entrenched behind a formidable mountain range, were finally overrun in 585,⁷ when Leovigild, at the end of his reign, "incorporated the Suevic kingdom of Galicia in his realm."⁸ The Visigoths were great warriors, who through separate and egalitarian laws ruled the indigenous tribes and Roman population of the country. They composed small minorities in all their conquered territories,⁹

but by liberal acceptance of prevailing ideas were able to control their predecessors, who greatly outnumbered them. Their habit of relative religious tolerance was a liberating experience to those who had long suffered persecutions at the hands of the Romans, and it was this new freedom that motivated the inhabitants of Iberia to help the tall, blond Goths in their conquest of the Peninsula. The Visigoths at first in this new territory were Arians, but conversion to orthodox Catholicism progressed until, in an effort to promote national unity, it was declared the national religion. The denial of religious freedom to religious minorities developed after the Visigoths had long been entrenched on Spanish soil and had completed their overall conversion to orthodoxy. Among the artistic introductions of the Visigoths to Spain were items typical of nomadic culture--objects portable and eclectic. Grave sites have been sources of much intricate Visigothic jewelry. Belt buckles and fibulae carried patterns of design similar to those that were later worked into stone when these peripatetic wanderers settled and built churches.

Remains of the Visigothic period are more evident in Vejer than those of earlier eras of the town's past. Within its environs two Visigothic churches remain, as do many lesser relics. Because of the general scarcity of buildings of the period, these churches are of tremendous

importance. The first, the Hermitage of Sts. Justo and Pastor, close to the neighboring town of Medina Sidonia, has long been considered the more significant of the two. It has, however, suffered many transformations. At present only two sections are considered pure Visigothic: the sacristy and the tower.¹⁰ Among the many fine examples of stone decoration here are several pieces of Visigothic origin, but these have been scattered at random throughout the church without regard to their former usage or function.

The second building, which has been the object of recent excavations, may prove to be of greater importance than the Medina Sidonia structure. Prior to the finds of 1970 this small chapel on the outskirts of Vejer called San Ambrosio had only one tie to Visigothic architecture--an inscribed column shaft dating the church (640) and naming its sponsor (Pimenio, the bishop of Medina Sidonia).¹¹

In the church of the Divine Saviour in Vejer there are four Visigothic capitals. One is located in an ajimez window behind the main altar and therefore not visible. The other three are engaged to piers that support the vaulting of the second bay of the nave. The marble shafts on which they rest may be either Visigothic or Roman.

The countryside around Vejer has also produced many relics relating to its Visigothic past. Although these as well as the churches will be discussed in greater detail in

Chapter III, mention is made of them here as an indication of the region's importance.

Another invasion of the South took place in 554, when Byzantine forces penetrated the eastern coast in response to an appeal from Athanagild for aid in his opposition to Agila, the king.¹² Seeing an opportunity to establish a stronghold on the Peninsula, the eastern monarch, Justinian, not only sent men to Athanagild's aid but issued orders as well for them to remain and to begin a colonization of the surrounding territory. They were able to absorb the area from Cartagena to Medina Sidonia and all the land extending to the coast south of that line. Since Vejer lies directly south of Medina Sidonia, it fell within the Byzantine domain. The occupation lasted for some sixty years before these newcomers were finally ousted,¹³ and while Byzantine influence eventually became an important factor in Spanish art and architecture, this circumstance was not a result of the short period of colonization.

The strongest expression in the arts, however, came from the Muslim invasion beginning in 711 when Count Julian, in an effort to gain the throne or, according to another account, to avenge a wronged daughter,¹⁴ invited Musa, the Arab governor of Africa to join forces with him against King Roderic. The Muslim leader sent General Tarik ibn Ziyad, who entered the Peninsula 60 miles east of Vejer

(a point subsequently called Gebel Tarik and today known as Gibraltar). After an ignominious routing of the Visigothic forces in the battle of Guadalete, near Vejer,¹⁵ the Muslims chose to remain--as had the Byzantines and the Romans before them. Thus Vejer fell into Arab hands and so remained for over 700 years.

Internal feuding among the Muslim conquerors continued over the forty-year period following their initial entry on Iberian soil until the Umayyad prince 'Abd-ar-Rahman I (730-788) was proclaimed Emir of al-Andalus in 756. It was during the reign of 'Abd-ar-Rahman that the Great Mosque of Cordoba was begun. A very innovative type of two-tiered support (which was without parallel in the East) was born with its construction. In later Umayyad reigns the mosque was enlarged, and during the rule of Al-Hakam II (961-976) what are considered the most beautiful of its decorations were added.

After 1008, however, there was constant internal struggle until the fall of the Umayyad dynasty. The ethnic and religious groups were too numerous and too tradition-bound to form a unified empire. The result was a fragmentation into small taifas, small weak parties, which fought among themselves until they were overwhelmed by the invading Almoravids from North Africa.

The Almoravids were a religious Berber sect called

into Spain to support the Saracen community, which found itself seriously threatened following the loss of Toledo to the Christians in 1084.¹⁶ Very devout Muslims, the Almoravids contrasted sharply with the Arabs of Andalusia, who were neither warriors nor religious fanatics but poets, artists, and aesthetes who envisioned a defeat of the Christians and a subsequent return of the Berbers to their North African homeland. The Almoravids, however, with appetites whetted by the luxury of Andalusia, stayed to do further battle and to unify the taifas which had become the typical political unit of Andalusia. Almoravid art speaks lucidly of a barbaric immersion into unaccustomed wealth. As men they were overwhelmed by the riches they now controlled, and before long their rigid religiosity also succumbed to languid luxury.¹⁷ As artists they could never dissociate wealth from decoration, so that their articulation of power became one of extravagant ornamentation. What had been a uniform melding of beauty, luxury, and wealth now became at times crudely ornate and overworked. But practiced hands soon developed Almoravid art into graceful flowing lines that were later to be appreciated for the rhythm of their design. Perhaps of all the Islamic empires to establish themselves in Spain that of the Almoravids left the scantest heritage¹⁸--not from lack of building, however, but as a result of the wrath of the Almohads, the second

wave of Berber invaders.

The Almohads, also a North African religious sect, had long been enemies of the Almoravids. Even more fanatical in their religion,¹⁹ they were not wont to follow in their brothers' footsteps. As they witnessed the collapse of the Almoravids, they knew what must be done--take over the now-weak Muslim peninsular empire and rebuild a new Islam on a firmer base than that of luxury. Their destruction of Almoravid edifices was so complete that none remain today in Spain--only some shards are left for museums. Our present knowledge of the Almoravid style comes from the two or three buildings extant in the Maghreb.²⁰ The Mosque of al-Qarawiyyin in Fez²¹ testifies to the heights of beauty Almoravid art could reach, and the following story in Rawd al-Qirtas expresses the Almohad reaction to that art:

When in the year 540=1145 Abd al-Mu'min was to enter victoriously into Fez, they had to cover with gesso, hastily and at night,...the admirable decorations, encrusted with gold, of blue and of other colors, that covered the cupola in front of the mihrab of the mosque of al-Qarawiyyin, a work of such beauty that the faithful were distracted from their prayers, attracted by the brilliance of the paintings.²²

Almohad artists, more severely restricted than those of other Muslim sects, concentrated on unity rather than decoration. The result was what is considered one of the most beautiful examples of Eastern expression in the Occident. The minimum ornamentation was always so placed

as to allow the maximum appreciation of its beauty. The limitations became challenges in which individual elements sang out their leitmotifs until they complemented the whole. Unfortunately the Almohads worked in relatively perishable materials, and so their artistic expressions dissolved in time--if not by the hands of men then in natural decay. The exquisite gesso decoration worked by Muslim hands was perhaps the most transient of all. Torres Balbás has written, "It is undoubtable that during the Almohad domination a profound decadence continued in the Peninsula, almost forgotten was the technique of stone and marble carving."²³

The last Muslim stronghold in Spain was that of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada. Due to the diplomacy of Muhammad ibn-Yusuf ibn Nasr and his alliance to the kings of Castile this final outpost remained intact for over two hundred years after the Reconquest had absorbed all other Muslim territory. Among existing Nasrid remains is perhaps the most impressive of all the Muslim buildings in Spain--that gem of domestic architecture known as the Alhambra.

The Muslim influence in Vejer was more pronounced than that of any other group that invaded the Peninsula. The aspect of the town is totally that of an Arab city--only the souk, or public market, is lacking. The contour of the land determined the plan of the village--narrow

winding streets that thread their way up and down the undulating hill on which Vejer sits. The continuous phalanxes of whitewashed dwellings with thick walls and small pierced windows speak of Eastern antecedents. Beyond the uncompromising facades that front the small streets, patios dappled with brilliantly colored flowers that pose a sharp contrast with the walls and floors, and huge grape vines, heavy with fruit, provide protection from the same hot sun that bakes the North African coast, lying just across the strait and clearly visible from Vejer.

Never once during their long sojourn in Spain did the Muslim conquerors control the entire Peninsula. In a small area in the northwest, protected by the Pico de Europa mountains, a band of men resisted the Muslim forces. Thus developed the nucleus of an ever-increasing power that gradually, year by year, reconquered the Arab-held territory in Spain, replacing the crescent with the cross. The Reconquest, as this movement was called, reached Vejer in 1250. The town's advantageous location made it an excellent outpost against the remaining Muslim kingdom of Granada. Thus Christian soldiers not only were stationed within the village but also were given land in the surrounding countryside.²⁴

There are several towns in this district still called de la Frontera (of the border), of which Jerez is the chief. The others are Bejer [Vejer], Chiclana,

Arcos, and Morón. They all appear to have been border towns delimiting the kingdom of Granada in the thirteenth century, with Christian troops garrisoned in them under the terms of Al Ahmar's alliance with San Fernando.²⁵

The reconquest of Vejer under Ferdinand III (later known as San Fernando) was of short duration, but the "heroic resistance"²⁶ put up by the Christians when it was retaken indicates that the village was quickly resettled with a large Christian population. The king conferred conquered areas in Andalusia on different religious orders as a means of expediting the repopulation. Vejer was given to the Order of Santa María, and it later fell into the hands of the Order of Santiago when the former order disappeared. Still, one must surmise that the Muslim population remained, for although it may have become an Hispanic-Christian community in a religious-ethnological sense, culturally and visually it remained more oriental than occidental. Until only thirty-five years ago the women of Vejer still covered their faces. And although western dress has replaced the cobijado of the past, the general character of the town retains its Moorish aspect. Guidebooks speak of its Arab flavor, and in 1884 Pedro de Madrazo wrote of it as "the Moorish village of Vejer."²⁷

In the wake of the military victories achieved by the forces of the Reconquest came religious victories of sorts. As the conquering armies swept into one village

after another the existing mosques were immediately exorcised and given over to Christian services of thanks to the omnipotent power that had sided with them in their struggle to reestablish control over the Peninsula. Existing mosques were a constant reminder of Muslim tenets; the newly repopulated villages needed a material expression of their Christian faith, and the people wanted temples that would conform to the rites of the Christian service. It was at this time that the Gothic style, born and developed in France, spread quickly southward into Spain.

At the same time that the Almohads were exercising their sobering influence on Islamic art, the Cistercians were influencing the art of Christianity, notably with St. Bernard's preaching against the pomp and splendor of the earlier church.²⁸ It was these Cistercian monks and their prodigious building program that first introduced Gothic art to the Peninsula. And it was from these monks and their austere monasteries that the builders of the Reconquest churches got their first view of current European architecture. The style was immediately recognized as the ultimate answer to the Christian need in Spain. The contrast with the mosques they were to replace was symbolic of the change that was to come there: whereas the mosques were low and mainly flat roofed, the Gothic churches stressed verticality, and whereas the south and Mecca determined

the orientation of mosques, east and Jerusalem determined that of churches.

The stone construction needed to support the stress of Gothic vaulting was not conducive to rapid building, and thus a compromise was made. By utilizing the less costly and more rapid building methods of the Muslims for the body of the church and incorporating what Gothic features money and time would afford, a new style was created that has come to be known as mudéjar. Initially the craftsmen were mostly the newly conquered Muslims, but as the style developed Christians with an appreciation of Muslim art joined in the creation of the Eastern patterns. Mudéjar became the language of small parochial churches, and its spread along the route of the Reconquest was always concurrent with the construction of the large pure Gothic structures that were rising in the principal cities of Spain, where resources and ideas were more bountiful. Vejer's San Salvador is basically a mudéjar expression, but as the village later grew so did the dreams of the men who inhabited it. Two centuries later, about 1525, an attempt was made to replace the old fabric with a new one of purely Gothic design. The construction was slow and stretched out over a long period, and as new styles appeared on the Peninsula the builders of Vejer tried to incorporate them in their church. It was never finished, nor was a smooth transition ever worked out between the existing styles. Today two

broken walls meet in rough connection unfinished for three hundred years.

The Renaissance passed Vejer with a brief pause. The church structure was only slightly altered to accommodate the new style. One chapel was redesigned along more classic lines, and a new main altar was raised which sits incongruously amidst the most Muslim part of the church. The town also echoed the church's inadequate tribute to the style of humanism by adding classical portals here and there on older facades.

The Baroque epoch in Vejer is only slightly more significant than that of the Renaissance. It gave to San Salvador a new side portal. The "House of the Inquisition," situated on the main plaza, bears salomonic columns as part of its ornate facade, but the strongest expression of the period is found in the interior of the small church of Rosario, whose basic, smooth mudéjar lines were covered with cupids, shields, and garlands of flowers moulded from gesso.

As a result of wars, lack of money, or even possibly of interest, San Salvador has become a potpourri of centuries of succeeding architectural ideas that fortunately never quite obliterated all the vestiges of the styles preceding them. The general impression it gives is Gothic, a reflection of visions and desires too magnificent

for rural pockets; in reality it is a melange of eloquent themes started and never finished by artists and artisans denied the opportunity to see their plans brought to completion.

In recent years yet one more wave of building has invaded Vejer. The twentieth century is speaking clearly. Small openings are expanded and covered with plate glass to display the veneer of opulence the past few years have created. Modern pisos rise with their pots of plastic plants, and automobiles paint the cal covered walls with bands of blue and yellow and red as they squeeze through the paths built for donkeys and small carts. Yet the voice of Islam still speaks--subdued and subservient to the cross that conquered it and that rises from the church in an expression of overlordship but confident that many more generations will pass before its imprint is erased.

NOTES

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³Antonio García y Bellido, Colonizaciones púnicas y griega, Vol. I of Ars Hispaniae (18 vols.; Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1947), p. 137. See also Rafael Altamira, A History of Spanish Civilization, trans. by P. Volkov (New York: Biblio and Tannen, 1968), pp. 15-16.

⁴Altamira, Spanish Civilization, p. 17.

⁵Ibid., p. 32. The author speaks of the importance of the industry of salting fish in Roman Spain.

⁶Friedrich Rahlves, Cathedrals and Monasteries of Spain, trans. by James C. Palmes (1st Amer. ed.; New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1966), p. 21.

⁷Altamira, Spanish Civilization, p. 39. See also Rafael Altamira, A History of Spain From the Beginnings to the Present Day, trans. by Muna Lee (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1949), p. 79.

⁸E. A. Thompson, The Goths in Spain (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 323.

⁹Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰Vincente Lampérez y Romea, Historia de la arquitectura cristiana española en la edad media según el estudio de los elementos y los monumentos (3 vols.; 2d ed.; Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, S. A., 1930), I, 202.

¹¹Enrique Romero de Torres, Provincia de Cádiz (1908-1909), Catalogo monumental de España (2 vols.; n.p.: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, 1934), p. 264.

¹² Helmut Schlunk, Arte visigodo, Vol. II of Ars Hispaniae (18 vols.; Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1947), p. 247. See also Thompson, Goths, p. 323, and Altamira, History of Spain, p. 79.

¹³ Helmut Schlunk, "Relaciones entre la península ibérica y Bizancio durante la época visigoda," Archivo español de arqueología, XVIII (1945), 182. The author says, " . . . in 612 Sisebut succeeded in expelling the imperial forces from the Mediterranean coast." Altamira (Spanish Civilization, p. 39) in contrast says, "In the beginning of the 7th century the Gothic king Suintila drove them out of Spain." Thompson (Goths, p. 168) concurs with, "Suintila's most striking success was his final expulsion of the Byzantines from Spain."

¹⁴ W. Montgomery Watt and Pierre Cachia, A History of Islamic Spain (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965 [Doubleday Anchor Book No. A601]), p. 130.

¹⁵ Ballesteros y Beretta, Historia de España, I, 881.

¹⁶ Watt and Cachia, Islamic Spain, p. 84.

¹⁷ Louis Bertrand and Sir Charles Petrie, The History of Spain (2d ed.; London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), p. 99.

¹⁸ Fernando Chueca Goitia, Historia de la arquitectura española: edad antigua y edad media (Madrid: Editorial Dossat, S. A., 1965), p. 264. The author states, "Little or nothing remained in Spain of Almoravid construction."

¹⁹ William C. Atkinson, A History of Spain and Portugal (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1960 [Pelican Book No. A464]), p. 55.

²⁰ Leopoldo Torres Balbás, Artes almorávide y almohade, Artes y artistas (Madrid: Instituto Diego Velázquez del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1955), p. 10.

²¹ Ibid., Illustration 6 shows the cupola of the al-Qarawiyyin mosque.

²²Leopoldo Torres Balbás, "Las yeserías descubiertas recientemente en las Huelgas de Burgos," Al-Andalus, VIII (Madrid-Granada, 1943), 253.

²³Leopoldo Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, arte nazarí, arte mudéjar, Vol. IV of Ars Hispaniae (18 vols.; Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1949), p. 52.

²⁴"Vejer," Diccionario geográfico de España, 1961.

²⁵Bernhard Whishaw and Ellen M. Whishaw, Arabic Spain: Sidelights on Her History and Art (London: John Murray, 1912), p. 299.

²⁶M. Agulló, Vejer de la Frontera, Cádiz, Spain (n.p.: Subsecretaría de Turismo, Dirección General de Promoción del Turismo, n.d.).

²⁷Pedro de Madrazo, España sus monumentos y artes-- su naturaleza é historia: Seville y Cádiz (Barcelona: Editorial de Daniel Cortezo y Ca., 1884), p. 768.

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CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION AND PLAN OF CHURCH

The Divine Saviour is a rectangular, three-aisle church with a square presbytery and side aisles terminating in square chapels [Fig. 1]. There are three chapels on the north side and one on the south, where an additional entrance and a tower are found. Although the plan seems to indicate a transept in which two chapels [Figs. 2o and 2p] form the arms, the spatial concept within the building contradicts this; the emphasis is longitudinal, and the presence of a cross axis is obscured. The church underwent several phases of construction, with a major style change dividing the building at the juncture of the second and third bays [Fig. 2e]. The low roofline of the older part of the church is dramatically raised at this point, where the addition of a clearstory to the four newer bays of the nave brings not only height but also light. The basilica-type arrangement of the building is not obvious when one views it from the exterior because of the houses, bars, and stables affixed to the basic structure over the centuries. Only the west facade and south side show the true plan [Figs. 4 and 5]; the north and east sides are lost in the clustering of forms on the periphery of the church (an occurrence not atypical in Spain) [Figs. 6 and 7].

Examining the building from a chronological viewpoint, one begins with the apse. Its walls of rubble construction form a perfect square which is raised four steps above the floor level of the rest of the Church. The ceiling, composed of ribbed vaulting, is higher than other parts of the older section of the church [Fig. 8]. A massive exterior buttress placed in the center of the east wall of the apse overlays one third of its area [Fig. 2a], and there is also a remnant of a similar buttress on the north side [Figs. 2b and 9]. The decorations both inside and out of the presbytery are of stone worked in the mudéjar style. The interior east wall contains a seventeenth-century altar which obscures an ajimez window that is also blocked from view on the exterior by the buttress [Figs. 10 and 11]. The north and south walls have pointed brick arches that lead to the adjoining side chapels, and on the west side the triumphal arch leading to the nave is also pointed [Fig. 12]. In the north wall, east of the pointed arch, a doorway with steps leads into the private rooms of the priests [Fig. 2w]. Under the steps (which are wooden and can be raised) another stairway leads to the crypt below.

Because the church has been built on the ridge of a hill that runs north and south, parts of the building acquire a depth not found in the rest of the structure. The south door is level with the street; however, to enter

the west door, which is about twelve feet above street level, one must climb several steps and a slope. The crypt under the capilla mayor is another example of this multi-level construction. Seemingly below ground, it is actually on the street level on the east side. Figure 13 shows a rough cross-section of how the church straddles the ridge.

The first two bays of the nave adjoining the apse are also part of the older construction [Fig. 2d]. Six stone piers support arches separating this portion of the nave from the side aisles. The two arches nearer the apse are of brick and pointed, whereas the following pair, although also of brick construction, are round [Fig. 14]. The six piers carry the sexpartite ribbed vaulting that covers this portion of the nave [Fig. 15]. Engaged to the piers are marble columns facing each other across the nave. The first two columns by the apse and the first column on the south side of the following bay are capped with simple mudéjar capitals [Fig. 16], while the other three carry Visigothic capitals with a strong Byzantine influence [Figs. 17, 18, and 19].

The side aisles adjoining this early part of the church are also of an older construction than the west front yet not so old as the apse and first two bays of the nave just described. The older aisle, on the north side

[Fig. 2k], is covered by a pointed barrel vault which terminates in a square chapel with quadripartite ribbed vaulting [Figs. 20 and 21]. The chapel decoration repeats in a simplified form the sawtooth pattern and the colonnette supported brackets found in the apse. The south aisle [Fig. 2h] ends in a matching chapel, but the roof of this aisle has quite beautiful groined vaulting [Fig. 22].

The old eastern section of the church ends abruptly west of the second bay. A rebuilding (never completed) of the west end apparently begun in the early sixteenth century literally breaks into the eastern half without any attempt at transition [Figs. 2e and 23]. Probably the east end was to be replaced bit by bit by the new Flamboyant Gothic but lack of funds, conflict, or some other unknown reason (the records having all been destroyed) prevented its continuation. The cessation of work was so abrupt that the point of contact between the new and the old portions of the church was left jagged and rough, with no attempt whatever at transition or even finishing and thus for nearly four hundred years a rather lugubrious air of disappointed expectancy has surrounded this materialized confrontation between one era and another.

In the new section of San Salvador one finds clustered piers carrying the ribs that form the Flamboyant Gothic vaulting above the western nave [Fig. 24]. The piers divide

the basilica into three aisles with slightly pointed arches, above which are placed double clearstory windows [Figs. 25 and 26]. The elevation of the west nave is of greater height than that of the side aisles and also greater than that of the two bays of the older nave which it adjoins. The quadripartite ribbed vaulting of the side aisles [Fig. 26] is the same height as the vaulting of the aisles which it meets in the old section.

The church has four side chapels. In the older east section there is one chapel on the south side opposite the first bay of the nave [Fig. 2p]. Its entrance is through an Isabeline Gothic arch of stone [Fig. 27]. Within the chapel a door, located on the west side, connects to a small storeroom [Fig. 2q], beyond which is the stairway to the belltower [Fig. 2r]. Beyond the stairway in the same westerly direction is the porch to the south entrance of the church [Fig. 2s]. This portico is opposite the third bay of the nave--in the Flamboyant Gothic part of the church. The entrance to the portico was through a stone lancet arch which has been filled in and fitted with a smaller doorway below [Fig. 28]. On the north side of the church, in the older section, the chapel opposite the first bay has a simple equilateral arch of stone [Fig. 29]. This chapel is a very important one in the church since it is dedicated to the Virgin of the Olives, the patrona of the

village. Directly next to the Chapel of the Virgin and toward the west is a newly remodeled chapel. It once obviously bore a Gothic stone arch like the other chapels, but it has since been cut to follow Renaissance lines [Fig. 30]. The chapel interior differs from the other two in that it is completely faced in marble whereas the others are simple gal covered rooms, and it carries a dome in contrast to the quadripartite vaults [Figs. 2n and 3l]. The final chapel is found on the north side immediately to the left upon entering the doorway in the west facade [Fig. 2m]. It is simple, of no particular style, and it is used to house the baptismal font of the church [Fig. 32]. Unlike the previous chapels its entrance arch is not faced with stone.

The placement of the Gothic side chapels constructed during the sixteenth century seems rather arbitrary. Only the two chapels that face each other across the first bay of the nave are balanced. Another stone-faced arch that may or may not have been intended as entrance to yet another chapel has been partially sealed off and replaced with a door to the sacristy [Fig. 2j]. An upper window above the arch indicates that at one time this was an outside wall [Fig. 33]. The northward continuation of the building from this point becomes a hodgepodge of rooms that extend to the street. They consist of offices, a dining room, vestment

rooms, sitting rooms, etc. for the clergy [Fig. 2w]. Additions to this area were made as recently as 1970, and some sort of minor construction was evident here in the spring of 1971.

The exterior of the church presents an odd appearance in that each side represents a different era of construction, and thus there are four entirely different facades. Beginning with the west front, one enters the building through a twentieth-century Gothic portal built in 1970 [Fig. 4]. It is faced with stone to match that of the building around it; however, the older stone is not merely a veneer as is the new, but solid. The light coloring of the new stone is in harsh contrast with the dark gray of the old, but no doubt a more harmonious blending will occur with the passage of time.

On the south side as one moves counterclockwise around the church is a line of Gothic buttresses which extend to the Baroque porch entrance that separates the newer part of the building from the older [Fig. 34]. Beyond the porch to the east is a tower whose base dates from the church's mudéjar beginnings (or Islamic, if it is part of the remains of an ancient minaret, as has been suggested).¹ The church walls beyond show traces of windows and arches later filled in or sealed off without apparent reason [Fig. 5]. As one advances to the southeast corner he sees

there the only visible exterior part of the older section of the building, which extends to the central east-end buttress [Fig. 7]. The lower part of the east end of the church is enclosed by a high whitewashed wall that conceals the door which leads from the crypt to the street. In the upper part of this eastern side is visible the little bit of mudéjar exterior stone ornamentation that borders the buttress. From this point of the apse on to the northeast corner and continuing throughout the entire north side, the church is lost from sight. The whitewashed honeycomb rooms that are affixed to this portion of the building present the aspect of a street of houses rather than of the imposing church which they conceal [Fig. 6].

In the middle of the north side is a new gate (constructed in 1970) that leads through a garden [Fig. 2v] of the same date and into the rooms which house the offices and reception chambers [Fig. 35]. A window with a horseshoe arch within an alfiz overlooking the garden from one of the offices is a twentieth-century attempt to preserve something of the Moorish aspect of the village [Fig. 36].

As one proceeds along the north side he must pass under an archway connecting a house across the street to the buildings adjoining the church [Fig. 37]. The small room above the arch is part of the house property. Beyond the arch in the northwest corner is an interesting adjunct

to the church--a stable [Fig. 2u]. However, this particular stable obviously has more significance than its facade reveals: the horses are quartered in a room with heavy piers supporting rounded arches and groined vaults [Fig. 38]. This northwest portion of the church is referred to as the "pantheon" by the local inhabitants of the village, who claim that the name is simply traditional and without import. Nevertheless in small isolated villages such as Vejer the everyday language of the people frequently provides clues to the past.² A possible explanation for the stable and origin of the name can be found in a text by Georgiana Goddard King in which she states that, "The pantheon or separate burial-chapel at the west, which was to persist in Spanish churches, down to the Renaissance and after, was originally a compromise with the canon that forbade interments in the church."³ Don Antonio Muñoz, a former mayor whose interest in the church far exceeds that of the average vejeriego, offered the information that under the area where the steps and ramp lead up to the west-front entrance an ossuary of sorts had been discovered. The human bones found there were extremely large--larger than those of the local villagers. It is tempting to hypothesize that these were Visigothic burials, but such interments in Spain--unlike the discovery in Vejer--were normally in the form of individual stone-lined graves

[e.g., Figure 39 of the graves found at San Ambrosio church outside of Vejer]. That the hillside was once a necropolis might easily be possible--especially the area near the church would be both appropriate and traditional.

Returning momentarily to the northwest corner, one finds a small cantina [Figs. 2t and 40] adjoining both the aforementioned stable and the remains of one of the towers [Fig. 2x] of the old city walls. At right angles to the west facade, is an entrance to another section of private rooms for the priests [Figs 2y and 41]. The Spanish custom of building endlessly onto previously existing structures here manifests itself splendidly.

A prominent feature of the outer aspect of the church is the unfinished state of the upper section, or roof line. That the interior remained in a rough state of incompleteness has been noted earlier; this same feature exists outside as well. Attached to each pier of the newer western section of the church, a flying buttress arches toward the outer walls of the side aisles [Fig. 42]. But the customary majestic rise of Gothic pinnacles, crockets and spires is missing--the tops of these buttresses end abruptly in a rough and blunt edge, as though they had been truncated by a gigantic scimitar [Fig. 34]. Gothic verticality is lost in the Divine Saviour, as it is in many other Spanish Gothic churches, which have been noted for

their massiveness and relative emphasis of the horizontal (anathema to French architects), and this additional cutting away of upward movement in San Salvador gives the church a very heavy, solid mien.

The one unbroken vertical line of San Salvador is found in the bell tower, contiguous with the south wall. The masonry of the lower level of this structure was obviously part of the older mudéjar section of the church [Fig. 5]. Its location is at the point where the old part of the church and the new meet. A Moorish window in the lower half is also in keeping with the stone construction of that style in the church; a round-headed window in the upper section of the square tower is of quite a different character. The entire structure is capped by a tile-covered pyramid, which is a common adjunct to church steeples in this area of Andalusia [Fig. 43].

Moving back toward the facade, one notes that the clearstory windows were either never completed or revised to meet later taste or usage. The stone tracery, visible on the inside [Fig. 44], has been filled with mortar, and the present windows are much smaller than the frame built for them; an additional filling in with mortar has created a rectangular area in which modern metal casement windows have been placed [Fig. 45].

The decoration that adorns the Church of the Divine

Saviour is mainly to be found in the interior. Specific examples will be discussed in the chapters on Visigothic, mudéjar, and Gothic styles. The exterior decoration is slight. Had the church been finished, the upper region would doubtless have borne gargoyles and other Gothic ornamentation on its spires and buttresses. However, what exists today is simply the tracery of eight windows, the mudéjar stone decorations found on the east buttress of the apse, and remnants of a north apse buttress on the north wall with carved stonework.

This then is the parochial church of Vejer, partaking of the styles of various eras. To what extent each is expressed, and the chronological sequence in which they occur will be discussed in the succeeding chapters.

NOTES

¹Antonio Gallego y Burín, La destrucción del tesoro artístico de España (Granada: n.p., 1938), p. 66. See also Agulló, Vejer and Romero de Torres, Cádiz, p. 396.

²I have traced some of the local customs to Moorish origins.

³King, Pre-Romanesque Churches, p. 91.

CHAPTER III

VISIGOTHIC ELEMENTS

The "founder of Visigothic rule in Spain"¹ was king Euric, but it was not until his son, Alaric II, was defeated by Clovis, the Frankish ruler, that the vast peninsular holdings of the Visigoths were established. They included Tarraconensis, Carthaginiensis, Lusitania and Baetica (Roman nomenclature for the four main provinces of the Peninsula). The town of Vejer de la Frontera fell within the jurisdiction of Baetica.

"From their new-won lands the Goths were quick to absorb the elements of the culture they found therein."² Thus the churches the Visigoths built were the churches of the lands they had conquered.³ They adapted many ideas from Byzantium which reached Spain via three sources: in the fifth century from Constantinople, in the sixth century from Ravenna, and in the seventh century from Italy and Sicily.⁴ In Andalusia the Byzantine element came from direct contact rather than through secondary sources--the southeast portion of this area of Spain was actually in Byzantine hands from 554 until 612. It has been generally concluded, however, that the effects of this intrusion were slight and that other sources of Byzantine infiltration into peninsular art were more substantial. Its importance

to this paper is that Vejer did fall within this Byzantine domain and, as we shall later see, the Visigothic capitals in the Divine Saviour church are a truncated Byzantine style.

Of those Visigothic churches standing today in Spain, the Byzantine Greek cross seems to be the predominate plan. There are contemporary sources which tell of wondrous temples now lost to mankind, but extant churches are those that are located in remote areas neither exposed to the destruction of marauding enemy forces nor rebuilt in newer styles. These are simple little country churches which in the course of their long histories may at one time have served as barns and storage bins or may simply have been plastered over for continued rural religious usage since remodeling was too costly or troublesome. Of the twenty-three odd churches definitely listed in Historia de la arquitectura cristiana española en la edad media⁵ as Visigothic, perhaps four or five are really complete, and only one has properties that can be related to those of Vejer.

These buildings, rustic in appearance, were usually constructed of large hewn stones, never of brick,⁶ though this material was on occasion used as an adjunct to stone, as in the dome of Santa Comba de Bande.⁷ The decorations were usually composed of helixes, crosses, spirals, stars,

and rosettes; twin-animal and grapevine motifs are also frequently encountered. These designs might be found anywhere in the church, but their most common locations are in interior and exterior friezes and in the capitals. The columns were always free standing---never engaged.⁸ The impost block was prevalent and sometimes bore decorations similar to those of the capitals. "The capitals were Roman, Corinthian or Composite types worked with characteristic dryness and roughness, or according to the Syrian tradition adopted by the Byzantines of cubic form with adornment of very low relief."⁹

The Visigoths were impressed by the art and architecture of their Roman predecessors. Because their skills were not so great, their attempts to reproduce Roman work often resulted in a barbaric copy of an intricate design. The Roman work was simplified to a shadow of its former self in Visigothic hands. What was high relief became very low relief, and the pattern on deeply cut Corinthian capitals became a vague reminiscence of acanthus leaves. A number of new capital forms joined the basic orders used by the Romans so that a great variety appeared in Visigothic times. Very stylized anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, and geometric figures were combined with the vegetal designs of earlier work, two dominant new motifs being the eagle and the cross.

That Vejer and the area around it composed a thriving Visigothic community is evident by the many traces of its seventh-century inhabitants. Of special interest among these relics are the mosaics discovered some fifty years ago on a nearby farm where the favorite eagle motif is found in two separate areas--by itself in the mosaic flooring of a former stable, and in the fields, where in a nearly complete mosaic floor the eagle appears as a brand of sorts on the hindquarters of a horse [Fig. 46].¹⁰

In the sanctuary of Oliva, a chapel on the outskirts of Vejer where is kept the image of the Virgin of the Olives, the patron saint of the village, one finds in the vestry adjoining the altar a pedestal that bears inscriptions on two sides--one Roman and the other Visigothic. The translation of the Visigothic side reads,

In the name of our Lord, Jesus. Here are concealed reliques of the martyr saints Esteban, Servandi, Germani, Justa, and Rufina on the first day of January of the era 712 (674 A.D.), seventh year of the pontificate of Theoderacis.¹¹

The legends concerning the finding of the stone are numerous, but if one can exclude the miracles and try to establish something credible from the hearsay evidence, which is all that exists, it would appear that the stone was found during the construction of the highway that runs in front of the sanctuary and was carried thence to its present resting place in the vestry.

Of greater importance is the almost inaccessible Hermitage of San Ambrosio, located in the countryside between Vejer and the sea (approximately three miles inland). Until 1970 this hermitage appeared to be a mudéjar church either built on the site of a former Visigothic one or merely incorporating Visigothic capitals and columns found elsewhere. Very recent excavations, however, reveal what appears to be a Visigothic sanctuary with graves beneath and beyond the mudéjar apse [Fig. 39]. Pending publication of the results of this extraordinary find, nothing more can be stated other than that there did exist a Visigothic church very near the village of Vejer.

A second church--one that has been thoroughly studied¹²--is found in the outskirts of the town of Medina Sidonia, approximately sixteen miles north of Vejer, whence resided the dukes of Medina Sidonia, who controlled Vejer. The church (or, more properly, hermitage) was rebuilt in the sixteenth century,¹³ and has apparently undergone several other changes (some unique, as can be seen by the use of capitals at either end of a column shaft [Fig. 47]) since it was first built in 630 during the reign of the Visigothic king Suintila. Within the building are

...four Visigothic capitals over imbedded columns; one of these is an ancient altar, with an inscription, which puts the dedication of the church, in

the era 668 (630 A.D.) of the bishop of Medina Sidonia, Pimenio.¹⁴

This inscription relates the Medina Sidonia Hermitage of Saints Justo and Pastor to that of San Ambrosio, where imbedded in a wall is an inscribed column shaft dating the church and naming Pimenio (see page 12). Both were founded by a prelate dedicated to erecting monuments who is also known by his signature on documents from the Council of Toledo.¹⁵

Considering the dearth of Visigothic remains within the Peninsula, the mosaic floors of a country villa revealing a rather grand dwelling and the two small chapels within the area argue in favor of a relatively large Visigothic population. In view of these residua, it is possible, in fact probable, that another, larger, Visigothic church existed in Vejer where San Salvador stands today. Limited space within towns often necessitated the destruction and reconstruction of existing buildings. The site of San Salvador, the highest ground in Vejer, would have been the obvious choice for a place of worship. There is no proof, of course, that a building earlier than that which stands today did exist. The only hints of Visigothic origin appear in the three capitals of the second bay of the nave and the capital located in the geminate window behind the reredos of the main altar. These few Visigothic

relics could possibly have been culled from the buildings in the countryside previously discussed. Conversely, they could also attest to the existence of still another building not necessarily located on the site of San Salvador but elsewhere.

Comparison of the relics seemingly indicates either that an earlier, Visigothic church existed on the site of San Salvador or that an unknown church in that style was in the environs. The capitals of San Ambrosio [Fig. 48] follow a pattern Georgiana Goddard King considered inevitably Spanish Visigothic [Fig. 49].¹⁶ They surmount columns of two types--the monolith and shafts built of several drums [Figs. 50 and 51]. The monolithic marble ones could easily be, and most probably are, reused Roman column shafts.¹⁷ The Visigothic capitals in the Hermitage of Saints Justo and Pastor are further examples of barbaric representations of Roman Corinthian ones. The column shafts are as various as the capitals--that is, Roman, Visigothic, and Muslim. And although comparisons become less clear when one considers the eroded state and unconventional usage of the relics in this chapel, the Visigothic capitals [Fig. 52] do relate with those of San Ambrosio. On the other hand, the Visigothic capitals found in San Salvador are unique [Figs. 53, 54, and 55]. The inverted trunk design shows a strong Byzantine influence, yet the decoration and the

elongated shape are unlike any others in this style found on the Peninsula. They are thus not only distinct from the capitals found in the two nearby hermitages but also from Byzantine ones found elsewhere in Spain. For comparison with the latter, one can study the sixth or seventh-century Byzantine capitals found in Barcelona [Fig. 56]. The similarity of the Barcelona capitals to those of San Vitale, Ravenna, as well as those of Hagia Sofia in Istanbul, is so strong that some scholars suggest they entered Spain as booty from Sicily in the thirteenth century.¹⁸ Closer in proximity, but not style, to Vejer is the Byzantine church of Aljezares, dating from the time of Justinian rule of the sixth century in southern Spain.¹⁹ The Byzantine finds there represent, " . . . the architectural style, not of Constantinople itself, but of Byzantine Africa."²⁰

If Vejer was not influenced by these obvious sources, then perhaps one can explain the capitals of San Salvador as a local vernacular of Byzantine expression. By comparison with another provincial Visigothic church, San Pedro de la Nave, one can see how localism rather than conformity is the answer. San Pedro de la Nave is a seventh-century church (built during the reign of King Egica, 687-701)²¹ of northern Spain--the province of Zamora. Although the capitals are of a shape obviously Byzantine, the decoration is pure Visigothic. The use of helixes, stars,

rosettes, and crosses [Fig. 57] is an example of the purity of the Visigothic style, whereas the Daniel in the Lion's den and other historiated capitals offer a local touch [Fig. 58]. The column bases in San Pedro de la Nave are of interest because their shape and type of decoration resemble somewhat one Visigothic capital found in the second bay in San Salvador [Figs. 55 and 59]. This particular capital differs in size and shape from the others in the bay. On the other hand the Vejer capital may be an eroded sample of Georgiana Goddard King's Spanish Visigothic capital [Fig. 49].

The shape of the Vejer capitals leads one to speculate that perhaps their original function was not as capitals but rather as dosserets or impost blocks.²² Another arguable factor is the Maltese cross found among the low relief decorations. The cross symbol frequently occurs in a stilt-block.²³

A third type of Visigothic capital is found in the geminate window behind the altar of San Salvador. Unfortunately the pictures of this capital are not very clear (and through photographs is the only way it can be viewed without dismantling the altar), but the style appears to be another variant of Visigothic origin, since the basic lines do not follow any of those usually associated with Roman imitations. However, the entasis of the shaft is

quite pronounced, and thus it could possibly be a reused Roman column. There is no available information as to material or size--merely two photographs [Figs. 10 and 11] taken at the time repair work was done to the altar.

Although large stonework is indicative of Visigothic construction, one cannot call the stone construction of the piers of the nave in San Salvador Visigothic. The most obvious feature contradicting this line of reasoning is the placement of the columns and capitals. The columns are engaged; and unless the church of Vejer is unique in this respect, the piers cannot be considered an example of Visigothic work since superimposed columns were never used (see page 42). The closest thing to an engaged Visigothic column is what one finds at San Pedro de la Nave, which has its columns next to the wall but not actually adjoining it.

The bases of the Vejer columns are interesting in that they are built up in a pyramid reminiscent also of San Pedro de la Nave work, but in this case undecorated. The use of these raised plinths on which the column shafts rest would probably indicate that the columns were previously used and brought in from elsewhere--as were those in the mosque in Córdoba. The solution at Córdoba of the problem of how to utilize columns that were too short was a two-tiered aqueduct-style of placement; in Vejer the problem

was solved by means of the pyramidal mortar extension [Fig. 18].

The Visigothic elements in Vejer are few, but significant in the dating of the church. The incorporation of brick in the foundation of the older section of the church indicates clearly that the early building postdates Visigothic work (see page 41). The question still remaining is whether these few Visigothic pieces found within the church indicate an earlier structure on this site or merely a reusing of architectural details from other buildings in the environs of Vejer.

¹Pedro de Palol and Max Hirmer, Early Medieval Art in Spain (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., n.d.), p. 13.

²Hugh Braun, Historical Architecture: The Development of Structure and Design (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1953), p. 167.

³Schlunk, "Relaciones," pp. 178-180. The author feels that Visigothic influence on architecture and sculpture was slight. In contrast read King, Pre-Romanesque Churches, p. 57.

⁴Schlunk, "Relaciones," p. 203.

⁵Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, I, 167.

⁶Ibid., p. 143.

⁷Chueca Goitia, Arquitectura español, plate 30e.

⁸Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, I, 145.

⁹Lozoya, Arte hispánico, I, 180.

¹⁰"Vejer de la Frontera," Boletín de la Comisión Provincial de Monumentos Históricos y Artísticos de Cádiz, II (1921), 59-62.

¹¹Romero de Torres, Cádiz, p. 273.

¹²Helmut Schlunk, "La Basílica de Alcalá de los Gazules (Cádiz)," Archivo español de arqueología, XVIII (1945), 81. See also Romero de Torres, Cádiz, pp. 263ff.

¹³Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, I, 202.

¹⁴Ibid. Although the author speaks of "imbedded columns" and a "Roman altar," what one sees today in the hermitage does not correspond. The engaged columns are not all Visigothic (some are free standing) and the altar is an engraved pier.

¹⁵Schlunk, "Alcalá de los Gazules," p. 81.

¹⁶King, Pre-Romanesque Churches, pp. 38-39.

¹⁷Schlunk, "Alcalá de los Gazules," p. 81.

¹⁸Schlunk, Arte visigodo, p. 244.

¹⁹C. de Mergelina, "La iglesia bizantina de Aljezares," Archivo español de arqueología, XIV (1940), 2-32.

²⁰Thompson, Goths, p. 331.

²¹Palol and Hirmer, Early Medieval Art, p. 16. See also Manuel Gomez-Moreno y Martínez, "San Pedro de la Nave, iglesia visigoda," Boletín de la Sociedad Castellana de Excursiones, II (May, 1906), 366.

²²For examples see Arthur Kingsley Porter, Medieval Architecture: Its Origins and Development (2 vols.; New York: Hacker Art Books, 1969), I, 101; and José Pijoán, Summa Artis: historia general del arte (23 vols.; 4th ed.; Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, S. A., 1961), VII, 354.

²³For examples see figures B, C, D, and E of Banister Fletcher, A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method (17th ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), p. 300.

CHAPTER IV

MUSLIM ELEMENTS

The possibility that San Salvador retains parts of a supposed former mosque on whose site it stands today¹ requires a brief explanation of Muslim architecture as prelude to mudéjar (discussed in Chapter V). The Muslim remains within the Peninsula express the interests and artistic abilities or practices of four distinct groups--the Umayyads, the Almoravids, the Almohads, and the Nasrids. Córdoba and Medina-az-Zahra preserve the relics of the Umayyads, the first great Spanish Muslim empire. Although these remains are located in an area that was recaptured rather late (1236) in the history of the Reconquest,² their Umayyad purity was maintained. They were not subject to remodeling or rebuilding by later Muslims because the site in which they are found died with its builders as an important center of Muslim activity. The Almoravids were so successfully crushed by the following wave of North African invaders, the Almohads, that the only remaining buildings of their epoch are found in the Maghreb--Fez, Tlemcen and Algiers.³ As the last Muslim group occupying the area in which Vejer is located, the Almohads provided the Muslim architectural characteristics which have come down to us today; the kingdom of Granada whose boundaries were far to

the east, lived on over two hundred years after the Reconquest of Vejer, but exercised no influence outside its own confines. While Granada's architecture underwent a gradual recovery from the decadence into which Muslim work generally had fallen (see page 17), the mudéjar and Gothic builders of Andalusia were at work converting mosques and rebuilding their Christian Spain.

The mosques of the Peninsula, as well as those of the Maghreb, were not exact reproductions of their prototypes: the Great Mosque of Damascus and the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in Cairo.⁴ In western mosques the aisles within the roofed area were perpendicular to the walls of the qibla, or the side of the building facing Mecca, rather than parallel to it.⁵ The mihrab, which indicates the direction of Mecca, faces south in Spanish and North African mosques.

The sahn, or atrium of the mosque, where the ablution fountains were placed, changed only slightly throughout the years. It was, however, moved during the Almoravid period from its portico position at the mosque entrance to a more central one contained within the covered area. With the advent of the Almohads it was returned to its earlier placement.

In contrast to the Almoravids, the Almohads lent a sense of order to the mosque; and it is during their reign that symmetry becomes an important feature in the Western

mosque compound. In Almohad buildings the central aisle leading to the mihrab became wider, rather like a nave in a Christian church, and the extreme side aisles in these multi-aisled mosques were also widened in a further move toward balance and symmetry.

The ornamentation, which was an extravagant vegetal motif in the Almoravid period, became very geometric during that of the Almohads. The Nasrids of Granada, who followed the Almohads and were contemporaneous with the apex of mudéjar architecture, were able to combine the contrasting decorations of both their predecessors. The Arab predilection for verses from the Koran inscribed within the walls of their buildings follows a similar pattern in that the cursive was the preferred Almoravid script, the Kufic that of the Almohads; the Grenadines made equal use of both.⁶

It was during the Almoravid reign that the stalactite squinches first appeared in the West.⁷ Originally Mesopotamio, this form of decoration gained popularity, and other uses were found for the design--corners of buildings were finished with a touch of the ornamental stalactite motif, as in the Atalaya tower of San Dionisio in Jerez [Fig. 60] and the whitewash-covered, less-clear example from Vejer's Divine Saviour church [Fig. 61]. The capitals used in the Patio de la Acequia⁸ in the Generalife of Granada and ceilings such as the cupola in the Sala de las

Dos Hermanas⁹ in the Alhambra show further ways of employing this design.

During the Muslim occupation of Spain there was a gradual movement toward use of less enduring materials. This movement is seen in comparing the remains of Medina-az-Zahra, an Umayyad palace near Córdoba, with the Alhambra of the Nasrids. The marble and stone decorations of the early years succumbed to gesso in the later ones. As the Muslim rulers immediately preceding the Nasrids, the Almo-hads were also practitioners of gesso work rather than that of stone or marble.

In any assessment of the Muslim elements found in Spain, one must not forget the minaret, or tower from which the muezzin calls the faithful to prayer. The most famous of these is the Giralda in Seville.¹⁰ It is a masterpiece of brickwork--simple, unified, and extremely elegant. The foundation was laid by the Muslim architect Ahmad-Benbaso, who used stones from the wall of the Alcázar of Abenabad and remains from Roman and Visigothic buildings. The architect Ali de Gomara completed the tower.¹¹ He personally assisted in its construction, completing the decorative scheme with " . . . blind arcading, long trellis-like panels known as ajaracas, and pierced with multifoil ajimez windows."¹²

The ceilings of the mosques, supported by columns

in the caliphal period and later by the piers of the Almoravids and Almohads, were usually of beautifully inlaid woodwork in geometrical designs, called artesonado.¹³ Simpler churches carried plain exposed beams, as in the Ermita del Castillo de Lebrija, a former mosque [Fig. 62]. Domes were often used over the mihrab and, as in Córdoba, over the maqsurah (where the dignitaries sat). The decoration of the domes was various. They could be plain, ribbed, covered with either lacería (intricate interlacing patterns) or lazo (poligonal star-shaped designs). Heavy ribbing was popular during the caliphal period, and, "...lacería, which one doesn't see in the work of the Mohammedans of the caliphate, appears to have been already formed in the twelfth century...."¹⁴ It soon became the favored decoration. Generally, one can say that square-shaped enclosures were domed and rectangular ones carried artesonado roofs.

Glazed ceramic tiles, often wrongly associated with the Arab conquest of Spain, were introduced during the Almohad reign. Alicatado work, small pieces of tile in geometric shapes set to form a pattern, was widely used until the Nasrid period, when azulejos, larger square tiles within which the pattern is incorporated, replaced the older, more exact art. For this reason the mosque of Córdoba, which was one of the first buildings in Spain erected in an

eastern vocabulary, contains no ceramic tiles.

Where does Vejer fit into the framework of Peninsular Muslim art? The foundation of the older part of the church, in addition to the construction of the apse is typical of Moorish work. Whether it precedes or postdates the Reconquest is a moot point.

The foundations of the altar area and the first two bays of the nave are brick--an Arab forte. These foundations were discovered in 1889 [Fig. 63] when the old floor tiles were replaced by those presently in use.¹⁵ The remainder of the church is on a stone base. The rubble construction of the apse is another example of typical Moorish work. If the area of the foundation and the apse itself are pre-Reconquest work, the original purpose of this older section of the building becomes very enigmatic. If the building were once a mosque, the present capilla mayor was not necessarily the location of the maqsurah, yet its square shape and elaborate decoration would normally read as that. In addition, its orientation, deviating 17 degrees north of true east, does not conform with the north and south main axis of North African and Peninsular mosques.

The size and shape of the apse could possibly indicate a former tomb of a Muslim saint--the use of the area as a necropolis has been previously discussed in chapter II (see page 28). But as funerary gubbas are usually square

and often contained within four equidistant walls--that is, without an atrium type of forecourt, the brick foundation that continues beyond the square area of the apse into the adjoining bays of the nave remains unexplained. This does not, of course, rule out the possibility of innovative construction or even of existing prototypes. We do know that gubbas have regional differences.¹⁶ The saint cult in Islam developed notably in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁷ Speaking of rábitas and sepulchres of saints in Spain, Torres Balbás says,

Of the many that were in the areas around the cities and in the country, only one seems to have been conserved in the outskirts of Granada, transformed into a Christian hermitage under the advocacy of San Sebastián.¹⁸

Unfortunately one tomb is not a sufficient basis for comparison with what may or may not be the remains of another.

The decoration of the capilla mayor of San Salvador consists of nine ornamented windows or niches in the upper section near the vaulting--three on each side wall and three on the end wall [Fig. 64]. The windows numbered three through seven can be called Almohad in style [Figs. 65, 66, 67, 68, and 69]. The simplicity of the design is typical of Almohad work, as is the interlacing along the inner edge of the alfiz. This work is very geometrical and compartmented relative to the softer, more wavy lines of the Almoravids. The blank space between the border of the alfiz

and the lobular window itself also speaks of Almohad artists, who did not share the horror vacui of the Almoravids. The window decoration resembles that found in the capilla de la Asunción (which was built by Alfonso VIII and thus antedates 1214, the year of his death) in the Cistercian monastery of las Huelgas in Burgos [Fig. 70]; all the decorative elements of this chapel, as well as its vaulting, are very pure Almohad work,¹⁹ done by Andalusian Moors who were transported to Burgos for the task. They were, in fact, probably artisans from Seville.²⁰ Geminate windows one and nine [Figs. 71 and 72] appear to be pre-Reconquest work, but the faces at the bases of the central columns indicate mudéjar construction. The execution in stone of the San Salvador decorations, in contrast to the gesso of the capilla de la Asunción, is yet another indication of mudéjar work. Had the ornamentation in Vejer been of gesso, determination as to whether it is Muslim or mudéjar would have been impossible, but the use of stone almost certainly indicates the latter.

Although the wooden retable covers the entire back wall of the presbytery, repair work done in 1968 revealed a geminate window behind the central panel [Fig. 11]. This window also may be either Muslim or mudéjar. It bears a striking resemblance to one found in Seville in the minaret adjoining San Marcos church. The church is mudéjar, but

the tower has variously been called Muslim, mudéjar, or both.²¹ If indeed the San Marcos minaret was built during the Muslim occupation of Spain--or, rather, if a part of it was constructed at that time--one could assume that the lower section would be the older. And it is in the bottom half that the window appears which so closely approximates that of Vejer Parroquial. Although, as can be seen [Fig. 73], the San Marcos window is not a geminate window, it does contain the other characteristics of that of Vejer--the cinquefoil and the pointed arches.

One last feature in the older part of San Salvador that may possibly indicate Muslim construction is the altar frontal [Fig. 74]; its use in Muslim times would have been, however, as a wall decoration. "In Spain in the thirteenth century they began to use for decorating monuments a decorative process of Mesopotamian-Persian origin: ceramic tile."²² This tile was in the form of alicatado work (see page 57) such as that used in Vejer Parroquial. The azulejo work, a simpler process, came into use in the mid-fourteenth century. Although both were used by mudéjar builders, one could argue that the less costly, simpler azulejo work would have been the more logical selection for a parochial church.

References to Vejer's San Salvador in written works are usually accompanied by the statement that it was built over a mosque; I have tried to show what possible remnants

of that mosque could still exist. Since such declarations never cite an authority for the information, a comparative study was the only feasible means of estimating the true situation. The result of that study indicates that if a mosque did exist on the site, very little remains of it, and even that small bit, as I shall show in chapter V, could just as well be mudéjar.

NOTES

¹Gallego y Burín, La destrucción, p. 66. See also Romero Torres, Cádiz, p. 396; and Agulló, Véjer.

²Julio González, "Reconquista y repoblación de Castilla, León, Extremadura y Andalucía (siglos XI a XIII)," in La Reconquista española y la repoblación del país (Zaragoza: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Escuela de Estudios Medievales Instituto de Estudios Pirenaicos, 1951), p. 195.

³Chueca Goita, Arquitectura española, p. 264.

⁴For plan of the Great Mosque of Damascus see figure 400, Seton Lloyd, et al., World Architecture (London: Hamlyn, 1971), p. 148. For plan of the Mosque of Ibn Tulun see figure 339, H. Heathcote Statham, A History of Architecture, rev. by Hugh Braun (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1950), p. 181.

⁵Chueca Goita, Arquitectura española, p. 262.

⁶Whishaw and Whishaw (Arabic Spain, p. 35) speak of, "...the florid African style favored by the Almohads." However, much in this book can be discounted because of its early date and the authors' inability to obtain the research material necessary for this study.

⁷Chueca Goitia, Arquitectura española, p. 263.

⁸For photograph see Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, p. 140, figure 128.

⁹Ibid., p. 121, figure 107.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 25, figure 13.

¹¹Santiago Montoto, La catedral y el alcázar de Sevilla, Vol. III of Los monumentos cardinales de España (Madrid: Editorial Plus Ultra, 1948), p. 23.

¹²Harold W. Booton, Architecture of Spain, Oriel Guide (London: Oriel Press Ltd., 1966), p. 37.

¹³Bernard Bevan, Historia de la arquitectura española, trans. by Fernando Chueca Goitia (Barcelona: Editorial Juventud, S. A., 1950, p. 172) lists the six basic types of Spanish ceilings.

¹⁴Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, III, 533.

¹⁵Information from conversation with Don Antonio Muñoz, former mayor of Vejer. Don Antonio and his father before him have been in charge of the upkeep of San Salvador. Many features such as the foundations and the ajimez window behind the altar were explained to Don Antonio by his father when he turned over his charge to his son.

¹⁶George Marçais, L'architecture musulmane d'occident: Tunisie, Algérie, Maroc, Espagne et Sicile, Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie Direction de l'Intérieur et des Beaux-Arts Antiquités et Monuments Historiques (2vols.; Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, 1954), II, 656.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 531.

¹⁸Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, p. 146.

¹⁹Torres Balbás, "Las yeserías," p. 242.

²⁰Torres Balbás, Artes almorávide, p. 23.

²¹Madrazo (España, p. 590) calls it morisca from the Almohad period; Jose Guerra Lovillo, Sevilla, Guías artísticas de España (2d ed.; Barcelona: Editorial Aries, 1962, p. 100) calls it mudéjar from the second half of the fourteenth century; Hachette World Guides, Spain (Paris: Hachette, 1961, p. 762) calls it the tower of a former mosque; and Lampérez y Romea (Arquitectura cristiana, p. 509) calls it an ancient minaret.

²²Juan José Martín González, Historia de la arquitectura (Madrid: Editorial Gregos, S. A., 1964), p. 151.

CHAPTER V

MUDEJAR ELEMENTS

Mudéjar is a provincial architecture, a product of the Reconquest. It was created concurrently with the Gothic and early Renaissance styles in Spain and borrowed freely from both. Whatever could be aesthetically merged with Muslim architecture was used to form what is simply a marriage of Eastern and Western styles. This chapter deals with the elusive beginnings of mudéjar when it comprised a union of Gothic and Muslim architecture. It will show by comparison that the older section of the Church of the Divine Saviour is an example of that style which followed the Reconquest and which had as its prototype earlier Muslim work and contemporary Gothic.

The word mudéjar as a definition of an architectural style did not come into use until the nineteenth century. It is believed to derive from either the Arabic word mudayyan, which may be translated as "subject,"¹ or mudijalat, "vassal."² It was first used as an architectural term in 1872 by José Amador de los Ríos³ to describe those works constructed by the newly conquered Muslims, as subjects of their Christian conquerors. In its strictest sense it means just that, but it also includes the work of Christians influenced by Arab styles and the labors

of Muslim converts to Christianity as well.⁴

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the Vejer parochial church is its strong mudéjar character. It is that quality which makes the church of the Divine Saviour truly Spanish rather than a mere composite of foreign influences. Prior to mudéjar, Christian architecture of the Peninsula consisted of alien styles brought into Spain by successive conquerors. Mudéjar, a composite of foreign styles merged to fill the needs of new Christian communities in recently conquered Muslim lands and to utilize the resources of the territory in which they were located, became the first expression of Spanish architecture.

As a style mudéjar was regional, elusive and long-lived. The regional aspect was a result of its unique development. It was an adjunct of the Reconquest, which began, traditionally, with the first Christian victory at Covadonga in 718, and became a major religious conflict--a second Troy in a sense, with the gods choosing sides. Divine intervention in the form of St. James abetted the Christian cause, and symbolic relics of Mohammed spurred the Muslim forces. The battle of Las Navas de Toloso in 1212 became the decisive victory for the Christians and a defeat from which the Mohammedans were never able to recover. It was at this juncture in time that mudéjar art began. The Reconquest gradually moved south, and in

its wake came a plethora of construction. Each Christian conquest of a village was celebrated by replacing the former mosque with a Christian church. Progress was slow, but as town after town fell into Christian hands the building of new churches in a given area expressed what was currently in vogue in European architecture, and provincial Muslim builders working on churches of secondary importance expressed these European concepts in terms of territorial resources and ideas. The elusive quality comes from the fact that entire sections of the early churches (e.g., the nave or side chapels) were often undiluted examples of Muslim building and decoration practices--making it impossible to ascertain whether the work is pre- or post-Reconquest. In many instances former mosques were used, and in both cases the Gothic additions seem only to add to the confusion. This, in addition to the vast number of archives lost or destroyed throughout the years, makes dating the churches very problematical indeed. Lastly, mudéjar is long-lived because its decoration extended through two European styles.

It flourished independently from the Christian tradition from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, influencing at the same time the Gothic and Renaissance styles. Many of the fantasies of the Isabeline and Plateresque styles are explained by its influence, which continued well into the seventeenth century.⁵

Before the Reconquest, Muslim concepts of religious

architecture were expressed in Spain by mosques and funerary temples. Generally speaking, there were no new mosques built after the establishment of Christian domination in the recaptured areas. If the Moors⁶ were not banished from newly conquered areas and their mosques purified and redefined along Christian lines, they were confined to morerías,⁷ ghettos where they were permitted to continue to exercise the rites of Islam.⁸ The building of new mosques was not allowed, however.⁹ Conversion rather than religious tolerance was the aim which served as an impetus to the prodigious building program that began.

Although the two religions were antithetical, artistic expressions were not segregated. That Muslim laborers and building practices were used for practical reasons is not disputed; however, the use of Muslim decoration was purely for aesthetic reasons. There was a widespread recognition of the superiority of the Eastern culture. This acceptance was a tradition inaugurated by Alfonso VI when he was proclaimed the "emperor of two religions."¹⁰ Mudéjar was a popular style in both religious and civil architecture.

There were a number of differences between Muslim and mudéjar construction and planning. For example, in order for mudéjar builders to bring about a conversion of former mosques it was necessary first to change the orien-

tation of the building; if, however, the mosque had Visigothic or Mozarabic origins, the east-west orientation prevailed and a transposition was not necessary. As a result, Christian temples which were once mosques are found today with dome-covered side chapels--the magurah of the mosque now relegated to a subordinate side placement but remaining as a reminder of its former service in Muslim years. Santa Marina in Seville is an example of how a former mosque was used for Christian purposes.¹¹ If the aisles ran perpendicular to the mihrab, as they did in Western mosques, their direction also had to be shifted ninety degrees. In a hypostyle building such as a mosque this change is easily possible since it requires merely a change of emphasis from the southern mihrab to the eastern altar [Fig. 75].

The minaret continued to serve to call men to prayer; only the manner in which it was done differed: the muezzin was replaced by a bell that tolled the hours of mass. So similar was its use that even in the eighteenth century when the bells rang in Madrid the people fell to their knees in worship wherever they were--a custom some Muslims still follow on hearing the muezzin call them to prayer.

Mudéjar churches tried to comply with the demand for vaulted ceilings with wall brackets sustaining the ribs of the vaults, according to Cistercian tradition. Those

parishes that could afford to do so completely vaulted the entire church interior, whereas poorer ones saved their money for the two most important parts of the church--the apse and the main portal. In the rural and secondary churches it is in these last two areas that Gothic work becomes evident--the remainder retains its Muslim aspect.

Since brick was not only cheap but also quickly manufactured and laid, it was the most suitable material for construction of new churches. Although one usually thinks of Aragonese mudéjar in the context of brick construction, it was a popular material throughout all the newly conquered areas. In Andalusia one tends to forget that brick lies beneath the cal, or limestone whitewash, that covers all southern buildings. Even though one finds a similarity among the mudéjar styles in Castile, Aragon, and Andalusia, there are regional differences.¹² In fact, one of the most outstanding characteristics of mudéjar is its regional quality: the poverty of Aragon--so in contrast with the wealth of Andalusia--was a definitely limiting factor in the building methods of that area. The time of the Reconquest was also important. Gothic architecture swept from France into Spain very quickly, and new ideas were always incorporated as rapidly as they were introduced. Since early mudéjar was in essence Muslim architecture with a Gothic ornamentation in its poorest aspect, and, conversely,

Gothic architecture with Muslim ornamentation in richer churches, both elements reflect the time and place of their construction. It also holds that whatever group was in power before the area was reconquered left traces of its own expression of Muslim art. Thus there is a caliphal influence in Castile as opposed to an Almohad one in Aragon and Andalusia.¹³ Again, however, considerations must of necessity be limited to those influences that affect the church of Vejer, and one must therefore deal with the mudéjar art of Andalusia specifically.

Andalusia was, as has been stated, a rich area at the time of the Reconquest. Vejer, called Bekkeh¹⁴ by the Saracens, later earned the name of Vejer de la Miel, or "Vejer of the Honey," for the local abundance of that product, resulting from the lush gardens surrounding the town.¹⁵ This agricultural richness--and resulting ecclesiastical wealth--may explain the decorative richness of the Divine Saviour church. It would also explain the use of stone in the construction. Unfortunately the older part of Vejer Parroquial is buried under countless layers of white-wash laid on through the centuries. The exterior reads as stone because of that practice--here as well as elsewhere in Spain--of covering mampostería and brickwork with a thin layer of cement and then incising thereon the outline of large hewn stones. The final step was to cover the disguise

with cal. A hammer and chisel are necessary to detect the true nature of the walls. The older part of the church is an example of this deception¹⁶--it therefore retains its whitewash covering, whereas the newer front part, which is stone, has been cleaned to reveal its more monumental construction. The decorations in the older section, which are of stone, present the major problem in dating of the church. Mudéjar craftsmen were, as stated earlier, mostly Moors living under Christian domination. They carried on the work of their forebears, the Almohads, and were, like them, lacking in the craft of stone masonry. On the other hand, the church might have been built by Christian stone masons--there exist examples of Christian work executed in the Muslim style.¹⁷

The puzzle remains of how much of the older part of the church is really early mudéjar, if indeed it is that rather than Muslim. The geminate window in the back wall of the presbytery offers a clue. If it is mudéjar work, then the vaulting in that area and the windows in the upper part of the chancel are both a very late and very retardataire mudéjar. The rough filling stones on either side of the central column of the geminate window reveal that it was obviously an open one and not a blind arcade. However, behind the window today and closing it on the exterior is a massive buttress [Fig. 2a] typical of mudéjar work.¹⁸ The

stone decoration [Fig. 76] on that buttress carries the same stone decoration that is found inside the presbytery, where it is used along the contour of the arches formed by the vaulting. It would be logical to call the geminate window Muslim and the buttress and interior mudéjar except that there exists in Seville the San Marcos tower window so similar that one cannot disregard it and its cinquefoil decoration, which are more Gothic (thus mudéjar) than Muslim. If the window is indeed mudéjar, then there were two mudéjar building programs: one in which the geminate window was constructed and a second in which the buttresses were added to support the new vaulting. Perhaps the most interesting feature about the San Salvador window is that it appears to be outlined in brick set into a mampostería wall---a contradiction of how the building reads from the exterior. It is the only visual suggestion that the stone facade of the back part of the church is after all only a veneer.

A more thorough extraction of mudéjar elements from San Salvador must depend on a comparison with work done in the environs and in the cities of Seville, Córdoba, and Jerez de la Frontera.

Following the capitulation in 1248 of Seville, Ferdinand II had insisted on the withdrawal of all Muslims from the city; there were, however, a few Muslims who were

allowed to remain because they pledged allegiance to the Christian ruler. Those who lived in the surrounding countryside were not treated so harshly: if they capitulated without battle, they were offered more favorable terms,¹⁹ and one can assume that smaller towns surrendered and thus kept their Muslim populations.

Thus the builders of the new Seville were a handful of Moors who remained in the city and a great number from the countryside whose talents could be exploited; additionally, of course, Christian craftsmen with fresh ideas were among the newly arrived population from the north. From these men a Sevillian mudéjar style of sorts soon appeared. Basically it consisted of a basilica plan--rectangular nave and side aisles--with a polygonal apse. The nave and aisles carried artesonado roofs, whereas ribbed vaulting covered the apse. The nave, without a transept, was raised above the aisles and apse. The basic supports were piers, in accordance with the preceding Almohad tradition. And the building material was brick. Angulo Iñiguez speaks of a struggle at the time for dominance between the Muslim and Gothic elements.²⁰ Muslim articulation seems to have won in most instances, but Gothic achieved dominance in the two most significant areas--the apse and the portal, the alpha and omega of mudéjar architecture. One finds then a juxtaposition of ideas and

materials within the same building. Usually brick was used for the portal, but stone also made its appearance in Gothic decoration. The ornamentation used was elementary and can be traced to Carolingian traditions.²¹ Were it not for an unmistakable Gothic arch, the portals would appear to be Romanesque (which continued and extended the Carolingian tradition in decoration). The decoration usually found around the archivolt consisted of sawtooth designs and diamond points; on occasion Moorish interlace became a preface to what followed beyond the portal. The ribbed vaulting of the apse was also simplistic, in accordance with the Cistercian abbeys of the North. The same basic decorations prevailed inside as well as out, with the diamond-point design preferred. The sawtooth (or chevron) pattern inside has been found mainly in very early-Reconquest churches in Seville and has been used as a method of dating churches of that period.²² The center boss of the ribbing, however, diverged from the Gothic and was often decorated with a hanging-pine design traditionally Muslim.

Other decorative accents were found in aisle windows or in the exterior brickwork--both elements remaining within the bounds of Almohad tastes. Blind arcades of brickwork were popular, as were windows with curvilinear and lobular arches.

Often the churches of Seville were former mosques,

such as Santa Marina,²³ in which the same general pattern prevailed in the Muslim parts of the church and to which Gothic additions were made. It has therefore become quite difficult to tell whether a certain part was pre- or post-Reconquest. The labor was the same, the tools the same, the materials the same, and the craftsmen the same. Thus only the Gothic elements can be fairly accurately dated. In addition there was an earthquake in Seville in 1356, which may have necessitated the rebuilding of many of the former mosques.²⁴ Consequently many features once attributed to pre-Reconquest times have been reexamined and classified as mudéjar work.

Several additions to churches were made in the fourteenth century in the form of side chapels, usually square in shape, built by wealthy noblemen for use as sepulchers. The Sevillian churches of Santa Catalina and San Esteban had sepulchral chapels built about 1400, San Pedro had one built in 1379, and Santa Marina was similarly added to in 1415.²⁵ They all carried domes on squinches. They are significant to this study in that their elaborate interior decoration is often strikingly similar to that found in the church of the Divine Saviour in Vejer.

The old section of the Divine Saviour church has been called mudéjar by many writers. Most important of these perhaps is Angulo Iñiguez, who refers to it in his

work Arquitectura mudéjar sevillana de los siglos XIII, XIV, y XV. Gallego y Burín also speaks of the primitive part of the church as being in a Romanesque-mudéjar tradition.²⁶

Generally, Vejer Parroquial does fall into the Sevillian mudéjar pattern; the basic plan of the church is quite within that context. A major difference, however, lies in the presbytery. It has been stated (see page 74) that the mudéjar churches of Seville carried polygonal apses covered in ribbed vaulting in accordance with the new influx of Gothic ideas. Vejer Parroquial differs in that its apse is square, yet it contains ribbed vaulting ordinarily used with a polygon shape. In the vaulting of a polygonal apse (also used in Córdoba [Fig. 77]) the ribs begin at each angle of the polygon. In Vejer squinches cut the square shape at the corners giving the apse a pseudo-polygonal shape from which the ribs can form a similar pattern [Fig. 8]. In provincial churches, where new ideas were not yet prevalent or where funds were short to put them into practice, a square apse was not unusual.²⁷ What is different from the Sevillian style is the covering of the apse of the Vejer church. Up to this time a square had always been converted to an octagon and then domed. Such procedure was traditional in Spain from the first caliphal buildings, and it was utilized almost

universally by the Sevillian mudéjar builders. Exceptions, such as La Rábida in Huelva, carry simple quadripartite vaults [Fig. 78]. The Vejer apse is interesting in that it carries all the details of polygonal apse vaultings of Seville, down to the stalactite effect of the inverted pine used as a boss in the ribbing.

The method of construction in the apse vault is quite simple: three small bisecting vaults on each side intersect with the main vault, which is barrel shaped [Fig. 79]. The arches formed by the vaults are outlined in a typically Muslim pattern [Fig. 80]. It is strange that the buttress in the center back of the apse carries the same motif (see page 73)--a very unlikely spot for the limited exterior decoration of the church. Also interesting is its execution in stone--a material not to be used extravagantly. One possible solution to the puzzle of the massive stone buttress may lie in the history of the cathedral of Seville. This building, purely Gothic in design, unfortunately lost its notable central lantern as a result of poor building practices. Following this mishap of 1511, there was great concern as to the reliability of Gothic vaulting. Sturdy wooden ceilings of Muslim origin were favorably contrasted with the new, seemingly unsatisfactory, ones of stone. The current temper led eventually to a proposal to replace the Gothic vaulting of the Seville

cathedral with artesonado work.²⁸ The buttress in Vejer seems unnecessarily massive (it actually spans two points where stress might occur), and this unusual reinforcement might possibly be an outcome of the Seville accident.

The other principal Gothic feature of mudéjar churches--the portal--has in the case of San Salvador long been destroyed; the one standing today dates from 1968. The entire front half of the church is of a relatively late date and of such a different style that it must fall into a category to be discussed in the next chapter.

Although the two bays directly preceding the apse stand on the same early brick foundation, they differ in that the bay nearer the altar has pointed arches in its division of aisle and nave whereas the following bay carries round ones. This could indicate different building programs; however, it also calls to mind the transition in arch types from the oratory to the maqsurah and on to the mihrab that one finds in mosques such as that in Tlemcen [Fig. 81]. Covering the two first bays of the Divine Saviour is sexpartite Gothic vaulting outlined in the same sawtooth design found in the apse. Noteworthy is the trim of the arches: it was obviously intended as a copy of decoration found in the apse; however, if the artisan had had the patience to examine his model somewhat more carefully, he would have discovered that the true design had

been thoroughly distorted by successive coats of whitewash [Figs. 80 and 82]. Although a great deal of flaking away is necessary to reveal the truth, the pattern in the apse is a repeat of the intricate interlace found on the buttress, not what it appears to be to the eye. Employing the line of reasoning that the more simple evolved from the more complex, one could hypothesize that the nave vaulting of the first two bays came several years after that of the apse. The many layers of cal found in the presbytery do not mean a prodigious time lapse between its hidden decoration and that in the nave. The custom in Vejer of applying fresh whitewash every summer inside and out to all buildings still persists. The sparkling whiteness and cleanliness of the town is part of its charm, but, of course, this custom produces a rapid build-up of whitewash.

The possibility that the nave is later than the presbytery may also explain the lack of an artesonado ceiling, which traditionally should have been found in conjunction with the Gothic one of the apse. Wooden ceilings are not long lasting in Vejer. The humidity resulting from the town's proximity to the sea seems to be favorable to termites. There are, it is said, houses with ceiling timber from ships destroyed in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, but this bit of local legend is not authenticated.

The ornamentation found in the Vejer apse, although pure Almohad in style, is also the style used by the mudéjar builders in Andalusia. The decorated windows, or niches, in the upper part of the apse are similar to windows found in Seville [Figs. 83 and 84]; however, their placement and material are quite different. The brick Sevillian windows are located in aisles, walls, and towers, not in the capilla mayor as in Vejer. It is of interest to note that the square funerary chapels also have niches approximating those of Vejer. In addition, the crypt of San Salvador is found directly beneath the capilla mayor. This, however, is not sufficient evidence for the labeling of the apse as an early funerary chapel, for the placement of crypts beneath the altar is quite common in Christian churches. Unfortunately, the crypt was desecrated during the Spanish Civil War,²⁹ and whatever evidence might have remained is now gone.

In Córdoba, perhaps another area which could have exerted architectural influence on Vejer, is found San Miguel, a small mudéjar church which bears similarities both to Seville and Vejer. Córdoba too had its "school" of mudéjar architecture, but it differed from that of Seville in that the capilla mayor was polygonal both inside and out whereas the terminating chapels of the two side aisles were polygonal within and rectangular without.³⁰ Comparisons with Vejer Parroquial can be made with the funerary side

chapel of San Miguel and the sawtooth decoration found both in the chapel and in the apse [Figs. 85 and 77]. The body of the church represents the Cordoban transitional style that bridged the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whereas the chapel is a product of the latter century.³¹

Other affinities with Vejer Parroquial are found in San Antonio Abad church in Trigueros (Huelva), built in the fourteenth century [Figs. 86 and 87].³² In the same province is the Monasterio de Rábida, said once to have been a Muslim rábida, or hermitage.³³ The church (perhaps a former mosque) within the hermitage also has a square apse without a dome, the former enclosed in Gothic vaulting ornamented in the sawtooth pattern found in Vejer [Fig. 78]. The nave ceiling is an artesonado one in keeping with the mudéjar tradition (it is, however, a restoration since la Rábida is by the sea and obviously faces the same problems as Vejer in preserving wooden beams). The apse carries a simple quadripartite vault instead of a dome. The altar is similar in appearance to that of Vejer but is covered with azulejos rather than alicatado work.

Nearer to Vejer is the country hermitage of San Ambrosio (see page 44). This most interesting building can be dated to Visigothic times from an inscription found on one of its columns. What remains today is a skeleton showing various periods of remodeling. As a small country church

it probably followed patterns set by the nearest town, Vejer. Of interest is a small square side chapel that still carries a beehive dome supported by Almohad trompas--perhaps a copy of a hypothetical dome of San Salvador that has now disappeared [Figs. 88 and 89].

Seville, Córdoba, and the province of Huelva show that Andalusian mudéjar, although fairly uniform, did evidence regional differences. The greatest influence on Vejer, which lies in the province of Cádiz, was not from the provincial capital itself but rather from another town that also served as a border post along the frontier of the kingdom of Granada--Jerez de la Frontera. Jerez fell into Christian hands after a lengthy siege on October 9, 1264. There were several attempts by the Moors to retake the city (one, to be elaborated later, of specific importance in 1285) but none successful. The early mudéjar structures here are of interest because the decoration is of stone rather than gesso and closely relates to that of Vejer Parroquial.

Santo Domingo, the first convent founded in Jerez, "...was begun before 1436, when in that year the jurors spoke to Eugenio IV demanding an indulgence for those that helped in the construction of the church and convent, which by then the construction of a cloister had begun."³⁴ Although many additions and rebuildings are evident in the

convent, the nave vaulting is very close to what is found in Vejer. From the flat end of the apse through the following two bays the ceiling is covered with a mudéjar cross vaulting and spine whose ribs bear the familiar sawtooth decoration [Fig. 90]. A further similarity lies in the last two bays of the nave, which are covered with late Gothic vaulting. In the Vejer church apse the termination of the ribs on brackets resting on short colonnettes connected by a continuous frieze of a diamond-point design [Fig. 91] has its prototype in the two enormous bays of Jerez' Santo Domingo. The arch of the second bay in the Jerez convent has not yet suffered the remodeling of the others and remains identical to those found in the apse and first bay of San Salvador (both barely visible in Figs. 90 and 91). As explained earlier, the layers of whitewash in the Vejer church obscure the true design.

Although the date of construction of the church of San Juan de los Caballeros in Jerez is uncertain, the apse and the two side chapels (that of San Jose and the "Jura" chapel) appear to be of earlier construction than the main body of the church.³⁵ The mudéjar vaulting and ornamentation are similar in the three areas, and a reference to a chapel in San Juan church in the town history adds credence to a very early construction date:

On 1285 Abu Jusuf, Sultan of Morocco besieged Jerez with a strong army, but the Moorish fury did not frighten its dwellers. These defended themselves with the utmost courage but nearly exhausted the noblemen assembled in one of the chapels of St. John's church and with blood of their veins they wrote a letter to King Sancho IV [of León and Castile] asking for help. The king ran to the desperate call and forced the Moors to raise the siege.³⁶

Once again in San Juan church the now-familiar patterns of mudéjar work occur [Figs. 92 and 93]. In addition, doorways in the presbytery [Fig. 94] and a niche in the San José chapel [Fig. 95] are carved in stone much the same way as the niches in the upper walls of the presbytery in Vejer. The San Salvador work contrasts with that of San Juan in that the former appears heavier and coarser [Fig. 67]. This appearance, I believe, is partly due to the heavy overlay of whitewash. On the other hand, however, there seems to be a difference in the depth of the design--San Salvador's being much deeper around the edge of the arch of the niche [Fig. 68].

Without question the strongest support of a very early fourteenth-century date (or even late thirteenth century in the case of the San José chapel of San Juan) for the mudéjar stonework of Jerez is the Church of Santiago. Although this church is basically late Gothic, it contains a chapel, known as the Capilla de la Paz, with a splendid mudéjar vault almost identical to that of Vejer's San

Salvador [Figs. 96 and 97]. The vault undoubtedly served as the prototype for the apse of the Vejer church. According to legend, after the battle of Salado in 1340 the Christian community transformed into parochial churches two hermitages that existed outside the walls of Jerez-- that of San Miguel, of which little of the original construction exists today, "...and that of la Paz next to which Alfonso X founded a royal chapel which he put under the advocacy of the Apostle St. James."³⁷ Both San Miguel and Santiago (the latter with its la Paz chapel intact) are still extant today outside the old city walls of Jerez.

The Divine Saviour of Vejer never quite achieved the grandeur of the Jerez churches, and it would seem probable that its mudéjar work followed that of the larger city. Because there are a few fine differences (e.g., the depth of cutting), I surmise that local masons attempted to emulate the work done in Jerez rather than that the same artisans worked in both places. The work in Vejer always seems to have an extra twist or lobe added to make up for what it lacks in monumentality [Fig. 67]. Unfortunately, cal-covered walls also take away the feeling of massiveness imparted by a stone structure.

Even with such obvious prototypes as those of Jerez, San Salvador remains an enigma. The head of the apse with its ajimez window imbedded in a rubble wall obviously

represents a building period distinct from that of the rest of the apse. It could be pre-Reconquest work if the mudéjar vaulting in that area dates as early as that of Jerez. On the other hand the similar mudéjar ajimez window found on a Sevillian tower interjects a contradictory note. The ceiling of the first two bays of the nave adjoining the apse probably represents still another phase in building. Its simplification of the decoration would seem so to indicate, though not as strongly as in the preceding instance. The north buttress [Figs. 2b and 98], with its stone ornamentation, bears comparison with the Atalaya Tower of Jerez [Fig. 99], which has been dated variously as 1420, 1447, and 1449.³⁸ Those dates might correspond with the second mudéjar building period in San Salvador, when the bays of the nave were constructed; however, the pattern of the stone decoration on the east buttress matches that of the apse. If the ajimez window and the eastern foundations are Moorish, did a mosque replace a Visigothic structure or were the Visigothic capitals used by mudéjar builders who transported them from outside? This rebuilding on the site of a former religious edifice was not without precedent: favored loci were used continuously for the major place of worship--whether it be pagan temple, mosque, or church.

Rather than speculate further, and speculation is all this chapter on mudéjar can produce, it is better

perhaps to recognize that exact dating of a style that spanned three centuries is highly problematical. What is important is that the older section of the church is basically mudéjar--a style unique to Spain and an outcome of its history. Rather than simply another novelty brought into the Peninsula by intruders, it was a development born and matured on Spanish soil, and thus the first native architecture.

NOTES

¹Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, p. 237. See also Watt and Cachia (Islamic Spain, p. 130) in which mudayyan is translated as "permitted to remain."

²Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 161.

³Marqués de Lozoya, "Teoría de morisco español," Archivos del Instituto de Estudios Africanos, Año XIX, Núm. 77, (October, 1965), p. 23. See also José Amador de los Ríos, "El estilo mudéjar en arquitectura," Discursos leídos en las recepciones y actos públicos celebrados por la Real Academia de las tres nobles artes de San Fernando desde 19 de junio de 1859, Tomo I (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel Tello, 1872), p. 3.

⁴Torres Balbás (Arte almohade, p. 237-8) prefers to continue use of the word mudéjar for the works of the converted morisco as well because it is impossible to separate the two. In contrast is the opinion of the Marqués de Lozoya, "Morisco español," p. 24.

⁵Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 162.

⁶As they came to be called even though the Muslim population was made up of Syrians, Persians, Arabs, Egyptians, as well as North African Berbers.

⁷Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, p. 239.

⁸Ibid., p. 240. The author refers to a passage in "Las Siete Partidas" of King Alfonso X in which Moors are allowed to freely practice their cult. Ricardo Velázquez Bosco, El Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de la Rábida (Madrid: Junta para Ampliación de Estudios é Investigaciones Científicas, 1914, p. 20) quotes partida título XXV, ley 1 to the effect that the Moors could live among the Christians, keeping their own laws; but in the cities they could not have mosques. Hachette (Spain, p. XLVII) states, "The Muslims had no officially recognized mosques and celebrated their cult in their homes." Pedro de Madrazo, España, sus monumentos y artes--su naturaleza é historia: Sevilla y Cádiz (Barcelona: Editorial de Daniel Cortezo y Ca., 1884, p. 582) states that of the former mosques in Seville taken over after the Reconquest three were given to the Jews for synagogues and one was left for the "moros mudéjares."

⁹Torres Balbás (Arte almohade, p. 308) mentions a mudéjar mosque called Tornerías in Toledo.

¹⁰Henri Terrasse, L'art hispano-mauresque des origines au XIII^e siècle, Publications de l'Institut de Hautes Études Marocaines, Vol. XXV (Paris: Les Éditions G. Van Oest, 1932), p. 455.

¹¹Chueca Goitia, Arquitectura española, p. 499.

¹²Terrasse, L'art hispano-mauresque, p. 456.

¹³Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 164.

¹⁴Romero de Torres, Cádiz, p. 313.

¹⁵Augustin de Horozco, Historia de la ciudad de Cádiz (Cádiz: Don Manuel Bosch, 1845, p. 307), states that the honey of Vejer was the best in Andalusia.

¹⁶Conversation with Don Antonio Muñoz.

¹⁷Torres Balbás (Arte almohade, p. 237) mentions the door and roof of the sala capitular of the cathedral of Toledo as an example of Christian work which is extremely Arab in execution.

¹⁸Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, p. 544.

¹⁹González, "Reconquista," p. 196.

²⁰Diego Angulo Iñiguez, Arquitectura mudéjar sevillana de los siglos XIII, XIV, y XV (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1932), p. 7.

²¹Porter, Medieval Architecture, I, 274.

²²Angulo Iñiguez, Mudéjar sevillana, p. 7. The author uses the decorations as an aid in dating the church of San Antonio de Trigueros as a fourteenth-century building (not later than 1400).

²³Ballesteros y Beretta, Historia de España, IV, 179. See also Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, p. 167 and p. 566; Madrazo, España, p. 582.

²⁴Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, p. 292.

- ²⁵Ibid., p. 290.
- ²⁶Gallego y Burín, La destrucción, p. 66.
- ²⁷Torres Balbás, Arte almohade, p. 288.
- ²⁸Sevilla monumental y artística (Seville, 1889-1892), II, 58, quoted in Angulo Iñiguez, Mudéjar sevillana, p. 7.
- ²⁹Gallego y Burín, La destrucción, p. 68.
- ³⁰Andres Calzada, Historia de la arquitectura española, Colección Labor, sección IV: artes plásticas (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, S. A., 1933), p. 138.
- ³¹Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, p. 185.
- ³²Angulo Iñiguez, Mudéjar sevillana, p. 25.
- ³³Buenaventura Anasagasti, Visita al Monasterio de Santa María de la Rábida (Ayamonte [Huelva], Spain: Hogar Infantil Provincial "J. A.," 1970), p. 7. The author of this booklet states that the body of the church is gótico-mudéjar of the thirteenth century and the presbytery is fifteenth-century Gothic.
- ³⁴Romero de Torres (Cádiz, p. 423) quotes this from information supplied by D. Hipólito R. Sancho.
- ³⁵Romero de Torres (Ibid., p. 409) says the presbytery is fourteenth century. In contrast Manuel Esteve Guerrero, Jerez de la Frontera (2d ed.; Jerez de la Frontera: Editorial Jerez Gráfico, 1952, p. 76) says, "It seems, however, that at the beginning of the XV century part of it had already been built," and later he mentions the tradition that the nobles of Jerez used one of the chapels of St. John's church in 1285.
- ³⁶Esteve Guerrero, Jerez, p. 24.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 152.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 122. See also Angulo Iñiguez, Mudéjar sevillana, p. 73.

CHAPTER VI

GOTHIC ELEMENTS

It has been said that two things characterize Gothic architecture in Spain: mudejarismo and (excluding the monuments of the last epoch, which was florid in style) austerity.¹ Since the mudéjar influence has been discussed in the previous chapter, one need note only that the characteristic of austerity is predominant in the great cathedrals built concurrently with provincial mudéjar churches: the lightness and fragility that stained glass and flying buttresses produced in France are lacking in the dark somber churches of the Peninsula. Rather than glorify the sun, Spanish architects excluded it from their interiors. The grandeur of Spanish churches thus lies in massiveness and spaciousness, not in the light and verticality one finds to the north. Blocking the sun's entrance is a custom which persists today even in private dwellings, and one can observe lowering shades as the sun tries to penetrate the houses of Spain.

Although the style from France was not slavishly copied but rather translated into Spanish terms, Spain was inordinately influenced by Gothicism. It first appeared in the Cistercian monastery of Moreruela, where the cross vaulting dates before 1168,² and from there spread rapidly

to some areas, more slowly to others that resisted it. It was, in addition, delayed by the Reconquest. Consequently, not until the fourteenth century did it occupy all of Christian Spain.³ Once established, it prevailed longer there than perhaps anywhere else; Bernard Bevan says that it persisted "until well into the eighteenth century."⁴ Philip II tried to supplant the style with a very strictly classical one (e.g., the Escorial), but it never became a truly popular movement. The Renaissance in Spain expressed itself in the silversmith oeuvre of Plateresque⁵ (a direct result of mudejarismo, ergo a Gothic expression), and so in a sense Gothic continued until the arrival of the Baroque, whose ornamentation could vie with and, in fact, elaborate upon the decoration of the former style. It is due to this resistance to change that one finds as late as 1695 yet another Gothic edifice in construction in the province of Cádiz--that of the Colegiata of Jerez de la Frontera.⁶ If more important churches in larger towns within the province continued to be retardataire in construction, it is easy then to understand why the Divine Saviour of Vejer would undergo a reconstruction in florid Gothic about 1525. It is also significant in this respect that Gothicism is considered by some scholars more intense in Andalusia than in many other areas.⁷

A large influx of foreigners came to Spain following

the Reconquest, and with them came works of art from other lands; but most important were the extraordinarily large numbers of artists themselves.⁸ Although with foreign immigration the regionalism of Spain lessened somewhat, the assimilation of new ideas in Gothic architecture was not strong enough to show clearly an historical development of a pure Spanish Gothic. Localism prevailed to such an extent that one must study many branches of the style rather than follow main lines of growth. Even foreigners succumbed to the local expression and were so " . . . deeply impressed by the genus loci that their work seems almost more Spanish than that of the Spaniards themselves."⁹

As a whole Andalusian cathedrals remain apart from those in the rest of Spain.

Taken as a group, they are of exceptionally late date, and only one of them, Seville, has any remaining work earlier than the sixteenth century. . . . They represent then a different epoch and a changed outlook. . . . Rather appropriately, in view of the Andalusian's habit of exaggeration, their leading feature is a preoccupation with size: most of them are in an absolute and not merely a relative sense very large buildings. In this there is a reflection of the ideas of grandeur that sprang from the success of the Reconquest and, later, from the union of the warring kingdoms and the acquisition of colonial wealth.¹⁰

While "the schools influencing ojival architecture in Andalusia are not very clear,"¹¹ one can briefly generalize on what led to southern Gothic. Before discussing the main influences it should be explained that pointed

arches first appeared in Armenia in the seventh century and reached western Europe during the Crusades.¹² They thus came into Spain via France and not as an outgrowth of Moorish arches. Aside from the Crusades there was a double influence on the Gothic churches of Andalusia, " . . . the Gothic architecture of Castile, mainly from the Burgundian area, and that of the monasteries of the Bernardines."¹³ The Cistercian (or Bernardine) influence was an early one and is strongly represented in the church of Santa Ana in Seville,¹⁴ which was erected in the second half of the thirteenth century by Alfonso the Wise in gratitude for having been cured of a grave sickness of the eyes.¹⁵ In accordance with St. Bernard's direction, simplicity prevails; however, important to this study is the way in which the vault ribs terminate in brackets along the side walls. This same feature can be seen in the Divine Saviour's early Gothic (more precisely, mudéjar) apse [Fig. 91]. The Castilian influence in Andalusia was late, for in Castile itself early Gothic was rejected, allowing Romanesque to continue into the fifteenth century.¹⁶ When acceptance finally came, the results were quite grand, for Castilian architects then produced the cathedrals of Seville, Salamanca, Segovia, and Astorga, all of which had a bearing on Andalusian architecture generally and on the Divine Saviour of Vejer specifically. The Castilian work

was distinctive in that it expressed a new "florid style showing Moorish influence,"¹⁷ and thereby was readily acceptable to the still Muslim-oriented south. Additionally, the union in the late fifteenth century of Ferdinand and Isabella not only augmented the spread of new styles but also gave the one in question the name by which it is known today--Isabelline Gothic.¹⁸

To understand the style that eventually worked its way south and was expressed in the western section of the Divine Saviour, one must note the works of Juan Gil de Hontañón and his son Rodrigo. An analysis in chronological sequence necessitates beginning with the Cathedral of Seville. The design for the cathedral was produced about 1400, and construction began in 1402¹⁹ at the west end (contrary to the medieval custom of beginning at the east end in order to open the head of the church for worship as soon as possible).²⁰ Bevan speaks of the novelty of design of this great church: "Equally in plan and in elevation, the cathedral of Seville has no clear antecedents in Spain; on the other hand, it is not a servile imitation of French works."²¹ Harvey also mentions its uniqueness: "The bases with their hollow-sided octagons of differing scales, supporting not only shafts but also salients of the moulded face, seem to have no parallels in Spain and are close to some of the best French and English work of

the time."²² The shape of the building, which served as a prototype for later churches, followed the foundations of a former mosque; and happily the adjoining sahn of that former mosque was also incorporated into the new cathedral. The cathedral of Seville thus became a great rectangular five-aisled church without a transept. The clustered columns of the arcades are broken by narrow abaci at the springing of the nave arches and again at the springing of the nave vaults. The former, which are simple and classical on the nave side, become foliated Gothic in design on the aisle side. The foliated pattern is repeated in the higher capital. The church was completed in 1506, but five years later the central lantern fell (not a particularly uncommon occurrence). It was at the time of the rebuilding of the lantern that Juan Gil de Hontañón contributed his part to the building of the cathedral. His work is seen in the reconstructed vaulting over the crossing and the capilla mayor, which had been damaged in the accident. The new crossing contrasts sharply with the plain quadripartite ribbed vaulting of the rest of the church. It is very florid Gothic in style, with the transverse ribs decorated in a floriated pattern not unlike the aforementioned abaci, and the lierne ribs outlined in cusped arches that terminate in clustered flowers.

That the Sevillian church influenced not only the

large cathedrals that followed but also the smaller churches in the nearby hinterlands (but only to a limited extent the Divine Saviour) can be substantiated by the Church of San Miguel in Jerez de la Frontera.²³ This provincial church, erected toward the end of the fifteenth century, is " . . . as much in style as in plan a simplification of that of Seville."²⁴

Although the new cathedral of Salamanca was not the work of Juan Gil de Hontañón alone, he stood at the fore of the other architects, who jointly planned and built the church, as maestro mayor.²⁵ The architect was no doubt influenced by the Bourges-Le Mans cathedral,²⁶ which did not elicit French followers but many Spanish ones (e.g., Barcelona, Palma de Majorca, Seville, Segovia, and Salamanca). The style was notable for its use of gigantic arcades.

Following the Sevillian plan, Salamanca is a rectangular church²⁷ without a transept--with, however, three aisles rather than five.²⁸ The vaulting, which is flamboyant Gothic throughout, differs from the Seville vaulting in that the ribs and bosses alone accent the pattern of the vaulting and are unencumbered with the elaborate ornamentation of the earlier church. The Salamanca pier shafts repeat the compound effect of those at Seville. A Renaissance touch is found in the roundels located in the spandrels of the arcade.

The construction of the Salamanca cathedral, which began in 1513 at the west end, followed the unorthodox Sevillian building pattern. Long before its termination the author of this great work died (1526). His successors were his son, Juan Gil el Mozo, and Juan de Álava. The Renaissance details in the church are Álava's work; Juan Gil was a Gothic purist. After Álava died in 1537 his place was taken by Rodrigo Gil de Hontañón, Juan Gil's bastard son and the most famous of the three family architects. Although he continued in the Gothic style of his father, Rodrigo added to the church a few of the Plateresque touches for which he became well known. Shortly after the defeat of the Spanish Armada (a crisis for all of Spain) the construction ended. The cathedral was not finished until the eighteenth century, and although the last work was true to the original style, it was quite stiff in execution.

The same west-end beginning was used in the Segovia cathedral,²⁹ which Juan Gil had begun in 1525, one year before his death. The building continued to develop in the lines of the Salamanca cathedral. There was now, however, a greater accent on verticality, obtained by omitting the capitals located in the earlier cathedral at the springing of the arch on the nave facade. García de Cubillas had reached the crossing when Rodrigo entered into the work and

erected the apse. Rodrigo selected for construction the popular medieval apse--a chevet with ambulatory and radiating chapels. His plan was retardataire in that it repeated the style of the early Pilgrimage churches, but it introduced an exterior beauty that Spanish Gothic churches usually lacked, with their emphasis on interiors. This was expressed in " . . . a magnificent series of steps--first the chapels, then the ambulatory, and finally the main apse of the choir, which has pinnacles, leading the eye further upwards, and even flying buttresses."³⁰

The construction of the Astorga cathedral³¹ (the last of the major churches which may relate to the work in the Divine Saviour of Vejer) began in 1471 when a new Gothic apse was built to replace the old Romanesque one. Before Rodrigo Gil entered into the construction the eastern end had been completed up through the first two bays of the nave. He began work in 1530 and completed the church in Gothic style. Here he emphasized verticality even further by abandoning altogether the capitals used by his predecessors in the piers in the eastern end of the nave.

Although the young Rodrigo was a much sought after architect from the 1530's until his death in 1577, and is considered more important than his father or half brother, " . . . one cannot put him at the side of the masters that developed the pleasant style of the Spanish Renaissance

because he did not understand the new art, nor that of the following even newer Herrera school. He was a retardataire architect; very hard working, yes, but archaic."³² Yet in another sense it was a new style rather than an old one that developed and flowered when Rodrigo took over his father's projects. It came at a time when people had wearied of excessive baroque in a style that originated as a reaction to the excessive decoration of Romanesque. Rodrigo was able to express this public sentiment in a more austere Gothic with minimal decoration incorporating Renaissance motifs.³³

One aspect typically Spanish that the above-mentioned churches share but is not attributed to the Gil de Hontañón family is the coro placed in the center of the church. Referring to it, Frankl says,

The practice of shutting off part of the nave with high screens, for the use of the clergy, completely obstructing the view from west to east, and partially obstructing that from north-to south, did not become general in Spain until the fifteenth century.³⁴

This obstruction or breaking up of the spatial quality, usually found in Gothic churches of Spain, on one hand may be considered a detraction; on the other it allows an intimacy with the services held at the main altar not found in other churches. It also affords artists additional space for sculptural decoration.

The cathedrals served as prototypes for the village

churches, but sometimes the influence came through larger village churches such as the Gothic church of Santa María la Coronada in Medina Sidonia (Cádiz). Although in every respect far more elaborate than the Divine Saviour, its effect on the smaller church must be considered in that it is situated in the ducal seat of Medina Sidonia, and Vejer falls within that duchy. The Medina Sidonia building, like that of Vejer, occupies the most commanding position of the village, which, in common with Vejer, is built on a hilltop. It is, however, far more imposing and, understandably, richer in every way than the Divine Saviour. Not only does the church possess valuable statuary and paintings but it is richer in ornamental detail. The lierne ribbing of the apse and first bay are elaborately decorated--more in keeping with the crossing vaults of the Seville cathedral or its provincial copy, San Miguel in Jerez, than those of Vejer. The vaults of the terminating chapels of the side aisles are (as will be shown) closely related to the nave vaults of Vejer, whereas the simplicity of the nave vaulting in Medina Sidonia is in stark contrast with that of the smaller church. Other ties are to be found in the varied arches leading to the side chapels (compare Figs. 27 and 100 and Figs. 28 and 101). The Medina Sidonia church represents a conglomerate of styles: in addition to its late Gothic parts, it bears

portions constructed during a massive remodeling in Renaissance style. In this century two Roman pillars found in the village have been imbedded in the church walls in order to preserve the ancient relics. Thus like the Divine Saviour of Vejer it represents a span of many centuries and styles.

What began in Spain as an attempt to simplify and humanize the character of Romanesque developed into a style that yielded naturally into the extreme decorative-ness of Flamboyant Gothic. The phenomenon has been explained with the thesis that once the technical problems are resolved architects search for new directions,³⁵ and those new directions in the Late Gothic were channeled toward effect and decoration. It was in decoration that a more ornate style began to surface.

Along the aisle walls in the church of the Divine Saviour one finds brackets supporting the ribs of the Gothic vaulting of the side aisles. These brackets can be traced back to early Cistercian models and to the previously mentioned early Gothic church of Santa Ana in Seville. But more interesting is the incipient transition to Baroque found in their decoration. One sees a cherub face emerging from the base of a rounded rib [Fig. 102], while another bracket, with its Gothic vegetal ornamentation, rests upon an outstretched hand [Fig. 103]. In

contrast are the earlier brackets found in the church of Medina Sidonia whose decoration, with its sculptured grotesques, remains more Gothic [Figs. 104 and 105]. The same evolution occurs in the jamb shafts of the nave and aisle windows. Those of Medina Sidonia are pure Gothic [Fig. 106] whereas those in Vejer represent a sort of Hegelian progression in art by either an imitation that is a simplification of its prototype [Fig. 107] or a play with a new Baroque decoration [Fig. 108].

The piers, with their multiple molded shafts, follow a direct pattern of development from Seville to Salamanca to Segovia to Medina Sidonia and, finally, to Vejer [Figs. 109, 110, and 111].³⁶ The Vejer pier is almost identical to that of Medina Sidonia in that it rests on an octagonal base rather than a round one; the round bases were used in Salamanca and Segovia, but the Medina Sidonia and Vejer octagons had their prototype in Seville.

Unlike the plan of the nave facade of the Gil de Hontañón cathedrals, the Divine Saviour has only the arcade and clearstory--probably not due to its late construction date so much as to its size. It is a far smaller building than the cathedrals, and its proportions do not merit an additional gallery or small balustrade to indicate one. There is, however, a narrow simple string course that runs along

the triforium area [Fig. 112] which gives a strong horizontal accent to contrast with the Gothic verticality. The band joins the pier capitals situated at the springing of the ribs which form the star vaulting. The arcade capitals of the Divine Saviour, however, are placed much in the same way as those in the cathedral of Segovia--on the aisle side only (not the nave side, where they would have interrupted the colonnettes supporting the rib vaulting) [Fig. 112].

The star vaulting at Vejer is simple in contrast with the elaborate crossing that Juan Gil de Hontañón designed for Seville. However, it does compare favorably with the sixteenth-century Sacristía de los Calices vault located on the south side of the cathedral [Figs. 113 and 114]. That this type of vaulting was popular in other churches in the province of Cádiz is demonstrated by the very late Gothic chapel of the mudéjar church of Santa María de la O in Sanlúcar de Barrameda [Fig. 115] as well as in the side aisle and terminating chapel vaults of the Medina Sidonia church of Santa María la Coronada [Fig. 116]. The bosses in the Divine Saviour are, however, different from the stereotyped rosettes found in the other churches [Fig. 117]: in Vejer provincial tastes were acceded to. Unfortunately, the nave vaulting of the Divine Saviour, with its layers of cal, appears to be more an elaborate decoration applied in gesso

than the skeletal framework of a Gothic vault. It is, however, not of gesso but of stone, and, as in most Spanish churches, forms " . . . a solid roof on which rests the roof tiles,"³⁷ and thus contrasts with the French vault which is " . . . merely a ceiling above which lifts the pointed roof."³⁸

In summary, the Gothic style that first arrived in Spain with the Cistercians was a long-lived one beginning in the twelfth century in some areas and extending well into the eighteenth century.³⁹ Since it followed the Reconquest, its arrival was later in Andalusia. The first Gothic in the south was primarily mudéjar because the Muslim influence was stronger there than elsewhere. Pure Gothic (i.e., without Islamic influences) began gradually to replace the mudéjar, and with Seville cathedral leading the way a new late Gothic style developed. Its architects, working mostly in Castile, built churches that greatly influenced Andalusia, and small rich villages tried to simulate the great cathedrals. Provincialism still dictated construction, however, so that one may discuss the development of the churches only in general terms. Strangely, Vejer's church was affected only slightly by the new Plateresque when it did arrive--perhaps if its reconstruction had continued, rather than stopping midway as it did, it would have added yet another style to its existing complex. The church is primarily a Gothic one--ranging from the early

mudéjar aspects of that style to the very late baroque influences--but in every way a Spanish Gothic one that still retains its own indomitable local character.

NOTES

¹Marqués de Lozoya and L. F. de Peñalosa, El arte gótico en España: arquitectura--escultura--pintura (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, S. A., 1935), p. 9.

²Ibid., p. 13.

³Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, III, 9.

⁴Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 191.

⁵George Kubler and Martin Soria, Art and Architecture in Spain and Portugal and Their American Dominions: 1500 - 1800, The Pelican History of Art 217 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969), p. 8. Kubler considers Plateresque a continuation of Late Medieval architecture, a term he applies to what I refer to as Late Gothic.

⁶Lozoya and Peñalosa, Arte gótico, p. 136. See also Esteve Guerrero, Jerez, figures XIV and XV. Today very little appears to be Gothic. After an earthquake in 1755 the Colegiata was severely damaged and, therefore, rebuilt.

⁷Lozoya and Peñalosa, Arte gótico, p. 136

⁸Augusto L. Mayer, El estilo gótico en España; trans. by Felipe Villaverde (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, S. A., 1929), p. 10.

⁹John Harvey, The Cathedrals of Spain (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1957), p. 8.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 223.

¹¹Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, III, 166.

¹²Hugh Braun, Historical Architecture: The Development of Structure and Design (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1953), p. 170.

¹³Leopoldo Torres Balbás, Arquitectura gótica, Vol. VII of Ars Hispaniae (18 vols.; Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1952), p. 116.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 121. See figure 85.

- 15 Lampérez y Romea, Arquitectura cristiana, III, 188.
- 16 Martin Briggs, Everyman's Concise Encyclopaedia of Architectura (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1959), p. 309.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Mayer, Estilo gótico, p. 18.
- 19 Harvey, Cathedrals, p. 57.
- 20 Martín Gonzalez, Arquitectura, p. 224. The author's explanation was in relation to the construction of the Burgos cathedral.
- 21 Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 191.
- 22 Harvey, Cathedrals, p. 233.
- 23 Esteve Guerrero, Jerez, figures III and VI.
- 24 Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 191. See also Chueca Goitia (Arquitectura española, p. 546, figure 494) for plan.
- 25 George Edmund Street, Some Account of Gothic Architecture in Spain (2 vols.; London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1914), p. 243. This account of the building of the Salamanca cathedral credits Rodrigo with being the "master of the works" and omits mention of his father, Juan. Juan is named as the principle architect of Salamanca in all other accounts of the construction.
- 26 Andrew Martindale, Gothic Art, The World of Art Library (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), p. 39. See also illustration 14.
- 27 Street, Gothic Architecture, p. 243. The author says the square east end was not planned but was a product of the eighteenth century.
- 28 Chueca Goitia, Arquitectura española, p. 571. See figure 514 for plan.
- 29 Ibid., p. 577. See figure 519 for plan.

³⁰Paul Frankl, Gothic Architecture, trans. by Dieter Pevsner, The Pelican History of Art (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1962), p. 211.

³¹Chueca Goitia, Arquitectura española, p. 585.
See figure 526 for plan.

³²Juan Agapita y Revilla "Un laborioso arquitecto Castellano del siglo XVI: Rodrigo Gil," Arquitectura, V Madrid (March, 1923), 63.

³³Lozoya and Peñalosa, Arte gótico, p. 134.

³⁴Frankl, Gothic Architecture, p. 119.

³⁵Lozoya and Peñalosa, Arte gótico, p. 43.

³⁶Torres Balbás, Arquitectura gótica, p. 284.
For illustrations of the piers of Seville cathedral, see figure 235; see p. 381, figure 315 for illustrations of the piers at Segovia.

³⁷Braun, Historical Architecture, p. 188.

³⁸Frankl, Gothic Architecture, p. 120.

³⁹Bevan, Arquitectura española, p. 197.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

Obviously, the dating of a building as complex and enigmatic as the Divine Saviour becomes a veritable rompecabeza. Thus the dates I herewith confer on various sections of the church are assigned with the realization (and understanding, I hope, on the part of the reader) that they cannot be more than a calculated guess.

To begin with the earliest features--the Visigothic capitals--I believe that the church standing today rests upon the site of a now-lost Visigothic church; the capitals are the only remaining visible feature. They do not come from the existing Visigothic remains in the environs (their style is distinct), nor do they resemble those found elsewhere. The uniqueness of style lies first in the fact that regionalism is the dominant voice in all Spanish construction and second in the Byzantine influence from the sixth-century colonization of a part of Andalusia that included Vejer (which was perhaps stronger than historians heretofore have believed). The capitals might come from the sixth century, though I believe the seventh century is a more logical date. Seventh-century remains are more prolific in Spain than those of the sixth, and other extant Visigothic remains in the Vejer area are products of the seventh century.

The columns which support the capitals are probably Roman and were no doubt brought from another site. This was a popular practice in Visigothic times, and one should probably not consider them the earliest feature in the church.

The arguments for pure Muslim elements within the Divine Saviour are not strong enough to give any feature in the church a date coinciding with the Muslim occupation and domination of the village. Until the foundations are exposed and studied, there remains only a possibility that the church rests on Muslim foundations. In addition, the cinquefoil decoration of the ajimez window discovered behind the altar is a strong argument in favor of its early mudéjar origin. The entire character of the village is Muslim; if there are no remains of a mosque to be seen today, it is probably because the mosque was replaced by the present church.

It appears that the Divine Saviour church underwent three building programs in the mudéjar style. The first program is represented by the ajimez window built immediately following the Reconquest--late in the thirteenth century. The foundations also were probably laid at this time since their orientation cannot be reconciled with any Muslim structure. This part of the church relates to the type of construction found in Seville and Cordoba. Very

likely the covering of the nave at this time was wood, and the apse probably carried the dome its square shape demanded. Such a dome, then, could have served as a prototype for the beehive one that survives in the church of San Ambrosio. A second building program came with the building of the upper windows and the new mudéjar vaulting of the apse. This portion of the building is stone, in contrast with the rubble of the lower section. The decoration of the upper windows is also of stone, in distinction from the brick outline of the ajimez window below. Here the construction is closely related to that found in Jerez. The work is rougher than that of Jerez, implying that the builders were not the same. But that the Divine Saviour was profoundly influenced by what was being built in Jerez in the fourteenth and fifteenth century is unmistakable. The buttress which conceals the lower ajimez window was built at the same time as the apse vaulting and upper windows: the decoration on the buttress is of stone and also repeats a pattern found in the apse.

The construction of the first two east-end nave bays followed the apse, probably within the same century but in a later building program. That the pattern of decoration is simplified and repeats a more elaborate cal-covered one supports such an interpretation. The heavy layer of whitewash which concealed the true design could

have accumulated easily within a decade. The third building program, then, probably followed quickly on the heels of the second one (not so quickly, however, that the original design could be remembered by the later builders). The mudéjar construction came to an end in the early fifteenth century, and a hundred years passed before new construction was begun.

The western section of the church is a sample of late Gothic architecture and includes some Isabelline elements which (as the name signifies) came after the union of the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella. The star vaulting, as well as the clustered piers, follows patterns first introduced by the Gil de Hontañón family early in the sixteenth century. Since the piers are not used without capitals, as are those in the Astorga cathedral, but rather follow the style just preceding, one must conclude that they were built before 1530.

The Church of the Divine Saviour can thus be said to represent a span of nine hundred years, and something of a history of Spanish construction can be seen in this one structure. It must be remembered, however, that it is Spanish generally, Andalusian vaguely, Cádiz-provincial spiritually--but essentially it is a vejeriego building, and thus only a small part of a very grand and complex process.

A NOTE ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Unless otherwise indicated, all photographs are of the Church of the Divine Saviour, Vejer de la Frontera.

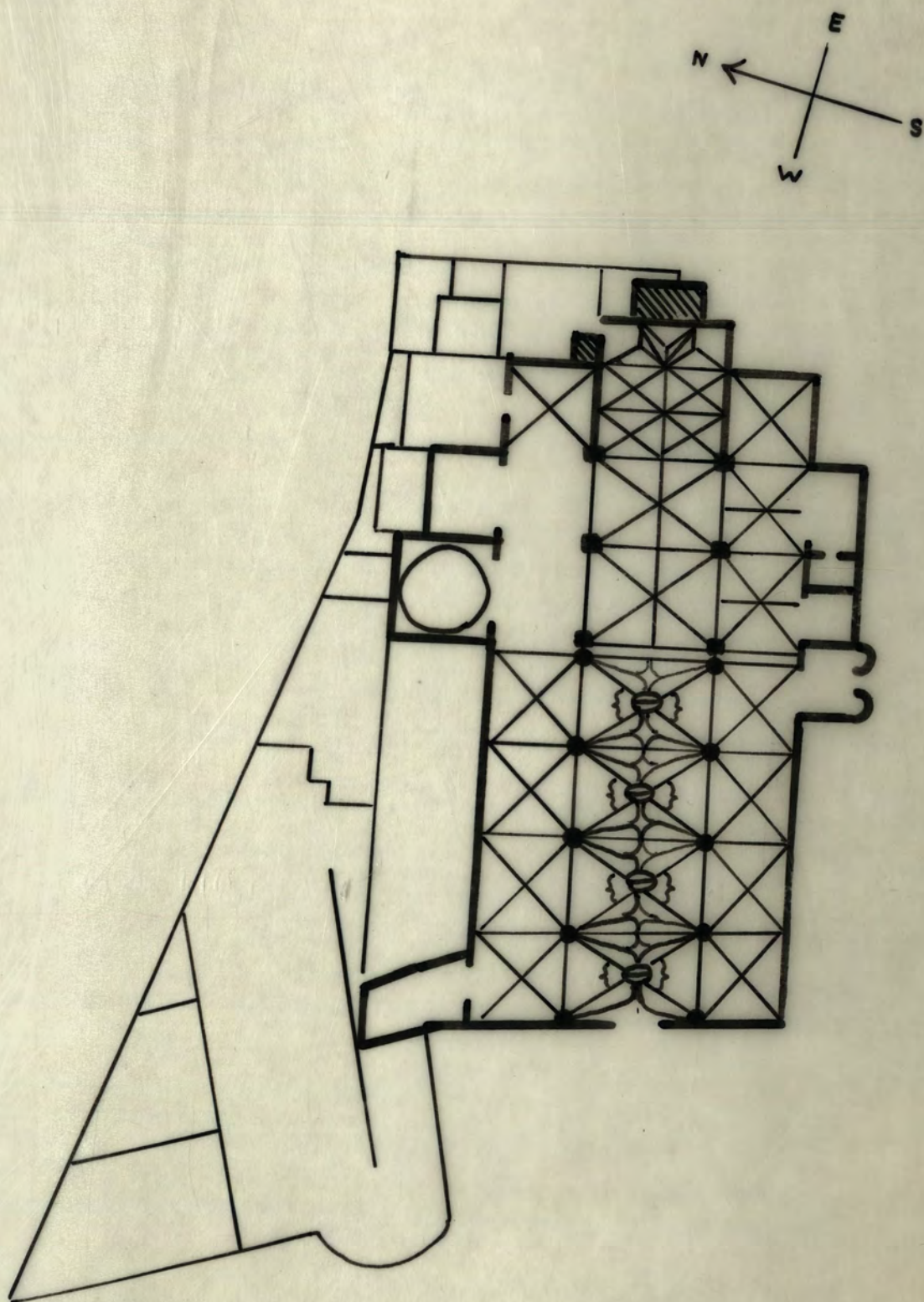


Figure 1. Detailed plan of the church.

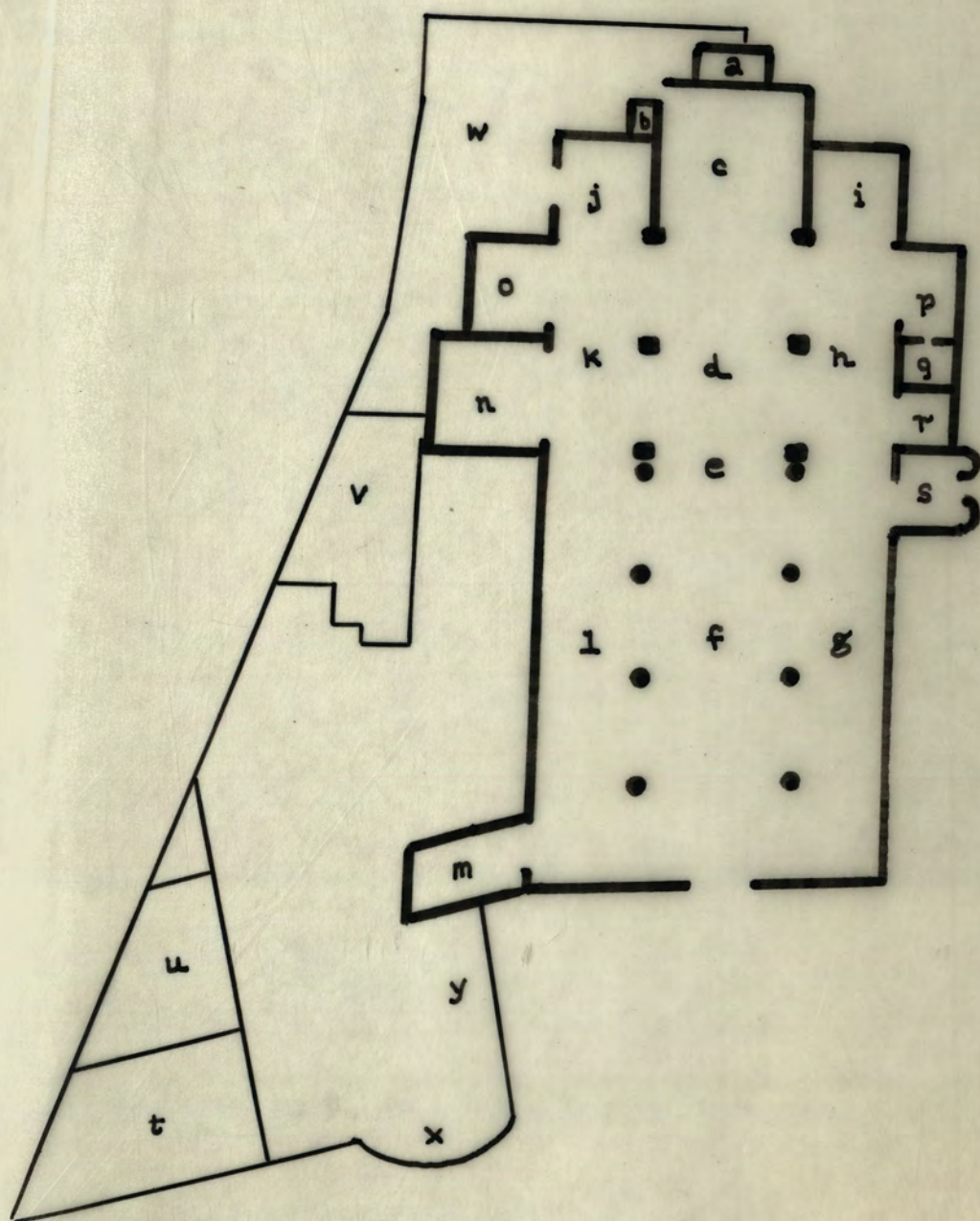


Figure 2. Numbered plan of the church.



Figure 3. Air view of the church (after Geología y Fotografía Aéreas, S. A.).

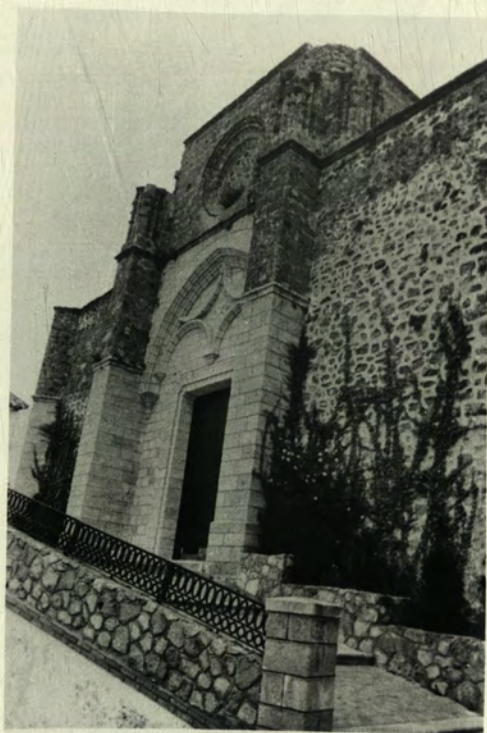


Figure 4. West facade with
ramp and steps leading to
entrance.



Figure 5. South elevation,
entrance, and bell tower.



Figure 6. North elevation with peripheral rooms used by the clergy.

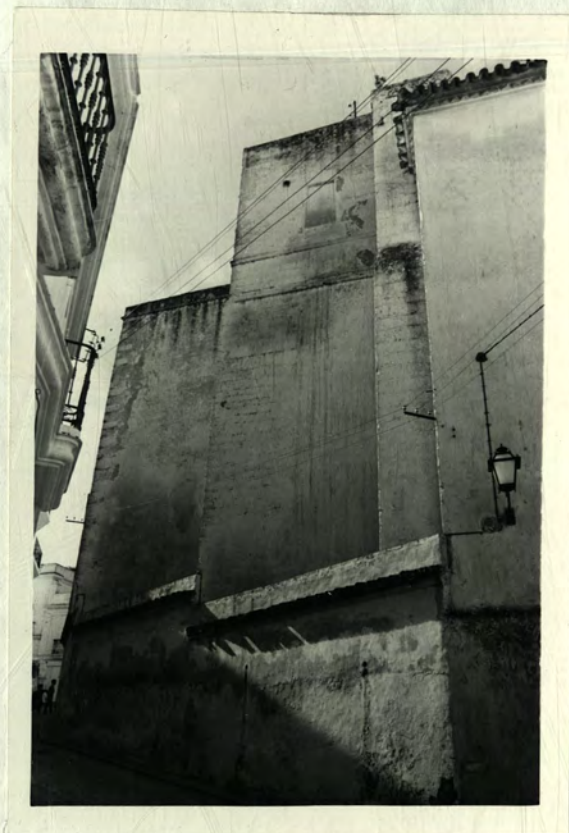


Figure 7. East elevation with
apse and wall concealing the
crypt.

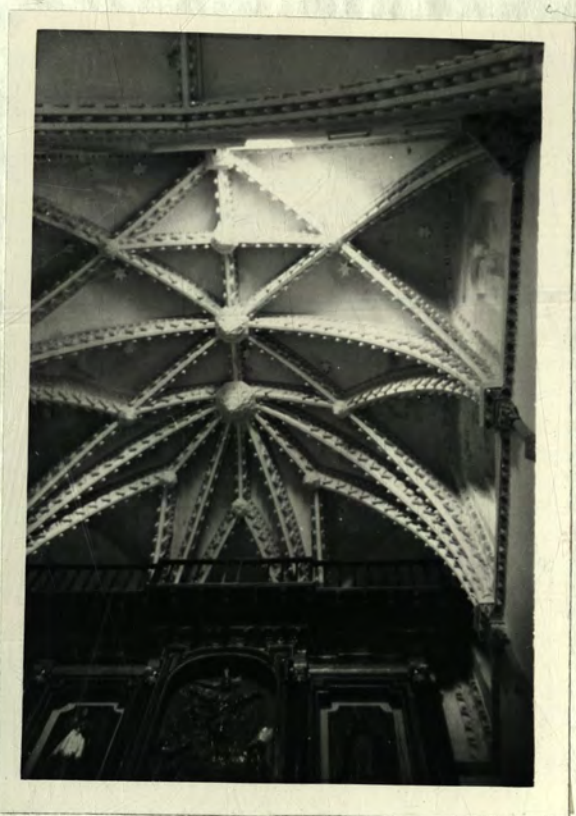


Figure 8. Ribbed vaulting of apse with sawtooth decoration.



Figure 9. Apse roofline showing east and north buttresses.

Figure 10. Main altar
with lower central
panel removed.



Figure 11. Aimez
window behind main
altar.





Figure 12. Triumphal arch looking west from apse.

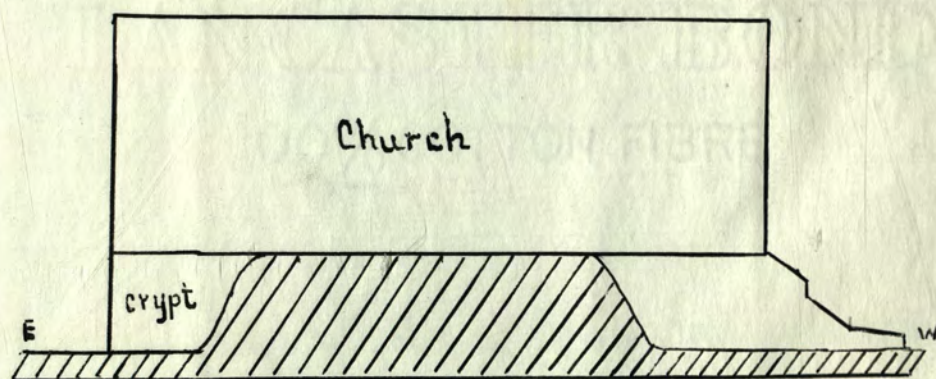


Figure 13. Cross-section showing positioning of church on ridge.



Figure 14. Pointed arch of first bay and rounded arch of second bay of nave. (see plan 2d).

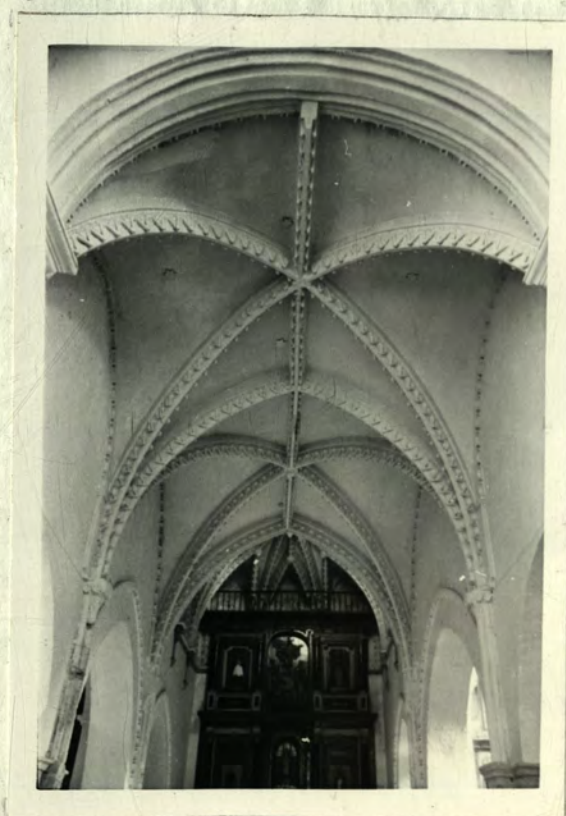


Figure 15. Ribbed vaulting over first two bays of nave.



Figure 16. Mudéjar capital



Figure 17. Visigothic capital



Figure 18.
Visigothic
capital



Figure 19.
Visigothic
capital



Figure 20. North side aisle barrel vault. (see plan 2k).



Figure 21. Aisle terminating chapel. (see plan 2i and 2j).

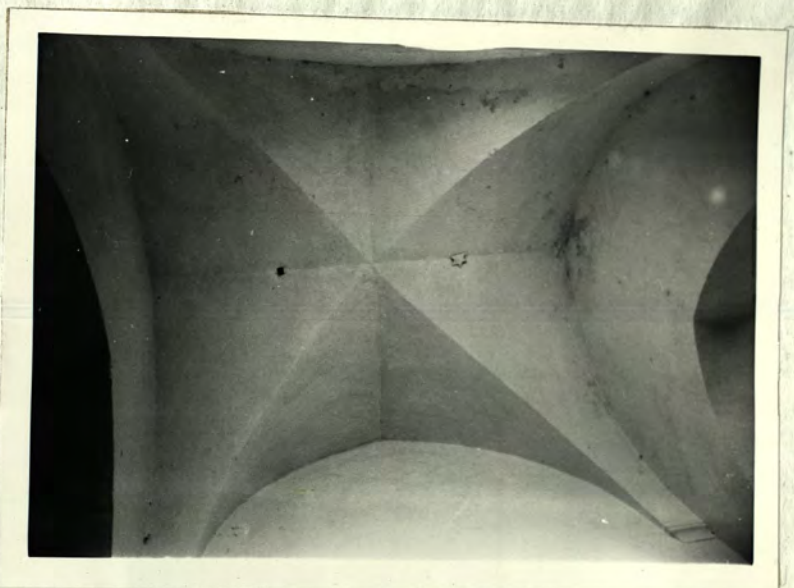


Figure 22. South side aisle groined vault.
(see plan 2h).



Figure 23. Unfinished meeting
of east and west piers. (see
plan 2e).



Figure 24.
Gothic
vaulting.
(see plan
2f).



Figure 25.
Pointed nave
arches.



Figure 26. Side aisle vaulting
(see plan 2g and 2l).



Figure 27. Southeast chapel (see plan 2p).



Figure 28. South entrance
(see plan 2a).



Figure 29. Northeast chapel (see plan 2o).



Figure 30. Northeast chapel (see plan 2n).

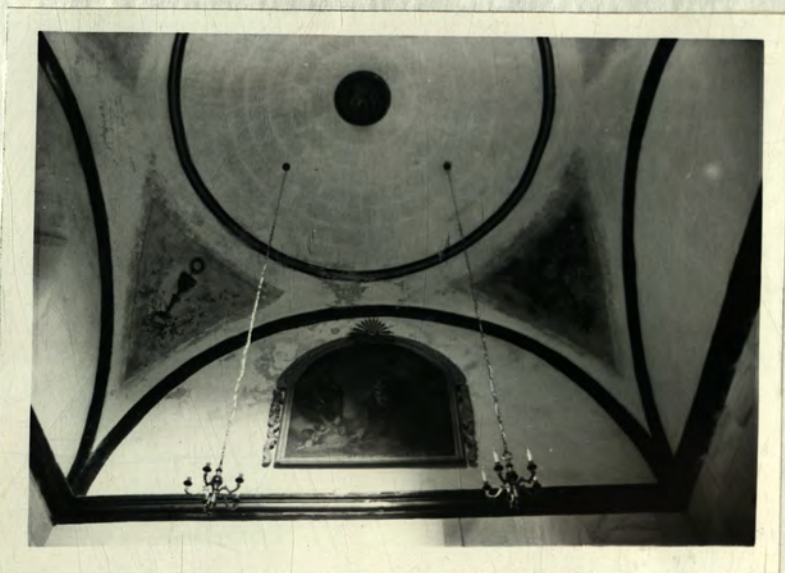


Figure 31. Northeast chapel dome.



Figure 32.
Baptismal
chapel (see
plan 2m).



Figure 33.
Northeast
doorway to
vestry (see
plan 2j).



Figure 34.
Southwest
buttresses.

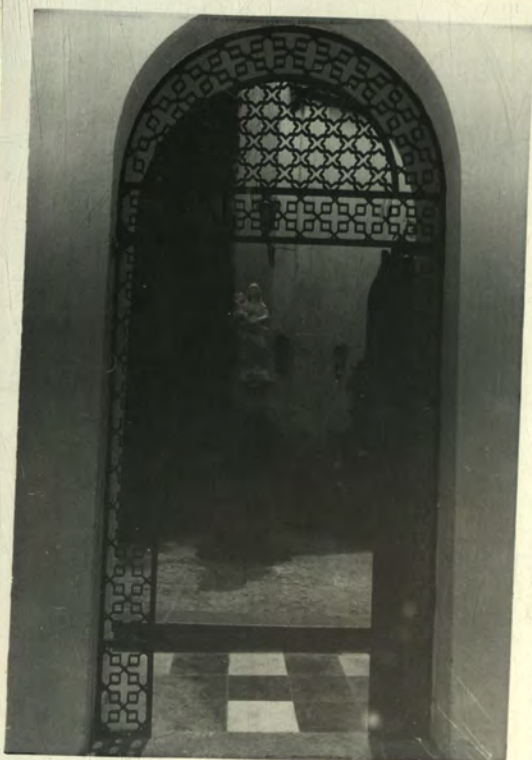


Figure 35.
North gate.



Figure 36.
North garden
(see plan 2v).



Figure 37.
North arch-
way.



Figure 38. Stable (see plan 2u).



Figure 39. Visigothic graves, Church of San Ambrosio.



Figure 40. Northeast corner bar and tower (see plan 2t and 2x).



Figure 41. Continuation of tower to west facade (see plan 2x and 2y).



Figure 42. Flying buttress.



Figure 43. Tile pyramid.



Figure 44. Interior
stone tracery of
clearstory window.



Figure 45. Exterior
view of clearstory
window.



Figure 46. Visigothic mosaic near Vejer de la Frontera.



Figure 47. Column shaft with capitals at either end, Hermitage of Sts. Justo and Pastor, Medina Sidonia.



Figure 48. Visigothic capital, Church of San Ambrosio near Vejer de la Frontera.



Figure 49. Spanish Visigothic capital (after Georgiana Goddard King, Pre-Romanesque Churches of Spain).



Figure 50.
Monolithic
shaft, Church
of San Ambrosio
near Vejer.



Figure 51.
Shaft of drums,
Church of San
Ambrosio near
Vejer.



Figure 52. Visigothic capital, Hermitage of Sts. Justo and Pastor, Medina Sidonia.



Figure 53. Visigothic capital.



Figure 54. Visigothic capital



Figure 55. Visigothic capital



Figure 56. Byzantine capital (after figure 246, volume 2, Ars Hispaniae).



Figure 57. Visigothic decoration, Church of San Pedro de la Nave (Zamora).



Figure 58. Visigothic capital, San Pedro de la Nave (Zamora).



Figure 59. Column base, San Pedro de la Nave (Zamora).

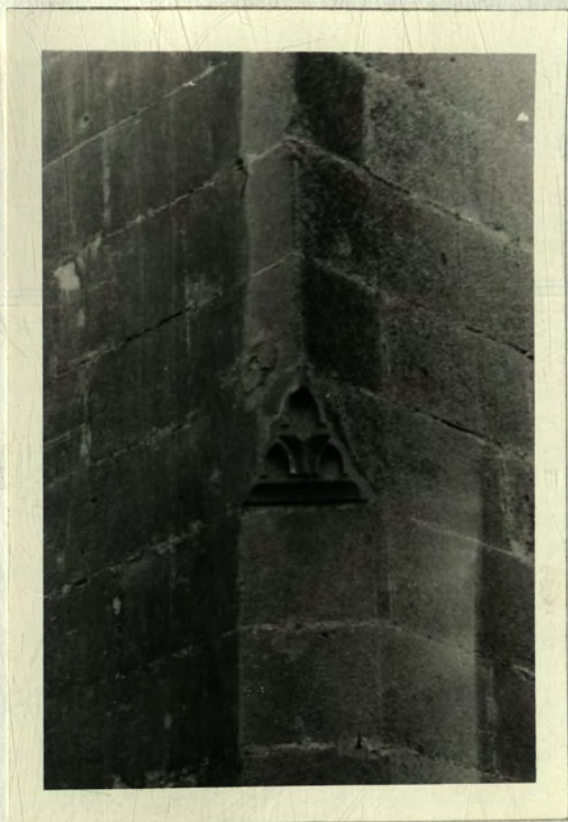


Figure 60. Corner
stalactite, San
Dionisio, Jerez de
la Frontera.



Figure 61. Corner
stalactite.



Figure 62. Muslim type roofing,
Ermita del Castillo, Lebrija.



Figure 63. Placement date of floor tiles.

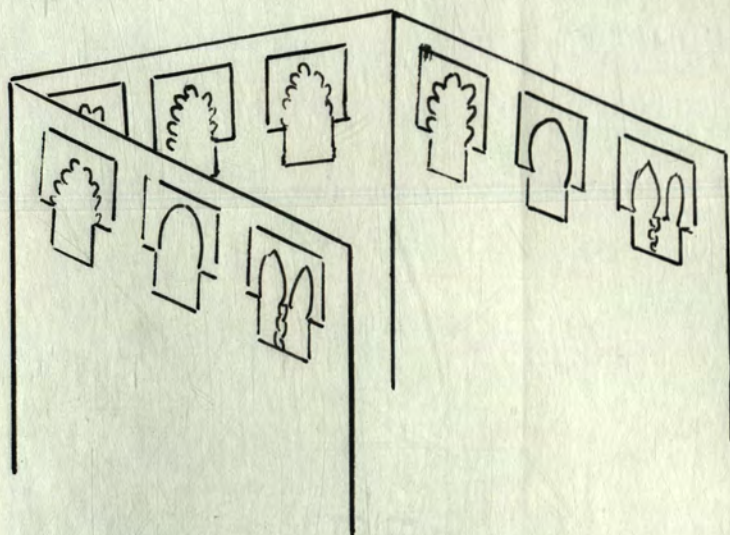


Figure 64. Upper windows of presbytery.



Figure 65. Window 3 (see Fig. 64).



Figure 66. Window 4
(see Fig. 64).



Figure 67. Window 5
(see Fig. 64).



Figure 68. Window 6 (see Fig. 64).



Figure 69. Window 7 (see Fig. 64).



Figure 70. Niche of
Las Huelgas, Capilla
de la Asunción, Burgos.



Figure 71. Window 1
(see Fig. 64).



Figure 72. Window 9 (see Fig. 64).

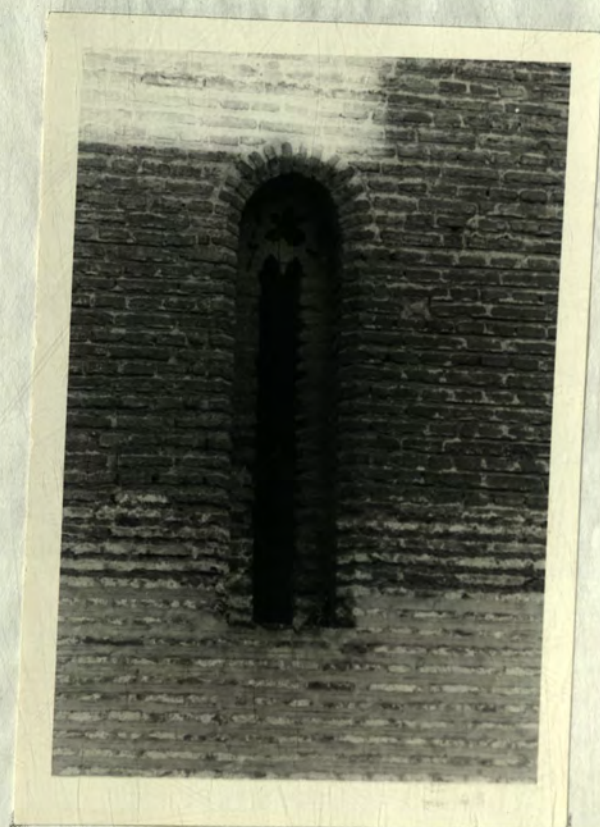


Figure 73. Tower window,
Church of San Marcos, Seville.



Figure 74. Altar of alicatado work.

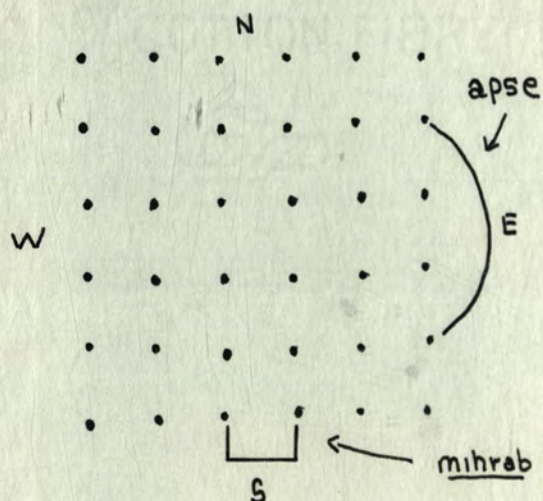


Figure 75. Change of orientation from mosque to church.



Figure 76. East buttress decoration



Figure 77. Presbytery, Church of San Miguel, Córdoba.



Figure 78. Presbytery of the church, Monasterio de la Rábida (Huelva).



Figure 79. Vault construction.

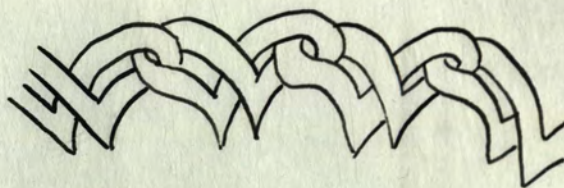


Figure 80. Presbytery decoration.

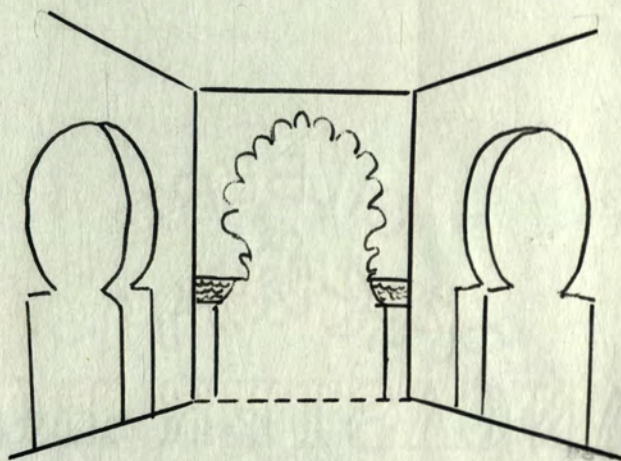


Figure 81. Maqsurah and mihrab,
Tlencen mosque, Algeria.

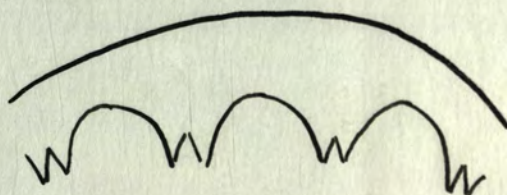


Figure 82. Nave decoration.



Figure 83. Window,
Church of Santa
Marina, Seville.



Figure 84. Window,
Church of Santa
Catalina, Seville.



Figure 85. Funerary chapel,
Church of San Miguel, Córdoba.



Figure 86. Sawtooth vaulting design, Church of San Antonio Abad, Trigueros.

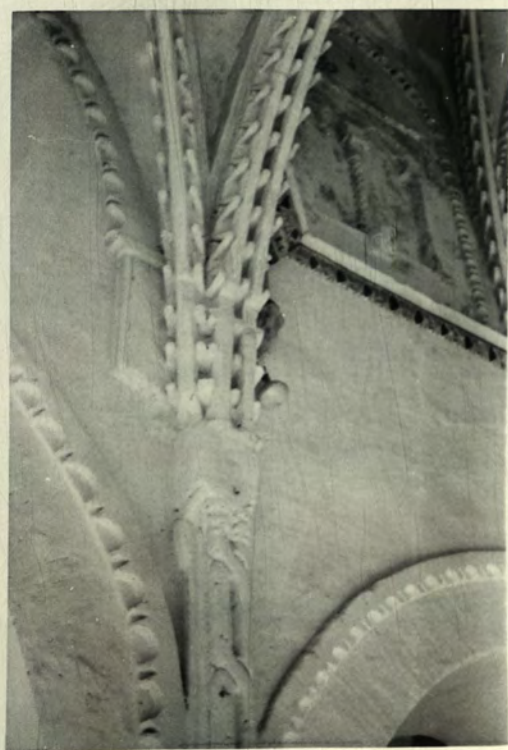


Figure 87. Sawtooth vaulting design.

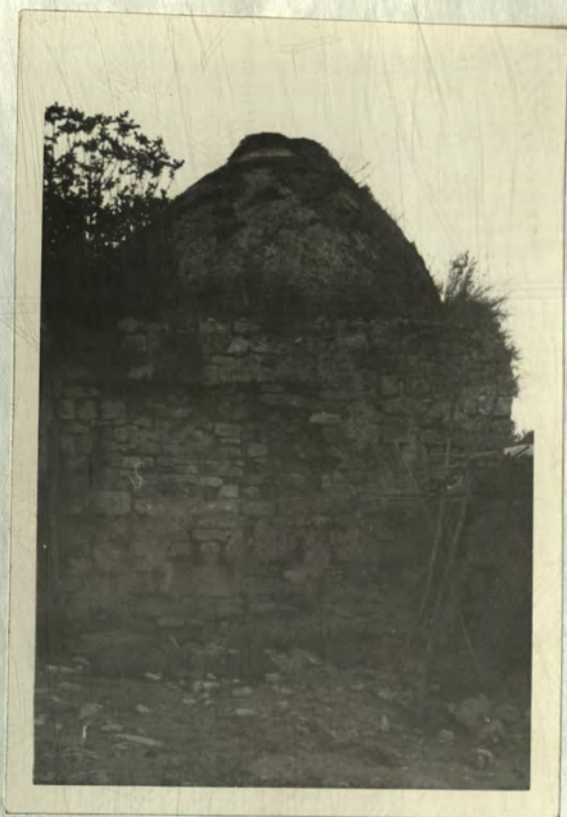


Figure 88. Beehive dome, Church of San Ambrosio near Vejer.

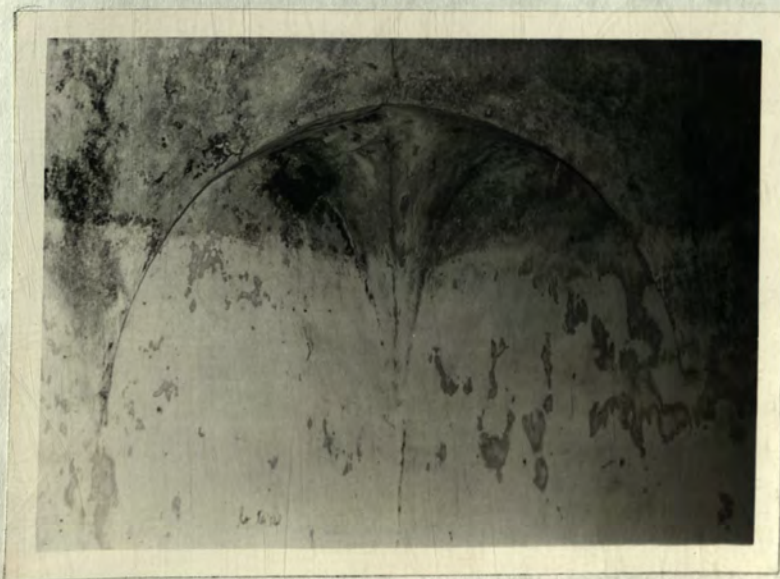


Figure 89. Almohad-type trompa, Church of San Ambrosio near Vejer.

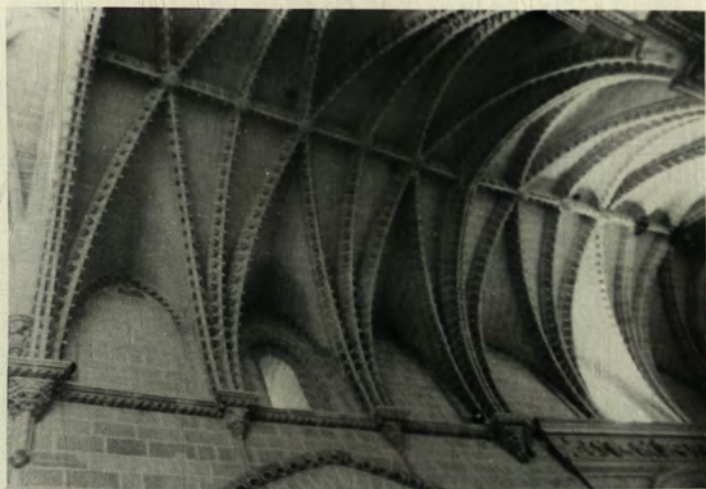


Figure 90. Mudéjar ribbed vaulting supported by brackets on colonnettes, Convent of Santo Domingo, Jerez de la Frontera.



Figure 91. Mudéjar ribbed vaulting supported by brackets on colonnettes.



Figure 92. Mudéjar apse, Church of San Juan, Jerez de la Frontera.

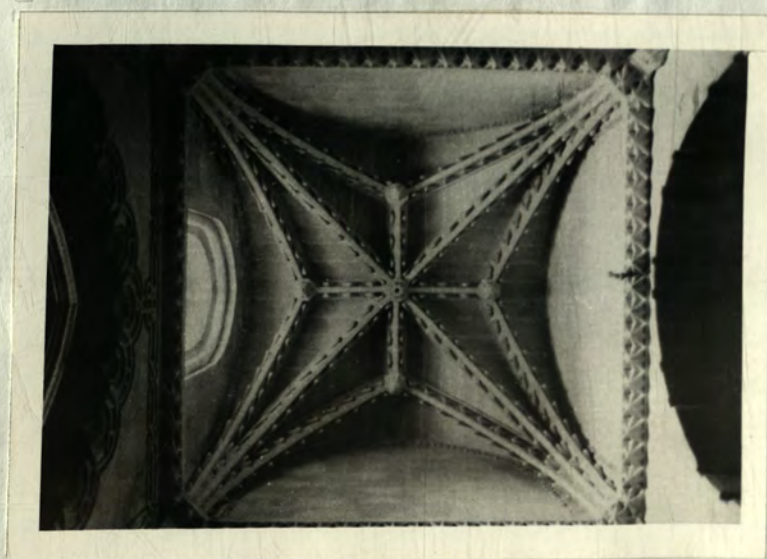


Figure 93. Mudéjar chapel vaulting, Church of San Juan, Jerez de la Frontera.



Figure 94. Mudéjar design over presbytery door, Church of San Juan, Jerez de la Frontera.



Figure 95. San José Chapel niche, Church of San Juan, Jerez de la Frontera.

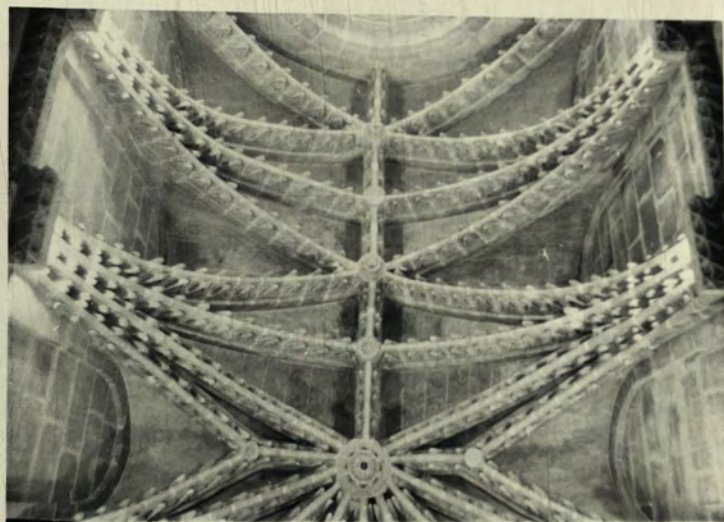


Figure 96. Capilla de la Paz vaulting, Church of Santiago, Jerez de la Frontera.

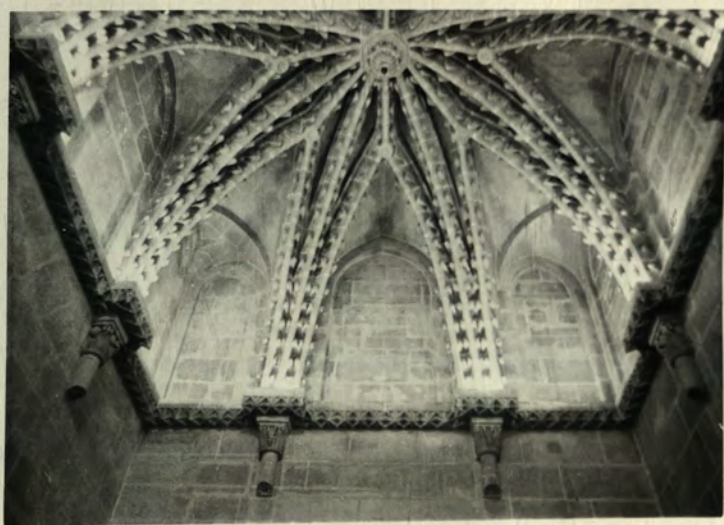


Figure 97. Capilla de la Paz vaulting continued.



Figure 98. North buttress ornamentation.



Figure 99. Atalaya tower ornamentation,
Church of San Dionisio, Jerez de la Frontera.



Figure 100. Side chapel,
Church of Santa María la
Coronada, Medina Sidonia.



Figure 101. Side chapel,
Church of Santa María la
Coronada, Medina Sidonia.



Figure 102. Aisle
console.



Figure 103. Aisle
console.



Figure 104. Aisle
console, Church of
Santa María la
Coronada, Medina
Sidonia.



Figure 105. Aisle
console, Church of
Santa María la
Coronada, Medina
Sidonia.



Figure 106. Window,
Church of Santa María
la Coronada, Medina
Sidonia.



Figure 107. Window



Figure 108. Window.



Figure 109. Pier base, Cathedral of Salamanca.



Figure 110. Pier base, Church of Santa
María la Coronada, Medina Sidonia.



Figure 111. Pier base.



Figure 112. Nave arcade.

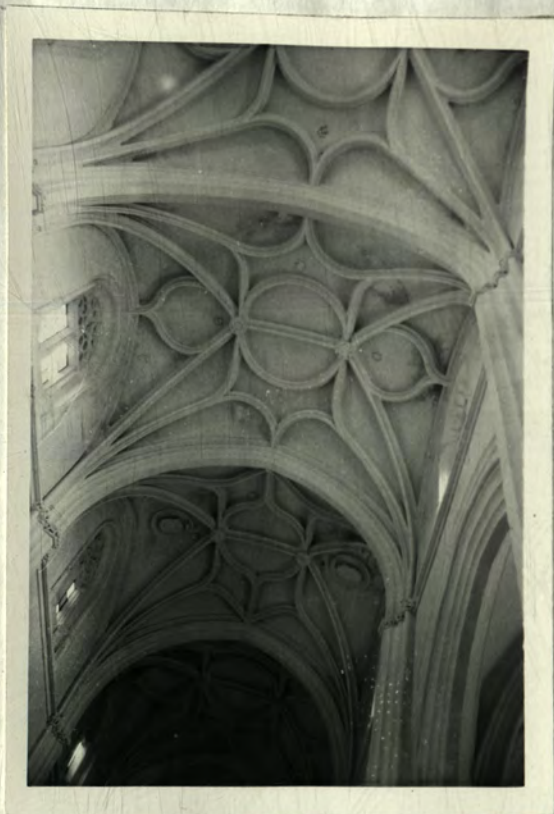


Figure 113. Nave vaulting.



Figure 114. Chapel vaulting, Sacristía de los Calices, Seville Cathedral.



Figure 115. Chapel vaulting, Church of Santa María de la O, Sanlúcar de Barrameda.



Figure 116. Aisle vaulting, Church of Santa María la Coronada, Medina Sidonia.



Figure 117. Boss.

GLOSSARY

- Ajaracas--trellis-type Arab decoration.
- Ajimez--arched window with pillar in center.
- Alfiz--square or rectangle framing an Arab arch.
- Alicatado--inlaid work composed of small pieces of glazed tile.
- Artesonado--wooden panelled ceiling.
- Azulejos--glazed tiles in various colors.
- Cal--lime whitewash.
- Capilla mayor--main chapel.
- Cobijado--special veil once worn by women of Vejer.
- Coro--choir.
- Lacería--interlacing.
- Lazo--polygonal star-shaped design.
- Maestro mayor--master builder.
- Maqsurah--area near mihrab where dignitaries sat.
- Mampostería--rubblework.
- Mihrab--prayer niche in mosque.
- Morería--Moorish quarter.
- Mudayyan--subject.
- Mudéjar--architectural style evolved during the Reconquest.
- Mudijalat--vassal.
- Muezzin--Muslim crier of the hour of prayer.
- Patrona--female patron saint.
- Pisos--apartments.

Qibla--side of mosque toward which Muslims turn in prayer.

Qubba--Muslim memorial shrine, especially of a saint.

Rábita--hermitage.

Rompecabeza--puzzle; literally, a "head breaker."

Sahn--atrium of a mosque.

Souk--public market.

Taifas--petty kingdoms resulting from the fragmentation of the Umayyad caliphate in Spain.

Trompas--squinch or pendentive types of support for a dome (used here to mean an Almohad type of squinch).

Vejeriego--an inhabitant of Vejer.

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