PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEMPLE, PROJECTIONS
OF THE DIVINE. ROYAL PATRONAGE, BIBLICAL
SCHOLARSHIP AND JESUIT IMAGERY IN SPAIN,
1580-1620*

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And you, son of man, describe to the house of Israel the temple
and its appearance and plan, that they may measure the pattern and
that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. And if they are ashamed
of all that they have done, portray the form of the temple, its arrange-
ments, its exits and its entrances, and its whole form; and make known
to them all its ordinances and all its laws; and write it down in their
sight, so that they may observe its whole form and perform all its laws
and all its ordinances. (Ezekiel 43, 10-11)

According to Marcel Bataillon's great book Érasme et l'Espagne (1937),
humanism in Spain slowly died out with the disappearance of Erasmus
(1536), its last voices smothered by the flames of the autos de fe of Valladolid and Seville in the years 1557-1559. A cordon sanitaire was thereafter erected around the country, the Inquisition's control "protecting" it from heresy and foreign influences.

Such a neat and powerful vision of Spain's past, prophetic in many
ways of its future, prevailed de facto with the death of the Spanish Repub-
lic and the isolation imposed by the Franco regime. It has since domi-

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nated historiography, leaving vast areas of Spain’s rich religious, intellec-
tual and cultural life uncharted, and cutting off the seventeenth-century art-
stistic and literary Golden Age from its roots. This article will argue that,
on the contrary, humanism did continue to flourish in Spain after the de-
cade of the 1550’s, and that it kept its place in the European republic of
letters while retaining its own particularities and benefiting from its diverse
religious traditions.

The monumental graphic reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon en-
titled *In Ezechielum Explanationes*, work of the two Jesuits Juan Bautista
Villalpando (1552-1608) and Jerónimo Prado (1547-1595), is a marvellous
example of the vitality of humanism in an age when Bataillon claimed it
had disappeared from Spanish intellectual life. Published in Rome from 1596
to 1605 in three enormous in-folio volumes of erudition and craftsmanship,
the book, lavishly illustrated, contained close to thirty spectacular engra-
vings, sometimes over a meter long and seventy-five centimetres high. Desti-
tined primarily for an audience of learned scholars and theologians, the
Spanish monarch Philip II (1556-1598) undertook the entire project, the
cost of which amounted to approximately 10,000 escudos. The book thus
underscores the king’s role as a great patron of letters, an aspect of his
patronage generally overshadowed by his involvement in the arts. By
the same token, the book offers an excellent example of Christian humanism
put at the service of the state, actively shaping—as in the mirror of prin-
ces genre—royal propaganda through a suggestive reflection of the mo-
narch’s projected image. It also highlights the intense intellectual and artis-
tistic activity centred in and around Seville during the years 1580-1620, as
both Prod and Villalpando were connected to this Andalucian city. In ad-
dition, the book draws attention to the contribution of the Jesuit order to
biblical scholarship in sixteenth— and early seventeenth-century Spain. Fi-
nally, a work of this nature, which integrates both text and pictorial ima-

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1 This conception of Spanish religious and intellectual history in the first half of the
sixteenth century is currently being revised by the work of Lu Ann Homza. See “Erasmus
as Hero, or Heretic? Spanish Humanism and the Valladolid Assembly of 1527”, *Renaissance
Renaissance*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.

2 The edition I have used is the recent translation of the second volume edited by
Juan Antonio Ramírez, *El Templo de Salomón según Juan Bautista Villalpando. Comentarios
da la profecía de Ezekiel*, Madrid, Siruela, 1991. References will be indicated by an abbrevi-
ated form of the title of the second volume, *De postrema Ezechielis prophetae visione*, an
arabic numeral for the book, a roman numeral for the chapter, yet another arabic numeral
for the page and, if need be, a letter to designate the column.

3 This is the case with Fernando Checa, *Felipe II mecenas de las artes*, Madrid, Nerea,
ges, helps define ideas about the exegetical function of imagery in relation, not only to the spirituality and the pastoral program of the Society of Jesus, but also to humanistic and artistic circles in Spain itself. This article hopes then to unite these three important facets—royal patronage, biblical scholarship and Jesuit imagery—and demonstrate the coalescence of the various manifestations of cultural and intellectual life in early modern Spain.

Jesuit Politics and the Archaeology of the *Explanations*

Little is known about the authors of the *Explanations*. Jerónimo Prado, born in the university city of Baeza in 1547, joined the Society of Jesus in 1572. He taught Sacred Scripture in various Jesuit colleges in Andalucía (Baeza, Córdoba, Sevilla), becoming one of the foremost Jesuit exegetes in Spain. His collaborator, Juan Bautista Villalpando, hailed from the nearby city of Córdoba, an important centre of Spanish antiquarianism. Born in 1552, little about his education and early life is known but, by his own admission, he was apprenticed to Juan de Herrera, architect to Philip II and builder of the Escorial. Entering the Society of Jesus in 1575, he ga-

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4 One inspiring study that also combines art, humanism and patronage is Sylvie Deswarte-Rosa, "Les "De Aetatibus mundi imagines" de Francisco de Holanda", *Monuments et mémoires*, 66, 1983, pp. 67-190.


6 Apart from his work for the *Explanations*, two biblical commentaries of his remain, both in manuscript form: *In Esatam Commentaria* (Córdoba, 1585), Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid (BNM), mss. 508, fol. 214-281; *Commentaria in epistola, Beati Pauli Apostoli ad Hebreos* (Córdoba, 1587), BNM, mss. 895, fol. 418-492.

7 "...tenía conocimientos científicos de Matemáticas y de Arquitectura con los que había intentado completar los estudios de la sagrada escritura, bajo la docta enseñanza de Juan de Herrera, Arquitecto del Rey Católico, que es un hombre dotado de profundos conocimientos y habilidades" (Introduction to the first volume reproduced as an Appendix to J. A. Ramírez (ed.), *El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado. Con las Saludas, Dedicatorias y Grabados en cobre de los volúmenes I y III de Juan Bautista Villalpando*, Madrid, Siruela, 1991, p. 114). Other mentions in J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 1-VII-34b; 1-VII-35a; 2-XX-94a.
ned renown during the 1580’s for architectural work in several Jesuit colleges and churches in Andalucía. When exactly Prado and Villalpando decided to embark upon this project is uncertain, but the two men were in close contact by 1580-1583, and this is probably when the idea of the *Explanattones* took shape. Although Prado wrote volume one, an extended commentary on the book of Ezekiel, Villalpando seems to have been the project’s mastermind. Indeed as his work on volumes two and three of the *Explanattones* suggests, he was far more than a practising architect. He was also a learned architect, skilled in art theory, philological humanism and biblical criticism. The second volume of the *Explanattones*, which served as the foundation of his reconstitution of the Temple of Jerusalem and forms the basis of the present study, illustrates Villalpando’s thorough knowledge of Vitruvius, his command of Hebrew and of Jewish exegesis, and his familiarity with patristic, medieval and contemporary scholarship on the Bible. However, what stands out in this book is Villalpando’s interest in reconciling divine revelation with classical culture, and his eagerness to Christianise pagan antiquity by giving the Temple a Vitruvian design, the only one in his opinion capable of architectural perfection.

In 1590, Villalpando submitted a final draft of his designs of the Temple to Philip II during an official interview attended by prince Philip, the Infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia, Juan de Herrera, and several courtiers. Subsequently, the king sent Villalpando to Rome to seek Papal approval for the book and to consult with scholars at the Collegium Romanum. Over the next three years, Villalpando would encounter a series of political and religious obstacles that delayed the publication of the *Explanattones*.

Ever since the election of the very young and very Italian Claudio Aquaviva as General of the Jesuits in 1581, a faction of the powerful Spanish

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8 The University Library of Seville houses a 1614 copy of a treatise by Villalpando, intitled *Sancti Remigii Explanattones Epistoliarum Beati Pauli Apostoli* (Biblioteca Universitaria de Sevilla, mss. 200/120).

9 For the occasion, a *Memorial de las cosas más insignes que tubo el Templo de Salomón* was written. It is reproduced in *Dios Arquitecto*, pp. 354-357. Book 5 of the *De postrema* is basically an elaboration of this pamphlet. Villalpando mentions the interview several times: 2-XX-93-94; 5-I-341; 5-XL-418-419; 5-LX-468-469.

branch of the order challenged his frail leadership\footnote{The detailed account of these critical events is found in Antonio Astrain, 
*Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la Asistencia de España*, Madrid, Razón y Fe, 1912, vol. 3, pp. 347-633. One has to read between the lines of this highly apologetic and out-dated work and rely on the many documents provided by the author in order to make out what was really going on within the Jesuit order at the time. A much clearer picture is offered by Miguel de la Pinta Llorente, *Actividades diplomáticas del P. José de Acosta. En torno a una política, y a un sentimiento religioso*. Madrid, CSIC, 1952, who publishes 31 letters of José de Acosta during his time as agent to Philip II in Rome (1593-1594). The period of Aquaviva's generalate (1581-1615), as decisive in shaping the evolution of the Society of Jesus as that of 1540-1565, has yet to be studied in all its complexities as John W. O'Malley has done for *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press, 1993. Guenter Lewy, "The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Early Years of the Society of Jesus", *Church History*, 29, 1960, pp. 141-160, proposes an opposite reading of these events as he presents Mariana's fight against the Jesuits's "natural" tendency to tyrannical government.}. Frustrated in their hopes of seeing one of their own preside over the destinies of the Society, these "rebels" campaigned for a reform of the order's Constitutions that would grant the province of Spain greater independence. Philip II lent an attentive and benevolent ear to these pleas, seizing the opportunity to exert greater royal control over this most dynamic and prosperous religious community. Thus in the last days of 1592, he had the leader of the "conspirators", José de Acosta, otherwise famous for his missionary work in the New World, travel to Rome to meet the newly elected Clement VIII. There, thanks to the help and influence of the fellow Spanish Jesuit and soon to be Cardinal Francisco de Toledo, who had managed to retain the favour of every passing pope for thirty-five years and was now entertaining the idea of taking over as General, Acosta succeeded in securing the pontiff's support and persuaded him into forcing Aquaviva to call a General Congregation. In late 1593, Aquaviva only managed to continue in his position by carefully selecting the participating members and excluding or neutralising his fiercest opponents in the Spanish faction, namely Toledo, Acosta and the famous historians Pedro Ribadeneira and Juan de Mariana. After fending off the efforts to remove him from office, the threats to Aquaviva's leadership seem to have died down after Toledo's death in 1596\footnote{This opposition stemmed in part from the diverging views among the Jesuits regarding the order's tolerance of members of Jewish ascendance. Indeed, ever since its creation in 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola, the order prided itself in accepting conversos in its ranks. Its second general, Diego Lainez, was a new Christian, just as was probably Juan de Polanco, Ignatius's personal secretary. Not until 1593, when the issue became a major political problem within the Society, did it adopt statutes forbidding the entry of conversos. As late as the General Congregation of 1607, Pedro Ribadeneira, the much respected biographer of Ignatius and himself of Jewish stock, denounced vehemently such decrees as going against the spirit of the founding father, and as disproportionately harsh compared to those of the diocesan churches who had adopted softer measures. On the issue, J. O'Malley, *The}.
The conflicts within the Jesuit order were still very present when Villalpando arrived in Rome in 1590. But a few days after his arrival, Pope Sixtus V, known for his hostility towards the king of Spain and the Jesuits, died\(^\text{13}\). Thus Villalpando had some cause for hope, which was intensified when the undertaking of the *Explanations* came into the hands of Cardinal Toledo, committed to the defence of Philip II’s interests. These hopes were however disappointed by the enduring instability of the chair of St. Peter until the advent of Clement VIII in 1593, and then by the apparent disinterest of that pontiff, which rendered any thought of papal patronage idle and definitively convinced Philip II to invest his name and his money in the project\(^\text{14}\). Parallel to these difficulties, Villalpando met with some reservations from his order, the nature of which remains somewhat uncertain. In 1592, an inquiry headed by the omnipresent Toledo was set up at Aquaviva’s request to look into the reconstruction’s orthodoxy. The severe judgement issued by the Italian Jesuit Antonio Possevino in 1593 offers an interesting insight into the kind of opposition Villalpando’s Temple might have received. Possevino wrote that: “Por lo que respecta a las proporciones, preceptos y simetría e, incluso, a la estructura general del Templo de Salomón, ésta puede aplicarse sin duda para la comprensión de los misterios de la Sagrada Escritura, pero nunca para su reconstrucción”. Such a statement challenged the very foundation of Villalpando’s conception that Ezekiel’s vision could and should be put into images to be understood, and that the idea of the Temple had to assume a material form in order to be intelligible\(^\text{15}\). Finally, after some deliberations where the weight of

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\(^{14}\) For this section, J. A. Ramírez, “Del valor del templo...”, pp. 27-30.

\(^{15}\) “Llegó aquí este padre en sazon que dentro de pocos días murió Papa Sisto, y luego Urbano i así se trató este negocio con Gregorio XIII el cual holgo de ver el libro, i lo remitio al padre Toledo, en este medio no an faltado algunas personas de la misma compañía que an puesto tachas en esta obra... i conforme a lo que yo puede colegir del umor del Papa, no creo que quiera gastar dineros en esto...” Letter of 22 April 1593 from the Duke of Sessa (ambassador in Rome) to the king, transcribed in J. A. Ramírez, “Del valor del templo...”, p. 42.

\(^{16}\) The quote taken from Possevino’s *Bibliotheca selecta de Ratione Studiorum ad disciplinas et ad salutem omnium gentium procurandum*, Rome, 1593. Translated in *Dios Arquitecto*, pp. 358-359 (here p. 359). These words must also be taken within the broader context of a gradual questioning of Vitruvius’s hegemony in architecture. People like Possevino or Pablo de Céspedes, profiting from the advances of philology and archeology, rea-
Philip II’s influence can be discerned, the book was cleared of all suspicion and granted papal approval later in 1593, but Villalpando was forced, as he himself explained in a later letter to the king, to extend the biblical commentary in order to ground the whole treatise upon firmer and sounder theological bases.

A better awareness of the political and religious context of those years could help disentangle the intricate and elaborate web of rivalries woven around the *Explanationes*. Despite this historiographical gap, the incessant quarrelling about this book raises a number of questions. Was Juan Bautista Villalpando nothing more than an innocent bystander caught in the crossfire? Or was he perceived as a royal emissary and therefore deliberately denied the technical and doctrinal support? What was the exact role of Cardinal Toledo? Did the king of Spain hope to make a political statement by sending Villalpando to Rome at a time when the internal crisis within the Jesuit order was worsening? Was the three year delay in the production of the book linked to the tense relations between Madrid and Rome?

Doctrinal and diplomatic and matters were not the only source of delay; the artistic and financial demands were also difficult to satisfy. For one,
the task of finding engravers with the skills to produce the elaborate plates Villalpando required proved arduous. For a moment, the fathers of the *Collegium Romanum* even contemplated the idea of sending Villalpando to Antwerp to complete printing, as Philip II had at one point planned. Fortunately, the completion of the other great Jesuit print-making endeavour of the end of the century, Jerónimo Nadal’s *Evangelicæ historiae imagenes* (1593), freed up some Dutch and Italian draftsmen, engravers and printers which allowed the project to proceed\(^{10}\). Another impediment was Prado’s premature death in 1595. But Villalpando persevered and the following year published Prado’s partially completed commentary, in the hope of encouraging Philip II to continue funding what was rapidly becoming a ruinously expensive venture.

The book was then shipped to Spain in 1597, together with prints of the Temple and a scale model of Jerusalem. This model is now lost, but in conjunction with the book it was solemnly presented to the king in the Alcázar of Madrid by the royal architect Francisco de Mora and the theologian Gaspar Pedrosa, each of which represented a different aspect of Villalpando’s project\(^{19}\). The analysis of this highly rhetorical, theatrical and symbolical ceremony allows us to fully appreciate the interest, importance and meaning Philip II attributed to this enterprise. As Pedrosa reports, upon receiving the scale model the King asked that the box be sent to the Palace “cerrada y liada sin abrirse”, and that it be stored in the tower over his apartments so that he could have it near him. Of course, it was Philip II’s prerogative to decide at the last minute of the day and time at which he wanted to see the model. And so, after long, complicated and careful preparations, the elaborate device was finally set up in a room near the king’s bedroom and ready to be presented on the second Sunday before

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\(^{19}\) *Relación sumaria del modelo de la antigua Hierusalem que ymbió a su Magestad de Roma el Padre Joan Bautista Villalpando y le presente y mostró el Padre Gaspar Pedrosa en Madrid con el primer ibomo sobre Ezechiel y con las estampa y aparato de El Templo de Salomon*, BNM, mss. 6035, fol. 134-154. The idea of creating a scale model of the Temple for the Escorial already circulated in learned circles close to Philip II around the year 1577 (cf. below, n. 35).
Lent. In a spectacular *mise-en-scène*, Pedrosa progressively unveiled the city of Jerusalem while giving a description of the holy places along with an account of the key moments in the life of Jesus. Step by step, hour by hour, the king could then literally relive (sixty days before Easter) every detail the Passion and Crucifixion of Christ. This giant composition of place, as Pedrosa himself describes it, served as a visual lesson of sacred history where the Scriptures came alive, almost like a journey to the Holy Land. This notion of mentally travelling through a visual space is a typical Jesuit technique for meditating images that we will find codified in Nada’s *Evangelicae historiae imagenes*. In a way, this presentation was a practical application, an enactment of sorts of the relation between text and image that Villalpando will operate in his recreation of the Temple.

The first volume of the *Explanaciones* included Prado’s commentary of the first twenty-six chapters of the book of Ezekiel (with three more added by Villalpando after his death). The third volume, entitled *Apparatus Urbis ac Templi Hierosolimitani* of 1604, comprised various erudite treatises (scientific, mathematical, metrological, topographical) on the city and temple of Jerusalem, all of which was the work of Villalpando. The second volume, also by Villalpando, did not appear until 1605. Titled *De postrema Ezechielis prophetae visone*, it was divided into five books. The first introduced Ezekiel and his vision and argued for the importance of a pictorial representation of the Temple. The second, enumerated the qualities required in an architect, and assessed the importance of sight and optics in architecture. It also included fifteen huge plates, each of which offered different views of the Temple—perspectives, elevations, floor plans. The next section, a commentary of chapter 40 of Ezekiel, dealt with the exterior me-

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20 "...vino el Rey en su silla en que le traían dos ayudas de camar y mandó ponerla a la parte de el oriente y allí cerca la del Padre a la mano derecha a la Señora Infanta yo me puse a la parte que corresponde al occidente porque desde allí avía hecho mi composición de lugares y disposición de todo el modelo y a mi lado el tracista para lo que tocara a su arte de medidas alturas..." (fol. 135v).

21 It also pointed to the interest for Christian archeology and sacred geography that we will see was so important among the Jesuits.

22 In a manuscript written between 1596 and 1598 (BNM, mss. 149, fol. 159-167), Arias Montano vehemently censured Prado’s commentary. In his view, staying faithful to the letter of the biblical text was of paramount importance. While he did not challenge the opportuneness of putting Ezekiel’s vision into images, he considered that these had to conform to the text and not reinvent it, as he contends Prado had done with dilusious imagination. See the study by Sylvaine Hänsel, “Figuras buenas y decentes. Unpublizirte und wenig bekannte Briefe und Gutachten des spanischen Humanisten Benito Arias Montano zur Zensur von Buchillustrationen” in Titus Heydenreich et Peter Blumenthal (eds.), *Glaubensprozesse, Prozesse des Glaubens? Religie Minderheiten zwischen Toleranz und Inquisition*, Tubingen, Stauffenbug, 1989, pp. 89-104.
asures of the Temple—porticoes, portals, porches, doors—, all of which were presented as if they had been designed by a disciple of Vitruvius. In the fourth book, a commentary on Ezekiel 41-43, Villalpando discussed the Temple’s interior decoration—rooms, walls, staircases, windows, tables, altars—, and speculated on the function and meaning in Hebrew society and religion of the various areas and instruments of the Temple. The last part of the Explanationes offered a grand discourse on the Temple, its correspondence with the body of Man, Christ, the Church and the Universe, according to astrological, cosmological and harmonic principles. It also calculated the cost of the building’s construction and presented comparisons of the Temple with the seven wonders of the ancient world, as well as with several Roman monuments and the Temples of Zerubabel and Herod in Jerusalem.

Written in the ponderous style of an erudite commentary, the Explanationes borrowed heavily from the writings of Jerome—who had written authoritatively on Ezekiel—and other Church Fathers. Villalpando meticulously analysed each verse of Ezekiel and systematically reviews and collates previous exegeses. He also laboriously questioned the exact meaning of every word of the Scriptures and every measure of the Temple the prophet provided. The core of his arguments rested on the divergent translations of Jewish words or on the permutation of Hebrew letters and characters, given in the different versions of the Bible. Although he always

23 All this is summarized by Villalpando in his introduction to the reader (J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, Saluda al benigno lector-14-16).

24 A number of Greek and Latin Church Fathers are mentionned by Villalpando as commentators of Ezekiel in his introduction of the first volume, but Jerome and Gregory remain his two principal patristic sources. See Appendix to El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado, pp. 115-116.

25 His exegesis of the name of Ezekiel, associating the prophet’s moral qualities with the semantic origin of his name, exemplifies this method used throughout the book. “En hebreo, Ezequiel se dice algo así como... “vigor de Dios”, fuerza de Dios; o bien “fortalecido por Dios” como lo interpreta el mismo S. Jerónimo. Creemos que el Señor tuvo en cuenta la etimología de este término, cuando le dice al mismo Ezequiel: “Toda la casa de Israel está debilitada”, esto es, “de dura frente” y “de endurecido corazón”. “Yo he entregado tu rostro como un diamante, duro como el pedernal: no los temas”. En ambos textos se encuentra el mismo término hebreo del que, con el nombre compuesto de Dios, parece deducirse el nombre propio del profeta. Por ello, el sentido del versículo queda insinuado hábilmente: nada debe temer de sus frentes “endurecidas” por sus crímenes y maldades. En efecto, tú eres Ezequiel, es decir, el “fortalecido por el valor”, el “fortalecido por Dios”. La mayoría de los nombres no es fruto del azar, sino de un buen augurio, sobre todo si se trata de los nombres dados a los grandes hombres, como acertadamente manifestó Platón, Príncipe de los filósofos griegos, y como lo corrobora la misma experiencia.” (Introduction to the first volume in Appendix to El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado, p. 112).
favoured the Vulgate, Villalpando was not reluctant to use earlier Greek or Jewish texts to support his idea that the Temple of Ezekiel's vision was indeed the Temple that Solomon had built.

Once published, Villalpando's treatise became a scholarly landmark, setting the standard for subsequent attempts to reconstruct the Temple. Although seventeenth-century biblical exegetics such as John Lightfoot (1650), Louis Cappel (1657), Samuel Lee (1659), and Louis Compiègne de Veil (1678), took issue with the Jesuit's interpretation, few challenged his basic premise of equating the Temple with the idea of perfection. The key to Villalpando's success probably lied in the unique and grandiose model he proposed. The popularity of his engravings attested to this success, and his designs were copied by Jacob Jehuda León (1642), Juan Caramuel von Lobkowitz (1678), and Fisher von Erlach (1721), in their reconstructions of the Temple. According to Roy Strong, Villalpando's designs even inspired Charles I and his architect Inigo Jones in their plans to reconstruct Whitehall palace. As historian Juan Antonio Ramírez put it, Villalpando's "objective delirium" attracted, convinced and stimulated the imagination of men. This fascination has continued throughout the centuries up to our day, as scholars over the past four decades have relentlessly tried to decipher Villalpando's cryptic Temple by emphasising its attractive yet limited astrological, cosmological and hermetical aspects.

Philip II, Solomon and the Escorial: the making of an image

Underlying Villalpando's project was an attempt to praise Philip II as new a Solomon, and to compare the newly-constructed majestic royal mo-

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26 Roy Strong, Britannia Triumphans. Inigo Jones, Rubens and Whitehall Palace, London, Thames and Hudson, 1980, pp. 55-64. Strong goes on to show that the Explanaciones were one of the king's favorite readings in his prison at Carisbrook in 1648. Vaughan Hart, Art and Magic in the Court of the Stuarts, London, Routledge, 1994 (esp. chap. V: "Architecture and the Geometry of Solomon's Temple", pp.105-135), makes this argument even more forcefully by demonstrating the omnipresence of the Temple in the literary and architectural thought of the 1620's, in a London that often considered itself a new Jerusalem.


28 The chief representant of that historiography continues to be René Taylor, whose influential studies (cited above n. 5) have dominated the field and imposed this reductive grid of interpretation.
nastery the king built at San Lorenzo de El Escorial (1563-1584) to the Temple of Jerusalem. The idea of Philip II as new Solomon did not begin with Villalpando. Traditionally, any king or pope who built sacred architecture on a massive scale was likened to the biblical ruler. In Philip's case, however, the idea first surfaced during his journey to the Low Countries (1548-1551) as prince of Spain. Intended as a tribute to his victorious father Charles V, who had defeated the Protestant forces of the Schmalkaldic league at Mühlberg in 1547, and to introduce the future sovereign to his Netherlandish subjects, several cities welcomed the Emperor and his son as the modern-day equivalents of David and Solomon. This allegory was apparent in the programs of several triumphal arches devised for the princely entries; it also appeared in various processions, plays or tableaux vivants that re-enacted the story of David and Solomon. The glorious warrior king Charles/David would crown his son, the prudent Philip/Solomon, who would continue his father's work and preserve the peace so laboriously acquired.

This scene was repeated in virtually every Flemish or Dutch city Philip visited, including Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Haarlem and Amsterdam. The theme of Philip as new Solomon reappeared during the course of his second visit to the Low Countries (1556-1559). On the occasion, the Great Order of the Golden Fleece, assembled in Ghent in 1559, commissioned the Flemish artist Lucas de Heere to execute a series of allegorical paintings honouring the new king, one of which portrayed Philip as Solomon holding the sceptre of justice and receiving the offerings and the homage of the Netherlands, personified as the Queen of Sheba.

The crystallisation of this particular rhetoric of majesty occurred around the time of the completion of the Escorial during the 1580's. It was found, for instance, in a poem circulating in 1580 at the University of Alcalá that compared Philip and his monastery to Solomon and his Temple. A 1582

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20 On the conscious efforts of Charles V to forge and construct an imperial image that involved frequent comparisons with both David and Solomon, see F. Checa, Carlos V y la imagen del héroe en el Renacimiento. Madrid, Taurus, 1987 (esp. pp. 151-154). Also by this author, "(Plus) Ultra Omnis Solisque Vias. La imagen de Carlos V en el reinado de Felipe II", Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía, 1, 1988, pp. 70-73.


31 F. Checa, Felipe II mecenas de las artes, pp. 106-107.

32 "Segundo, el sin Segundo, es quien la habita [esta obra], rigiendo desde allí su monarquía/ Filipphe, de metales suma infinita/ ofreciendo á su templo cada día:/ vasos, joyas, riquezas, nunca escrita/ del oriental tesoro pedrería/ cruces y ataviós sacerdotales/ que al suyo Salomon no las dió tales." (Juan de San Jerónimo, "Memorias" in Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España, vol. 7, p. 273).
Spanish translation of Vitruvius also stressed this particular connection when its publisher Juan Gracián dedicated the volume to the king, "second Solomon and prince of architects". Two years later, the statues of six Israelite kings connected to the history of the Temple of Jerusalem (Hezekiah, Josephat, Manassah, Joshua, David and Solomon) were raised on the facade of the basilica of the Escorial. This significant yet unexplained change, that radically departed from previous plans calling for the construction of six funerary obelisks, was decided by Philip II between 1577 and 1580 upon the advice of the noted biblical humanist Benito Arias Montano (1527-1598), who had just arrived from Antwerp crowned with the fame of editing the royally sponsored Polyglot Bible (1569-1572). This first and decisive intervention by the scholar who had just completed his own reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon (included in the same Polyglot Bible), marked the imposition or at least the first explicit "inscription" or "enshrinement" of the solomonic theme at the Escorial. Although the monarch called him to the Escorial primarily to organise his new royal library, Arias Montano also participated in the elaboration of many iconographical programs that reflected the king's solomonic concerns. For example, he inspired the program of the frescoes in the Escorial's sacristy, which were meant to recall the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Jerusalem.

33 Cornelia von der Osten Sacken, El Escorial. Estudio Iconológico, Bilbao, Xarait, 1984, p. 121.

34 The main account for the construction of the Escorial is that of José de Sigüenza, La Fundación del Monasterio de El Escorial (1605), Madrid, Aguilar, 1963. Here, 2-II-213-217 (see above n. 2 for this notation system). For this specific aspect, C. Osten Sacken, El Escorial..., pp. 130-132; Agustín Bustamante, La octava maravilla del mundo. Estudio histórico sobre El Escorial de Felipe II, Madrid, Alpuerto, 1994, pp. 637-640.

35 An early indication of Arias Montano's association with the idea of the Temple of Solomon at the Escorial is Luis de Estrada's letter to the bibliocr (c. 1577) in which he informed him of his desire to propose to the king —via Arias Montano— the idea of a scale model of the Temple for the Escorial: "Y antes que de aquí pase, querría comunicar con Vm. una tentación que he tenido grande; y es que Vm. suplicase a su Magestad que entre otras grandezas que manda hacer en San Lorenzo, hiciese en un aposento un modelo de la fábrica del Tabernáculo del Viejo Testamento, y otro del Templo de Salomon con el Pontífical del Sumo Sacerdote, porque no basta estampa para dar a entender estas arquitecturas, toldos, y tapicerías; y si Vm. ordenase unos modelos conforme a lo estampado en la Biblia de su Magestad, sería la cosa más de ver que se hubiese hecho en el mundo desde Salomon acá" ("Carta apologetica del sabio cisterciense Fr. Luis de Estrada por el mérito y arreglo de la célebre Biblia Regia de Arias Montano y sus versiones" in Luis Esteban (ed.), IV Centenario de Fray Luis de Estrada, Soria, Monasterio de Santa María de la Huerta, 1983, p. 656)

The analogy between Philip II and Solomon was the order of the day. Just as David instructed Solomon to build the Temple, Charles V advised his successor to raise a mausoleum for the Habsburg dynasty. By the 1590’s, the association of Philip to Solomon on the one hand and the Escorial to the Temple on the other had become commonplace. It appeared in a 1592 collection of Italian poems praising the Escorial, and again in a 1593 sonnet by the Spanish poet Luis de Góngora who labelled the king a “Salomon segundo”\(^{37}\). The following year, Juan Alonso de Almela once again emphasised the connection with the Temple in his description of the Escorial, linking the royal monastery directly to Villalpando’s work\(^{38}\). Following Philip II’s death in 1598, where references to Solomon formed a \textit{leitmotiv}\(^{39}\), the solomonic theme was explicated and codified in José de Sigüenza’s famous \textit{Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo}, which included a lengthy description of the Escorial, finally taking on unprecedented proportions and new political meanings in the \textit{Explanations}. Both published in 1605, these works posit the solomonic paradigm as inherent to the inception, conception and realisation of the Escorial.

The Hieronymite monk José de Sigüenza (1544-1606), who enjoyed Philip II’s favour as keeper of the relics at the Escorial and successor to his master Arias Montano as royal librarian, was commissioned by his order—and possibly the king— to write the history of the Escorial\(^{40}\). In his highly


\(^{38}\) A. Bustamante, \textit{La octava maravilla...}, p. 640, n. 35.


apologetic account of the monarch and his oeuvre, Sigüenza compared the Escorial to the great monuments of the ancient world. More interestingly, he likened the monastery to the three biblical constructions—Noah's Ark, Moses's Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple—thus placing it in direct lineage with these divinely inspired buildings. King Solomon's architectural ambitions thus became the yardstick to measure those of Philip II, and in the third part of the Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo, Sigüenza carefully examined the biblical monarch's building techniques, management of labour, and above all means of finance.

This constellation of ideas forms the backdrop to Villalpando's reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon, which upon close inspection bares an uncanny resemblance to the Escorial. Villalpando reflected this intention by modelling the floor plan (planta) of his Temple on that of the Escorial, evidently using for this purpose Juan de Herrera's engravings for the Escorial. The similarities between the two buildings so impressed Philip II, that, upon seeing Villalpando's plates in 1590 the monarch apparently exclaimed: "O extraño edificio, o extraordinario, único e inaudito edificio." Clearly, in Villalpando's mind, Philip II epitomized "una imagen de la piedad de David y de la sabiduría y grandeza de Salomón... un claro reflejo de la apasionada y santa emulación de Ezequiel al levantar las muy admirables y regias mansiones y templos de San Lorenzo en El Escorial". As king of Jerusalem (a title inherited from his Burgundian ancestors), was it not fitting then to hand him over the keys to the city and the Temple as their new warden? Was it therefore any coincidence that, according to Vi-

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41 J. de Sigüenza, Fundación, Prologue-5-6; 2-XXII-428-446.
42 J. de Sigüenza, Fundación, Prologue-4-6. "Aqui, como en una arca de Noé, se salvan muchas almas que, huyendo del diluvio del mundo, se encierran dentro de sus marcos en una estrecha obediencia, esperando con gran firmeza no olvidará Dios a los que así se fioron de su palabra. Aquí, como en el Tabernáculo de Moisés, se asienta el mismo Dios en la verdadera arca del testamento sobre las alas de los querubines, se aprende la ley divina, se guarda, se ejecuta, disputa, defiende, enseña. Aquí, como en otro Templo de Salomón, a quien nuestro patrón y fundador Felipe II fue imitando en esta obra, suenan de día y de noche las divinas alabanzas, se hacen continuos sacrificios, humean siempre los inciensos, no se apaga el fuego ni faltan panes recientes delante de la presencia divina, y debajo de los altares reposan las cenizas y los huesos de los que fueron sacrificiados por Cristo" (Prologue-6).
44 J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 2-XX-93b. Villalpando interpreted this reaction as a sign of his patron's shrewdness in contemplating and understanding architecture (2-XX-94a).
45 Dedication of the first volume to Philip II in Appendix to El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado, p. 108.
46 This was ceremoniously done during the 1597 interview. See J. A. Ramírez, "Del valor del templo...", p. 36.
llalpando, the Temple was completed in twenty-one years, exactly the same amount of time as the Escorial.\footnote{J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 5-LXV-483b.}

In his comparison of the Temple and the Escorial, Villalpando also knew how to please the Philip II’s life-long interest in architecture. The king was deeply involved in the daily construction of the Escorial, and evidently passed some of his concerns on to his daughter Isabella Clara Eugenia who, when first presented with Villalpando’s project in 1590, surprised the Jesuit with her questions about the materials used for the construction of the Temple. As Villalpando himself reports, “tras escuchar ella [la infanta] y observar mis grabados con toda atención y benevolencia, me pidió vivamente que le explicara un dato muy concreto que hasta aquel momento no había caído en la cuenta; por ello, fui incapaz de darle una respuesta satisfactoria; su ruego era el siguiente: ¿con qué cubierta estaban protegidos los techos del templo frente a las inclemencias del tiempo?\footnote{J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 5-XL-419a.} Initially Villalpando remained silent; upon reflection, he answered by declaring in his book that the Temple’s roofs were covered with bronze. It is not clear what to make of this incident, but the infanta’s query undoubtedly sprang from the various misfortunes experienced at the Escorial with the lead-coated slate roofs, vulnerable to leaks and fires as the 1577 flare-up had already shown, and the subsequent blazes would confirm.\footnote{On the roofs of the Escorial and their many problems, past and present: George Kubler, Building the Escorial, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 103-105, 119-124. The account of the 1577 fire in J. de Sigüenza, Fundación, 1-X-77-81.} Certainly, Villalpando’s notion of equating the Escorial with the Temple of Solomon was one that the royal family shared. Elsewhere in the Explanationes, Villalpando called to other similarities between the two buildings. For example, the stonemaking technique implemented at the Escorial was modelled on the one used in Solomon’s quarries.\footnote{J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 5-LX-469a. Sigüenza also draws attention to this fact (Fundación, 1-IX-66-67).} Villalpando was also aware that financial questions attracted Philip II’s attention, since the king himself had to fend off criticism for the costs of the Escorial.\footnote{Sigüenza also attempted to respond to some of the social and political criticism brought about by the costs of the Escorial. In the two longest chapters of his work (Fundación, 2-XXI-XXII-417-446), he pitted Philip’s relatively “modest” expenditures against Solomon’s astronomical expenses. An analysis of Solomon’s finances and Sigüenza’s discourse in J. A. Ramírez, “Del valor del templo…”, pp. 19-27. Richard L. Kagan, Lucrecia’s Dreams, Politics and Prophecy in Sixteenth-Century Spain, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990, p. 105, offers an example of the discontent voiced during the 1580’s. For the general context of those years, A. Bustamante, La octava maravilla…, pp. 411-420.} Therefore when Pedrosa
presented volume one of the *Explanations* to Philip II in 1597, Villalpando had previously instructed the theologian to inform the monarch about the enormous expenses incurred by Solomon for his Temple. According to Pedroso's report, this seems to have caused the king "alguna novedad y con ocasión de esto leyo toda la dedicatoria que era bien larga en que se dava razon desto [el coste del Templo] que le causo gusto"\(^2\). For his patron's benefit, then, Villalpando described in minute detail Solomon's finances, comparing his revenues and his supplies in wheat and gold to those of others princes, and inquiring about his methods of taxation\(^3\).

The parallel between the Temple and the Escorial could, however, be extended even further. Both buildings shared the same tripartite yet unified structure and function: *domus domini, domus regia, domus sacerdotalium*. Furthermore, in the Escorial, as in the Temple, only the king and his priests had access to the basilica's choir\(^4\). Both buildings also symbolised political restoration and spiritual renewal. For the ancient Jews, the construction of the Temple signified the end of the Babylonian captivity and the return from exile to a freedom of worship. For the Spanish monarchy, the construction of the Escorial marked the establishment of a new religious and political order, embodied by the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and championed by Philip II\(^5\). Thus, as long as faith and prayer were observed, Jerusalem (the Spanish empire) and the Temple (Escorial) would not fall. In the end, what probably fascinated and attracted so the king and Villalpando, was that, in a marvellous shift that at once operated a dialogue and sealed an intimate and reciprocal relation between

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\(^2\) Relación sumaria del modelo..., fol. 150r-151v, quoted in J. A. Ramírez, "Del valor del templo...", p. 36.

\(^3\) J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 5-XLIII-LIX-425-468.


\(^5\) Sigüenza drew attention to this chronological convergence between the "last stone" of Trent and the first stone of the Escorial, and between the time taken to build the second Temple and the duration of the Council: "Y es bien advertir que este mismo año y casi en el mismo mes que se puso la primera piedra de este templo que dijimos ser propio símbolo de Jesucristo (como lo dijo el Profeta) se remató y se puso la postrera del santo Concilio de Trento... Cuarenta y seis años se tardó en edificar el templo de Jerusalén la segunda vez por Zorobabel, y se tardó otro tanto en el Concilio Tridentino, si lo miramos desde su origen, que fue la herejía de Martín Lutero, año 1517, en tiempo de León X, y se acabó en el 63, en tiempo de Pío IV. Reprobáronle los protestantes de Alemania, reprobóle Enrique VIII en Inglaterra y Isabela sue hija; resistióle también en muchas cosas Enrique, Rey de Francia; abrazóle con suma reverencia Felipe II, Rey de España, y para confirmación y guardia de sus santos estatutos y dogmas, puso la primera piedra de un alcázar y templo de San Lorenzo, donde se habían de eternizar y obedecer para siempre" (*Fundación*, 1-III-26-27). See also Villalpando’s introduction to the first volume in Appendix to *El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo Prado*, pp. 113-114.
both models, the Escorial represented for both men the materialisation, the embodiment, and the living representation of the Temple.

While Philip II probably did not hope to recreate the Temple of Jerusalem per se, he most certainly sought to recapture the idea underlying it by pursuing the tradition of divinely inspired architectures, by equating Spanish and Hebrew monarchies, and also by evoking the actuality of God's covenant with the new chosen people. The importance the king ascribed to the solomonic theme at the Escorial and in his patronage of biblical scholarship, demonstrates ultimately that he intended this typology to go beyond the mere commonplace. Carefully selected men such as Arias Montano, Sigüenza and Villalpando, helped Philip II formulate a coherent system of self-representation. The first of these three men, acutely aware of the allegorical power of the Bible and deft at handling propaganda, provided a conceptual, ideological and rhetorical foundation for the king's pretensions. The second, had the ability to give the dry history of a monument the evocative strength of a literary construction that would gradually emerge as the canonical image of the Escorial and circulate throughout Europe. The third, using pictorial images, reconciled pagan antiquity and Christianity through the principles of Vitruvius, recalling thus the great synthesis project of the Escorial. Solomon had prudently and wisely chosen his advisers.

By making the Explanations one of his reign's greatest and most ambitious act of intellectual and typographical patronage (the other being the

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56 Arias Montano expressed his opinions on forms of political government in a commentary on Joshua, De Optimo Imperio, sive in Librum Issuae Commentarium (Antwerp, 1583), where he depicted Philip II as a new Joshua (incidentally one of the kings on the facade of the Escorial basilica), rediscoverer of the forgotten books of the law, renewer of the covenant of God with his people and conqueror of the heretics. On his defense of regalism, see the excellent article by José Luis Sánchez Lora, "El pensamiento político de Benito Arias Montano" in Luis Gómez Cansecio (ed.), Anatomía del humanismo. Benito Arias Montano, 1598-1998. Homenaje al P. Melquíades Andrés, Huelva, Universidad de Huelva, 1998, pp. 149-179. During his years in Flanders (1568-1576), Arias Montano was also commissioned to design the program for the statue of the duke of Alba in the citadel of Antwerp (1571). See S. Hänsel, "Benito Arias Montano y la estatua del duque de Alba", Norba-Arte, 10, 1990, pp. 29-51. A rapid survey of Arias Montano's extensive print collection demonstrates this conflating knowledge of Old Testament and royal iconography. Cf. C. Osten Sacken, El Escorial..., p. 100.


58 F. Checa, Felipe II mecenas de las artes, pp. 201 ff. Also, Fernando Marías and Agustín Bustamante, "La révolution classique: de Vitruve à l'Escorial", La Revue de l'Art, 70, 1985, pp. 29-40.
aforementioned Antwerp Polyglot Bible edited by Arias Montano), Philip II not only encouraged a more political type of humanism, but also shaped this connection with the figure of Solomon to fit the image he wanted to project. Though initially created and imposed upon him as the wishful omen of a reign of peace, justice and wisdom, the monarch transformed this trope into a self-serving tool for his religious and political claims.

Biblical Scholarship in the Society of Jesus

Villalpando’s book and Philip II’s patronage also speak to the larger issue of biblical scholarship, an important chapter in sixteenth-century Spanish history that has yet to be written. It is noteworthy that the *Explanations* did not stand alone. It emerged instead from a school of Christian humanism and biblical exegesis associated with Arias Montano and the Jesuits, which was centred in Seville in the years 1580-1620. Although this article’s scope prohibits a full discussion of this school, a brief overview of its intellectual origins and some of its proponent’s work better helps to understand the *Explanations* and its place in a humanistic tradition that the great *autos de fe* of 1557 and 1559 did little to extinguish.

The Temple of Solomon always occupied an predominant place in Europe’s scholarly imagination and visual culture. Since the Early Middle Ages, numerous students of the Bible, both Christian and Jewish, had endeavoured to reconstruct it, in image as well as in text. By the mid sixteenth

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61 José Durand, “Perú y Ophir en Garcilaso Inca, el jesuita Pineda y Gregorio García”, *Historica* (Peru), 3, 1979, p. 36, talks about an entire Jesuit school of biblicism in Andalusia led by Jerónimo Prado. Among other members, he includes the fathers Juan Bautista Villalpando, Luis del Alcázar, Juan de Pineda, Martín de Roa and the young Pedro Maldonado.

century, as the noted art historian Fernando Marías has observed, the interest for biblical constructions such as Noah’s Ark, the Tabernacle of Moses or the Temple of Solomon had become essentially Iberian and Jesuit. In part, Spanish interest in the Old Testament reflected the influence of converso scholars in universities and colleges throughout the Peninsula; it was also related to the idea of Spaniards as a chosen people and its monarchs as individuals selected by God to reconquer Jerusalem.

During the later half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, Jesuits largely dominated the production of works of biblical exegesis and sacred erudition in Spain. The range of their contribution to scriptural studies extended over the fields of biblical scholarship, Christian antiquarianism and the visual arts. These investigations have to be understood in the broader context of scholarly disputes between Catholics and Protestants to appropriate sacred history. Spanish Jesuits, who stood in the front line of this confessional battleground, analysed the life, customs, institutions and laws of the ancient Hebrews, making their work a mix of hermeneutics, philological criticism and biblical contextualism. With their Protestant counterparts, Catholic scholars also strove to prove the Bible’s greater


65 Fernando Marías, “El Escorial de Felipe II y la sabiduría divina”, Annali di Architettura, 1, 1989, p. 72. “A mediados del siglo XVI, no obstante, el interés por las construcciones bíblicas parece haberse centrado en la península ibérica: de los años 1551-1557 son las imágenes del Arca de Noé y otros edificios de Francisco de Holanda; de 1552 el Tratado de las ocho quæstiones del templo (Toledo) del erasmista Juan de Vergara; de 1568 la obra de Héctor Pinto In Ezechielem prophetam commentaria (Salamanca); de 1593 el De templo et de tjs quae ad templum pertinent (Amberes) de Francisco de Ribera; de 1605 el Commentariorum in concordiam, vol. III, De templo ibernolitum (Lisboa) de Sebastián Barradas. Más revelante son, sin embargo, el Apparatus (vol. VIII) de Benito Arias Montano de la Biblia Regia de 1572 (Amberes) y su reimpresión de 1593 como Antiquitatum judaicarum Libri IX (Leyden), con su representación “antropomórfica” del Arca de Noé, y lógicamente los tres volúmenes del In Ezechielum explanationes (Roma, 1596-1604) de los jesuitas Jerónimo Prado y Juan Bautista Villalpando”. To this list we can add Pedro Serrano de Bujalance, In Ezechiel prophetam, Antwerp, 1572 (2nd ed., 1609). See also below, n. 67.

64 This is particularly evident in the 1619 treatise by Juan de Salazar, Política española (edition by Miguel Herrera García, Madrid, Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1945). In the fourth chapter, entitled “Los sucesos, casi sútiles en todos tiempos, y el modo singular que Dios ha tenido en la elección y gobierno del pueblo español, declaran ser su pueblo escogido en la ley de gracia, como lo fue el electo, en tiempo de la escrita”, there is an explicit reference to Philip II as the new Solomon and the Escorial as an imitation of the Temple (p. 82).

antiquity over classical texts, recapturing thus a non-pagan past and reaching back to a time of purity when God spoke directly to his people\textsuperscript{66}.

Spanish Jesuits worked on a number of subjects, biblical geography and archaeology being one of their areas of predilection. For one, they wrote nearly all the works touching on the Temple of Solomon, their most notable efforts coming from Francisco de Ribera (1593), Juan de Pineda (1609) and of course Villalpando\textsuperscript{67}. The issue of sacred weights and measures, so closely tied to that of the Temple that they were often discussed jointly, also interested Jesuit scholars; apart from the aforementioned authors, Juan de Mariana (1599) and Luis del Alcázar (1614) both wrote independent treatises on the subject. In a more “sociological” perspective, Martín de Roa produced in 1600 a work on Hebrew customs and mores\textsuperscript{68}. From a theological standpoint, renowned members of the Society of Jesus such as Benito Pereira (1589-1598) and Francisco Suárez, speculated on the exact location of the garden of Eden\textsuperscript{69}. Jesuits also participated in the vast movement that traced, through inquiries into toponymy, the biblical origins of different cities in the Peninsula, revealing thus the antiquity and the glory of the Spanish nation. In this search for a sacred genealogy of town and country, Martín de Roa compiled between 1617 and 1636 the ecclesiastical antiquities of the Andalucian cities of Jerez de la Frontera, Málaga, Écija

\textsuperscript{66} José Luis de Orella y Unzue, Respuestas católicas a las Centurias de Magdeburgo (1559-1588), Madrid, Fundación Universitaria Española, 1976; François Laplanche, La Bible en France entre mythe et critique, XVIe-XIXe siècle, Paris, Albin Michel, 1994, pp. 13-68.

\textsuperscript{67} Juan Fernández, Explanaciones in Ezechielum, manuscript, 1576; Francisco de Ribera, De templo et de ijs quae ad templum pertinent, Antwerp, 1593 (further editions in 1602 and 1623); Sebastián Barradas, Commentarium in concordiam, vol. III: De templo terosolitani, Lisbon, 1605; Lucas Carillo, Commentaria et explanationes in Ezechielem prophetam, manuscript, 1606; Juan de Pineda, De Rebus Salomonis Regis libri octo, Lyon, 1609 (2\textsuperscript{nd} edition, Mainz, 1613); Martín Estevan, Compendio del rico aparato y hermosa arquitectura del templo de Salomón..., Alcalá de Henares, 1615 (translated summary of Villalpando); Gaspar Sánchez; Commentarium in quattuor libros Regum et duos Paralipomenos, Lyon, 1623. The British Library also holds a short manuscript treatise by Juan de Mariana intitled “Templo de Salomon” (mss. Eg. 1875, fol. 211-214). Inventories of works of biblical exegesis in M. Avilés Fernández, “Historia de la exégesis...”, pp. 81-102; Klaus Reinhardt, Bibelkommentare spanischer Autoren (1500-1700), vol. 1: Autoren A-LL, Madrid, CSIC, 1990.

\textsuperscript{68} Juan de Mariana, De ponderibus et mensuris, Paris, 1599; Luis del Alcázar, Opusculum de sacris ponderibus et mensuris, Antwerp, 1614; Martín de Roa, Singularium locorum ac rerum libri V in quibus cum ex sacris tum ex humanis litteris multa ex gentium, bebraeorumque moribus explicantur, Córdoba, 1600. Cf. M. Avilés Fernández, “Historia de la exégesis...”, pp. 81, 93, 98 (he mistakenly notes 1604 as the publication date for Alcázar’s treatise).

and Córdoba; José de Acosta, in the *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590), attempted to determine the site of biblical Ophir and Tarsis, associated by many with Peru and Spain; and Juan de Mariana, in his opening chapter of the *Historia General de España* (1605), dealt with the coming of Tubal, grandson of Noah and alleged first settler of Spain.

Immersed in this learned culture and one of its foremost exponents, Villalpando addressed many of the same questions as his fellow Jesuits. Throughout the second volume of the *Explanaciones*, he repeatedly referred to sacred weights, measures and coins in comparing Solomon’s wealth in precious metals to Philip II’s supplies in gold and silver, Villalpando also alluded to the mines of Ophir and the ships of Tarsis, drawing a parallel with Spain and its Peruvian riches. The recovery of the Spanish people’s origins concerned Villalpando as well. At one point in the *Explanaciones*, he mentioned examining, along with other erudite members of the Society, some inscriptions in Sagonte (Valencia) that apparently confirmed the presence of Jews in Spain during the time of Solomon. In fact, in his 1603 dedication of volume three of the *Explanaciones* to Philip III, Villalpando laid out the entire program of Jesuit biblical scholarship, writing: “así se va documentando la ciencia de los Libros Sagrados, así se hace presente el recuerdo de la antigüedad, se consolida la genuina percepción de la historia, se escogen con prudencia los más famosos documentos y –lo que es más importante– se alimenta y se aumenta el amor hacia Dios y el respeto hacia la suprema Jerusalén.”

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71 See the tables included in Jerónimo Prado’s “Compendio de la segunda parte de los comentarios sobre el profeta Ezekiel” in *El templo de Salomón según Jerónimo Prado*, pp. 58-73.


74 Appendix to *El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado*, p. 121.
The feverish activity surrounding biblical studies represented but one expression of Spain's vibrant humanism in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. For if this scriptural slant characterised Spanish humanism, its artistic component also formed part of a particular Spanish religious sensibility. Philip II understood and to a certain extent embodied this duality, encouraging through his patronage the integration of both its aspects. Therefore, it comes as no surprise to find many of the figures related to the construction of the royal image or to the movement of biblical scholarship, involved in the visual arts. With the Explanationes, Villalpando united all three fields to achieve a synthesis of Spanish Christian humanism.

Modelling their efforts on Flemish examples, Spanish men of letters in the late sixteenth century progressively bridged the gap between words and images. Among them, the figure of Arias Montano stands out. Although the nature of his work was less overtly polemical, he nevertheless shared many of the Jesuits's aims. His return to Seville after a prolonged stay in the Low Countries (1568-1576), was crucial to the development of that city's learned community, although still very little is known about his tremendous influence. Arias Montano accomplished fundamental work in Flanders, notably with the engraver Philips Galle, drawing from the rich Netherlandish tradition of joining religious text and pictorial images, and experimenting with almost all the possible forms of interaction and contact between the two, from devotional and emblem books to illustrated episodes of the Bible and the life of Christ. Frequently, seventeenth-century Andalucian painters would take up in their compositions the iconographical models Arias Montano proposed in these books. Villalpando certainly inherited from this pervasive contribution, conjugating it with the Jesuit print-making tradition.

The Jesuits left a profound mark on the artistic evolution of the Sevillian school, best captured in Francisco de Pacheco's Arte de la Pintura (pu-

75 His work in the Apparatus of the Polyglot Bible (1572), covered all areas of biblical erudition: history, geography, archeology, genealogy, topography, toponomy, chronology, metrology, numismatic. A brief summary of these treatises in Balbino Santos y Olivera, "Benito Arias Montano, padre de la arqueología biblica", Revista Española de Estudios Bíblicos, 3, 1928, pp. 135-141.

blished in 1649, but in fact completed by 1638)\textsuperscript{77}. In this monumental survey of post-tridentine iconography, Velázquez’s master and father-in-law repeatedly deferred to the authority of fathers from the Society of Jesus he knew in the college or house of Seville, and whose names have been encountered in these pages; Francisco Suárez, Juan de Pineda, Martín de Roa, Luis del Alcázar and above all Jerónimo Nadal, played an instrumental part in establishing Pacheco’s canon for religious imagery\textsuperscript{78}. With the pioneering Evangelicae historiae imagines (1593), essential to the comprehension of his Adnotaciones et meditaciones in evangelia (1595), Nadal paved the way for the visual application of the Ignacian imaginative model of composition of place by combining text and engravings to create a new relation between art and devotion\textsuperscript{79}. Shortly thereafter, two momentous publication set another landmark in the history of Jesuit illustrated commentaries of the Scriptures. In 1598, appeared the first volume of the Commentariorum in job by Juan de Pineda, which included a series of emblematic prints of the life of the prophet that worked in the same fashion as the Nadal. Five years later in 1603, the Vestigatio arcani sensu in Apocalypsi by Luis de Alcázar worked into the body of the argument a group of twenty-four prints engraved by the Sevillian artist Juan de Jáuregui\textsuperscript{80}. In 1605, Juan Bautista

\textsuperscript{77} Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas (ed.), Arte de la Pintura, Madrid, Cátedra, 1990. In the definition of painting Pacheco gives, as formulated by the Sevillian humanist Francisco de Medina, there is an explicit reference to the visions of prophets and their representation by painters (1-1-75). Further on, when Pacheco comes to the subject of inventio and idea, as defined by the Sevillian jesuit Diego Meléndez, he precisely uses the example of a temple to illustrate these concepts: “De suerte, que cuando el artifices mira un templo segun su arquitectura o materialidad, entiende el templo, entonce entiende la idea del…” (2-1-282-283).


\textsuperscript{80} These elaborate engravings for two extremely “visual” books of the Bible have never been properly analysed in their relation to the text. The only study (more like an an-
Villalpando would supply yet another link in this chain with the *Explanations*.

**Villalpando and the visual arts**

Villalpando's reconstitution of the Temple had originally a targeted public. Architects, Villalpando wrote, will not read my commentary to the engravings because they are already accustomed to seeing and interpreting the elevations, perspectives and floor plans of a structure. Even if they were to read the annotations, he continued, they would need the help and guidance of a theologian to comprehend the mysteries of the Scriptures. For in the end, it is those very theologians he hoped to reach. For them, he would explain in detail the technical terms, meticulously describe the different parts of the building, painstakingly expound on the principles of art, mathematics and optics. All this to help them interpret the plates and recognise the symbolism encoded in the architecture, to enhance their comprehension of the relevant passages of the Bible, and to convince them of the necessity of a graphic representation of the Temple. By establishing himself as an indispensable guide and teacher, Villalpando wished to introduce theologians to a “visual theology” where images could inform the text. Understanding Ezekiel without possessing some kind of architectural knowledge then became simply unthinkable. As a matter of fact, in his opinion this was the main reason why the prophecy had remained so impenetrable through the ages, and the previous reconstructions of the Temple seemed so unconvincing. Villalpando thought that “suprimidas las figuras o representaciones gráficas es muy difícil que incluso un arquitecto pueda emitir un juicio sobre un edificio que no está construido y mucho más difícil que lo juzgue el que ignora los términos de este arte y que quizá jamás ha oído el nombre de tal ciencia. Si no me equivoco, esta fue realmente la cosa por la que esta visión ha permanecido oculta hasta ahora


81 “Pero nosotros, ¿cuántas y qué prolijas explicaciones, oh Dios inmortal, tendremos que señalar, pues nuestro interés es instruir a un teólogo y no a un obrero, para que pueda tener conocimiento y valorar cada una de las partes de este magnífico templo, sus dimensiones, su ubicación, su utilidad y explicarlo a otros si fuera preciso?” (J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 2-III-61a). Also in his introduction to the reader (Saluda al benigno lector-15).  

82 The expression comes from J. A. Ramírez, “Evocar, reconstruir...”, p. 31. For all this, J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 1-XIV-54.

83 “Y ciertamente este símbolo dificilmente lo comprenden quienes ignoran las reglas de la arquitectura o quienes no se han ejercitado en la contemplación de los edificios...” (J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 1-II-22a)
en las sombras de la oscuridad\textsuperscript{84}. He went on to characterise his predecessors as such: “todos estos autores me parecen semejantes a aquellos artesanos que quisiéran practicar su oficio sin utilizar ningún instrumento propio de su profesión”\textsuperscript{85}.

Just as in Nadal, images undoubtedly constituted the central element, the primary instrument of interpretation in Villalpando’s Temple\textsuperscript{86}. In the opening sentence of his dedication of the first volume to Philip II (1596), he wrote that after working on this project for the last seventeen years he felt that “un vehemente deseo de comprender la imagen de aquel famoso Templo se adueña de mí”\textsuperscript{87}. The dependence of text upon image was in his mind complete; one could only be understood through the contemplation of the other. For the first time, a commentary of Ezekiel relied heavily upon images in its gloss. As Villalpando stated, “El argumento de este capítulo radica en que demostremos que era totalmente necesario utilizar unas imágenes muy exactas del Templo para comprender esta visión, y si faltan tales imágenes necesariamente no la entenderemos”\textsuperscript{88}. He continued, “afirmamos que esto es totalmente imposible sin unos dibujos o diseños, y mantenemos como algo totalmente cierto que quienes quieran enseñar o explicar esta visión a otros sin estas ayudas, con toda seguridad van a perder su tiempo y su trabajo”\textsuperscript{89}. He even went so far as to ask his readers to check if all the engravings were included when they bought the book, and if they were in the right order. Otherwise, he assured them, his work would be completely worthless\textsuperscript{90}.

In Villalpando’s perspective, language was incapable of presenting a concept the way a picture could. He himself admitted to have made more progress by sketching the designs than by reading and pondering the numerous commentaries\textsuperscript{91}. He wanted, then, to convert these words into ima-

\textsuperscript{84} J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-VIII-37a.
\textsuperscript{85} J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-VIII-37b.
\textsuperscript{87} Appendix to El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado, p. 107.
\textsuperscript{88} J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-VIII-37a.
\textsuperscript{89} J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-XIV-52b. See also, 1-XIV-54.
\textsuperscript{90} J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-XIV-54a. Also: “…pues no tenemos ninguna esperanza en poder ser útiles sin las imágenes y las descripciones que abundantemente hemos grabado” (1-XIV-53b).
\textsuperscript{91} J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-XIV-53b.
ges, so that the visual could reinforce and give credit and authority to the written. This was in keeping with the pedagogical function ascribed by the Jesuits to the emblem, where a single metaphorical image could encompass an entire discourse and take the figurative meaning of multiple rhetorical tropes. Whereas words only indirectly substituted for reality, an emblem offered reality with a superimposed meaning, while reaching and striking the mind with more clarity and effectiveness\textsuperscript{92}. For those few who knew how to construe them—and to teach the theologians how to read architecture as an emblem was part of Villalpando’s objective—, emblematic images allowed escape from the limitations of discursive reasoning and transcendence of other modes of knowledge, providing direct access to the essence of an object and delectation in savouring “el apreciado fruto de su interior”\textsuperscript{93}. Equating thus the instantaneity and the immediacy of sight with a greater understanding was akin to the Ciceronian idea which considered that “the metaphors drawn from the sense of sight are much more vivid, almost placing before the mind’s eye what we cannot discern and see”\textsuperscript{94}.

The mental image signified in the words “before the mind’s eye” formed another essential component of Villalpando’s conceptual framework\textsuperscript{95}. As an architect, he knew that it was not enough to perceive with the body, the exterior eyes; one should also conceive with the mind, the interior eyes.

\textsuperscript{92} This also made for quite a strong argument against the supremacy of the text advocated by the Protestants.


\textsuperscript{94} Cícero, \textit{De oratore}, III, 161. Quoted by E. Gombrich, “\textit{Icones Symbolicae}...”, p. 167. The idea of sight as the sharpest, most beautiful and most excellent of the senses goes back to Aristotle and beyond. Villalpando refers to it a few times (\textit{De postrema}, 1-VI-32; 2-III-61; 2-VIII-71-72). For a genealogy of this commonplace, see the opening chapter of Héctor Pinto, \textit{Imagen de la vida cristiana} (Coimbra, 1563), “De la excelencia de la vista sobre los otros sentidos y del descubrimiento de la verdad”. This in the edition—based on the 1567 Zaragoza translation from Portuguese—by Edward Glaser, Barcelona, Juan Flors, 1967, pp. 185-192. (Coll. “Espirituales Españoles”). In 1568, Pinto also wrote a commentary on Ezekiel (cited above n. 63).

At the same time he was aware of the difficulties this operation entailed. Villalpando marvelled at Philip II’s ability to imagine buildings from mere designs: “Le agradaba de tal forma dar vueltas y vueltas a estos dibujos y concebibía sus formas mentalmente de modo tan perfecto, que en este tema, que es francamente difícil, me di cuenta de que el Rey superó incluso a los más sabios arquitectos…”96. But at the same time he realised that:

Es casi imposible que alguien pueda comprender el pensamiento del Profeta cuando escribe esta profecía, si antes no concibe mentalmente la imagen del Templo... Y también es muy difícil que alguien pueda comprender los misterios de la Iglesia futura, que eran revelados por el Angel, si previamente no contemplaba con detenimiento, con los ojos de su mente, el mismo Templo en el que estaban representados tales misterios... En todos aquellos temas que exigen tener delante de los ojos unas imágenes o dibujos para poder comprenderlos intelectualmente, esto de ninguna forma se puede cumplir si no ves con tus mismos ojos las figuras cuya total estructura, distribución y partes es preciso también que estén presentes antes los ojos del alma97.

As the last sentence suggests, the mental could not be separated from the physical. Villalpando admirably formulated this, writing: “De ningún modo podría ser percibida [esta profecía] a no ser por quienes, contemplando la figura de la casa con sus ojos corpóreos, pudieran concebir mentalmente y contemplar físicamente cada una de sus partes, sus dimensiones, su proporción, su orden”98. The abstract idea, if necessary, was in itself insufficient. For the intellect to grasp it, it needed to be set in a concrete and tangible form, just as the prophet had to put down in writing then draw on a tablet a model of the Temple, in order for his people to understand what God had dictated to him. Villalpando drove this important point in by reiterating once more his claim: “Por esto, al dar vueltas en la cabeza a las distintas ideas que concebimos, ningún entendimiento por más intuitivo y lúcido que sea podrá formar una disposición adecuada del edificio; es necesario, como tantas veces hemos dicho, dibujarlas o darles forma como sea para que queden fijas y podamos contemplarlas con los ojos y con la mente una y otra vez”99. Meaning, then, moved from idea, to text, to image.

96 J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 2-XX-94a.
97 J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-XIV-52b.
98 J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 1-VIII-36a. Also, “Por lo que es preciso dar forma a estas imágenes mentales mediante unas líneas, para que una vez plasmadas por escrito tales imágenes las pueda ver una y otra vez, las pueda comparar, juzgar y perfeccionar” (2-IX-74a).
99 J. B. Villalpando, De postrema, 2-III-60b. Or also, “yo pregunto ¿quién se puede atribuir un ingenio tan penetrante para verlo y una habilidad para escribirlo o enseñarlo que
Villalpando confessed that, at first, he surmised and speculated more than truly understood anything about the prophecy. Once he had completed the designs, though, things became clearer.

Guiado únicamente por una hipótesis, antes de que dejara en suspensio mi ánimo y todos nuestros afanes en comprender esta única visión del Profeta, no de decir que lo sospechaba más que lo creía; pero después de que hemos podido conseguir, por la gracia de Dios, llevar a buen término estas nuestras imágenes del Templo descrito por Ezequiel, al menos en gran parte, ahora ya nos parece no que lo creemos, sino que lo vemos con los ojos profundos de la mente e incluso con los ojos físicos de nuestro cuerpo.100

These very reasons prevented him from accepting the exclusively allegorical and anaqogical interpretation certain authors such as Jerome had made of the Temple, and drove him to favour the literal sense of the Scriptures. Villalpando could not conceive the Temple as a mere mystical symbol of Christ and the Church; it also had to be something literal and material—a Temple made of stones that could be drawn and engraved. I do not deny the spiritual house, he said, yet “confieso que sus principios surgieron a partir de algo construido en madera”101. This led him to rhetorically question: “¿Quién no ve que todo esto es más adecuado y proporcionado a nuestra inteligencia si lo vemos representado en la imagen invisible de un Templo, más que si fuera en una pura imaginación?”102. Undeniably, imagination required confirmation by the senses.

This idea found an echo in the remarkable example of the Queen of Sheba visiting Solomon, used at the very beginning of the second volume of the *Explanations*. Admiring the wealth of his kingdom and the beauty of his monuments, the queen assured her host that they went beyond everything she had envisioned. From this episode, Villalpando asserted that only

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100 J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 1-VII-34b.
sight allowed the expression of what was imagined or was by nature ineffable:

En cuanto nos es posible interpretar estas palabras, entendemos, que su fuerza radica en la imposibilidad de expresar verbalmente, con el fin de que se pueda comprender en sus justos términos, los extraordinarios e inefables méritos que sobrepasaron con mucho los méritos habituales y comunes; solamente ahora, al haberlo visto y oído experimentalmente, le proporcionó la base que le faltaba para corroborarlo de un modo fehaciente: el testimonio definitivo de lo que veía fue decisivo para reafirmarse en su opinión\textsuperscript{103}.

The same is true, he continued, for everything we are told about these far away lands (the Indies), so foreign to us that we cannot fully understand them, regardless of all the detailed and vivid information we receive. Only through visual and physical experience do these wonders become real to us. By ourselves, we are unable to reconstruct the unknown. Our imagination and our intellect are simply not powerful enough. So, Villalpando asks, how can we envision something so marvellous as the Temple of Solomon? In his opinion, perfect knowledge could only be attained by an initial idea of the building and an empirical notion of each of its parts. The pictorial representation therefore served as a didactical bridge between idea and matter, making the concept visible and intelligible\textsuperscript{104}.

This overarching discourse about understanding, imagination and the senses, with a constant come and go between the three levels of perception\textsuperscript{105}, functioned as an introduction to the typically Jesuit method of meditating upon images, the composition of place. This technique of imaginary transformation of places and events into objects of contemplation, called for a “volonté d’image”, in the words of the historian-semiotician Pierre-Antoine Fabre. As Fabre argued, “la composition de lieu dessine ainsi

\textsuperscript{103} J. B. Villalpando, \textit{De postrema}, Saluda al benigno lector-9.

\textsuperscript{104} J. B. Villalpando, \textit{De postrema}, Saluda al benigno lector-9-10.

\textsuperscript{105} It is interesting to note that Villalpando applied these degrees of interpretation, similar in more ways than one to the four different meanings of the Bible, to the Temple itself: “Así como en el alma del hombre podemos advertir una fuerza y potencia superior, que llamamos “la mente”, hay otra virtualidad inferior que llamamos la sensibilidad o sentido, e igualmente –siguiendo esta analogía del templo sagrado– podemos advertir en él [el Templo] algo que podemos llamar como su “alma”; en efecto, se da una similitud entre el hombre, el tabernáculo y el universo, pero tal analogía no es perceptible por los sentidos, también posee la mente, o bien su facultad más importante, por la que se simboliza la Iglesia de Cristo, e incluso al mismo Cristo hombre visible y Dios invisible, según la capacidad intuitiva de cada uno” (J. B. Villalpando, \textit{De postrema}, 5-XXVIII-392b).
le sens spirituel de l'imagination sensible”\textsuperscript{106}. Although the integration of this concept to the discourse of the *Explanationes* has been hinted at by scholars, it has yet to be explained thoroughly\textsuperscript{107}. Through the composition of place, Villalpando finally reconciled the conflicting mental and physical images, justifying the need for both. At the root of this central relationship, lay the dynamic of the gaze —so basic to the understanding of forms that Villalpando would devote six chapters to optics, light and visual perception—\textsuperscript{108} along with that of the mental image —the interior design so often evoked. Together, they combined to produce what was in fact one prodigious *compositio loci*. The materiality Villalpando sought to ascribe to his reconstruction by refusing to confine its existence to a purely mystical level, and by diligently and systematically describing practically each room, wall, door, window, staircase, column, vase, facade, or courtyard of the Temple (books 3 and 4), further attested his desire to create a place (*locus*) upon which the reader could set his eyes and his spirit. He then proceeded to breathe life into this house by narrating the activity around it, in the encampments of the twelve tribes or on the building site, and by specifying the financial and human costs of its construction (book 5). In the end, one could not help but see the Temple and feel that he partook in the prophet’s vision. As Villalpando himself asserted: “Es tan singular esta visión que nos hace ver cada una de las partes de cada uno de los datos de tal manera que parece una verdadera visión corpórea”\textsuperscript{109}. After all, what was Ezekiel’s prophecy if not a wide composition of place?\textsuperscript{110}

The contemplation of the fifteen plates illustrating the floor plans, perspectives and elevations, or those representing the altars, the molten sea and the great candelabra, stimulated the mental visualisation of the Temple and the recreation of the *locus*. Villalpando explained how the engravings were supposed to relate to the core of the text:


\textsuperscript{107} J. A. Ramírez, “Evocar, reconstruir…”, pp. 31-33, 36, has pointed out some of the similarities between the discourse of Villalpando and the *compositio loci*.

\textsuperscript{108} J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 2-III-VIII-60-74. “Examinados brevemente estos temas sobre la naturaleza de lo visible, nos parece que hemos abierto una puerta para comprender mejor las formas o figuras” (2-VI-68a).

\textsuperscript{109} J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 3-IV-113b.

\textsuperscript{110} As a matter of fact, Villalpando seems extremely concerned to determine the nature of Ezekiel’s vision. He dedicates four chapters to this question, wondering whether it was physical or spiritual, coming to the conclusion that if the prophet was not physically transported to Jerusalem, he did actually see the Temple with his mind’s eye (J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 1-IV-VII-26-35).
Que los que van a leer estos nuestros comentarios y explicaciones estén advertidos de que si quieren comprenderlos con gusto y con provecho, extiendan los grabados, los mantengan delante de sus ojos para que se acostumbren a descubrir en ellos casi cada una de las partes de estos debates, para que puedan comprobar la autenticidad de la cita que leen y de su comentario, para que puedan, y esto es lo más importante, corroborarlo con el consenso de todos los demás.\footnote{J. B. Villalpando, \textit{De postrema}, 1-XIV-54b.}

He enjoined the reader to go beyond the mere passive contemplation to an active participation in the intellectual reconstruction, by maintaining the plates “firmly set in his spirit”, “examining the engraving with attention”, looking at the stairs “as if he had climbed them”, turning to one print or the other and keeping it at hand until the end of the argument to see if it coincided with the Holy Writ.\footnote{P.-A. Fabre has called “l’image comme signe sacré”\footnote{P.-A. Fabre, \textit{Ignace de Loyola. Le lieu de l’image}, p. 172. Villalpando talked about: “unos misterios, que solamente con la visión imaginaria y sin ninguna representación física, parecería totalmente imposible que se pudieran simbolizar” (J. B. Villalpando, \textit{De postrema}, 1-X-42b). R. Klein, “L’imagination comme vêtement...”, p. 87, believes that symbols are “le seul langage par lequel nous pouvons encore, exceptionnellement, communiquer avec les dieux”. For a discussion on symbols and images as a reflection of divinity, E. Gombrich, \textit{Icones Symbolicae...}, pp. 146 ff.}”\footnote{The quote: “...y es imposible comprender sin dibujos, imágenes o bocetos esta visión de Ezequiel si el lector no los mantiene en su ánimo de forma fija y firme” (J. B. Villalpando, \textit{De postrema}, 1-VIII-37b); “una vez que el lector examine con atención el grabado, podrá conocer todos los demás datos más fácilmente” (5-XXXVIII-414a); “Después de examinar detenidamente las escaleras, como si las hubiera subido...” (4-LXVI-307a). Also, “Es tiempo ya de que el lector, que va a leer todas nuestras explicaciones, tenga delante de sus ojos nuestra planta general” (3-VI-116a); “Le rogamos que conserve delante este grabado hasta que veamos todas las consecuencias que son fruto de nuestros razonamientos y conjeturas” (4-XLVIII-274). Other references in 1-VII-35b; 1-IX-74a; 3-IX-119b; 3-XL-190a; 4-XLIV-266a.} The image thus corresponded to the perfection of the text and the building it conveyed. This is what P.-A. Fabre has called “l’image comme signe sacré”. The mysteries of the Temple, its \textit{idea}, were carved in the stone, inscribed in its form and its proportions. By converting these mysteries into images, Villalpando and the reader shared in some way the power the lat-
ter symbolised, the divine essence of the Temple—"[que] supera toda clase de hermosura que pueda ser objeto de una aprehension visual o intelectiva"—being infused into the *vera imago*. As we become familiar with the Temple, Villalpando wrote, "percibimos un mayor conocimiento, como si brillara una luz cada vez más luminosa; una luz que nos permite inmediatamente examinar con atencion nuevos misterios y ocultos planes de Dios que contiene la majestuosa grandiosidad del Templo". The purpose of his commentary and his reconstruction was then to go from the sensory to the divine, that is to say "clarificar todo lo que es objeto de una aprehension sensorial, para a partir de estos datos descubrir otros elementos más divinos"; or more concisely, "perfeccionar los conceptos o los frutos inmaduraos de nuestra alma". Just as our guide proceeded from the outside of the Temple to the inside, progressing "de modo que de lo más exterior pasemos a lo más interior y de lo más profundo a lo más elevado", he wanted the reader to elevate himself by this "reflexión interna del corazón y del alma" to the contemplation of divine truths.

Ultimately, the contemplation of God as the end point of the spiritual and pictorial journey through Solomon's Temple, transcended the mere context of the book to reappear in real life. Appropriately enough, Juan Bautista Villalpando chose the time of death, this meeting point between two worlds, to convey this effect. Paying tribute to his lost colleague Jerónimo Prado, he recreated the scene—the *locus*—of their last meeting:

Al comunicarlo yo la proximidad de su muerte, me recibió con gran certeza y gozo; se quedó mirando con atencion sus manos. Le pregunté por qué las examinaba con tanto interés y él me contestó: "observo con cuidado mis manos que de nuevo he de ver en lo sucesivo". Entretanto iba pronunciando aquellas palabras de Job: "Y verán mis ojos en mi carne a Dios, mi Salvador que yo mismo he de contemplar y no otro". Quedó la nostalgia y el dolor de su ausencia.

To stare as Prado did at those dying hands that laid the foundations of the material and perceptible Temple, meant in fact to already glimpse at

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115 J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, Saluda al begino lector-12.
116 Dedication to Philip II in Appendix to *El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado*, p. 107.
118 J. B. Villalpando, *De postrema*, 4-I-201b and 3-X-123b.
119 Appendix to *El Templo de Salomón según Jerónimo de Prado*, p. 114. The book of Job, where the sense of sight is also very prominent and which inspired abundant exegetical work in sixteenth-century Spain, could be another interesting place to look for a visual interpretation of the Bible.
the other Temple, spiritual and ineffable. After a life-long meditation on God and the Temple, he was thus allowed to go through the mirror, to travel the opposite direction, from the sensory to the intellective. Those eyes that had gazed at the form would soon contemplate the idea.

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This close up of the world of royal patronage, biblical scholarship, and Jesuit imagery seen through the microscopic lens of the Explanationes, has considerably altered our "wide-angle" perception, revealing an unsuspected cultural liveliness in late sixteenth-century Spain that extends to the first half of the seventeenth century. This change of light opens our eyes to a reality that has been left, so to speak, in the dark room of history ever since Bataillon's dazzling thesis. Hence, this new focus on a continued intellectual effervescence fostered by people such as Arias Montano, Villalpando, the Jesuits and countless other scholars and erudites, offers a fresh perspective that might finally enable us to understand the intellectual milieu of someone like Velázquez.\(^\text{120}\)