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Memory and Performance.
Classical Reception in Early Modern Festivals

Edited by Francesca Bortoletti, Giovanna Di Martino,
and Eugenio Refini

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Representations of the *Battle of the Giants*: an Early Modern Anti-Islamic Allegory Deployed by the Hispanic Monarchy

Abstract

The focus of the present paper is a prescient political allegory that was used to represent the Iberian monarchs' fight against Islam: the Battle of the Giants. We explore the propagandistic significance of this allegory through an analysis of its two principal forms: the Gigantomachy and the Titanomachy. Taking the Gigantomachies created by Giulio Romano and Perino del Vaga as our point of departure, this study develops a diachronic approach to reconstructing the genesis, evolution and dissemination of this mythological theme in Italy and the Iberian Peninsula from the early sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries. Attention is then turned to the incorporation of this allegory into the political discourse of the Hispanic Monarchy from the end of the sixteenth century onwards. Careful scrutiny is paid to invocations of this allegory in the ephemeral decorations created for royal festivals during the early modern period, and it is asked: who gained political capital from these events?

KEYWORDS: Battle of the Giants; Gigantomachy; Titanomachy; ephemeral art; Islamic imagery; Hispanic monarchy; Iberia

1. Introduction

From the 1970s onwards, a range of scholarly studies began to address the use of mythology as a key source for the creation of an iconography of the Hispanic monarchy during the early modern era.¹ In conjunction with this line of enquiry, scholars considered how this cultural development was shaped by the Renaissance interest in classical antiquity. However, it was not until the 1990s that the oft-repeated claim that mythology was not a common feature of Iberian artistic culture began to be questioned. Fernando Checa's

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¹ Amongst many others, see Rosenthal 1971 and 1973.

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analysis (1987 and 1992) of the evolution of the propagandistic imagery of Charles V and Philip II; Rosa López Torrijos's landmark compendium (1985) on mythology in Spanish art amply demonstrated the pivotal importance of mythology in Iberian artistic culture, and the research by Adelaida Allo Manero (1992 and 2003) devoted to this same theme through her analysis of the funerary exequies staged for the Hispanic Monarchy; and e. Drawing on these seminal studies, the focus of this article is an analysis of the repercussion of classical imagery upon ephemeral art and festival culture in the early modern Hispanic world. To do so, we focus on visual and theatrical representations of the theme of the *Battle of the Giants* during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and we explore how this was deployed as a political allegory of the Hispanic Monarchy. Subsequently it was used by both Iberian monarchies to represent their struggle against Islam. Our aim is to provide a diachronic reconstruction of this political message which was formulated through the principal two forms of this mythological subject, the *Gigantomachy* and the *Titanomachy*. To do so, we trace its circulation between the Italian and Iberian peninsulas, where it was represented repeatedly as part of ephemeral decorations created for the Catholic monarchy in these two peninsular territories.²

2. Early Representations of the *Gigantomachy* and *Titanomachy*

The most famous sixteenth-century representations of the *Gigantomachy* were undoubtedly those painted by Giulio Romano at the Palazzo Te in Mantua, and Perino del Vaga at Andea Doria's villa in Genoa. Both images were dominated by depictions of *Jupiter Tonans* annihilating the giants with his thunder bolt. Nevertheless, the full significance of these paintings transcends the artists' more or less faithful rendering of classical texts, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1, 152ff.), and the subsequent moralizing editions of it.³ Instead, what is of particular relevance for this study is how the scene was re-signified as a political allegory in the context of the reign of Charles V (1519-1556), which is when the monarch and Emperor was identified with Jupiter, the king of the gods, and his enemies with the giants or Titans.⁴

With regards to the first of the two aforementioned examples, Giulio Romano's mural paintings in the *Sala dei giganti* in the Palazzo Te (1532-

² For the iconography of the *Gigantomachy* and *Titanomachy* as allegories of the protracted conflict fought against the Turks, and Muslims more generally, and above all with regard to the representation of this subject by the Portuguese monarchy, see Franco Llopis and Rega Castro 2020, 117-28; Franco Llopis and Rega Castro 2021, 74-84.

³ On the classical sources for this myth and their reception in western art from the fourth century CE onwards, see Rodríguez López 2015, 7-26.

⁴ See the classical studies by Mitchell 1986, 147; Guthmüller 1997, 291-308.

1535) have been linked to Charles V's second visit to the city in November 1532, following his coronation as Emperor. Although he would have seen these frescoes in an incomplete state, he did see the preparatory drawings. He also witnessed a number of ephemeral spectacles staged by Federico II Gonzaga (Romano 1892, 242), which were intended to celebrate Charles's political power, as well as the value of his Italian alliances, such as those with the Gonzaga and Doria families. In this context, the *Gigantomachy* reveals a nascent iconographic tradition that would go on to explicitly identify Jupiter with the young Emperor;⁵ this argument, however, has not been unanimously accepted by historians.

Indeed, on the vault of the *Sala dei Giganti* it is *Jupiter Tonans* alone who vanquishes his adversaries, and he does so under the protection of the Imperial Eagle, which doubles as Jupiter's own symbol; the bird is depicted enthroned beneath a canopy, which was intentionally chosen as the focal point of the composition (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Giulio Romano, *Gigantomachy*, 1532-1535, fresco, Sala dei Giganti, Palazzo Te, Mantua

⁵ See e.g. Hartt 1958, 1, 157-8; Eisler 1983a (1996), 314-17, and 1983b, 101-3; more recently, see also Belfanti 2019, 55.

With regards to the giants, they were not intended to symbolize any particular enemy, but rather all the adversaries who confronted both the Holy Roman Empire and the Hispanic Monarchy (Guthmüller 1997, 291-308). On the other hand, both the triumphal arches that Giulio Romano designed to mark the Emperor's second entry into the city, as well as the facade of the Palazzo Te that leads into the garden, were decorated with military trophies, winged victories and figures of slaves and prisoners, all in accordance with the iconographic tradition established by classical Roman art, which Giulio Romano had first-hand knowledge of. Such features were wholly appropriate for Charles V, above all since his coronation as Emperor.⁶ As a result, the giants were represented *all'antica*, not in the form of Turkish captives, nor as African slaves, as would later become a recurring feature of imperial decorative programmes, in particular after the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.

In the wake of this initial example, the *Battle of the Giants* became a theme that was deployed to celebrate military victories in North Africa, including the capture of both Tunis and La Goulette. For the Emperor's entry into Palermo in September 1535 four "statue gigantesche de' Turchi" (gigantic statues of Turks) were built in the form of Atlanteans or Telamons. Originally, these were created as elements of ephemeral architecture, but later, in the mid-sixteenth century, they were carved in stone as part of the decoration of the *Porta Nuova* (c. 1570-1668).⁷ We can only imagine the design of the initial ephemeral triumphal arch on the basis of what the *Porta Nuova* looks like today;⁸ however, conceptually it functioned as a metaphor for the Hispanic Monarchy's war against Islam.⁹

The second foundational example of the use of this allegory is provided by the decoration of the apartment of Andrea Doria in the Palazzo del Principe, which as was mentioned above are considered to be the work of Perino del Vaga (1531-1533). The theme of the decorative programme created for the room's vaulted ceiling was once more the fall of the giants, and it was interpreted, as had become tradition, as an allegory of Charles V conquering his political and religious enemies (Fig. 2).¹⁰

⁶ Belluzzi 1980, 47-62; more recently, see Mattei 2014b, 217-23; and 2014a, 110-17; see also Angelucci et al. 2019, 129n27.

⁷ Fagiolo and Madonna 1981, 126-35; see also Checa 1987, 105; Cámara Muñoz 1998, 141.

⁸ On its anti-Turkish meaning, see Baskins 2019, 332; also, see Baskins 2017, 22.

⁹ On the propagandistic use of this metaphor in the context of Hispanic festival culture during the sixteenth century, see Franco Llopis 2017, 87-116, esp. 90-3. In parallel, for recent studies of the use of the aforesaid imagery in the royal iconography created for the Portuguese Monarchy, see Rega Castro 2021.

¹⁰ Parma Armani 1970, 44-8; 1986, 122-3; more recently, see Stagno 2019, 296-339.



Fig. 2 : Perino del Vaga, Gigantomachy, 1531-1533, fresco,
principal chamber in the apartments of Andrea Doria,
Palazzo del Principe, Genoa

The clue to its interpretation is provided by a letter Pietro Aretino sent to the Emperor in 1537, in which he compared the ruler's enemies – the Turks included – to the giants who challenged Jupiter and as a result were defeated. However, just as it had occurred in Mantua, a new dimension was conferred upon the paintings' political-propagandistic meaning by the presence of the young Charles V. He resided in the Palazzo del Principe from March to April 1533 as Andrea Doria's guest, by which time the paintings had been completed. To mark Charles's official entry into Mantua, Perino del Vaga designed a triumphal arch – for which a preparatory drawing has been conserved, close to the palace. The decoration of the arch moved away from the mythological scene to a more explicit evocation of Charles's Muslim foes. The arch's upper section was painted with two battle scenes, in which vanquished Ottoman soldiers wearing turbans can be clearly discerned, and to one side there is a personification of Faith or the Catholic Church.¹¹ This drawing can be interpreted as a celebration of the victories of Emperor Charles V against the Turks in Hungary and along the Eastern borders of the Holy Roman Empire – an outcome of the successful defence of Vienna against the forces of Suleiman the Magnificent in 1532. Yet, it is also a metaphor for the defeat of the enemies of Catholicism, more generally.

¹¹ The drawing of this arch is conserved in the Courtauld Institute of Art (London), Blunt Collection. See, for example, Kubler 1972, 120. More recently, see Stagno 2017, 150, esp. Fig. 1.

The battle against the giants or Titans – this was never clearly distinguished – was also used in Italy to symbolize Philip II's victory over his religious enemies from an early date following his sojourn in Trent in 1549 as a young prince. It was there that a battle was staged in his honour, in which “*quatro centauros con algunos soldados vestidos a la Turquesca*” (four centaurs with some soldiers dressed in the Turkish manner) took part along with “*quatro gigantes en forma de salvajes muy fieros y espantables alrededor de una cueva . . . la qual llamavan Infierno*” (four giants of savage appearance, very fierce and terrifying, surrounding a cave . . . they called Hell);¹² all these characters were customary figures in this type of paratheatrical spectacle, as well as in early modern triumphal entries. It is of great significance that, in such performances, occurring all over the Italian peninsula, the representation of the Mediterranean enemy exhibits the stereotypical physiognomic and dress characteristics typically associated with the Turks. This contrasts with the portrayal observed in other enclaves, such as the Iberian peninsula, where they were also portrayed as North African Muslims or even as Moriscos (Muslims forced to become Christians at the beginning of the sixteenth century). This phenomenon can be attributed to the difference in political and defense policies employed by Italian regions, particularly in response to pirate and corsair attacks, as well as the captivity of their sailors.¹³ The ‘useful enemy’, which marks the iconographic programs, is the Ottoman Empire, and not Islam in general.

If we return to the Genoese ephemeral arch, we notice another peculiarity, i.e. that Hercules is included in the scene: this was intended to extol the strength of the Habsburg monarchy. He was depicted as a figure “*de grande relieve*” (with impressive foreshortening) who stood right at the mouth of the cave and “*que sacava con una cadena fuera del infierno al can Cerbero con tres cabeças*” (he pulled the three-headed Cerberus out of hell with a chain). The allusion to the labours of Hercules is clear, yet to avoid any doubt the eight knights who had to fight against the centaurs entered “*armados de armas blancas con almetes en las cabeças y por cimera en ellos un Hércules . . .*” (armed with swords and wearing helmets adorned with an [image of] Hercules . . .).¹⁴ Hercules was the prototype of the virtuous hero, and he was deemed capable of conquering both the barbarian centaurs, defeating the heresy, in other words, the Turks.

¹² Calvete de Estrella 1930 (1552), 103. See also a recent study by Río Noguerras 2012, 187-205.

¹³ On captivity in early modern Italy, see, amongst others, Bono 2002; Bono 2001; Małowist and Biežuńska-Małowist 1987; Sánchez León and López Nadal 1996.

¹⁴ Calvete de Estrella 1930 (1552), 103-4.

It is important to note that Charles V himself commissioned armour from prominent goldsmiths such as the Negroni family, in which his figure emulates that of the Theban hero. This tradition persisted until Philip IV, as evidenced by the well-known *Salón de Reinos* (Madrid), where Francisco Zurbarán depicted a series dedicated to Hercules as an emblem of the monarch's military policy. This imagery serves as a form of political reaffirmation, even in times of crisis.¹⁵ It is also important to note that the selection of Hercules may have been influenced, as was the case at the funeral of Charles V in Rome, by the numerous expeditions to uncharted, distant lands that the Theban, like the Emperor, undertook in order to vanquish even his overseas adversaries.¹⁶

Staging allegorical battles akin to that which was held in Trent gained currency in the Iberian Peninsula, both for royal entries and exequies, as well as a subject in festive spectacles more broadly.¹⁷ According to the Jesuit Juan Antonio Jarque, this type of symbolism was based on a statement by St Jerome:

‘Monstrum’ en latín . . . llamó San Jerónimo con toda propiedad a la Herejía . . . Y después de aver hecho largo arancel de Monstruos diferentes que refieren las Historias Sagrada y Profana, como Centauros, Sirenas, Cancerbero, . . . Hidra de siete cabeças, Caco de Virgilio, Gerión de tres cabeças, Gerolyficas todas de la Herejía . . .

[*Monstrum* in Latin . . . was defined by St Jerome with complete propriety as Heresy . . . And [he did so] having undertaken a lengthy survey of the different monsters referred to in Sacred and Profane History, such as Centaurs, Sirens,

¹⁵ See Elliott and Brown 1982, 163-70; Úbeda de los Cobos 2005, 152-65. For a general overview related to the ephemeral art, see Franco Llopis 2017, 87-116.

¹⁶ “La inteligencia de la qual es que su Magestad Cesarea pasó en la conquista del mundo, mas adelante que Hercules, y con mayor trabajo y dificultad, y assi merecio mucho mas que Hercules sin comparación, porque abrió la puerta para la navegación y descubrimiento, no solamente del Poniente, pero aun del Septentrino, Medio dia y Oriente, en las quales partes a acrecentado y agumentado la ley evangelica y Fe de Christo” (The intelligence of His Majesty Caesarea is evidenced by his conquest of the world, which occurred later than that of Hercules and required greater labor and difficulty. Therefore, he merited greater renown than Hercules, as he facilitated navigation and discovery, not only in the West, but also in the North, South, and East. In these regions, he expanded and expanded the knowledge of the evangelical law and the faith of Christ): Sandoval y Rojas 1614, 487.

¹⁷ Allo Manero 2003, 149-50. With regard to sacred oratory, of particular relevance is a sermon delivered in Málaga to mark the death of Philip II, in which the subject of the Battle of the Giants was related to other biblical passages and the victory won over the enemies of Christianity, see Aguilar García 1994, 281.

Cerberus, . . . the seven-headed Hydra, Virgil's Cacus, three-headed Geryon, all Hieroglyphs of Heresy. . .]¹⁸

It is for this reason that when Elizabeth of Valois, Philip II's third wife, made her entry into Toledo (1559), the route she took to the Alcazar was adorned with three very large statues of Hercules, Cacus and Geryon (Fernández Travieso 2007, 37-46). The representation of these figures paid homage to Hercules, the mythical founder of Toledo, the city that was honouring the queen, but this was also an allusion to the Habsburg dynasty. Thereby, the statue of Hercules could be read as an image of the monarch as the conqueror of heresy, which was in turn alluded to by the figures of Cacus and Geryon. The figure of Geryon also symbolized the Islamic enemy, in this case more specifically associated with the Moriscos, converts from Islam, at the funeral of Margaret of Austria in Córdoba. The intellectual Basilio Vaca devised a hieroglyph in which a hand emerges from a cloud, stopping the scythe with which Death was threatening the queen. The latter is shown cutting off one of the three heads of Geryon with a saw. The motto was: "Ne totum pereat, melius est abscindere parte / donec abscindat manum, quae scandalizat" (Matthew 18), followed by these words: "Detén Muerte la guadaña / Hasta que la mano la sierre / y los Moriscos destierre, / que escandalizan a España" (Guzmán 1612, 153; Cease the scythe of death / Until the hand saws it / And the Moriscos banish / Who scandalize Spain).¹⁹ These sentences illustrate the polysemic value of these representations, as well as the varying associations of the Islamic enemy in European and Hispanic contexts. While in Europe the figure of the Islamic enemy was primarily linked to the Turk, in Spain, this was not always the case. Instead, the Moriscos, a Muslim population forced to convert at the beginning of the sixteenth century, played a key role in the visual propaganda. Their presence in Spain contributed to the destabilization of the Habsburgs' policy of unity of faith, which aimed to promote a single, unified Christian identity across the Spanish Empire.

We find this same visual rhetoric a few years later at Philip III's entry into Lisbon in 1619. On this occasion, in one of the most ritually significant urban spaces, the Terreiro do Paço – the open space by the Royal Palace in Lisbon close to the Customs House, the *Battle of the Giants* was represented as a metaphor of the expulsion of the Moriscos, which had taken place ten years earlier, but this same image also alluded to the struggle against the Turks (Rega Castro and Franco Llopis 2021, 76-7). A spectacular sculpture was staged there that illustrated the "fabula de la Guerra de los titanes . . .

¹⁸ Jarque 1666, 259-60, qtd in Allo Manero 2003, 150.

¹⁹ For these exequies see Moreno Cuadro 1988, for more general aspects, see Franco Llopis 2022a, 61-83.

por lo mucho que simboliza esta fabula con los temerarios intentos de los Moriscos, que convocando las fuerças turquescas i Africanas . . . intentaron pertubar la paz” (Lavanha 1622, 9ff.; the fable of the War of the Titans . . . as this fable greatly symbolises the rash attempts made by the Moriscos, who by summoning Turkish and African forces . . . sought to disturb the peace); its appearance is partially known thanks to the engraving Joan Schorquens made for Lavanha’s account of the festivity. However, an account conserved in the Biblioteca da Ajuda offers a more detailed description of these giants’ “bultos muy crecidos” (very tall forms), and how there was a sculpture of Philip III as Jupiter, who with his thunderbolts caused “las monstruosas personas gigantescas [fueran] lançandose en un abysmo o gruta infernal” (BA 54-X-6 no. 1, 6ff.; these monstrous gigantic figures to be cast into an infernal abyss or pit). This description presents us with a scene that was wholly baroque, one that moved beyond the classical limits of representation.

A correct interpretation of these figures is possible thanks to Lavanha’s aforementioned text, as well as a manuscript written circa 1619 and preserved in the archive of the Cathedral of Granada:

Sabed que estos gigantes son comparadas a quatro naçiones contrarios a nuestra ley y contra el Rey Phellipe que los defiende, los sujeta y los ba acabando y echando del mundo como segunda coluna de la fe. El un gigante senifica la (h) erejia; el otro la casa otomana, que son los moros; el tercero los moriscos que hecho de España; el 4.º se compara a los judíos . . . (Gan Giménez 1991, 419)

[You should know that these giants are comparable to four nations opposed to both our law and King Philip who [is seen] fighting against them, subjugating them and eventually doing away with them, and like a second column of faith he casts them from the world. One giant signifies heresy, the other the House of Ottoman [Osman], who are Moors; the third the Moriscos who he expelled from Spain; the 4th is compared to the Jews . . .]

On the other hand, the identification of the monarch with Jupiter was a feature which, as we have seen, gained currency from the Italian Renaissance onwards, and some Italian courts frequently applied it to Charles V. Thereby, it is clear that the depiction of this subject in Lisbon was by no means a novelty, and nor for that matter was the ‘bestialization’ of the enemy in the form of a giant or monster.

The use of this allegory was a rhetorical strategy, and it was not restricted to the theatre and ephemeral art as it was also used in other media. In this regard, mention should be made of the frontispiece that the Flemish artist Petrus Firens engraved for the book *Guerras Civiles de Granada* by Ginés Pérez de Hita, which was published in Paris in 1606 (Fig. 3); an image that has barely been studied by experts (Franco Llopis 2022b).



Fig. 3 : Petrus Firus, *Allegory of the Civil Wars of Granada*, c. 1606, engraving, Tisch Library, Tufts University, USA

The artist's intention was to use this mythological allegory to represent the War of the Alpujarras (1568-1571), which broke out following an armed insurrection by the *Monfies* (members of Muslim communities living in the mountain regions near Granada) and the Moriscos of Granada. This was one of the cruellest conflicts fought on the peninsula during the sixteenth century, and it resulted in a victory for the royal troops led by Juan de Austria; during the conflict the rebels received support from a small contingent of Berber and Ottoman pirates (Franco Llopis and Moreno Díaz del Campo 2019, 371-411). The frontispiece these accounts of the structures created for the triumphal arches and catafalques built for the Spanish Habsburgs. The main feature of the frontispiece is a mountain, on whose peak stands an eagle upon a plinth. Jupiter is depicted beneath his attribute, and he is depicted as sat upon a rocky throne just beneath the mountain's peak; he casts his thunderbolts down upon the insurrectionaries, who flee in terror from the foot of the mountain. The costume used for the latter figures is barely lifelike, as the fleeing troops do not really look like Turks or Muslims; instead, the artist has schematized or simplified all the sartorial elements of the various contingents of Muslims, whether *conversos* or not,²⁰ whereby it is hard to identify them. Furthermore, Neptune is seen on the right sinking enemy ships, with a naval battle as a backdrop.

In this regard, it is important to bear in mind two entwined issues: Neptune fought alongside Jupiter against the Titans, and his image went on to be used in Habsburg culture, above all after the battle of Lepanto (1571), as a means of symbolizing the victory won by the Christian fleet against the Turk. The allusion to Neptune reinforced the providentialist ideology invoked by the Holy League, and in particular Philip II's messianic imperialism. Thus, it is clear that Firens combined a range of iconographic types that were in circulation during the second half of the sixteenth century, and they were used to illustrate the Hispanic Monarchy's victories. His engraving underscores how the *Gigantomachy* or *Titanomachy* was used within an ideological and interpretative framework akin to that of the "fábula de la guerra de los titanes" (fable of the War of the Titans) that was depicted for the entry of Philip III into Lisbon, irrespective of the fact that he was a king who had suffered many years of penury and military defeat. Indeed, this is an illustrative example of how, during the period when the Hispanic Monarchy exercised control over the Italian and Flemish territories, the allegorical and mythological representations of the Islamic enemy, at these territories, were centered on the figure of the Turk; in the Iberian case, however, a double iconographic interweaving can be observed, as the internal enemy (Morisco)

²⁰ On Moorish costume and its representation in literature and art, see for example, Carrasco Urgoiti 2003, and Irigoyen-García 2017.

was assimilated and represented on some occasions as the Mediterranean enemy (Turk) (see Franco Llopis and Moreno Díaz del Campo 2019, 396-412).

To avoid oversimplified or monolithic interpretations, we shall now turn to a further and more detailed contextualization of the sources for and thorough analysis of each celebration. The recurring depiction of this subject in a range of media suggests that it had become a well-known subject for extolling the feats of the Hispanic monarchs. Needless to say, it played an important role in the exequies held for Philip III in Seville in 1621. On this occasion Jupiter was depicted carried by an eagle and he was again seen quelling the giants' rebellion. On this occasion this allegorical image was concerned with his confrontation of the Protestant 'heresy', and this may be inferred from the image's motto, "Alitis opus" (He needs the eagle's wings), and the inscription "Por él inclinó el Danubio/ La frente al César Triunfante / del Palatino arrogante" (qtd in Allo Manero 2003, 154; Thanks to him the Danube bows / its head before Caesar, triumphant / over the arrogant Palatine), which clearly alludes to the support Philip provided to Emperor Ferdinand II against the Protestant Union.²¹

Once the theme had been codified as a political allegory in the visual culture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was further developed in the festive culture of the end of the century. This phenomenon allows us to analyse a series of aspects of its performative dimension through a comparative study of three festive events in three different contexts. These examples are intimately connected to the discourses of propaganda and legitimization of the Hispanic Monarchy, during a period marked by political crisis and dynastic change.

²¹ To reaffirm the monarch's role as defender of the faith, these same exequies included a depiction of a lion fighting against a monster in the mythical setting of Hesperides at the foot of Mount Atlas, which was intended to commemorate the capture of Larache, one of this monarch's few military victories, on which see Allo Manero 2003, 154. This account was located in: BCC. MS 58-5-36. "Relación de las Honrras que hizo la Ciudad de Sevilla por su Magestad el Rey Don Felipe Tercero Nuestro Señor que ese en el cielo. Escrita para el duque de Alcalá Virrey de Cataluña, 1621", in *Historia desta ciudad de Sevilla que escribió el Lizenciado Collado em que se trata de su fundación hasta la perdida de España y el tiempo que dominaron los moros hasta su restauración por el santo Rey Don Fernando y lo que a obrado en servicio de los Reyes sus sucesores hasta el Rey Nuestro Señor Don Felipe Tercero. Añadido al libro Las Reales Exequias que hizo Sevilla desde las del Rey Felipe 3º año de 1612 hasta las de la Reyna D. Maria de Austria su mujer del Rey Don Felipe Quarto, ano de 1696.* MS 1698, 199-207.

3. The *Titanomachy* in the Later Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

In another context and at a much later date, the *Titanomachy* was used to decorate a festival arch built in the Puerta del Sol in Madrid for the entry of Queen María Luisa de Orleans (1680), first wife to Charles II. Regrettably, the scene was depicted on the rear of the arch, which means it is not included in the drawing depicting this monument attributed to Matías de Torres (Zapata Fernández de la Hoz 2000, 130-1). The arch's principal facade was dedicated to the Catholic Religion and its defence by the Hispanic Monarchy, while its rear façade represented gods and heroes from antiquity, who were presented as models of heroic virtue. The first tier of images depicted, on the lower left-hand side the "Religión dándole armas a Cadmo para luchar con el dragon" (Religion giving weapons to Cadmus to fight the dragon), and on the right-hand side the "Batalla de los Cíclopes hicieron al cielo tirando piedras contra él" (Battle that the Cyclops waged against heaven casting stones against it) (An. 1680, 9, 10), or, in other words, a *Gigantomachy*, and it was identified as such by Zapata Fernández de la Hoz (2000, 142). These two scenes were displayed as the reverse of the *Battle of Lutos*, the *Tribute of the one hundred maidens* and the *Battle of Navas de Tolosa*, whereby both the Titans and giants would have been identified with the 'Moors' of the so-called Christian Conquest. Likewise, the dragon would have been linked with the many forms of heresy which the Hispanic Monarchy had to combat. Both Cadmus and Jupiter, who punished the giants with his thunderbolts, were presented as mythological prefigurations of the monarch himself, Charles II.

In a similar vein, an intriguing pyrotechnic display was staged a few years later, in 1689, in the Piazza del Palazzo Reale in Palermo to mark the feast of St Rosalia, the city's patron. It should not be overlooked that this city was one of the most significant representative spaces for the Hispanic Monarchy, and since 1535 it had staged lavish festivities to glorify the Spanish monarchs' struggle over their overseas enemies. On this occasion, there was a representation of Mount Olympus, whose peak was crowned "non dall'Armigero di Giove, ma dalla sua medesima Aquila" (not by Jove's squire, but by his very own eagle), and which, as was the case in Firens's print, this monument provided a metaphor for the destruction of Jupiter's enemies: "di Centauri, e di Pitoni, d'immensa corporatura da Giganti" (An. 1690, 7-12, qtd in Mínguez Cornelles et al. 2014, 113-14; the Centaurs, Pythons, and the immensely tall Giants). Furthermore, the massive structure was surrounded by eight colossi or giants, who stood on pedestals and had a bronze-like patina. They were identified by inscribed cartouches and their number combined some of the Titans – Coeus, Iapetus and Atlas – along with other figures

who had only recently been invented – such as Adamastor,²² and there were also other figures who had no link to this mythological subject – such as Goliath.²³ Nevertheless, their presence, far from being mere artistic licence, seems to have been justified on the basis that the overarching concept for the programme was to present a series of “geroglifici dell’empietà abbattuta” (hieroglyphs of impiety sundered) by the Hispanic Monarchy (An. 1690, 8), and this political dimension was clearly reinforced by the physical presence of the viceroy and the Sicilian nobility.

Nevertheless, the intended significance of the latter spectacle was based on both the number and type of enemies involved. They were defeated by the king of all the gods, Jupiter, as an alter ego of the Spanish monarch Charles II. The complexity of this *macchina* is also a key factor, but it cannot be addressed in depth in the present study due to the space available.

Many years would pass until another monument of this type depicting either the *Gigantomachy* or *Titanomachy* would be built. However, an opportune moment was provided by the celebrations held for the double betrothal of the Prince of Asturias, Ferdinand of Bourbon, to the Portuguese Infanta María Bárbara de Braganza, and Crown Prince José de Braganza of Portugal to the Spanish Infanta Mariana Victoria, which took place in both courts in 1727. In January 1728 a pyrotechnic castle was designed and built, once again in the Terreiro do Paço. Its subject was misidentified as *Júpiter Capitolino*. In fact, it represented the *War of the Giants or Titans*, and it was presided over by the figure of *Jupiter Tonans*, who annihilated his foes with his thunderbolts, casting them down from the peak of the mountain, as can be observed in the engraving by Antoine Quillard.²⁴ This pyrotechnic spectacle

²² The Portuguese poet Luís de Camões incorporated this mythical character into this epic poem *Os Lusíadas* (Camões 1572, 51ff.), in which he described Adamastor as the guardian of the Cape of Storms, or Cape of Good Hope. For a deeper understanding of its value as a symbolic representation of Islam or African paganism in the ephemeral art of the Portuguese court, see: Franco Llopis and Rega Castro 2020, 117-18.

²³ Goliath appears in other contexts as a depiction of the struggle against the enemies of the faith. One example of this is provided by the entry staged for Prince Philip into Milan in 1559. A sculpture of the Philistine giant was built in the Piazza del Duomo in Milan, and it was accompanied by David, as well as Holofernes, Hercules and Atlanta, and it was intended to symbolize how Philip had confronted his antagonists (Leydi 1990). Another example is provided by the festivities held in Toledo for the canonization of St Ignatius Loyola in 1622, the saint was depicted as David, while Luther was represented as Goliath. See Sanz Baso 2022, 214; and Franco Llopis and Sanz Baso, 2023.

²⁴ Two carved plates based on the design by Pierre Antoine Quillard have been conserved, they were engraved by Théodore Andreas Harrewyn. The engraving in question is: *Júpiter no Capitólio* (Jupiter on the Capitoline), 1728, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), class mark E. 1107 V. The other plate depicts: *Diana no Templo de Éfeso*

staged a metaphorical representation of the monarchy's triumph over the enemies of the faith. The imperialist political message was undoubtedly articulated in the upper section of the castle, where a personification of Fame bearing a laurel wreath sounded her trumpet, while accompanying two enchained prisoners; given their long moustaches and shaven heads these would have been read as captive Turks, despite them not wearing turbans (Fig. 4).



Fig 4 : Pierre-Antoine Quillard, Capitoline Jupiter [Gigantomachy or Titanomachy], c.1728, engraving, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Lisbon

(Diana in the Temple of Ephesus), 1728, BNP, class mark E. 65. R. Published in Pereira 2000, 127n42. See also García and Zink 2002, 52-5. More recently, see Rega Castro and Franco Llopis 2021, 79-81.

Nevertheless, the key to interpreting this programme is provided by another of the *artificios* (artifices) that illuminated this event. Fortunately, the chronicler was more loquacious in his description of this second monument. According to Fray José da Natividade, the second of these pyrotechnic spectacles represented the temple of Artemis in Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, which had been located in Asia Minor, in other words, Ottoman territory. In 356 BCE it had been burnt to the ground by Herostratus, and it was burnt down once again during the festivities in Lisbon as an augury of a future time “... em que o Soberano Pincipe [D. José] ... poria a ferro, e fogo as Mesquitas Ágarenas, que tem a Lua, porque era subentendida a mesma Diana, por seu timbre” (Natividade 1752, 32; in which the Crown Prince [Dom José] ... would set fire to the Muslim Mosques, who fear the Moon, because it was assumed to be Diana herself). Although the half-moon does not appear on Diana’s forehead in the engraving (García and Zink 2002, 67), this traditional attribute of the goddess and the crescent emblem of the Turkish empire were, according to the chronicle, conflated through metonymy, in order to allude to the Iberian monarchies’ revived commitment to pursue the “cruzada” (crusade) against Islam beyond the traditional zone of influence in North Africa, and on into the heart of the Ottoman Empire.

Thus, it is clear that the subject of the *Battle of the Giants* was used recurrently up until the early eighteenth century, and it was depicted in a range of media, in particular in the artistic genres linked to Baroque festival culture. Of equal importance is the definitive codification of the political content of this iconographic theme as an allegory of the Iberian monarchies’ unrelenting military struggle against Islam. Later, in 1768 the Aragonese painter Francisco Bayeu – follower of Corrado Giaquinto and Raphael Mengs, revived the subject and included it amongst the series of allegories designed for the decorative programme entitled the *Triumph of the Spanish Monarchy*. The *Battle of the Giants* was painted on the ceiling of the *cuarto de los Príncipes de Asturias* (chamber of the Prince and Princess of Asturias) in the Palacio Real in Madrid (Fig. 5);²⁵ however, the dynastic change brought about by the ascent of the Bourbons to the Spanish throne led to the exclusion of the imperial eagle from the iconographic programme.

Nevertheless, it is clear how this mythological subject evolved over the course of the centuries, from its Northern Italian origins, and went on to

²⁵ The Museo Nacional del Prado also conserves the preparatory oil sketch (Inv. P000604), dated to 1767-1768; and in Zaragoza, the Real Sociedad Económica Aragonesa de Amigos del País conserves a ricordo (small-scale copy) of the aforementioned vault. Amongst others, see Morales and Marín 1995, 82; Mano 2016, 181, 186n53; see also Rodríguez López 2015, 22.

circulate across various Hispanic territories and the Iberian world. Based upon these two monarchies' conflict with their religious enemies, and above all the Ottoman empire, the *Battle of the Giants* gradually established itself as a (self)image of the Spanish empire, and (on occasion) of the Portuguese empire too.²⁶



Fig. 5 : Francisco Bayeu, *The Fall of the Giants*, 1767-1768 c., oil on canvas, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

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²⁶ Cardim, 2010, pp. 37-72. For a comparative study within the context of early modern Iberian art, see Franco Llopis and Rega Castro 2019, 459-89. See also Rega Castro and Franco Llopis 2021, 101-6.

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