

From Valencia to Querétaro. Devotion to Saint James through an illustration by Vicente Capilla Gil

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Abstract: The conquest of the city of Querétaro (Mexico), on 25 July 1531, on the feast day of Saint James, is commemorated in an illustration by a Valencian engraver, Vicente Capilla Gil, produced in 1792. The coincidence in the date of the two events led to a miraculous happening being recorded in the illustration: the appearance of the Holy Cross in the sky together with the Apostle, Patron Saint of Spain. This in turn led to the extension of the cult of Saint James and devotion to the Holy Cross throughout the Vice-Royalty of New Spain, and one of the main mission schools is named after it: Santa Cruz de Querétaro. The work done by the Franciscan Brothers in the context of missions is highlighted in an exemplary way in the illustration. The virtues and deeds of Brother Antonio Llinaz and Brother Antonio Marfil, of Spanish origin, as founders of the school, evangelists and apostle of Christ are underlined in the illustration.

Key words: Illustration; Flemish; Franciscan; Allegory; Iconography; Missions; Cross; Cult; Saint James the Apostle.

The conquest of the city of Querétaro (Mexico), on 25 July 1531, on the feast day of Saint James¹, is commemorated in an illustration by a Valencian engraver, Vicente Capilla Gil, produced in 1792 (Fig.1). The coincidence in the date of the two events led

¹ This engraving was the object of an analysis by Santiago Montoya Beleña in his article, "Alegoría de la Orden Franciscana en un grabado inédito de 1792 de Vicente Capilla Gil", *Boletín Camón Aznar*, XLVIII-II (1992), p. 189-203. In our study we aim to broaden the iconographic study of the illustration by this author, contributing details that we find significant or that could point towards a more complete interpretation.

to a miraculous happening being recorded in the illustration: the appearance of the Holy Cross observed by both Spaniards and natives in the sky, while the bloody battle took place. As a result of the vision, devotion to the cross became much more widespread, and one of the main mission schools in New Spain is named after it: Santa Cruz de Querétaro².

The Colegio Seminario de Propaganda Fide de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro was founded in 1683 on the site where the conquest of the city was completed. It was founded by Franciscan Brothers Antonio Llinaz and Antonio Margil, both of Spanish origin³.

The church and the monastery of Santa Cruz were built on what was known as Loma de San Gremal, where the famous battle on this day in 1531 was fought between the Chichimeca Indians, resident in the region, and the conquistadors. Legend has it that in the heat of the fray the Spaniards called on the Apostle Saint James, Patron Saint of Spain, for protection, and then a shining pink-coloured cross was seen high in the sky, together with Saint James riding a white steed.

The Franciscans, in memory of the event, erected a similar one to that seen by the natives on the site, and later on they built a hermitage, then a chapel, and in the mid-seventeenth century, the small monastery of the Recolección de San Buenaventura, which changed its name to that of the first Colegio de Propaganda Fide in America and started to operate as such on 5 August 1683⁴. The names of Antonio Llinaz and Antonio Margil de Jesús stand out above the many monks who formed part of the school. Its transcendence was continental, because others were built just like it, such as Cristo Crucificado in Guatemala, San Antonio in Texas and in Mexico itself, Guadalupe in Zacatecas, San Francisco in Pachuca, and San Fernando and Zapopan in Jalisco; after two centuries of fruitful evangelism and bringing culture to the north, centre and south of America, these schools reached the surroundings of Buenos Aires with the Colegio del Rosario, in Argentina, not to mention the twenty-one Fray Junípero Serra missions in Alta California.

2 RODRIGUEZ, V., "Colegio de Querétaro. Último reclutador de Misioneros", *Archivo Ibero-Americano*. XLVII, 185-188. p. 164.

3 Franciscan institutions were set up in the Peninsula before 1679, earlier than the Colegio de la Santa Cruz, to train evangelists, "sobre todo para el continente americano y muy en particular para las tierras de la Nueva España". *A virxe peregrina. Iconografía e culto*. Museo de Pontevedra. Edificio Sarmiento. Xacobeo 2004, Xunta de Galicia. One of these mission seminary schools was built in Cambados and later moved to Herbón (1695-1701); numerous monks left from here to the school in Querétaro to carry out their evangelical work. Among many of these names, we know that of Brother Andrés de Pazos, born in the parish of Veá, who set out from Herbón to Querétaro in 1714, where he became Guardian and Vice-Prefect of Missions. This was one of the inroads for the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe (Mexico) in Galicia, as various paintings came from the school in 1735; one of them can still be seen in the church at Herbón. BLANCO PARDO, R. M., *Apuntes históricos sobre el colegio de misioneros de Herbón de la esclarecida orden de San Francisco*, Artes Gráficas de Gerardo Castro, Lugo, 1925. The Mission School in Querétaro was the promoter of various similar centres, representing the beginning and the expansion of the Propaganda Fide schools in America; they were independent of each other, under the direct jurisdiction of the Comisario General de Indias in Madrid. BORGES MORÁN, P., "Expediciones Misioneras al Colegio de Querétaro (Méjico), 1683-1822", *Archivo Español Ibero-Americano. Homenaje a San Francisco de Asís en el VIII Centenario de su nacimiento: 1182-1982*. XLII, 165-168 (1982), p. 809.

4 AMERLINCK, M^a.C., *Arte virreinal entre Querétaro y Zacatecas*. Madrid, 1987, p. 11-12.



Fig. 2. *St Michael of the Miracles appears to Diego Lázaro*, first half of the 18th century. Museo Universitario de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. Mexico.

Thanks to the papal bull granted by Innocent XI to set up the new institute, Brother Antonio Llinaz oversaw the building work for thirty years, right up to his death in Madrid on 29 June 1693⁵. The most famous missionaries, explorers, translators and civilisers of vast regions such as Texas, Arizona and Central America were trained in its classrooms over the following two centuries.

Many of these significant characters were depicted on numerous oil paintings and illustrations exalting their crucial work in the evangelisation of the above-mentioned lands. Such is the case with the engraving by Vicente Capilla Gil, which endeavours to exalt the Franciscan order through the work of monks as exemplary sons who took God's word to the furthest boundaries of New Spain.

The Holy Cross⁶, like a triumphant palm tree, is in the centre as the axis of

symmetry, dividing the scene into two different levels: heaven and earth.

In the upper part we see the Immaculate Conception being crowned by the Holy Trinity. On the sides, on a throne of clouds, Saint Joseph and the child, on whose lips we read the words "*Ite ad Joseph*"; there are two kneeling angels, the first of which holds a crown and the model of the church, while the second has a tray with twelve pomegranates; the inscriptions make allusion to Saint Joseph as the Patron Saint of the missionary school: "*Collegium et Imper. Mex. D.O.C*" and "*Vincenti dabo edere de ligno vitae*" ("*To he who overcomes shall I give the fruit of the tree of life*", Apoc 2:7)⁷.

We should bear in mind the fact that from the Council of 1555 onwards, Saint Joseph was also the Patron Saint of the Church of Mexico⁸. The relationship between

5 For bibliography concerning Antonio Llinaz and Antonio Margil cf. MONTÓYA BELEÑA, S., "Alegoría de la Orden Franciscana en un grabado inédito de 1792 de Vicente Capilla Gil", *Boletín del Instituto Camón Aznar*, XLVIII-IL (1992), p. 189-203.

6 Cf. documentary annex.

7 The epigraph is taken from Chapter 2 of the Apocalypse, in allusion to the epistle to the church in Ephesus: "*He who has ears, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches: To he who overcomes shall I give the fruit of the tree of life, in the centre of the paradise of my God*" (Apoc. 2:7).

8 In the sixteenth century Saint Joseph intervened in public and official life just like the Apostle Saint James before and the Virgin of Guadalupe afterwards.

New Spain and the glorious patriarch was always an intimate one. The church of New Spain believed that Joseph was present at Jesus' baptism in the Jordan, which endowed him with two new titles: "*Compadre del padre Eterno*" and "*padrino de la Nueva España*". The first church in the Valley of Mexico was built in his honour; San José de Naturales, built by the Franciscans. It was here that the Indians first received the teachings of the western world⁹.

On the other side, Saint Michael is depicted conquering the devil in the form of a dog. The iconography of the Archangel Michael was widespread in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; on many occasions he is depicted together with Saint Joseph in allusion to the *Ars bene moriendi*. His presence in the engraving, however, is justified by the Franciscans' age-old devotion to Saint Michael¹⁰. The Archangel Michael is associated with the sentence "*Quis ut Deus?*" ("*Who is like God?*"), the initials of which are engraved on the shield accompanying him. He is often invoked as the "*great prince of the heavenly hosts*" (Daniel 10:13)¹¹ and conqueror of Satan, a topic taken from the Apocalypse (12: 7-9); the iconographic type was created in the seventh century in the grotto of Monte Gargano and imitated on the Monte de San Miguel, after which it became popular on seals and miniatures¹². The cult of Saint Michael extended greatly in the seventeenth century, symbolising the triumph of the Catholic Church over the dragon of the Protestant heresy; hence numerous churches were devoted to him in Italy, France and Germany¹³. The presence of this kind of Counter-reformation iconography is constant in Mexico in modern painting. We should not forget that the devotion shown by society in New Spain to angels was made evident through the large number of paintings they appear in. Saint Michael enjoyed the greatest veneration among the group of seven archangels, among other things because of the significant role he played as captain of a host of angels that defeated the demons and as protector of the Woman in the Apocalypse, who represented both the Virgin Mary and the Church, a common topic in all colonial art in South America¹⁴. Hence the figure of Saint Michael generally accompanies the Virgin of the Apocalypse and fights against the demon with seven heads, who is shown in defeat under his feet¹⁵.

He was also invoked to protect people against earthquakes and epidemics, and so numerous villages, chapels and altarpieces were named after him. It was common in

9 MORERA, J., "Patrocinio de San José en Tecamac", *Imágenes de los Naturales en el arte de la Nueva España. Siglos XVI al XVIII*. Fomento Cultural Banamex. México, D.F., 2005, p. 437.

10 MONTOYA BELEÑA, S., "Alegoría de la Orden Franciscana en un grabado inédito de 1792 de Vicente Capilla Gil", *Boletín del Instituto Camón Aznar*, XLVIII-IL (1992), p. 194.

11 RODRÍGUEZ-MIAJA, F.E., "Una maravilla en San Miguel del Milagro", *Imágenes de los Naturales en el arte de la Nueva España. Siglos XVI al XVIII*. Fomento Cultural Banamex. México, D.F., 2005, p. 358.

12 GARCÍA OLLOQUI, M^a.V., *La Roldana*. Sevilla, 2003, s.p. lám 12.

13 RÉAU, L., *Iconografía del arte cristiano...* T.1, vol.1, *op. cit.* p. 71.

14 *Ibidem*, p. 363.

15 This type of iconography is common in the oil paintings of Miguel Cabrera, such as the "*Virgen del Apocalipsis*" (eighteenth century) in the Museo Nacional de Arte, previously held at the Pinacoteca Virreinal de San Diego, México, D.F. SEBASTIÁN LÓPEZ, S., *Iconografía e Iconología del arte novohispano*. Italia, 1992, p. 45.

New Spain for the spreading of his cult to be linked to a miraculous happening: the apparition of the Archangel Michael to an Indian in 1631 on the site where a spring of healing water was discovered, asking him to make the miracle known¹⁶ (Fig. 2).

In this regard we come across paintings and engravings, such as the one by Francisco Silverio (1721-1761) at the Real Academia de la Historia de Madrid, which might have served as inspiration for Vicente Capilla's illustration.

The presence of Saint Michael in allegorical work corresponds to his role as protector and conqueror of unbelievers, just as in Vicente Capilla Gil's illustration. We should add in this regard that after the conquest of Mexico by Spain, the presence of Saint Michael came to represent the triumph over idolatry¹⁷.

As far as the iconographic depiction in New Spain is concerned, it corresponds to that of Europe, brought by the Spanish and summed up in the image of the triumph of the Catholic Church over heresy. The garments he is generally depicted in are of Roman origin – a centurion's – and this spread to Baroque art in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His distinctive garments are a helmet crowned with large feathers, a breastplate, shield and sword, just as we see him in the engraving, lacking in this case the palm leaf and white standard with the red cross he usually bears on other occasions. The sword of fire depicts him as guardian of heaven while the shield represents his might as a warrior¹⁸.

Brother Antonio Llinaz is depicted at the bottom of the engraving, together with a small circular church in allusion to the school founded in Querétaro to train missionaries; the latter are shown kneeling down around an atrium with a book for study, crowned by a cross; the following inscriptions come out of the Franciscans' mouths: "*Quis mihi tribuat ut ego moriar pro te? / ibo Christum daturus aut sanguinem Charitas Dei urget nos / aut pati aut mori*"¹⁹. The inscription "*V.P.F. Antº Llinaz plantavit*" at lower left reminds observers that the school was founded by Brother Llinaz.

Brother Antonio Margil is identified by the inscription "*V.P.F. Antº Margil*" at lower right, surrounded by a group of eleven natives. The following words come out of

16 According to tradition the Archangel Michael appeared to the Indian Diego Lázaro in Tlaxcala (Mexico) during a religious procession. In the first apparition he pointed him to a spring of healing waters, and in the second the Indian became ill as a punishment for disobedience, and was taken by the Archangel himself to the spring, where he was cured and told once again to let people know about the announcement. RISHELL, J. J.; STRATTON-PRUITT, S., *Revelaciones. Las Artes en América Latina*, 1492-1820. Fondo de Cultura Económica. Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2007, p. 345.

17 In Chapter IV, Book VIII of the *Chronica Seraphica* by Saint Francis, mention is made of the saint's devotion to the Archangel Michael: "*La devoción cordial que siempre tuvo el Santo al Archangel San Miguel, le condujo al Monte Gargano, sitio venerable por la celebre aparición de este purísimo Espíritu, Protector de la Fè, y de la Iglesia. Aunque pudo entrar en los mas íntimo de este Templo, donde se venera el ara, ò piedra en que se apareció (cosa que se concede à muy pocos) no se atrevió à entrar tan adentro de humilde y se quedó en la parte de afuera, adorando aquel sagrado lugar, diciendo à su compañero: Terrible lugar es este, viendo cara à cara la Magestad de Dios, y honrado con la presencia del Principe de la Milicia del Cielo*". CORNEJO, D., *Chronica Seraphica. Vida del Glorioso Patriarca San Francisco y de sus primeros discípulos*. I. Madrid: viuda de Juan García Infançon: 1721, p. 419-420.

18 RODRIGUEZ-MIAJA, F.E., "Una maravilla en San Miguel del Milagro...", *op. cit.* p. 360.

19 If only I could die for you / I will go to give their blood to Christ – the love of God urges us on – to suffer or die.

his mouth: “*Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit salvus erit*” (“Whoever believes and is baptised shall be saved”). A native replies, “*Ecce aqua; quid prohibet me baptizari?*” (“Here is water; what is there to stop me from being baptised?”). This kind of illustration can often be seen in the biographies of these missionaries, such as that of Father Margil, published by Enrique Oltra Perales under the title *Antonio Margil de Jesús, un valenciano apóstol Evangélico de las Américas (1657-1726)*, printed in the city of Valencia; it includes an engraving in which the monk from Valencia is portrayed in the Franciscan habit, holding the cross of Christ on high with one hand while he preaches to a group of Indians kneeling and sitting around him. One of the Indians is saying “*I believe*” (Fig. 3). The illustration is the work of Lorenzo de Mansilla and was possibly a source of inspiration for Vicente Capilla²⁰.

Behind the figure of Father Margil, we see an eagle resting on a nopal – a plant that is representative of Mexican flora – and the symbol of the founding of Mexico. This represents the sign that the Aztecs, coming southwards from Aztlan, were searching for a place to found a new city. According to this legend, the Aztecs, who were a nomadic tribe at the time, were wandering through Mexico in search of a sign from heaven to show them the exact spot where they should build their capital. Huitzilopochtli, one of their main deities, had told them they would find an eagle devouring a snake on a nopal. After 350 years’ searching, they found the sign on a little island in Lake Texcoco and with permission from the local king, they founded the city of Tenochtitlan²¹.

In the engraving from Valencia, the nopal is depicted on a rock and the eagle on the plant with outspread wings, an eight-pointed star over its head and an inscription reading “*Sub umbra illius, que desideraveram sedi*” (“*I sat in the shade of he whom I loved*”).

We should point out that this iconographic motif became very popular in diverse manuscripts and paintings, although the presence of the serpent was not accepted in all of them as it was taken as a misunderstanding of the *Mexicayotl* chronicle by Hernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc. This because the Nahuatl sentence “*the serpent whistles*” was translated as “*the serpent is destroyed*”²² (Fig. 4).

20 The same iconographic type can be seen in the frontispiece of the life of Serra written by Palóu and published in Mexico in 1787, in which Brother Junípero Serra lifts on high the cross with his left hand while preaching Christian doctrine to a group of natives.

21 On top of a prickly pear cactus and a stone “*hace su morada una hermosa águila: este lugar nos manda que busquemos y que allado nos tengamos por dichosos y bien aventurados, porque este es el lugar y descanso de nuestra quietud y grandeza: aquí ha de ser ensalzado nuestro nombre y engrandecida la nación mexicana...este lugar manda se llame Tenochtitlán*”, p. 39. DURÁN, D., *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de Tierra Firme* por el padre fray Diego Durán religioso de la orden de predicadores, México, Imprenta de J.M Andrade y F. Escalante, 1867, I, II y Atlas.

22 In the annex to Brother Diego Durán’s *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de Tierra Firme*, it is pointed out that “*el tunal sobre la piedra es el verdadero símbolo, pero se encuentra de distinta manera en los jeroglíficos, en el jeroglífico de Sigüenza, en el mapa Tlótzin y en los códices Telleriano-Remese y Vaticano, el tunal no tiene águila, en la tira Tepéchan, tiene águila, pero esta se ve sola con las alas extendidas al sol sin desgarrar pájaro ni culebra, lo mismo que en la primera lámina del códice Mendocino*”, p. 161.



Fig. 3. Enrique Oltra Perales: *Antonio Margil de Jesús, an apostle from Valencia sent to evangelise the Americas (1657-1726)*. Valencia.

Based on this, Brother Diego Durán²³ reinterpreted the legend, in such a way that the eagle symbolised good, while the serpent represented evil and sin. Father Durán used this version of the story for the first time in 1582 to illustrate his *Historia de las indias de la Nueva España e islas de Tierra Firme*²⁴.

This meaning was adopted from then on, as it corresponded to traditional European heraldry. It was therefore used by missionaries for catechising and the conversion of the natives to Christianity.

Between the two scenes with the missionaries is a cross shaped like a palm tree, from whose trunk twelve palms with busts of Franciscan missionaries are sprouting, recalling other allegorical images of this type, such as the one on one of the walls of the Exconvento de San Miguel de Huejotzingo, in the city of Puebla (Fig. 5), in which 12 monks worship the cross.

They are in fact the 12 Franciscan apostles, i.e. the first twelve Franciscans who came to Mexico in 1524 to start evangelising with Brother Pedro de Gante, who had already been there since 1523. This symbolic number is an allusion to a return to the primitive church, part of the order's plan for evangelisation in the New World, inspired by the path followed by the twelve apostles²⁵. On the illustration therefore, there is a clear attempt to highlight missionary continuity through this iconography, providing a link between the brothers who founded the school in Querétaro and the many others who are shown around the palm trees with the mythical first Franciscans to tread American land.

Depicting the cross as a palm tree follows the typology of the founding palm tree, a very common topic in depictions of the religious orders and whose antecedents lie in the iconography of medieval manuscripts²⁶.

In Vicente Capilla's engraving the cross is an allusion to the one seen in Querétaro by the natives when the city was founded, and that the Franciscans wished to commemorate by raising one inside the monastery of Santiago. The palm tree-cross is also shown as a *via perfectionis*, as the Franciscan virtues are written on the steps: *Abstinencia, Freno circumdare corpus, Humilitas, Patientia, Paupertas, Castitas, Obedientia, Contemplatio, Zelus animarum, Ad Dei Gloriam*²⁷. Saint Francis reiterated the importance of practising these virtues on his numerous journeys through the towns and cities of Italy and other countries, preaching the spirit of the gospel²⁸.

23 *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de Tierra Firme* por el padre fray Diego Durán religioso de la orden de predicadores, México, Imprenta de J.M Andrade y F. Escalante, 1867, Tomo I, II y Atlas.

24 Chapter V. "De cómo los mexicanos, avisados de sus dios fueron a buscar e tunal y el águila y cómo lo allaron y del acuerdo que para el edificio tuvieron". *Idem*, p. 38-46.

25 MATEO GÓMEZ, I., "Aspectos religiosos, sociales y culturales en la iconografía de las órdenes religiosas en Hispano América", en *Relaciones artísticas entre España y América*, CSIC. Centro de Estudios Históricos, Departamento de Historia del Arte. Diego Velásquez, Madrid, 1990, p. 33-36. For further information cf. SEBASTIÁN LÓPEZ, S., *Iconografía e iconología del arte novohispano*, Grupo Azabache, Italia, 1992. p. 61-65.

26 STEPPE, J.K., "San Benito y las artes plásticas", *San Benito. Padre de Occidente*. Barcelona, 1980, p. 71.

27 SEBASTIÁN LÓPEZ, S., "A Iconografía de Santiago na arte hispanoamericana", *Santiago e América*. Mosteiro de San Martiño Pinario. Santiago de Compostela, 1993.

28 "(...) A esta suma de felicidades os llevarà por la mano la caridad fervorosa, la humildad profunda, la pobreza voluntaria, la negación de la voluntad propia, la penitencia de las culpas, la mortificación de las pasiones. Ay de aquellos que amantes de sí mismos huyen las amarguras, y asperezas de la Cruz, y eligen vivir en vicios, y pecados,

Between the cross and the church is Saint Francis, holding a cross on high in his right hand while water flows out of his stigmata into the basin of a fountain (*fons vitae*). Saint Francis is depicted as the “alter Christus” just as in one of the dwellings of the *Representaciones de la verdad vestida, místicas, morales y alegóricas sobre las siete Moradas de Santa Teresa, careadas con la noche oscura del B. Fr. Juan de la Cruz* printed in Madrid in 1677 and reproduced two years later²⁹. In one of the engravings depicting the fourth dwelling the soul is shown in a mystic garden, whose well contains the blood of Christ, but it can only be drawn with great effort (with buckets) as only God gives it naturally, to whom he will. We see Christ crucified in the engraving – the blood flowing from his hands falls directly into the well³⁰. At the foot is the inscription “De un mismo origen nace pero en su manantial mas satisface”. A sentence from the Bible at the top explains the meaning of the image: “Bibebant autem de spiritali, consequente eos, petra: petra autem erat Christus” (“because they drank of the water from the mysterious stone that followed them; the stone was Christ”, 1 Cor 10:4).

The fountain was the inspiration behind numerous illustrations and paintings in the Modern Era. In engravings in Baroque books religious orders included images of their most representative saints, accompanied by emblems and allegories. In the frontispiece of the book by Fernando de Camargo y Salgado, *La Iglesia Militante. Cronologia Sacra y epitome historial de todo quanto ha sucedido en ella prospero y adverso* (Madrid, 1642) a fountain with two steps is depicted and various bodies superimposed; on the highest one a church is raised. At the sides are Saint Augustine and Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, dressed in the habit of the order, with their corresponding attributes.

The *fons vitae* was considered a symbol of spiritual strength and it is thus that it is shown in Villalva’s emblems³¹, and as strength in adversity, as in Juan de Borja’s

embelesados en la complacencia de sus torpes deseos, y en la torpeza de sus apetitos con profundo olvido de los beneficios de la Redempcion, y de la obligacion, en que estan à Dios por las promesas de su estado”. CORNEJO, D., *Chronica Seraphica...*, op. cit. Libro IV, capítulo XIV, p. 499.

Book V deals with the *Buen uso de las virtudes contra los vicios*: “Donde ay caridad verdadera no tiene lugar ni el temor fervil, ni la ignorancia. Con la voluntaria, y alegre pobreza, no caben funestos ceños de la embidia, ni las inquietudes de la avaricia. El coraçon que medita la Passion, y la Muerte de Christo, no se embaraza en vanas solicitudes del siglo. Quando el temor santo de Dios guarda la casa de la conciencia, no podría aportillarla con sus baterias el comun enemigo. Donde ay discrecion, y misericordia, no caben superfluidad y engaño. Por tanto os asseguro, amados hijos míos, que el hombre, que posse perfectamente una de estas virtudes, las tiene todas sin ofender à ninguna: pero es necessario, que muere à si mismo, para llegar a su perfecta possession. Al contrario, el que à una de estas virtudes ofende, las ofende à todas, y es como si no tuviera alguna. Son estas virtudes de tal valor, y eficacia, que cada una confunde, y atropella à los vicios contrarios”. CORNEJO, D., *Chronica Seraphica...*, op. cit., p. 501.

29 SEBASTIÁN LÓPEZ, S., *Contrarreforma y Barroco. Lecturas iconográficas e iconológicas*. Madrid, 1989, p. 78-80.

30 *Idem*, p. 79.

31 The note to the emblem explains its meaning: “*Quanto es el origen del agua, más alto, tanto más sube en las fuentes. La gracia de Dios agua se llama en las divinas letras... la gracia... siempre bulle y se mueve en el coraçon, y procura de subir al mismo peso y nivel, de la cumbre do baxó. Siendo pues su principio el pecho de Dios, y la fuente de la sabiduría que es el soberano Hijo, no para un punto hasta bolver a su origen... Lo que importa pues es, para que esta agua biva no dexé su bullicio, ya que es espiritual y divina, hazer a la carne de su condición, espiritualizarla*”

work, with the motto “*Afflictio Spiritus*” (“*Affliction of the spirit*”)³². On one of the bodies on the illustration of Saint Augustine we read “*Supra Firmam Petram*” (“*On the firm rock*”), and on one of the fonts “*Bene fundata est*” (“*It is well founded*”). The same idea appears on the emblematic engraving of the seven Dwellings of Saint Teresa.

In Camilli’s work we see the emblem of the fountain as a symbol of human prudence and true goodness, realising that his merits are owed to God and not to himself, from a perfect and true Christian humility in the absence of all self-praise³³. The fountain in Capilla’s engraving becomes the fountain opened by Moses in the desert and is the symbol of the side wound of Christ crucified (like the stigmata of Saint Francis), whose blood redeems humanity³⁴. The fountain is also the symbol of baptism and this meaning is evident in the engraving from Valencia, as the Franciscan order is considered one of the first, together with the Augustinians and Dominicans, to bring this Christian sacrament to Mexico.

Over the cross, and following the axis of symmetry, is the Immaculate Conception, which just like the Trinity, depicted at the top, is a source of inspiration for sixteenth-century Flemish art. The Trinity can often be seen in the work of the Wierix brothers, illustrations Vicente Capilla could have had access to at the Real Academia de San Carlos, as he was the curator³⁵. Such is the case of the *Triunfo de la Trinidad* by Jean Wierix, inspired by an illustration by Corneilles Cort, dating from 1566³⁶. The formal traits, layout and iconographic attributes are the same as in the Flemish engraving.



Fig. 4. *The Codex Mendoza*, 1535-1541 (approx.). Bodleian Library (UK).

y adelgazarla lo posible, porque con su peso tan pesado, no le impide el curso para el Cielo”. BERNAT VISTARINI, A. and CULL, J.T., *Enciclopedia de Emblemas Españoles...*, op. cit., p. 358.

32 “Grandes cosas son, las que han emprendido los hombres afligidos, y puestos en grandes aprietos, y han salido con ellas; pareciendo imposible cosa, el poderles suceder bien. Porque assi como el agua encañada, y puesta en lugar estrecho, la apretura, que alli tiene, y su propio peso le haze contra su naturaleza subir a lo alto, ayudandole para esto la apretura del ayre, por no dar vacio: de la misma manera el spiritu afligido, y congojado, y puesto en gran aprieto, se levanta, a emprender cosas mayores, de las que parece, que por su naturaleza podria alcanzar, y con esta affliction de spiritu es tanto el ímpetu que pone, que alcanza, lo que parecia imposible”. BORJA, J.(de), *Empresas Morales...*, op. cit., p. 422.

33 CAMILLI, C., *Imprese ilustrati di diversi, coi discorsi di Camillo Camilli*. Venecia, 1586, p. 36..

34 BIEDERMANN, H., *Diccionario de simbolos*. Barcelona, 1996, p. 202-203.

35 GALLEGO GALLEGU, A., *Historia del grabado en España*. Madrid, 1999, p. 293.

36 MAUQUOY-HENDRICKX, M., *Les estampes des Wierix conservées au cabinet des estampes de la Bibliothèque Royale Albert I^{er}*. I. Bruxelles, 1978, p. 58, fig. 194.



Fig. 5. *Franciscan Exaltation of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*, 1637. Museo Regional de Querétaro (Mexico).

The Immaculate Conception was also reproduced by the Wierix brothers being crowned by the Trinity³⁷, as can be seen on the engraving from Valencia. The Immaculate Conception follows the iconographic models introduced into Spanish Baroque, such as in those by Martínez Montañés, depicted with long flowing tunics, the right leg bent slightly forwards and the hands held together in prayer³⁸. Vicente Capilla combines references from European models – that had come to Spain in collections and repertoires – with Spanish types that had become popular in paintings and sculptures from previous centuries. The presence of Mary is not fortuitous in a Franciscan allegory, as this order was one of the main defenders of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception at a time when her condition of “*conceived without the stain of original sin*” was being questioned. This stout defence of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception came to South America, and in Mexico, at the Franciscan school in Querétaro, there are images depicting the Franciscan exaltation of the Immaculate Conception by Mexican artist Basilio de Salazar. Mary is shown in the centre of the engraving, surrounded by the main symbols related to the dogma. At the bottom a group of Franciscans and ecclesiastical authorities who had defended the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception make up the city of God: it is a Franciscan Jerusalem, as is made clear by the epigraph on the city walls³⁹: “*Ego quassi vitis Fructificavi Suavitatem Odoris & Flores meu Fructus Honoris & Honestatus/ In Populo Honorificato & in Parte Dei mei*”⁴⁰ (Fig. 6).

The fundamental historical reference in the illustration is evident in the background landscape – the view of the city of Querétaro with its characteristic aqueduct and the cross on top of a mountain. Above this is the figure of Saint James on horseback and the cross that was seen in the sky during the battle. The image of Saint James on horseback was very popular in engravings, the frontispiece of books and loose illustrations that enabled the arrival of this kind of iconographic type into South America.

This was the best-known type, although he was also depicted as a pilgrim in paintings and sculptures. There are many churches in Mexico devoted to Saint James, in whose inside the most representative scenes from the apostle’s life are depicted. We could cite as examples the church in Tlatelolco in the north of Mexico City (Fig. 7) and the sixteenth-century relief on the front of the church of Saint Francis in Querétaro. The iconography is the same in each case: the supernatural horseman, the faithful and regal cavalryman of the Spanish Crown who defeats unbelievers, mainly Muslims and at times, Indians⁴¹.

37 *Idem*, p. 128-129, fig. 708.

38 SÁNCHEZ-MESA MARTÍN, D., “Inmaculada”, *Inmaculada*. Exposición de la Santa Iglesia Catedral de Santa María la Real de la Almudena. Madrid, 2005, p. 234-235.

39 STRATTON-PRUITT, S., “Exaltación franciscana de la Virgen de la Inmaculada Concepción”, *Revelaciones. Las Artes en América Latina...*, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

40 “*Like the vine I sprouted sweet-smelling branches and my flowers produced worthy and beautiful fruit. Among the chosen people, in the land of my God*”.

41 VARGASLUGO, E., “Imágenes de la conquista en el arte del siglo XVII: dos visiones”, *Imágenes de los Naturales...*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

The supposed participation of the apostle Saint James in the victorious conquest of Mexico must have given him the fame as a very powerful saint among the Indians. The cult to Saint James must also have taken root in New Spain thanks to the “buen celo que pusieron todas las órdenes monásticas, el clero en general, las autoridades civiles, prueba de ello son los numerosos templos en los que se les venera”⁴². The religious orders also devoted some of their monasteries to Saint James: of these nine were Franciscan, five Augustinian and three Dominican⁴³.

In Vicente Capilla’s engraving Saint James is wearing a hat and shield in accordance with the iconographic patterns of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The definitive iconography of Saint James the Moor-slayer was established at the Council of Trent⁴⁴ and it was during the Counter-reformation that the warlike depiction of Saint James was transformed from a specific event as the driving force behind the Reconquest into a holy soldier who intervened on behalf of Christians in their struggle against pagans and unbelievers⁴⁵. The image of Saint James on horseback on Capilla’s engraving corresponds to the intense work carried out by brothers to convince the natives, presenting the deeds of Saint James as “*un conquistador-benefactor de los indios puesto que, al derrotarlos, los salvó porque los atrajo a la verdadera fe, y así, con esa bandera, sermonear y perorar que el triunfo de Santiago no fue en contra de los pueblos nativos sino en contra del demonio, que se encontraba aposentado entre ellos*”⁴⁶.

Conclusion

Altogether the iconographic elements making up the illustration by Vicente Capilla Gil provide the viewer with a series of symbolic messages very much in accordance with the way of communicating religious and allegorical topics that were so common in the artistic period the engraving belongs to.

The axis of symmetry of both the composition and the content of the picture is the apparition of the Holy Cross, as is made clear by the plaque at the bottom, which under the title of “*Copia de la SSa Cruz...*” refers us to a very specific type of devotional iconography – the one referred to by Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez as “*Trampantojos a lo divino*”⁴⁷, i.e. a type of painting and especially illustration that portrays in detail

42 MARTÍNEZ DEL RÍO DE REDO, M., “Santiago, patrono de la conquista”, *Imágenes de los Naturales en el arte de la Nueva España. Siglos XVI al XVIII*. Fomento Cultural Bonamex. México, D.F., 2005, p. 187. VARGASLUGO, E., “Prólogo” to the second edition of *Santiago en América*, by Rafael Heliodoro Valle, México, 1988, p. 11.

43 MARTÍNEZ DEL RÍO DE REDO, M., “Santiago, patrono de la conquista”..., *op. cit.*, p. 187.

44 POMBO RODRÍGUEZ, A., “La iconografía de Santiago Matamoros”, *Peregrino*, 12 (1990), p. 20-22.

45 MONTEROSO MONTERO, J., “Santiago, San Millán y San Raimundo, Milites Christi”, *Santiago-Al Andalus. Diálogos artísticos para un milenio*, Santiago de Compostela, 1997, p. 486.

46 VARGASLUGO, E., “Imágenes de la conquista en el arte del siglo XVII: dos visiones”, *Imágenes de los Naturales...*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

47 PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, A. E., “Trampantojos a lo divino”, *Lecturas de Historia del Arte*, III, Instituto de Estudios



Fig. 6. Miguel Mauricio: *St James the Indian-slayer*. Church of St James Tlatelolco. Distrito Federal (Mexico).

images of forms, whether of Christ, Our Lady or saints that were the object of widespread veneration in villages, cities, areas, regions and countries⁴⁸. As Rodríguez de Ceballos points out, the mysterious, the transcendent and the divine dwell in them and become immediately present⁴⁹.

This type of work was very popular both in Spain⁵⁰ and in the American viceroyalties, and so it should come as no surprise that Vicente Capilla Gil's illustration was known in Mexico or that it was commissioned from there.

We could therefore state that this illustration, among other possible interpretations, is a true portrait of the cross that appeared in the sky during the conquest of the city of Querétaro as a triumphant palm from which Franciscan brothers sprout, possibly in memory of those who initiated evangelism in this part of the Spanish domains, or more probably depicting martyrs. In both cases, they are presented before the viewer as examples. In other words, the idea is to underline the virtues and deeds of one or more people in the engraving, in this case brothers Antonio Llinaz and Antonio Margil as founders of the school but also as evangelists and apostles of Christ.

The cross is present as a characteristic element in the composition groups of each brother, whether the one held by Margil or the one crowning the book used by Llinaz to preach to the Indians, thus reiterating its central role in the topic of the engraving.

As far as the symbolism is concerned, Brother Juan de Torquemada, Provincial Minister of the Order of Saint Francis in Mexico, points out in his book *Monarquía Indiana* that since they were first converted, "*los indios tomaron a la Imagen o figura de la Santa Cruz en que Ntro Señor Jesucristo quiso morir, para redimirnos. El origen de esta advocación sería la continua predicación, doctrina, que aquellos sus primeros maestros les daban, de la Muerte y Pasión del Hijo de Dios, en el madero de la cruz, y el ejemplo, que por obra les enseñaba en su vida, que toda era cruz, penitencia...*"⁵¹.

Friars in the Franciscan order made this their premise, just like Saint Francis himself, who displays it in his hand and is accompanied by it in his iconography in the fountain as the *fons vitae*.

Iconográficos Ephialte, Vitoria, 1992, p. 139-155.

48 RODRÍGUEZ G. DE CEBALLOS, A., "Tramantojos a lo divino": íconos pintados de Cristo y de la Virgen a partir de imágenes de culto en América meridional", *Barroco Iberoamericano. Territorio, arte espacio y sociedad*. Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Ediciones Giralda, I.

49 *Idem*, p. 35.

50 Cf. PORTÚS, J. and VEGA, J., *La estampa religiosa en la España del Antiguo Régimen*, Fundación Universitaria Española, Madrid, 1998.

51 TORQUEMADA, J., *Tercera parte de los veinte i un libros rituales i monarca indiana, con el origen y guerras, de los Indios Occidentales, de sus poblaciones, descubrimientos, conquista, conversión y otras cosas maravillosas de la misma tierra, distribuydos entres tomos. Compuesto por Fray Juan de Torquemada Ministro Provincial de la Orden de Nuestro Seráfico Padre San Francisco en la provincia del Santo Evangelio de Mexico en la Nueva España*. Madrid: Nicolás Rodríguez Franco: 1723.



Fig. 7. *The group of the twelve Franciscans worshipping the cross.* Anonymous, 16th century. Church and Convent of St Michael the Archangel. Huejotzingo. Puebla (Mexico).

Saint Francis thus encourages the Franciscan brothers who follow in his steps while the other images depicted form part of Franciscan devotion and enjoyed a significant presence in the city in Mexico.

Saint Joseph as protector, tutor, defender and custodian of the Son of God and his Holy Mother, entrusted to him by the Eternal Father, became at some point both Patron Saint of the Mexican Church and of the city itself, hence one of the reasons for his presence.

In the same way, in the engraving by Vicente Capilla the Franciscans' defence of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception is made manifest, making them therefore deserving of the special protection of the Virgin Mary.

The presence of the Apostle Saint James is a peculiar detail, as in the narratives concerning the happening commemorated by the illustration, there is no mention of the apostle on horseback; he is included rather as a symbolic fact as the conquest of the city took place on his feast day.

We should recall that the custom of calling upon Saint James the Apostle among the natives when in battle came from Spain, changing his name from Saint James the Moor-slayer to Saint James the Indian-slayer, as mentioned above. The illustration is most interesting due to its quality and the topic it represents, speaking to us of the glorification of the founding of the city of Querétaro, an important enclave for Spanish rule, and the work carried out in the area by the Franciscans within the context of missions.

Once again an illustration becomes a "*useful image*", a narrator of history, catechising the people in the truths of the faith and the memory of sacred deeds and happenings that deserved to be perpetuated in time⁵².

52 MONTERROSO MONTERO, J.M., "Entre el Dogma y la Devoción. Pintura, Literatura Sacra y vida conceptual franciscana", *Quintana*, 4 (2005), p. 166.

Documentary annex

ESPINOSA, ISIDRO FÉLIX DE: *Chronica Apostolica y Seraphica de todos los Colegios de Propaganda Fide de esta Nueva España, de Misioneros Franciscanos Observantes erigidos con autoridad pontificia, y regia, para la reformacion de los Fieles y Cruz de Piedra que como titular se venera en su Primer Colegio de Propaganda Fide de la muy ilustre ciudad de Santiago de Querétaro, sita en el Arzobispado de Mexico. Parte Primera. México: viuda de D. Ioseph Bernardo de Hoyal, Impressora del Real, y Apostolico Tribunal de la Santa Cruz en todo este Reyno: 1746.*

Dedicatoria a la Santissima Cruz de Piedra, venerada por Cruz de los Milagros, en la muy noble ciudad de Querétaro:

“Puede verificarse de nuestra Cruz ser aquella Piedra primaria de Zacharias Educet lapidem primarium (Zach, cap. 4, v.7) a quien el Hebreo llama: Lapidem capitis, por ser este el primer Colegio, y Cabeza de todos los de PROPAGANDA FIDE de Misioneros Observantes, assi en esta America, y en toda la Meridional, como los que se han erigido despues en toda España; pues todos se gobiernan por las Bulas de N.S.S P. Innocencio XI dadas à peticion del V. Fundador Fr. Antonio Linaz para el Instituto Apostolico. En este primer Colegio con el titulo de la Santissima Cruz de Piedra, se renovò el culto del antiguo Jacob à la Piedra à quien dio titulo: “Erexit in titulum” y fue según varias Versiones lo mismo darle titulo, que erigir Altar, Estatua, Columna, Señal, y Monumento, para memorial perpetuo de aversele manifestado en aquel Campo la misteriosa Escala.

En la Pacificacion de Queretaro se viò en el ayre una resplandeciente Cruz, para modelo de la que se avia de fabricar en aquel mismo Campo, de piedras diversas. En la misma peana de nuestra Cruz se formó el primer Altar en que se celebró la primera Missa: “Erexit in Altare”, se puso alli la Estatua de la Cruz: “Statuam”, se levantó como Columna: “columnam, se exaltó como Signo ò Vandera de la Fe: “Signum”, y Memorial de paz de toda aquella Gentilidad, que se sujetaba al yugo de Christo: “Monumentum”. Cruz fue misteriosa la Escala representada en el ayre al dormido Jacob, dice Theophanes: “Vidit Scalam praesignificatricem Crucis” y en la Piedra se le figurò otra Cruz (...) Cruz representada en varios colores vieron los que à Queretaro pacificaron y en las piedras de que se architecta la Cruz de Piedra adoraron à Christo en ella figurado. Jacob de diversas piedras: “Tulit de lapidibus”, levantó una: “Erexit lapidem”. Tres piedras en nuestra Cruz forman una sola Piedra: todas tres una, como las tres de Jacob, discurren lo que digo en esta Chronica.

El Psalmo 101, al verso 14 y 15 alegoricamente vaticina la edificacion espiritual de la Iglesia: “Tu exurgens misereberis Sion” y dà la causa: “Quoniam placuerunt servis tuis lapides eius”. Duhamel explica: “De aedificatione Ecclesiae Propheta vaticinatur”. En donde se pusieron las piedras de nuestra Cruz era puntualmente en la Gentilidad un acerbo ò monton de piedras en que adorasen los Barbaros sus

Idolos; y en el mismo sitio se admirò el estrepito, que hacia nuestra Cruz con sus inusitados temblores (...)

Estas piedras para edificar alli la primera piedra fueron las de la Cruz que agradaron à aquellos Primeros Apostolicos Misioneros (...) Estas piedras escogieron por lo que les agradaron, los primeros Apostolicos de PROPAGANDA FIDE, para vivir, y morir al asylo de la Cruz de Piedra, y edificaron la mystica Sion del Colegio para la conversion de tantos Gentiles, como se pueden ver en esta Chronica (...)

Capítulo II, libro I: Origen de la Santissima Cruz de Piedra, y como se plantó en el mismo sitio que ahora se venera.

“Tal es la hermosa Estructura de la Sma. Cruz de Piedra, que oy venera Titular el Colegio de Misioneros Apostolicos en Queretaro, que despues de contar su primer origen por el año de mil quinientos y treinta uno, que hazen doscientos y diez años en este de quarenta y uno en que lo escribo, se mantiene, no solo los cultos que le tributaron en la Conquista de Queretaro, sino con mayores realces de veneracion por sus multiplicados prodigios. Quiso el Cielo prevenir el Trono de esta Cruz milagrosa, quando en medio de la densa obscuridad que observaron, no solo los que venian de Conquistadores, sino los mismo Gentiles al tiempo de la refriega, que dejamos escrita, vieron todos una claridad tan activa, que les robò las atenciones, y en el centro una Cruz refulgente, como de quatro baras, entre blanco, y roja, suspensa en el ayre, y à su lado una Imagen, que les representaba al Patròn de las Españas Señor Santiago, casi perpendicularmente sobre el centro donde se colocò despues la Cruz de Piedra.

Con este prodigio cessò la porfiada refriega, y causò en todos aquella reverente admiracion, que haciendolos verter muchas lagrimas produjo los deseados efectos de pacificarse los Gentiles, y admitir gustosos la luz del Santo Evangelio, que se las propuso luego que se congregaron en la planicie este Puesto. Sucediò esto à veinte y cinco de Julio de mil quinientos y treinta y uno, dia del Apostol Santiago, y se tomò possession de este sitio en nombre de su Magestad catolica. Pidieron los Gentiles por señal de las paces que pactaban, les plantassen una Cruz en este Cerrillo en que se avian de congregar, y el dia veinte y seis, que solemniza la Iglesia à la Señora Santa Ana, se colocò una Cruz de madera de un pino que se trajo de lejos, de doce varas de altura, y seis de brazos; y se celebrò el Sacrosanto Sacrificio de la Missa (...)

Dieron norma el P. Misionero, y los Caziques de traerles otra Cruz de cantera toda de una pieza, aunque no muy alta; y preguntados si estaban con ella gustosos, no se daban por contentos, por decir, que la querian mas solida, de mayor altura, y que fuesse formada de piedras sacadas del mismo ambito del Pueblo. Para condescender à sus suplicas remetieron golpe de gente à una pequeña loma, que cae à este Cerrillo por la parte de el Oriente, y se vee en las vertientes del camino antiguo, que venía de México à Queretaro, y en una hoya descubrieron quatro piedras de canteria, y de estas segregaron las que avian de servir para la Estructura de la Cruz tan desseada.

Con gran diligencia fueron labrando el Simulacro de tres piedras, en esta forma: una para la cabeza, y brazos, y las dos restantes para el cuerpo; todo hecho à proporcion de lo que demandaba la Estructura; que como hasta oy se vee es ochavada, y con solos los primeros golpes del martillo, sin el pulimento con que persiciona las piedras las destrezas del Arte según el escrito de los indios tenía la Cruz de altura dos varas y media... pp. 4-6.

Descripción del escudo de Querétaro con la presencia del Apóstol Santiago

“Persuade lo veridico de esta aparicion de la Cruz en el Cielo, el Escudo de las Armas, que oy tiene por timbre esta Nobilissima Ciudad de Queretaro, en cuyos superiores Quadros se veen la Cruz, y Santiago, sirviendo el Sol de pedestal á la Cruz, con dos Estrellas; y ya se sabe lo que acreditan la credulidad, pinturas, y tradiciones antiguas.

No descubro otro motivo para la eleccion de estas Armas que averse tenido por verdaderas las apariciones de la Cruz, y del soberano Apostol. Es tradicion inconclusa aludir estas Imágenes á la Pacificacion de Queretaro, y el Sol con las estrellas alude sin repugnancia à lo opaco, que se ostento en aquel dia, quedando de los reflejos de la Cruz, vista en los ayeres obscureciendo sus lucimientos (...) p. 7.

Date of reception: 20-II-2008

Date of acceptance: 13-I-2009