

La predisposizione del sepolcro nel Medioevo latino, bizantino e islamico rappresenta una pratica centrale nella società, caratterizzata da forme di espressione che assumevano innumerevoli declinazioni materiali e immateriali. Nei contesti di maggiore rilievo, tombe accompagnate da apparati evocativi talvolta assai complessi riflettevano l'importanza del defunto. Tuttavia, più frequentemente era la dimensione modesta, se non addirittura anonima, a trasmettere il senso di pietà verso i cari scomparsi.

Il volume offre uno spaccato sull'arte funeraria e al contempo sulle ritualità legate alla predisposizione dell'ultima dimora terrena e alla perpetuazione della memoria oltre la morte. Vengono esplorati sia siti funerari ancora integri, sia quelli violati, distrutti, frammentari o persino privi di consistenza materiale. Emerge un mosaico denso di stimoli che considera innumerevoli aspetti legati al tema del sepolcro: i destinatari (santi, religiosi, laici), gli artisti, i valori culturali di riferimento, le modalità di esposizione, le forme e le tipologie di tombe, le espressioni linguistiche e le forme documentarie (le fonti, la liturgia, il culto, la devozione), i media artistici quali la scultura, l'architettura, l'arte monumentale, la pittura, l'epigrafi. Un'opera editoriale che, attraverso un'ampia prospettiva, svela le molteplici sfaccettature di un tema tanto universale quanto complesso.

Tomb preparation in Latin, Byzantine and Islamic medieval societies was a central practice, marked by forms of expression that assumed countless material and immaterial variations. In more prominent contexts, sepulchres accompanied by evocative and often highly intricate arrangements reflected the importance of the deceased. However, more frequently, it was the modest, if not entirely anonymous tomb that conveyed a sense of piety towards departed loved ones.

This book provides a compelling insight into funerary art and the rituals associated with preparing the final earthly resting place and perpetuating memory beyond death. It explores both intact burial sites and those that have been violated, destroyed, fragmented, or even entirely devoid of tangible remains. The result is a rich and stimulating mosaic that considers the myriad aspects linked to the theme of the tomb: the intended recipients (saints, clerics, laypeople), the artists, the cultural values of the time, the modes of display, the forms and types of tombs, as well as linguistic expressions and sources of information (written texts, liturgy, cult, devotion). It also examines artistic media such as sculpture, architecture, monumental art, painting and epigraphy. Through a broad perspective, this volume unveils the many facets of a subject as universal as it is complex.

SEPOLTURE MEDIEVALI
(IV-XV SECOLO)
Spazi, opere, scritture
MEDIEVAL BURIALS
(4th-15th CENTURIES)
Spaces, Artworks, Writings

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Burials Beyond Borders: the Tombs of Bishop Juan Díaz de Coca in Rome and Burgos

Philip Muijtjens*

The great canonist Guillaume Durandus († 1296) wrote in his *Rationale divinarum officiorum* that one cannot have two tombs.¹ The reality of burial practices in the late medieval Mediterranean, however, was much more complicated, sometimes even in open defiance of official church doctrine. Once described as “one of the best in the church, or in Rome itself”,² the elaborately carved and painted tomb of Bishop Juan Díaz de Coca (1389-1477) in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome is an excellent example of just how much the proliferation of funerary monuments represented a complex reality which was often concerned with other matters, and which, more often than not, transcended national borders. Juan Díaz de Coca spent years on the construction of his monument in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, only to decide months before his death in 1477 that his remains should go to Burgos instead. After a lengthy process, Juan’s remains were finally laid to rest in a different monument in the Chapel of the Visitation in the cathedral of Burgos in 1485. Based on new archival evidence, this essay will show how Juan Díaz de Coca’s two tombs are situated within a larger network which would ultimately span thirty years across two countries in the Mediterranean. As will become clear, the highly interconnected nature of the Mediterranean and its complex social networks allowed for a cross-contamination of tombs and funerary practices between the two peninsulas.

An International Career

Born in Burgos into a family of *conversos* (Jews who converted to Christianity), Juan Díaz de Coca was destined to enter the Church.³ While Juan’s ecclesiastical career remains largely unexplored, it will be discussed in more detail here, as it provides much of the context for Juan’s later involvement in funerary projects. One of the earliest references to Juan dates from 1421, when he held the position of *medio*

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The archive research for this chapter was generously funded by the ARTES / CEEH Travel Scholarship. The following abbreviations are used for the archive references: ACB = Archivo Catedralicio de Burgos; RR = Registro (capitular act); ACV = Archivo de la Capilla de la Visitación; LIB = Libro; ASR = Archivio di Stato di Roma; AGOP = Archivio Generale dell’Ordine dei Predicatori.

1 Durand 1672, p. 22: “[...] nemo potest duas sepulturas habere”.

2 Davies 1910, pp. 273.

3 Cantera Burgos 1952, pp. 58-59, 366-368.

racionero at the chapter of the cathedral of Burgos.⁴ He must already have enjoyed quite a successful career by that time, because in that same year Juan was active in the capacity of canon judge in Burgos.⁵ He was promoted to *racionero* later in 1421 and acquired benefices connected to some local parishes.⁶ Juan continued to accumulate benefices in the following years, resulting in what must have been quite a sizeable yearly income for the young prelate. When in 1428 one of the canons of Burgos died, Juan was appointed as a new member of the chapter of the cathedral of Burgos, thus securing further prominence for himself.⁷ On the day of his appointment, Juan was also made abbot of the collegiate church of San Pedro de Cervatos, in Campoo de Enmedio (fig. 1).⁸

Juan's rise in the ecclesiastical hierarchy accelerated in the next decade. On 17 July 1431, he was one of those tasked by the chapter with presenting a petition from the bishop of Burgos to Pope Eugenius IV.⁹ This probably resulted in Juan's first visit to the papal court, where he likely became acquainted with Eugenius himself, because documents after this date suggest that Juan became an important figure in the communication between the chapter of Burgos and the pope. In 1433, Juan was tasked with sending an order to several Castilian bishops, including the one of Burgos, that they adhere to a papal bull issued by Eugenius.¹⁰ In June 1435, Juan was present at the Council of Basel in the capacity of judge and procurator of Pablo († 1435), bishop of Burgos.¹¹ In the following years Juan acquired privileges from Eugenius IV.¹² Juan's prominence kept increasing, as is suggested by his elevation to the archdeaconsry of Palenzuela on 1 June 1442.¹³ The latter appointment is significant because in the first half of the 15th century the bishops of Burgos would often give this position to clergymen who were also chaplains to the royal Castilian court. Indeed, Juan is briefly mentioned in the capacity of chaplain to the Queen of Castile only a month after his appointment to the archdeaconsry.¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is likely that Juan spent a significant amount – if not most – of his time at the papal court in Italy. Juan's apparently close connection with the papal entourage from the early 1430s onwards portended further advancement for the clergyman from Burgos. From at least April 1441 Juan

⁴ ACB, RR, 5, ff. 9v-11r.

⁵ ACB, RR, 7, ff. 32v-33r, 39r-40r.

⁶ ACB, RR, 5, ff. 15v-16r; ACB, RR, 7, f. 1r.

⁷ ACB, RR, 6, ff. 304v-305r.

⁸ Ivi, f. 306r. Juan would hold this position until 1442, when Fernando González de Aranda, cubicularius of the pope, formally took possession of it. ACB, RR, 12, f. 153v. Juan must have acquired similar positions at other abbeys, too. For example, in 1433 he is referred to as the abbot of the collegiate church of Santa Juliana in Santillana del Mar. ACB, RR, 8, ff. 171r-176r.

⁹ ACB, RR, 2, ff. 282r-283r.

¹⁰ ACB, RR, 8, ff. 171r-176r.

¹¹ This becomes clear from a charter dated 19 June 1435. Reichersberg, Stifftsarchiv Urkunden (1137-1857), 1435 VI 19. See also Serrano 1942, pp. 106, 144; Cantera Burgos 1952, p. 367.

¹² ACB, RR, 12, f. 127r.

¹³ ACB, RR, 11, f. 42v.

¹⁴ Guijarro González 2016, 220-239, no. 38.

held the position of Auditor to the Apostolic Palace.¹⁵ This means that Juan was part of the Roman Rota, the highest ecclesiastical court. Juan was made Dean of the Rota and he was also tasked with keeping its documents.¹⁶ His proximity to the pope should therefore not be underestimated. Juan lived in Florence, where Eugenius held court until his victorious entry into Rome on 28 September 1443. Juan Díaz de Coca was appointed chaplain to the pope by Eugenius, a position he would retain for years to come under Callixtus III and Pius II.¹⁷ In 1447, Juan donated funds to the Confraternity of Santo Spirito in Sassia which had been founded by Eugenius only months earlier.¹⁸ Several papal letters further attest to successive popes' personal high regard for Juan's capabilities in legal matters.¹⁹ As such, the Spanish clergyman became the arbiter in countless legal cases which were presented to him by representatives from many countries across Europe. Many documents containing the sentences which Juan pronounced have survived all over Europe, the vast majority in archives in England and Germany.²⁰ The legal disputes that were presented to Juan were usually about benefices or other financial matters affecting individuals across many layers of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For example, Juan was approached to pronounce sentence over a dispute regarding revenue between the canons regular of the abbey of Saint-Étienne in Dijon and the Carthusians of the famous Chartreuse de Champmol in 1448.²¹ Decades later, on 23 April 1472, Juan was asked to adjudicate in a dispute regarding repayment between two local clergymen in Rome.²² He was sometimes even responsible for pronouncing excommunication.²³ The many known sentences further show that Juan travelled with the papal court in following decades. For example, in 1446 Juan was active as papal auditor from Saint Peter's in Rome, while in 1459-1460 he was

¹⁵ ACB, RR, 8, ff. 350r-v. Juan is mentioned in this capacity in 1442. See *Lateran Regesta*, 390: 15 March 1442, in *Calendar* 1912, pp. 265-274. The second earliest mention of Juan as papal auditor dates from September 1442 (*Bullarium* 1929, no. 618). This is much earlier than initially thought. Serrano and Cantera Burgos thought that Juan lived in Rome from 1443 (Serrano 1942, p. 215; Cantera Burgos 1952, p. 368). It is possible that Juan had already settled in Italy as early as 1440, if we interpret a brief reference in the capitular minutes of Burgos as such. For the reference, see Cantera Burgos 1952, pp. 367-368.

¹⁶ Cerchiari 1919, pp. 129-130; Hoberg 1994, p. 20; Flaiani 2016, pp. 105-106.

¹⁷ ACB, LIB, 67, ff. 6r-7r; Vatican Regesta 478: 9 April 1460, in *Calendar* 1921, pp. 415-419.

¹⁸ Egidi 1914, p. 115.

¹⁹ One such example is pope Pius II's letter from 1462 (*Registrum* 1856, p. 410).

²⁰ Striking is the large number of cases coming from the German-speaking parts of the European continent and from Scotland and England. See, for example, *Repertorium* 2000, no. 89, 602, 1356, 1517, 2924, 3016, 3491, 3509, 3635, 4744, 4779, 4863, 5393, 6234. Juan was also responsible for several cases in which the Teutonic Order were involved. Vienna, Deutschordenszentralarchiv, Urkunde no. 3564; Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz, Best. 55A4, Deutscher Orden, Ballei Koblenz, no. 145. For other archival references and more context on his activities, see Freifrau von Boeselager 1999, pp. 259, 382, 619; Schuchard 2013, pp. 104-210.

²¹ Juan Díaz de Coca ruled in favour of the Charterhouse. Archives départementales de la Côte d'Or, Série G: Chapitres cathédraux, Chapitre Cathédrale de Dijon/Ancienne Abbaye de Saint-Étienne, Domaines, Fauverney, Dîmes, G 349.

²² ASR, Collegio dei Notai Capitolini, vol. 1646, ff. 209r-v.

²³ A document from 1496 makes reference to the excommunication of a German clergyman which Juan Díaz de Coca pronounced at an unspecified earlier time. Woelky 1885, pp. 593-594 (charter no. 753).

active in Siena where Pius II held court.²⁴ Juan's legacy as a legislator should not be underestimated, as his past pronouncements were used as an authority on certain legal matters even decades after his death.²⁵ His knowledge was matched by his extensive library in Rome of all the major legal works, which was later described in Juan's testament.²⁶

In Juan the cathedral chapter of Burgos gained an extremely important source of influence at the papal court, which it was happy to use for (predominantly) financial matters such as benefices, prebends, appointments, statutes etc.²⁷ As a result, Juan was regularly involved in petitions from Burgos. For example, in March 1443 he approached Eugenius IV on behalf of some canons of Burgos.²⁸ By 1447, Juan had become dean of the cathedral of Burgos, which cemented his continuous connection with the old chapter even while he was in Rome.²⁹ Juan also played a role in arranging papal approval for the consecration of the new bishop of Burgos in 1456.³⁰ As will become clear below, the enduring importance and prominence of Juan for the cathedral of Burgos would play a significant part in the Spanish clergyman's two future burials in 1477 and 1485 (fig. 2).

The Chapel of the Visitation in Burgos

The 1440s were an extremely successful and prolific decade for Juan Díaz de Coca, which saw him rise from the cathedral of Burgos to the circles closest to the pope in Florence and later in Rome. It was also in this decade that Juan's funerary affairs became a more important factor in his life, as he made a first step to settle his affairs in the event of his death. On 26 May 1445, Eugenius IV issued a bull which gave Juan the mandate to draw up a testament.³¹ There is no evidence to suggest that Juan was already contemplating burial inside the basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva or any other church in Italy for that matter. In fact, it is not until the 1460s that Juan starts the preparations for burial inside Santa Maria sopra Minerva. So why gain the right to testate in 1445? His decision to testate coincides with important work on someone else's funerary chapel in the cathedral of Burgos, namely the Chapel of the Visitation. Begun in 1440 by his cousin Alfonso de Cartagena (1384-1456), bishop of Burgos and noted author, this chapel was constructed under supervision of the architect Juan de Colonia († 1481) on the foundations of an older chapel dedicated to Santa Marina.³² On 19 May 1441, while Juan was auditor of the apostolic palace in Florence and con-

24 *Lateran Regesta*, 426: 1446, in *Calendar* 1912, pp. 540-546; *Lateran Regesta*, 547: 10 April 1459, in *Calendar* 1933, pp. 42-48; *Vatican Regesta* 478: 9 April 1460, in *Calendar* 1921, pp. 415-419.

25 This becomes clear from the transcriptions of correspondence between members of the Roman Rota, as published in *Formularium* 1495, ff. 48r-v, 78, 158.

26 ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, ff. 5v-6v.

27 Díaz Ibañez 2012, pp. 75-97.

28 ACB, RR, 4, f. 105r. See also ACB, RR, 2, ff. 378r-384r. Serrano 1942, pp. 190-191.

29 *Preussische Urkundenbuch* 1882, JH II 2703, 26 June 1447.

30 Cantera Burgos 1952, pp. 368-369.

31 ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 1r.

32 Martínez y Sanz 1866, pp. 94-95. For more information on Alfonso de Cartagena's written work, see Verdín Díaz 1992.

struction was underway, Eugenius IV issued a papal bull granting indulgence to all those visiting the chapel of Burgos on 2 July, the feast day of the Visitation.³³ The chapel was already completed by April 1442.³⁴ Alfonso's chapel is still intact and is located directly next to the imposing 13th-century *Puerta del Sarmental* on the south-side of the cathedral.³⁵ The chapel is filled with the coat-of-arms of Alfonso, namely the fleur-de-lys. Throughout his entire ecclesiastical career, Juan would use the same coat-of-arms as his cousin Alfonso de Cartagena, as is evidenced by his seal (**fig. 2**). It would feature prominently on Juan's tombs in Santa Maria sopra Minerva and in Burgos.

A few years later, in 1446, Alfonso had the statutes of the chapel and its chaplaincy confirmed. There were to be seven chaplains and two acolytes in order to perform masses and fulfil other spiritual obligations of the chapel.³⁶ They were led by a *capellanus maior*, one Luis de Maluenda († 1488).³⁷ In 1447, Alfonso de Cartagena already had a tomb prepared in his own chapel, which, according to his own statutes, had to be flat on the pavement.³⁸ Alfonso made sure that the chapel, despite its prestigious location next to one of the most prominent portals of the cathedral, would remain a highly exclusive place of burial. In the 1446 chapel statutes, Alfonso had explicitly written that burial inside the chapel was reserved for his relatives who held a prebend from the cathedral of Burgos.³⁹ Thus, as a relative of Alfonso and a prebendary of Burgos, Juan Díaz de Coca was given the right to be buried inside the Chapel of the Visitation, too.⁴⁰ Interestingly, this agreement on the chapel's statutes was signed only months after Juan received his first papal approval to testate.⁴¹ Perhaps Juan, who was only five years his junior, was inspired by Alfonso's work on the Chapel of the Visitation to think about settling his own worldly affairs in the event of his death? He must at least have been aware of his right to be buried inside Alfonso's chapel (**fig. 3**).

The interconnectedness of Juan's and Alfonso's resolve is suggested by another coinciding of key decisions. Juan had Pope Callixtus III reconfirm his right to draw up a testament in 1455, only months before the death of Alfonso de Cartagena, who

33 ACB, LIB, 391, f. 8r.

34 Martínez y Sanz 1866, pp. 95-96; López Mata 1947, pp. 632-643; Silva Maroto 2007, pp. 37-41; Martín Martínez de Simón 2013, pp. 278-280; Menéndez González 2016, pp. 91-119.

35 Deknatel 1935, pp. 255-273.

36 ACB, ACV, 1, ff. 1v-4v. The chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation were very present in the community of the cathedral of Burgos. They are regularly mentioned in the testaments of canons. One such example is Gregorio, chaplain of the Chapel of the Visitation, in a testament from 1484. ACB, RR, 8, ff. 97v, 542r-643r.

37 Luis de Maluenda played an important role in the first decades after the foundation of the Chapel of the Visitation. He was buried in his own monument in 1488. Díaz Ibañez 2015, pp. 303-355.

38 Alfonso explicitly refers to the existence of this tomb in 1447 and in 1449 in capitular acts. Martínez y Sanz 1866, p. 98; Jennings 2021, pp. 58-59.

39 This rule was already confirmed by the chapter of the cathedral in 1442. ACB, LIB, 11, ff. 174r-175r.

40 It should be noted that Alfonso's father Pablo de Cartagena and other lay members of his family were buried in the Dominican monastery of San Pablo in Burgos. Wethey 1936, p. 57. Chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation also had relatives buried in San Pablo, as is attested by documents in the chapel archive. ACB, ACV, 1, f. 63r.

41 ACB, ACV, 1, ff. 5r-7r.

had been ill for some time.⁴² Was Juan aware of his relative's impending death? The result of Alfonso da Cartagena's passing was that Juan's relationship with the Chapel of the Visitation in Burgos became much more direct, because Juan was named one of the procurators of the bishop's estate, which included the said chapel.⁴³ During the first years, Juan was not responsible for significant artistic additions to the chapel. An inventory drawn up on 17 July 1456 shows that the chapel had already been completely furnished by Alfonso.⁴⁴ The chapel had a newly made altarpiece ("un retablo nuevo") which represented the scene of the Visitation between Mary and Elisabeth. The frame of the altarpiece was made of gilded wood and the scene of the Visitation was covered by canvas doors which were only opened at certain times of the year.⁴⁵ This altarpiece had disappeared by 1772.⁴⁶ The chapel also contained a substantial set of silver liturgical objects, including a chalice, paten, and crucifixes.⁴⁷ Alfonso de Cartagena had made sure that many other artworks adorned the otherwise simply decorated fabric of the chapel. A second altarpiece, painted by Juan Sánchez (fl. 1440-1470), was located on the lateral side, while there was a 'Flemish' image of the *Vera Icon* in the chapel, in addition to other painted artworks.⁴⁸ Precious fabrics played a significant role in enhancing the visual impact of the entire structure and the inventory lists an impressive array of decorated chasubles. The altar itself was covered by a colourful antependium with the coat-of-arms of Alfonso de Cartagena.⁴⁹ More importantly, the inventory lists a number of 'old tapestries', one of which was donated to the chapel by Juan Díaz de Coca himself.⁵⁰ While Juan was certainly not the only relative of Alfonso to donate precious objects to the Chapel of the Visitation before 1456, this significant reference shows that physical absence from Spain did not stop him from donating objects to the chapel even before the death of his relative. The tapestry in question has not survived. Juan would not have been able to attend to any matters inside the Chapel of the Visitation in person, but his status and influence at the papal court certainly provided him with the necessary means to ensure the continued existence of the chapel and its chaplaincies. For example, he was likely a driving force behind

⁴² Alfonso de Cartagena died on 12 July 1456 on his way back from Santiago de Compostela; the chapter of the cathedral of Burgos convened on 26 July 1456 and confirmed that the episcopal seat had been left empty by his death. ACB, RR, 14, f. 219r. Reference taken from Serrano 1942, p. 308, appendix no. XVI.

⁴³ ACB, RR, 8, f. 584r.

⁴⁴ ACB, RR, 3, ff. 36r-38v.

⁴⁵ Ivi, f. 37r.

⁴⁶ In that year, the current altarpiece was installed by Santiago Alvarez, painter and gilder. Martínez y Sanz 1866, p. 97.

⁴⁷ ACB, RR, 3, f. 37v.

⁴⁸ ACB, ACV, 4, f. 2v. The Cathedral Museum of Burgos preserves two parts of a lost retable, which are attributed to a follower of Juan Sánchez. *Pinturas* 1994, pp. 100-101; *Tesoros* 1995, p. 23.

⁴⁹ Although nothing appears to have survived from the fabrics which Alfonso donated to his own chapel, another chasuble which he donated to the sacristy of the cathedral of Burgos has come down to us. For more information on this chasuble, see Huidobro Serna 1926, pp. 96-100; *Tesoros* 1995, pp. 144-147.

⁵⁰ ACB, RR, 3, f. 38v.

Pope Callixtus III's reconfirmation of the statutes of the Chapel of the Visitation in 1457.⁵¹ In April 1458, Juan added funds to the endowment of the chapel so that masses would be said for the memory of Alfonso.⁵² Later that same year, Juan ceded benefices to the same chapel for the celebration of the feast day of the Conversion of Saint Paul.⁵³ This last donation is significant, considering Juan's own background as a Jew who converted to Christianity. In November 1460, Juan named some procurators in Burgos who were tasked with the management of real estate for the benefit of the chapel.⁵⁴ Juan continued to use his close connections with the pope, because in 1461 Pius II confirmed the annexation of a number of benefices for the celebration of masses inside the Chapel of the Visitation.⁵⁵ Despite the physical distance, Juan must have been informed through correspondence and the regular visits of delegates from Burgos. While most of this remains undocumented, we can find the occasional glimpse of this international network in which Juan must have played an important part. For example, records show that on May 1460, Juan Díaz de Coca was joined in Rome by the bishop of Oviedo and others in order to confirm an old papal bull in favour of the cathedral of Burgos.⁵⁶ According to Juan's testament from 1473, his household in Rome consisted of around ten people, some of whom were from Burgos and most of whom were clergymen who held various prebends from different dioceses in Spain.⁵⁷ Thus, Juan cultivated constant contacts with his country of origin and it is very likely that news and documents on the management and upkeep of the Chapel of the Visitation travelled to Rome via these same networks.⁵⁸ The preceding shows that Juan played a significant role in the upkeep of the chapel which had been constructed decades earlier by his famous cousin Alfonso de Cartagena. It would not be long, however, before Juan started making arrangements which showcase his changing interests regarding his own place of burial.

Juan Díaz de Coca's Funerary Chapel in Rome

The years of continued efforts to guarantee the financial survival of Alfonso de Cartagena's funerary chapel and its associated chaplaincies in the cathedral of Burgos provided Juan with the experience necessary for undertaking a similar project for himself. Possibly inspired by Alfonso's Chapel of the Visitation, Juan soon started preparations for his own funerary structure. By the beginning of June 1463 Juan already possessed the patronage of a new funerary chapel which he had dedicated to the Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle and to Saint John the Baptist.⁵⁹ The Conversion of Saint Paul had also played a role in Juan's benefices for the Chapel of the Visitation. Juan's chapel was

⁵¹ ACB, ACV, 1, f. 1r. This was not the first reconfirmation, as the charter makes clear. Probably with Juan's influence, Nicholas V had already confirmed the statutes of Alfonso de Cartagena's chapel in 1454. Ivi, f. 5r.

⁵² ACB, RR, 16, f. 41r.

⁵³ Cantera Burgos 1952, p. 369.

⁵⁴ ACB, ACV, 39, no. 10, f. 6.

⁵⁵ Ivi, no. 13, ff. 1-22.

⁵⁶ ACB, RR, 16, f. 169r.

⁵⁷ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 7r.

⁵⁸ There were often clergymen from Burgos in Rome. Serrano 1942, pp. 230-231.

⁵⁹ Magister 2000, pp. 197-198.

added to the existing right nave of the basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, probably replacing an older altar.⁶⁰ Juan Díaz de Coca's chapel was flanked on both sides by already-existing chapels. On the left side, around the corner of the transept, was the early 15th-century chapel of the crucifix.⁶¹ It was the subject of enduring patronage and devotion and was adorned with new brocade vestments and lamps around 1472.⁶² Directly to the right of Juan's chapel was the old chapel of Saint Catherine of Alexandria which had been held under the patronage of the Orsini family.⁶³

Juan's choice for this basilica may be attributed to a variety of reasons. It often served as the seat of the Roman Rota in the 15th century.⁶⁴ Juan was therefore often to be found in the basilica or the adjacent convent, as documents attest. For example, in June 1460, shortly before Juan's first known donations to his chapel, he was pronouncing sentences from the *ambitus* of the convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.⁶⁵ The fact that the basilica was the main seat of the Dominican Order in Rome may have played a role in Juan's decision, too. Juan's early career at the papal court in Florence in the 1440s must have been marked by many visits to another important Dominican convent, namely Santa Maria Novella, where Eugenius IV held court at the time. The Dominican presence was therefore a consistent factor in key moments in Juan's career as papal auditor. In addition, Juan lived in the same *riione* as the basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.⁶⁶ It seems that many other people of Spanish descent lived in the vicinity, as it was located very close to the church of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli, which was a religious centre in Rome especially for those originating from the kingdom of Castile.⁶⁷ Juan was among those present when the statutes of the church were confirmed in 1470.⁶⁸ This was also reflected in the demography of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The convent housed friars from Spain at times.⁶⁹ The Spanish presence at the religious house was also significantly added to by Cardinal Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468), who was constructing his own funerary chapel dedicated to Saint James the Apostle inside the basilica in the same years as Juan Díaz de Coca.⁷⁰ Like the papal auditor, Cardinal Juan was a *converso* from Castile and León with a personal connection to Burgos.⁷¹ Juan Díaz de Coca kept

⁶⁰ This is known from payments recorded in the archive of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. For the transcriptions and references, see Bertelli 1968, pp. 45-46; Palmerio, Villetti 1989, p. 151.

⁶¹ Ivi, pp. 157-159.

⁶² ASR, Collegio dei Notai Capitolini, f. 252v.

⁶³ Palmerio, Villetti 1989, pp. 51-53, 152-156.

⁶⁴ Salonen 2016, pp. 73-74.

⁶⁵ Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv München, Urkunden Kloster Windberg 0573, dated 20 June 1460.

⁶⁶ This is mentioned at the end of one notarial act from 1476. ASR, Collegio dei Notai Capitolini, vol. 1644, f. 297v.

⁶⁷ For a detailed overview of the early history of the church, see Fernández Alonso 1956a, pp. 9-96; Fernández Alonso 1956b, pp. 499-548. For more information on the later building phases of this church, see Fernández Alonso 1958; Albiero 2014, pp. 92-111; Nelson Novoa 2014, pp. 112-119; Vaquero Piñeiro 2014, pp. 25-37; May 2021, pp. 145-160.

⁶⁸ Fernández Alonso 1956a, pp. 38-40.

⁶⁹ ASR, Collegio dei Notai Capitolini, vol. 1646, f. 58v.

⁷⁰ Palmerio, Villetti 1989, pp. 63-65, 151-152.

⁷¹ Born in nearby Valladolid, Cardinal Juan de Torquemada appears to have been related to a merchant called García Fernández de Torquemada who was active in Burgos and who worked with the cathedral of Burgos in the middle of the 15th century. See, for example, ACB, RR, 10, f. 116v. Another relative of the cardinal was canon of the cathedral of Burgos years later. ACB, RR, 28, f. 8r.

several of Torquemada's written works in his personal study.⁷² We may assume that the two were quite well known to one another.

It may have been a combination of these and other factors that prompted Juan to choose burial in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, but it does not necessarily explain why Juan waited with the construction of a chapel there until the early 1460s. The timing may in part have to do with practical concerns. The basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva underwent significant reconstruction in the 15th century. The naves of the basilica were not covered by vaults until the mid-1450s,⁷³ a fact which may have halted work on any chapels being added to the sides of the naves. Another important factor which may help explain the date of Juan Díaz de Coca's and Juan de Torquemada's work on their respective chapels is the fact that the south nave of Santa Maria sopra Minerva was a prestigious place of burial which had very recently gained even more importance. The remains of Saint Catherine of Siena had been in the south nave since 1380, where they soon became the object of intense veneration. Under the supervision of Archbishop Antoninus of Florence (1389-1459) a new tomb was created for Catherine of Siena in 1430 at the end of the south nave in the chapel directly to the right of the cappella maggiore. Because of its longstanding association with the cult of the Dominican nun, images of the saintly figure were to be found in the south nave of the basilica.⁷⁴ Catherine of Siena was beatified on 29 December 1460 and canonized not much later, on 29 June 1461.⁷⁵ The saint's tomb was subsequently refurbished in ca. 1466 and put on the altar of the chapel to accommodate increased devotion (**fig. 4**).⁷⁶

The chapels of Juan Díaz de Coca and Juan de Torquemada were therefore located in a part of the basilica which was intrinsically linked to the burgeoning cult of the newly canonized Dominican nun. The construction of the chapels probably began around the same time as or shortly after the canonisation. Proximity to the chapel that housed Saint Catherine of Siena's mortal remains enhanced the visibility of their own funerary chapels. This was further helped by the fact that there was likely no choir screen in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, only a choir in the centre of the middle nave in front of the high altar.⁷⁷ The south nave, with Saint Catherine's chapel at the end and the chapels of Juan Díaz de Coca and Juan de Torquemada in between, was therefore freely accessible to the laity.⁷⁸ This is important as it means that the many religious visitors who had to pass the two chapels on their way to and from Catherine of Siena's tomb could get a glimpse of the chapels and tombs. As the last one of the

⁷² ACB, ACV, 38, no. 11.

⁷³ Palmerio, Villetti 1989, pp. 63-65, 115-118; Kleefisch-Jobst 1991, p. 39; Barclay Lloyd 2022, pp. 274-275, 280-284.

⁷⁴ See Barclay Lloyd 2015.

⁷⁵ Giunta 2007, pp. 62-64.

⁷⁶ Gentilini 2005, pp. 472-487; Barclay Lloyd 2015, p. 143.

⁷⁷ Plans to remove this choir to behind the high altar began in 1539. Barclay Lloyd 2022, pp. 286-288.

⁷⁸ The question of a tramezzo at Santa Maria sopra Minerva remained unanswered for a long time. Palmerio, Villetti 1989, pp. 25-35, 44-49. Magister 2000, p. 197. It was Lloyd who was the first to put out the convincing theory that there was no tramezzo in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Barclay Lloyd 2015, pp. 119-121; Barclay Lloyd 2022, pp. 289-299, 349-353.

succession of chapels along the south wall of the nave, Juan Díaz de Coca's chapel was in an especially prestigious location. By inserting his coat-of-arms, which was the same as that of Alfonso de Cartagena, above the archway, Juan ensured that his patronage of the chapel was visible from other parts of the basilica, too.⁷⁹

The fabric of Juan Díaz de Coca's chapel was probably completed in a short period. In 1463 and 1464, Juan donated olive groves on condition that the friars say mass in his chapel of the Conversion of Saint Paul.⁸⁰ A 17th-century description tells us that on the altar of the chapel there was originally a Quattrocento altarpiece 'in classical style' ("fatta all'antica") in a frame of gilded wood and that it depicted Saint Paul 'with many saints' ("con molti santi").⁸¹ The altarpiece was delegated to a different part of the convent in the century, when Juan's chapel was rededicated to Saint Raymond of Penyafort sometime after the latter's canonisation in 1601, and subsequently lost.⁸² Berthier, who did not mention these earlier descriptions, wrote in 1910 that the old altarpiece was still to be seen in the sacristy of Santa Maria sopra Minerva and that it depicted the Madonna and Child flanked by SS Peter and Paul.⁸³ It is impossible to ascertain how reliable Berthier's account is.

While work on his funerary chapel at Santa Maria sopra Minerva was underway, Juan remained committed to the cathedral of Burgos, as is attested by a number of documents. For example, in January 1463, Juan represented some canons in front of the pope regarding benefices, while in 1465 he ceded to the cathedral chapter a benefice in Presencio (close to Burgos).⁸⁴ While it is very likely that the fabric of the newly built funerary chapel was completed around 1464, it would take several more years before Juan decided on the final disposition of his monument. This may in part have to do with the fact that, even after the large accumulation of benefices and other sources of income over the last couple of decades, it would take yet more years before he would take his final significant step up the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Moreover, this would not be without initial difficulties (fig. 5).

In 1466, Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo (1404-1470) left the episcopal see of Oviedo vacant to take on other dioceses, including that of Calahorra. Pope Paul II subsequently proposed that Juan be consecrated the next bishop of Oviedo. Facing resistance from the diocese itself, Juan was sidelined in favour of another candidate. However, Paul II

⁷⁹ Alfonso de Cartagena's coat-of-arms can still be seen above the archway into the Chapel of the Visitation in the cathedral of Burgos.

⁸⁰ Palmerio, Villetti 1989, pp. 156-157.

⁸¹ ACM, MS III, 328, *Campione*, p.157: "Nell'altare di detta cappella miravasi una gran tavola fatta all'antica, dipinta in legno dorato, con la figura di S. Paulo Apostolo e di molti altri Santi, e sopravvenendo poi la canonizzazione di S. Raimondo, non avendo egli particolare cappella, fu detta tavola levata e posta nell'andito grande del Convento, in luogo assai rilevato – quale oggidì non più esiste, si suppone andata a male – e in detta cappella fu collocata una nuova tavola con la figura di S. Paolo Apostolo e di S. Raimondo". Reference from *Magister* 2000, no. 22, p. 202.

⁸² AGOP, MS XIV, Liber C, pars I, p. 39: "Della cappella di S. Raimondo la pala d'altare (perduta) fu sostituita con una nuova con S. Paolo e S. Raimondo, dipinti da Niccolò Magni d'Ardesia". Reference from *Magister* 2000, no. 22, p. 202.

⁸³ Berthier 1910, pp. 120-123.

⁸⁴ ACB, RR, 17, ff. 72v-74r, 273r.

persisted and Juan was offered the episcopal see of Oviedo in 1468.⁸⁵ Juan's appointment, then, caused some friction with Henry IV of Castile (1425-1474) and he had to give way.⁸⁶ Paul II, however, remained committed. It seems that Juan nevertheless had to wait until 1470, when the aforementioned Rodrigo died. Juan was consecrated bishop of Calahorra and La Calzada in December that same year.⁸⁷ Already in 1471, Juan organised a visitation of the diocese of Calahorra.⁸⁸ It seems that Juan's accession to episcopal status was very significant for him, especially because of the years it took him to arrive at that stage. Juan would emphasize at least three times in his testament of 1473 that his funeral and other commemorative masses should befit his status as bishop.⁸⁹ His newly acquired prominence in the ecclesiastical hierarchy may also have prompted the need for an entirely new funerary monument which befitted his status. Now that he was at the head of two dioceses, Juan would have had more resources at his disposal than ever before, thus enabling him to fund an elaborate monument. This may also explain the presence of two tombs in his chapel at Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The marble tomb slab of Juan, which is still preserved in a corner of the chapel, may have been part of an earlier monument. Perhaps its commission dates from even before Juan's elevation to an episcopal see. If so, this would explain why the effigy does not show a mitre, a crosier or any other attribute that would allude specifically to his episcopal status.⁹⁰ Instead, the effigy presents Juan at the moment of mass when he would hold up the chalice, which suggests that the tomb slab was originally supposed to be placed in dialogue with the altar of the chapel. The tomb slab was recorded in front of the altar of the small chapel until the 18th century.⁹¹ The more elaborate marble tomb by Andrea Bregno, however, emphasises Juan's episcopal status in no uncertain visual language. The mitre and crosier, unmistakable attributes of his newly acquired rank, are represented multiple times on the monument, both in marble and in fresco. In stark contrast with the marble tomb slab, Juan Díaz de Coca's new monument unequivocally presents a combination of the finest sculpture and fresco painting which Rome had to offer in the 1470s. The tomb is created in such a way that the viewer's gaze is immediately drawn towards the fresco which depicts Juan kneeling in front of Christ giving Judgment. There is no consensus as to the identity of the painter of the fresco, although most scholars have settled on either Antoniazio Romano or Melozzo da Forlì, the two leading painters in Rome at that time.⁹² The unusual depiction of Juan in front

⁸⁵ Fernández Alonso 1954, pp. 66-67.

⁸⁶ The king felt insulted as he considered Juan's appointment a breach of royal prerogative. Cantera Burgos 1952, pp. 369-370.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁸ For more information on Juan Díaz de Coca's involvement in the diocese of Calahorra, which he never visited during his episcopacy, see Groizard y Coronado 1913, pp. 7-12, 16-17, 27-34, 41.

⁸⁹ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 2v.

⁹⁰ Other known tomb slabs of contemporary bishops or cardinals usually depict the regalia. This goes also for Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo. His slab is now preserved in the church of Santa Maria in Monserrato degli Spagnoli. Pöpper 2010, pp. 176-181, 353-355.

⁹¹ Ivi, 175-176. Nevertheless, it is commonly assumed that the slab was created to be in conjuncture with a bigger monument. Bertelli 1968, p. 40; Caglioti 1997, no. 26, p. 244; Pöpper 2010, p. 176.

⁹² Gottschewski 1904; De Schlegel 1910, pp. 222-224; Noehles-Doerk 1973, pp. 56, 59; Clark 1990, p. 17; *Andrea*

of Christ in Judgment has been interpreted as a reference to contemporary discussions of the Particular Judgement.⁹³ While this may contain a grain of truth, another reason for the close visual connection between Juan and Christ may be the fact that the Spanish prelate had a particular interest in the Sacrament of the Body of Christ. For example, in his testament, which he would draw up in 1473 around the time of the painting of the fresco, Juan included a detailed request on the special use of the Host in the Chapel of the Visitation in Burgos for his own commemoration.⁹⁴ The marble monument in Santa Maria sopra Minerva was probably also surrounded by a large fresco of drapery of some kind in order to increase the visual impact of the tomb, a painted decoration that was likely overpainted in the 16th or 17th century (fig. 6).

Juan Díaz de Coca probably did not have to look far for his choice of sculptor. In precisely the same period when Juan commissioned his new monument, the sculptor Andrea Bregno, to whom Juan's monument is attributed, worked on the tombs in Rome of two other Spanish high prelates who frequented the same ecclesiastical circles as Juan. From 1470 onwards, Bregno worked on the tomb of Cardinal Juan de Carvajal († 1469) in his funerary chapel in San Marcello al Corso, while he also created a highly detailed tomb slab and two coats-of-arms for the aforementioned bishop Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo in the nearby church of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli.⁹⁵ It is likely that the contemporary work on these two funerary structures motivated, or perhaps even coincided with, Juan's choice of Andrea Bregno as sculptor of his own tomb in Santa Maria sopra Minerva.⁹⁶ The very finely sculpted decoration of Juan's tomb soon proved to be a fertile example for subsequent monuments. One need only think of the tomb of the Cardinals Domenico and Angelico Capranica which was located next to where the remains of Saint Catherine of Siena were venerated in Santa Maria sopra Minerva.⁹⁷ Given the scale and decoration of Juan's monument, it is certain that it would have taken some years to complete. Because the epitaph on Juan's tomb mentions that the monument was commissioned by him during his lifetime, it must have been sculpted and completed sometime between 1471 and 1477.⁹⁸

Bregno 2008, pp. 373-375; Salvatore 2011, p. 75; *Antoniazio Romano* 2013, pp. 53, 134, 142-147; Kühnleth 2024, cat. 30.

⁹³ In this context it is often compared with the tomb and fresco by Maso di Banco from ca. 1335 in Santa Croce, Florence. Brilliant 2009, pp. 314-316; Russo 2013-2014, p. 33; De Simone, 2014, p. 103. Koch even argued that the fresco inspired Domenico Ghirlandaio for his own fresco of 'the Annunciation of Santa Fina's Death by Saint Gregory the Great' in the chapel of Santa Fina in the Collegiata of San Gimignano. Koch 1998, pp. 158-159.

⁹⁴ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 4v.

⁹⁵ These tombs, which are now only partially preserved, were convincingly attributed to Andrea Bregno by Francesco Caglioti. See Caglioti 1997. For a comprehensive overview of the activities of Andrea Bregno in Rome, see Kühnleth 2002.

⁹⁶ Juan's testamentary executor, Pedro de Aranda, would employ Andrea Bregno again in 1495 to repair the pavement of the aforementioned church of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli. Fernández Alonso 1958, pp. 19-20.

⁹⁷ Pöpper 2010, pp. 176-181.

⁹⁸ "IOANNES DIDACI DE COCA HISPANVS | PRESVL CALAGVRRITANVS VIR | INTEGERRIMVS SIBI VIVENS POSVIT | VIXIT ANNIS LXXXVIIII M VIII D XVI". Based on a passage found in Juan's testament, it has been argued that the funerary monument was completed by 1473. Caglioti 1997, p. 244, no. 26; Pöpper 2010, p. 176; Russo 2013-2014, no. 182. While there is a possibility that this was the case, the passage makes no explicit mention of any tomb, hence the more generous time scale taken in this essay for dating the creation and completion of the entire monument.

While construction of his new tomb was underway, Juan started settling his affairs, but only after further assurances were made regarding the legality of Juan's estate. On 2 November 1472, Sixtus IV confirmed Juan's right to testate for a third time, while on 14 July 1473 the pope confirmed an older papal decree that the auditors of the Rota could issue bulls which related to their personal arrangements.⁹⁹ Juan drew up his testament in Rome on 5 August 1473. In it he explicitly stated that, were he to die in Italy, his remains should be interred in Santa Maria sopra Minerva 'in the chapel of SS Paul and John the Baptist built with the help and grace of God at my cost'.¹⁰⁰ In the event of Juan's death outside of Italy, the Chapel of the Visitation in Burgos should be his final resting place.¹⁰¹ Given that he expended so many resources on his new tomb in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, we may assume that Juan considered it likely that he would die in Italy and be buried in Rome. This is also suggested by the fact that Juan left a substantial sum to the friars of Santa Maria sopra Minerva with the explicit wish that several types of mass be said in their basilica in the two months following his death. Notable is the emphasis on Marian verses, which he wanted to be pronounced during High Mass in the basilica.¹⁰² Other bequests in the testament illustrate Juan's contacts with the many religious houses in Rome and in Burgos. For example, the Franciscan friars of Santa Maria in Aracoeli were given a breviary 'which contains almost all the hymns and which ends with the Office of the Trinity'.¹⁰³ To the Benedictine monks of San Paolo fuori le Mura Juan bequeathed a Bible in parts which was kept for him together with many other books by the Hieronymite friars of the convent of Nuestra Señora de Fresdeval just outside Burgos.¹⁰⁴

After donating funds to his dioceses of Calahorra and La Calzada, Juan included a testamentary decision which would have significant implications for his funerals in the coming two decades: he made the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation his universal heirs to all his remaining possessions.¹⁰⁵ In return, the chaplains were required to perform commemorative masses and light torches at the tombs of Alfonso de Cartagena and Pablo de Santa Maria († 1435), bishop of Burgos, who was

⁹⁹ The confirmation by Sixtus IV was issued in a papal bull on 2 November 1472. ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, ff. 1v-2r. For Sixtus' confirmation of the papal bull in 1473, see von Hofmann 1914, p. 28, no. 114 (Paul II), p. 33, no. 138 (Sixtus IV).

¹⁰⁰ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 2v: "[...] vollo et mando quod in quocumque loco titius italie finero dies meos corpus meum sepeliatur in ecclesia Monasterii beate Marie sopra minervam de Urbe in capella sanctorum Pauli et Johannis Baptiste cum auxilio et gratia dei meis sumptibus et expensis constructa [...]."

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*: "[...] vollo quod corpus meum sepeliatur in capella Visitationis beate Marie Virginis in ecclesia Burgense sita [...]."

¹⁰² ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 3r.

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁵ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 4v: "[...] Item in omnibus aliis bonis meis solutis debitis legatis relictis et aliis suprascriptis et expressis et inferius forte exprimendis et solutis etiam aliis debitis sique forte reperiantur et adque ego tenerer que omnino ego vollo et mando quod solvantur et restituantur Instituo et facio meum universalem heredem in omnibus aliis bonis meis predictos videlicet omnes Capellanos clericus et Capitulum Capelle Visitationis beate Virginis Marie in sepedicta ecclesia Burgense sita ac ipsam Capellam visitationis quam Capellam gloriose memorie Reverendissimus presbyter Alfonsus de Cartaiena olim Episcopus Burgensis fundavit et dotavit [...]."

buried in the same chapel of the Visitation, according to Juan's testament.¹⁰⁶ Finally, Juan appointed Rodrigo de Borja (1431-1501), Cardinal-bishop of Albano and future pope Alexander VI, and Pedro de Aranda († 1500), archdeacon and member of Juan's household in Rome, as his testamentary executors, with the explicit wish that they have enough freedom to dispose of Juan's goods in the way they saw fit.¹⁰⁷

A Substantial Change

The legal framework seems to have been a major concern for Juan Díaz de Coca, from the first confirmation of his individual right to testate through to the last papal bull in 1472. As if that was not enough, Juan felt it necessary to add transcripts of the aforementioned bulls to his testament, followed by another summary of them in the testament itself.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps his background in canon law prompted Juan to make the unusually elaborate attempts to create a very solid legal framework for his inheritance? We may only guess at his true motivations. Given the great care he took to lay the legal groundwork for his inheritance and burial, it is striking that Juan changed his mind more than once regarding his funeral arrangements. A newly discovered document sheds new light on Juan's wishes for his funerary chapel of the Conversion of Saint Paul in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. On 15 June 1476, Juan Díaz de Coca had an important codicil added to his earlier testament, with the sole aim of ensuring the future management of his funerary chapel in the Roman basilica.¹⁰⁹ Juan stated in no uncertain terms that the patronage of the chapel of the Conversion of Saint Paul was to be left in perpetuity to Tommaso de Marroffis, a Roman citizen whom Juan referred to as his 'spiritual son'.¹¹⁰ Tommaso de Marroffis was a Roman clerk who had worked for Juan's household for a long time. He had a young grandson called Cristoforo who lived in Juan's house while Tommaso's brothers Giuliano and Giovanni were also part of the Spanish bishop's personal network in Rome.¹¹¹ Tommaso de Marroffis was supposed to succeed Juan 'completely' ("in totum") in the latter's position as owner and caretaker of the funerary chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva.¹¹² Finally, Tommaso was named testamentary executor of Juan together with Rodrigo de Borja and Pedro

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁷ ACB, ACV, 38, ff. 5r, 7r.

¹⁰⁸ Ivi, no. 10, ff. 3v-4r.

¹⁰⁹ ASR, Collegio dei Notai Capitolini, vol. 1644, f. 297r: "[...] Reverendus in christo pater et dominus dominus Johannes Cocha episcopus calagurritanus causarum sacri apaltii apostolici auditor [...] recordatus se alias ultimum condidisse testamentum novum publici notarii et in eo aliqua pro oblivionem omisisse de quibus omnino disponere intendit et maxime de quadam cappella per eum edificata et constructa posita in ecclesia sancte marie super minervam de Urbe dedicata beato paulo apostolico ac de bonis et rebus dicte cappelle et volens igitur huic sive ultime voluntati providere non revocando propterea dictum suum condutum testamentum [...]".

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*: "Deinde reliquit fecit constituit et deputavit perpetuum patronum ac curatorem rerum et bonorum dicte cappelle providum et discretum virum Tomasium de Marofis romanum civem filium spirituales ipsius domini Johannis".

¹¹¹ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 8r: "Item [...] legavit ipse dominus Episcopus Thomasio de Marroffis antiquo familiari sive clerico Romano [...]". Giuliano and Giovanni de Marroffis, brothers of Tommaso, are mentioned in the same document. There were all given black cloth in order to attend Juan Díaz de Coca's funeral. Ivi, f. 8v.

¹¹² ASR, Collegio dei Notai Capitolini, vol. 1644, f. 297r.

de Aranda.¹¹³ Alienation of the chapel or some of its associated possessions was forbidden. Instead, a benefice or real estate (“possessio”) had to be acquired from the funds which Juan had donated to the friars of Santa Maria Novella for the upkeep of the chapel in perpetuity.¹¹⁴ Juan further specified that no one else was ever (“numquam [...] aliquis alius”) to be buried in his funerary chapel, thus implying that only his remains were to be laid to rest inside.¹¹⁵

The codicil of 1476 does not provide any clue as to why Juan felt it necessary to have this document drawn up at this moment or why Tommaso de Marroffis was included in the management of the bishop’s estate. Perhaps the new marble tomb had been completed and installed and Juan felt the need to make some final arrangements regarding the chapel? This codicil certainly did provide a clear answer to a question which was left unanswered in the 1473 testament, namely to whom the patronage of the chapel at Santa Maria sopra Minerva would pass after Juan’s death. Furthermore, this document provides some very important insight into the changeability of Juan’s wishes in the last months of his life. On one hand, the inclusion of Tommaso de Marroffis, a lifelong friend from Rome, must have been the result of certain considerations; on the other, it shows that Juan was willing to radically alter his earlier funerary arrangements. This second point would become poignantly clear again quite soon: less than a year after making the codicil in favour of Tommaso de Marroffis, on 9 March 1477, Juan added another codicil which, surprisingly, changed everything. Juan decided that he would go against his own testament and initial burial plans, even though he had made his last testamentary alteration regarding his chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva only eight months earlier. Pedro de Aranda, one of the aforementioned testamentary executors, was now made to promise in front of Juan that he would transport his master’s remains to the Chapel of the Visitation in the cathedral of Burgos, even in the event of his death in Rome.¹¹⁶ Almost twenty years after he had begun work on his own funerary chapel in Rome, Juan changed course entirely, this time in favour of the chapel which had been the first major funerary project of his life.

The latest codicil triggered a complicated chain of events between Burgos and Rome, spanning several years and showcasing the complexity of arranging a burial between two countries. Juan died on 12 March 1477 in Rome. Two days earlier, on

¹¹³ Ivi, ff. 297r-v.

¹¹⁴ Ivi, f. 297r: “Item voluit et mandavit dictus dominus Johannes quod de omnibus pecuniis per ipsum dominum Johannem in suo ultimo testamento relictis et quibus relinquendis per eum fratribus et conventui dicte ecclesie sive eidem ecclesie sancte marie super minervam ematur et emi debeat aliqua possessio stabilis que sit et esse debeat perpetuo dicte cappelle [...]”.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 10, f. 8r: “Item prefactus petrus de Aranda prothonotarius pollicitus fuit per apositionem manus pectori suo eidem dicto Episcopo hoc potenti ossa sua ipsius dicti Episcopi transportari facere ad Cappellam Visitationis site in ecclesia Burgense ubi ceteri Episcopi ipsius consanguinei requiescunt et [...] Rome in domo habitationis eisdem dicti Episcopi presentibus ibidem ipso petro prothonotario et Gundisaluo garsie decretorum doctori clerico [...] ac prefacto Thomasio de Marroffis et francisco de Quemada et Antonio de Soria diocesis osoniensis diocesis testibus”.

10 March, Rodrigo de Borja and Pedro de Aranda, as testamentary executors, had already drawn up an inventory of the bishop's personal belongings in Rome.¹¹⁷ The list was sent to the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation in Burgos.¹¹⁸ Juan's mortal remains must have been laid to rest in his chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva while his estate was being dealt with. The epitaph on the front of the monument, which had been left partially empty in order to be filled in later, was hastily 'completed' merely by adding the life span of Juan. The splendid tomb, which was the result of years of concerted effort by the foremost artists which Rome had to offer, was no longer Juan's priority. Instead, it had to make way for a last-minute decision and a tomb in Burgos which had not even been planned.

The chapter of the cathedral of Burgos went into action a couple of months after Juan's death. On 19 September 1477, Juan Alonso, canon of the cathedral, was given the mandate to travel to Rome and claim the first part of Juan's estate, namely 100,000 maravedí, for the Chapel of the Visitation.¹¹⁹ Days later, on 25 September, Juan Alonso was ordered to travel to Rome with Pedro de Aranda. This means that Pedro had travelled back to Burgos in the capacity of Juan's testamentary executor.¹²⁰ Pedro must have returned to Rome soon after, as he had recently taken up the role of Vice-Treasurer of the Camera Apostolica.¹²¹ It seems that the strategy of the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation was to escort parts of Juan Díaz de Coca's estate from Italy to Burgos in several concerted efforts. Juan Alonso and Pedro de Aranda succeeded in their first mission, for later in 1478 a list was made of objects and monies already returned to the chaplains in Burgos.¹²² It must have become clear that arranging the transfer of the rest of the estate and of Juan's remains to the Chapel of the Visitation would be no mean feat and that it would take a long time. It was probably with this in mind that on 12 February 1478 Pedro de Cartagena, brother of the late Alfonso, was formally tasked with protecting the bequest of Juan Díaz de Coca for the Chapel.¹²³

In the meantime, other parts of Juan's estate found their way to where the late bishop and papal auditor had bequeathed them. In November 1479, mention was made of another 170,000 maravedí for the Chapel of the Visitation.¹²⁴ On 25 November 1480, Juan Jiménez, another canon of the cathedral of Burgos, confirmed that he had handed over to the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation 120,000 maravedí

¹¹⁷ Ivi, no.11, ff. 9r-12r.

¹¹⁸ Ivi, no.11, ff. 1r-4v.

¹¹⁹ ACB, RR, 20, ff. 119r-120r.

¹²⁰ Pedro de Aranda had succeeded Juan Díaz de Coca as bishop of Calahorra on 29 July 1477. ACB, RR, 19, ff. 96r-97r.

¹²¹ Pedro de Aranda took up this position in late 1476 and would retain it until 1480. ASR, Camerale I – Quitanze per comuni servizi, no.1131, f. 65v; no. 1132, f. 191r; no. 1133, f. 2r; no. 1134, f. 79r.

¹²² ACB, ACV, 38, no. 11, ff. 9r-12r.

¹²³ Cantera Burgos 1952, p. 351, no. 54. Sancho de Prestines, archdeacon of Lara, was named procurator of Pedro de Cartagena. ACB, ACV, 40, no. 6, f. 1r. In the statutes of the Chapel of the Visitation, Alfonso de Cartagena confirmed that he left the patronage of one-fourth of the chaplaincies of the Chapel of the Visitation to his brother Pedro de Cartagena. ACB, ACV, 1, f. 3v. Pedro de Cartagena died shortly after in 1478.

¹²⁴ ACB, ACV, 40, no. 5, f. 1r.

from Juan Díaz de Coca's assets in the diocese of Calahorra.¹²⁵ On the same day he promised to collect the large sum of 850,000 maravedí in Rome and deliver it to the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation within two months.¹²⁶ It seems that the practical issue of distance was not of major concern in arranging the transfer of Juan Díaz de Coca's estate to Burgos. However, the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation did encounter problems of a different nature. Relatively early on, Pedro de Aranda failed to honour his task as testamentary executor of Juan Díaz de Coca. This matter must have dragged on for some time because on 10 July 1480, an official complaint was lodged by the chaplains to king Ferdinand II of Aragon (1452-1516), husband of Isabella I (1451-1504). The king was implored to intervene because, according to the lengthy testimony, Pedro de Aranda had collected monies from the estate of Juan Díaz de Coca but had failed to give them to the chaplains of Burgos.¹²⁷ The matter would take another couple of months to be resolved as it ended up in the Roman Court. On 23 January 1481, Pedro de Aranda signed a settlement with a representative of the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation. The chaplains' claims were re-asserted in their favour.¹²⁸ Pedro de Aranda was forced to pay up 1,000 gold ducats on the same day, while also promising the settlement of future payments (fig. 7).¹²⁹

Juan Díaz de Coca's Final Tomb

In the four years following the lawsuit against Pedro de Aranda, the chapter of the cathedral of Burgos maintained a presence in Rome, though this was certainly not only for the purpose of the transfer of the estate of Juan Díaz de Coca. It is likely that the remainder of Juan's estate was transferred to Burgos via these existing networks. Unfortunately, not much seems to be known about this. The next thing we do know comes from the inscription on Juan Díaz de Coca's funerary monument in the Chapel of the Visitation in the cathedral of Burgos. It mentions that his remains were laid to rest in Burgos in 1485, eight years after his death.¹³⁰ We may assume that there would have been a funeral service befitting his status as bishop, as Juan had so expressly wished for in his testament. There is a documentary reference to a 'procession of memory' in the cathedral in 1485, but this may equally have been for the commemo-

¹²⁵ ACB, ACV, 38, no. 11, ff. 18r-21r.

¹²⁶ Ivi, f. 21v.

¹²⁷ ACB, ACV, 40, no. 7, f. 1.

¹²⁸ ACB, ACV, 38, no.11, ff. 1r-4v.

¹²⁹ Ivi, ff. 13r-17r.

¹³⁰ The inscription goes as follows:

HIC : QUIESCIT : REVERENDUS : PATER : ET : DNS. JOHANNES :
DE : COCA : UTRIUSQUE : JURE : DOCTOR : EPS. : CALAGURRITANUS, CAU[SA]
RUM : APOSTOLICARUM : DE : ROTA : DECANUS : ET : AUDITOR : QUI : BONORUM
SUORUM : CAPELLAM : HANC : HEREDEM RELIQUIT : OBIT : ROME :
XII : MARCII : ANNO : A : NATIVITATE : DOMINI : MCCCLXXVII : ETATIS
VERO : SUE : LXXV : CUIUS : OSSA : TRANSLATA : SUNT : ANNO : EIUS
DEM : NAT. : LXX^oXV^o : DE : MANDATO : EIUSDEM : DOMINI : OB : DEVOCIONEM
ET : CONSANGUINITATEM : RDLI : DOMINI : ALFONSI : DE : CARTAGENA : EPL : BURGENSIS :

ration of others already buried there.¹³¹ According to the obituary lists of the cathedral of Burgos, Juan Díaz de Coca was commemorated twice every year, namely on 14 April and 12 May.¹³² As none of these dates coincides with his actual date of death of 12 March, it is possible that they concern masses funded by Juan's estate or that one of them is the date of his funeral in the Chapel of the Visitation in 1485 (figs. 8-9).

Despite the prolonged nature of this process, Juan Díaz de Coca's estate had provided a very significant source of income for the Chapel of the Visitation. The chaplains must have been eager to use this for the upkeep of their chapel. An inventory from 1480 shows that the chapel was extremely well appointed, and that various chaplains and other prelates had added liturgical objects, works of art and vestments to the already extensive collection in the years since the foundation of the chapel.¹³³ It is also around this time that a new funerary monument was constructed for Alfonso de Cartagena, founder of the chapel and Juan's uncle. Located in the middle of the Chapel of the Visitation in front of the main altar, Alfonso's tomb is one of the highlights of 15th-century sculpture in Burgos. Initially it was believed that the tomb had been created already in 1447 or 1449, when the first mentions were made of a burial place created by Alfonso for himself in the Chapel of the Visitation.¹³⁴ Wethey put forward the convincing theory that Alfonso's elaborate monument was in fact the product of sculptors from the late 1470s.¹³⁵ If the latter is the case, it is very possible that the creation of the new tomb for Alfonso coincided with the arrival of parts of Juan Díaz de Coca's estate from Rome. Perhaps Juan's estate even contributed towards the cost of this monument for the founder of the chapel. No documents have yet been discovered which prove or disprove a direct link between the arrival of the funds from Juan's estate and work on Alfonso de Cartagena's new tomb, but the close chronological time frame makes it worth considering the possibility (fig. 10).

Juan's final tomb in Burgos, however, was a very different story. Juan's very sudden change of mind with the codicil of 9 March 1477 meant that nothing had been prepared or planned for his burial in Burgos. A close inspection of various details of the tomb reveals that its construction was certainly not a straightforward, concerted process like the elaborate monument for Alfonso de Cartagena had been. Located directly to the left of the main altar of the chapel, the tomb of Juan Díaz de Coca consists of a recessed arch containing a full-size sculpted effigy. The arch itself is adorned with a finely sculpted border of vegetation interspersed with putti-like figures and the coat-of-arms on top, similar to other tombs in the chapel. The border is of a refined quality and bears a strong resemblance to the decoration found in the arch of the original portal of the church of the Charterhouse of Miraflores, which was installed by the workshop of Juan de Colonia in the north side of the church in 1486, the year

¹³¹ ACB, RR, 28, f. 8r.

¹³² Serna Serna 2008, pp. 387, 416.

¹³³ ACB, ACV, 4, ff. 1r-6r.

¹³⁴ Wethey 1936, pp. 56-61.

¹³⁵ Ivi, pp. 56-59. Others insist that the 1447 reference implies the existence of the tomb. Silva Maroto 2007, p. 39. For an overview of the most recent discussion on this tomb, see Jennings 2021, no. 74.

after Juan Díaz de Coca's funeral.¹³⁶ The arch suddenly ends below the effigy, possibly because the sculpted frontal had to make way at some point for an alteration to the interior. Two coats-of-arms flanking an angel supporting an epitaph are on the back of the arch. The sculpted effigy, however, appears to have been carved much less skillfully. Closer inspection of Juan's mitre, which roughly imitates the intricately carved mitre of Alfonso de Cartagena's effigy, shows that many details were left incomplete. The same goes for the embroidered edge of the chasuble, which shows a largely undefined version of the Visitation on one side. This lack of detail and completion of Juan's monument is striking. Although it took the chaplains of the Chapel of the Visitation almost ten years to retrieve Juan Díaz de Coca's estate and remains, the monument for the respected papal auditor and bishop became something of a haphazard job. While the structure of the wall tomb was completed, it seems that Juan's effigy was added in a half-finished state, probably because it remained unfinished. This makes it likely that the 'completion' (i.e. putting together of remaining parts) of Juan's monument can be dated to after his burial in the chapel in 1485.

While the transfer of Juan Díaz de Coca's estate from Rome had been such a significant theme for the chaplains for many years, there was apparently no real interest in, or funds available for, the final decoration and completion of Juan's second and final tomb.

Conclusion

While Juan Díaz de Coca is now mostly known because of his elaborate tomb in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the lengthy process behind the settlement of his estate and final burial wishes shows that remaining tombs are often silent witnesses to a much longer story. It has been argued here that Juan Díaz de Coca was part of a vibrant and complex international network in which ideas about tombs and funerary structures were exchanged, adapted or even refuted. The famous marble tomb of Juan Díaz de Coca in Santa Maria sopra Minerva should be seen against this same background. While Juan's continuous interactions with the papal court and with Spain led to the construction of one of the most significant funerary monuments in Quattrocento Rome, these same contacts also led to the bishop's radical decision to have his remains taken beyond borders and to relocate them to Burgos. This essay has introduced Juan's second tomb in the Chapel of the Visitation in Burgos to wider scholarship, while also providing further primary material on its more famous counterpart in Rome. It has been shown that in the years after Juan's death in 1477, the canons of Burgos utilized existing international networks to enforce litigations and to transport both objects and monies.

¹³⁶ The portal was transferred to its current location on the west side of the church in the time of Prior Juan de Santoya (1648-1661). For a transcription of the primary sources on this alteration, see Menéndez González 2019, p. 35.

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fig. 1. Rome, church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Tomb of Juan Díaz de Coca, between 1470-1477 (© Archivio Alinari, Firenze)

fig. 2. Seal of Juan Díaz de Coca. Attached to charter drawn up in Rome on 24 October 1453 (© Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz, 55A4, Deutscher Orden, Ballei Koblenz, 145)



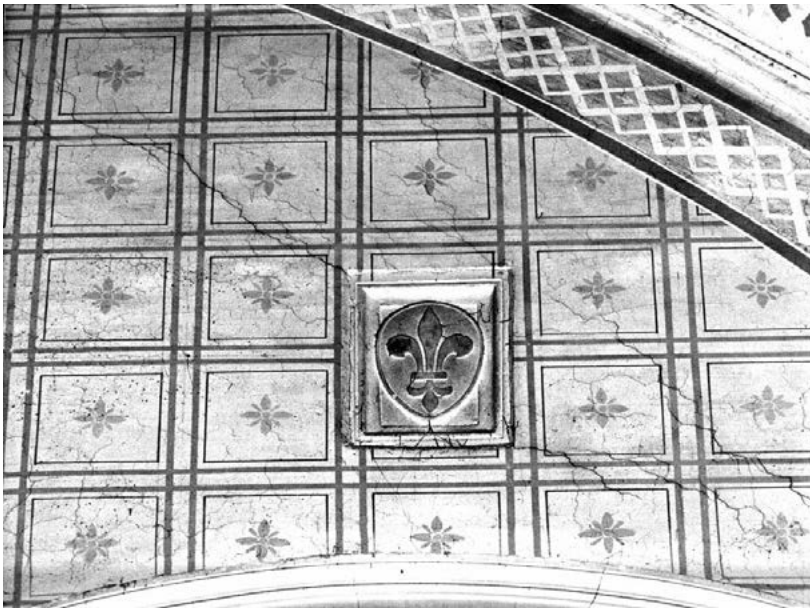


fig. 3. Burgos, cathedral. Chapel of the Visitation (© Wikimedia Commons)

fig. 4. Rome, church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Coat-of-arms of Juan Díaz de Coca above the arch of his funerary chapel (© Soprintendenza per i beni artistici e storici del Lazio)

fig. 5. Rome, church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Tomb slab of Juan Díaz de Coca, between 1470-1477 (© Bibliotheca Hertziana)

fig. 6. Rome, church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Detail of the monument of Juan Díaz de Coca (© Fondazione Zeri)







fig. 7. Burgos, cathedral. The second tomb of Juan Díaz de Coca in the Chapel of the Visitation, ca. 1485 (© Cabildo de la Catedral de Burgos)

fig. 8. Burgos, cathedral. The Tomb of Alfonso de Cartagena in the Chapel of the Visitation, ca. 1480 (© Alamy)

fig. 9. Burgos, charterhouse of Miraflores. Juan de Colonia and workshop, detail of the portal, 1486 (© Philip Muijtjens)

fig. 10. Burgos, cathedral. Detail of the carved effigy of the second tomb of Juan Díaz de Coca in the Chapel of the Visitation (© Cabildo de la Catedral de Burgos)



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