

MATERIAL CONVERSIONS: NATURALISM, DISCERNMENT, AND  
SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SPANISH STILL-LIFE PAINTING

by

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## Abstract

This thesis argues for the ways in which the new genre of still-life painting became a forum for experimentation for artists in seventeenth-century Spain. In a context wherein the production of visual imagery was overwhelmingly religious, and profane pictorial genres were generally limited to only a few, still life became bound up with growing interests in naturalism, or efforts to faithfully recreate the material world on canvas, and novel approaches to painting. Focusing on the period between 1600 and 1675, the thesis first traces the early conventions of still life cultivated by artists in the city of Toledo and in the court capital of Madrid. It then shifts the focus to Seville and to the intriguing development of what I refer to as *mixed images* – paintings that repurpose still life’s conventions with sacred subject matter. The contribution of this thesis lies in examining divergent types of mixed images, including paintings of sacrificial sheep and lambs and severed heads of saints, in relation to the novel genre of still life.

Still-life painting emerged as an independent genre in the Spanish context around 1600, which was prompted by a number of interrelated factors including Spain’s robust political ties to other artistic centers in Europe and the surge in activity in picture collecting among upper and middling classes. Although still life was a pan-European phenomenon, the manner in which it was brought together with religious imagery in the form of mixed images, I argue, responds to evolving ideas about painting, including the depiction of violence, in the Spanish context. Painted for private patrons, mixed images by artists such as Francisco de Zurbarán, Bartolomé Murillo, and Sebastián Llanos y Valdés crucially foreground issues involving the portrayal of sacred subject matter at a moment when religious imagery was increasingly juxtaposed with other types of pictures

in the space of the private collection. Ultimately, by drawing attention to informal links between artistic practice and still life, this thesis proposes that still life in seventeenth-century Spain functioned as a locus for thinking about naturalistic painting, which encouraged the subsequent deployment of the genre's conventions to sacred ends.

## Preface

This dissertation is an original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Krystel Chéhab. A version of the material in chapter four was presented as “Stilling the Saintly Head in Seventeenth-century Spanish Painting,” *Renaissance Society of America*, New York, 27-29 March, 2014, and as “ Severed Heads: The Aftermath of Violence in Spanish Still-life Painting,” *College Art Association*, New York, 13-16 February, 2013.



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## **Dedication**

*For Andre and my parents*

## Chapter One: Introduction

In the eighteenth century, the Spanish poet and priest Francisco Gregorio de Salas composed a sonnet about the still-life paintings of Juan Fernández (before 1587-1657), an artist from the previous century known by contemporaries as el Labrador. Labrador was a painter of still lifes who is documented in the Spanish Habsburg court capital of Madrid in the early 1630s, a period during which the new genre of still life was garnering interest by artists and collectors alike. In his sonnet about Labrador's paintings of fruit and flowers, Salas extols their extraordinary naturalism by contending that the representations were so convincing that the painted fruit only denied the experience of taste.<sup>1</sup> When viewing Labrador's pictures, Salas avows, his senses are deceived, calling attention to the dexterity with which the painter has converted oil paint into representation.<sup>2</sup> Admittedly, laudatory references of this kind were legion in the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth, as Salas' sonnet attests. Still-life paintings, which were typically composed of inanimate things, had a proclivity for being faithful portrayals and, in this regard, artists' achievements in the genre were far from an uncommon focus for such appraisals. Nevertheless, Salas puts an interesting spin on his rhetorical commonplace. Towards the end of the sonnet, he exclaims, "this great painter [Labrador] has suspended everything" (que a todo gran Pintor ha suspendido).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The sonnet is reproduced in Miguel Herrero García, *Contribución de la literatura a la historia del arte: por Miguel Herrero García* (Madrid: S. Aguirre, 1943), 255. For the original see, Francisco Gregorio de Salas, *Elogios poeticos: dirigidos a varios heroes, y personas de distinguido merito en sus profesiones, y de elevados empléos, asi antiguos, como modernos, y algunos de ellos, que actualmente viven, todos naturales de la provincia de Estremadura* (Madrid: A. Ramirez, 1773), 74-76.

<sup>2</sup> Herrero García, *Contribución de la literatura*, 255.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

When Salas pronounces that Labrador “has suspended everything,” he is most certainly referring to the unique manner of hanging objects found in the works of early painters of still life. In the *Diccionario de autoridades* (1726-1739), *suspender* (to suspend) was defined as “to lift, hang or stop something up or in the air.”<sup>4</sup> In the Spanish context, suspended things were a hallmark of still-life painting in the first third of the seventeenth century. Like other early producers of still life, Labrador’s painted displays were not exclusively organized along a horizontal ledge; foodstuffs could also be suspended with string to hang along a picture’s vertical axis.

To take an example, Labrador’s *Still Life with Bunches of Grapes* (c. 1636) in the Prado consists of bunches of grapes that are lowered by the vine with string from an invisible point outside of the image (Figure 1). Set against a dark ground, the grapes surge forward into the beholder’s space, a process that is facilitated by their suspension in mid air. Reflections of light play off the individual grapes, which are mostly of a green reddish tint but intermixed with a bunch of darker ones. The incongruent sizes and placement of the neighboring bunches within the picture draws attention to the subtle variations in shape. By making use of a highly contrived format, wherein string permits the encroachment of foodstuffs toward the threshold of the picture, Labrador’s still life intensifies our sense of vision, inviting us to linger over its intricate details.

Presumably, Salas also had another definition of *suspender* in mind when crafting his sonnet about Labrador’s still lifes. In the *Diccionario de autoridades*, the term is also

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<sup>4</sup> I cite the English translation of the definition reproduced in Elena del Río Parra, “Suspensio Animi, or the Interweaving of Mysticism and Artistic Creation,” in *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*, ed. Hilaire Kallendorf (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 395. For the Spanish original, see *Diccionario de la lengua castellana: en que se explica el verdadero sentido de las voces, su naturaleza y calidad, con las frases o modos de hablar, los proverbios o refranes, y otras cosas convenientes al uso de la lengua*, Vol. 6 (Madrid: En la Imprenta de la Real Academia Española: Por la Viuda de Francisco del Hierro, 1726-1739), 192.

defined as “to snatch the spirit and stop it with the admiration of the strange or the unexpected of some object or happening.”<sup>5</sup> *Suspender* is linked with feelings of admiration at being confronted with something novel or surprising.<sup>6</sup> As Salas makes known to us in various ways throughout his sonnet, it is Labrador’s remarkable achievements in naturalism that suspend viewers before his still lifes, inviting them to examine meticulously painted surfaces. In this particular painting, Labrador has consciously chosen to portray the subject matter of grapes, which in the early modern period became a *topos* that called up the classical lineage of naturalistic portrayals of foodstuffs.<sup>7</sup> In this regard, Labrador’s still life itself already makes a claim for the picture’s technical achievements and its deserving admiration.<sup>8</sup>

Importantly, though, by playing on the meaning of the verb to suspend, Salas’ comments direct us to two significant, and overlapping dimensions of still life that became central to the genre in seventeenth-century Spain. That is, Salas links the material

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<sup>5</sup> Del Río Parra, “Suspensio Animi,” 395. Del Río Parra’s text is an interesting study of suspension of judgment in relation to Spanish mysticism.

<sup>6</sup> This definition can be found in other early modern Spanish texts. In describing a character in his “El desdén del Alameda,” the writer Gonzalo de Céspedes y Meneses states, “His skill and artifice suspended them and evoked their wonder.” The phrase is quoted and translated in José Antonio Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. Terry Cochran, *Theory and History of Literature* v. 25 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 233. Maravall discusses suspension in relation to the use of suspense in seventeenth-century Spanish theater, which he links to strategies of social control. See pages 215-224.

<sup>7</sup> Pliny’s competition was often summoned during the early modern period to signal both the capacity of naturalism and the closely related issue of a beholder’s response. As the story goes, Zeuxis painted grapes so successfully that birds flew down to peck them. Parrhasius, however, performed the greater deceit by painting a curtain so realistically that he got the better of Zeuxis who asked for it to be removed to reveal his companion’s image underneath. Pliny, *Natural History*, 35.65-66.

<sup>8</sup> S. Ebert-Schifferer calls attention to the back and forth between art production and criticism when it comes to the use of certain *topoi*. See S. Ebert-Schifferer, “Trompe l’Oeil: The Underestimated Trick,” in *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe L’oeil Painting* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002), 19.

components of Labrador's still lifes, or the interplay of ledge, foodstuffs, oil paint, the mechanics of string, and the artist's steady hand, which together produce the display seen in the frame, with a beholder's experience of viewing them. As Labrador's *Still Life with Bunches of Grapes* demonstrates, early Spanish practitioners composed highly naturalistic pictures in ways that depend on, as well as call attention to, the artifice of a display with little concern with evoking a recognizable setting. At the same time, as elicited in Salas' turn of phrase, the capacity of naturalism honed in still life delighted beholders who were eager to be surprised by the genre's technical feats.

Still-life painting grew out of, and participated in, a growing descriptive enterprise, as the visible world and its diversity of things were registered in imagery as never before. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the boundaries of acceptable pictorial content were increasingly expanded to include worldly objects, animals, and landscapes as a picture's principal subject matter, which became the province of still life and the other minor genres. Although still life, with its pictures of inanimate things, was perceived as inferior to established categories such as the religious *historia* or devotional image by contemporary art theorists, it was quickly recognized as a genre in which one could pursue, as well as delight in, achievements in naturalism.

It was due in part to Spain's political status in Europe at the end of the sixteenth century that the new genre of still-life painting was rapidly introduced in Spanish cities. Around 1600, still-life painting developed practically concurrently in a handful of artistic centers throughout the continent, and specifically in cities such as Antwerp and Milan with which Spain had political ties. Although Spain's position in Europe would be challenged and diminished over the course of the seventeenth century, at the end of the

sixteenth, it maintained robust connections to lands strategically located outside of the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>9</sup> Importantly, it was by way of Spanish officials and representatives stationed abroad, and other networks, that still-life paintings were first imported into Spain where they were viewed and later adapted by local artists.<sup>10</sup>

In the landscape of pictorial production in Catholic Spain, religious imagery occupied a pivotal place. At the Council of Trent (1563), Catholics reaffirmed the efficacy of religious imagery in response to attacks mounted on images by Protestant reformers. Spain saw itself as the bulwark of Catholicism that, under the protection of Catholic kings, was vigilantly protecting the faith from encroaching heresies, both from abroad and also from within its borders. As power and land in the Spanish Peninsula were consolidated under the monarchy and Christian rule, the monarchy became increasingly intolerant of the heterodox beliefs adhered to by its large populations of Islamic and Jewish peoples. The expulsion of the Jews took place in 1492 and substantial efforts were made to subjugate and convert Islamic peoples to Christian rule during the sixteenth century, until they too were officially expelled in 1609.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ongoing religious and political strife in the Netherlands, rebellious declarations of independence in Portugal and Catalonia, and the French challenge to Spanish hegemony, contributed to important shifts in European power relations during the seventeenth century. For Spain's economic and political situation in the early seventeenth century, see Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain, 1516-1659* (New York: Basic Books, 1971); J. H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964); J. H. Elliott, *Spain and Its World, 1500-1700: Selected Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Geoffrey Parker, *Europe in Crisis, 1598-1648* (London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1979); Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World, 1606-1661* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982); Bernardo José García García, *La pax hispánica: política exterior del Duque de Lerma* (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 1996); Paul C. Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica, 1598-1621: The Failure of Grand Strategy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> A series of examples of Spanish officials (holding foreign posts or positions at the Habsburg court) who were early collectors of still life can be found in Peter Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza: el bodegón español en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico, 1999), 21-22.

<sup>11</sup> The Kingdom of Granada in southern Spain fell to the Christians in 1492, which initiated the *Reconquista* of land for Christendom and the Spanish crown that had been lost for centuries. For more on

With few exceptions apart from portraits made of the Habsburg royals, images created in Spain before the last decade of the sixteenth century consisted almost exclusively of spiritual subject matter. Although the introduction of new genres such as still life diversified the artistic output of a number of Spanish artists, renewed investments in religious imagery continued to orient the vast majority of image making and discourses about images throughout the seventeenth century. That images could offer moral guidance and inspire devotion was considered – and frequently reiterated in the art treatises of Vicente Carducho and Francisco Pacheco – the very aim of painting.<sup>12</sup>

Concurrent with the high demand for religious imagery was the explosive interest in picture collecting that arose in the early seventeenth century. Although the Spanish monarchs of the sixteenth century, especially Philip II, were enthusiastic collectors, the nobility and other wealthy individuals in the realm did not generally assemble picture collections until this later period.<sup>13</sup> When collecting did take hold on a larger scale, it was

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the Inquisition, which was also established in Spain during this period, see Henry Kamen, *The Phoenix and the Flame: Catalonia and the Counter Reformation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). More recently, see James S. Amelang, *Parallel Histories: Muslims and Jews in Inquisitorial Spain* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> On the goals of holy images and the Christian artist, see Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura*, ed. Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), 248-265. For a partial English translation, see Jonathan Brown, and Robert Enggass, *Italian and Spanish Art, 1600-1750: Sources and Documents* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992), 161-165.

<sup>13</sup> The itinerant Spanish court of the first half of the sixteenth century had an impact of the development of picture collecting, as pointed out in Jonathan Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting in Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 308. See the discussions of collecting during the reign of Philip III in José Miguel Morán Turina and Fernando Checa Cremades, *El coleccionismo en España: de la cámara de maravillas a la galería de pinturas* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1985), 223-230; Marcus B. Burke, “A Golden Age of Collecting,” in Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part 1*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997), 116-123; Sarah Schroth, “A New Style of Grandeur: Politics and Patronage at the Court of Philip III,” in *El Greco to Velázquez: Art during the Reign of Philip III*, ed. Sarah Schroth and Ronni Baer, 1st ed. (Boston: MFA Publications; Published in association with the Nasher Museum of Art, 2008), 77-120.



painting, more than any other artistic medium, which garnered collectors' attention.<sup>14</sup>

The rise in collecting among private individuals meant that the interiors of noble homes, as well as those of merchants and bureaucrats, were steadily filled by their owners with paintings.<sup>15</sup> It is in such spaces that the artful transformations of fruit into paint seen in Labrador's *Still Life with Bunches of Grapes* could be appreciated. As William Jordan and Peter Cherry have already demonstrated, the independent still life in Spain invited visual delight of its imitations of nature.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, in his *Arte de la pintura* (1649), Francisco Pacheco asserts that paintings of flowers after nature were "very entertaining" (*muy entretenida*).<sup>17</sup>

Around 1600, still life emerged in Europe as an independent pictorial genre – a genre that was recognizably distinct from religious painting. The rich tradition of still life that developed in Protestant-controlled Netherlands during the period is partly explained in relation to the breaking with, and supplanting of, traditional forms of religious imagery. Under Protestant rule, the removal of images from institutional religious settings, such as churches, fuelled an alternative market for non-religious pictures in genres such as still life. Less critical attention, however, has been directed to the place of still life in an artistic climate like Catholic Spain where imagery, on the whole, was

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<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Brown and J.H. Elliott suggest that Philip IV's preference for painting helped to shape noble collecting preferences. See Jonathan Brown and J.H. Elliott, *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 115.

<sup>15</sup> For an overview of collecting trends at court, see the two essays in Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755*, vol. 1, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> William B. Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age, 1600-1650*, with the assistance of Sarah Schroth (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1985), 8-9; William B. Jordan and Peter Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1995), 17-18.

<sup>17</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 509.

preoccupied with very different concerns. In Spain, still-life painting was also perceived as a genre distinct from religious imagery, and one that thrived in part because of it. Remarkably, however, in this context still life was brought together with religious imagery in intriguing ways, a phenomenon that has yet to be subjected to extended scrutiny.<sup>18</sup>

In this thesis, I explore a series of intersections between still-life painting and religious imagery in seventeenth-century Spain. I begin by addressing the rise of the independent still life, and the flurry of activity in the genre that took place in Habsburg Madrid in the second and third decades of the century. As a genre that was new and malleable, and bound up with novel conventions and practices of the period, still life became a significant locus for experimentation with naturalism. This eventually propelled artists to repurpose the genre's conventions to new sacred purposes. The remaining chapters therefore shift the focus from the independent still life to a category of image – what I call a *mixed image* and describe later on – that is located at the limits of the genre of still-life painting. Shortly after the rise of still life, a number of artists in Spain, and specifically in the southern city of Seville, portrayed religious subject matter in a manner remarkably reminiscent of still life. For example, in Sebastián Llanos y Valdés' *Head of Saint Catherine* (c.1652) in the Goya museum in Castres, which is a painting discussed in chapter four, the saint's head is arranged among inanimate objects on a ledge, replicating the format for still life that had been popularized in the first half of the century (Figure 2).

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<sup>18</sup> For a study of how still-life painting is combined with religious imagery in seventeenth-century Antwerp, see Susan Merriam, *Seventeenth-Century Flemish Garland Paintings: Still Life, Vision, and the Devotional Image* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).

Such a picture directs our attention to the surprising and unusual character of still life, prompting inquiry into how the genre was put to use by painters in this artistic context.

### **Spanish still-life painting**

Following the first exhibition of Spanish still-life painting at the Prado museum in 1935, and the foundational study by Julio Cavestany undertaken in conjunction with the occasion, scholarly interest in still life has grown steadily, intensifying over the last thirty or so years.<sup>19</sup> Importantly, in the early historiography, studies primarily focused on the output of the artist Juan Sánchez Cotán (1560-1627), whose still lifes are the earliest extant and attributed works of their kind in the Spanish context. The appearance of Sánchez Cotán's still lifes in Toledo, and at the early date of 1600, was not easy to explain relative to the city's conservative spiritual climate and traditions of religious painting. In the first assessments of his still lifes, mid-twentieth-century scholars likened the minimal content and form of the artist's pictures to ascetic and mystical currents found in sixteenth-century Toledo.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, it was proposed that Sánchez Cotán's attention to natural objects, such as foodstuffs, could be understood in light of the idea that nature mirrors the greatness of God who can thus be found in the humblest of

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<sup>19</sup> Julio Cavestany, *Floreros y bodegones en la pintura española* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte, 1936-1940). For other early surveys of the genre, see Enrique Lafuente Ferrari, "La peinture de bodegones en Espagne," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6, no. 14 (1935): 169-83; Ingvar Bergström, *Maestros españoles de bodegones y floreros del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Insula, 1970).

<sup>20</sup> Emilio Orozco Díaz, "Realismo y religiosidad en la pintura de Sánchez Cotán," *Goya: Revista de Arte* 1 (1954): 19-28. For his more recent book-length study, see Emilio Orozco Díaz, *El pintor Fray Juan Sánchez Cotán* (Granada: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad, 1993). See also the early overview of Sánchez Cotán's paintings and other Spanish works in Charles Sterling, *Still Life Painting from Antiquity to the Present Time*, trans. James Emmons (New York: Universe Books, 1959), 68-77. It should be noted that Sánchez Cotán's biography has been called upon to buttress interpretations of the artist's still lifes. The artist's decision to retire to a Carthusian monastery in his later years has elicited readings that connect his still lifes with the humble diet and discipline of monastic daily life.

creations.<sup>21</sup> Another line of interpretation posited that, generally speaking, earthly things found in seventeenth-century Spanish painting, including the fruit and flower contents of a still life, should be read in symbolic terms.<sup>22</sup>

On the whole, early interpretations attempted the difficult task of reconciling Sánchez Cotán's production of still lifes with the appetite for religious pictures in Spain at the end of the sixteenth century. In the last thirty or so years, however, the surge in interest in still-life painting among historians of Spanish art has expanded the scope of inquiry, resulting in new areas of study.<sup>23</sup> Extensive archival research by a range of scholars has broadened our knowledge of seventeenth-century practitioners of still life and identified existing works of art.<sup>24</sup> As still lifes painted by a variety of artists became better studied, spiritual interpretations in the early scholarship of Sánchez Cotán's paintings proved decidedly less persuasive.<sup>25</sup> Jordan and Cherry have convincingly

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<sup>21</sup> See, for instance, the discussion in Orozco Díaz, "Realismo y religiosidad," 24. For a discussion of landscapes and still lifes in relation to ideas of Christian Optimism in the Lombard context, see Pamela M. Jones, "Federico Borromeo as a Patron of Landscapes and Still Lifes: Christian Optimism in Italy Ca. 1600," *The Art Bulletin* 70, no. 2 (June 1988): 261-272.

<sup>22</sup> Julián Gallego, *Vision et symboles dans la peinture espagnole du siècle d'or*, Collection Le Signe de L'art 3 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1968), 189-197.

<sup>23</sup> Since 1983, there have been a number of exhibitions on Spanish still life accompanied by well-researched catalogue essays. See especially Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros de 1600 a Goya: Museo del Prado, noviembre 1983/enero 1984* (Spain: Ministerio de Cultura, Dirección General de Bellas Artes y Archivos, 1983); Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*; Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*. There have been additional exhibitions dedicated to still-life painting in the last ten years. See, for instance, Javier Portús Pérez and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Lo fingido verdadero: bodegones españoles de la colección Naseiro adquiridos para el Prado* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Archival findings have been published in numerous article-length studies. For lengthier studies, in addition to the catalogues mentioned in the previous note, see Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*; William B. Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen y León & the Court of Madrid* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Earlier scholars who read Sánchez Cotán's paintings in sacred terms did not typically read those of his contemporaries in the same manner, with the exception of the still lifes by Francisco de Zurbarán. On this, see Sterling, *Still Life Painting from Antiquity to the Present Time*, 73-77.

argued that independent still-life paintings in the Spanish context do not typically privilege nor do they strongly encourage religious readings.<sup>26</sup> The two scholars, and Alfonso Pérez Sánchez, have instead emphasized the movement of pictures into Spanish cities and drawn parallels with pictorial examples of still life in foreign artistic centers.<sup>27</sup> One avenue that these scholars and others have pursued is to situate examples of still-life painting in Spain in relation to the genre's ancient lineage. For instance, the more elaborate still lifes of the Madrid-based artist Juan van der Hamen (1596-1631), whose works I address in chapter two, have been yoked to the ancient role of *xenia*, or foodstuffs, in hospitality, and to nascent consumption practices among the urban elite in the Spanish capital.<sup>28</sup>

Studies that consider the cultural and socio-historical roles of objects depicted in still life take their lead from the more extensive scholarship generated on the genre in other geographical contexts, especially the Netherlands. Netherlandish still-life paintings are understood by scholars to mediate a range of historical issues, including but not limited to the increased wealth of the market, transoceanic conquests, religious reform,

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<sup>26</sup> Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 17-24.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. Comparisons between foreign paintings and Spanish ones are made at different points throughout this text. See also Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros*, 23-25. For a study of patronage activities of the Spanish elite, see Sarah Schroth, "Early Collectors of Still-Life Painting in Castile," in *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age, 1600-1650*, ed. William B. Jordan (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1985), 28-39.

<sup>28</sup> Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen y León*, 77-79. For a discussion of *xenia* in Juan van der Hamen's still lifes, see chapter 4 in Carmen B. Ripolles, "Constructing the Artistic Subject in Golden Age Spain." (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 2011). On the status of objects in Van der Hamen's paintings, see Javier Portús, "Significados sociales en el bodegón barroco español," in *Materia crítica: formas de ocio y de consumo en la cultura áurea*, ed. Enrique García Santo-Tomás (Madrid: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2009), 169-89.

artistic prowess and scientific advancements.<sup>29</sup> At different intervals in the thesis, I make use of the insights of Celeste Brusati, Elizabeth Honig and other scholars of still life. Overall, this considerable body of literature is valuable insofar as it helps to flag patterns of similarity and provoke inquiry into the divergent ways the genre manifests in the Spanish context.<sup>30</sup>

A significant point of orientation for this thesis is Victor Stoichita's study on the emergence of the framed and transportable picture, or *tableau*, and the rise of a new concept of the image.<sup>31</sup> Stoichita focuses on new pictorial genres, such as still life, landscape and genre scenes, and outlines the structural changes in painting that give rise to them when the framing elements of the religious image are brought into confrontation with it. Stoichita positions these developments in painting during the early modern period

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<sup>29</sup> This literature is vast. Key studies include Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Knopf, 1987); Celeste Brusati, "Natural Artifice and Material Values in Dutch Still Life," in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne E. Franits (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 144–57; Elizabeth A. Honig, *Painting & the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Julie Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

<sup>30</sup> For instance, in contrast to Dutch pictures, only a handful of Spanish still lifes depict transoceanic goods. Paintings by Juan de Zurbarán and Antonio Pereda portray chocolate, which was imported from the Iberian Atlantic, and its accouterments. For a study on the reception of chocolate in Spain, see Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). Historians of science have assessed still-life paintings for their links to botanical knowledge. See María José López Terrada, "Hernández and Spanish Painting in the Seventeenth Century," in *Searching for the Secrets of Nature: The Life and Works of Dr. Francisco Hernández*, ed. Simon Varey, Rafael Chabrán and Dora B. Weiner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000). On still life as part of Spain's 'baroque' scientific culture, see José Ramón Marcaida and Juan Pimentel, "Dead Natures or Still Lifes? Science, Art, and Collecting in the Spanish Baroque," in *Collecting Across Cultures Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, ed. Daniela Bleichmar and Peter C. Mancall (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

<sup>31</sup> For his argument about the structural development of still life in relation to conventional forms of religious imagery, see Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 17-29.

at the intersections of artistic, religious and economic exigencies. In lieu of a study that adheres to chronological and stylistic categories of painting, Stoichita surveys a range of European pictures – importantly bringing Spanish works into dialogue with Netherlandish and Italian ones – to make an argument about their metapictorial aspects. Through a close study of pictures, he brings forward the variegated ways in which early modern painting was reflecting on the expansion of pictorial genres, painting's status as representation, and its modes of production and exhibition.

Stoichita's noteworthy study positions still life within wider frames of reference, alerting us to how certain pictures function as metapictorial reflections while connecting still life to new spaces of display and viewing practices for painting. I make use of the author's valuable insights regarding the ways in which such paintings prompt thinking about their status as representation. Yet my thesis is also acutely concerned with artistic production, which requires a close look at diverse artists and their workshop practices involving the genre of still life. Ultimately, my study argues that still-life painting in Spain functioned as a locus for thinking – not only in the course of viewing a work, but also, and significantly, for artists during the processes of making.

In chapter two on the independent still-life painting in Spain, I draw on the sizeable archival research and important insights of earlier scholars, especially Jordan and Cherry. While I focus on the well-studied works and workshop practices of Juan Sánchez Cotán, Alejandro Loarte, Juan van der Hamen, Juan Fernández el Labrador and other artists, I depart from earlier studies by situating the artists' production of still lifes in relation to the discussions of the genre in contemporary art treatises. I look specifically to the texts of Francisco Pacheco, Vicente Carducho and Antonio Palomino in order to

locate how still life is positioned within wider discussions of naturalistic painting in the seventeenth century. While these texts have been examined for their insights into the genre scenes and *bodegones* of the well-known Spanish artist Diego Velázquez, they have yet to be probed with the far more pervasive genre of still-life painting in mind. In this regard, my study joins a growing body of scholarship on Spanish painting that has sought to understand aspects of the medium, and of certain genres in particular, in relation to their discursive roles in contemporary art theory.<sup>32</sup>

My subsequent chapters shift the lens away from the independent still life to concentrate on different examples of mixed images. A *mixed image* is the term I use to signal a painting that combines the conventions of still life with spiritual subject matter. Recently, Cherry has gestured to the peripheral status of such images in stating, “The parameters of the category [of Spanish still life] could be further expanded by the inclusion of religious images, which can be considered ‘divine’ still lifes, such as the Veronica Veil, the Lamb of God and even the severed heads of saints.”<sup>33</sup> It is precisely these three image types – the Lamb of God (and the bound sheep), severed heads of saints, and the veil of Veronica – that my thesis examines. The bound sheep and severed

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<sup>32</sup> For an early compilation of Spanish art theory, see F. Calvo Serraller, *La Teoría de la pintura en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1981). See the comparative discussion of still lifes and genre painting by different Spanish treatise writers in Karin Hellwig, *La literatura artística española en el siglo XVII* (Madrid: Visor, 1999), 253-282. For considerations of art theory in relation to Velázquez' paintings, see Steven N. Orso, *Velázquez, Los Borrachos, and Painting at the Court of Philip IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Emily Umberger, “Velázquez and Naturalism I; Interpreting ‘Los Borrachos,’” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 24 (October 1993): 21–43; Tanya J. Tiffany, “Interpreting Velázquez: Artistic Innovation and Painted Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Seville” (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins, 2003), 53-112.

<sup>33</sup> Peter Cherry, John Loughman and Lesley Stevenson, *In the Presence of Things: Four Centuries of European Still-Life Painting* (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2010), 37.



heads of saints are taken up in chapters three and four, respectively, while the Veronica veil is briefly considered in the conclusion.

In my study, I do not aim to expand the genre of still-life painting so much as create a framework for understanding the mixing of the newly established genre of still life with religious subject matter. Mixed images have not received much scholarly attention. Only a handful of studies have assessed the various image types, with some receiving far more consideration than others.<sup>34</sup> The three image types constitute a distinct category of picture that combines the sacred with still life; however, they must also be understood relative to a broader spectrum of cultural production. Cherry's use of the term 'divine' – a translation of the phrase *a lo divino* – to signal the image types that I consider in my thesis is indicative of this association. In current scholarship, the phrase *a lo divino* is affixed to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works of Spanish literature and art that merge the sacred with conventionally non-religious literary and pictorial genres. The term was first applied to painting by the literary historian Emilio Orozco Díaz who, extrapolating from his discussion of *a lo divino* texts, applied the phrasing to certain portraits of female saints that resembled worldly portraits of Sevillian ladies by the artist

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<sup>34</sup> The images addressed in my conclusion have received attention in a handful of article-length studies. See M.L. Caturla, "La Santa Faz de Zurbarán, trompe-l'oeil 'a lo divino,'" *Goya: Revista de Arte* 64–65 (1965): 202–5; Victor Stoichita, "La Verónica de Zurbarán," *Norba: Revista de Arte* 11 (1991): 71–90; Victor Stoichita, "Bodegones a lo divino," in *El bodegón*, ed. John Berger (Madrid: Fundación Museo del Prado, 2000), 87–105.

Francisco de Zurbarán.<sup>35</sup> Since then, art historians have adopted *a lo divino* phrasing to qualify works of art.<sup>36</sup>

Recognition of a wider tendency in Spanish painting to blur genres is productive, if not yet entirely understood.<sup>37</sup> To my mind, though, affixing *a lo divino* to the paintings addressed in this study implies too strongly that one genre of picture – still life – has been appropriated by another. This has the unfortunate consequence of having us overlook the dynamic tensions created at the intersections of genres. I thus prefer the term *mixed image* to allow such tensions to remain in focus and present in the reader’s mind, though by using image I wish not to lose the material resonance that is so pivotal to these paintings. By studying the three image types all together, and in relation to broader developments in still-life painting, my thesis seeks to better understand the ways in which still life’s conventions were repurposed for sacred ends. As I suggest in the chapters on mixed images, when artists portrayed sacred subject matter using the conventions of still life, they did so with a conscious understanding of the associations that had accrued to that genre.

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<sup>35</sup> See Emilio Orozco Díaz, “Retratos a lo divino: Para la interpretación de un tema de la pintura de Zurbarán,” in *Temas del barroco de poesía y pintura*. (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1947), 29–36. The text is a modified version of a text published by the author in 1942.

<sup>36</sup> Julián Gallego uses the term *bodegón a lo divino* to designate Diego Velázquez’ *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* (c. 1618). See Gallego, *Vision et symboles*, 252. Alfonso Pérez Sánchez has applied the phrase “*trampantojos ‘a lo divino’*” to statue paintings, or paintings made after sculpture, that closely mimic the real. Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, “Trampantojos ‘a lo divino,’” *Lecturas de Historia del Arte III* (1992): 139–55.

<sup>37</sup> David Darst makes a distinction between texts that he classifies as *a lo divino* and other texts written during the seventeenth century that represent a more subtle process of converting profane literary genres. According to Darst, the latter “manipulate the closing moments to establish a religious closure resulting from some kind of conversion” in the form of marriage or spiritual conversion to reaffirm the status quo. Although I do not see the mixed images considered in this thesis working in a similar manner, Darst’s discussion is useful for thinking about an alternate way of conceptualizing the mixing of genres. See David H. Darst, *Converting fiction: Counter Reformational Closure in the Secular Literature of Golden Age Spain* (Chapel Hill: U.N.C., Department of Romance Languages, 1998).

## Artistic climate

Interests in the genre of still-life painting among painters must be situated in relation to broader patterns of artistic production and collecting in seventeenth-century Spain. Although the Spanish King Philip IV (1621-1665) was an enthusiastic collector of pictures, his collection in the Alcazar palace in Madrid consisted of very few Spanish paintings relative to foreign ones; excluding the works of El Greco and Ribera, little more than 13 percent of pictures are attributed to Spanish artists, though they might have also authored a number of the unattributed pictures.<sup>38</sup> The upper nobility also had a penchant for foreign pictures, encouraged by their diplomatic tenures abroad as well as encounters with works in the royal collections.<sup>39</sup> Identifying points of contact and parallels between artistic production in Spain and in other parts of Europe, as Marcus Burke, Jonathan Brown, and other scholars have done, has helped to amend longstanding conceptions of Spanish isolation.<sup>40</sup> This research has also brought attention to the fact that, in marked distinction from collecting practices elsewhere in Europe, the high appraisal of foreign works in the Spanish context, and most acutely at court in Madrid if less so in Seville, permitted the vast majority of local artists only partial involvement in the burgeoning culture of collecting. Desires for foreign pictures, among other factors, including moral

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<sup>38</sup> Burke, "A Golden Age of Collecting," 126. For a study of the Alcazar palace, see Steven N. Orso, *Philip IV and the Decoration of the Alcázar of Madrid* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

<sup>39</sup> Brown and Elliott, *A Palace for a King*, 115-116. The authors explain that nobles who held foreign posts formed many of the great seventeenth-century collections.

<sup>40</sup> For an introduction to the multifarious connections during the period with foreign artistic activities, especially those in Italy and the Netherlands, see Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting*. On Italian paintings in Spanish collections, see Marcus B. Burke, "Private Collections of Italian Art in Seventeenth-Century Spain" (PhD diss., New York University, 1984). On the demand for foreign pictures among collectors in Madrid, see Peter Cherry, "Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste," in Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997), esp. 2-35.

restrictions, resulted in constraints on the types of paintings local artists produced. As

Brown has summarized:

...[T]he interest in collecting had a still more profound impact in that it imposed limits on the thematic repertory of Spanish painters. It has often been observed that Spanish painting of the Golden Age is largely restricted to religious subjects (mostly from the New Testament), portraiture, and still life, in that order. Absent, or nearly absent, are mythological and allegorical subjects, scenes of the daily activities of every class of society, and landscapes, townscapes, and seascapes.<sup>41</sup>

As a whole, and relative to other types of non-religious painting, still life features rather prominently in the output of Spanish painters. Certainly, still-life paintings could range considerably in quality. There are, for instance, examples of less successful artists supplying large quantities of still lifes to picture dealers that were then sold for relatively inexpensive sums.<sup>42</sup> More skilled artists, including Labrador and Juan van der Hamen, had still lifes commissioned from them or made works on speculation for a growing market, which was a common practice with this genre of painting.<sup>43</sup>

According to José Miguel Morán Turina and Javier Portús, the esteem for still-life painting would become indicative of a changing tide toward greater numbers of non-religious subjects in Spanish picture collections around 1620.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, the introduction of still life and other types of pictures would give rise to new modes of viewing. In the space of the collection, learning how to look at painting – which included identifying the hand of the artist, the style, compositional elements, the proper distance at

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<sup>41</sup> Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting*, 4.

<sup>42</sup> See the documented examples in Cherry, “Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste,” 78-85, esp. 79.

<sup>43</sup> Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 25.

<sup>44</sup> José Miguel Morán Turina and Javier Portús Pérez, *El arte de mirar: la pintura y su público en la España de Velázquez* (Madrid: Istmo, 1997), 25.

which to view it, and much more – became central to the viewing experience of a true *aficionado de arte*.<sup>45</sup>

A testament to the growing affinity for pictures and its new viewing practices is the extent to which the language of artistic discernment had infiltrated other areas of cultural production, including sermons and the theater, by the seventeenth century.<sup>46</sup> For instance, in a sermon that circulated in print in 1636, the well-known court preacher Fray Hortensio Paravicino brings the distinction between two ways of viewing – *ver* and *considerar* – to bear on painted images.<sup>47</sup> To buttress a larger point about the importance of careful looking and thought, Paravicino draws on the urban experience of pausing before the shop of one of the many picture sellers in central Madrid during an evening stroll on the Calle Mayor. According to Paravicino, when one gazes upon a painting on display outside a shop, there were two different ways of experiencing it. To appreciate its *colorido* in passing, Paravicino explains, would be only to look at the work (*verlo solo*). Alternatively, to attend to a host of other aspects of the picture – its imitation of nature, the decorum in the *historia* and other pictorial aspects such as the gestures of figures and

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<sup>45</sup> For a general summary on the *aficionado*, see Cherry, “Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste,” 35-40. On the issue of the *borrón* in relation to viewing practices, see Gridley McKim-Smith, “Writing and Painting in the Age of Velázquez,” in *Examining Velázquez*, ed. Greta Andersen-Bergdoll, Richard Newman, and Gridley McKim-Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 1-33.

<sup>46</sup> For the ways this manifests in literary works, consult Javier Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento en la España de Lope de Vega* (Hondarribia-Guipúzcoa: Nerea, 1999); Laura R. Bass, *The Drama of the Portrait: Theater and Visual Culture in Early Modern Spain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).

<sup>47</sup> Paravicino’s comments are cited in Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, 49. For the original, see Hortensio Félix Paravicino y Arteaga, *Oraciones evangelicas de Adviento y Quaresma* (En Madrid: en la Imprenta del Reyno, 1636), 94.

the use of foreshortening – would be to consider it (considerarlo) carefully.<sup>48</sup> For Paravicino, attentive looking at pictures is closely tied to turning vision into a form of knowledge. To understand a painting was to contemplate its divergent parts. With the rise of collecting, a work's visual arrangement became increasingly subject to scrutiny among those learned in painting. Attention to pictorial elements was to occur in conjunction with the interpretation of a picture's *historia*.<sup>49</sup> It is worth noting that Paravicino also had non-narrative images in mind when he laid out his example about close looking. In fact, the first type of picture that he calls to mind is a *pais*, or a landscape, which he then follows with mention of a *historia*.<sup>50</sup> Bereft of narrative, landscape paintings – and even more urgently still lifes, which were sure to offer viewers the benefit of proximity to represented things – did nothing if not encourage close scrutiny of their finished surfaces.

Knowledge in Spain about painting soared in comparison to earlier times, which is crucial for understanding how viewers would have made sense of mixed images.<sup>51</sup> It should be emphasized that the mixed images included here for study were not intended

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<sup>48</sup> “Passais por esta calle mayor, veis un lienzo de un pais recién pintado o una Historia, agradaos lo colorido de passo, fue verlo solo; pero deteneos a ver si descubre la imitacion al natural lo vivo de la accion, y el decoro de la historia, o el ademan, el desnudo, o el escorco, aquello es consideralo.” Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Javier Portús notes Paravicino's emphasis on visual elements in Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, 42-53.

<sup>50</sup> Such “paises” likely included among them imported Flemish landscapes or emulations of them. See the reference to “a small Flemish landscape” (algún paisillo flamenco) that could be bought on Madrid's Calle Mayor in Antonio Liñán y Verdugo, *Guía y avisos de forasteros que vienen a la corte* [1621], ed. Edison Simons (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1980), 162. Cited in José Miguel Morán Turina, “Aquí fue troya (de buenas y malas pinturas, de algunos entendidos y otros que no lo eran tanto),” *Anales de Historia del Arte*, no. 3 (1991): 166.

<sup>51</sup> In reference to the Spanish monarchs, Sir Arthur Hopton writes in a letter to the English ambassador in 1638, “They are now become more judicious in & more affectiond unto the Art of Paynting, then they have beene, or then the world imagines.” William Noel Sainsbury, *Original Unpublished Papers Illustrative of the Life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens...* (London, 1859), 353-354. These remarks are published in Elizabeth du Gué-Trapièr, “Sir Arthur Hopton and the Interchange of Paintings between Spain and England in the Seventeenth Century: Part 2,” *The Connoisseur* 164 (1967): 62.

for institutional settings or parish churches. They were made for spaces in the home, a setting that, in the early 1600s, increasingly became a space for picture collecting, as well as a continuing place of private devotion.<sup>52</sup> The mixed images considered in this thesis were all painted in Seville. In that city, the artistic climate differed from that at court in Madrid insofar as it was principally religious institutions that controlled large-scale commissions.<sup>53</sup> Such commissions have also received the majority of scholarly attention when it comes to patronage studies of Sevillian painting, which has meant that the display and interpreting practices involving pictures in Sevillian homes remains an understudied area of research. In recent years, the growing attention to picture collecting in that city has resulted in a handful of publications that consider individual patrons and their artistic preferences.<sup>54</sup> In my chapters on mixed images, I make use of this burgeoning literature, but also look to scholarship generated on collecting and discernment in Madrid and further afield in order to better understand how mixed images were viewed and experienced by contemporaries.

Collecting spaces typically displayed paintings made in diverse pictorial genres, which would have encouraged viewers to hone knowledge about different categories of images.<sup>55</sup> In this study, I argue that, in making mixed images, artists were relying on their

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<sup>52</sup> For a recent collection of essays on the topic of how paintings of religious subject matter were displayed in the space of collections, see Gail Feigenbaum and S. Ebert-Schifferer, *Sacred Possessions: Collecting Italian Religious Art, 1500-1900* (Getty Publications, 2011).

<sup>53</sup> See the overview of Sevillian painting in Enrique Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca sevillana* (Sevilla: Guadalquivir Ediciones, 2003).

<sup>54</sup> Jonathan Brown and Richard L. Kagan, "The Duke of Alcalá: His Collection and Its Evolution," *The Art Bulletin* 69, no. 2 (1987): 231–55; Gabriele Finaldi, ed., *Murillo & Justino de Neve: The Art of Friendship* (Madrid: Museo Nacional de Prado, 2012).

<sup>55</sup> For a discussion of the intertextual experience of looking fostered by the space of the collection, see Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, 111–114.

own familiarity with pictorial forms and conventions, as well as the mounting knowledge about painting that beholders brought to works. Mixed images depend intently on viewers' discernment, on their ability to mobilize knowledge about categories of images and conventions, which was an endeavor facilitated by the space of a collection.<sup>56</sup> It should also be noted that the term *discernment* is often connected to religious types of looking as in, for instance, the act of discerning the divine in a vision. While this use of *discernment* is distinct from the one that I evoke here in relation to mixed images, the buoyancy of the term reiterates how intertwined artistic and religious discernment could become in this context.<sup>57</sup>

The origins of still-life painting in Europe are unclear, but the genre's development is situated within broader early modern interests in examining and visualizing the natural world and its manifold contents. This pursuit joined artistic, scientific, and religious concerns. In Catholic Spain, the development of still life coincided mainly with a mounting emphasis on naturalism in religious painting in the wake of the Council of Trent. Religious pictures were to be accurate and truthful representations of figures and stories that were straightforward and easy to comprehend. Such painting, it was thought, could instruct viewers in sacred stories and serve as an

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<sup>56</sup> The topic of artistic discernment in the Flemish context has been a focus of study. See Zirka Zaremba Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp, 1550-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Elizabeth Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art: A Study in the Location of Value in Seventeenth-Century Flemish Painting," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 46, no. 1 (1995): 252–97; Frances Gage, "'Some Stirring or Changing of Place': Vision, Judgement and Mobility in Pictures of Galleries," *Intellectual History Review* 20, no. 1 (2010): 123–45.

<sup>57</sup> For this use of the term, see Michael Cole, "Discernment and Animation, Leonardo to Lomazzo," in *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Reindert Leonard Falkenburg, Walter S. Melion, and Todd M. Richardson (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), 133–61.



effective conduit to devotion.<sup>58</sup> That still-life painting developed out of a wider turn towards naturalistic imagery in the Spanish context has long been acknowledged. One of the aims of this thesis, however, is to examine how still-life painting occupied an important locus for considerations of naturalism. I refer here both to considerations in a practical sense, as in an artist learning to hone one's skills in recreating the world on canvas, and to considerations in a discursive context insofar as still-life painting, despite its lowly status, became a point of reference for a novel mode of painting in contemporary art theory.

My discussion of naturalism, especially in chapter two, engages most fully with how the issue was articulated in debates that were quite specific to painting, and to sculpture, in seventeenth-century Spain. *Naturalism* is a term that encompasses divergent pictorial styles, which indicates that the term is perhaps best interpreted as a mode of representation.<sup>59</sup> In this study, I use the terms *naturalism* and *naturalistic* to designate paintings or parts therein that aim to recreate as faithfully as possible the appearance of material objects. It is also worth noting, though, that the paintings examined in this thesis, which were made between 1600 and 1675, tend to share similar visual characteristics – characteristics that are congruent with those employed in early independent still lifes. To varying degrees, these works adhere to a mode of naturalism that employs fairly finished

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<sup>58</sup> For a recent synopsis of imagery in Counter-Reformation Spain, see Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, "Image and Counter-Reformation in Spain and Spanish America," in *Sacred Spain: Art and Belief in the Spanish World*, ed. Ronda Kasl and Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos (Indianapolis; New Haven: Indianapolis Museum of Art; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2009), 15–35.

<sup>59</sup> See the discussion of two different approaches to naturalism discussed in Spanish art theory in Chiara Gauna, "Giudizi e polemiche intorno a Caravaggio e Tiziano nei trattati d'arte spagnoli del XVII secolo: Carducho, Pacheco e la tradizione artistica italiana," *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* (1998): 57–78.

surfaces, and strong contrasts of light and shade to mimic the three-dimensional forms found in nature, though there are certainly adaptations as the century wore on.

An understanding of naturalism as a pictorial outcome on the canvas is often discussed in relation to a specific mode of working. This is perhaps most acutely observed when addressing the innovative mode of working associated with Caravaggio in the Italian context. As early as the seventeenth century, art theorists, and allegedly Caravaggio himself, linked the artist's naturalistic portrayals to a method of making that involved empirical observation and close replication of a model and which, in principal at least and as his critics claimed, could result in the direct transcription of world onto canvas. This method is typically contrasted by early art theorists, such as Giovanni Bellori, to an idealist approach where the imagination is entreated to engage in artistic selection, and copying nature is only one aspect of the artistic process.<sup>60</sup> In his *Diálogos de la pintura* (1633), the Italian-born Spanish art theorist Carducho raises these same issues, which I draw on in chapter two to account for the allure of still life, as well as the arguments against it. In my discussion, when referring to working methods in art theory and in practice, and especially those means associated with the pictorial outcome of naturalism, I typically indicate specific techniques – portraying an object from close up, applying light and shade to achieve plasticity of forms – in order to leave aside, whenever possible, the encompassing term *naturalistic approach*. After all, in practice, an artist can never succeed in creating an exact replica of reality, or an image without artistic

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<sup>60</sup> This issue forms the basis of Giovanni Bellori's early critique of Caravaggio. See Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Giovan Pietro Bellori: The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects: A New Translation and Critical Edition*, ed. Hellmut Wohl and Tommaso Montanari, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 179-186.

intervention. Still-life paintings are imaginative constructions; they allow artists to bring fiction together with the real practice of working from life.

In her work on Netherlandish still lifes, Brusati has called attention to the relationship between artifice and naturalism, or what she refers to as realism, a term that is understood to be more closely tied to an actual referent in time and space.<sup>61</sup> In Brusati's words, "...contrary to the fictions the paintings purvey, still lifes do not record as much as they remake the material world for particular kinds of visual consumption."<sup>62</sup> As Brusati explains, realism and artifice work together to "remake" the world for viewers that must be recognized as a fiction that does not necessarily possess an equivalent in the real world. Naturalism contributes to the very fiction of still life displays since it underwrites them with claims to truth.<sup>63</sup> Early still-life paintings in Spain are often quite naturalistic insofar as they strive successfully to replicate material things on canvas. Depicted is not the world transcribed, however, but the world assembled for a specific kind of viewing. Still lifes can also render their artifice quite apparent. For instance,

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<sup>61</sup> The topic of realism has received substantial consideration in Netherlandish art history since the nineteenth century when Dutch pictures were perceived as "slices of everyday life." In the last generation of scholars, realism has been implicated in vexing debates about whether deeper iconographic meaning can be found beneath its "seeming realism," making contemporary texts pivotal in uncovering a work's message, as Eddy de Jongh has proposed. This position has been countered by Svetlana Alpers who instead proposed that realism be seen as connected to a Dutch "art of describing," understanding painting and other forms of visual culture as a means of creating knowledge. For studies by these two scholars and others on the topic of realism, see the essays collected in

<sup>62</sup> Brusati, "Natural Artifice and Material Values," 145.

<sup>63</sup> The relationship between naturalism and truth, especially as it relates to eyewitness testimony and the role of an artist, has also been considered by historians working at the crossroads of early modern art and science. See, for example, Peter Parshall, "Imago Contrafacta: Images and Facts in the Northern Renaissance," *Art History* 16, no. 4 (1993): 554–79; Claudia Swan, "Ad Vivum, Naer Het Leven, from the Life: Defining a Mode of Representation," *Word & Image* 11 (1995): 353–72; Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

Labrador's *Still Life with Bunches of Grapes* is unabashedly a pictorial creation without any pretense to accurate transcription of a larder or any other type of setting (Figure 1).

## Chapters

Not long after the emergence of the independent genre of still-life painting in Spain, artists began to approach religious subject matter using still life's conventions. Mixed images are, in many ways, a response to ongoing demands for sacred imagery in this fervently Catholic context, but they also help to elicit, I argue, a facet of still life that is vital to consider. Still life was a relatively unlegislated genre of picture, especially in comparison to religious painting, as Jordan has already pointed out.<sup>64</sup> It was perceived as separate from religious imagery, and one of the few profane genres to be keenly pursued by Spanish painters. In its newness, the genre was open and malleable. As this thesis demonstrates, in practice and also in theory, artists and treatise writers employed it as a means with which to approach, and reflect on, contemporary matters in painting. Levels of interest in still life erupt in diverse Spanish cities at different moments, prompting my analysis to focus first on Toledo and Madrid, and later on Seville, where a new set of conditions reactivated engagement with the genre.

To understand the extent to which the genre of still life functioned as a forum for experimentation, I explore its relationship to naturalism and how the genre became bound up with enskillment, with technical achievements in painting, and with the novel practice of working from life. The thesis' contribution lies in examining the intriguing ways, and reasons for which, still life and religious imagery were entwined. It charts various intersections between still life and spiritual subject matter, taking into account issues such

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<sup>64</sup> Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 17.

as the everyday and life and death. I trace how still life emerges as a point of reference in theoretical discussions, as a means to provoke reflection in the burgeoning space of the picture collection, and as a tool with which to foreground the materiality of an intensely sacred object, such as the severed head of a saint or the holy veil impressed with Christ's face. Mixed images demonstrate how conventions and practices associated with one genre make meaning in different ways when brought to bear on another. Crucially, they bring into focus how still life functioned as a valuable tool that gave impetus to something new amid the constraints of the artistic climate of seventeenth-century Seville.

Chapter two addresses the rise of still-life painting in Spain in the first third of the seventeenth century, which took place in the Castilian cities of Toledo and Madrid. A market for still lifes soared, particularly in the Habsburg court capital, in response to a number of interrelated factors, including but not limited to Spain's geopolitical ties across Europe, rising interests among the nobility and bureaucrats in forming picture collections, and high levels of imported pictures of divergent subject matter. Still life caught on quickly at court in the 1620s and came to be imputed with a sense of newness and innovation among collectors and artists. Examining the still-life production of Sánchez Cotán, Loarte, Van der Hamen, Labrador and other artists is useful for understanding the practices and conventions that were accruing to the genre. Importantly, as I explain, the novelty of naturalism in still life was increasingly linked to the novel method of working from real inanimate models.

This chapter attends to how Castilian artists reworked imported pictorial types in the process of developing their own inventive compositions to bring forward the artistic choices and adaptations made by early practitioners. At the same time, it is concerned

with how still-life painting was conceptualized and discussed in the writings of Spain's principal art theorists, Carducho and Pacheco, and also Palomino. Spanish art theory has long been viewed as derivative due to long passages quoted and summarized from foreign, and especially Italian theorists. Worth underscoring, however, is how discussions of still life in these texts manifest as direct responses to contemporary artistic concerns that were unfolding in Spain in the 1620s and 1630s. The aim of the chapter, then, is to set out the ways in which, in both practice and theory, still life became a crucial fulcrum for thinking about new approaches to picture making during this period.

In chapter three, the focus shifts to mixed images, specifically to a pictorial invention by Francisco de Zurbarán in Seville in the 1630s. As the favored artist of many religious houses in the city, Zurbarán's oeuvre is inordinately focused on religious pictures, though he, like other artists in Seville, took to painting still lifes in his early years. Still life developed later in Seville than it did in Madrid, and thus Sevillian artists were liable to have become familiar with the genre as it was pursued by Castilian artists, rather than only foreign ones, by way of movements of artists and collectors between the two cities. Whereas chapter two took a broad lens in examining the early development of still life, chapter three concentrates on how still life was mobilized in a selection of works by one artist in particular. In this chapter, I examine two variations of a painting by Zurbarán – one of a bound sheep and the other of an adorned lamb, which symbolizes the Lamb of God. Set in close proximity to the picture plane, and denying any sense of spatial depth, the sacrificial animal in these images is offered up to viewers. I consider Zurbarán's pictures of bound animals, and especially those of the unadorned bound sheep, in relation to discernment, which is a theme that is not frequent, but not absent

from Zurbarán's oeuvre. In mixing genres, Zurbarán's paintings of bound sheep, I argue, elicit the supposition that meaning is generated when reading such a work in relation to other pictures, an activity that was simultaneously being cultivated in the novel spaces of picture collections in seventeenth-century Seville.

While chapter three focuses on a pictorial invention by a single artist, the following chapter explores a type of mixed image that was painted by various artists in Seville. Chapter four addresses the pictorial phenomenon of decapitated saint heads, which became quite popular in the city between 1650 and 1675. A tradition of painting the severed head of John the Baptist had already been established in the Netherlands and in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. When Sevillian artists took to painting the Baptist's head in the mid seventeenth century, it is likely that their points of reference were not only located in painting, but also in polychrome sculpture since it is in polychrome that the saint's head was first portrayed in Seville. Unlike heads in polychrome, though, the painted head was made for private patrons. Additionally, artists working on canvas expanded the repertoire of heads, choosing to paint not only the head of the Baptist but also that of Saint Paul and other saints. In this chapter, I demonstrate how the conventions of still life were mobilized to stage the material fragment of the severed saintly head. By relying on still life, I argue, the pictures succeed in visualizing saintly sacrifice while adhering to contemporary preferences in Seville for private pictures.

Finally, my conclusion briefly outlines the contours of one final example. I return to another image type painted by Zurbarán, the Veronica veil, which the artist painted nearly a dozen times over his career. The material conversions elicited in the portrayal of

Christ's holy face – of portrait becoming cloth and of cloth becoming portrait – are indicative of complex pictorial issues that arise with this type of image. The contact of Christ's face to cloth miraculously generated an *archeiopoetos*, or an image not made by human hands. I end my thesis with a discussion of how still life was again mobilized by this artist when he went to interpret the non-manufactured image.

*Material Conversions*, the title of the thesis, encapsulates divergent issues gathered here for study. The objects of foodstuffs and earthenware routinely portrayed in Spanish still life are connected to an individual's experience of the material world. They are the stuff of everyday life – found in the home and in the marketplace – and are often chosen for study precisely because of their availability in addition to their physical qualities. Still-life painting fostered the art of converting the material world into painted surface through the process of combining oil paint, close observation, and an artist's skilled hand. Painters in seventeenth-century Spain achieved remarkable levels of naturalism, especially in pictorial relief, allowing the play between the materiality of the depicted object and its replication in paint to come to the fore of visual experience. The term *material* also importantly conjures the notion of practice, and the techniques and tools that go into a process of making. In this regard, the term is a gesture to the idea that still life, and the practices associated with it, became a key component of artistic training at a moment when making 'life' studies was quickly gaining ground.

With their portrayals of earthly things, still-life paintings are clearly understood to evoke aspects of the world as it can be seen. Although it cannot be denied that some viewers would have taken pleasure in contemplating symbolic interpretations of foodstuffs, the genre emerged in Spain as a means with which to portray the visible,



rather than the invisible world. In this regard, we must take note that when artists make use of the conventions of still life to portray the severed head of a saint or the veil of Veronica imprinted with Christ's face, they do so in order to evoke most acutely the material remnants of the sacred figures on earth.

*Conversion*, on the other hand, functions in conjunction with the assorted meanings of material to signal the multifarious transformations that are a crucial component of this study, including ones conjured in representation – ripe and unripe fruit, whole and fragmented bodies, and living and death. The term *conversion* is strongly evocative of a spiritual transformation, perhaps quite aptly in this case. However, I use the term to underscore how still life in Spain was a genre whose conventions and practices were poised for redeployment and reinterpretation, which could ultimately give rise to the mixed images considered in the pages that follow.

## Chapter Two: Between practice and theory: the early Spanish still life

### Introduction

Of paintings of fruit and flowers, the seventeenth-century French art theorist André Félibien writes, “Although these sorts of works are not the most considerable in the art of painting, those [artists] who have excelled [at painting them] have not failed to attain a reputation.”<sup>65</sup> As secretary to the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, an institution that would play a crucial role in the formation of classical art theory, Félibien’s opinion of still-life painting as a less admirable pictorial enterprise is far from surprising. That such works could amuse and thus allow their creators to gain a certain degree of recognition did not change the fact that, for the academicians, there was little merit in the portrayal of vegetables, fruit, fish, game and other inanimate things. Inherited from the Renaissance was the notion that history painting, or the depiction of legendary and historical events, was a noble pursuit that roused the intellect and was thus worthy of its status as a liberal art. From this perspective, still-life painting and its imitation of lifeless objects fell short, and summoned instead the more mechanical aspect of the painterly practice. In the preface to a published collection of lectures delivered to the French Academy in 1667, Félibien famously formalized this position by establishing

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<sup>65</sup> “Bien que ces sortes d’ouvrages ne soient pas les plus considerables dans l’art du peindre, toutefois ceux qui s’y sont le plus signalez, n’ont pas laissé d’acquérir de la reputation, come Labrador, de Somme & Michel Ange des Batailles.” Félibien includes Labrador in a subsequent passage in this volume as well. “...[C]ependant on ne laisse pas parmi ces derniers, d’en rencontrer qui ont tant d’habileté & de savoir dans les choses dont ils se mêlent, que les plus habiles d’entr’eux sont souvent beaucoup plus estimez que d’autres qui travaillent à des ouvrages plus relevez. Par exemple...Labrador & de Somme pour toutes sortes de fruits...” André Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes; Avec la vie des architectes*, Nouvelle edition, vol. 4 [1666-1688] (Trevoux: De l’Imprimerie de S.A.S, 1725), 179, 397-398. The first passage is also cited and translated in William B. Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age, 1600-1650* (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1985), 147.

a hierarchy of genres wherein still life would officially take its place at the hierarchy's bottom.

By the time these ideas were concretized in the French Royal Academy in the 1660s, still-life painting had been practiced in cities in Europe for almost seventy years. As early as the 1590s, still life developed as an independent genre in diverse artistic centers, including in the Spanish city of Toledo. In Spain, it was clear from the genre's very beginnings that it was to occupy a less prestigious position than narrative and devotional painting. In the wake of sixteenth-century debates about religion, and the ensuing decrees on images set forth at the Council of Trent (1563), the aim of imagery to recall the stories of the Catholic faith and inspire devotion unquestionably informed the vast majority of artistic production. In this fervently Catholic context, the renewed investment in the image kept the majority of painters occupied with making religious pictures that served as tools for spiritual guidance. How still-life painting gathered momentum within this artistic climate in the first third of the seventeenth century is the subject of the chapter.

In Spain, the still-life paintings of Juan Sánchez Cotán (1560-1627) are the earliest attributed pictures of their kind. Sánchez Cotán was primarily a painter of religious imagery in the city of Toledo, but made a small selection of extraordinary still lifes around 1600. As demonstrated by his *Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber* (c. 1600), Sánchez Cotán's still lifes make use of a fictive window frame, and are composed of an assortment of foodstuffs that are suspended with string from a space outside of the picture (Figure 3). The meticulous organization of foodstuffs forms a descending curve: from the quince, which is slightly recessed in the left upper quadrant,

to the cucumber in the lower right foreground that juts outward toward beholders. Vibrantly illuminated in the painting's foreground, these objects are set in stark contrast to the imposing black ground that lies behind them.

As explained in chapter one, Sánchez Cotán's paintings have long served as the focal point of scholarly interest in the topic of Spanish still life.<sup>66</sup> That the artist chose to leave Toledo when he was in his early forties to join the Carthusian order of monks informed early interpretations of his still lifes, despite the fact that the majority of these works were painted before the artist's departure from Toledo.<sup>67</sup> Since the mid-1980s, however, scholars of Spanish art, especially William Jordan and Peter Cherry, have been eager to dislocate Sánchez Cotán's still lifes and Spanish still-life painting, more generally, from sacred interpretations.<sup>68</sup> According to Jordan and Cherry, and reiterated by others, the innovative aspect of still-life painting can be seen as a function of Spain's conservative artistic climate. Given that religious pictures in this context were to be straightforward and increasingly accessible to the devout – which are concerns that intensified after Trent – early still-life painting offered an attractive alternative. Still life was not required to conform to the same regimented criteria as religious imagery, but permitted artists a degree of freedom in imitating the natural world. In Jordan's words,

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<sup>66</sup> For an overview of this literature, see chapter one, pages 9-11.

<sup>67</sup> For a short biography of the artist, see Diego Angulo Iníguez and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Historia de la pintura española: escuela toledana de la primera mitad del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Instituto Diego Velázquez, 1972), 39-45.

<sup>68</sup> Note, for instance, the focus of the discussion of Sánchez Cotán in Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 43-64. For a direct engagement with the issue of sacred interpretations, see William B. Jordan and Peter Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1995), 19-24; Peter Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza: el bodegón español en el siglo de oro* (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico, 1999), 12-16. Unless otherwise noted, I cite from the English sections of Cherry's text.

this helps to explain “the experimental character of [Sánchez Cotán’s] pictures of fruits, vegetables and game,” referring to the novel way in which the artist has arranged his displays.<sup>69</sup> As Cherry has noted, such a climate for images accounts “to some extent, for the way in which early Spanish painters of still life brought considerable originality, inventiveness and representational skills to the genre.”<sup>70</sup> For these scholars, the pleasurable conceits associated with still-life painting could serve as a retreat, for both artists and viewers, from the serious affairs of religious pictures.<sup>71</sup>

In Spain, still-life painting must be situated between innovation and constraint, especially when one considers the limited options of non-religious subject matter available for pursuit by practicing artists.<sup>72</sup> Early seventeenth-century painters looking to generate their own inventive compositions in non-religious types of painting worked almost exclusively in the genres of still life and portraiture and, only later in the century, landscape. With this in mind, and given the sizeable output of still-life painting, the genre warrants further study, especially when taking into account the mounting interests in naturalism over the period. Naturalism is a capacious term, as outlined in chapter one; I

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<sup>69</sup> Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 17. Victor Stoichita has also characterized Sánchez Cotán’s still lifes as experimental in his interpretations of the artist’s use on the frame. See Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 32.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Cherry, “The Hungry Eye: The Still Lifes of Juan Sánchez Cotán,” *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* LXV, no. 2 (1996): 84.

<sup>71</sup> Javier Portús has referred to still-life painting as “a neutral genre” (un género neutro). See Javier Portús Pérez and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Lo fingido verdadero: bodegones españoles de la colección Naseiro adquiridos para el Prado* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2006), 48. For a recent reading of Sánchez Cotán’s pictures in relation to early scientific imagery, see Mindy Nancarrow, “Sight, Science, and the Still-Life Paintings of Juan Sánchez Cotán,” in *Sense and the Senses in Early Modern Art and Cultural Practice*, ed. Siv Tove Kulbrandstad Walker and Alice E. Sanger (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 63–74.

<sup>72</sup> For a brief overview and relevant sources on the topic, see chapter one, pages 17–19.

use the terms ‘naturalism’ and ‘naturalistic painting’ to describe paintings that strive to recreate, as accurately as possible, real objects in the world on canvas. In using these terms, I do not imply that the outcome on canvas is the result of a mere act of copying an object set before the artist, even if this is how naturalism is often conceptualized in contemporary art treatises. Artifice is routinely involved, as well as exhibited, in Spanish still life, which points to how closely the two – artifice and naturalism – are bound up together in the genre.

Building on studies by earlier scholars, this chapter takes as its point of departure the suggestion that Sánchez Cotán’s paintings – as well as those of other early makers of still life – were of an experimental nature. It focuses on developments in still-life painting in the Castilian cities of Toledo and Madrid between the late 1590s and the early 1630s. My discussion begins with Sánchez Cotán’s paintings in Toledo to consider burgeoning conventions of still-life painting, which were soon after emulated and adapted by other artists. It then shifts the focus to the capital city of Madrid, and to works by Alejandro Loarte (c.1590-1626), Juan van der Hamen y León (1596-1631), Juan Fernández who was known as el Labrador (before 1587-1657) and others who were active in Madrid, or connected to the city, during the 1620s and early 1630s. These artists were regarded during their lifetimes for their adeptness in the novel genre of still life, and their oeuvres have since been well documented.<sup>73</sup> In this chapter, I thus draw on a growing body of

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<sup>73</sup> See especially the discussions of these artists in Diego Angulo Iñiguez and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Historia de la pintura española; escuela madrileña del primer tercio del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Instituto Diego Velázquez, 1969); Angulo Iñiguez and Pérez Sánchez, *Historia de la pintura española: escuela toledana de la primera mitad del siglo XVII*. In addition, ongoing archival studies have brought to light important documentation on the presence of still lifes in collections and on its different practitioners. See, for instance, Mercedes Agulló y Cobo, *Noticias sobre pintores madrileños de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Granada: Departamentos de Historia del Arte de las Universidades de Granada y Autónoma de Madrid, 1978).

published archival materials and commentary, which have been gathered in magisterial overviews of seventeenth-century Spanish still life.<sup>74</sup>

My contribution lies in positioning early still-life painting in relation to broader concerns about painting as they were articulated at court in Madrid. I look to reflections on the genre in the contemporary art treatises of Francisco Pacheco and Vicente Carducho in order to understand how still-life painting emerged as a genre decidedly apart from religious imagery, but also one that mediated contemporary concerns about it. By bringing together emerging practices involving still life with theories on painting, this chapter argues that the genre was a catalyst for thinking about representation in ways that extend beyond the confines of its own (lowly) genre.

### **Imported images: *lienzos de Flandes* and *bodegones de Italia***

In the second part of André Félibien's sentence, which I quote at the beginning of the chapter, the theorist lists the names of a handful of seventeenth-century still-life painters who had succeeded in dazzling contemporaries with their illusionistic displays despite the genre's modest status. Intriguingly, included on his list is the Spanish painter Labrador.<sup>75</sup> In the early 1630s, Labrador was dedicated to painting fruit and flower still lifes for local collectors in the capital city of Madrid. His works, however, caught the attention of a few foreigners at court, including the English ambassador to Spain, and were eventually transported to England, and possibly also to France, where Félibien

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<sup>74</sup> See especially Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*; Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*; Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*.

<sup>75</sup> Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages*, 179.

likely viewed them.<sup>76</sup> That Labrador's still lifes traveled outside of Spain is recognizably an anomaly. Seldom were works by Spanish artists exported to other places in Europe during the seventeenth century. On the other hand, artworks from Catholic-controlled regions flowed rapidly into Spanish cities, including Toledo, Madrid and also Seville. With large numbers of paintings streaming in from abroad, these cities increasingly became spaces in which to encounter a variety of pictorial types.<sup>77</sup>

Imported pictures played a pivotal role in fomenting interests in non-narrative pictures among Spanish artists and collectors.<sup>78</sup> It is telling that when early genre and still-life paintings were first introduced in this context, the type of picture itself was perceived initially to be foreign.<sup>79</sup> In 1600, for example, the collection of the royal chaplain, Lope de Velasco, in Madrid lists a set of 24 "canvases from Flanders of figures

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<sup>76</sup> For exchanges between English diplomats involving Labrador's pictures, see Elizabeth du Gué-Trapier, "Sir Arthur Hopton and the Interchange of Paintings between Spain and England in the Seventeenth Century," *Connoisseur* 164 and 165 (1967): 239-243 and 60-63. A work by Labrador was possibly in France by way of King Philip IV's sister Anne of Austria who married Louis XIII of France. This is noted in Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 154nn2, who cites Anne of Austria's inventory in Jeannine Baticle in Gilberte Martin-Méry and Musée des beaux-arts (Bordeaux), *La nature morte de Brueghel à Soutine Galerie des beaux-arts, Bordeaux, 5 mai-1er septembre 1978* (Bordeaux: Musée des beaux-arts, 1978), 56.

<sup>77</sup> In 1598, the concerned *arbitrista*, or critic at court, Cristobal de Herrera commented that the Spanish economy would benefit, among other things, if local artists learned to paint *lienzos* (likely referring to genre or landscape scenes) instead of importing them from Flanders as was the custom. Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera, *Discursos del amparo de los legitimos pobres, y reduccion de los fingidos: y de la fundacion y principio de los albergues destos reynos, y ampara de la milicia dellos* (En Madrid: Por Luis Sánchez, 1598), 142-143. Cited in José Miguel Morán Turina, "Aquí fue troya (de buenas y malas pinturas, de algunos entendidos y otros que no lo eran tanto)," *Anales de Historia del Arte*, no. 3 (1991): 177n81.

<sup>78</sup> On early collecting of still life in Spain, see Sarah Schroth, "Early Collectors of Still-Life Painting in Castile," in *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age, 1600-1650*, William B. Jordan (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1985), 28-39.

<sup>79</sup> The foreign perception of the *bodegón* around 1600 is discussed in Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 4-5.



and vegetables” (liencos de flandes de figures y verduras).<sup>80</sup> Likewise, in Toledo in the same year, the inventory of Juan de Borja included among his almost 300 paintings, “another kitchen scene from Flanders” (otro lienzo de la cocina de flandes).<sup>81</sup> These would have likely been made in the format popularized by the Flemish painter Pieter Aertsen. Remarkably, when Spanish artists began to produce similar types of pictures, they too would make reference to the type’s foreign provenance.<sup>82</sup> In his appeal to receive payment, the court portraitist Pantoja de la Cruz reminded Agustín Álvarez de Toledo, who was a member of the Council of the Indies, of the three “*bodegones* from Italy” that he had made for him seven years prior in 1592.<sup>83</sup> As scholars have proposed, the use of the term *bodegón* in this instance presumably refers to early genre paintings made in the Italian region of Lombardy by artists such as Vincenzo Campi and Bartolomeo Passarotti.<sup>84</sup> Although the term *bodegón* is now understood to indicate a Spanish type of painting, it is important to note that early modern Spaniards used the term to designate

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<sup>80</sup> Archivo Histórico de Protocolos de Madrid (hereafter AHPM) Prot 895, f. 125v. Cited in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 23n14.

<sup>81</sup> AHPM Prot. 933, f. 379ff. Cited in Schroth, “Early Collectors of Still-Life,” 32, and earlier in Cristóbal Pérez Pastor, *Noticias y documentos relativos á la historia y literatura españolas*, vol. 11 (Madrid: Imprenta de la Revista de Legislación, 1914), 83.

<sup>82</sup> Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 4-5.

<sup>83</sup> Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, “Sobre la vida y las obras de Juan Pantoja de la Cruz,” *Archivo Español de Arte* 20, no. 78 (1947): 102. Cited in Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 4.

<sup>84</sup> Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros de 1600 a Goya: Museo del Prado, noviembre 1983/enero 1984* (Spain: Ministerio de Cultura, Dirección General de Bellas Artes y Archivos, 1983), 24. For a recent study on genre paintings by Campi and Passarotti, see Sheila McTighe, “Foods and the Body in Italian Genre Paintings, about 1580: Campi, Passarotti, Carracci,” *The Art Bulletin* 86, no. 2 (June 2004): 301–23.

what were considered, at least initially, foreign pictorial types – Italian as well as Flemish – that included human figures along with inanimate objects.<sup>85</sup>

These references to inventories denote late-sixteenth-century genre pictures; however, the point about an initial foreignness is arguably valid for still-life painting as well. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Spanish agents were scattered throughout Europe. Officials who held posts in Spanish-controlled territories, such as Milan, were exposed to new types of painting and were key in forging connections between local artistic communities and their native lands.<sup>86</sup> Through these channels, and others, early still-life paintings were introduced in Spain, where they were viewed and emulated by local artists.<sup>87</sup> This is suggested by the example of the Condestable de Castilla, Juan Fernández de Velasco. During his tenure as governor of Milan, which is one of the earliest cities in which the independent still life was made, Juan Fernández de Velasco and his wife, María Girón, had their portraits painted by two of the region's foremost practitioners of still-life painting, Ambrogio Figino and Fede Galizia.<sup>88</sup> The couple would surely have been familiar with the still lifes of these

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<sup>85</sup> Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 4-5.

<sup>86</sup> See, for instance, the collected inventories of various Spanish officials who held foreign posts in Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997).

<sup>87</sup> Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 31. For a recent study on Spanish Milan, see. Stefano D'Amico, *Spanish Milan: A City within the Empire, 1535-1706* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). On developments in naturalism in the Lombard context, see the essays in Andrea Bayer, ed., *Painters of Reality: The Legacy of Leonardo and Caravaggio in Lombardy* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004).

<sup>88</sup> Although Fede Galizia's portrait of Maria Girón is unknown to us, Galizia would have painted it before 1595 since Paolo Morigia refers to it in that year. For the excerpt from Morigia's text and more on the collecting habits of the Condestable de Castilla, see María Cruz de Carlos Varona, "'Al modo de los Antiguos.' Las colecciones artísticas de Juan Fernández de Velasco, VI Condestable de Castilla," in *Patronos y coleccionistas: los condestables de Castilla y el arte (siglos XV-XVII)*, ed. Begoña Alonso Ruiz, Felipe Pereda, and María Cruz de Carlos Varona (Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones e Intercambio Editorial, Universidad de Valladolid, 2005), 255.

Lombard artists and perhaps even purchased a selection of pictures by them or their compatriots to bring back to Spain. Listed in an inventory taken of Fernández de Velasco's possessions in 1606, shortly after his return to his homeland, are unattributed paintings of fruit.<sup>89</sup>

Paintings of single fruit bowls by Figino, Galizia and Panfilo Nuvolone are among the earliest independent still lifes made in Europe and, significantly, must have been known in Spain from an early date.<sup>90</sup> Figino's *Metal Plate with Peaches and Vine Leaves* (1591-94) in a private collection is a small work that portrays an assortment of peaches and leaves collected in a shallow metallic bowl (Figure 4).<sup>91</sup> Similar paintings were made in Spain during the same period. Practically concurrent with the early output of still life in Milan is the anonymous Spanish *Plate of Pears* (1595-1600), which is currently housed in the Prado museum (Figure 5). Although unattributed, *Plate of Pears* is confidently thought to be the work of a Spanish artist due to the characteristically dry application of pigment.<sup>92</sup> *Plate of Pears*, which measures 23 × 32.5 cm, approximate the

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. Cruz de Carlos suggests that two still lifes documented in Fernández' library in 1608 in Madrid (upon his return to Spain) might have been painted by Figino and Galizia. Additionally, in commenting on a painting of fruit listed in Fernández's post-mortem inventory of 1613, Peter Cherry proposed that the unusual use of the verb *contrahechar* (to counterfeit) to describe the picture might indicate that it was imported. See Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 21.

<sup>90</sup> Pérez Sánchez and later scholars note the similarities between the works of Figino, Galizia and Panfilo Nuvolone and unattributed Spanish pictures of stemmed bowls of pears and plums. See Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros*, 30.

<sup>91</sup> Figino's painting measures 21 × 30 cm. On Italian still-life painting, see Mina Gregori, *La natura morta italiana: da Caravaggio al Settecento: Firenze, Palazzo Strozzi, 26 giugno-12 ottobre 2003* (Milano: Electa, 2003).

<sup>92</sup> Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 10. Jordan draws a comparison between these two images, and notes that "the sensuous handling of the paint and warm coloration differentiate [*Plate of Pears*] from the polished Lombard manner."

dimensions of Figino's picture, which suggests that its anonymous author must have been familiar with imported images from Lombardy.

Little is known about still life's beginnings in Spain, and why paintings would have first been made in the Toledan context. Scholars have remarked that educated humanist circles around the city's cathedral may have fostered its development. As Sarah Schroth has demonstrated, these individuals were among the earliest collectors of Juan Sánchez Cotán's still lifes.<sup>93</sup> Toledo had been an important residence of the peripatetic Habsburg court during the sixteenth century before King Philip II declared Madrid the permanent capital of Spain in 1561.<sup>94</sup> After the court took leave of Toledo, however, the city remained the residence of the Archbishop of Toledo and the center of the Spanish Church, which ensured close ties between Toledo and the neighboring court capital. This is important since it is the movement of artists, collectors and paintings between the two cities that helps to fuel interest in the burgeoning genre.

The Toledan artist Blas de Prado (c.1545-1599) is considered the first identified practitioner of still-life painting in the Spanish context, making pictures in the early 1590s. Although no extant still lifes have been attributed to Blas, it has been suggested that he would have authored single bowls of fruit similar to *Plate of Pears* and reminiscent of sixteenth-century pictures imported from Lombardy.<sup>95</sup> A reference to Blas' pictures can be found in Francisco Pacheco's *Arte de la pintura* (1649). Pacheco recalls

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<sup>93</sup> Schroth, "Early Collectors of Still-Life Painting in Castile," 28–39.

<sup>94</sup> For more on the artistic climate in Toledo, and the work of El Greco, see Fernando Marías, *El Greco in Toledo* (London: Scala, 2001).

<sup>95</sup> Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros*, 30; Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 10-14.

seeing delightful paintings of fruit by Blas when the artist passed through his native city of Seville in 1593.<sup>96</sup> Following the account of his visit, Pacheco also notes that Sánchez Cotán was Blas' "disciple" in this genre.<sup>97</sup> The connection between the two artists around still life is further reinforced by the identification of one of Blas' sketchbooks in the possession of Sánchez Cotán in 1603.<sup>98</sup>

### **The play of *parerga***

Sánchez Cotán's impressive paintings help to elucidate specific developments in the genre of still life in the Spanish context. Before examining specific images, however, I turn briefly to art theory in order to position still-life painting within a broader purview of imagery, reserving most of the discussion of art theory for the end of the chapter. Still-life painting was perceived as a new category of image in Spain during the first third of the seventeenth century, and one that was recognizably set apart from the pervasive modes of religious imagery. To better understand the significance of still life as a distinct genre, it is useful to turn to the concept of *parerga*, or the accessories to a main work and, specifically, to how *parerga* is addressed in Pacheco's *Arte de la pintura* and other contemporary texts, especially those penned in Catholic regions.<sup>99</sup> As one of the main

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<sup>96</sup> Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura*, ed. Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), 511.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 45. For the inventory, see Julio Cavestany, *Florerios y bodegones en la pintura española* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte, 1936-1940), 136-38.

<sup>99</sup> As Victor Stoichita has demonstrated, the structural development of still life can be understood as an intertextual process related to the idea of *parerga* since the contents of still life were once the marginalia in religious imagery prior to the invention of the independent genre. Stoichita does not deal with art theory in the Spanish context, which I focus on here. See Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, esp. 23-29.

theoretical reflections on painting during the period in Spain, Pacheco's discussion helps to clarify the freedoms and limitations imposed on the genre of still life.

The term *parerga* is drawn from the rhetorical theories of ancient authors to describe elements or accessories that embellish a given work. In his *Painting of the Ancients* (1637), the early modern commentator Franciscus Junius summarizes for his readers Quintilian's definition of *parerga*. In Junius words, *parerga* are those parts "added to the worke for to adorne it."<sup>100</sup> Junius also summarizes Pliny the Elder's definition of *parerga* since it is this ancient author who relates the term specifically to painting by designating as *parerga* the accessories in an image that accompany its principal work.<sup>101</sup>

In the sixteenth century, when advocacy for clarity of meaning in religious painting was legion, and naturalism in painting was on the rise, it is no surprise that the language of adornment would be deployed by early modern art theorists to criticize potential obstacles or distractions to one's proper encounter with a work of art. Animals, fruits and vegetables had long been present as accessories in religious paintings where they often carried spiritual significance and encouraged viewers to understand them in relation to the principal scene. In this period, however, a shift began to take place wherein the objects themselves, rendered in extraordinary naturalistic detail, came to be perceived in new ways and assumed a more prominent role in representation. Early modern writers

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<sup>100</sup> Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients, in Three Booke: Declaring by Historicall Observations and Examples, the Beginning, Progresse, and Consummation of That Most Noble Art, and How Those Ancient Artificers Attained to Their Still so Much Admired Excellencie* (London: Printed by R. Hodgkinsonne, and are to be sold by Daniel Frere ..., 1638), 353-54.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 354. Junius cites Pliny's example of the porch of Minerva's temple to which Protogenes added small ships that are "among the things which painters call *Parerga*."

discussed *parerga* as an issue concerned with disproportion between a work's disparate parts.<sup>102</sup> The perils of *parerga* could be linked to an artist's choice in crafting one's composition or, conversely, to the attention granted a picture's various parts by a beholder.

In Pacheco's *Arte de la pintura*, the concept of *parerga* is summoned to discuss the appropriate attention to a picture's divergent parts by a beholder. In his treatise, Pacheco recounts a story about a painting of the Last Supper, which was painted by fellow Andalusian artist and prelate Pablo de Céspedes.<sup>103</sup> De Céspedes, Pacheco recalls, angrily declared that his figures went unnoticed due to an exquisitely painted glass vessel – an accessory – in the picture's foreground that garnered much attention by viewers of his painting. To remedy the situation, Pacheco states, De Céspedes hurriedly called for the vessel to be effaced and ultimately destroyed.<sup>104</sup> Pacheco's story about Pablo de Céspedes is a contemporary version of the ancient story of Protogenes. According to Pliny, when seeing that his depiction of a partridge was attracting more attention than the carefully crafted satyr, Protogenes sought permission to destroy his image of the partridge. Pacheco was undoubtedly aware of the ancient story since he includes it in his text as a preamble to his tale about De Céspedes.<sup>105</sup> Although Pacheco does not use the term *parerga*, the term is used in reference to the same story about Protogenes when it is

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<sup>102</sup> See the discussion of *parerga* in Gabriele Paleotti, *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, ed. Paolo Prodi, trans. William McCuaig (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2012), 231-232.

<sup>103</sup> Zahira Véliz, *Artists' Techniques in Golden Age Spain: Six Treatises in Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 99. Certain sections on still-life painting in Pacheco's *Arte* have been translated into English in Véliz' text. When possible, I quote from this translation.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Although the story and lesson are the same, in Pacheco's account, the artist is Parrhasius instead of Protogenes. Pacheco cites the text of a sixteenth-century Spaniard Pedro Mejia as his source.

recounted by Junius in his *Painting of the Ancients*.<sup>106</sup> In Pacheco's *Arte*, both stories, contemporary and ancient, tell of the irritation of the painter at those who "gaze with rapt attention, admiring the least important things" while "the principal part of the work is forgotten," as if to implore readers to heed the proper hierarchy of images.<sup>107</sup> Although Pacheco's comments are not overly characterized by religious zeal, they nevertheless reveal his dissatisfaction when viewers do not execute proper discernment of a religious scene.

Pacheco incorporates the ancient story about *parerga*, as well as his own version involving De Céspedes, in the same section of *Arte* that he discusses the new genre of still-life painting. He undoubtedly perceived links between *parerga* and still life, which is perhaps to be expected given similarities in their pictorial content. By addressing the issue of *parerga* and independent still lifes together in a section in Book Three titled "On paintings of animals and birds, fish markets and *bodegones*," Pacheco's text allows us to see the different exigencies for engagement with this pictorial content depending on the category of picture. In contrast to the admonitory tone that Pacheco takes with regards to overbearing still lifes in religious painting, he finds independent still lifes "pleasing and entertaining" even if, he claims, they do not prove difficult to make.<sup>108</sup> Given the absence of sacred subject matter, still-life painting was clearly perceived by this theorist, and presumably by others, to allow for certain liberties.

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<sup>106</sup> Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients*, 354-55. Although Junius himself does not mention still-life painting in this account of *parerga*, his discussion would later serve as a source for theoretical reflections on still-life painting in the Dutch Republic. For these connections, see Andrea Gasten, "Dutch Still-Life Painting: Judgements and Appreciation," in *Still-Life in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. E. de Jongh (Auckland: Auckland City Art Gallery, 1982), 16-17.

<sup>107</sup> Véliz, *Artists' Techniques*, 99.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 91, 93.



Likewise, in 1635, the Spanish priest Bernardino de Villegas mounts a critique against Flemish landscape paintings composed with hermetic saints.<sup>109</sup> For Villegas, paintings that are filled with peasant animals, forests, gardens and other natural settings have been falsely named spiritual in subject matter because they include a tiny penitent Saint Jerome hidden in the background. Instead of being named a “panel of Saint Jerome” (el paño de San Gerónimo), he opines, it would make more sense to call it a “panel of the forest in Flandes” (el paño de la Floresta de Flandes) given what is depicted therein.<sup>110</sup> In the Italian context, Cardinal Federico Borromeo of Milan would go one step further in offering a solution to the problem identified by Villegas since he too was displeased with current depictions of saints in landscapes. In his treatise *Della pittura sacra* (1624), Borromeo writes, “...it would have been preferable to depict all these things in a landscape, in a distinct painting, and to carefully represent [the saint’s] figure, entirely devout, in another canvas destined for the religious cult, so that it could be worshipped and revered.”<sup>111</sup> Borromeo’s is an attempt to safeguard the experience of a religious image by moving landscape to another painting.

The stories about *parerga* readily testify to the allure of naturalistic imagery, which were increasingly detectable in a painting’s accessories. They also alert us to how such accessories and their levels of naturalism could prove problematic in a religious

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<sup>109</sup> See the published excerpt from Bernardino de Villegas’s text in Miguel Herrero García, *Contribución de la literatura a la historia del arte* (Madrid: impr. de S. Aguirre, 1943), 154-55.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>111</sup> I quote the English translation of Borromeo’s text in Lorenzo Pericolo, *Caravaggio and Pictorial Narrative: Dislocating the Istorya in Early Modern Painting* (Harvey Miller, 2011), 245. Victor Stoichita also points to Borromeo’s treatise in discussing *parerga* in relation to still life. Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, 25. On Borromeo as an art patron, see Pamela M. Jones, *Federico Borromeo and the Ambrosiana: Art and Patronage in Seventeenth-Century Milan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

image – so much so that in some cases it was safer to move such experiments to a “distinct painting.” Two things are worth emphasizing here that are central to my overall discussion. First, early explorations in highly naturalistic painting in Spain happened in the genre of still-life painting, which was viewed as a genre set apart from religious imagery.<sup>112</sup> Second, the issue of naturalism in depicting religious figures was subject to differing opinions in the first third of the seventeenth century, which, as I return to later, needs to be considered in a discussion of still-life painting. In other words, while still-life painting was perceived as a genre apart from religious imagery, it was not disengaged from wider concerns regarding naturalism.

### **Framing Juan Sánchez Cotán’s pictures**

Juan Sánchez Cotán’s paintings are indicative of how, from an early date, artists in Spain adapted and experimented with imported pictorial types. As *Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber* in San Diego attests, the artist’s still lifes depart considerably from earlier paintings of bowls of fruit. As in the painting in San Diego, in *Still Life with Game Fowl* (c.1600) in the Art Institute of Chicago, string has been judiciously wrapped around the stem of a quince and the outer leaves of a cabbage to allow the large textured masses to hang immobile in pictorial space (Figure 6).<sup>113</sup> The picture bears a close resemblance

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<sup>112</sup> The still lifes of Sánchez Cotán, one of the earliest makers of still life in Castile, bear little resemblance to his religious paintings. This is noted in Angulo Iníguez and Pérez Sánchez, *Historia de la pintura española; escuela toledana de la primera mitad del siglo XVII*, 45-51; Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 27-28.

<sup>113</sup> Scholarship on Sánchez Cotán’s still lifes has called attention to the unique organization of foodstuffs in the San Diego *Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber*. For instance, Martin Soria has characterized the parabolic arrangement as illustrative of an “ascetic idealism” as well as one that has a mathematical logic. See Martin S. Soria, “Sánchez Cotán’s ‘Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber,’” *The Art Quarterly* 8 (1945): 225–33. Following Soria, Alfonso Pérez Sánchez proposed the possibility of a link with intellectual circles at Philip II’s El Escorial in Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros de 1600 a Goya*, 34.

to *Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber*, which is ostensibly the source for this later image.<sup>114</sup> In *Still Life Game Fowl*, an assortment of hanging fowl has been integrated into the composition and carefully lowered to varying degrees into the space of the fictive window. A duck on the far right is depicted close to the picture's surface and its chest illuminated by a light source from the left to endow it with a third dimension. By casting its shadow on the outside edge of the window frame, the duck is a remarkable testimony to the interests in illusion and relief that form an integral component of the still life genre.

Sánchez Cotán's use of a fictive window frame distinguishes the artist's works from those of his contemporaries elsewhere in Europe, and would surely have registered as such with early viewers who were increasingly familiar with imported pictures. In *The Self-Aware Image*, Victor Stoichita briefly introduces Sánchez Cotán's pictures in a broader discussion of how the presence of frames and embrasures in new genres of early modern painting, such as still life, mark the confrontation with the religious image, wherein their contents had only ever occupied the margins or *parerga* of painting.<sup>115</sup> He proposes that artist's painted frame has meta-artistic potential insofar as it asserts the newly established place of the lowly things of still life. By mimicking the borders of the picture, Stoichita explains, the painted frame in Sánchez Cotán's paintings attracts attention to the novelty of its pictorial content at the center of representation.<sup>116</sup>

My discussion focuses instead on the ways in which Sánchez Cotán's painted frame was made in dialogue with imported genre scenes of markets and kitchens that

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<sup>114</sup> Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 30.

<sup>115</sup> Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, 30-33.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

presumably inspired its making. The novelty of the artist's fictive frame has prompted much speculation about the type of setting the paintings readily depict. To account for the relationship between the frame and the dark background, Eric Young long ago developed the idea that what is portrayed in Sánchez Cotán's pictures is a *cantarero*, a dark cooling space or larder in the interior of the Spanish home, where food is typically stored in the warmer regions of the country.<sup>117</sup> The practice of hanging foodstuffs with string was thought to slow the effects of time on them, and thus served a functional use in the domestic context. Cherry has suggested that the window might not reproduce a real space but functions instead as a pictorial mechanism.<sup>118</sup> While this is likely the case, it is also worth attending to the artful conversion in the artist's still lifes of real lived space into a representational one.

It is evident from contemporary references that the fictive frame depicted in Sánchez Cotán's painting was perceived as a window by the artist as well as by beholders. For example, in the artist's own inventory, a canvas that already contained a painted frame but had not yet been filled with comestibles is described as a "window" (*ventana*).<sup>119</sup> In addition, until recently, all firmly attributed still lifes by Sánchez Cotán had displayed a fictive frame on only three sides, as seen in *Still Life with Game Fowl* (Figure 6). In these images, the upper edge of the window is repeatedly left off the canvas. Conversely, in *Still Life with a Basket of Cherries* (c.1600) in a private collection,

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<sup>117</sup> Eric Young, "New Perspectives on Spanish Still-Life Painting of the Golden Age," *The Burlington Magazine* 118 (1976): 204.

<sup>118</sup> Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 32.

<sup>119</sup> "A canvas primed for a window" (un lienzo exprimado para una ventana) in Cavestany, *Floreros y bodegones en la pintura española*, 137. Other authors have made note of this reference and the artist's use of a window. See, for instance, Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 48, 50.

which is now accepted as a work by Sánchez Cotán, the frame is rendered from a lower vantage point to grant visual access to all four sides (Figure 7). From the upper sill, a single basket of cherries hangs from a large hook, which gives this painting by the artist a closer resemblance to an actual window than any of the others. A last indication that the fictive frame was to recall a window is the manner in which a number of works – works that have long been understood to be still lifes by Sánchez Cotán – were displayed in the Spanish monarch’s Pardo Palace. In one of the Pardo’s galleries, the paintings were positioned in black and gold frames above the doors, and were to match the windows that ran along the exterior wall to create a visual parallel with them.<sup>120</sup>

While foods were suspended with string in a *cantarero* in seventeenth-century Spain, as scholars have pointed out, it is worth noting that foodstuffs could also hang in a window in the home. A portrayal of the ordinary use of string in suspending objects in a window opening can be found in a pen and ink drawing attributed to the late-seventeenth-century Valencian artist Juan Conchillos Falcó (1641-1711). Conchillos’ *Domestic Scene* (undated) in the Prado is a rare example of a Spanish drawing that portrays a humble scene of everyday life (Figure 8).<sup>121</sup> *Domestic Scene* depicts a woman preparing a meal over a small stove fire as a man and young child look on. These activities take place in an exterior setting, possibly on the porch of their modest home, while a large window is visible in the right background of the scene. From the upper edge of the large window,

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<sup>120</sup> Archivo General de Palacio (hereafter AGP), Caja 9404, n.3 of the 1653 inventory of the palace, entry 145. “A small fruit still life with its gold and black frame and an open melon in the middle” (Un frutero Pequeño Con su marco de oro y negro y un melon abierto en medio). Cited in William B. Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen y León & the Court of Madrid* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 300n24. For a brief description of the gallery’s layout, see pages 57-58.

<sup>121</sup> For Juan Conchillos Falcó’s drawing, see plate XIII in Diego Angulo Iñiguez and Alfonso E Pérez Sánchez, *A Corpus of Spanish Drawings, Vol. 4. Valencia 1600-1700* (London: Harvey Miller, 1988).

the artist has sketched a series of comestibles that are suspended with string and descend toward a line up of earthenware vessels arranged on the window's lower sill. In Conchillos' drawing, the functional nature of the string is emphasized by its uniform length. A consistent distance is maintained between the foodstuffs and the upper threshold of the window, as if to keep the opening mostly clear to facilitate the movement of foodstuffs and cooking objects from inside to outside and vice versa.

Presumably, Conchillos' *Domestic Scene* is a fairly truthful portrayal of how such a window – and string – was put to use in domestic settings. Conversely, in Sánchez Cotán's paintings, the clever use of string moves the displays of foodstuffs away from ordinary use.<sup>122</sup> In *Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber* in San Diego and *Still Life with Game Fowl* in Chicago, not only does the string vary noticeably in length for different foodstuffs, but also is oddly prominent in the frame. In the San Diego *Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber*, the organization of foodstuffs into a descending arc with string renders the artifice acute (Figure 3). Without a doubt, this is no straightforward display of foodstuffs to be found in the domestic home, or in the stalls of market vendors in the plaza of Zocodover in Toledo. Even if the notion that Sánchez Cotán would have constructed the entire scene all at once is likely itself a fiction, this does not impede the picture from calling up the very processes involved in its making. In *Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber*, string draws attention to the diligence that went into building the display, to the crafty way, for instance, that the artist in his workshop has looped string through the outer leaves of the cabbage head in order to suspend and study it. Moreover, Sánchez Cotán's conspicuous signature on the fictive frame in the painting and in another

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<sup>122</sup> This observation has also been made in Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 29.

work, *Still Life with Game Fowl, Fruit and Vegetables* (1602) by him in the Prado, further attests to the intervention of the artist's hand in these displays (Figure 9).<sup>123</sup>

### Surface and depth

Sánchez Cotán's combined use of the window and string strongly indicates that he appropriated everyday practices to bring them into the realm of making pictures. I develop this further below, but first attend to how the window functioned as a crucial device in Sánchez Cotán's still lifes. In the fifteenth century, the window became closely aligned with painting when the Italian art theorist and commentator Leon Battista Alberti cast the window as a metaphor for painting in order to describe the perspectival space forged in such an opening.<sup>124</sup> For Alberti, a painting was "an open window through which I see what I want to paint," or the very departure point in the creation of a picture.<sup>125</sup> Of course, Sánchez Cotán's window is considerably different from the perspectival construction leading to the well-configured *historia* that Alberti envisioned. Nevertheless, Alberti's understanding of the window as a transparent veil on the picture plane and an opening that conjures up spatial depth seems also to orient Sánchez Cotán's use of the window in his pictures. In other words, the fictive window reminds us that we are poised in front of a picture, on this side of representation, while it also encourages us

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<sup>123</sup> For a discussion of the signature, see Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, 33.

<sup>124</sup> Of the two books in Sánchez Cotán's possession in 1603, one was Jacopo Barozzi de Vignola's *Le due regole della prospettiva pratica* (Rome, 1583). Cavestany, *Floreros y bodegones en la pintura española*, 137. See also the comments on the artist's inventory in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 31-32.

<sup>125</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. and ed. John R. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), 56.

to pursue pictorial depth visually.<sup>126</sup> In his still lifes, Sánchez Cotán mindfully implements the window as an organizing element that is based on perspective, but purposely eschews the portrayal of depth for which the window was well suited. Instead, he opts for a striking dark ground in all of his known still lifes that, positioned “behind” the window opening, makes visible the denial of pictorial depth.

As a pictorial convention, the black ground had already been established in portraiture in Spain since the sixteenth century. It was also typically used in still-life paintings made in Lombardy and the Netherlands around 1600, as evidenced in the work of Ambrogio Figino earlier introduced and in those of Flemish artists such as Clara Peeters.<sup>127</sup> Given Spain’s geopolitical ties to the cities in which these artists worked, it is perhaps to be expected that the dark ground would come to be a staple in early Spanish still lifes. Interestingly, however, as Rafael Asenjo Romero’s recent technical studies have demonstrated, Sánchez Cotán appears to have been much concerned with the appearance of the dark ground in his still lifes, so much so that he does not employ traditional Castilian methods of preparing it.<sup>128</sup> For example, in the San Diego painting, he alters the ratio of pigments by effectively reducing the red earth tones and including instead a mixture of dark gray with a tinge of orange. A finishing layer over top also contributes to the achievement of a vibrant surface of black paint that effectively

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<sup>126</sup> As Cherry describes, Sánchez Cotán “has marked a vanishing point in the centre of the top edge of the canvas and has drawn down two diagonal lines to the bottom corners of the canvas, which articulate the receding orthogonals of the window frame.” See Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 31.

<sup>127</sup> For the use of a dark ground in Lombard painting, consult essays in Bayer, *Painters of Reality*.

<sup>128</sup> Rafael Asenjo Romero, *El bodegón español en el siglo XVII: desvelando su naturaleza oculta*, with a prologue by Zahira Véliz (Madrid: Icono I & R, 2009), 26-27, 29-30.



reinforces, through contrast, the illusionism of objects.<sup>129</sup> When executing one of his still-life compositions, it was through the process of building up a canvas that the black ground was forced to yield to a picture's other components. Sánchez Cotán first applied the ground layers of dark paint over the entire canvas. He subsequently rendered the window frame and ledge and soon after began to paint selected foodstuffs.<sup>130</sup>

Sánchez Cotán's alterations of the dark ground are illustrative of how an early maker of still life in Spain was experimenting with ways to heighten the impact of his highly naturalistic pictures. The artist's preoccupation with ground, and his use of a window to frame that ground, is suggestive of how he is negotiating the issue of surface and depth. The dark ground can be found in all of the artist's extant still lifes but it is particularly apparent in *Cardoon and Carrots* (1603-1627) in the Museum of Fine Arts in Granada due to the overall sparseness of this image (Figure 10). The spectacular pink cardoon, which is a winter vegetable, is propped up against the right border of the window. Its coarse, feathered stalks are mostly contained within the window frame with the exception of the gentle probe forward of those stalks closest to its border. The work is considered Sánchez Cotán's last still life, and likely the only one that he made during his years at the Carthusian Charterhouse in Granada.<sup>131</sup> The presence of the ground is more prominent here than in the majority of his earlier pictures, which prompted early scholars

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 26-27. See also the brief remarks on technique with regards to Sánchez Cotán's Prado still life summarized in Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 188n17.

<sup>130</sup> For an extended discussion of the artist's method, see Asenjo Romero, *El bodegón español en el siglo XVII*, 25-33, esp. 27.

<sup>131</sup> Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 32. *Cardoon and Carrots* was discovered in the Charterhouse in the nineteenth century.

to attempt to come to terms with something that remained unpictured in the darkness within the painted frame.<sup>132</sup>

I propose that we see the mechanisms at work in *Cardoon and Carrots* and Sánchez Cotán's other images as evidence of how the artist is making use of viewers' expectations of pictorial depth. The lure of the black ground, which is eased by the opening of the window, creates an effective contrast with the reversal of these perspectival mechanisms that create *trompe l'oeil* effects on the picture's surface. In *trompe l'oeil*, objects extend out towards the viewer, puncturing the threshold of the picture plane, which is made all the more visible by the painted frame of the window. The distinction between surface and depth is further reiterated through the application of light and shade. A harsh light illuminates objects in a picture's foreground while its depths always remain obscured in shadow. It is thus through contrast that attention is shifted from depth to surface. By making use of a fictive frame, in addition to black paint and string, Sánchez Cotán's still lifes are captivating experiments with relief that overflow into the space of a beholder.

### **Still-life and the *bodegón***

Before attending to a dimension of conversion at work in Sánchez Cotán's painted displays, I first lay out significant differences between still-life painting and the *bodegón*. Similar to other European cities, references to still-life painting in seventeenth-century Spanish inventories are often descriptive and simply catalog the main contents of a given

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<sup>132</sup> For a recent assessment of the dark ground in Sánchez Cotán's works, see Fernando Rodríguez de la Flor, "Capítulo 2: Negro, nada, infinito. *Vanitas* y cuadros metafísicos en la pintura del Siglo de Oro," in *Barroco. Representación e ideología en el museo hispánico [1580-1680]* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002), 77–122.

artwork.<sup>133</sup> A painting could be listed as a *lienzo de frutas*, or canvas of fruit.<sup>134</sup> In some cases, a term might be used to signal a specific type of still life. For instance, a *frutero* could refer to a painting of a basket of fruit or to one composed of fruit, while a *florero* was a painting of flowers.<sup>135</sup> While these terms might also be applied to paintings that included other objects in addition to fruits and flowers, it is generally understood that such works exclusively featured inanimate objects.

As early as the 1590s, the term *bodegón* was used to designate a type of painting. Before it came to signal a picture, however, the term was used to refer to eating places and taverns, which is evidenced by its use in literary texts and municipal legislation. In his *Tesoro de la lengua castellana*, (1611), Sebastián de Covarrubias defines a *bodegón* as “the basement or low entrance in which there is a cellar where one who has no one to cook for him can have a prepared meal, and with it a drink.”<sup>136</sup> When the term was eventually mobilized for painting, it carried with it the association with eating and humble foodstuffs. As Barry Wind suggests, the use of the term *bodegón* by individuals, including by art theorists, could vary with regards to the actual contents of such a

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<sup>133</sup> See the descriptive entries for still lifes and *bodegones* in contemporary inventories collected in Joan-Ramón Triadó, “Bodegones y pintura de bodegón,” in *El bodegón*, ed. John Berger (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2000), 36-38.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>135</sup> A *frutero* is defined as “the picture or canvas that is painted with different fruits: and likewise fruteros also refer to baskets of feigned fruit” (el quadro ò lienzo que se pinta de diversas frutas: y asimismo se llaman fruteros los canastillos de frutas fingidos) in *Diccionario de la lengua castellana: en que se explica el verdadero sentido de las voces, su naturaleza y calidad, con las frases o modos de hablar, los proverbios o refranes, y otras cosas convenientes al uso de la lengua*, Vol. 3 (Madrid: En la Imprenta de la Real Academia Española: Por la Viuda de Francisco del Hierro, 1726-1739), 803.

<sup>136</sup> “El sotano, o portal baxo, dentro del qual està la bodega, adonde el que no tiene quien le guise la comida la halla allí adereçada, y juntamente la bebida...” See Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española* (Madrid: Luis Sánchez, 1611), 143v.

picture.<sup>137</sup> That a *bodegón* could signify different types of pictures in the seventeenth century was likely a function of its having only recently been introduced into artistic circles. Nevertheless, scholars tend to agree that, more often than not, a *bodegón* was understood to be a still-life painting with comestibles that, importantly, contained human figures.<sup>138</sup> It was only in the eighteenth century that the term increasingly denoted still lifes composed without human figures.<sup>139</sup>

On the basis of extant paintings, scenes of the market, the tavern, or the kitchen populated with figures are far less frequent in Spanish painting than are still lifes composed solely of inanimate things, such as the hanging still lifes of Juan Sánchez Cotán. Even less common are scenes of deceit found in early seventeenth-century Italian painting. While imported genre scenes from the Netherlands and Lombardy – especially those from the late sixteenth century – were popular with collectors, Spanish artists instead painted displays of food and objects that appear removed from lived spaces and devoid of the bodies that inhabited them. In this respect, Velázquez’ well-known *bodegones* painted in Seville between 1618 and 1623, including a work such as *Tavern Scene with Two Men and a Boy* (c. 1618) in The Hermitage in St. Petersburg, are considerably unusual (Figure 11).

Explanations for the rare appearance of genre scenes in Spanish painting in the first third of the seventeenth century are beyond the scope of this study, but it is worth

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<sup>137</sup> Barry Wind, “The Bodegón and Art Theory,” in *Velázquez’s Bodegones: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Genre Painting* (Fairfax, VA: George Mason University Press, 1987), 3.

<sup>138</sup> On terminology, see Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 16-17. For an extended discussion, see Wind, “The Bodegón and Art Theory,” 1–19.

<sup>139</sup> Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 17.

highlighting that such works seem to have been more likely to provoke criticism. Some would prefer to see artists abstain from producing scenes of drunkenness, trickery, or ones with potential sexual allusions and other types of morally compromising activities. This is true of the Madrid-based painter and theorist Vicente Carducho for whom *bodegones* cause offence to the office of painting. For Carducho, such works “debas[e] noble Art into ignoble thoughts, as are seen today in those pictures of eating places [*bodegones*] with low and most vile ideas, and others of drunkards, others of sharpers, gamblers, and similar things, without any more invention nor any more matter, than it having occurred to the Painter...”<sup>140</sup> Carducho’s appraisal has been ascribed to a rivalry with Velázquez, who was a producer of *bodegones* in his early years and later gained prestige at King Philip IV’s court at a moment when Carducho’s pictures were no longer as prized as they had been.<sup>141</sup> Nevertheless, it should be noted that Carducho merely puts a harsh spin on an anxiety about genre pictures to be found outside of Spain as well. In the art treatise *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre e profane* (1582), the Bolognese Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti expresses reticence about paintings of “...the gobbling of food, drunkenness, and dissolute living, though they may seem to move viewers to laughter, because one must always be careful that with these one does not dissolve the good contents of the virtues.”<sup>142</sup> That paintings of this subject matter were perceived as

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<sup>140</sup> I quote, with slight modification, the English translation of this passage in Steven N. Orso, *Velázquez, Los Borrachos, and Painting at the Court of Philip IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 77. For the Spanish, see Vicente Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura: su defensa, origen, esencia, definición, modos y diferencias*, ed. F. Calvo Serraller (Madrid: Turner, 1979), 338-39.

<sup>141</sup> See the discussion of Velázquez’ arrival at court in Orso, *Velázquez, Los Borrachos*, 40-96.

<sup>142</sup> Paleotti, *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, 243-44.

inimical to the purpose of imagery to instill morality and encourage good behavior might explain, to some degree, their near absence from the repertoire of most Spanish artists.

One artist who did experiment with painting genre scenes in addition to still lifes is Alejandro Loarte (c.1590-1626). Loarte resided in Madrid in 1619, when he married, but later left Madrid to live in Toledo in or before 1624.<sup>143</sup> Loarte made paintings that ranged in price and subject matter, and over thirty still lifes and genre scenes are listed in his inventory in Toledo at the time of his death.<sup>144</sup> All of Loarte's signed still lifes and genre scenes date between 1623 and his early death in 1626, which makes it unclear whether or not he painted still lifes while he resided in Madrid, or only after his return to Toledo. Nevertheless, it is likely in Madrid that Loarte became familiar with a variety of imported works, in addition to Sánchez Cotán's still lifes that were newly displayed at court, as explained below. Loarte is among the first artists in Castile to replicate Sánchez Cotán's fictive window, as seen in Loarte's signed and dated *Still Life with Fruit* (1624) in a private collection, and was thus well familiar with the convention (Figure 12).<sup>145</sup> He also adapted the idea of a hanging still life to create *Still Life with Hanging Meat and Vegetables* (1625) in the Várez Fisa Collection (Figure 13). In this painting, hanging fowl, slabs of meat, and sausage are suspended from above by short pieces of string while the ledge below is filled with winter vegetables, including a cardoon, as was often used in Sánchez Cotán's pictures.

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<sup>143</sup> For Loarte's published inventory, see Antonio Méndez Casal, *El pintor Alejandro de Loarte* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte, 1934), 1-16. For a summary of archival knowledge on Loarte, see Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 190n32.

<sup>144</sup> A list of Loarte's still lifes and genres scenes and their seventeenth-century patrons can be found in Angulo Iñiguez and Pérez Sánchez, *Historia de la pintura española*, 221-24.

<sup>145</sup> For a summary of existing paintings that adopt the fictive window format, see Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 34.

Loarte's still lifes and genre scenes are noticeably made in dialogue with a range of sources available to him. As scholars have pointed out, his creative emulations of Flemish and Italian genre scenes quite visibly demonstrate an engagement with imported types of pictures.<sup>146</sup> To turn to one example, in Loarte's *Still Life with Meat, Fowl and Tavern Scene* (c.1623-26) in the Matthiesen Gallery in London, the canvas is split down the middle to create a composite scene that juxtaposes a hanging still life with an interior rendered in perspective and bustling with human activity (Figure 14).<sup>147</sup> The format of the painting suggests Loarte's familiarity with imported genre paintings of the kind made by the Flemish artist Joachim Beuckelaer.<sup>148</sup> An example of a painting made by Beuckelaer, such as *Kitchen Scene* (1568) in the Capodimonte Museum in Naples, allows for a comparison with Loarte's pictures (Figure 15).<sup>149</sup> In Beuckelaer's painting, a hanging display of butchered meats is rendered alongside an interior space populated by figures involved in different activities. The meat stall with its assortment of meats and the perspectival interior are integrated in a shared space or, at the very least, adjoining spaces.

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<sup>146</sup> Loarte's engagement with the works of Vincenzo Campi is briefly noted in Charles Sterling, *Still Life Painting from Antiquity to the Present Time*, trans. James Emmons (New York: Universe Books, 1959), 63,75. Loarte's familiarity with Campi and Bartolomeo Passarotti is also mentioned in Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros*, 24.

<sup>147</sup> A mention of the resemblance of Loarte's *Still Life with Meat, Fowl and Tavern Scene* to Flemish paintings can be found when Loarte's work was first published in Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 58.

<sup>148</sup> On Beuckelaer, see Keith P. F. Moxey, "Pieter Aertsen, Joachim Beuckelaer, and the Rise of Secular Painting in the Context of the Reformation" (Garland, 1977); Elizabeth A. Honig, *Painting & the Market in Early Modern Antwerp*, Yale Publications in the History of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>149</sup> Beuckelaer's painting is useful in making a comparison, but there is no record that this exact image was ever brought in Spain.

Loarte's painting departs in crucial ways from the conventions employed in Beuckelaer's picture. In *Still Life with Meat, Fowl and Tavern Scene*, the format isolates one scene, the still life, from the other, the tavern scene. Viewers are alerted to this division through the radical difference in spatial construction; the hanging still life is pressed up close to the picture plane against a dark ground while the interior is deeply, if awkwardly, recessed in space through the use of perspective. The only attempt to unite the two scenes is the leg of lamb that visibly extends over the center divide into the recessed space behind it.<sup>150</sup> The chiasm between these adjacent, but separated scenes is further emphasized by the very contents of the hanging still life. That is, it is unlikely that the expensive hanging fowl on the left would be served at the homely public eating house, or *bodegón*, on the right wherein men of different social classes are seated around a table eating what is surely simple fare. Well understood by beholders, and to the artist himself, would have been the notion that these expensive meats were inaccessible to many, and certainly unlikely to be served in a *bodegón*. In other words, the priority is not an integrated scene, but one in which two vaguely related scenes are brought together.

Loarte's split painting, when considered in dialogue with Sánchez Cotán's earlier pictures brings into focus a crucial dimension of still life as it developed in the Castilian context. Recall that early still-life paintings were produced in conversation with the influx of still lifes and genre scenes from Lombardy and from the Netherlands. While the parallels between what are presumed to be Blas de Prado's fruit bowls of the 1590s and those produced by his contemporaries in Lombardy are quite easily detected, the parallels between foreign imports and the early still lifes of Sánchez Cotán are less

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<sup>150</sup> Intriguingly, it is also an artful leg of lamb that overlaps the different pictorial spaces set out in Pieter Aertsen's *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* (1552). See Figure 45.



straightforward. Yet the artist's adoption of certain conventions suggests that he was quite familiar with imported market and kitchen scenes that were then being collected in Toledo. After all, Sánchez Cotán elected to portray hanging meats, as seen in his *Still Life with Game Fowl*, but did so not, as was convention, in a market or a kitchen scene, but among other inanimate objects in a still life. It is thus possible that the market stall partly inspired the artist's use of the fictive window. Like the market stall, the window frame allowed Sánchez Cotán to manipulate the vertical length of the picture plane, which he further exploited by introducing the practice of hanging foodstuffs with string. Yet removed from recognizable interiors and any potentially lustful behavior, as found for instance in the background of Beuckelaer's work, Sánchez Cotán's paintings focus instead on the judicious study and portrayal of inanimate things on the picture's surface. Likewise, it is noteworthy that, even when purporting to paint a Flemish-style scene in *Still Life with Meat, Fowl and Tavern Scene*, Loarte chooses to forgo the integrated composition to give priority to the visual appeal of the surface and its illusion of relief.

So far, this chapter has focused on the early extant still lifes of Sánchez Cotán painted around 1600, and touched upon those made by Loarte in the 1620s. With these artists' works, we see how the new genre of still life functioned as a locus for growing interests in naturalistic painting during the first third of the seventeenth century. In what follows, the focus shifts to later painters of still life who were based in or connected to Madrid in the 1620s and early 1630s. I then draw attention to incipient practices associated with still life that link it to investments in naturalism in order to situate the genre within a broader landscape of image making in the Habsburg capital.

## The surge in still life in Habsburg Madrid

Curiously, there is little evidence that still-life paintings were made in Toledo or in Madrid in the years that lapsed between Sánchez Cotán's departure from Toledo for the Carthusian monastery in 1603 and the appearance in 1618 at court of what are almost surely his pictures.<sup>151</sup> To this effect, the installation of Sánchez Cotán's paintings in Madrid might be viewed as one impetus for the explosion of interest in still life among artists in Castile in the 1620s. The arrival of the artist's paintings at court was made possible by the Archbishop of Toledo Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas who was an avid collector of pictures. Sandoval's interests in emerging forms of naturalism have long been recognized; he is among the first in Spain to acquire copies of paintings by Caravaggio in addition to originals by Carlo Saraceni.<sup>152</sup> Upon Sandoval's death in 1618, five unattributed still-life paintings, which scholars agree to be the works of Sánchez Cotán, went up for sale at the *almoneda*, or public estate sale, of the archbishop's belongings.<sup>153</sup> It is presumed that Sandoval acquired these still lifes for his own collection shortly after Sánchez Cotán left Toledo.<sup>154</sup> At the *almoneda* at Sandoval's death, the five still lifes were procured for the picture collection of King Philip III (1598-1621). At the time,

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<sup>151</sup> The sequence of events involving the arrival of what are presumed to be Sánchez Cotán's pictures in Madrid are touched upon in diverse studies. In this paragraph, I draw on the discussion of events recently outlined in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen y León*, 54-60.

<sup>152</sup> Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part 1*, 572. As Archbishop, and member of the Council of Castile, Sandoval was connected to political and ecclesiastical circles in both Toledo and Madrid. He is also recognized as having been a patron of Miguel de Cervantes. For more on Sandoval, see J. C. Palacios Gonzalo, "Don Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas: Valedor de las artes y de las letras," *Anales Complutenses*, no. 13 (2001): 77-106; Raúl Berzosa Martínez, "El cardenal don Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas (1546-1618), protector de Cervantes," *Studium Ovetense: Revista del Instituto Superior de Estudios Teológicos del Seminario Metropolitano de Oviedo*, no. 35 (2007): 331-46.

<sup>153</sup> Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 54-55.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 55, 57.

Sandoval's nephew was Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, Duke of Lerma, who was the favorite of King Philip III, which might have facilitated the purchase of the five still lifes for the royal collection.<sup>155</sup>

Once purchased for the monarch's collection, Sánchez Cotán's paintings must have become increasingly well known to contemporaries.<sup>156</sup> Endowed with a sense of newness, his still lifes were displayed at El Pardo palace where visitors would have viewed them with considerable intrigue. El Pardo was the monarch's hunting lodge and a retreat for the royals and their intimates. It would become a center of artistic patronage during Philip III's reign when efforts were made to refurbish the structure after it was ravaged by fire in 1604.<sup>157</sup> Although set in the countryside a few kilometers from Madrid, El Pardo was still very much connected to the city, and thus the court chronicler, Jerónimo de Quintana, included the palace in his descriptive tour of Madrid residences in the early seventeenth century.<sup>158</sup>

The surge in interest in still-life painting in Madrid coincided with another surge in the formation of picture collections, which fuelled the growing market for still lifes.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Schroth, "Early Collectors of Still-Life Painting in Castile," 35.

<sup>156</sup> In *Arte de la pintura*, Pacheco states that Sánchez Cotán gained a reputation in still-life painting before departing for the monastery in Granada. See Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 511.

<sup>157</sup> On art patronage at El Pardo, see Magdalena de Lapuerta Montoya, *Los pintores de la corte de Felipe III: la Casa Real de El Pardo* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2002). On El Pardo as an architectural structure, see Virginia Tovar Martín, *El Real Sitio de El Pardo* (Madrid: Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, 1995).

<sup>158</sup> Jerónimo de Quintana, *A la muy antigua, noble y coronada villa de Madrid: historia de su antigüedad, nobleza y grandeza* (Madrid: Imprenta de Reyno, 1629), 374-375.

<sup>159</sup> See the discussion of collecting paintings in the minor genres in Peter Cherry, "Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste," in Marcus B Burke, Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part 1*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997), 92-107.

The relationship between the proliferation of still-life painting and the rise of the private collection in early modern Europe is often noted, but it is worth reiterating how the two comes together in the Spanish context. On the whole, although with some exception, picture collecting in the sixteenth century had been the prerogative of the monarchs. It is only around 1600 that individuals, particularly in court circles, began to cultivate an interest in collecting pictures. The widespread practice of collecting that arose among the nobility and court functionaries has been linked to the permanent establishment of the court in Madrid during the reign of Philip III.<sup>160</sup> During Philip III's rule, and that of his ministers, the nobility was summoned to live at court instead of remaining on their landed estates, resulting in new aristocratic practices and courtly ways of life, which included collecting pictures.<sup>161</sup> In 1626, the Spanish canon and economist Pedro Fernández de Navarrete would comment on the changing fashions at court as "extraordinary paintings" increasingly replaced other wall hangings.<sup>162</sup> So pervasive was the explosion of pictures

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<sup>160</sup> On the collecting practices of Philip III and his ministers, see Sarah Schroth, "The Private Picture Collection of the Duke of Lerma" (PhD diss., New York University, 1990); Sarah Schroth, "A New Style of Grandeur: Politics and Patronage at the Court of Philip III," in *El Greco to Velázquez: Art during the Reign of Philip III*, ed. Sarah Schroth and Ronni Baer, 1st ed. (Boston: MFA Publications; Published in association with the Nasher Museum of Art, 2008), 77–120. On Madrid as a growing urban center, see José Miguel Morán Turina and Bernardo José García García, eds., *El Madrid de Velázquez y Calderón: villa y corte en el siglo XVII*, 2 vols (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2000).

<sup>161</sup> On the rise of collecting among private individuals after 1600, see José Miguel Morán Turina and Fernando Checa Cremades, *El coleccionismo en España: de la cámara de maravillas a la galería de pinturas* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1985), 231–49, 283–306; Marcus B. Burke, "A Golden Age of Collecting," in Marcus B. Burke, Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601–1755 Part I*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997), 109–87; Javier Portús Pérez, *Pintura y pensamiento en la España de Lope de Vega* (Hondarribia-Guipúzcoa: Nerea, 1999), 67–73; Miguel Falomir Faus, "The Value of Painting in Renaissance Spain," in *Economia e Arte Secc. XIII - XVIII / Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini", Prato*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Florence: Le Monnier, 2002), 240–46.

<sup>162</sup> Pedro Fernández Navarrete, *Conservación de monarquías y discursos políticos sobre la gran consulta que el consejo hizo al señor Rey Don Felipe Tercero al Presidente, y Consejo Supremo de Castilla* (Madrid: Impr. Real, 1626), 246. Cited in Morán Turina and Checa Cremades, *El coleccionismo en España*, 234.

in Madrid during this period that the diarist Francisco de Santos was to exclaim in 1663 that it was nearly impossible to come across a home that did not consist of paintings or, at the very least, of printed images.<sup>163</sup>

With the formation of private collections and new spaces made available for the hanging of pictures, non-religious paintings were increasingly solicited in addition to sacred ones. Despite the dedicatedly Catholic context of seventeenth-century Spain, studies of private inventories have indicated high levels of non-religious painting, especially among more affluent collectors.<sup>164</sup> As these studies have shown, profane subject matter was not uncommon in Spanish collections. Less common, as Jonathan Brown and Richard Kagan have pointed out, is the depiction of profane themes by Spanish artists.<sup>165</sup> Local artists might copy imported works made in diverse genres to meet the demands of patrons who could not afford originals, but the span of non-religious subjects of their own invention, as earlier mentioned, was typically limited.<sup>166</sup> Importantly, however, still-life painting was one such genre in which rising demands among collectors created a market for pictures that could, at least partially, be fulfilled by local artists.

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<sup>163</sup> Francisco Santos, *Día, y noche de Madrid: discursos de lo mas notable que en él passa ...* (En Madrid: Por Pablo de Val; A costa de Iuan de Valdes, mercader de libros, vendese en su casa ..., 1663), 184. Cited in Morán Turina, "Aquí fue troya," 163.

<sup>164</sup> See the data on Madrid collections provided in Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755*. On the preferences of different social groups in Madrid, consult Jesús Bravo Lozano, "Pintura y mentalidades en Madrid a finales del siglo XVII," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, no. 18 (1981): 193–220. For statistical studies of private collections in Seville, see references listed in my note 385.

<sup>165</sup> Jonathan Brown and Richard L. Kagan, "The Duke of Alcalá: His Collection and its Evolution," *The Art Bulletin* 69, no. 2 (1987): 246.

<sup>166</sup> See the discussion in chapter one, pages 17-19.

There exists a noteworthy example of how the arrival of Sánchez Cotán's five still-life paintings in Madrid in 1618 urged one artist in the city to experiment with this new genre of painting. In 1619, a sixth still-life painting was commissioned to hang at El Pardo palace alongside the existing five purchased from Sandoval's collection.<sup>167</sup> Juan van der Hamen, a Madrid-based artist of Flemish descent, was asked to make a "canvas of fruit and game" (*lienzo de frutas y caça*) that would complement those already purchased at the *almoneda* of Archbishop Sandoval.<sup>168</sup> Like Sánchez Cotán's paintings, Van der Hamen's still life was displayed at El Pardo over the doors of the Galería de Mediodía. Van der Hamen was thus commissioned to copy in style and format, with slight variation, the inventive compositions of Sánchez Cotán. Although Van der Hamen's still life for El Pardo is unknown, the artist made use of the window format several times after the royal commission, as seen in his *Basket and Boxes of Sweets* (1622) in the Prado of a few years later (Figure 16).<sup>169</sup> In this example, foodstuffs are not suspended, but set on the lower ledge of the fictive window frame. A woven basket at the center is brimming with sweets while an assortment of canisters is positioned at its left and right to grant the composition an ordered and balanced effect.

Paintings by Loarte and Van der Hamen are illustrative of the ways in which Sánchez Cotán's still-lives were reconfigured, rehearsed, and rethought by other artists working in and between Madrid and Toledo. In Madrid, artists typically maintained their

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<sup>167</sup> Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 54.

<sup>168</sup> Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter AGS), Contaduría Mayor, tercera época, leg. 784. "...[P]or pintar al olio in lienço de frutas y caça que se hiço por mandado de su Magestad para la galería del medio dia de la Casa Real del Pardo en correspondencia de otros lienços que se compraron de la almoneda del cardenal de Toledo para sobre las puertas de la dicha galleria." Cited in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 300n16, and first published in José María de Azcárate Ristori, "Algunas noticias sobre pintores cortesanos del siglo XVII," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 6 (1970): 60.

<sup>169</sup> See the various examples collected in chapter six in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 75-120.

residences and workshops in the central and commercial spaces of the city.<sup>170</sup> Proximity to different workshops surely facilitated knowledge of other artists' works, as well as of novel approaches to image making. As mentioned, since Loarte was also in Madrid in 1619, the same year as Van der Hamen's commission for El Pardo, it is possible that it was there, rather than in Toledo, that he too first encountered Sánchez Cotán's pictures, along with Van der Hamen's own repertoire of still lifes.

Still-life paintings could be commissioned, as the example of Van der Hamen's painting for El Pardo attests. An excellent variation, or perhaps even copy, of a lost Sánchez Cotán's original was painted with costly blue ultramarine.<sup>171</sup> Given the expense of such a pigment, and its rare use in Spanish pictures, it is possible that the copy was made at the behest of a specific patron. On the whole, though, pictures painted in this genre were more typically made on speculation.<sup>172</sup> In general, still-life paintings, even those prized by collectors, were not highly valued in monetary terms. This is a likely explanation for why very few artists specialized in the genre, though a fair number would experiment with making such paintings. In the 1626 inventory taken of Loarte's workshop in Toledo, the artist's priciest still lifes were a commissioned set of works. These still lifes of fairly standard dimensions were sold for 70 reales each while other still

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<sup>170</sup> In collecting data on artists who were petitioned to pay the *alcabala* tax on the sale of paintings during the mid-1630s, Julián Gállego also documented the neighborhoods in which these artists lived. See Julián Gállego, *El Pintor de Artesano a Artista* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, Departamento de Historia del Arte, 1976), 169-172, 255-257.

<sup>171</sup> Asenjo Romero, *El bodegón español en el siglo XVII*, 34. For Pacheco's comments on its very limited usage in Spain, see Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990). 485.

<sup>172</sup> An oft-cited example is a painting of a poultry vendor listed in Alejandro Loarte's testament as "el qual no está concertado," stipulating that the work did not yet have a buyer. For the artist's testament, see Méndez Casal, *El pintor Alejandro de Loarte*, 2-3.

lives in Loarte's inventory were valued at a far lower price.<sup>173</sup> In Madrid, Van der Hamen's still lifes had earned him quite a reputation. Valuations of his works in contemporary inventories oscillate considerably, ranging from 25 to 500 reales.<sup>174</sup> At the time of the artist's death in 1631, the appraisal of his workshop demonstrates that the average value of a still life was approximately 50 or 60 reales, but could be valued much higher or lower depending on the size and complexity of a work.<sup>175</sup>

### **Artful conversions**

Early practitioners of still life in Spain directed much pictorial attention to unprepared foodstuffs and other ordinary things. As seen already in Sánchez Cotán's paintings and those of Loarte, still lifes are mostly dedicated to the picturing of various comestibles, though these comestibles could certainly differ substantially in value.<sup>176</sup> Similarly, Juan Fernández, known as el Labrador, busied himself with painting pictures of grapes, and other types of fruit as seen in his *Still Life with Quinces and Acorns* (c. 1633) in the Royal Collection Trust (Figure 17). Other artists working in Madrid or

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<sup>173</sup> In Loarte's will are listed "ocho lienzos de frutas de vara y tercia concertados a setenta reales cada uno" that were made for a collector by the name of Antonio Martínez Heredia. Méndez Casal, *El pintor Alejandro de Loarte*, 2-3. There are other still lifes and genre scenes, which are perhaps smaller or workshop models, which were valued in the inventory made after his death for as little as 4, 6, 8 and 10 reales. For these entries, see pages 6,8.

<sup>174</sup> For valuations of Van der Hamen's still lifes in private collections in Madrid, see the examples collected in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 87-92.

<sup>175</sup> This approximate average was given in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 43. For the appraisal of the artist's workshop, see William B. Jordan, "Juan van der Hamen y León" (PhD diss., New York University, 1967), 214-220.

<sup>176</sup> For studies of food in seventeenth-century Spain, see Matilde Santamaría Arnaiz, *La Alimentación de los españoles bajo el reinado de los Austrias: la Sala de Alcaldes de casa y corte, las fuentes literarias, los colegios mayores y el papel sanitario de boticarios y médicos* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense, Fac. Medicina, 1988); María Angeles Pérez Samper, *La alimentación en la España del Siglo de Oro* (Huesca: La Val de Onsera, 1998); Julio Valles Rojo, *Cocina y alimentación en los siglos XVI y XVII* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2007).



Toledo during the 1620s mixed in more elaborate objects with simpler ones. Van der Hamen, for instance, was a prolific artist and quickly expanded his repertoire to include elegant glasswork and sophisticated pottery in a variety of his pictures, which is an artistic choice that scholars have partly attributed to his allegiances to Flemish traditions due to familial ties.<sup>177</sup>

That early Spanish pictures often depict ordinary things along with more alluring ones, such as game fowl or the occasional porcelain, suggests, as noted by others, that it was primarily the visual potential of objects rather than their inherent values that was to motivate their inclusion in a still life. During the 1620s and first years of the 1630s, still life in Spain appears less concerned with embellishing in painted form the craftiness of artisan objects or bringing forth associations with transoceanic trade or the market.<sup>178</sup> Instead, early still-life paintings focus on the visual appeal of portrayed foodstuffs. These assembled displays were oriented toward capturing a beholder's gaze, though this does not preclude a synesthetic experience that engages the senses of taste, smell, touch and hearing in the course of their viewing.

The simplicity of things in still-life painting is not without an ancient lineage. Picturing unremarkable things as the ancients had done was part of still life's legacy in the early modern period.<sup>179</sup> By directing attention to what is generally unremarkable, still

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<sup>177</sup> On Van der Hamen's engagement with Flemish traditions, such as the serving table, see Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 125-28. Jordan and others have also linked luxurious objects and the presence of sweets in the artist's still lifes to the material culture of the Madrilean elite. See Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 75, and the studies cited in note 28 of this thesis.

<sup>178</sup> For a discussion of trade in northern still-life painting, see Julie Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

<sup>179</sup> Sterling, *Still Life Painting from Antiquity to the Present Time*, 39-40; S. Ebert-Schifferer, "The Legacy of Antiquity," in *Still Life: A History* (New York: Abrams, 1999), 15-24.

life invokes a paradox that invites consideration of the artful process of transforming the commonplace into a painted marvel, as Rosalie Colie and others have explained.<sup>180</sup> By achieving unprecedented levels of naturalism in depicting the unequivocally ordinary, artists were thus able to flaunt their technical abilities.

The artfulness of conversion – of object into paint and paint into object – was connected to still life’s appeal as well as its pursuit. Many of the early practitioners of still life in Toledo and Madrid gave their paintings a fairly finished appearance, which heightened the illusion of relief, while also inviting inspection of the surface details of depicted things. According to Pacheco in *Arte de la pintura*, to attain true imitations of nature, viewers must be convinced by the illusion of a third dimension in close proximity to the work as well as from far away from it, which required that painting be rendered in an *acabado* (smooth) finish.<sup>181</sup> Although Pacheco is not concerned with still-life painting when discussing the issue of finish, he invokes the story in Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History* about Zeuxis and Parrhasius, which was repeatedly summoned in the early

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<sup>180</sup> Rosalie Colie, “Still Life: Paradoxes of Being,” in *Paradoxia Epidemica; the Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 273–99. Writing in 1966, Rosalie Colie linked still-life painting and the paradox encomium of the Sophists due to their parallel interests in things without merit. See also the discussion of paradoxical encomia the works of Flemish artist Pieter Aertsen in Reindert Leonard Falkenburg, “Matters of Taste: Pieter Aertsen’s Market Scenes, Eating Habits, and Pictoria Rhetoric in the Sixteenth Century,” in *The Object as Subject*, ed. Anne W. Lowenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 13–27.

<sup>181</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 412–420. In seventeenth-century Spain, a variety of opinions circulated regarding whether carefully wrought surfaces were preferable or not to *pintura de borrones*, or loose brushwork exemplified by the much-revered Titian and other late sixteenth-century Venetian artists. See Gridley McKim-Smith, “Writing and Painting in the Age of Velázquez,” in *Examining Velázquez*, ed. Greta Andersen-Bergdoll, Richard Newman, and Gridley McKim-Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 17–27; Chiara Gauna, “Giudizi e polemiche intorno a Caravaggio e Tiziano nei trattati d’arte spagnoli del XVII secolo: Carducho, Pacheco e la tradizione artistica italiana,” *Ricerche di storia dell’arte* 64 (1998): 57–78; For these ideas in the Italian context, Charles Dempsey, “Caravaggio and the Two Naturalistic Styles: Specular versus Macular,” in *Caravaggio: Realism, Rebellion, Reception*, ed. Genevieve Warwick (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 91–100.

modern period in reference to still-life painting.<sup>182</sup> Pacheco's comments clue us in to why an *acabado* finish would have been desirable and employed in early still lifes since such paintings were intently concerned with creating naturalistic displays of foodstuffs that closely imitate real ones.

### **Inanimate models**

Artists working in Madrid painted still lifes as independent pictures, which were avidly collected by contemporaries who appreciated their feats of naturalism. At the same time, it cannot be overlooked that still-life painting was increasingly linked in this context to the novel practice of working directly from nature. In speaking generally about the benefits of portraying inanimate objects, the Aragonese painter and theorist Jusepe Martínez notes in his unpublished treatise (c. 1670) that a painter is granted all the time needed to depict them without being concerned about whether or not they will move.<sup>183</sup> This certainly would have made the objects of still life appealing to artists keen to excel in highly naturalistic painting. Additionally, in an anonymous tract on painting that was likely penned in Andalusia around 1656, the author casually compares the painstaking portrayal of a tree in a landscape to the care involved in painting a still life from nature.<sup>184</sup> He writes, "... [A] tree is made carefully so that it can be recognized, in which case it must be copied from nature and painted with all attention to detail, as if you were

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<sup>182</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 413. For a summary of Pliny's story, see note 7.

<sup>183</sup> "Y en esta forma hacen algunos muchos adherentes, como brocados, libros, vasos, yerbas, flores, como las ven en el natural inmobiles, que aguardan al pintor el tiempo que desea y há menester, sin mudarse ni moverse." Jusepe Martínez, *Discursos practicables del nobilísimo arte de la pintura, sus rudimentos, medios y fines que enseña la experiencia, con los ejemplares de obras insignes de artifices ilustres*, with introductory notes by Valentín Carderera y Solano (Madrid: Impr. de M. Tello, 1866), 69-70.

<sup>184</sup> I draw from the introduction to the tract offered in Véliz, *Artists' Techniques*, 107.

painting a still life on a table before you.”<sup>185</sup> The notion that, in still life, objects to be painted were placed at a short distance from the artist so he or she could scrutinize their details is strongly evoked in a small circular painting by the Madrid-based artist Antonio Pereda (1611-1678) titled *Still Life with Walnuts* (1634) in a private collection (Figure 18). The outer shells and interiors of walnuts are the only subject of the image; they have been amplified and carefully delineated by the artist through the slow process of examining each piece.<sup>186</sup>

Generally speaking, in Spanish still lifes made prior to the early 1630s, rarely are individual foodstuffs portrayed so as to overlap.<sup>187</sup> Later paintings in the context entail displays of greater density; however, in the earlier pictures, discrete objects are often granted similar degrees of pictorial attention, thereby inviting artists, and later viewers, to focus in on a single object. In *Still Life with Flowers and Fruit* (1629) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for instance, Van der Hamen portrays fruits in woven baskets and on metallic plates, which are accompanied by an earthenware jug and an arrangement of flowers (Figure 19). The three-tiered ledge employed by the artist allows for a larger number of objects to be displayed together while each retains its autonomy.<sup>188</sup> In this respect, the stepped ledge performs a similar function to the earlier convention of the hanging still life. Although this painting is one of Van der Hamen’s later still lifes and is

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<sup>185</sup> Véliz, *Artists’ Techniques*, 123. I quote from Véliz’ translation of the anonymous treatise. The original manuscript (MS. 5917) is housed in the Spanish National Library in Madrid.

<sup>186</sup> Pereda was also under the protection of Giovanni Battista Crescenzi. On Pereda, see Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 206-21.

<sup>187</sup> Scholars have long noted this feature in early Spanish pictures.

<sup>188</sup> For a discussion of Van der Hamen’s stepped platform, consult Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 132-4.

certainly a fuller arrangement than many of his earlier works, the delineation of each object remains central to the composition.

This convention of spatial distance is carried through the majority of still-life painting made in Madrid and Toledo, and also in Seville, into the 1630s. This is quite unlike later Dutch still-life painting wherein objects are organized in close proximity to one another, a spatial configuration reinforced by the play of reflections on the various surfaces.<sup>189</sup> In Spanish still lifes, the process of making did not necessarily involve assembling together in real life the entirety of the contents of a composition. The disparate objects that make up a still life could have been painted at diverse moments and then reproduced together on a canvas.<sup>190</sup> While this is true of other contexts as well, in early Spanish paintings, the spatial remove between objects eased the practice of assembling individual objects on the canvas instead of together on the table.

Given the lack of visible corrections to still lifes painted by Sánchez Cotán, Van der Hamen and other artists that have been subject to technical analyses, it has been suggested that artists first sketched out in chalk or charcoal on canvas the components of a still life before applying paint.<sup>191</sup> Otherwise, or in conjunction with this approach, smaller still lifes consisting of individual foodstuffs could serve as painted models that

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<sup>189</sup> See the discussion of reflected surfaces in Dutch still life and its connections to “the probing eye” in Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 90-91.

<sup>190</sup> In this section, I draw on studies by William Jordan, Peter Cherry and Rafael Asenjo Romero to explain working methods associated with still life.

<sup>191</sup> Asenjo Romero, *El bodegón español en el Siglo XVII*, 78. The author explains that initial sketching on canvas would have been absorbed by oil paint and thus is not detectable today.

would later be imitated or transferred by way of cartoon to larger pictures.<sup>192</sup> To turn to the practice of Van der Hamen, it appears the artist painted an array of simple still lifes, such as single plates of fruit.<sup>193</sup> Listed as a single entry in Van der Hamen's workshop inventory are fourteen small fruit still lifes, which, as Jordan has pointed out, likely functioned as painted models in addition to being offered up for sale.<sup>194</sup> A painting that exemplifies such a work is *Plate of Pomegranates* (c. 1630) in a private collection (Figure 20).<sup>195</sup> This small painting, reminiscent of the imported Lombard works, portrays a silver plate with six visible pomegranates, half of which have been cut open at their centers to reveal the red seeds lodged within. An example of a more elaborate painting of a fruit bowl is *Glass Fruit Bowl on a Stone Plinth* (late 1620s), currently in a private collection, which was documented in the collection of the Spanish nobleman and collector, the Marqués de Leganés, in 1655 (Figure 21).<sup>196</sup> This work demonstrates Van

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<sup>192</sup> On the use of transfer devices, such as cartoons, see *ibid.*, 19-20. Listed in Sánchez Cotán's inventory are two cartoons of a grouse and two ducks, which were likely made to facilitate the birds' reuse in other compositions, as explained in Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 48. Another entry in Sánchez Cotán's inventory records "a duck on panel," which has been linked to the duck represented in the artist's *Chicago Still Life with Game Fowl*. The entry suggests that the duck is repeated in the Chicago painting since specific reference is made to it. "A canvas of fruit wherein there is the duck and three other birds" (Un lienzo de frutas adonde está el ánade y otros tres pájaros). This has been pointed out in Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, 29.

<sup>193</sup> Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 192.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 188, 192. "Catorce liencos de frutas de media vara de largo y una tercia de ancho a cinquenta rreales cada vno montan settecientos rreales." The entry is cited in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 307n25, and first published in Jordan, "Juan van der Hamen y León," 214.

<sup>195</sup> This painting is reproduced in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 279. I follow this author's suggestion that the work was painted later in the artist's career.

<sup>196</sup> This painting is reproduced in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 193. I follow the author's dating of the picture to the late 1620s. On the Marqués de Leganés, see Mary Crawford Volk, "New Light on a Seventeenth-Century Collector: The Marquis of Leganés," *The Art Bulletin* 62, no. 2 (1980): 256-68; Jordan, *Juan van Der Hamen*, 183-202; José Juan Pérez Preciado, "El Marqués de Leganés y las artes" (PhD diss. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2008).

der Hamen's attention to color and use of light and shadow to emphasize the three-dimensionality of the pomegranates, quince, grapes and apples, which can all be viewed through the glass bowl that holds them.<sup>197</sup> The manipulation of dramatic light is observable in the small shadow cast by the leaves of the quince on its own fruit as well as in the shadow that engulfs the space around the glass bowl's base and beyond it.

Even though the various components of a more complex still-life painting were generally not painted all at once, and artists often reused foodstuffs from earlier paintings and painted models, the association between the genre of still life and the practice of working from real objects was considerably well established. This is evidenced by offhand remarks in art treatises that elicit the setup of inanimate objects before an artist on a nearby table. Additionally, similar comments can occasionally be found in reference to the working practices of particular painters. For instance, in his biography of Labrador, the eighteenth-century Spanish theorist and biographer Antonio Palomino states that the artist painted fruits and flowers "often from nature," thereby alluding to the connection between still life and the practice of working closely from objects.<sup>198</sup>

I draw attention to connections between still life and the method of working from real objects to suggest that the novelty of the genre was not only tied to its lowly pictorial content and displays of impressive naturalism, but was also linked to a novel approach to making. The newness associated with still life and with this method of working, and how they are entwined, will be further developed when I turn next to contemporary art

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<sup>197</sup> The work is still in possession of its original glazes, according to Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 193.

<sup>198</sup> Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, trans. Nina Ayala Mallory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 51. Palomino, however, is mistaken on Labrador's dates.

treatises. First, though, without delving too far into artistic training, a parallel issue should be noted. Importantly, the practice of working from life, or from live human models, was considered a novel one in seventeenth-century Spain. Even accomplished artists seem to have looked frequently to printed sources. In the words of Zahira Véliz, “The absence in the first half of the seventeenth century of an academic environment in Spain, with life-drawing sessions and communal study for artists, may have dictated [artists’] greater reliance on printed visual resources.”<sup>199</sup> When artists in Seville came together to establish an academy in 1660, it was to be an academy principally dedicated to filling a gap in artistic training by encouraging life-drawing sessions of the human body.<sup>200</sup> Certainly, there is evidence that painters in Madrid and Seville made studies of real bodies and heads, sculpture, and bodily fragments made of clay prior to the Sevillian academy’s foundation.<sup>201</sup> However, the innovation associated with drawing from models, especially living ones, comes through in Pacheco’s *Arte de la pintura* in the manner in which the author calls attention to artists who adopted such a practice.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Zahira Véliz Bomford, “The Authority of Prints in Early Modern Spain,” *Hispanic Research Journal* 9, no. 5 (2008): 428.

<sup>200</sup> On the academy that developed in Seville, see Hiliary Macartney, “The Nobility of Art: The Seville Academy Founded by Murillo and a Portrait of Philip IV at Pollok House,” *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History* 4 (1999): 48–56; Peter Cherry, “Murillo’s Drawing Academy,” in *Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682): Paintings from American Collections*, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt (New York: H.N. Abrams, in association with the Kimbell Art Museum, 2002), 47–61.

<sup>201</sup> On artistic training, specifically in Seville, see Peter Cherry, “Artistic Training in Seville,” in *Velázquez in Seville*, ed. David Davies, Enriqueta Harris, and Michael Clarke (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1996), 67–75.

<sup>202</sup> For instance, in recounting how Velázquez as a boy in Pacheco’s workshop in the 1610s drew the heads and faces of fellow artists from life, the theorist conveys to readers the novelty of the practice. See Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 527–28.



In still-life painting, as to be expected, the models that artists set before themselves for vigilant study were inanimate ones. In portraying various foodstuffs and kitchen utensils, the focus was on the shrewd application of color and the use of light and shade, which was facilitated by working closely from real models at some stage in the artistic process. To expand on these issues and introduce others, I turn to the treatises of the two principal Spanish art theorists of the period. Significantly, as I explain, the genre of still life is deployed in these writings as a reference point for a mode of painting that was evocatively new.

### **Spanish art theory**

With still life becoming more widely practiced and collected in Madrid in the 1620s and early 1630s, it is not surprising that the two main art theorists of seventeenth-century Spain, Vicente Carducho and Francisco Pacheco, would invoke the genre in their reflections on painting. The earlier of the two texts, Carducho's *Diálogos* was published in Madrid in 1633, and is largely made in the vein of the late sixteenth-century Italian texts of Federico Zuccaro and Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo.<sup>203</sup> Zuccaro travelled to Spain in the 1580s to work for King Philip II at the palace of El Escorial, and the young Vicente Carducho would accompany his older brother, Bartolomeo, on the journey as part of Zuccaro's entourage. The Florentine brothers established themselves permanently in Spain after Zuccaro's return to Italy, with Carducho eventually becoming a court painter to Philip III and Philip IV.<sup>204</sup> Still-life painting is not directly addressed in Carducho's

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<sup>203</sup> For a short biography on Carducho and notes on his sources, see Francisco Calvo de Serraller's introduction to Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1979), xiii-xx.

<sup>204</sup> For a study of Carducho, see Mary Crawford Volk, *Vicencio Carducho and Seventeenth Century Castilian Painting* (New York: Garland, 1977).

*Diálogos*, but its cameo appearance in the text is suggestive of the ways in which the genre is closely linked with concerns regarding the imitation of nature. It is clear from Carducho's lengthy excursus that he found the imitation of nature to be an important issue, which was most likely spurred on by the new modes of naturalistic painting that were then in vogue in Madrid.

### **Vicente Carducho's *Diálogos de la pintura* (1633)**

The structure of the *Diálogos de la pintura* follows the convention of an exchange between a master – the spokesperson for Carducho's views – and a student. In the Fourth Dialogue of the text, two different modes of imitation are set out and described. Carducho draws a distinction between *de lo natural* and *de la naturaleza*, for which he relies on Vincenzo Danti's explanation of the differences between *ritrarre* and *imitare*, which was itself based on Aristotle's *Poetics*, a text that was in circulation by the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>205</sup> The first mode, *de lo natural*, is perceived as the mere copying of nature, while the second, *de la naturaleza*, is defined as an improved and idealized view of nature that can be achieved through the intervening role of the artist. For Carducho, studying nature was acceptable, and even encouraged, so long as it was followed by a careful process of selection that rendered the artist's memory and imagination indispensable.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> The comparison with Vincenzo Danti is made by Calvo Serraller in Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1979), 190-1n529.

<sup>206</sup> Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1979), esp. 200-201.

The differing approaches to imitation is not a new topic, and was amply treated in sixteenth-century Italian art theory.<sup>207</sup> Of interest in the *Diálogos*, though, is how the student brings the discussion to bear on what a reader understands to be a contemporary issue. That is, the student recounts to the master how paintings that achieve an impressive degree of naturalism have become highly regarded among aficionados of painting who would see such works elevated to the celebrated status of *docta pintura*, or learned painting.<sup>208</sup> The exchange, unsurprisingly, is an opportunity for the master to correct the misjudgment and reaffirm the boundaries of learned painting. What is telling about the student's tale is that the paintings – or, more specifically, the contents therein – which are designated the main impostors of learned painting mostly read like the contents of a still life. As the student explains, it is the "... pitcher, knife, ledge, bread, fruits, fowl..." which are "done with great propriety, [but] without much effort of the mind, [and] without much drawing, or study..." that appeal to contemporary aficionados.<sup>209</sup>

Although it is unclear whether the student has in mind the independent still-life painting or other types of imagery that might include a still life assemblage, this excerpt in the *Diálogos* is significant for the connection made between an approach to painting deemed *de lo natural*, or involving the copying of nature, and the inanimate things that

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<sup>207</sup> For a useful overview of Italian art theory, see Anthony Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450-1600*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940); Moshe Barasch, *Theories of Art: From Plato to Winckelmann* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>208</sup> Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1979), 200-1.

<sup>209</sup> The entire list reads as follows, "...feigned taffeta, which looks like real taffeta, cloth, canvas, a pitcher, knife, ledge, bread, fruits, birds, brute animal and the rational one, and everything else done with great propriety, without much effort of the mind, without much drawing, or study..." ("...el tafetan fingido, que parece tafetan verdadero, el paño, el lienzo, el jarro, el cuchillo, el banco, el pan, la frutas, el ave, el animal bruto, y el racional, y todo lo demas hecho con tan gran propiedad, sin tanto trabajo de espiritu, sin tanto dibujar, ni estudiar..."). Ibid., 200.

typify the content of still life. Predictably enough, the master responds to the student's comment by conceding that such "paintings of simple imitation" lend themselves well to the pleasure of deception but bypass *disegno* and intellectual thought, which ultimately makes them unworthy of the status of learned painting.<sup>210</sup> Carducho was a vocal advocate in the struggle to ascertain the status of painting as a liberal art, which had yet to be officially established in seventeenth-century Spain.<sup>211</sup> It is thus no surprise that he did not wholly endorse the genre of still life. A type of painting that he (and others) associated with the direct copying of nature instead of the intellectualizing process of selection undoubtedly proved an uncomfortable fit with the theorist's arguments.<sup>212</sup> As the quote by Félibien at the beginning of the chapter attests, still life as a mechanical practice would reverberate in art theory throughout much of the genre's early discursive life.

Nevertheless, while still life could only ever be mildly commendable, neither did the genre itself cause great offense. However, the stakes for painting *de lo natural* were significantly raised when a painting took on the elevated subject matter of a *historia*, especially a religious one, which were by far the most common form of narrative painting in the Spanish context. Such an approach could pose a moral danger. If painting were to be made after an ephemeral nature, it would jeopardize the eternal idea of the religious figure.<sup>213</sup> It is partly for this reason that Carducho was to mount his famous attack on Caravaggio later in the *Diálogos* when the theorist addressed the divergent styles of

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> On this issue, see Gállego, *El pintor de artesano a artista*, esp. chapter 9.

<sup>212</sup> In the Italian context, as Carducho would have known, the emphasis on drawing had played a key role in establishing the intellectual status of painting as a liberal art.

<sup>213</sup> Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1979), 184-85.

painters.<sup>214</sup> As Francisco Calvo Serraller has pointed out, the inclusion of Caravaggio in Carducho's *Diálogos* is particularly noteworthy since Caravaggio is one of only a handful of seventeenth-century artists to be cited in the text, despite the relatively late publication date of 1633.<sup>215</sup>

In general, the extent to which Caravaggio's innovations were understood or misunderstood during his lifetime has long been a topic of scholarship on Italian art. Unsurprisingly, this is further compounded in the Spanish context due to the physical distance from Caravaggio and his works.<sup>216</sup> The role of Caravaggio's art in developments in naturalistic painting in Spain has been a point of contention, especially regarding the oeuvre of Velázquez.<sup>217</sup> What seems most likely, as Alfonso Pérez Sánchez and others have noted, is that it was Caravaggio's novel method of working from life that came to be most intently associated with his name in Spain during the period. In other words, Caravaggio was not necessarily always known by specific pictures, but instead represented a new and distinct approach to painting, one that always involved working

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 270-272.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 270n698.

<sup>216</sup> Although only rarely did original paintings by Caravaggio make their way into Spain, copies of the artist's works, and paintings by those who emulated his style would have been available in Spanish art circles. On Italian artists and artworks in Spain, see Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Pintura italiana del siglo XVII en España* (Madrid: Universidad de Madrid, 1965). The first mention of Caravaggio is in 1615 in Cristobal Suarez de Figueroa's *Plaza universal de todas ciencias y artes* (Madrid: Por Luis Sánchez, 1615).

<sup>217</sup> Jonathan Brown has suggested that very few artists in Spain appear to have emulated Caravaggio in the ways of the Dutch and Italian Caravaggisti. See also explanations of the relationship between the two artists in Emily Umberger, "Velázquez and Naturalism I; Interpreting 'Los Borrachos,'" *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 24 (October 1, 1993): 21-43; Tanya J. Tiffany, "Interpreting Velázquez: Artistic Innovation and Painted Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Seville" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins, 2003), 71-81.

closely from a model.<sup>218</sup> As early as 1604, the northern art theorist Karel Van Mander explains in his *Schilder-Boeck* of how Caravaggio “will not make a single brushstroke without close study of life, which he copies and paints.”<sup>219</sup> Van Mander’s explanation is an early account of Caravaggio’s practice, and one with which Carducho, and also Pacheco, would likely have been familiar.<sup>220</sup> In the *Diálogos*, Carducho implies having seen the artist’s astounding accomplishments, admitting that Caravaggio’s works are “so admirable and so vivid.”<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, he sounds the alarm on what he perceived to be the dangerous pitfalls of the method – making painting into the mechanical practice of copying from nature – which could be, to the detriment of painting, adopted by artists of lesser talent.

It should be noted that, in the 1620s, Madrid was home to competing approaches to painting, which is a function of the stream of works and artists that flowed into the capital. In particular, though, the period has been an important focal point in scholarship on Velázquez. It was during the early years of the decade that Velázquez arrived at court at the behest of Gaspar de Haro de Guzmán, Count-Duke Olivares, who was the favorite

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<sup>218</sup> Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Caravaggio y el naturalismo español* (Seville: Reales Alcázares, 1973), unpaginated.

<sup>219</sup> I quote the translation of Van Mander’s text excerpted in Howard Hibbard, *Caravaggio* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 344.

<sup>220</sup> This is not to brush aside the significance of imported works by subsequent Italian artists or by Spanish ones, especially those who traveled to Italy, in either reinforcing such a perception, or contributing to developments in naturalistic painting, more generally. Caravaggio’s *Crucifixion of Saint Andrew* (Cleveland Museum of Art) was recorded in the Valladolid palace of the Conde de Benavente in 1652. For the published inventory, see Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, 497-498, esp. 497. For a recent study of the Benavente family of collectors, see Mercedes Simal López, *Los Condes-Duques de Benavente en el siglo XVII: patronos y coleccionistas en su villa solariega* (Benavente: Centro de Estudios Benaventanos “Ledo del Pozo,” 2002).

<sup>221</sup> For an English translation of Carducho’s discussion of Caravaggio, see Robert Enggass and Jonathan Brown, *Italian and Spanish Art, 1600-1750: Sources and Documents* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992), 172-74.

of the young King Philip IV who had only recently assumed the throne. In this narrative of events, there has been a tendency to pit Velázquez' inventive mode of naturalism, which involved the practice of working from live models, against the tired reform style of religious painting that prevailed among the older artists at court, many of whom continued to work in late sixteenth-century Italianate traditions that had thrived at El Escorial.<sup>222</sup> Carducho has long been understood to be a mouthpiece for these views, and an early critic of Velázquez.<sup>223</sup> While recent scholarship has begun to nuance the narrative of Velázquez' arrival in Madrid, it is evident that naturalism was among the foremost pictorial issues of the day, which is why it played a significant role in Carducho's *Diálogos*.<sup>224</sup>

I introduce Carducho's remarks to bring forward how still life is intently connected to contemporary concerns about painting even if, as a genre apart from religious imagery, it was not burdened by the same moral quandaries. That still life is drawn into the discussion of naturalism attests to the perceived novelty of the genre and its links to painting *a lo natural*, which fostered working closely from nature. Although, for Carducho, still-life painting was unwaveringly linked to an approach to painting that involved the direct translation of a real object into a painted one, he nevertheless makes

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<sup>222</sup> For an overview of this period, see Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting*, 89-114. In the words of José López-Rey, "Caravaggism was the main tenet of modernism to Velázquez' generation." José López-Rey, *Velázquez, the Artist as a Maker: With a Catalogue Raisonné of His Extant Works* (Lausanne: Bibliothèque des arts, 1979), 8.

<sup>223</sup> For a discussion of the relationship between Velázquez and Carducho, see Orso, *Velázquez, Los Borrachos*, 40-96.

<sup>224</sup> See the comments on Van der Hamen in Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 24. On the naturalism found in the works of Juan Bautista Maíno, see Leticia Ruiz Gómez and María Cruz de Carlos, *Juan Bautista Maíno, 1581-1649* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2009).

some allowance for the genre, though not, as earlier explained, for *bodegones*. Much of Carducho's treatise is geared toward signaling the formidable achievements of sixteenth-century Italian artists, the Florentines and the Venetians, and especially Michelangelo and Titian. To Carducho's mind, earlier artists have not been surpassed in their application of *dibujo*, but in the realm of color, later achievements, he indicates, are deserving of recognition.<sup>225</sup> Without giving names, Carducho states that a few moderns have exceeded earlier artists, "...in imitation, *colorido*, liveliness, landscapes, fruits, animals and other things (which they took to be accessories and of little worth)."<sup>226</sup> Carducho presumably gestures in this passage to the growing appeal of the minor genres – which includes still life – replete as such pictures were with former "accessories" or *parerga*. In their naturalistic portrayals of earthly things, still-life paintings impressed with their achievements in color, which is a perspective that also orients the discussion of still life in Pacheco's treatise.<sup>227</sup>

### **Francisco Pacheco's *Arte de la pintura* (1649)**

To turn to Pacheco's *Arte de la pintura*, we are confronted with a similar, but also quite different assessment of still-life painting. As Jonathan Brown has noted, Pacheco's treatise was composed in Seville and is generally quite focused on Sevillian traditions of

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<sup>225</sup> Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1979), 133.

<sup>226</sup> "...si bien en la imitacion, colorido, viveza, paisas, frutas, animales, y otras cosas (que aquellos tuvieron por acesorias, y de poco consideracion) en algunos modernos se han aventajado..." Ibid., 133.

<sup>227</sup> In his note to the passage, Calvo Serraller states that Carducho must be referring to contemporary types of naturalistic painting, though he links it more specifically to that found in the works of the Bassano. Ibid., 133n392.



imagery.<sup>228</sup> Nonetheless, Pacheco's discussion of early still-life painting indicates that he also associated such pictures with innovations to be seen in Madrid. There are references to Sánchez Cotán and Van der Hamen whose works Pacheco might have viewed during a trip to court to visit his son-in-law, Velázquez, in the mid-1620s. Although Pacheco's heavy reliance on earlier theoretical texts accounts for a large portion of his overall discussion, his comments on the new genre of still life seem to have been produced primarily in dialogue with, or even as a response to, developments in contemporary artistic practice.<sup>229</sup> In what follows, I trace a nexus of issues in Pacheco's *Arte* – still-life painting, the practice of working from life and the achievement of pictorial relief. While the sections dealing with such matters have occasionally been taken up in discussions of Velázquez' genre paintings, they remain to be examined for what they reveal about the place of still life, more generally.<sup>230</sup>

The first chapter of Book Three, which is the book devoted to the practice of painting in Pacheco's *Arte*, is the launching point for my discussion. In its opening pages, Pacheco draws an important connection between method – the practice of working from life – and the levels of naturalism achieved on the canvas. He writes:

But I keep to nature for everything; if everything could be taken from nature, not only the heads, nudes, hands, and feet but [also] the draperies of plain cloth and silk and everything else, it would be so much the better. This was done by Michelangelo Caravaggio, as can be seen in the *Crucifixion of Saint Peter* (even though it is a copy), with such pleasing effect. Jusepe Ribera did this also, since

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<sup>228</sup> Jonathan Brown, *Images and Ideas in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Painting* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 44.

<sup>229</sup> Pacheco's reliance on sources results at times in contradictory remarks. See the discussion in *ibid.*, 44-62.

<sup>230</sup> For a discussion of Pacheco's writings in relation to Velázquez' paintings, see Tiffany, "Interpreting Velázquez, 76-81. These sections have also been discussed in a study examining Pacheco's notion of naturalism. See Gauna, "Giudizi e polemiche," 64-66.

among all the great paintings [owned by] the Duke of Alcala [d. 1637], his figures and heads alone appear to be living, and the rest only painted, even though they hang next to works by Guido Boloñés [Guido Bologna]. The paintings of my son-in-law [Diego Velázquez] who follows this method also differ from the rest, because he works from nature always.<sup>231</sup>

In this passage, Pacheco shows himself to be a supporter of the method of working from live (and inanimate) models, which, he suggests, result in extraordinary achievements in naturalism. This is a practice that he associates with the methods of Caravaggio, Ribera and Velázquez, and even goes so far as to draw a comparison between the methods of these artists' and his own. Pacheco's claim is somewhat surprising, since his conception of working from life likely differed in execution from the practices employed by Caravaggio. For one thing, Pacheco was deeply in favor of preparatory models and adamant that no artist should "assail the canvas by drawing his idea for some figure or history directly upon it...without any other preparation."<sup>232</sup> While the passage indicates that Pacheco perceived the naturalism that erupted on the canvases of the three artists to be the outcome of a practice that involved working from the model, the specifics of such a process, and the extent to which it involved drawing or only painting, is unclear.

Nevertheless, I introduce this passage in order to emphasize the newness that Pacheco associates with the achievements in naturalism of these artists and their (if not entirely understood) methods of working from life. Crucially, for my purposes, when Ribera and Caravaggio make another appearance together in Pacheco's *Arte*, they do so

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<sup>231</sup> Véliz, *Artists' Techniques in Golden Age Spain*, 41. I quote from sections of Book Three of Pacheco's *Arte* excerpted and translated in Véliz' text.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 35. On Velázquez' working method, see Zahira Véliz, "Velázquez' Early Technique," in *Velázquez in Seville*, ed. David Davies, Enriqueta Harris, and Michael Clarke (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1996), 79–84. Also by this author is an overview of perceptions of drawing and painting in contemporary art treatises. See Zahira Véliz, "Aspects of Drawing and Painting in Seventeenth Century Spanish Treatises," *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 11 (1998): 295–317.

in the company of still-life painting. In Book Two, Pacheco outlines the three main components of *colorido*, which include *hermosura*, *suavidad* and *relievo* (beauty, delicacy and relief). Having already addressed the topics of beauty and delicacy, he turns in the book's penultimate chapter to the issue of relief. As Pacheco explains, relief is the illusory appearance of figures and objects in painting that allow them to appear "round like sculpture and like nature" (*parecer redondas como el bulto y como el natural y vivas*), which is achieved through the application of light and shade.<sup>233</sup> Paintings that are accomplished with relief deceive the eye by "emerging forward from the picture" (*saledindose del cuadro*).<sup>234</sup> Relief allows for a plasticity of forms that replicates the real to bring the portrayed object or figure into our space. A successful painting, Pacheco claims, was typically composed of all three components of *colorido*, but the achievement of relief was imperative.

In this chapter, Pacheco names Caravaggio, Ribera and Jacopo Bassano as artists whose works exemplify the achievement of relief.<sup>235</sup> Pacheco's use of the term *valiente*, (valiant or bold) to describe these painters again signals their innovative rendition of color.<sup>236</sup> The use of modeling facilitated the deepening of tones to promote contrast, which was a fundamental aspect of relief. Relief had long been an important aspect of early modern painting, which is a point buttressed by the introduction in Pacheco's chapter of a series of quotations from the texts of Italian authors, including Leon Battista

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<sup>233</sup>

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid. Pacheco includes El Greco as an auxiliary to the discussion of relief.

<sup>236</sup> For a study of Caravaggio's use of color, see Janis Bell, "Some Seventeenth-Century Appraisals of Caravaggio's Coloring," *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 27 (1993): 103–29.

Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci and Ludovico Dolce.<sup>237</sup> Pacheco quotes passages from Leonardo who advocates for more subtle variations in moving from light to shadowed areas of a picture.<sup>238</sup> However, Pacheco's choice of Caravaggio and Ribera and even Bassano, whose sixteenth-century night scenes were well received in Spain, indicates a recognition and acceptance of starker manipulations of color and light.<sup>239</sup> Pacheco suggests that to heighten the illusion of three-dimensionality, a dark ground should be employed. A dark ground was prominent in sixteenth-century Lombard imagery and later Caravaggesque painting. Yet it was also, as earlier discussed, a steadfast component of still life in Spain during the period in which Pacheco was composing his treatise.<sup>240</sup>

Pacheco begins his remarks on relief by explaining his choice of protagonists. The works of Caravaggio, Ribera and Bassano, he indicates, lack beauty and delicacy, but make up for it with their forceful accomplishments in relief. These comments are remarkable given what follows in the same chapter. As Chiara Gauna has aptly noted, Pacheco explains that the application of color in a picture is cued to its category of painting.<sup>241</sup> To this effect, Pacheco relays to his readers the import of "delicacy, beauty and decorum" in the portrayal of sacred images and divine histories, which is, after all,

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<sup>237</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 405-6.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid. For a short study of Leonardo's *rilievo*, see Martin Kemp, "Leonardo and the Idea of Naturalism: Leonardo's Hypernaturalism," in *Painters of Reality: The Legacy of Leonardo and Caravaggio in Lombardy*, ed. Andrea Bayer (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), 65-73. On Pacheco's use of Leonardo's writings, see Charlene Villaseñor Black, "Pacheco, Velázquez, and the Legacy of Leonardo in Spain," in *Re-Reading Leonardo*, ed. Claire Farago (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 349-74.

<sup>239</sup> On the Bassano, see Miguel Falomir Faus, *Los Bassano en la España del Siglo de Oro: 29 de marzo - 27 de mayo 2001* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2001).

<sup>240</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 406.

<sup>241</sup> Gauna, "Giudizi e polemiche," 66.

the main subject matter of Catholic painters.<sup>242</sup> Accordingly, he explains, the softening of contrasts to produce a unifying effect of color is the province of religious pictures – and not the application of relief.<sup>243</sup>

Undoubtedly, Pacheco's stipulations on the use of color in religious painting seem at odds with his observations of the paintings of Caravaggio, Ribera and Bassano. Given the reference in the above-quoted passage from Book Three to a copy of Caravaggio's *Crucifixion of Saint Peter*, and the artistic outputs of all three of these artists, it is extremely likely that Pacheco had in mind their religious paintings when preparing his remarks on relief. In other words, the paintings of these artists exist as a caveat within his discussion to exemplify not only naturalistic painting but – and crucially – an approach that involved attending to gradations in color and heightening distinctions between light and shade that was perceivably new, especially in religious imagery.

Significantly, it is in the context of this discussion on relief that Pacheco calls up the genre of still-life painting. He cites the oft-rehearsed anecdotal story in Pliny's *Natural History* of the ancient painter Peiraikos who depicts "humble subjects" (cosas humildes) for which he achieves considerable fame.<sup>244</sup> Early modern authors delighted in making comparisons between the painted trifles of the ancient painters and those of their contemporary counterparts. The Flemish writer Hadrian Junius, for instance, drew a comparison between Peiraikos's images and Pieter Aertsen's paintings of abundant

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<sup>242</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 407.

<sup>243</sup> That color should function as a unifying mechanism in religious compositions can be found in the texts of other seventeenth-century authors. For an overview in relation to critiques of Caravaggio's painting, see Bell, "Some Seventeenth-Century Appraisals of Caravaggio's Coloring."

<sup>244</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 407.

displays of foodstuffs in the foregrounds of his pictures.<sup>245</sup> In Spain, too, Peiraikos' images would be invoked in the unpublished *Comentarios de la pintura* of Felipe de Guevara in which the author tells of the artist's great successes in painting meat stalls (despensas) and other ordinary things.<sup>246</sup> Like his contemporaries, when Pacheco introduces the story of Peiraikos, he quickly follows it up with a reference to his own context to remind readers that the paintings that he had in mind are contemporary ones. He compares the lowly or "rhypographic" (Riparografo) pictorial pursuits of ancient artists such as Peiraikos to the pictures of his fellow painters depicting "fish markets, *bodegones*, animals, fruits and landscapes" (pescaderías, bodegones, animales, frutas y paisajes).<sup>247</sup>

Still life and other minor genres are brought to bear on Pacheco's discussion of relief in order to gesture to divergent expectations depending on the category of painting. In contrast to the emphasis on "delicacy, beauty and decorum" in the depiction of sacred subject matter, relief is understood by Pacheco to be a central component of pictures in the minor genres. Objects in a still life, then, were expected to surge forward into a beholder's space through gradations of color and the play of light. According to Pacheco, painting in the minor genres can successfully be made without an appeal to beauty or delicacy but not, he states, without relief.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Cited in Sterling, *Still Life Painting from Antiquity to the Present Time*, 39.

<sup>246</sup> Felipe de Guevara is writing in Spain before the rise of the independent still life but may have had Netherlandish market scenes in mind. Felipe de Guevara, *Comentarios de la pintura. Se publ. con un discurso preliminar y algunas notas de A. Ponz*, 1788. A passing reference to Guevara's text is made in Sterling, *Still Life Painting from Antiquity to the Present Time*, 39.

<sup>247</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 407.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

Pacheco gives little in the way of explanation for the surprising appeal to the minor genres in the context of this discussion. Nonetheless, his comments lend support to the idea that these genres – and still life in particular, given that it was that most regularly practiced by Spanish artists – had come to accrue certain associations and expectations in the minds of artists and viewers. Recall that Pacheco's treatise, though published posthumously in 1649, was completed by 1638. For Pacheco, it is clear that the ability to feign relief on a flat surface was understood not only to be integral to still life's appeal, but also a characteristic to be strongly identified with it.

Although Pacheco remained an enthusiast of paintings that adhered to the requisite delicacy and beauty of religious pictures exemplified in the works of Raphael, as he demonstrates in another section of *Arte*, his discussion of relief underscores the novelty and appeal of pictures made by or associated with Caravaggio, Ribera and Bassano.<sup>249</sup> In a study of the early genre paintings of Velázquez, Tanya Tiffany brings together Pacheco's remarks about relief with comments made by Palomino about Velázquez in the following century.<sup>250</sup> Palomino forges a comparison with artistic accomplishments of the past in order to make a claim for Velázquez' departure from earlier models. In Palomino's words, Velázquez took "...to painting rustic subjects with great bravado and with unusual lighting and colors. Some reproached him for not painting with delicacy and beauty more serious subjects in which he might emulate

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<sup>249</sup> On Pacheco's favorable perception of Raphael and his artistic process, see Brown, *Images and Ideas*, 52-54.

<sup>250</sup> For a discussion of Palomino's comments on Velázquez, and how they draw in Raphael as a point of contrast, see Tiffany, "Interpreting Velázquez," 64-66.

Raphael of Urbino...”<sup>251</sup> Palomino’s comments on Velázquez are not unlike the earlier observations of Pacheco. In Palomino’s text, the “delicacy and beauty” of Raphael’s religious pictures are contrasted with the “unusual lighting and colors” evoked in Velázquez’ paintings of lowly subject matter.<sup>252</sup>

Pacheco’s comments, like those of Carducho, register a crossroads of different approaches to religious painting that was in effect in the early part of the seventeenth century. Pacheco’s remarks, as well as subsequent ones made by Palomino, help us, I suggest, to draw broader conclusions about the genre of still life. As still life soared in production and popularity in the 1620s in Madrid, what was concretized was its recognition as a genre illustrative of a novel approach to picturing and to making. That is, still life permitted artists to experiment with the practice of working directly from (inanimate) models to endeavor toward heightened naturalism without having to negotiate the prickly issues of material and divine. That still life could be drawn into reflections in art treatises about religious imagery, the most important category of picture in Spain, in this regard is indicative of how closely the genre had become aligned with naturalistic painting. Although recognized as a genre set apart from religious painting, the texts of Carducho and Pacheco are testament to the extent to which still life, and the high levels of naturalism that flourished in that genre, became a point of reference amid changing expectations for religious imagery.

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<sup>251</sup> Palomino, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, 141.

<sup>252</sup> As Tiffany has indicated, Palomino’s use of the *topos* of artists breaking with the past highlights the newness of Velázquez’ naturalism and subject matter around 1620. For a review of the *topos* in Spanish art, see Tiffany, “Interpreting Velázquez,” 66-71.



## Conclusion: between practice and theory

From the very inception of still-life painting, even before its placement in Félibien's hierarchy, the stakes for imagery were thought to reside in other genres. Such an understanding is threaded through early modern texts, but it is quite for this reason, as explained, that still life became a forum for experimenting with highly naturalistic painting. Artists in Castile turned to still-life painting as a means to probe the capacities and limits of naturalism. In the first third of the seventeenth century, still life was a means with which to explore new – and initially perceived as foreign – visual types that invited investigation with form and content.

Although still life's lineage as *parerga* defined the genre as a lowly one in the minds of treatise writers, it should be noted that, in general, contemporary Spanish texts are less prescriptive than descriptive when it comes to the new genre of still life. The texts of both Carducho and Pacheco respond quite directly to contemporary paintings, and to practices cultivated around the new genre. This aligns with Moshe Barashe's broader observation about the art treatises of Europe that, "on the whole, art theory was slow in coming to terms with the variety and independence of pictorial genres."<sup>253</sup> In this regard, examining the ways in which still-life painting is evoked, if often obliquely, in the writings of Carducho and Pacheco brings into focus the extent to which still life was bound up with a matrix of issues, including the rise of naturalistic painting. The relationship between the new genre and textual sources also urges us to look more closely at practices associated with still life, such as working from real (inanimate) models, and

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<sup>253</sup> Moshe Barasch, *Modern Theories of Art, I: From Winckelmann to Baudelaire* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 62.

the ways in which such a working method carried particular resonance in the Spanish context during this period.

Practice and theory involving still-life painting come together quite vividly in two eighteenth-century Spanish texts. Palomino's *El museo pictórico y la escala óptica* (1715-24) is considered a pivotal early source on seventeenth-century Spanish painting. In Book Five of his treatise, Palomino stipulates the proper training of *el copiante*, the beginner artist at the second level of instruction.<sup>254</sup> After outlining the significance of *dibujo*, Palomino next explains that to learn the admirable effects of color, the beginner must pick up the brush and select for copying an array of inanimate things. He writes,

Also important for the beginner is to copy inanimate things, such as flowers, fruits, and vessels, and kitchen utensils [in order] to overcome one's fear of copying from nature, and to gain practice and knowledge of chiaroscuro. Also, [the beginner] should copy birds and dead game, observing in each thing the symmetry, color, and hues that compose it...<sup>255</sup>

For Palomino, the objects typically encountered in a still life – “flowers, fruits, vessels, kitchen utensils...birds and dead game” – could function as a means for a young artist to become adroit in the use of light and shade and the application of color. Although Palomino only proposes this program of training in the early eighteenth century, it seems likely that he was drawing on earlier artists' informal experiences and existing practices. After all, his instructions for *el copiante* not only recall the contents of still life, but also

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<sup>254</sup> “Tambien importará mucho à el Principiante copiar algunas otras cosas inanimadas, como flores, frutas, y algunas vasijas, y trastos de cozina, para ir perdiendo el miedo à copiar el natural, è in tomando practica, y conocimiento de el claro, y obscuro. Tambien copiarà alguna aves, y caza muertas, observando en cada cosa la Symetria, color, y tintas, de que se compone...” Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *El museo pictorico, y escala optica*, Tomo Segundo (Madrid: Por L.A. de Bedmar, impressor del reyno, 1715), 26.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

seem highly reminiscent of early experiments in Toledo and Madrid with staging objects and scrutinizing them carefully.

Remarkably, another eighteenth-century commentator, the artist and aesthetician Antonio Ponz, drew still-life painting together with artistic training. In this case, though, the discussion is geared specifically to artistic practices in the southern city of Seville.

Ponz travelled through Spain in the 1770s and his remarks read more like an overview of painting in Seville in contrast to the didactic directives that Palomino offers a young beginner. Ponz writes,

I have observed that almost all of the painters of note of this city made in their early years paintings of fruit baskets, flowers, and landscapes, fish, birds, *bodegoncillos* (small bodegones), [kitchen] utensils and similar things, which they seem to have perceived highly. And reflecting on it, I think they did well [to paint these], and that it is a way to freely exercise the brush, and improve one's knowledge of nature to [use in] more important works. Like one is to seek the perfection of *dibujo* in antique sculpture so in nature should one look for the excellence of *colorido*.<sup>256</sup>

For Ponz, as for Palomino, the study of nature was a worthy endeavor insofar as it permitted an artist to improve one's handling of the brush and to accrue knowledge about color and the particulars of nature. Although Ponz is writing in 1780, it is significant that his comments on still life are situated in his text amid a review of seventeenth-century

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<sup>256</sup> "Tengo observado, que casi todos los Pintores de credito de esta Ciudad hicieron en sus principios pinturas de fruterios, flores, y paisajes, peces, aves, bodegoncillos, utensilios, y cosas semejantes; lo que parece tuvieron por maxima: y reflexionado sobre ello, creo que hicieron bien, y que es un camino de exercitar libremente el pincel, y facilitar el conocimiento del natural para cosas mayores. Asi como en las estatuas antiguas se ha de buscar la perfeccion del dibuxo, asi en el natural se debe buscar la excelencia del colorido." Antonio Ponz, *Viage de España: en que se da noticia de las cosas mas apreciables, y dignas de saberse, que hay en ella* (Viuda de Ibarra, hijos, y compañía, 1780), 278-79. This passage is cited (in Spanish) in Cavestany, *Floreros y bodegones en la pintura española*, 11.

Sevillian painters, which suggests that it is the practices of earlier Sevillian artists to which he expressly refers.<sup>257</sup>

In addition to becoming an independent genre of painting in seventeenth-century Spain, still life also came to be informally depended upon as a form of artistic practice. In making still lifes, artists experimented with assembling objects together on canvas to create potent displays of stilled objects. As they did so, they studied the effects of light and color on real objects set before them and honed their skills in conveying texture, the possibilities of shadow and deepened tones to achieve greater degrees of naturalism. Certainly, the ties forged between still life and training in practice, and later in art theory, did little to unhinge the genre from its associations with the technical aspects of painting. Yet by understanding the informal links between still life and artistic training that were sowed during the seventeenth century, we arrive at the crucial point that still life became available as a way of thinking for artists in this period. The novelty of the contents of still life was met by an equally novel approach to making that resulted in extraordinary results. It is precisely for this reason that still life became a means with which to look anew at religious imagery. In the next chapters, I focus on artistic production in Seville since it is in that context that still-life painting was imaginatively reconfigured with spiritual subject matter.

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<sup>257</sup> Evidence in the inventories and other textual accounts corroborates the point that many of Seville's leading artists in this period would try their hands at painting still lifes.

### Chapter Three: Still life, repetition, and Francisco de Zurbarán's paintings of bound sheep (1631-1640)

#### Introduction

It is right to note that it is our city of Seville, universal marketplace of the world, where all nations come to see and to purchase not only temporal wealth such as jewels, pearls, silver, gold and merchandise and fruits of the land, as an emporium and the wealthiest and most fruitful and powerful that is known in Europe, and where all that is necessary for human life overflows...and in spiritual riches [the city] is also a good example of devotion and sanctity; and thus the foreigners say that Seville, within its own name, and in its [very] letters, expresses its own grandeurs: *Seville*, whose first [letter], which is S, means *Holy* [*Santa*], which is understood as religious. This is demonstrated in the great numbers of churches, secular and regular of nuns and monks of diverse orders [*institutos*], in their continual and perpetual praise of God, in which some are always outdoing others; and exemplifies how there are so many sacred places and devout images of devotion, and so many solemn festivals that are celebrated in it [the city] in the course of the year for the saints and pious ones.<sup>258</sup>

-Alonso Sánchez Gordillo, *Religiosas estaciones que frecuenta la religiosidad sevilliana* (c. 1635)

Abbot Alonso Sánchez Gordillo's (1561-1644) aggrandizing observations about Seville highlight for readers the city's prevalent and self-identifying characteristics in the early years of the seventeenth century. The Abbot boasts of the material riches that can be found alongside spiritual ones, conjuring an image of Seville as both bustling economic hub and center of fervent Catholic devotion. Situated on the banks of the Guadalquivir River, Seville served as gateway to the Indies during the initial period of Spain's maritime expeditions. By the end of the sixteenth century, the population and urban

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<sup>258</sup> Alonso Sánchez Gordillo, *Religiosas estaciones que frecuenta la religiosidad sevillana*, ed. Jorge Bernales Ballesteros (Sevilla: Patronato Ricardo Cantu Leal del Consejo General de Hermandades, 1982), 43, quoted and translated in Susan Verdi Webster, *Art and Ritual in Golden-Age Spain: Sevillian Confraternities and the Processional Sculpture of Holy Week* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 30-31.

landscape had swelled significantly to make it one of the largest cities in Europe.<sup>259</sup>

Foreigners flocked to Seville's ports – merchants, seamen, and entrepreneurs – in the hopes of seeking wealth and opportunity in Spain's transoceanic realms.<sup>260</sup> While the early decades of the seventeenth century are generally characterized as prosperous, the city's circumstances began to change in the 1620s due to the heavy dependence of Seville's fortunes on the continual trafficking of merchandise. Decreases in the level of silver extracted from New World mines, flooding of the Guadalquivir River and repeated food shortages, along with the dismal effects of Spain's wars across Europe, contributed to the city's slow decline throughout the seventeenth century.

During the early years of the century, though, Seville's ample wealth contributed to the foundation of new monasteries and convents that came to require sacred images. Religious establishments were important patrons to Sevillian artists, and works made for them accounted for a large portion of artistic production.<sup>261</sup> In Seville, more than in Madrid, such institutions exerted considerable influence on developments in painting. Madrid was becoming an increasingly cosmopolitan center as the capital of the Spanish Habsburgs and residence to a number of noble families. Painters in that context could, at least in principle, be employed in a broader range of artistic projects, even if their involvement in certain arenas was often restricted on account of wide-sweeping

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<sup>259</sup> For a general history of Seville during the period, see Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Orto y ocase de Sevilla*, 4th ed. (Universidad de Sevilla, 1991).

<sup>260</sup> For an introduction to sixteenth-century trade in Seville, see Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

<sup>261</sup> In a population of 120,000-150,000 people, in 1600 there were approximately 37 institutions with an additional fifteen established during the early part of the seventeenth century. Jonathan Brown, "Patronage and Piety: Religious Imagery in the Art of Francisco de Zurbarán," in *Zurbarán*, ed. Jeannine Baticle (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 2. See also Alfonso E. Perez Sánchez, "The Artistic Milieu in Seville during the First Third of the Seventeenth Century," in *Zurbarán*, ed. Baticle, 37–52.

preferences for foreign artists.<sup>262</sup> In Seville, with spiritual institutions as the principal art patrons, imagery was largely of a religious nature, and horizons of expectations for pictures tended to be drawn along sacred lines.<sup>263</sup> In the wake of the Council of Trent's decree on images (1563), and the reaffirmed value of Catholic representation, much stock was placed in exactness and legibility, especially when catering to the spiritual needs of institutional patrons.

It is in the Sevillian context that the new genre of still-life painting was imaginatively reconfigured and brought into dialogue with religious imagery. Francisco Zurbarán (1598-1664), an artist who worked predominately for institutional patrons in the city, made a small number of pictures during the 1630s that demonstrate a novel orientation for still-life painting. In his *Bound Sheep* (1635-40), which measures 38 by 62 centimeters and is located in the Prado museum, a single horned sheep lies solemnly on a grey-colored ledge (Figure 22). Depicted in profile, with its head resting gently on the bare surface, the stilled animal is positioned parallel to the picture plane while an imperceptible light source on the left highlights the whiteness and tactility of the wool. The stark contrast between figure and ground, or between the fleshy body and the engulfing darkness that surrounds it, works to concentrate visual attention. The front and hind legs are bound together with cord and project forward toward the painting's threshold to accentuate sacrifice and the sheep's loss of freedom. The animal's facial

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<sup>262</sup> I briefly address these issues in chapter one, pages 17-19. For an overview of Spanish preferences for foreign artists, see Peter Cherry, "Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste," in Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997), 2-35.

<sup>263</sup> For a survey of seventeenth-century Sevillian painting, see Enrique Valdivieso and Juan Miguel Serrera, *Historia de la pintura española: escuela sevillana del primer tercio del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1985); Enrique Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca sevillana* (Sevilla: Guadalquivir Ediciones, 2003).

expression and lowered eyes communicate an awareness and acceptance of this fate; in place of struggle, a resolute stillness pervades the image in anticipation of a deadly, but also unpictured, violent blow.

The horned sheep is recognizably a sacrificial animal, but the picture itself is unmoored from any category of image. Alone on the ledge, the bound sheep can be read as both still life and as something vastly different from it. Remarkably, *Bound Sheep* is one of five extant versions of this painting. In addition to these five, Zurbarán painted another two pictures with small, but significant alterations for a total of (at least) seven pictures.<sup>264</sup> In paintings of the first variation, which is exemplified by the Prado *Bound Sheep*, the animal is depicted with horns, though their size and form varies marginally between the five versions. In the second variation, an example of which is the *Agnus Dei* (1635-40) in the San Diego Museum of Art, the sheep has been replaced with a hornless lamb, which is a potent metaphor for Christ, the Lamb of God (Figure 23). The difference between the two image variations is intensified by the inclusion of a nimbus and an inscription to reiterate the lamb's strong associations with the sacrifice of Christ. Importantly, then, Zurbarán produced two similar, but radically different variations of the picture, each of which was repeated, revealing a persistent interest in the animal as a subject of study.

Scholarly attention to the Prado *Bound Sheep*, and the other paintings, has primarily unfolded in the context of monographic studies of Zurbarán's oeuvre.<sup>265</sup> In this

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<sup>264</sup> All known versions of bound sheep and lambs are published in Odile Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, 1598-1664: Catálogo razonado y crítico, Volumen I*, collab. Almudena Ros de Barbero (Madrid: Fundación Arte Hispánico, 2009).

<sup>265</sup> The first monograph on Zurbarán is José Cascales y Muñoz, *Francisco de Zurbarán Vol. I, su época, su vida y sus obras* (Madrid: F. Fé, 1911). Despite the recognition that Zurbarán received during his lifetime,



scholarly format, the challenge of classifying the artist's pictures of sheep and lambs has presented itself as a topic for debate. Notably, it is with Zurbarán's paintings of the bound sheep, rather than with those of the bound lamb, wherein disagreement typically lies. Paul Guinard was correct in acknowledging in his study of 1960 that the bound sheep "poses a problem of interpretation."<sup>266</sup> A few scholars, for instance, prefer to differentiate between the sheep and their hornless counterparts, the lambs. In cataloguing Zurbarán's pictures, the lambs have been slotted among the artist's religious paintings while the sheep and a handful of still lifes make up a separate category of image. This was first implemented by Guinard, and reaffirmed most recently by Odile Delenda.<sup>267</sup> The caveat in Guinard's categorization scheme is that Zurbarán's still lifes, along with the sheep, nevertheless participate in a theological worldview in which the spiritual is infused in the material. A different perspective is offered by Alfonso Pérez Sánchez for whom there is little difference between the lamb and the sheep. For this author, even a sheep with horns could

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the artist's works drew little consideration until the start of the nineteenth century. In his *Diccionario histórico de los mas ilustres profesores de las bellas artes en España* of 1800, the Spanish art historian Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez included the first extended biography of the artist based on new data mined in the archives. In this text, Bermúdez inventoried the artist's most impressive works, the majority of which were still in their original locations in Seville. Bermúdez *Diccionario* served as a blueprint for subsequent texts penned by foreign authors in response to mounting interest in Spanish art, which was set in motion when a deluge of works by seventeenth-century artists were propelled out of Seville during the French invasion, which began in 1808. On the critical fortunes of Zurbarán, see Yves Bottineau, "On the Critical Fortunes of Francisco de Zurbarán: Reflections and Inquiries," in *Zurbarán*, ed. Baticle, 25–36; Odile Delenda, "Trayectoria Crítica de Francisco de Zurbarán en España," in *Francisco de Zurbarán, 1598-1664: Los conjuntos y el obrador, Volumen II* (Madrid: Fundación Arte Hispánico, 2009), 25–38.

<sup>266</sup> Paul Guinard, *Zurbarán et les peintres espagnols de la vie monastique* (Paris: Éditions du Temps, 1960), 280.

<sup>267</sup> Guinard, *Zurbarán et les peintres espagnols*, 280-282; Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*, 343-345.

call forth associations with the Lamb of God and thus with Christ.<sup>268</sup> Similarly, Julián Gállego has proposed that the images of sheep potentially make reference to the Old Testament sacrifice of Isaac.<sup>269</sup>

Debates over the proper classification of Zurbarán's paintings of bound sheep betray the lack of certitude that exists when images are made at the intersections of genres. They also demonstrate that a horned bound sheep in visual imagery signifies in more uncertain terms than a lamb, especially when laden with accouterments. In the case of Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep* in the Prado, it is tensions between resemblance and difference with the lamb, I suggest, that contribute to the visual experience of the picture. Importantly, Zurbarán painted the earliest pictures of bound sheep first. That is, the composition with a single living sheep was invented – and repeated – on multiple occasions before it was ever transformed into a lamb. Order here is important because it tells us the sheep is eventually made into a lamb, and not the other way around. It is thus to Zurbarán's Prado *Bound Sheep*, along with other versions of the image, that we must look in order to trace the subtle process of bringing pictorial modes together. My discussion in this chapter concentrates on the Prado *Bound Sheep* but situates it in relation to other versions of this image and to the two versions of *Agnus Dei*. The paintings were all made during the 1630s, and presumably all in Seville, the city in which Zurbarán lived during these years.

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<sup>268</sup> Museo del Prado, *Zurbarán: Museo del Prado, 3 mayo-30 julio 1988* (Madrid: Ministerio de cultura, 1988), 435-36. For a similar perspective, see Matías Díaz Padrón, "Una quinta repetición inédita del Agnus Dei, de Zurbarán," *Goya: Revista de Arte* 164 (1981): 66-69.

<sup>269</sup> Julián Gállego and José Gudiol, *Zurbarán, 1598-1664* (New York: Rizzoli, 1977), 50-51.

During this period, the contours and conventions of the new genre of still life were both increasingly understood but also seemingly in flux. I begin by setting Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep* and its other versions within the broader production of still-life painting that developed in Seville in the 1620s to bring forward how the genre's conventions are effectively mobilized in this painting. Zurbarán's religious works are also drawn into the discussion for the ways certain visual strategies found in them are brought to bear on the *Bound Sheep*. This chapter considers how the genre of still life was remade into something new in Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep*. I argue that, in seventeenth-century Seville, such a development comes out of the important intersections between ongoing demands for religious painting, the rise of still life and the nascent culture of picture collecting.

As mentioned, my discussion in this chapter centers on the Prado *Bound Sheep*, but necessarily pivots on the cluster of images that take as their subject matter bound sheep and lambs. I thus clarify my use of terminology. Contemporaries typically referred to a sheep with horns as a *carnero*. Esteban de Terreros y Pando's *Diccionario castellano* (1786) is the most precise and stipulates that a *carnero* is a male animal with horns that curve like a volute, or what in English we would tend to call a ram.<sup>270</sup> *Carnero* seems also to have referred more broadly to sheep as a food source since the Spanish term for sheep and ewe, the female counterpart to the ram, coincide in the term *oveja*.<sup>271</sup> *Carnero*

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<sup>270</sup> Esteban de Terreros y Pando, *Diccionario castellano, con las voces de ciencias y artes y sus correspondientes en las tres lenguas, francesa, latina é italiana Tomo 1* (Madrid: Impr. de la viuda de Ibarra, hijos y compañía, 1786), 364. See also the entry in *Diccionario de la lengua castellana: en que se explica el verdadero sentido de las voces, su naturaleza y calidad, con las frases o modos de hablar, los proverbios o refranes, y otras cosas convenientes al uso de la lengua, Vol. 2* (Madrid: En la Imprenta de la Real Academia Española: Por la Viuda de Francisco del Hierro, 1726-1739), 187.

<sup>271</sup> A lamb, or *cordero*, is a sheep of either sex that is less than a year old, as defined in *Diccionario de la lengua castellana, Vol. 2*, 594.

was used to indicate mutton, the meat of an adult sheep of either sex, which was widely consumed among the wealthier classes in seventeenth-century Spain.<sup>272</sup> In order to maintain the association between the term *carnero* and food, I use the English term sheep, instead of ram, to refer to the horned animal in the Prado picture.<sup>273</sup>

### **Still-life painting in Seville**

Zurbarán was not a native of Seville, but trained in the workshop of Pedro Díaz de Villaneuva in the city from 1614 until 1617 before settling in the town of Llerena.<sup>274</sup> Little is known about Zurbarán's early training or the reasons for his departure from Seville. Nonetheless, during his period in Llerena, Zurbarán received commissions from prominent Sevillian religious houses, which required him to be in residence at various intervals.<sup>275</sup> Zurbarán's paintings for these establishments clearly made a considerable impression on early viewers; in an unprecedented move, he was entreated by Seville's City Council to return permanently to the city in 1629.<sup>276</sup>

It was shortly thereafter that Zurbarán would paint a small selection of still-life paintings. By the early 1630s, when the majority of these pictures were painted, there

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<sup>272</sup> See the connection between *carnero* and food made in Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española* (Madrid: Luis Sánchez, 1611), 406; *Diccionario de la lengua castellana*, 187.

<sup>273</sup> The translation of *carnero* is "mutton, or a sheep" in John Stevens, *A New Spanish and English Dictionary: Collected from the Best Spanish Authors ...* (London: G. Sawbridge, 1706).

<sup>274</sup> For collected sources and a recent chronology, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*, 45-79.

<sup>275</sup> A study of the artist's monastic commissions is found in Guinard, *Zurbarán et les peintres espagnols*.

<sup>276</sup> Cascales y Muñoz, *Francisco de Zurbarán*, 202-4. These events are summarized in Brown, "Patronage and Piety," 6.

would already have been important precedents in still life in the city.<sup>277</sup> The earliest still lifes and genre scenes documented in Sevillian inventories would presumably have been imported from foreign centers, especially from the Netherlands. The inventory of Pedro Sirman, a merchant from Antwerp, was drawn up in 1620 in Seville and lists twenty-four canvases of – what are likely Flemish – “kitchen scenes, fruits and fish” (cocinas, frutas y pescados).<sup>278</sup> Paintings documented during the 1620s were also, if less frequently, attributed to Spanish artists in Seville with ties to other cities. In the inventory of the city’s foremost art collector, the third Duke of Alcalá Fernando Enríques Afán de Ribera, is listed a set of fourteen paintings of baskets of fruit.<sup>279</sup> Antonio Mohedano, an artist residing in Seville who came from another region of Andalusia, is thought to be the author of these still lifes, which he likely made before the early date of 1610.<sup>280</sup>

Significantly, the early development of still-life painting in Seville depended on knowledge of earlier Spanish examples rather than only on foreign ones. By the time still-life painting was taken up by a number of the city’s artists, the genre was already quite established at court in Madrid, and had been practiced even earlier in the city of Toledo.<sup>281</sup> The early paintings of Mohedano in the Duke of Alcalá’s inventory, for

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<sup>277</sup> The dating of Zurbarán’s works is based on dates given in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*, 148-153.

<sup>278</sup> Archivo de Protocolos de Sevilla (hereafter APS), Oficio 24, 1620, libro 4, f.771v. A transcription of the entry is published in Peter Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza: el bodegón español en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico, 1999), 58, 69n67. See page 58 of Cherry’s study for additional examples of Flemish paintings documented in Seville. Unless otherwise noted, I cite from the English sections of this text.

<sup>279</sup> Jonathan Brown and Richard L. Kagan, “The Duke of Alcalá: His Collection and Its Evolution,” *The Art Bulletin* 69, no. 2 (1987): 238. This example is also mentioned in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 127.

<sup>280</sup> Brown and Kagan, “The Duke of Alcalá,” 238.

<sup>281</sup> See my discussion of these developments in chapter two.

instance, are reminiscent of the early still-life compositions made in Toledo in the 1590s, though the tradition itself can be traced back to the Italian region of Lombardy.<sup>282</sup>

With the rise of the Sevillian Gaspar de Haro de Guzmán, Count-Duke Olivares, as first minister or favorite to King Philip IV in 1621, many Sevillians would be drawn to Madrid to take up positions at court.<sup>283</sup> This facilitated the flow of artistic ideas and works between the two cities, including those concerned with new genre of still life.<sup>284</sup> Indeed, it was during a trip to the capital in 1625 that the Sevillian artist and art theorist Francisco Pacheco would try his hand at painting a *bodegón*, a type of still life that included human figures. “I ventured to paint a small canvas,” he recalls in *Arte de la pintura* (1649), “with two figures from life, with flowers, fruits and other trifles.”<sup>285</sup>

Although artistic ties with Madrid, and even Toledo, are important for the development of still-life painting in Seville, it should be noted that it was well before Francisco Pacheco’s trip to Madrid in 1625 that his son-in-law Diego Velázquez would paint a unique array of *bodegones* and genre scenes.<sup>286</sup> Velázquez’ paintings, which date

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<sup>282</sup> Brown and Kagan, “The Duke of Alcalá,” 238. On early Lombard pictures in Spain, see Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros de 1600 a Goya: Museo del Prado, noviembre 1983/enero 1984* (Spain: Ministerio de Cultura, Dirección General de Bellas Artes y Archivos, 1983, 24-25, 30; William B. Jordan, *Spanish Still Life In The Golden Age 1600-1650* (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1985), 10-13.

<sup>283</sup> For more on Olivares, see J. H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

<sup>284</sup> For example, in 1609 in Madrid, the Marques del Carpio was loaned eleven *bodegones* by the Marques de Loriana to furnish his residence in Seville during his tenure as a city official. AHPM, Prot. 1701, f.805-805v, 21 September 1609. A transcription of the exchange is published in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 20, 26n127.

<sup>285</sup> Zahira Véliz, *Artists’ Techniques in Golden Age Spain: Six Treatises in Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 97. When possible, I quote from the sections of Pacheco’s *Arte* translated into English in this text.

<sup>286</sup> In 1629, seventeen still lifes were listed in the inventory of Francisco López Caro, a companion of Diego Velázquez in Pacheco’s workshop. See the mention of López Caro in William B. Jordan and Peter

between 1617 and 1623, represent a fuller engagement with earlier foreign examples of genre pictures, such as those found in the inventory of Pedro Sirman mentioned above, than do the works of his near contemporaries in Seville.<sup>287</sup> Nevertheless, with few exceptions, genre scenes were not painted with any great determination in the Spanish context.<sup>288</sup>

In terms of still lifes composed solely of inanimate objects, Zurbarán's paintings of the early 1630s are the earliest works painted in Seville, with the exception of those made by Mohedano of twenty years prior. Zurbarán's still lifes visibly employ earlier conventions of this genre of painting – a flat ledge, black background and symmetrical display of objects. In this respect, his still lifes clearly emulate the format that had been made popular at court in the 1620s and earlier by artists such as Juan van der Hamen.<sup>289</sup>

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Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1995), 102, 195n7. For recent studies on Francisco López Caro, see Luis R. Méndez Rodríguez, "Nuevos datos documentales sobre el pintor Francisco López Caro," *Laboratorio de Arte: Revista del Departamento de Historia del Arte* 15 (2002): 389–94; Lina Malo Lara, "Aportación documental al catálogo del pintor Francisco López Caro: cuarenta bodegones para Juan Martínez Montañés," *Laboratorio de Arte: Revista del Departamento de Historia del Arte* 18 (2005): 311–18.

<sup>287</sup> For a recent study of Velázquez' paintings, see Tanya J. Tiffany, *Diego Velázquez's Early Paintings and the Culture of Seventeenth-Century Seville* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012). See also José López-Rey, *Velázquez, the Artist as a Maker: With a Catalogue Raisonné of His Extant Works* (Lausanne: Bibliothèque des arts, 1979), 12–21; Jonathan Brown, *Velázquez, Painter and Courtier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Barry Wind, *Velázquez's Bodegones: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Genre Painting* (Fairfax, VA: George Mason University Press, 1987).

<sup>288</sup> For a brief overview of this issue, see my discussion in chapter two, 56–60. For genre pictures painted in Seville by Bartolomé Murillo later in the century, see Xanthe Brooke and Peter Cherry, *Murillo: Scenes of Childhood* (London: Merrell, 2001).

<sup>289</sup> Pérez Sánchez and Museo del Prado, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros*, 76. Alfonso Pérez Sánchez has suggested that Zurbarán might have had occasion to view still lifes by the Madrid-based artist Juan van der Hamen. William Jordan seems to concur in suggesting that Juan van der Hamen's still lifes might have influenced Zurbarán. See William B. Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen y León & the Court of Madrid* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 85. Additionally, Pedro de Campobón, who was to become the foremost flower painter in Seville around mid-century, arrived from Toledo in or around 1628, and perhaps brought with him knowledge of the innovations in still life in that city. This is suggested in Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life*, 102, 195n8.

*Basket of Oranges* in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena is Zurbarán's only signed still life, despite the handful of works attributed to him (Figure 24). A large canvas that measures 60 by 107 centimeters, *Basket of Oranges* contains three carefully wrought configurations that are positioned together on a single wooden ledge against a dark ground. At the center of the image is a wicker basket piled high with oranges and topped with a sprig of white flowers. To the left of the basket, a small metallic plate holds four large lemons whose reflections are captured in the shiny surface below. A similar metallic plate also sits to the right of the wicker basket and holds a white cup with a delicate pink rose that rests on its rim.

For a large still-life composition like *Basket of Oranges*, Zurbarán presumably would not have displayed the entirety of a still life's components in front of him before rendering them in paint. Like the approaches of Van der Hamen and Juan Sánchez Cotán discussed elsewhere in this study, Zurbarán formulated his more elaborate still lifes by bringing different entities together on the painted canvas, though not necessarily in the real.<sup>290</sup> His method involved painting small still-life configurations that could exist as independent paintings but whose contents could also later be repeated in other paintings. According to Peter Cherry and William Jordan, the artist likely kept painted models of small still lifes in his workshop in order to facilitate their reuse elsewhere.<sup>291</sup> Radiographic studies of *Basket of Oranges* indicate that a different arrangement - a plate

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<sup>290</sup> This observation is made in Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life*, 103.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.



of sweets - was initially painted where the plate of lemons now appears.<sup>292</sup> This is possible precisely because of Zurbarán's method of making such a picture.

The plate of sweets that initially formed part of *Basket of Oranges*, which can still be seen in x-rays studies of the image, is featured alone in a small still life, *Plate of Sweets* (1630-32) (Figure 25).<sup>293</sup> Another example of this kind of repetition can be traced to a small canvas titled *A Cup of Water and a Rose* (c. 1630) in the National Gallery in London (Figure 26). Depicted in this work is a white cup on a plate accompanied by a rose, a configuration that resembles closely that found in *Basket of Oranges*.<sup>294</sup> This same arrangement also appears in two other paintings by Zurbarán, including *The Miraculous Cure of the Blessed Reginald of Orleans* (1626-27) in the Church of the Magdalena in Seville (Figure 27).<sup>295</sup>

The individual still life configurations that are repeated in the artist's pictures were liable to have been initially painted from real (lifeless) models set out in front of the painter.<sup>296</sup> Small still lifes, especially, are likely the outcome of this mode of working.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid. Additionally, the horizon line differs for each of the three configurations in *Basket of Oranges* indicating its independence from the others. Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 128-9.

<sup>293</sup> Jordan and Cherry, *Spanish Still Life*, 103; Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán*, Vol. 1, 150-151.

<sup>294</sup> This canvas, which measures 21.2 x 30.1 cm, is most likely an independent picture, but certain borders appear to have been trimmed at an undetermined time. See the discussion in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán*, Vol. 1, 148-149.

<sup>295</sup> This comparison is made in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 129.

<sup>296</sup> In making his paintings of bound sheep, it has been suggested that Zurbarán poised himself before a real bound sheep on multiple occasions, a conclusion drawn from the marginally different ages of the animals depicted on canvas. It is difficult to assess whether each of the portrayals emerged from a separate life study; however, given the artist's use of the still life format, it is almost certain that at least one sheep, if not more, were painted from life. See the mention of the artist painting the 1632 version "del natural" (from life) in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán*, Vol. 1, 224.

As I argue in the previous chapter, still-life painting in the Spanish context became an early convergence point for experiments with making pictures from life. Although still life focused attention on inert objects, the genre played an important role in encouraging artists in the practice of life study, which allowed them to further hone skills in naturalistic painting. Working directly from real models – whether human, animal or object – was seen as an innovative approach to picture making. In seventeenth-century Spain, the novel practice of life study came to be closely aligned with the Italian artist Caravaggio and with the formidable achievements in naturalism that could result from its application. Surely, this is what led the eighteenth-century Spanish artist and biographer Antonio Palomino to draw a comparison between Zurbarán’s method of working and the Caravaggesque approach. In his *El museo pictórico y la escala óptica* (1715-24), Palomino proclaims to readers that Zurbarán made pictures “from the model” using the “method of the school of Caravaggio.”<sup>298</sup>

With the growing appeal of still-life painting among painters and collectors in Seville, it is no surprise that Zurbarán would try his hand at the genre. Significantly, for my purposes, it is at the same time that he was making his early still lifes that Zurbarán painted his first pictures of bound sheep, which suggests an important overlap between them that is reiterated in the paintings’ visual characteristics. As seen in the Prado *Bound Sheep*, the artist employs a similar format to his still lifes to display the animal in a

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<sup>297</sup> For a discussion of the artist’s small still lifes, see entries 25, 26 and 27 in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*.

<sup>298</sup> Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, trans. Nina Ayala Mallory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 184. Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *El museo pictórico, y escala óptica, Tomo Tercero* (Madrid: Por L.A. de Bedmar, impresor del reyno, 1715), 355. In leading up to this assertion, Palomino makes little distinction between things animate or inanimate painted from life by the Spanish painter. On the role of Caravaggio in Spanish art theory, see my discussion in chapter two, pages 82-84 and 87-91.

shallow space against a dark ground. I return to the connections between still life and the bound sheep later in the discussion, but first situate animal painting, and specifically bound sheep and lambs, in painted imagery of seventeenth-century Spain.

### **A diversity of pictures**

In general, it was uncommon for a painter of this time in Seville – and in Spain, more broadly – to make a single animal the focus of pictorial attention.<sup>299</sup> When animals did figure as subjects of painted imagery, it tended to be almost exclusively in the genre of still-life painting. Even then, as attested by early pictures made in Toledo and Madrid, animals depicted in still life were seldom portrayed entirely alone. They were displayed instead with a host of everyday objects and foodstuffs, as seen, for instance, in Alejandro Loarte's *Still Life with Hanging Meat and Vegetables* (1625) in a private collection (Figure 15).

As interest in the accurate portrayal of the natural world surged in the sixteenth century, the depiction of animals increasingly garnered attention. In his *Arte de la pintura*, Pacheco makes a point of stressing the necessity of learning how to depict animals. As *veedor*, or inspector, of sacred images for the Inquisition in Seville beginning in 1618, Pacheco's call was surely motivated in part by concerns with decorum, given that animals were regularly depicted in religious pictures to locate an event in historical space and time. Life studies made of animals, Pacheco suggests, can help an artist achieve facility in painting them so that “when intending to paint a lamb, he does not

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<sup>299</sup> I refer here to painting; however, few examples exist in other types of media, such as printed imagery. For a recent overview on print in Spain, see Mark McDonald, *Renaissance to Goya: Prints and Drawings Made in Spain* (London: British Museum, 2012).

make a cat or a dog as some do.”<sup>300</sup> Should life studies prove too difficult, he advises, an artist may learn by copying the diversity of animals included in paintings made by the Bassano family of artists from the Veneto.<sup>301</sup> Pacheco also praises the lifelikeness of animals painted by the Spanish artist Pedro Orrente whose works, like those of the Bassano, could also serve as examples to diligent artists.<sup>302</sup>

Pacheco’s *Arte de la pintura* was published in Seville in 1649, only after its author’s death, but was ostensibly written over the first half of the century and completed by 1638.<sup>303</sup> His comments about animal studies thus lend insight into contemporary trends in Seville during the period in which Zurbarán was working. Curiously, and perhaps connected to Pacheco’s point about acquiring skills in animal painting, there is early evidence in artists’ inventories in Toledo and Madrid of images made of a single lamb. The choice in subject matter is ostensibly due to the centrality of the lamb in Christian thought and imagery, especially considering the scant evidence of similar images of other animals made during the period. For example, an image of “a lamb” (*un cordero*) is listed in the 1638 inventory of the artist and art theorist Vicente Carducho. Humbly valued at only 8 reales, this was presumably a small painted study of the

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<sup>300</sup> Véliz, *Artists’ Techniques*, 96. I quote from Véliz’ English translation of this section of Pacheco’s *Arte*. For the Spanish version, see Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura*, ed. Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), 517.

<sup>301</sup> Pacheco’s invocation of the Bassano, whose paintings were much prized in Spain, suggests that he was well versed in the appeal that faithful renditions of animals held for contemporary viewers. For more on how Spanish collectors sought originals and copies of Bassano paintings, see Cherry, “Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste,” 33-35.

<sup>302</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 517.

<sup>303</sup> See Bassegoda’s useful introduction to Pacheco’s treatise in *ibid.*, 11-61.

animal.<sup>304</sup> In an earlier instance, a “canvas of a lamb” (lienzo de un cordero) is recorded in the workshop inventory of Alejandro Loarte upon his death in 1626, and was likely also made as a study, though perhaps one that was also up for sale.<sup>305</sup> In a final example, “a picture of a single lamb” (Un quadro de Un Cordero) by Pedro Orrente is recorded, not in the artist’s workshop, but in the collection of Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán in 1689, almost fifty years after the artist’s death. That Orrente was widely recognized for his facility in painting animals might explain the value of 200 reales ascribed to this work and its dwelling in a prominent picture collection.<sup>306</sup>

Notwithstanding these examples, independent animal paintings were few and far between in Spain, and only tend to exist as workshop models. Whether the examples above are life studies or adaptations from another artist’s pictures is unknown. Nonetheless, these references are telling insofar as they indicate that, albeit rare, a practice of making small images of lambs – and this animal more so than others, as far as I can tell – was already in existence when Zurbarán picked up his brush in the early 1630s. And, yet, there is little indication that the lamb studies of earlier artists in Spain would have resembled the bound animal so evocative of sacrifice found in Zurbarán’s pictures.

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<sup>304</sup> Listed in Vicente Carducho’s inventory in 1638 (Archival Inventory E-603). The Getty Provenance Index Database, “Archival Inventories,” accessed January 5, 2015, <http://piprod.getty.edu/starweb/pi/servlet.starweb>.

<sup>305</sup> A value for Loarte’s “lienzo de un cordero” is unknown. For the inventory, see Antonio Méndez Casal, *El pintor Alejandro de Loarte* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte, 1934), 8. Loarte was on friendly terms with Pedro Orrente, who was the executor of Loarte’s will in 1626 in Toledo.

<sup>306</sup> See the 1689 inventory of Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán published in Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part 1*, 839.

The artist's Prado *Bound Sheep* and the other versions and variation of this image are quite unlike anything painted before it. Nor did Zurbarán create any other images of a single animal or, intriguingly, include an animal in any of his known still-life paintings, which are composed almost exclusively of fruits, simple flowers, vessels, and kitchenware. Given the absence of other animal studies in the artist's oeuvre, one pedestrian explanation for the initial choice of a sheep as subject matter might be the animal was to stand in for a life study of a lamb. Sheep's meat, or *carnero*, was the more common food source of the two, which could have made the animal easier to attain for study.<sup>307</sup> A painting of a sheep, even if horned, could easily serve as a model for a hornless lamb, an animal more suited to use in Catholic imagery. Presumably, in such a circumstance, when repeating the animal's portrayal in another picture, as was already Zurbarán's practice with small still lifes, the artist would only need to reduce the appearance of horns. In fact, there is evidence that a process along these lines did indeed occur. In Zurbarán's *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1638) in the Grenoble Museum, the animal depicted closely mimics that found in Zurbarán's pictures of bound sheep (Figure 28). Given the similarity and placement of the animal in the foreground of *Adoration*, it is almost certain that the artist was adapting from an earlier image of his, as he did with small still lifes.<sup>308</sup> Crucially, however, as I return to below, whether or not the subject matter of a sheep was initially selected with an eye toward including the animal in a

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<sup>307</sup> On the consumption of meat in seventeenth-century Spain, see Julio Valles Rojo, *Cocina y alimentación en los siglos XVI y XVII* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2007), 256-61.

<sup>308</sup> In the setting of Christ's birth, the presence of a lamb importantly signals the future sacrifice of Christ the Lamb of God. In such a context, the animal would need to read unequivocally as a lamb in order to adhere to decorum requirements. Oddly, though, the lamb in Zurbarán's *Adoration* is given baby horns. Given the exigencies for decorum in the Sevillian context, it was presumably because the horns were small and barely visible that they were deemed acceptable.

religious scene is less important than what appears to emerge during the process of repeating the sheep on various occasions.

As indicated, as far as pictorial subject matter goes, the horned sheep, with its limbs bound, was far less common in imagery than its hornless counterpart. The bound lamb, on the other hand, can be located with relative frequency in early modern pictures – not alone but depicted in a larger scene. As seen in the painting by Zurbarán, the bound lamb is often found at the adoration of the shepherds at the birth of Christ. The animal appears, for instance, in the Spanish Jesuit Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia* (*Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*), a popular meditative text that circulated widely and would have been known to artists and viewers in Seville. Printed in Antwerp in 1595, Nadal's *Adnotationes et Meditationes* harnessed Ignatius de Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* to a series of printed engravings that visualize key events told in the stories of the Gospel to aid viewers during their private meditation.<sup>309</sup> In this series, the bound lamb appears in Hieronymus Wierix's engraved image, *In aurora natalis domini: De Pastoribus* (*At the Dawn of the Birth of the Lord: The Shepherds*) (Figure 29).<sup>310</sup> At Christ's birth, as mentioned, the bound lamb signals as a material offering to the newborn Christ Child and, simultaneously, as a visual cue that links the birth to the passion to gesture to the sacrifice that Christ came into the world to fulfill.

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<sup>309</sup> For a modern edition, see Gerónimo Nadal, *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*, ed. Frederick A. Homann and Walter S. Melion (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2003).

<sup>310</sup> Inocencio Vicente Pérez Guillén suggests that the source for the bound animal in Zurbarán's *Adoration of the Shepherds* is that included in Nadal's prints. See Inocencio Vicente Pérez Guillén, "Nuevas fuentes de la pintura de Zurbarán: La estampa didáctica jesuítica," *Goya: Revista de Arte* 213 (1989): 154-56. However, there are also earlier examples in painting that include a bound lamb at the Adoration scene, such as a work by Juan Bautista Maíno of 1612-1614 currently in the Prado.

The supple metaphor of Christ as lamb recurs throughout sacred texts and was habitually called upon by theologians and art theorists in early modern Spain. The lamb had long been a visual symbol in Christian art; by the mid-fourth century, it appears alone as a metaphor for Christ.<sup>311</sup> The sixteenth-century Spanish theologian Fray Luis de León included the figure of the lamb in his book *The Names of Christ* (1595), in which he specifies the things of the world with resemblances to Christ. Along with the lamb's meekness, purity and innocence, it was the imminent fulfillment of sacrifice, he explains, that most effectively characterizes the relationship with the animal.<sup>312</sup> Pacheco would draw on Fray León's understanding of the correspondence between the animal and Christ in his *Arte de la pintura* to comment on the historical use of the lamb in painting.<sup>313</sup> Additionally, in his *Antigüedad, veneración y fruto de las sagradas Imágenes y Reliquias*, which was published in Seville in 1623, the Jesuit historian Father Martín de Roa writes that of all the Old Testament sacrifices, it is that of the lamb that most acutely prefigures Christ's ultimate sacrifice by recalling the glories of redemption achieved by its occurrence.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> On animals as symbols, see Carola Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993); Simona Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

<sup>312</sup> Luis de León, *De los nombres de Christo: en tres libros* (En Salamanca: En casa de Iuan Fernandez: A costa de Iuan Pulman, mercader de libros, 1595), fols 249-50. The lamb as a name for Christ is added in the 1595 edition of *The Names of Christ*, which was first published in 1583. León's text is often summoned in reference to Zurbarán's sheep and lamb paintings, as in Baticle, *Zurbarán* (1987), 269-70.

<sup>313</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 664-665. Pacheco explains why representing Christ in the form of a lamb is permissible, which is a point made by referencing the writings of Johannes Molannes.

<sup>314</sup> Martín de Roa, *Antigüedad, veneracion i fruto de las sagradas imagenes, i reliquias. Historias i exenplos a este proposito* (Sevilla: Gabriel Ramos Vejarano, 1623), 121r-129v. Roa's discussion of the lambs is focused on the *agnus dei* wax images that were distributed in Rome.



During this period, the hornless bound lamb could also be seen in genre painting, a category of picture wherein mundane associations are generally granted priority. Paintings of this kind were mostly imported from the Netherlands and from Italy, though Spanish artists did paint them on occasion. With the flow of genre pictures into Seville, a work such as *Market Scene* (1590) by the Frankfurt-based Antwerpen artist Frederik I. van Valckenborch (or his workshop) in Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum would not have been unusual (Figure 30).<sup>315</sup> In this painting, a bound lamb is situated in the bustling setting of a marketplace; depicted, if awkwardly, on a table in the central foreground, the lamb is made into a commodity as one of a selection of animals offered up for sale.<sup>316</sup>

Also in demand among Spanish collectors were paintings of the seasons and the months of the year.<sup>317</sup> Lambs were a familiar sight in such pictures due to their association with spring as the season in which they are habitually born. In a work titled *Month of April* (c. 1591) in the Prado by Francesco Bassano, whose works were readily appreciated in Spain, the butchering of animals is rendered in a pastoral setting (Figure 31).<sup>318</sup> In Bassano's painting, only a few lambs roam freely in the landscape. For the most

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<sup>315</sup> I introduce this painting as an example of a familiar genre scene setting, though there is no evidence that the specific work was ever brought to Seville.

<sup>316</sup> For a study of Antwerp market scenes, see Elizabeth A. Honig, *Painting & the Market in Early Modern Antwerp*, Yale Publications in the History of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>317</sup> "Doce países de los doce meses del año" are listed in the 1651 inventory in Seville of Don Martín Auñón Camacho, caballero de Santiago. Archivo de Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla (hereafter APNS) Escribanía VII, 1651, libro 1, f. 1-249. The inventory of Don Martín Auñón Camacho is published in Jesús Aguado de los Reyes, *Riqueza y sociedad en la Sevilla del siglo XVII* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1994), 216.

<sup>318</sup> For Bassano paintings in Spain, see Miguel Falomir Faus, *Los Bassano en la España del Siglo de Oro: 29 de marzo - 27 de mayo 2001* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2001). See also Bernard Aikema, *Jacopo Bassano and His Public: Moralizing Pictures in an Age of Reform, Ca. 1535-1600* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). See also note 301.

part, the animals are depicted in the process of being shorn, meeting their fates on the sacrificial workbench, or have been transformed into butchered meat, which hangs from adjacent stalls. In the left foreground, a butcher with a raised knife clasps together a living lamb's bound legs – as the string would do in Zurbarán's pictures – to reinforce the relationship between bounded limbs and imminent death. While the bound lambs included in a scene like Bassano's undeniably also call up ideas of the paschal lamb and the sacrifice of Christ, they appeal more forcefully to ideas about the annual cycle of foodstuffs, the marketplace, and mundane butchering for domestic consumption.

Remarkably, although the body of a horned sheep is less frequently depicted in representation, the animal's severed head – with its handsome horns intact – had found its way into still lifes of the period, due, it seems, to the allure of the animal's horns.<sup>319</sup> An extant example in Seville can be found in a later work by the artist Francisco Barranco who made a painting that incorporated the head of the sheep into a display of kitchen objects (Figure 32).<sup>320</sup> In this painting, the curvature and weight of the animal's horns are to be viewed against the sheen of the copper cauldron, the heaviness of the clay pitcher and the rumpled feathers formed by the pile of dead birds. Like the other objects on display, the horns appeal more intently through their solicitation of a beholder's senses of sight and touch. Such a focus for the sheep's head in Barranco's painting becomes clearer when juxtaposed with a work by a contemporary of his in Madrid. Francisco Barrera's *Still Life with Meat, Fruit and Vegetables (the Month of April)* (1640s) in a

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<sup>319</sup> See the still-life painting by the Lombard artist Giovanni Battista Crespi (1573-1632) reproduced in Marco Rosci, *Il Cerano* (Milano: Electa, 2000), 242-43.

<sup>320</sup> On what little is known about Barranco, see Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, "Dos bodegones de Francisco Barranco," *Archivo Español de Arte* 72, no. 286 (1999): 171-73.

private collection aims to present foodstuffs associated with the month of April in the tradition of Bassano mentioned above (Figure 33).<sup>321</sup> Included in the work is a sheep's head, which is arranged alongside an assortment of meats, fruits and vegetables. In this case, however, the sheep's head is depicted without horns. In the setting of Barrera's display, the hornless sheep's head is made into a foodstuff, prioritizing its status as food by presenting it as meat ready to be cooked, over its allure as an object to be esteemed for its tactile qualities.<sup>322</sup>

These pictorial precedents demonstrate that the bound lamb could readily be found in various types of representation, with certain meanings privileged therein. Additionally, there are instances of the head of the horned sheep in earlier representation, and in still life more specifically, which would have encouraged viewers of Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep* to draw parallels with the genre. Nonetheless, in this painting and its other versions, the bound and living sheep is stilled and isolated on the ledge, distinguishing it in crucial ways from the multiple scenarios described above.

Before moving the discussion of Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep* forward, it is worth emphasizing the artist's adherence to decorum in his religious pictures, and specifically in his use of a lamb. This point can clearly be made by way of brief discussion of the practices of another early modern artist, Caravaggio. In a recent study, Conrad Rudolph and Steven F. Ostrow have addressed the differences between a horned sheep and a lamb

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<sup>321</sup> For more on Barrera, see Jordan, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age*, 183-190.

<sup>322</sup> On food and its display in early modern Europe, see Ken Albala, *Food in Early Modern Europe* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003).

in Caravaggio's paintings in early seventeenth-century Rome.<sup>323</sup> Without rehearsing the particulars of these scholars' arguments, their assessment of Caravaggio's *Saint John the Baptist* (1609-10) in the Borghese Gallery in Rome is useful for how it elucidates the issues of artistic choice and decorum in relation to the horned or hornless animal (Figure 34). In Caravaggio's Borghese picture of John the Baptist, a horned sheep serves as the young boy's companion even though, as is well known, it is the hornless lamb that signals the saint's role as forerunner of Christ, the Lamb of God.<sup>324</sup> Because of this, the Borghese painting has prompted speculation over its precise subject matter since Caravaggio would surely have been familiar with the convention of Baptist imagery. In consultation with sheep specialists, Rudolph and Ostrow argue that, despite the conspicuous horns of the animal in the picture, the animal was in fact still a lamb, if one whose horns had already formed. These authors thus conclude that Caravaggio's inclusion of a horned sheep was not misguided; instead, they propose, it is a function of the artist's characteristic mode of painting, which purported not to deviate from the model set before him.

Zurbarán was making pictures in an artistic climate considerably different from Caravaggio's Rome, wherein that artist's patrons permitted of him certain freedoms. In contrast to Caravaggio, if one follows Rudolph and Ostrow's arguments, Zurbarán could never go so far as to include a fully horned sheep in a scene wherein convention would

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<sup>323</sup> The scholars offer an interpretation of Caravaggio's picture of a nude boy with a sheep in the Pinacoteca Capitolina as a portrayal of Isaac in Conrad Rudolph and Steven F. Ostrow, "'Isaac Laughing': Caravaggio, Non-Traditional Imagery and Traditional Identification," *Art History* 24, no. 5 (2001): 646–81.

<sup>324</sup> In the Gospel of John in the New Testament, John the Baptist identifies Christ as lamb by pronouncing, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." John 1:29 (New Revised Standard Version).

demand otherwise. Having trained in Seville in the early seventeenth century, the artist would have understood the compulsion to uphold religious orthodoxy. To recall Pacheco in *Arte de la pintura*, painting should be accurate, decorous and adhere to convention in portrayals of sacred histories and figures.<sup>325</sup> Such exigencies would have included, as Pacheco's earlier remarks indicate, the proper portrayal of animals. In Zurbarán's oeuvre, a hornless lamb is painted where convention demanded it, as seen in his *Saint John the Baptist in the Desert* (c.1650) housed in the Cathedral Museum in Seville (Figure 35).<sup>326</sup>

Without drawing too hard of a distinction between the hornless lamb and the horned sheep in Zurbarán's pictures, it is nonetheless significant, as I have been suggesting. It will be recalled that the artist himself clearly perceived a difference between the two by including the nimbus and inscription only in paintings of the hornless lamb. That is, Zurbarán refrained from equipping his horned sheep – on no less than five occasions – with the framing elements that he reserved solely for the hornless lamb.

### **Making multiples**

Zurbarán's inventive compositions of bound sheep are rendered with extraordinary naturalism, and only slight differences exist between the five known versions.<sup>327</sup> The first version was signed and dated to 1631 and a second version, which was also signed and dated, followed in 1632 (Figures 36, 37). The other three versions,

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<sup>325</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 299-300.

<sup>326</sup> While Zurbarán's *Saint John the Baptist in the Desert* attests to the artist's observance of decorum, it also, by way of contrast, emphasizes the extraordinary attention to naturalism in the Prado *Bound Sheep* and the other versions. The lamb in the *Saint John* picture, like the one in another painting of the Baptist from 1638-39, appears far less lifelike than the bound sheep and lambs that concern me here.

<sup>327</sup> Odile Delenda notes the different ages of the sheep in her recent catalogue. She indicates that the earliest painting depicts a horned sheep of six to eight months, while the 1632 painting portrays a slightly older animal of approximately eight months. See entries 39, 55, 105, 105 bis, 106 in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*.

including the one in the Prado, are undated and without signature but are typically ascribed to the period between 1635 and 1640 (Figures 38, 39).<sup>328</sup>

Interestingly, there are a handful of subtle differences between the first two versions and the later three. First, the first two versions are much larger than the later ones; the 1631 painting measures a considerable 84 by 116 centimeters and the 1632 painting is moderately smaller at 61.3 by 83.2 centimeters. The large dimensions of the pictures, especially the earliest one of 1631, corroborates the suggestion that this picture was painted by the artist from life. The animal is nearly rendered life size. In contrast, the Prado picture measures only 38 by 62 centimeters (fig. 22). The dimensions of the other two versions of the sheep are much closer to those of the Prado version, as are the dimensions of the two *Agnus Dei* paintings.<sup>329</sup> Secondly, there is also a notable shift in the rendering of the stone plinth in the later images. The ledge in the 1631 painting is hard to see in reproduction, but it is clear that the ledge in the 1632 image is not a leveled plinth but one that is visibly fractured along lines that run perpendicular to the picture plane.<sup>330</sup> Towards the left of this image, the plinth appears especially gashed and uneven, as if Zurbarán has attempted to render faithfully the very surface upon which the animal was placed. To draw another contrast, in the Prado version, and in the other later paintings, the unevenness of the ledge is modified and made into a smooth surface. It becomes a unified stone ledge that no longer detracts from the animal that rest upon it.

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<sup>328</sup> I draw on dates given in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*. In one version (entry 106), traces of a monogram have been detected. On dating, see also Alfonso Pérez Sánchez's comments in Museo del Prado, *Zurbarán: Museo del Prado*, 436.

<sup>329</sup> There exists, for instance, a second version of the Prado painting (1635-1640) with similar dimensions. See entry 105bis in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*.

<sup>330</sup> For the more obscure versions, I am relying entirely on reproductions published in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*.

Additionally, the arrangement of the animal's body is slightly modified after the earliest two versions. In the Prado painting, and the others made during the later period, the animal's hind legs are lodged between the front ones, which is a departure from the earlier configuration where one of the animal's hind legs is bound on top of a front one. Finally, there also appears to be a development from the early versions to the later ones in the relationship between the background and the luminosity of the animal's fleece. Jeannine Baticle has observed that in the later pictures, and here she emphasizes the Prado *Bound Sheep* and also the San Diego *Agnus Dei*, are especially concerned with achieving contrast between figure and the surrounding darkness.<sup>331</sup>

The subtle alterations between versions of the bound sheep prompt one to conclude that Zurbarán was thinking about the relationship between pictorial elements – figure and ground, light and shadow – during the process of remaking each image. If the impetus for the 1631 painting of the sheep was an occasion to paint the animal from life, as its dimensions certainly suggest, the repetition of the animal and the reworking of the picture's visual components indicates a persistent interest on the part of the artist to heighten the effects of an already poignant composition. Especially in the three images made between 1630 and 1640, a flurry of painterly brush strokes make up the animal body so that the wool is almost tangible and evokes the sense of touch. The lighting that is cast from the left falls exclusively in the foreground to reveal the animal's voluminous shape while the shadowed parts of the body's underbelly contribute to the illusion of volume. The enhanced visual distinction that thus arises between the painterly body of the bound sheep and the effacing brushstrokes of the dark ground emphasizes the bodily

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<sup>331</sup> Baticle, *Zurbarán*, 269.

presence of the animal in the picture. These adaptations and others go to work in evoking sacrifice—one that is soon forthcoming.

### **Dead things**

As I have been suggesting, Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep* in the Prado makes use of the conventions of still-life painting. At the same time, the work departs considerably from still life when one looks to contemporary art theory and practice. Surely, in repeating the bound sheep on different occasions, Zurbarán would have been cognizant of how such a picture eschewed the genre's burgeoning conventions, which must have intensified pictorial interest in the work for him and for viewers. Pacheco's comments in *Arte de la pintura* help to elucidate this parting, even though there is no mention of Zurbarán in his text, despite the artist's position as one of the city's leading painters.<sup>332</sup> Pacheco is one of the first writers to reflect on the emerging genre of still-life painting, and the sections in his treatise devoted to this type of painting represent an early attempt to reckon with pictures, and issues presented by them, in the Spanish context.

In Book Three of *Arte*, Pacheco separates paintings of fruits and flowers from the more complex still-life arrangements that he discusses in a section titled "On paintings of animals and birds, fish markets and *bodegones*." In his discussion of animals, which I touched upon briefly earlier, Pacheco addresses animals inserted into a larger *historia* as well as those depicted in still life and genre scenes. Outlining a crucial distinction in their portrayal, he writes, "It is true that the imitation of fishes, birds and dead things is more easily achieved, because everything remains in the posture chosen by the artist at the

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<sup>332</sup> For a list of Pacheco's contemporaries absent from *Arte*, see Bassegoda's introduction to Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (199), 42-43.



outset.”<sup>333</sup> For Pacheco, animals that had recently been killed or transformed into butchered meat remain motionless in death like food and vessels in contrast to animals that are living. To this effect, he explains, living animals “require more care from the artist because he has to make their movements natural.”<sup>334</sup> The movement of animals expected in a *historia* evidently diverges sharply from the stillness of dead animals encountered in still life. If drawn in absolute terms, animals either appeared living and animated through motion or made still in death. The French art critic André Félibien would employ a comparable distinction when he set out to formalize a hierarchy of genres later in the seventeenth century.<sup>335</sup> Similar criteria was also erected by the Dutch painter and theorist Gérard de Lairese in his *Het groote schilderboek (The Great Book on Painting)* (1707). Lairese defines still life as “immoveable and inanimate Things.”<sup>336</sup> As he goes on to affirm, “’Tis likewise improper, and against the Nature of Still-life, to introduce... any Kind of living Creatures; which would spoil the very Name of a Still-life...”<sup>337</sup> Living creatures, especially animated ones, betray the stillness concomitant with the genre of still life.

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<sup>333</sup> Véliz, *Artists’ Techniques*, 97. I quote from the translated sections of Pacheco’s *Arte* in Véliz’s text.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Félibien draws a distinction between paintings of immobile objects such as flowers and fruit and those containing animals in motion, as pointed out in Moshe Barasch, *Theories of Art: From Plato to Winckelmann* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 343.

<sup>336</sup> Gérard de Lairese, *The Art of Painting in All Its Branches, Methodically Demonstrated by Discourses and Plates, and Exemplified by Remarks on the Paintings of the Best Masters* [1707]; ... *By Gerard de Lairese. Translated by John Frederick Fritsch* (London: printed for the author, and sold by J. Brotherton; W. Hinchliffe; J. Oswald; A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, and J. Wood; C. Rivington, and G. Foster [and 13 others in London], 1738), 548.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., 549.

Pacheco's remarks on the incongruity of live things in still life are less concerned with scaffolding the criteria of a genre, as would be the case with later commentators, than they are a response to new types of pictures imported and produced in the Spanish context. Still, Pacheco reiterates for his readers the deadness of things conventionally found in still life by referring to animals that were once alive as "dead things" (*cosas muertas*).<sup>338</sup> Inventories, too, corroborate Pacheco's comments; similar language is occasionally used to reference the contents of such pictures. In one seventeenth-century inventory, a picture is described as containing "dead things of the hunt."<sup>339</sup> It is likely because of this understanding of still life that Pacheco flags the novelty of an incipient type of painting in the course of his discussion. He tells readers of "a new Flemish painter," who is presumably Frans Snyders, who painted ferocious living animals such as "...dogs with their mouths foaming as they attack and devour calves."<sup>340</sup> Snyders' paintings were well received in Spain, and many feature animals in still life and landscape settings.<sup>341</sup> A work such as *The Pantry* (early 1630s) in the Prado is illustrative of the shift in dynamics when live animals are introduced into a quiet scene (Figure 40).

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<sup>338</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 517.

<sup>339</sup> "otro quadro grande de cosas muertas de caza" (another large painting with dead things from the hunt). Inventory of Juan Fernández de Velasco, Condestable de Castilla in Burgos. Archivo Histórico Protocolos de Madrid (hereafter AHPM) Prot. 24.850, f. 550-550v. Cited in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 27n145.

<sup>340</sup> Véliz, *Artists' Techniques*, 97. I quote from Véliz' English translation of this section of Pacheco's text. Véliz echoes earlier scholars in suggesting that Pacheco refers here to Snyders.

<sup>341</sup> For instance, item 197 in the 1689 inventory of Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán lists "A canvas of a hunting scene with a boar chasing dogs" as an original by Frans Snyders that was valued at the high price of 2500 reales ("Un Lienzo de Cazeria con Un Jabali persiguido de perros original de fran.<sup>co</sup> Yznair de Vara y dos terzias de Caida y quatro Varas y Sesma de ancho Con marco negro en dos mill y quinientos R<sup>s</sup> 2500.") The inventory is published in Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, 841.

In this picture, a fierce animal trio devours an array of foodstuffs that would otherwise constitute the contents of a still life.<sup>342</sup>

Live animals were far less commonly portrayed than dead ones in still-life paintings by Spanish artists. Even in Snyder's novel pictures, which move away from more conventional understandings of still life, live animals are habitually in motion which often distinguishes them from their less fortunate counterparts. On a handful of occasions, the Madrid-based Juan van der Hamen, who was attentive to Flemish pictorial trends, emulated certain motifs of small animals found in Snyder's still-life paintings.<sup>343</sup> Yet, as seen in Van der Hamen's *Still Life with Fruits and Birds* (1621) in the Spanish National Heritage collection, the inclusion of live animals in his still lifes went little further than the monkey or small bird curious about the delicacies in a fruit basket (Figure 41). By far, it was dead animals rather than living ones that were ubiquitous in Spanish still lifes. Moreover, in the 1620s and early 1630s, the prevailing convention among early practitioners was to vertically suspend dead game, rather than depict it along the horizontal ledge.

In Zurbarán's Prado *Bound Sheep*, the artist draws on the genre of still life and its convention of painting dead animals to reshuffle it in a way that highlights the animal's aliveness and impending death. The animal is still alive, and reverberating through the

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<sup>342</sup> There exists a growing body of literature on the role of animal depictions in intellectual histories. This scholarship focuses mainly on imagery produced in the Netherlands. See Peter Harrison, "The Virtues of Animals in Seventeenth-Century Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59, no. 3 (1998): 463-384; Nathaniel Wolloch, *Subjugated Animals: Animals and Anthropocentrism in Early Modern European Culture* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2006); Sarah R. Cohen, "Life and Death in the Northern European Game Piece," in *Early Modern Zoology: The Construction of Animals in Science, Literature and the Visual Arts*, ed. K.A.E. Enenkel and M.S. Smith (Brill, 2007), 611-48; Rina Knoeff, "Animals inside: Anatomy, Interiority and Virtue in the Early Modern Dutch Republic," *Medizinhistorisches Journal: Internationale Vierteljahrsschrift Zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 43, no. 1 (2008): 1-19.

<sup>343</sup> Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen*, 103-107.

painting is a sense of forthcoming death. The sheep in Zurbarán's paintings – alive and purposely stilled – would have seemed especially peculiar. This is a strategy, as I explain in what follows, that Zurbarán pursues almost simultaneously in a series of religious pictures.

### **Christ on the cross**

In order to develop further the elicitation of death in Zurbarán's pictures of a living bound animal, I turn to a pivotal subject matter in the artist's oeuvre, the Crucifixion. At the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church reaffirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation to stipulate that the Eucharist contained the real body of Christ, which artists responded to by placing renewed emphasis on representation of that very body.<sup>344</sup> In Seville, the scene of the Crucifixion, the central sacrifice of the Catholic faith, was in high demand among religious institutions and private individuals. The subject matter was one that Zurbarán, together with his workshop, would paint nearly thirty times in the span of his career.<sup>345</sup> An early example is the *Crucifixion* of 1627, which originally hung in a chapel in the Monastery of San Pablo, and is currently in the Art Institute of Chicago (Figure 42). In that painting and those that follow, Zurbarán portrays the full-length body of Christ against a dark ground with a nail in each of his uncrossed standing feet.<sup>346</sup> As Francisco Pacheco had done before him, Zurbarán removes in almost every version the groups of sacred figures that typically gather at the foot of the cross. Pictorial attention in

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<sup>344</sup> On representations of Christ, see James Clifton, *The Body of Christ in the Art of Europe and New Spain, 1150-1800*, with essays by David Nirenberg and Linda Elaine Neagley. (Munich: Prestel, 1997).

<sup>345</sup> Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*, 37.

<sup>346</sup> In this, Zurbarán follows Francisco Pacheco. See *ibid.*, 338-334. For a discussion of pictorial precedents for the four nails, see Benito Navarrete Prieto, "Durero y los cuatro clavos," *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 16, no. 34 (1995): 7-10.

Zurbarán's images is entirely directed to the body of Christ, which is endowed with three-dimensionality through the application of light and shade.

In contrast to the dead Christ of the Chicago painting, during the 1630s Zurbarán and his workshop painted a less conventional moment of the Crucifixion scene. In *Christ on the Cross* (1635-40) in the Fine Arts Museum in Seville, Christ is depicted not dead, but expiring on the cross in those anticipatory moments at death's threshold (Figure 43). This is not the only example.<sup>347</sup> As Delenda has indicated, nearly half of the artist's Crucifixion scenes portray the expiring Christ.<sup>348</sup> In *Christ on the Cross*, a front-facing Christ is represented alive, and his head is not lowered in death, but tilts upward towards God the Father. Supported by the platform upon which he stands, Christ's body appears almost to lift upward, directing the viewer's attention to Christ's upward gaze and face.<sup>349</sup>

Zurbarán's paintings of the expiring Christ, which were made primarily during the 1630s, elucidate the artist's deliberate evocation of the threshold between living and dead. The death of Christ is happening, as it were, before one's very eyes, thus beckoning viewers' involvement. The potential for exchange with a living Christ undoubtedly had strong appeal since devotional literature of the period encouraged viewers to envision themselves present for Christ's sacrifice, filling their hearts with empathy and compassion.<sup>350</sup> It is likely for this reason that a patron might favor an image of the living

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<sup>347</sup> The painting in the Fine Arts Museum in Seville measures 255 x 193 cm. For examples of workshop versions, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*, 337-39.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>349</sup> Unlike the majority of his crucifixion scenes, a slighter lighter palette is employed in *Christ on the Cross*. The cityscape of Jerusalem is visible, if only remotely, to remind that the crucifixion is a historical event in addition to one that transcends time.

<sup>350</sup> The "composition of place" techniques developed in Ignatius de Loyola's (1491-1556) *Spiritual Exercises*, which encouraged a firsthand experience of the events of Christ's life, have been linked to

Christ. In a 1603 contract for a polychrome sculpture to be made for the chapel of Mateo Vázquez de Leca, for instance, it was expressly stipulated that Christ was “to be alive, before He had died...looking to any person who might be praying at the foot of the crucifix, as if Christ Himself were speaking to him.”<sup>351</sup>

As Vázquez de Leca’s petition suggests, portrayals of a living Christ were in demand and thus are not themselves to be considered unusual. Where Zurbarán’s *Christ on the Cross* and others of the expiring Christ depart is in the specific interest in registering – and suspending in painting – the last moments before expiration. Christ gazes heaven-bound at God, to whom he directs his last words.<sup>352</sup> By depicting Christ’s open mouth, the picture attempts to render visible the interval immediately preceding the death of Christ since, after uttering his last words, Christ tragically exhaled his final breath. At that pivotal event that will give rise to the resurrection and the ultimate triumph over death, there is no contortion and no writhing of Christ’s body. The body’s stillness contrasts with, and makes all the more potent and visible, the expressiveness of a face that takes us nearer to the threshold.<sup>353</sup>

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seventeenth-century painting. See, for instance, arguments made about Caravaggio’s works in Joseph F. Chorpennig, “Another Look at Caravaggio and Religion,” *Artibus et Historiae* 8, no. 16 (1987): 149-158.

<sup>351</sup> L.C. Antón, “Informe de conservación y restauración del Cristo Yacente de Gregorio Fernández,” Madrid 1988. Cited and translated in Xavier Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture, 1600-1700* (London: National Gallery, 2009), 25.

<sup>352</sup> Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*, 337-39. For a discussion of Christ’s facial expressions in paintings of the crucifixion in the sixteenth-century Italian context, see Alexander Nagel, *Michelangelo and the Reform of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Una Roman D’Elia, *The Poetics of Titian’s Religious Paintings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>353</sup> Robert Mills explores the idea of suspension to describe how viewers become involved in scenes of sacred violence. See Robert Mills, *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture* (London: Reaktion, 2005).

In an earlier part of this chapter, I explained how combining elements of still-life painting with religious imagery was a practice followed by Zurbarán as early as the late 1620s. The movement of small painted still lifes into a picture such as *The Miraculous Cure of the Blessed Reginald of Orleans* (1626-27) points to how the genre's contents – a basket of bread, a plate of fruit, a cup with a rose, etc. – could create a sense of “immediacy,” to borrow a term used by Jonathan Brown to describe the artist's work, when rendered naturalistically in a religious scene (Figure 27).<sup>354</sup> Relocating a small still life into such a picture could help to foster a contemplative viewing experience for a beholder. Ordinary objects and foodstuffs were commandeered to evoke familiar, recognizable settings that collapsed the distance between holy figures and their viewers.

*Bound Sheep*, conversely, exemplifies a mixing of still life and religious painting that is quite unlike this other aspect of Zurbarán's practice. In *Bound Sheep*, I am suggesting, Zurbarán pursues artistic strategies that concern him more urgently in his devotional paintings. As the discussion of *Christ on the Cross* (1635-40) demonstrates, Zurbarán creates a compelling devotional work that mobilizes naturalism and stillness to evoke sacrifice in response to demands for sacred pictures by religious communities in Seville. Playing on his artistic strengths, the artist intensified the potency of his pictures by reducing the visual field to shallow spaces and depicting static figures therein.<sup>355</sup>

Like Zurbarán's *Christ on the Cross*, *Bound Sheep* is a non-narrative image whose descriptive mechanisms do the important work of alerting us to an impending, but

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<sup>354</sup> Jonathan Brown, *Francisco de Zurbarán* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1974), 24. See also the discussion of immediacy in Jonathan Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting in Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 159-177.

<sup>355</sup> Jonathan Brown sees such a strategy as partly linked to Zurbarán's difficulty with linear perspective during this early period. See Brown, *Francisco de Zurbarán*, 13-15.

invisible violence. The evocation of death opens up a specific temporality in the painting; it is death's immediacy that makes the image so unusual. By adopting the format of still life, the contrived nature of Zurbarán's image invites a slow, proximate experience of the sheep's solemn expression. The use of naturalism draws one to the resoluteness registered in the animal's face, as if to suggest that the animal is aware of its fate, and of itself as offering.<sup>356</sup> This is certainly not a free animal grazing the pasturelands outside of Seville. Nor is the animal carelessly displayed among other foodstuffs. Barrera's *Still Life with Meat, Fruit and Vegetables (the Month of April)* can again be called up to elucidate the distinction (Figure 31). In Barrera's painting, a bound lamb is unceremoniously presented upside down alongside other butchered parts of meat. In *Bound Sheep*, in contrast, the fleshy body of the animal balances upright along the ledge. The outstretched limbs extend, almost symmetrically, towards the beholder, encouraging recognition of the cord that tightly binds them and of death to come. At the cusp of death, the whiteness of the wool is left untarnished, and the skin unbroken by the still absent act. In conjunction with the sacrificial associations of sheep, it is the picture's mode of presentation, as I described, that strongly urges thinking in this direction. Like *Christ on the Cross*, there is in *Bound Sheep* a strong preoccupation with eliciting the imminence of death – and importantly of sacrifice – through descriptive mechanisms that suspend viewers before it.

### **Mixed images**

At this junction, it is useful to introduce an example in Sevillian painting by a different artist that brings together the then novel category of genre painting with religious narrative. This significant, if rather distinct, precedent exists in the early works

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<sup>356</sup> See note 342 for sources that take up the issue of an animal's awareness of death.



of Velázquez. Before his departure from Seville for the court in Madrid in 1623, Velázquez would make a small selection of pictures that skillfully juxtapose the two types of painting.<sup>357</sup> In Velázquez' *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* (c. 1618) in the National Gallery in London, two half-length figures in the left foreground are located in what is presumably a modest kitchen (Figure 44). The young woman looks longingly out at the viewer as she employs a mortar and pestle to crush the garlic on the table in front of her. An older woman stands behind her and points a disapproving finger in the direction of the younger woman's activities. An opening in the right background leads the viewer to a separate space, one that is visually cordoned off from the scene in the foreground. In this recessed image is portrayed the familiar components of the religious narrative; Christ is seated with Mary at his feet while her sister Martha stands behind her as if she has just momentarily arrived from the kitchen. The structural separation in Velázquez' painting does not necessarily invite viewers to see a continuum between the two pictorial spaces; in this regard, and others, the picture departs from an earlier image by the sixteenth-century Netherlandish artist Pieter Aertsen upon which the work is based (Figure 45).<sup>358</sup> In Velázquez' image, the relationship of the two figures to each other, to the careful selection of foodstuffs on the table, and, most importantly, to the recessed

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<sup>357</sup> On Velázquez during his early years in Seville, see the essays collected in David Davies, Enriqueta Harris and Michael Clarke, *Velázquez in Seville* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1996).

<sup>358</sup> The relationship between Velázquez' painting and Jacob Matham's print of Aertsen's painting was first noted in August L. Mayer, "Velazquez Und Die Niederlandischen Kuchenstucke," *Kunstchronik Und Kunstmarkt* 30 (January 1919): 236–37. The discrepancies between the two artists' works is explored in Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3–16.

religious scene in the background is far from clear, and has engendered much speculation as a result.<sup>359</sup>

Velázquez' *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* was made in the second decade of the seventeenth century when minor genres, such as still life and genre painting, were already understood as distinct from religious imagery. Velázquez, for instance, was simultaneously making independent genre scenes when he painted *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha*. To this effect, Velázquez' picture represents a conscious effort by the artist to join together disparate genres of painting with a genre scene in the foreground and a religious narrative in the background.

Significantly, it is this characteristic – the mixing of genres – that has led scholars of Spanish art to occasionally categorize Velázquez' *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* together with Zurbarán's versions of *Bound Sheep* and *Agnus Dei*.<sup>360</sup> The works of these two artists are joined by scholars under the category of image referred to as *bodegón a lo divino*, or a divine *bodegón*, as I explain in the introduction to this thesis.<sup>361</sup> The two artists were trained in Seville during the same period and were both, if in dissimilar ways, testing the boundaries between genres and levels of representation in

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<sup>359</sup> For recent interpretations, see Tanya Tiffany, "Visualizing Devotion in Early Modern Seville: Velázquez's *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary*," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 32, no. 2 (2005): 433–53; Lorenzo Pericolo, "The Antichrist of Spanish Painting: Diego Velázquez' *Supper at Emmaus* and the Two Versions of *La Mulata*," in *Caravaggio and Pictorial Narrative: Dislocating the Istoria in Early Modern Painting* (Harvey Miller, 2011), 517–37.

<sup>360</sup> For instance, Gállego draws a parallel between Velázquez' *bodegones 'a lo divino'* and Zurbarán's *Agnus Dei* paintings in Gállego and Gudiol, *Zurbarán, 1598-1664*, 50-51. On Velázquez' paintings as *bodegones "a lo divino"*, see the discussion in Cherry, *Arte y naturaleza*, 58-62.

<sup>361</sup> For an explanation of *bodegones 'a lo divino'*, see chapter one, 14-16. For a summary of the use of the Spanish term *bodegón*, see chapter two, 56-60.

painting.<sup>362</sup> Undoubtedly, however, Velázquez' *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* is a very different work from the paintings that I have been describing by Zurbarán. Yet the scholarship generated on Velázquez' painting is plentiful and, as I suggest below, can direct attention to an important aspect of Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep*.

One facet of Velázquez' painting about which scholars tend to agree is the necessity of the beholder's intervention.<sup>363</sup> One is petitioned to understand the two levels of representation in relation to each other, or make meaning out of the encounter of parts. This type of intertextual reading in early modern painting is encouraged, as Victor Stoichita has suggested, by the inclusion of mechanisms such as openings and apertures within a picture.<sup>364</sup> Julian Gállego has also investigated the use of the painting-within-a-painting format in seventeenth-century imagery, focusing specifically on its function in Spanish art.<sup>365</sup> For Gállego, the painting-within-the painting format and presumably the work that it demanded of viewers was akin, in broad strokes, to the types of interpretation demanded by games of wit that were popular in seventeenth-century Spain. A small circle of elite viewers, he explains, would have prized such paintings.<sup>366</sup> It should be

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<sup>362</sup> In his later years Zurbarán would attest to having known Velázquez in Seville during his youth, leading scholars to tentatively propose that Zurbarán must have been familiar, to some degree, with Velázquez' early works. See Brown, "Patronage and Piety," 44; Pérez Sánchez, "The Artistic Milieu in Seville during the First Third of the Seventeenth Century," 51. For further discussion and testimony of this relationship, see María Luisa Caturla, "Velázquez y Zurbarán," in *Varia velazqueña; homenaje a Velázquez en el III centenario de su muerte, 1660-1960.*, ed. Antonio Gallego y Burín and Dirección General de Bellas Artes (Madrid, 1960), 463–70.

<sup>363</sup> On this aspect of Velázquez' painting, see especially Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, 10-16.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Julián Gállego, "Cuadro, clave del cuadro," in *El cuadro dentro del cuadro* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1978), 153–73.

underscored that it is not only the juxtaposition of different pictorial spaces in Velázquez' picture that summons interpretation. Importantly, the adjacent scenes are rendered in two visibly distinct genres, and would have been considered as such by early modern viewers, fuelling an invitation to make sense of the connections between them.

A similar appeal to the beholder emerges when genres are brought together in a single space of representation, as is the case with *Bound Sheep*.<sup>367</sup> While in Velázquez' image, the religious and genre scenes are separated from one another spatially, in *Bound Sheep*, still life and religious imagery are combined to create a picture that wavers between the two genres. The painting relies on the conventions of still life for its format and, to some extent, for its animal content, though not without amendment. The single motif of a bound sheep, with its long association with sacrifice, makes meaning purportedly unclear, which is an issue further compounded, as already explained, by the anticipation of death that we read in the image.

*Bound Sheep*'s minimal composition unquestionably lends poignancy to the picture, but there is little in the image to anchor it. Isolated on the ledge, in the tradition of still life, the animal is excised from the scaffolding of context. The picture instead calls upon viewers to draw their own conclusions about the type of sacrifice – common or sacred – so forcefully evoked. Palomino tells of an aficionado in eighteenth-century

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<sup>366</sup> Ibid., 160–61. Gállego includes Velázquez' *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha* in his discussion of the strategies for interpretation that these types of images demand. He suggests that a recessed image could be the key to interpreting the larger picture.

<sup>367</sup> For a recent discussion of the appeal to interpretation when genres are brought together in a single frame, see Bronwen Wilson, "The Work of Realism," *Art History* 35, no. 5 (2012): 1059–73.

Seville who valued Zurbarán's version more than "one hundred live sheep."<sup>368</sup> That this early collector draws a spirited comparison with animals in the physical world suggests that such a picture was liable to call upon viewers' everyday experiences of the animals, especially given the still life format. Sheep's meat was frequently consumed in seventeenth-century Spain among those who could afford it, as articulated in the popular refrain "vaca y carnero, olla de caballeros," which conveys that gentlemen's stew consists of beef and sheep's meat.<sup>369</sup> Bound sheep would thus have been an ordinary sight in the marketplace, or when transported to and from it. Along with a slaughterhouse located on the edges of Seville, there might also have been discrete sites devoted to the daily death of ovine in the city's mercantile spaces, as is documented near the Rastro market in Madrid.<sup>370</sup> Furthermore, the excellent wool shorn from Merino sheep was not only highly valued by the Spanish and a source of national pride, but was also a profitable export.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> Palomino, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, 184. Palomino refers to the animal in the painting not as a *carnero* but as a *borreguillo*, which is a young sheep more than a year old.

<sup>369</sup> The refrain is cited in the definition for *carnero* in Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*, 406.

<sup>370</sup> In seventeenth-century Seville, meat could be purchased at any one of the dozen meat stalls. See the discussion of food in Benito Navarrete Prieto and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *El joven Murillo: Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, 19 de octubre de 2009 - 17 de enero de 2010, Museo de Bellas Artes de Sevilla, 18 de febrero - 30 de mayo de 2010* (Bilbao: Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao; Sevilla: Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura, 2009), 131. At the end of the sixteenth century, sheep to be slaughtered grazed in the Tablada and Tabladilla pasturelands close to the slaughterhouse, as explained in Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David. Cook, *The Plague Files: Crisis Management in Sixteenth-Century Seville* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 47. On the slaughter of sheep in central Madrid near El Rastro and la Puerta de Toledo, see Antonio López Gómez, *Madrid: estudios de geografía histórica* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1999), 253.

<sup>371</sup> On the wool trade in Spain, see Carla Rahn Phillips, *Spain's Golden Fleece: Wool Production and the Wool Trade from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997). For a study of sheep with regards to politics of ethnicity, see Javier Irigoyen-García, *The Spanish Arcadia: Sheep Herding, Pastoral Discourse, and Ethnicity in Early Modern Spain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

Economic or other investments and desire would also have been summoned as part of one's visual involvement with a picture.

Of course, in *Bound Sheep*, everyday butchering could be exchanged for, or even held in tension with, sacred interpretations of sacrifice. For viewers in Seville, the live animal bound for slaughter might have quickly called upon the realm of religion. As scholars have suggested, the horned animal might be interpreted as an Old Testament sacrifice, such as the substitution of the sheep for Isaac in the story of Abraham, even if, to my knowledge, the sheep in these scenes during the early modern period are rarely bound. The sacrifice of Isaac, and the offering of the animal, refers in typological terms directly to the passion and Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the cross, creating a sequence of meanings through which a viewer might move.<sup>372</sup> Likewise, as to be expected, the sheep could ostensibly slip directly into the guise of its hornless counterpart, as a metaphor for Christ's sacrifice as the Lamb of God. Relying on the format for still life, but supplying an animal that has the potential to call up, through resemblance, the sacrifice of Christ, religious meaning is introduced obliquely in *Bound Sheep*. The sheep's resemblance to a lamb, a motif that would have been familiar from the memory of other types of images, encourages such slippage.

### **Agnus Dei**

I return to the Prado *Bound Sheep* momentarily, but it is useful to introduce briefly the other variation, the *Agnus Dei*. The *Agnus Dei* (1635-1640) in San Diego is considered the first of two extant versions. In this painting, the hornless lamb, like its

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<sup>372</sup> For a review of lambs and sheep in biblical passages, see David Alan Robertson, Allen J. Frantzen, and Martin D'Arcy Gallery of Art, *Ecce Agnus Dei: Sacrificial Imagery of Christ, 1350-1750: From the Collection of Loyola University Chicago, February 18-September 30, 1994* (Chicago: Loyola University Chicago, 1994).

counterpart the sheep, lies defenselessly on a stone ledge with its limbs firmly tied together. In contrast to the Prado painting, however, the San Diego work is equipped with a series of accouterments. The faint nimbus over the lamb's head and the textual inscription lend meaning to the picture. Etched in Latin on the front side of a ledge is the phrase "*Tanquam Agnus*," which translates to "like a lamb." The inscription is taken from a passage in the Book of Isaiah (53.7-8) that reads "like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before its shearer, he was silent and opened not his mouth."<sup>373</sup> This phrase conjures up a well-known Old Testament reference in Christian typology to Christ as the sacrificial lamb who suffers and dies on the cross for the redemption of human sins. It makes reference to the lamb's disposition and acceptance of its fate, a meaning that viewers of the painting would have easily understood.<sup>374</sup> In Zurbarán's *Agnus Dei* (1639) in the Museum of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, the textual inscription is repeated, and slightly extended to read "*Tanquam Agnus/in Occisione*" (Figure 46).<sup>375</sup>

As indicated already, the powerful visual motif of the bound sheep was developed before the image was restated with this intention in the *Agnus Dei* paintings. Importantly, the anticipation of death – elicited in text in the *Agnus Dei* by the Old Testament

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<sup>373</sup> Isaiah 53:7-8 (NRSV)

<sup>374</sup> In his explanation of the use of metaphor in visual imagery to express a complex or transcendent concept, Vicente Carducho draws on the familiar example of lamb to visualize Christ's innocence. See Vicente Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura: su defensa, origen, esencia, definición, modos y diferencias*, ed. F. Calvo Serraller (Madrid: Turner, 1979), 348.

<sup>375</sup> Delenda identifies a difference in the rendering of the animal's wool between the two versions, pointing out that the San Fernando lamb has already been shorn. See Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*, 463. The San Fernando painting came to light only recently when published in Matías Díaz Padrón, "Una sexta repetición del Agnus Dei de Zurbarán," *Goya: Revista de Arte* 270 (1999): 153–54.

reference to the phrase “like a lamb led to the slaughter” – was already registered in the earlier paintings of bound sheep. In other words, text is only later added to the pictorial invention. In the Prado *Bound Sheep*, the visual mechanisms alone had vigorously poised the animal between the fundamental thresholds of living and dead. It is only later, in the *Agnus Dei* versions, that the pictorial invention is buttressed by Biblical inscription. With the *Agnus Dei*, the oscillation between text and image and metaphor and animal lends the picture its charge. A beholder is encouraged to move between the lamb as animal and the accompanying text and accouterments that stress metaphorical thinking of Christ as Lamb of God. Zurbarán’s reasons for converting the sheep into lambs are unknown; he was feasibly responding to specific demands of patrons that desired to see the sacred brought forward in a more straightforward, intelligible manner. As mentioned, there are only two extant versions, in comparison to the five bound sheep, which were in all likelihood almost all painted before Zurbarán decided to make the sheep into an *agnus dei*.

### **Visual discernment**

Returning to Zurbarán’s *Bound Sheep*, it is the animal’s resemblance to and difference from the lamb that heightens its pictorial interest, and further fuels the desire to lend meaning to the image. Although both variations combine still-life painting with religious subject matter, without the accouterments that emphasize the lamb as metaphor for Christ beholders of the bound sheep are made more aware of the play that is created by mixing genres. Fostered in the oscillation between meanings elicited by *Bound Sheep* is an amplified attentiveness to a beholder’s own role.

Importantly, there exists in Zurbarán’s oeuvre another instance in which the role of a viewer as interpreter is made acutely visible. In the Prado is listed a work titled *Saint*



*Luke as a Painter before Christ on the Cross*, though Delenda has recently catalogued it as *A Painter before the Crucifixion*, thinking that it might be an image of the artist himself (Figure 47).<sup>376</sup> Zurbarán made this painting, during the same period of the 1630s, or possibly later according to scholars who claim that it is a self-portrait.<sup>377</sup> *A Painter before the Crucifixion* is a considerably unique image among Zurbarán's paintings. It is a fairly small picture relative to the artist's Crucifixion scenes and the patron is unknown, as is the original context of display.<sup>378</sup> Depicted in the painting is an aging painter who stands at the foot of the cross. His right hand rests on his heart while the left balances his palette and brushes. The artist stands in the right foreground, at the threshold of the picture plane, and gazes upward at Christ whose body is oriented not towards the viewer, as might be expected, but towards the artist positioned below. Whether the artist is intended to be Saint Luke, Zurbarán himself, or even a surrogate painter of a crucifixion, his role as maker of the sacred scene is an important aspect of the picture.<sup>379</sup> That Zurbarán conceived of such a picture with himself in mind, even if it is not a self-portrait, seems fairly certain, and would arguably have been understood in this manner by a patron.<sup>380</sup> It will be recalled that the number of Crucifixion scenes produced by Zurbarán

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<sup>376</sup> Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. 1*, 674-75.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid.

<sup>378</sup> The painting measures 105 x 84 cm. In the nineteenth century, it was inventoried in the collection of the *Infante* Don Sebastián de Borbón. Ibid., 675.

<sup>379</sup> For recent comments on the artist as interpreter in this picture, see Marcia B. Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 170-11.

<sup>380</sup> Saint Luke painting Christ at his Crucifixion is certainly an unusual subject matter. For a discussion of the far more common portrayal of Saint Luke depicting the Virgin and Christ Child, see, for example, Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 342-8.

during his long residency in Seville was considerable, and was thus a type of painting for which he was well known. Notably, it was due in part to the success of the early *Crucifixion*, now in Chicago, that Zurbarán was honored with the invitation by the City Council to take up permanent residence in Seville.<sup>381</sup>

More significant for my purposes, though, is how such a work engages the beholder. The discrepancy in titles assigned to the painting indicates a persistent lack of certainty among scholars about the precise scenario unfolding in the scene between the depicted painter and Christ. The absence of a straightforward interpretation for the painting has been noted by Stoichita, and reiterated more recently by Xavier Bray.<sup>382</sup> In Stoichita's words, the artist "wanted to leave a margin of ambiguity" in the work.<sup>383</sup> Whether one is to understand the portrayed Christ as a painting, a polychrome sculpture or even a vision appears to be purposely left for the viewer to resolve and imagine when standing before it.<sup>384</sup> Given the explicit reference to the depicted artist as a maker of Crucifixion scenes, I would add that it alludes more specifically to the artist himself – to Zurbarán as a creator of pictures – and to the interpretive process that can be required when viewing his works. That *A Painter before the Crucifixion* carefully stages the relationship between artistic creation and viewer by encouraging decipherment of the exchange between painter and Crucifixion scene lends support to the argument I have

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<sup>381</sup> For this account, see Palomino, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, 184-85. According to Palomino, Zurbarán's *Crucifixion* was so lifelike that there were viewers who, upon seeing it, believed it to be not painting, but sculpture.

<sup>382</sup> Victor Stoichita, *Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995), 72-74; Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real*, 31.

<sup>383</sup> Stoichita, *Visionary Experience*, 74.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*, 73-74.

been making. In paintings of bound sheep, viewers are again petitioned to reflect on their interpretive roles due to the manifold references the works elicit.

My arguments about Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep* depend, in part, on emerging interests during this period in Spain, and in Seville more specifically, in amassing private picture collections. Archival research has dispelled the myth that seventeenth-century Spanish collectors restricted themselves to religious imagery.<sup>385</sup> In Seville, although religious paintings were typically the mainstay of a picture collection, paintings of profane subject matter also counted among inventoried works.<sup>386</sup> Considerably less documented, though, are the activities and exchanges fostered in Sevillian private spaces by paintings, especially non-devotional ones.

In Madrid, the topic of collecting has received more scholarly attention, and thus is useful for broaching the issue in Seville, even if collecting was more enthusiastically

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<sup>385</sup> In 1986, Francisco Manuel Martín Morales surveyed post-mortem inventories taken in Seville between 1600 and 1670 to attempt an understanding of collecting patterns based on factors such as an individual's professional status and social class. The collections of the nobility contained the highest percentage of non-religious subjects while clergy members and merchants also typically held significant numbers of these categories of painting. See Francisco Manuel Martín Morales, "Aproximación al estudio del mercado de cuadros en la Sevilla barroca (1600-1670)," *Archivo Hispalense: Revista Histórica, Literaria y Artística* 69, no. 210 (1986): 137–60. In another important study, Duncan Kinkead examined over 200 inventories taken between 1650 and 1699 in Seville. Duncan Kinkead, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla: 1650-1699," *Boletín de Bellas Artes* 17 (1989): 117–78.

<sup>386</sup> For more general studies on picture collecting in Seville see, Alfredo Ureña Uceda, "La pintura andaluza en el coleccionismo de los siglos XVII y XVIII," *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía* 7, no. 13 (1998): 99–148; Juan Miguel Serrera Contreras, "La historia del coleccionismo y mecenazgo en la España Moderna," in *El hispanismo anglonorteamericano: aportaciones, problemas y perspectivas sobre historia, arte y literatura españolas (siglos XVI-XVIII)*: Actas de la I conferencia internacional "Hacia un Nuevo Humanismo" C.I.N.HU., Córdoba, 9-14 de septiembre de 1997, ed. José Manuel de Bernardo Ares (Córdoba: Publicaciones Obra Social y Cultural CajaSur, 2001), 1431–52; Antonio Urquizar Herrera, *Coleccionismo y nobleza: signos de distinción social en la Andalucía del Renacimiento* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2007). For studies of individual collectors and collections, see Brown and Kagan, "The Duke of Alcalá: His Collection and Its Evolution"; Vicente Lleó Cañal, "The Art Collection of the Ninth Duke of Medinaceli," *The Burlington Magazine* 131 (1989): 108–16; José Roda Peña, "Los bienes artísticos de Diego de Paiva, un comerciante portugués en la Sevilla del siglo XVII," *Atrio: Revista de Historia del Arte* 13–13 (2008): 127–6.

pursued at court.<sup>387</sup> Given the ties between the two cities, and the individuals that moved between them, it seems reasonable to assume that, at the very least, a percentage of Sevillian residents adopted practices around pictures similar to their contemporaries in Madrid – especially since they too assembled collections with still lifes and other non-devotional types of pictures. In the Madrid context, the custom of contemplating paintings in the capital’s nascent spaces of collecting has been explained as a way of noble life that developed in the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>388</sup> As Javier Portús explains, individuals were keen to “enseñar la casa,” or show (off) to each other their homes and possessions, which would increasingly consist of a newly assembled picture collection.<sup>389</sup>

One component of the burgeoning literature on collecting in Madrid is the analysis of a variety of instances in which painting is alluded to in the effusive literary output of seventeenth-century Spain. In a play by the famous playwright Félix Lope de Vega y Carpio, in whose works references to pictures frequently appear, one character intimates that to “mirar pinturas” (view paintings) was a favorite new pastime at court.<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>387</sup> In Madrid, privileged collectors who moved in the orbit of the court would have been exposed to King Philip IV’s substantial collection of Italian and Flemish painting. This prompted many of them to fill their rooms with significant numbers of foreign pictures or local copies made after them. See notes 39 and 40.

<sup>388</sup> For textual evidence that elicits these developments, see José Miguel Morán Turina, “Aquí fue troya (De buenas y malas pinturas, de algunos entendidos y otros que no lo eran tanto),” *Anales de Historia del Arte*, no. 3 (1991): 159–84; Javier Portús Pérez, *Pintura y pensamiento en la España de Lope de Vega* (Hondarribia-Guipúzcoa: Nerea, 1999).

<sup>389</sup> Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, 70. On the slippery issue of having knowledge about painting vs. collecting to accrue social capital, see also the discussion in Miguel Falomir Faus, “The Value of Painting in Renaissance Spain,” in *Economia e Arte Secc. XIII - XVIII / Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini” Prato*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Florence: Le Monnier, 2002), 231–60.

<sup>390</sup> Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, 70. This is Portús’ interpretation of a passage in Lope’s *La más prudente venganza*. For the original, see Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, ed., *Obras de Lope de Vega* (Madrid: Atlas, 1964).

Additionally, in Alonso Castillo Solórzano's *El mayorazgo figura*, a scene set in a private picture gallery involves one character asking the other whether or not she appreciates pictures.<sup>391</sup> Such references and exchanges between characters in contemporary texts alerts us to the growing social currency attached to presenting oneself not only as a collector of painting, but also as an *aficionado* adept in the language and conventions of pictures.<sup>392</sup>

In her recent study of the intersections between theater and painting, Laura Bass analyzes how viewing experiences of painting, and the genre of portraiture more specifically, are played out on the Spanish stage.<sup>393</sup> She makes an important claim for a kind of “visual literacy” among Madrid’s theater-going public that involved possessing knowledge of pictorial conventions. Understanding a series of exchanges on stage, which contribute to the unfolding of the play’s plot, depends on an individual’s familiarity with the conventions of portraiture. Bass’ arguments about “visual literacy” at the playhouse underscore that a new kind of discernment of painting was evidently also emerging in the spaces of domestic interiors. Likewise, the scholarship of Portús and others elicits consideration of the social exchanges involving pictures that transpired in these spaces. Such studies help to align Spanish spaces of collecting with European counterparts

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<sup>391</sup> Alonso Castillo Solórzano was in the employ of the Count of Benavente who owned an impressive art collection that was described in Carducho's *Diálogos* when the theorist recalls the finest collections in Madrid. For a transcription of the exchange in the gallery in *El mayorazgo figura*, see Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, 182. See also the recent analysis in Laura R. Bass, *The Drama of the Portrait: Theater and Visual Culture in Early Modern Spain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 27-41.

<sup>392</sup> On the rise of the *aficionado*, see Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, 67-73; Cherry, “Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste,” 35-40.

<sup>393</sup> See especially the chapter titled “Visual Literacy and Urban Comedy” in Bass, *The Drama of the Portrait*, 13-41.

wherein the social dimensions and aspirations fostered in such contexts has been attended to more robustly in scholarly literature.<sup>394</sup>

With a surge in interest among the Spanish nobility and the middling classes in forming picture collections, diverse types of imagery were increasingly mounted on Spanish walls, even if certain genres were not typically painted by local artists. As I explain elsewhere in this study, the output of most Spanish painters, and Zurbarán can here be included, was generally limited to pictures depicting sacred themes in addition to the non-religious genres of portraiture, still life and, later in the seventeenth century, landscape painting. Like other painters in Seville, Zurbarán made images for the domestic context in addition to those created for the monastic communities for which he is better known.<sup>395</sup> That more than 60 works are attributed to him in late-seventeenth-century inventories corroborates Antonio Palomino's claim in *El museo pictórico y la escala óptica* that many of the artist's works were to be viewed in private collections.<sup>396</sup>

As expected, the overwhelming majority of pictures by Zurbarán in private collections were made to assist viewers in their personal devotion.<sup>397</sup> Yet separate from

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<sup>394</sup> Elizabeth Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art: A Study in the Location of Value in Seventeenth-Century Flemish Painting," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 46, no. 1 (1995): 252–97; Frances Gage, "'Some Stirring or Changing of Place': Vision, Judgement and Mobility in Pictures of Galleries," *Intellectual History Review* 20, no. 1 (March 1, 2010): 123–45.

<sup>395</sup> For an overview of his institutional commissions, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán*, Vol. 2, 49–260.

<sup>396</sup> Palomino, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, 185; Kinkead, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla," 120.

<sup>397</sup> Even the private devotional works have received little attention, as Jonathan Brown pointed out over two decades ago, and which continues to be the case. See Brown, "Patronage and Piety," 15. For a recent study of Zurbarán's paintings of Saint Francis, which are considered to have been largely made for private settings, see María Cruz de Carlos Varona, "'Ante Obitu Mortuus, Post Obitu Vivus': Visual Representations of the Body of Saint Francis of Assisi," in *Imagery, Spirituality and Ideology in Baroque Spain and Latin America*, ed. Jeremy Roe and Marta Bustillo (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), 97–112.

this category of image and also displayed in domestic settings are the artist's paintings of bound sheep and still lifes. Whether these categories of works were commissioned or made on speculation remains unknown, but they clearly respond to growing interests in collecting pictures. In Spanish domestic interiors, profane pictures were juxtaposed together on the wall with religious paintings.<sup>398</sup> How we are to understand the domestic interior in Seville as a space where pictures aided private devotion and as a space that encouraged artistic discernment and social exchanges about pictures remains little understood. Nevertheless, scholarly assessments of collecting practices in Madrid suggest that, in Seville, the forms of viewing elicited in interiors were not only directed toward spiritual subject matter.

Most versions of Zurbarán's bound sheep and lambs are liable to have remained in Seville. Palomino, it will be remembered, makes reference to a version in the collection of an eighteenth-century Sevillian aficionado in his biography of the artist.<sup>399</sup> In addition, one of Zurbarán's *Agnus Dei* pictures was reportedly viewed in Seville by an English traveler in the eighteenth century.<sup>400</sup> The only seventeenth-century reference to Zurbarán's bound sheep is to be found in an inventory taken of a picture collection in Madrid, which is further testament to the multifarious artistic connections between Seville and the capital. The postmortem inventory of the court functionary Don Juan de

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<sup>398</sup> On practices of hanging pictures in Madrid, see Cherry, "Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste," 61-66.

<sup>399</sup> Palomino, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, 184.

<sup>400</sup> When the English traveler Joseph Townsend journeyed to Seville in 1792, he writes of seeing a lamb by Zurbarán in the private collection of Don Donato de Arenzana. For Townsend, the lifelikeness of the image was so striking that it was "...perhaps, the most perfect representation that was ever painted upon canvas." Joseph Townsend, *A Journey through Spain in the Years 1786 and 1787 with Particular Attention to the Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, Population, Taxes, and Revenue of That Country; ... By Joseph Townsend ... In Three Volumes. ...* (London: Printed for C. Dilly, 1791), II, 299.

Castañeda was drawn up in 1694, with the paintings valued by the same Palomino who was then in residence in the capital.<sup>401</sup> Among Castañeda's possessions is listed a "painting of a sheep" (pintura de un carnero), which is designated an "original" by Francisco Zurbarán.<sup>402</sup> It is possible that Zurbarán carried the painting with him to demonstrate his artistic prowess when he traveled to Madrid in 1634 and 1635 to work on the Hall of Realms in the newly built Buen Retiro palace of the Spanish monarchs.<sup>403</sup>

In early modern spaces of collecting, pictures were typically hung in close proximity to one another.<sup>404</sup> With paintings lined up one after another, such spaces fostered modes of viewing that encouraged viewers to make connections between images by moving between them to identify parallels and correlations.<sup>405</sup> In Castañeda's collection, Zurbarán's painting of a bound sheep appears to have been displayed in a manner that facilitated such mobile viewing practices. According to Cherry, Castañeda's collection exemplifies "the taste of the period for hanging together old master paintings, Flemish works, and contemporary Spanish paintings."<sup>406</sup> If Palomino's textual record of Castañeda's pictures replicates how the paintings have been displayed at the time of the inventory's making, there is a strong indication that this collector positioned Zurbarán's

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<sup>401</sup> The inventory of his paintings is published in Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, 969-71. Castañeda's position at court was Maestro Mayor de la Cienzia de las Armas de sus Caballeros Pajes del Rey.

<sup>402</sup> "Otra pintura de un carnero, orijinal de fran.<sup>co</sup> Zurbarán tasada en çiento y quarenta R.<sup>s</sup> 140." Ibid., 70.

<sup>403</sup> On the decoration of the Buen Retiro, see Jonathan Brown and J.H. Elliott, *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

<sup>404</sup> This seems to have been in the case in Spanish residences, as suggested in Cherry, "Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste," 62.

<sup>405</sup> See the discussion in Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, esp. 111-114.

<sup>406</sup> Cherry, "Seventeenth-Century Spanish Taste," 48.



bound sheep in relation to paintings with which it would have been in conversation. Intriguingly, in the inventory taken by Palomino, Zurbarán's painting is preceded by two pastoral landscapes painted by the artist José Antolínez.<sup>407</sup> The picture is then followed by an unattributed picture of "Spring" (Primavera), which could very well resemble the *Month of April* introduced earlier by Francesco Bassano.<sup>408</sup> If so, it was liable to include, as does Bassano's picture, lambs or even sheep due to the close association between the animals and that time of year. The same might even be said of Antolínez' pastoral landscapes, which might have included grazing sheep. The point is that Zurbarán's painting is positioned to entice reading with other images that potentially share, to some degree, its pictorial content.

The display of Zurbarán's picture in Castañeda's collection is testament to the important ways in which *Bound Sheep* and its other versions were produced and viewed in dialogue with a broader spectrum of pictures. This is a crucial aspect of these works, and one that is easily overlooked in monographic studies. My earlier suggestion that *Bound Sheep* has the potential to be read in different ways, depending on the associations brought to it, is grounded in the notion that the painting is a visual response to Seville's burgeoning culture of collecting. In the evolving climate for pictures, knowledge of painting – of conventions and of various artists' works – increasingly became a requisite part of a beholder's experience.<sup>409</sup> With its minimal display, Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep*

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<sup>407</sup> For more on Antolínez, see Diego Angulo Iníguez, *José Antolínez* (Madrid: Instituto Diego Velázquez, del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1957).

<sup>408</sup> Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part 1*, 970-71.

<sup>409</sup> See the overview given in chapter one, pages 18-22.

wittingly presents itself as an opportunity to demonstrate one's familiarity with diverse types of pictures.

Whether or not the invention of a single solitary sheep was an unforeseen outcome of Zurbarán's life study of the animal, the artist exploited the potential of his pictorial invention in and through its remaking in different versions. The Prado *Bound Sheep* spectacularly elicits the animal's death; the sacrificial aspect of the work reverberates throughout, and perhaps contributes to one's desire to make sense of it. The bound sheep evokes potent sacred interpretations, which, as I have argued, are always held in tension with other associations, a play between meanings that is intensified when the picture is displayed in nascent spaces of collecting. *Bound Sheep* presents viewers with the opportunity to exercise discernment, to choose how to interpret it, whether by viewing it in relation to nearby pictures or by calling up from memory other images and even texts. It is possible that by interweaving sacred interpretations with still life, and the playful responses engendered by the genre, a picture such as *Bound Sheep* also appealed to viewers for the ways it elicited issues that were becoming increasingly commonplace in the spaces of Sevillian interiors. That is, Zurbarán's painting might call to mind the evolving, and also overlapping experiences of pictures that were newly unfolding in such settings.

### **Conclusion: repetitions**

In his paintings of the *Agnus Dei*, Zurbarán elected to reinterpret the bound sheep along decidedly sacred lines. It is telling, however, that another artist would remake Zurbarán's pictorial invention into a considerably different image. Baltazar Gomes Figueira was a Portuguese artist who resided in Seville from the mid-1620s until the early

1630s. Little is known about Gomes' activities in Seville, but he was examined by the painters' guild in 1631.<sup>410</sup> It is known that Gomes was connected with other practitioners in Seville. Francisco de Herrera the Elder, who was an important proponent of naturalism in Seville and had allegedly at one time been Velázquez' teacher, would serve as godfather to Gomes' daughter.<sup>411</sup> Given the intimate artistic climate of Seville, it is likely that Gomes and Zurbarán would have known each other or, at the very least, the Portuguese artist would have been familiar with Zurbarán's pictures.<sup>412</sup>

Remarkably, after his return to Portugal, Gomes adapted Zurbarán's bound sheep for inclusion in one of his own paintings. In *Bound Sheep with Hanging Game* (1645-55) in the Évora museum, a living horned sheep lies with its limbs bound on a flat surface (48). Gomes' picture was painted and exhibited in the city of Évora, far from Seville, making it difficult to determine the extent to which viewers of the image would have recognized the bound sheep at the image's center to be a quotation from another artist. However, the making of the work suggests that Zurbarán's paintings were reasonably well known among fellow artists in Seville. Gomes' daughter Josefa de Óbidos, who was also a painter, made her own impressive emulations of Zurbarán's *Agnus Dei* paintings

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<sup>410</sup> Celestino López Martínez, *Arquitectos, escultores y pintores vecinos de Sevilla* (Sevilla: Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1928), 50-51.

<sup>411</sup> These archival findings are summarized in Vítor Serrão and National Museum of Women in the Arts, *The Sacred and the Profane: Josefa de Óbidos of Portugal* (Washington: National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1997), 20. For a chronology, see Vítor Serrão and Galeria de Pintura do Rei D. Luís, "Josefa de Ayala, pintora, o elogio da inocência," in *Josefa de Obidos e o tempo barroco* (Lisboa: Instituto Português do Património Cultural, 1991), 13-49. For more on Francisco de Herrera the Elder, see Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Benito Navarrete Prieto, *De Herrera a Velázquez: el primer naturalismo en Sevilla* (Sevilla: Focus Abengoa; Bilbao: Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, 2005).

<sup>412</sup> Gomes Figueira married Catalina de Ayala, who was from a wealthy merchant family in Seville. His father-in-law Joao Ortiz de Ayala amassed an important picture collection that was liable to have included paintings by Sevillian artists, and to which Gomes would have had access as suggested in Serrão and National Museum, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 46.

after she too returned from Seville to Portugal.<sup>413</sup> Additionally, an unusual entry for a single *carnero*, or sheep, by Bartolomé López in a Sevillian inventory of 1670 suggests that other artists might have emulated Zurbarán's pictures.<sup>414</sup>

In Gomes' *Bound Sheep with Hanging Game* (1645-55), the bound sheep is not isolated on the ledge, which is a compositional choice so crucial to Zurbarán's picture. Instead, Gomes combines the bound sheep with a hanging still-life painting. His use of a fictive window frame is strongly reminiscent of that employed by Juan Sánchez Cotán in Toledo in his early still lifes from around 1600. Throughout the 1620s, a number of artists in Toledo and Madrid used the fictive window in their still lifes, but it had since gone out of fashion. Nor did artists in Seville make use of the device, as far as I am aware. Nevertheless, the window format would have been familiar to artists working in Seville. Recall that Zurbarán was familiar with the paintings of Juan van der Hamen, an artist who had relied on the window format for many of his early works.<sup>415</sup> By employing such a format, Gomes was drawing on a visual language that would have surely been recognizable to artists and collectors in Seville, and perhaps in certain instances in Portugal.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the ways in which Sánchez Cotán's works translate the structure of the market stall or the larder, inherited from imported genre

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<sup>413</sup> Josefa Ayala de Obidos's paintings are better studied than those of her father. See José Hernández Díaz, *Josefa de Ayala, pintora ibérica del siglo XVII*. (Sevilla, 1967); Serrão and National Museum of Women, *The Sacred and the Profane*; Serrão and Galeria de Pintura do Rei, *Josefa de Obidos e o tempo barroco*. See also the chapter on Josefa in the recent dissertation of Casey Gardonio-Foat, "Professional Women Artists of Golden Age Iberia: Careers in Context" (PhD Diss., New York University, 2012).

<sup>414</sup> This inventory is published in Kinkead, "Artistic Inventories," 127.

<sup>415</sup> Additionally, in *Arte de la pintura*, Francisco Pacheco reports that Juan Sánchez Cotán's had gained considerable recognition for his still lifes. Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 511.

pictures, into a window frame, thereby creating a new format for still-life painting. Sánchez Cotán's *Still Life with Game Fowl, Fruit and Vegetables* (1602) in the Prado is predicated on pictorial artifice, which is revealed in the odd combination of foodstuffs and the unusual use of string to suspend them (Figure 8). Adjacent to individually strung apples hang two small birds and two partridges while an arrangement of radishes, carrots and a large cardoon protrude from the ledge below. In Gomes' *Bound Sheep with Hanging Game*, the variegated mix of foodstuffs found in the works of Sánchez Cotán has been traded in for a repertoire of similar ones. Suspended is a gamut of expensive game – mallard ducks, partridges, cottontail rabbits and a hare – that gives thematic unity to the vertical display.<sup>416</sup>

Gomes' adaptation of this window format to create a line up of dead animals has the aim of generating a strong visual contrast between the hanging animals and the bound sheep. The upper ledge of the window is left outside of the frame. Without this orientation, the visual emphasis resides in the heaviness of dead animal bodies that descend toward the horizontal ledge, and thus toward the bound sheep that lies upon it. The visual proximity allows viewers to identify sameness – stilled and bound animals – while also highlighting radical difference – dead and alive, hunted and domestic, vertical and horizontal. The mechanisms of color and light further accentuate these distinctions; the whiteness of the sheep wool is illuminated by a light source that falls from the upper left while the more subdued colors of the dead animals are mostly cast in shadow. In Gomes' painting, the sacrificial associations of the sheep oscillate, if in different ways

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<sup>416</sup> For the identification of Gomes' foodstuffs, see Sónia Tahlé Azambuja, *A linguagem simbólica da natureza: a flora e a fauna na pintura seiscentista portuguesa* (Lisboa: Nova Vega, 2009), 118-19.

from the sheep portrayed by Zurbarán, between animals as fulfilling worldly desires and nourishment and as spiritual offerings.

That Gomes recontextualized the bound sheep the way he did with a hanging still-life painting demonstrates how one artist – and early viewer of Zurbarán’s pictorial invention – chose to interpret, and reinterpret it. As Maria Loh has reminded in her study of repetition in seventeenth-century art and theory, new meaning is generated through the process of recontextualization.<sup>417</sup> Gomes’ *Bound Sheep with Hanging Game* departs from Zurbarán’s Prado *Bound Sheep* in interesting ways; in its repetition, it also elucidates how contemporaries versed in the still-life tradition picked up on and exploited tensions registered in Zurbarán’s image. Significantly, Gomes’ *Bound Sheep with Hanging Game* also attests, as I have been suggesting in this chapter, to the creative potential opened up by the genre of still-life painting. By combining a hanging still life with Zurbarán’s motif of the bound sheep, Gomes’ repetition indicates how still life was a genre that invited different kinds of experimentation, especially among painters in the artistic orbit of seventeenth-century Seville.

Zurbarán’s Prado *Bound Sheep* and its other versions represent an early experiment in combining still life with religious subject matter. The surging presence of the living sheep – which is made still by its bound legs – vibrates with intensity and sacrificial violence in the painting. *Bound Sheep* is produced in an artistic climate wherein spiritual directives for imagery were, and continued to be, singularly important. These pictures develop out of Zurbarán’s engagement with the conventions and practices

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<sup>417</sup> Maria H. Loh, “New and Improved: Repetition as Originality in Italian Baroque Practice and Theory,” *The Art Bulletin* 86, no. 3 (2004): 477–504. On issues of repetition and emulation, see also Elizabeth Cropper, *The Domenichino Affair: Novelty, Imitation, and Theft in Seventeenth-Century Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

of still-life painting, which he then combined with strategies used in his religious imagery. As I have attempted to demonstrate, *Bound Sheep* is a poignant composition that moves between associations, demanding and yet eluding straightforward interpretation. In petitioning the beholder, the painting prompts reflection on the possibilities for pictures that were newly emerging in domestic spaces in seventeenth-century Seville.

## Chapter Four: The aftermath of violence: stilling the saintly head (1650-1675)

### Introduction

In a painting titled *Head of Saint Catherine* (c. 1652) by the Sevillian artist Sebastián Llanos y Valdés (c.1605-1677), which is located in the Goya museum in Castres, the severed head of Saint Catherine of Alexandria is cast among the accouterments of her martyrdom (Figure 2).<sup>418</sup> Vibrantly illuminated against the dark ground, the paleness of the saint's face is punctuated by eyes weighed down under swollen eyelids and an open mouth that appears to struggle for its final breath. The delicate pink ribbon that holds her dark hair and the glimmering earring that still clings to her right earlobe contribute to the scene's strangeness. The piercing naturalism entices us to scrutinize the components of the picture while it elicits horror in the knowledge that what is beheld is a decapitated head.

Llanos' *Head of Saint Catherine* exemplifies the beguiling pictorial subject matter of the severed head of the saint. During the second half of the seventeenth century, the heads of Saint John the Baptist, Saint Catherine and other saints were energetically depicted in painting in the southern city of Seville – and almost exclusively in that city in terms of the Spanish context.<sup>419</sup> The solitary head of John the Baptist had earlier precedents in painting elsewhere in Europe, and in Seville's lively tradition of polychrome sculpture. Remarkably, though, as Llanos' painting attests, when this painter

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<sup>418</sup> For the recent change in attribution from Juan Valdés Leal to Sebastián Llanos y Valdés, see entry 13 in Jean-Louis Augé and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Obras maestras españolas del Museo Goya de Castres* (Bilbao: Fundación BBVA, 2002), 84.

<sup>419</sup> Documented are also a handful of unattributed pictures that were possibly painted in Castile. See the website of the Red Digital de Colecciones de Museos de España, accessed January 20, 2015, <http://ceres.mcu.es/>.



and others took to portraying the decapitated head, they considerably expanded the roster of heads, and explored new ways of casting them in painting.<sup>420</sup>

Llanos' *Head of Saint Catherine* and other paintings examined in this chapter foreground the fragmented body. In place of bodily wholeness, the decapitated head of the saint is made the focus of representation. In the *Etymologies* of the seventh century, Isidore of Seville clearly outlines the import of the head as body part. He writes, "The primary part of the body is the head (*caput*), and it was given this name because from there all senses and nerves originate (*imitium capere*), and every source of activity arises from it."<sup>421</sup> In the seventeenth century, the head was typically understood as the part of the body that directed much of its activity, and also housed the soul.<sup>422</sup> Perceived thus as the most significant body part, the fragment of the head, especially a saintly one, carried extraordinary symbolic potential.<sup>423</sup>

Despite the paintings' considerable intrigue, Llanos' *Head of Saint Catherine* and others pictures made by his Sevillian contemporaries are largely understudied in current scholarship. A handful of early twentieth-century scholars, however, were noticeably interested in such works. In a study in 1913, Enrique Romero de Torres judiciously

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<sup>420</sup> There is evidence that seventeenth-century Italian artists, mostly in Naples, also painted the severed heads of different saints. See Mina Gregori, "La trayectoria en un tema desde Leonardo hasta Caravaggio: la 'Cabeza de San Juan Bautista,'" in *In sapientia libertas: escritos en homenaje al Profesor Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez*, ed. Museo del Prado (Madrid: Museo Nacional de Prado, 2007), 353–64.

<sup>421</sup> Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. Stephen A. Barney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 232.

<sup>422</sup> Catrien Santing and Barbara Baert, "Introduction," in *Disembodied Heads in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, ed. Catrien Santing, Barbara Baert, and Anita Traninger (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1. This introduction to a collection of essays provides an overview of associations with the severed head in medieval and early modern Europe.

<sup>423</sup> For a discussion of the symbolism of the head in different historical contexts, see Regina Janes, *Losing Our Heads: Beheadings in Literature and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

located and published a number of extant seventeenth-century pictures of saintly heads, all of which the author considered to be the work of the artist Juan Valdés Leal (1622-1690).<sup>424</sup> Shortly thereafter, José Pérez y Gestoso published an important monograph on Valdés Leal, who hailed from Córdoba but lived and worked for several years in Seville.<sup>425</sup> Pérez y Gestoso's text lent further support to the notion that Valdés Leal was Seville's principal, if not exclusive, author of paintings of severed heads. Many of these attributions were left undisputed until relatively recently when examined by current specialists, and especially by Enrique Valdivieso.<sup>426</sup> The broader range of artists in Seville who are now acknowledged as having painted saintly heads puts pressure on older biographical interpretations that linked the works to Valdés Leal's inexorable interest in themes of death and the brevity of life.<sup>427</sup> Furthermore, it makes evident the need to reassess such pictures especially since, as Valdivieso has commented, almost all of the city's leading artists portrayed the severed head of John the Baptist, and occasionally of other saints, at one time or another.<sup>428</sup>

A number of extant paintings created in Seville still remain unattributed and undated; on the basis of the handful of dated ones, however, it can confidently be asserted that the majority of works were painted between 1650 and 1675. That a number of

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<sup>424</sup> Enrique Romero de Torres, "El pintor de los muertos. Más obras inéditas de Valdés Leal," *Museum* III (1913): 41-50.

<sup>425</sup> See especially images 41 and 42 in José Gestoso y Pérez and Hispanic Society of America, *Biografía del pintor sevillano, Juan de Valdés Leal* (Sevilla: Oficina tip. de J.P. Gironés, 1916).

<sup>426</sup> See the reevaluation of paintings attributed to Valdés Leal in Enrique Valdivieso, *Juan de Valdés Leal* (Sevilla: Guadalquivir, 1988), 285-288.

<sup>427</sup> Such an interpretation is laid out in Romero de Torres, "El pintor de los muertos."

<sup>428</sup> Enrique Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca sevillana* (Sevilla: Guadalquivir Ediciones, 2003), 62.

painters in the same city took to picturing the unusual subject matter over a relatively short period indicates a collective interest in the pictorial type. In Seville's small, but relatively active artistic community, its foremost painters would have known each other, and been familiar with each other's works. In fact, many of the artists who painted severed heads were founding members of the artist-initiated drawing academy that was established in the city in 1660, with Bartolomé Murillo (1617-1682) and Francisco Herrera the Younger (1627-1685) jointly serving as the academy's first presidents.<sup>429</sup> In all probability, then, makers of paintings of severed heads were responding to each other's inventions.

As indicated, many paintings still carry tentative attributions, though it is widely accepted among scholars that such works were painted in Seville in the second half of the seventeenth century. Therefore, in this chapter, paintings securely attributed to Llanos, Murillo and Valdés Leal will be brought into conversation with works with less certain attributions. The focus is not on the inventions of a particular artist, though these will not be overlooked; instead, I assess the portrayal of the isolated severed head from a broader vantage point in order to elicit the noteworthy intersections with still-life painting. One aim is to bring forward how still-life painting became an effective genre with which to experiment portraying the severed head. I argue that Llanos and Murillo and other artists relied not only on the genre's format, but also on its modes of assembling – the act of setting up objects on a ledge and on canvas. A second, related aim is to situate paintings

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<sup>429</sup> On the academy, see Hiliary Macartney, "The Nobility of Art: The Seville Academy Founded by Murillo and a Portrait of Philip IV at Pollok House," *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History* 4 (1999): 48–56; Peter Cherry, "Murillo's Drawing Academy," in *Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682): Paintings from American Collections*, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt (New York: H.N. Abrams, in association with the Kimbell Art Museum, 2002), 47–61.

of decapitated saint heads in the artistic climate of Seville during the third quarter of the seventeenth century. Certainly, these paintings would have been valued in a city with a voracious appetite for religious pictures. Yet this chapter probes the reasons for which such intriguing portrayals of violence might have resonated with artists and viewers during this particular historical moment.

### **Precedents in painting and polychrome**

It is the head of John the Baptist, rather than that of any other saint, that had precedents in imagery elsewhere in Europe. The Baptist is a significant figure in Christianity as the precursor to Christ and he who would ultimately identify him. John thus comes at the end of the line of prophets who foretell of Christ's coming while he is also the first of the Christian martyrs. As told in the Gospels, and retold in Pedro de Ribadeneyra's widely-read *Flos Sanctorum* (1599) and other hagiographies of the period, John the Baptist's vocal disapproval of the union of Herod, ruler of Galilee, and Herodias would result in the silencing of his head by severing it from his body.<sup>430</sup> The Baptist had preached against the marriage of Herod to Herodias, the former wife of his half-brother. Herodias, it was believed, eventually sought deadly revenge on the Baptist, whose sermons were popular with people. At Herod's birthday feast, Herodias' daughter Salome so enchanted the ruler with her dancing that he promised to offer her whatever she desired; after consulting with her mother, Salome would demand the head of the Baptist, which soon after would be brought to her by the executioner.<sup>431</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Mark 6:14-29. (New Revised Standard Version, hereafter NRSV); Pedro de Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum, libro de las vidas de los santos, primera parte* [1599] (Madrid: por Luis Sánchez, 1616).

<sup>431</sup> For an account of the Baptist's decapitation, see Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum*, 619-624.

In painting, the head of the Baptist on a platter could be included in a narrative, or displayed all alone. An early example of the head isolated in painting can be found in the Italian artist Andrea Solario's *Head of John the Baptist* (1507) in the Louvre (Figure 49). Solario paints the head of the Baptist safeguarded within the inner rim of a footed chalice set on a wooden ledge against a dark ground. By portraying the saint's head in three-quarter profile, Solario departs from earlier, Netherlandish pictures painted on circular panels that merge the head with the surface upon which it was depicted.<sup>432</sup> Solario's work is the earliest known example wherein the saintly head is poised in a receptacle on a ledge, though whether such an invention can be attributed to Solario or to a lost Leonardo original, as has been proposed, remains unclear.<sup>433</sup> Nonetheless, other artists in the Lombard region of Italy soon after emulated this manner of displaying the solitary head.<sup>434</sup>

Solario's Louvre painting is considered the prototype for subsequent painted pictures of the Baptist's head in Italy, and also in Spain.<sup>435</sup> Lombardy was a geographic region with which Spain maintained robust political ties, which facilitated the movement of artistic works between them, as demonstrated already in chapter two with the imports

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<sup>432</sup> For a review of the portrayal of the Baptist's head in different European pictorial and sculptural traditions, see Isabel Combs Stuebe, "The 'Johannisschüssel': From Narrative to Reliquary to 'Andachtsbild,'" *Marsyas* 14 (1968-69): 1-16.

<sup>433</sup> For a discussion of Solario's painting, see Barbara Baert, "'The Head of St John the Baptist on a Tazza' by Andrea Solario (1507): The Transformation and the Transition of the 'Johannesschüssel' from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance," *Critica D'arte* 69, no. 29-31 (2007): 60-82, esp. 66. See also the author's lengthier study on the Baptist's head, Barbara Baert, *Caput Johannis in Disco: Essay on a Man's Head* (Leiden: Brill, 2012). On Solario's painting more generally, see David Alan Brown, *Andrea Solario* (Milano: Electa, 1987).

<sup>434</sup> For examples of paintings, see Combs Stuebe, "The 'Johannisschüssel,'" 10n61; Luisa Cogliati Arano, *Andrea Solario* (Milano: E.T.I., 1966).

<sup>435</sup> Combs Stuebe, "The 'Johannisschüssel,'" 11-14.

of Lombard still lifes. Copies and adaptations of Solario's painting were, to a limited extent, available in the Spanish peninsula. One anonymous *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (16<sup>th</sup> century) belongs to the Prado museum but is currently housed in the Lope de Vega museum in Madrid (Figure 50). It bears a close resemblance to Solario's painting and is likely the work of an Italian artist, but it is unknown which year the painting entered Spain.<sup>436</sup> There is, however, evidence that paintings of the Baptist's head were collected in Spain, and mostly at court in Madrid, prior to the momentum that gathered around the pictorial type in Seville in the late 1640s.<sup>437</sup> These works tend to be largely unattributed in Madrilean inventories, though it is likely they were imported. In certain cases, a direct connection with Italy can be discerned. For example, in Madrid in 1638, the artist and art theorist Vicente Carducho, who was born in Italy and looked favorably on its imagery, had in his possession a considerably modest portrayal of the Baptist's severed head.<sup>438</sup> Additionally, a painting attributed to the sixteenth-century Sevillian artist Luis de Vargas is recorded in the Conde del Águila's eighteenth-century collection in Seville.<sup>439</sup> Vargas spent much time in Italy, and it is feasible that during his travels, or upon his return to Seville, he tried his hand at depicting the Baptist's head.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>436</sup> This painting is mentioned in *ibid.*, 10n61.

<sup>437</sup> Paintings of the head of John the Baptist are inventoried in seventeenth-century collections in Madrid, though it is likely that such pictures would have mostly been imported from elsewhere. For examples, consult the inventories published in Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755*.

<sup>438</sup> The work is listed in Vicente Carducho's inventory in 1638 (Archival Inventory E-603). The Getty Provenance Index Database, "Archival Inventories," accessed January 20, 2015, <http://piprod.getty.edu/starweb/pi/servlet.starweb>. In the inventory of his possessions, the painting is pejoratively described as "poorer than *ordinario*" (menor que ordinario) to situate it unfavorably in relation to the mass-produced *pintura ordinaria* that could be picked up relatively inexpensively on the streets of Madrid.

<sup>439</sup> "Ytt. O[t]ro Quadro de la Cavesa del Baptista, de mano del mismo autor Luis de Vargas." Archivo de Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla (hereafter APNS), Oficio 18, 1784, legado 12117, f.610-619. The painting

Among Italian painters, the depiction of the Baptist's head with Salome or Herodias became increasingly fashionable in the seventeenth century.<sup>441</sup> Conversely, when Sevillian artists began to portray the saint's head in the 1640s they typically eschew portrayals with other figures.<sup>442</sup> This is not to say that depictions of the sort did not exist; Llanos painted a picture with Herodias towards the end of his career.<sup>443</sup> Yet, in general, artists in this context repeatedly preferred to render alone the radiating head of the saint. To turn to one Sevillian example, *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (1650-1675) belongs to the Prado collection, but is currently held in the Museum of Fine Arts of Coruña (Figure 51). Acquired for the Spanish royal collection by King Charles IV (1748-1819), the painting bears an uncertain attribution to Murillo.<sup>444</sup> However, it is likely the work of a different Sevillian artist, and possibly painted by Llanos, as Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño has

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is listed in the inventory published in Magdalena Illán Martín, "La colección pictórica del conde del Águila," *Laboratorio de Arte* 13 (2000): 144-150, esp. 144.

<sup>440</sup> Pacheco tells that Vargas spent several years in Italy before returning to Seville. See Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura*, ed. Bonaventura. Bassegoda i Hugas (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), 222.

<sup>441</sup> This observation is made in Janes, *Losing Our Heads*, 111.

<sup>442</sup> In their study of the inventory of the Duke of Alcala in Seville, Jonathan Brown and Richard Kagan have noted the rarity of the portrayal of Herodias. See Jonathan Brown and Richard Kagan, "The Duke of Alcala: His Collection and Its Evolution," *The Art Bulletin* 69, no. 2 (June 1987): 14.

<sup>443</sup> Diego Angulo Iñiguez, "Don Sebastián de Llanos y Valdés," *Archivo Español de Arte* 19, no. 76 (1946): 315. Citing an early study by August L. Mayer, Diego Angulo Iñiguez makes reference to a painting of Herodias by Llanos that is signed and dated to 1675 and was once located in the Church of San Juan de Marchena. See August L. Mayer, *Die Sevilianer Malerschule; Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1911). For the recent translation of Mayer's text into Spanish, see August L. Mayer, *La escuela sevillana de pintura: aportaciones a su historia por August L. Mayer.*, trans. Daniel Romero (Spain: Cajasol. Obra Social, 2010), 204.

<sup>444</sup> The Prado possesses two pairs of paintings of severed heads (the head of the Baptist and the head of Saint Paul) for a total of four paintings. I follow the Prado's current attributions.

proposed.<sup>445</sup> In the Coruña *Head of Saint John the Baptist*, the decapitated head of the Baptist is portrayed not in a footed salver as found in Solario's Louvre picture but in a concave gilded platter that sits at the center of an unadorned ledge against a dark ground. Resting on its right side, the saintly head turns towards the beholder, allowing the upper part of his face to be bathed in light as locks of thick, wavy hair tumble onto the platter's rim.

Although earlier paintings by Solario and other Italian artists were a point of reference for Murillo, Llanos and others, Sevillian artists were likely responding more directly to depictions of the saint's head in polychrome sculpture. Seville boasted a dynamic polychrome tradition, an art form that was almost exclusively religious in the Spanish context. Practitioners furnished the peninsula's spiritual establishments, confraternities and private oratories with polychrome sculpture to aid in contemplating the sacred.<sup>446</sup> Sculpture's ability to conform closely to its prototype singled it out in the minds of a few contemporary preachers as the more effective media as a tool for devotion.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> See entry 343 and 342 in Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *La obra pictórica completa de Murillo* (Barcelona: Editorial Noguer, 1978), 116. Subsequently, Diego Angulo Iñiguez classified the picture under "obras discutibles" (debated works) in Diego Angulo Iñiguez, *Murillo: catálogo crítico, Vol. 2* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1981), 513.

<sup>446</sup> On processional sculpture in Seville, see Susan Verdi Webster, *Art and Ritual in Golden-Age Spain: Sevillian Confraternities and the Processional Sculpture of Holy Week*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

<sup>447</sup> See the discussion of sculpture in Karin Hellwig, *La literatura artística española en el siglo XVII* (Madrid: Visor, 1999), 185-186.



Sculptural examples of the decapitated head of John the Baptist date in Spain from the mid sixteenth century.<sup>448</sup> In Seville, renowned sculptors took up the subject matter just prior to 1600; Gaspar Nuñez Delgado created a polychromed terracotta head in 1591, which is currently housed in Seville's Museum of Fine Arts. Subsequently, Juan Martínez Montañés carved two versions in wood, one for the Church of San Leandro in Seville and another that was sent to Peru in 1607.<sup>449</sup> Another sculptor Juan de Mesa, who gained employment in the workshop of Martínez Montañés upon his arrival from the neighboring city of Córdoba, carved his own version around 1625.<sup>450</sup> Mesa's *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (c.1625) in polychromed wood was originally made for the Convent of Santa Clara, but is currently housed in the Cathedral museum in Seville (Figure 52). The sculpture now rests on a newer base, but a platter, diadem and casket were requested of a contemporary silversmith around the time of the sculpture's commission.<sup>451</sup> These objects were surely intended to augment the presentational aspect of the polychromed head; placed in the silver platter, the sculpture's approximation of the real head would have been enhanced.

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<sup>448</sup> For instance, there exists an example by the sculptor Juan de Juni in Valladolid from approximately 1545, as explained in Juan José Martín González, *J. de Juni: vida y obra* (Madrid: Dirección General de Bellas Artes, 1974), 158. Cited in Marjorie Trusted, *Spanish Sculpture: Catalogue of the Post-Medieval Spanish Sculpture in Wood, Terracotta, Alabaster, Marble, Stone, Lead and Jet in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1996), 135.

<sup>449</sup> For a brief overview of existing sculptural examples from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, see Trusted, *Spanish Sculpture*, 135-136.

<sup>450</sup> On Mesa's version, see Manuel Gómez-Moreno, *The Golden Age of Spanish Sculpture* (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1964), 54-55; Xavier Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture, 1600-1700* (London: National Gallery, 2009), 82-84.

<sup>451</sup> This is summarized in Xavier Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real*, 82-84. For the contract with the silversmith, see José Hernández Díaz, *Juan de Mesa; escultor de imaginería (1583-1627)* (Sevilla: Diputación de Sevilla, 1972), 79.

In Mesa's sculpture, the Baptist's face reveals carefully chiseled facial features and teeth, and hair that closely imitate the real. His head is turned sideways, and viewers are invited to inspect the gaping gash on his neck that signals his martyrdom. With its impressive display of hyperrealism, most visible in the enthralling neck wound that is executed with surprising anatomical precision, the sculpture urges viewers to collapse the distance between fiction and prototype.<sup>452</sup> For larger polychrome sculpture, patrons might stipulate the types of wounds or legions to be rendered on the body.<sup>453</sup> Perhaps the intention of such instructions was to facilitate and to focus meditation on the suffering and violence endured by holy figures. A similar desired outcome might explain the detail in which the Baptist's neck wound is rendered in Mesa's sculpture.

The joint efforts required by polychrome in Seville created close working relationships between sculptors and painters. In accordance with guild regulations, Mesa and other sculptors did not polychrome their own sculpture; this was left to a painter whose identity in this instance remains unknown.<sup>454</sup> Powerful guilds continued to hold sway in the city, and instituted a rigid division of labor between what were, in practice, the less fixed categories of sculpture and painting.<sup>455</sup> Once the carving of a sculpture was

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<sup>452</sup> On anatomical precision, see comments in Xavier Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real*, 82.

<sup>453</sup> Juan José Martín González, *El escultor Gregorio Fernández* (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1980), cited in Gridley McKim-Smith, "Spanish Polychrome Sculpture and Its Critical Misfortunes," in *Spanish Polychrome Sculpture 1500-1800 in United States Collections*, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt (New York: Spanish Institute, 1993), 23.

<sup>454</sup> Xavier Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real*, 82.

<sup>455</sup> An overview of the relationship between painters and sculptors in Seville is outlined in a section of Bray's introductory catalogue essay. See Xavier Bray, "The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700," in *The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture, 1600-1700*, ed. Xavier Bray and National Gallery (London: National Gallery, 2009), 18-26. On the *paragone* and relationship

complete, sculptors would be obliged to engage a certified painter to apply polychrome, making the final work a collaborative endeavor. Although this would change toward the end of the seventeenth century when sculptors began to acquire the title of *pintor de imagineria* that would permit them to polychrome their own works, such guild regulations attest to the unusual proximity of sculpture and painting in the Sevillian context.<sup>456</sup>

On more than one occasion, the proximity between sculpture and painting led an artist working in one medium in Seville to replicate an image type generated in the other. As Xavier Bray has suggested, pictorial interest in the severed head of John the Baptist can be partly explained by the head's earlier portrayal in polychrome sculpture.<sup>457</sup> Although, to my knowledge, none of the artists who painted severed heads on canvas were involved in applying polychrome to sculptural heads, it should not be overlooked that portrayals of the head in painting followed closely on the heels of its demand in polychrome.<sup>458</sup> It should be noted that the issue of decorum with regards to bodily viscera was unquestionably different in works of polychrome sculpture and painting. The gruesome neck wound rendered by Mesa in his *Head of the Baptist*, and the bloodiness

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between sculpture and painting in Spanish art theory, see Hellwig, *La literatura artística española*, 175-252.

<sup>456</sup> Bray, "The Sacred Made Real," 25-26.

<sup>457</sup> Bray and National Gallery, *The Sacred Made Real*, 84. The *Sacred Made Real* exhibition held in 2009 argued for a consideration of the longstanding tradition of polychrome when accounting for the arresting forms that emerge in seventeenth-century Spanish painting. Bray suggests that such a relationship might have existed between polychromed heads and painted ones in the catalogue entry for Mesa's *Head of Saint John the Baptist*.

<sup>458</sup> To further elicit the connection between the two media, it is worth noting that sculptors in the eighteenth century no longer only portrayed the severed head of the Baptist, as they had done previously, but began to also depict the head of Saint Paul, which, as I explain below, thrived in seventeenth-century painting. For eighteenth-century examples of Spanish sculpture, consult J.J. Martín González, "Cabezas de santos degollados en la escultura barroca española," *Goya: Revista de Arte* 16 (1957): 210-13.

found in seventeenth-century Spanish polychrome more generally, is nearly absent from contemporary painting. While the application of gore was central to representing the torments of the saints and Christ in sculpture, blood in painting was only acceptable in controlled quantities. In *Arte de la pintura* (1649), Francisco Pacheco stipulates that wounds to a holy body in painting were not to be excessive. In discussing the portrayal of Christ at the column, a work in which Christ endures considerable bodily injury, Pacheco encourages artists to partially obscure these lacerations in the shadowed or darker areas to preserve the splendor of the sacred body.<sup>459</sup> This is to say that when painters went to depict the decapitated head of the Baptist and other saints on canvas, they were forced to resort to different visual means.

### **Still life and practitioners**

Around 1650, painters in Seville began to render decapitated saint heads on canvas, and did so by readily adopting the format used for still-life painting. Into the late 1640s, still life in Seville rehearsed specific visual conventions, favoring simple, unadorned horizontal surfaces that allowed for the juxtaposition of individual objects against a dark ground. In the previous chapter, I introduced Francisco de Zurbarán's handful of still lifes, which date from approximately 1630 and count among the earliest extant pictures of this kind to be made in the city. Zurbarán's still lifes exemplify this format, which was later carried on in the oeuvre of his son, Juan de Zurbarán, who was one of the few artists to specialize in still-life painting until his early death in Seville's 1649 plague. A number of signed works can be attributed to Juan, including the impressive *Plate of Lemons* (c. 1640) in the Museum of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts

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<sup>459</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 301.

of San Fernando in Madrid (Figure 53).<sup>460</sup> Displayed in the picture's shallow foreground, a modest arrangement of lemons is illuminated in strong light while the background is entirely cast in shadow.

Evidently, there was recognized value in employing a dark ground in still life where objects could lay claim to lifelikeness and immediacy. Pacheco indicates in his *Arte de la pintura* that a dark ground in painting permits figures and things to surge forward from the canvas and appear in strong relief.<sup>461</sup> A black ground makes painting more lifelike, Pacheco explains, by granting depicted objects and figures three dimensionality as found “in sculpture and in nature” (como el bulto y como el natural).<sup>462</sup> Given the precedent of the severed head of John the Baptist in polychrome sculpture, it is not surprising that an emphasis on relief would come to orient explorations of the head in painting. The extraordinary achievements in polychrome must have posed, albeit obliquely, a pictorial challenge once the theme was translated into painting. The issue of relief had also been a factor during the earlier transition of the head of John the Baptist from sculpture to painted forms of representation in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries elsewhere in Europe. Tracking this shift from a three-dimensional object to a two-dimensional one, Barbara Baert explains that what is lost is the physical correlation between the object and its referent – the material relic of the saintly head – which, she

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<sup>460</sup> On the work of Juan de Zurbarán, see Odile Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, “Juan de Zurbarán (Llerena, 1620-Sevilla, 1649),” in *Francisco de Zurbarán, 1598-1664: Los conjuntos y el obrador, Volumen II* (Madrid: Fundación Arte Hispánico, 2009), 275–85.

<sup>461</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 404.

<sup>462</sup> Ibid.

suggests, must subsequently be compensated for by pictorial illusion.<sup>463</sup> To return momentarily to the Coruña *Head of the Baptist*, we see that the artist is keen to elicit the presence of the saintly fragment in the image (Figure 51). Against the dark ground, the Baptist's severed head surges forward in pictorial relief, while the platter holding the head casts a shadow on the ledge below it, emphasizing its physical presence. Furthermore, the far border of the narrow ledge is carefully demarcated in the left back corner to demonstrate the shallowness of pictorial space, which insists that attention remain focused on the foreground – on the weightiness of the illuminated head that presses into the platter and turns toward the picture plane.

The use of a flat ledge and a dark ground as the setting for still life was not exclusive to Seville, or to Spain. As explained in previous chapters, it was first espoused in still life in Lombardy and the Netherlands in the 1590s and adopted soon after by artists in Spanish cities. Additionally, even before such a format was put to use in Lombardy to render independent still lifes, Solario and other artists would employ it to display the head of John the Baptist since it was conducive to illusion.<sup>464</sup> Significantly, however, by the time painters in the Sevillian context began to paint the severed head, the format was one firmly linked in the minds of artists and viewers to the genre of still-life painting.

In chapter two of this thesis, I introduced the ways in which still life was closely tied to impressive feats of naturalism, which, for contemporaries, were largely connected to the novel practice of working from models (if inanimate ones). At the chapter's end, I

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<sup>463</sup> Baert, "'The Head of St John the Baptist on a Tazza' by Andrea Solario (1507)," 75.

<sup>464</sup> On these conventions, see essays in Bayer, *Painters of Reality*.

included the remarks of the eighteenth-century art commentator Antonio Ponz who observes, during his travels to Seville, that seventeenth-century artists in that city often painted still lifes in their early years to attain a facility with the application of color.<sup>465</sup> Such a report seems to align with the textual references that connect the city's leading artists around mid century – Francisco Herrera the Elder (1590-1656) and his son Herrera the Younger, Murillo, Camprobín and possibly even Llanos – with the practice of making still lifes, even if the large numbers of their works are currently lost or unattributed.

For instance, on a handful of occasions, *floreros*, or flower still lifes, are attributed to Murillo in seventeenth-century inventories.<sup>466</sup> Later in his career, the artist also painted a number of genre scenes in outdoor settings with loose brushwork, many of which are still in existence today, in contrast to his still lifes.<sup>467</sup> Likewise, there are also references in the inventories to still lifes painted by Herrera the Elder and Herrera the Younger.<sup>468</sup> Additionally, Antonio Palomino reports in *El museo pictórico y la escala óptica* (1715-24) that Herrera the Elder “had particular good taste for painting small still lifes with various kitchen trifles, done after nature so realistically that they deceive you.”<sup>469</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> For Ponz' remarks, see pages 97-98.

<sup>466</sup> These are collected and published in Duncan Kinhead, “Artistic Inventories in Sevilla: 1650-1699,” *Boletín de Bellas Artes* 17 (1989): 121.

<sup>467</sup> For Murillo's genre scenes, see Xanthe Brooke and Peter Cherry, *Murillo: Scenes of Childhood* (London: Merrell, 2001).

<sup>468</sup> “Diez y ocho frutereros de mano de Francisco de Herrera en el uno pintado una mulatilla” (Eighteen fruit still lifes by the hand of Francisco de Herrera in which in one is painted a young mulatta girl). Inventory of Joseph Belero, Archivo de Protocolos de Sevilla (hereafter APS), Oficio 21, 1654, libro 1, f. 294-97. The inventory is published in Kinhead, “Artistic Inventories in Sevilla,” 123. It is uncertain whether the entry refers to Herrera father or son.

<sup>469</sup> Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, trans. Nina Ayala Mallory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 128. I quote from Mallory's translation of Palomino's artist biographies, which comprise the third part of *El museo pictórico y la escala óptica*.

Palomino also praises the still lifes of Herrera the Younger.<sup>470</sup> Unfortunately, however, no still lifes known today are presently attributed to either father or son. Although there is no mention of Llanos having painted still lifes, it is likely the artist was quite familiar with the genre and its conventions if he was in fact apprenticed to Herrera the Elder, as the early Spanish art historian Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez recounts in his biography of Llanos.<sup>471</sup> Regarding Valdés Leal, there is no documentation that suggests the artist ever painted still lifes. On the other hand, though, Pedro de Campobín (1605-1674), Seville's leading painter of still lifes and, like Juan de Zurbarán, one of the few artists in Spain to ever concentrate almost wholly on the genre, is ascribed two paintings of severed heads in a seventeenth-century collection.<sup>472</sup> In this instance, the owner prepared the list of possessions himself, and owned a number of Campobín's works, which increases the likelihood of a correct attribution.<sup>473</sup>

Given the textual evidence that many of the leading painters in Seville around 1650 dabbled in painting still lifes, it is safe to assume that the artists mentioned above

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<sup>470</sup> "Having devoted himself to painting small still lifes, for which he had a great talent – most particularly some with fish, done after nature – in order to become better known by this means and to help take care of his needs in a Court [Rome] where he had no protection, he attained such extraordinary excellence in these trifles that he earned there the nickname it *Spagnolo degli pexe*. Whereby he gained not only fame but also profit." Ibid., 270.

<sup>471</sup> A reference to Llanos' possible training with Herrera the Elder is made in Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez, *Diccionario historico de los mas ilustres profesores de las bellas artes en España* (Madrid: Impr. de la viuda de Ibarra, 1800), 40; Cited in Angulo Iñiguez, "Don Sebastián de Llanos y Valdés," 312; Duncan Kinkead, "Nuevos datos sobre los pintores don Sebastián de Llanos y Valdés e Ignacio de Iriarte," *Archivo Hispalense: Revista Histórica, Literaria y Artística* 62, no. 191 (1979): 191-192.

<sup>472</sup> In general, rarely did artists in Spain specialize in one particular type of painting since it was more lucrative to diversify.

<sup>473</sup> "Dos quadros de San Juan y San Pablo degollado con su moldura de *la misma mano* (emphasis is Kinkead's, referring to other paintings by Campobín's hand)." Capital del Doctor Miguel de Ayza, doctor and *titular* of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. APS, Oficio 17, 1676, libro 1, f. 886-93. For the inventory, see Kinkead, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla," 132.



were familiar with the genre's conventions. Not only might a few have produced still lifes in keeping with the format used in the works of Juan de Zurbarán, but also they were liable to have been familiar with, and even participated in, new directions implemented in still life during the period. After the late 1640s, the genre was no longer dominated by a format consisting of a stark black ground and minimal composition that had been the staple of still life until that point. Artists such as Camprobín lightened their backgrounds, occasionally amplified the density of their compositions, and softened their palettes to include warmer colors and tones. Camprobín's signed and dated *Still Life with Sweets* (1663) in a private collection is a subtle example of these changes (Figure 54).

Sevillian painters responded to the pictorial challenge of the severed saintly head, which was previously only the prerogative of polychrome, by taking recourse in a format – and a genre – wherein spectacular illusions were frequently achieved. Although conventions for still-life painting began to evolve in the late 1640s, the earliest paintings of severed heads noticeably make use of the genre's more established conventions, which were intently focused on pictorial relief. As will be seen, however, artists also took into account newer developments in still life, drawing on them in intriguing ways to picture the decapitated head. Importantly, as I explain in what follows, still-life painting and its assembled displays of immobile things offered Sevillian artists an effective way of picturing saintly fragment.

### **Picturing martyrdom**

Paintings of saints were a mainstay of imagery in seventeenth-century Seville. The reaffirmation of the centrality of the cult of saints and their intercessory role in Catholicism was a focal point at the Council of Trent (1545-1563), after having come

under severe attack by Protestant reformers. After Trent, hagiographies of saints, as in Pedro de Ribadeneyra's *Flos Sanctorum* (1599), poured off the presses as Catholics tirelessly documented these individuals' lives and miracles.<sup>474</sup> These accounts told of the persecution of saints who bore tremendous suffering and death on account of their beliefs. Early saints, many of who were also martyrs, figured prominently in hagiographies, which helped to make a claim for the longevity of the Catholic Church.<sup>475</sup> The avalanche of individuals who willingly gave up their lives for God helped to emphasize the Church's continuity and tradition, and attest to its longstanding power. Such stories of persecution must have resounded with individuals living through the turbulence of a period wherein Catholics, but also those on the other side of the confessional divide, were dying for their beliefs.<sup>476</sup>

As Émile Mâle long ago pointed out, martyrdom was a favored subject matter in Catholic imagery after the Council of Trent.<sup>477</sup> Paintings vividly depicted a saint's martyrdom and the bodily torments endured in the name of faith, which then served as important testament, while also spurring viewers' compassion. In sixteenth-century Spain, one work that achieved much success in this regard is a painting of the martyrdom of Saint James by Juan Fernández de Navarrete, an artist who spent a period of time in

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<sup>474</sup> Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum, libro de las vidas de los santos*. Another significant hagiography published during the period is Alonso de Villegas, *Flos Sanctorum y historia general, de la vida y hechos de Iesu Christo ...* (En Madrid: por Pedro Madrigal, 1588).

<sup>475</sup> Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 306.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid.

<sup>477</sup> Emile Mâle, *Religious Art from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Noonday Press, 1958), 175-177. First published in 1949.

Italy.<sup>478</sup> In Navarrete's *Martyrdom of Saint James* (1569-1571) in El Escorial, Saint James kneels in the center foreground of the image, with his body oriented towards the viewer (Figure 55). To his left, a soldier lunges forward with a blade securely wielded in his right hand that seems to slide effortlessly through the saint's neck. The painting, which was displayed in the El Escorial palace of King Philip II outside of Madrid, impressed contemporaries, and even elicited a response from the palace chronicler José de Sigüenza in 1605. Of Navarrete's painting, Sigüenza writes, "...those who see it will swear that [Saint James] is already beginning to expire – the eyes turned, colour drained, the face changed – so that it puts compassion in the souls [of the viewers] and brings tears to the eyes, as though seeing the real thing."<sup>479</sup> In Sigüenza's opinion, Navarrete's work was efficacious for the ways it so approximated the occurrence of saintly death that it allowed a viewer to witness the momentous event, which invited compassion. Late in the seventeenth century, in his *El pincel, cuyas glorias...* (1681), the court chronicler Don Félix de Lucio Espinosa y Malo similarly advocated the power of painting, claiming that it was better to see a martyrdom painted than to hear it described since images allow such scenes to be more permanently introduced into the heart, stirring one's emotions.<sup>480</sup>

While narrative scenes of martyrdom were certainly painted by Spanish artists like Navarrete during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Cécile Vincent-Cassy has

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<sup>478</sup> For a study of Juan Fernández de Navarrete's works, see Rosemarie Mulcahy, *Philip II of Spain, Patron of the Arts* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004), 115-212.

<sup>479</sup> José de Sigüenza, *La fundación del monasterio de El Escorial* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1963), 242. The excerpted translation of Sigüenza's passage is taken from Mulcahy, *Philip II of Spain*, 144-45.

<sup>480</sup> "Verdad, con tantas ventajas, que mueve mas los afectos ver padecer las imagenes, que oir referir sus Martyrios; porque es mas firme la representacion, y queda con mas permanencia aquel objeto lastimoso en la idea que la voz puede introducir al Corazon sus piedades." Félix de Lucio Espinosa y Malo, *El pincel, cuyas glorias descriuia Don Felix de Lucio Espinosa y Malo* (En Madrid: por Francisco Sanz, 1681), 29.

recently brought into focus more conventional strategies for representing martyrs in seventeenth-century Spain.<sup>481</sup> While her study is dedicated primarily to paintings of virgin-martyrs made for public spaces, she nevertheless draws a wider comparison between Spanish pictures of martyrs and contemporary Italian ones, especially the narratives painted by the Spanish-born José de Ribera and other artists working in Naples during the better part of the century.<sup>482</sup> Vincent-Cassy explains that Spanish artists commonly attend to the issue of saintly martyrdom through different pictorial strategies, reminding us that, in Spain, “Narrative portrayals of the lives of early martyr-saints and, within them, the scenes of decapitation, [etc.]...are more rare than we think.”<sup>483</sup> She points out that when narrative scenes of a saint’s martyrdom are in fact painted, they tend to be at the request of religious orders looking to highlight the heroism of its early members.<sup>484</sup> In place of depicting moments of suffering, Vincent-Cassy explains, Spanish artists generally elected “...to represent their saints in a sort of narrative void, privileging an iconic form...”<sup>485</sup> Even the renowned painter Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), who only painted a handful of religious pictures during his career, created a picture that adheres, to some extent, to this tradition. Velázquez’ *Santa Rufina* (1628-29) in the Focus-Abengoa Foundation in Seville is a static half-length portrayal of the third-century Saint Rufina,

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<sup>481</sup> Cécile Vincent-Cassy, *Les saintes vierges et martyres dans l’Espagne du XVIIe siècle: culte e image* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2011).

<sup>482</sup> Vincent-Cassy, *Les saintes vierges et martyres*, 19-31, esp. 22.

<sup>483</sup> “Les scènes narratives de la vie des saints martyrs des premiers siècles du christianisme et parmi elles les scènes de décapitation...sont donc plus rare qu’on ne pense.” Ibid., 28.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid.

<sup>485</sup> “De leur côté, les artistes napolitains continuèrent tout au long du siècle à peindre les saints martyrs dans le moment de souffrance et de supplice, tandis que leur confrères espagnols éludèrent cet instant, préférant représenter ces saints dans une sorte de vide narrative, privilégiant les représentations iconiques destinées aux retables d’églises.” Ibid.

one of Seville's local saints, who gazes out of the picture as she holds her martyr's palm and her attribute of earthenware vessels (Figure 56). In such a picture, martyrdom and its violence is evoked only obliquely through attributes, calling upon viewers to see the picture as an image of the saint now in heaven.

If Vincent-Cassy's study lays out general conventions for martyrial imagery in seventeenth-century Spain, other scholars have drawn specific attention to the climate for pictures in Seville around 1650, making note of the deceleration of references in painting to martyrdom. Seville experienced innumerable misfortunes around mid century; the arrival of a devastating plague in 1649 allegedly halved the population, which was followed by the onset of draught and food shortages, along with expected social turmoil and unrest. As Spain's main port for goods arriving from transoceanic lands, Seville's economy also severely suffered when high levels of silt in the Guadalquivir River made it necessary for cargo to be unloaded instead in the oceanfront city of Cádiz.<sup>486</sup>

Generally speaking, art historical studies made of this period in Seville tend to focus on the oeuvre and patronage of Murillo – who was by far the city's most celebrated artist – though such studies are also useful for gaining an understanding of the wider artistic context. In drawing a comparison between the careers of Murillo and Valdés Leal, Jonathan Brown asserts that Murillo's painting was generally favored by patrons who “increasingly preferred Murillo's serene promises of salvation without suffering and sainthood without martyrdom or penance.” Indeed, Murillo as prolific an artist as he was

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<sup>486</sup> For a survey of the situation in Seville, see Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Orto y ocaso de Sevilla*, 4th ed. (Universidad de Sevilla, 1991), esp. 131-152.

only made a handful of narrative scenes of martyrdom during his career.<sup>487</sup> Along similar lines, Suzanne Stratton-Pruitt proposes that Murillo created “images of comfort for the faithful, images that held out the promise of salvation through piety and good works, and that offered sweet respite from the real horrors of the plague and grinding poverty and hunger.”<sup>488</sup> Murillo’s intimate private devotional pictures as well as his public ones, which often portray scenes of apotheosis and visions, have been understood to offer comfort to Sevillians during trying times.<sup>489</sup>

Although there is a precedent for the head of John the Baptist in polychrome, a medium in which violence inflicted on a holy body was undoubtedly registered in more visceral ways, the proliferation of decapitated heads in painting in Seville after 1650 belies easy explanation. In his 1957 study, J.J. Martín González situates demands for the severed head in polychrome sculpture in response to a desire for realistic and violent imagery fostered during the Counter Reformation.<sup>490</sup> Importantly, however, as I have attempted to demonstrate, by the time painters in Seville began to portray the saint’s severed head on canvas around 1650, the artistic situation was such that evocations of martyrdom in painting were far less commonly portrayed.<sup>491</sup> To some extent, this makes paintings of decapitated saint heads something of an anomaly worthy of scrutiny in the

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<sup>487</sup> One example is Murillo’s *Martyrdom of Saint Andrew* (1675-82) in the Prado.

<sup>488</sup> Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt, “Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, 1617-1682,” in *Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682): Paintings from American Collections*, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt (New York: H.N. Abrams, in association with the Kimbell Art Museum, 2002), 19.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

<sup>490</sup> Martín González, “Cabezas de santos degollados en la escultura barroca española,” 210.

<sup>491</sup> The suggested dates for Herrera the Elder’s works are given in Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca sevillana*, 314.

general landscape for pictures in mid-century Seville. Undoubtedly, this pictorial type registers violence in ways more direct and urgent than do more conventional static half-length or full-length paintings of saints accompanied by their attributes. They also had different effects. In the words of Edward Sullivan, Spanish painted (and sculpted) portrayals of the solitary head of a saint were “to have a spontaneous emotional impact upon the viewer, possessing the ability both to shock and to move the pious to sorrow.”<sup>492</sup> As this chapter suggests, paintings of heads made in Seville elicit empathy and piety, while they also endeavor to surprise with their beguiling subject matter and manner of presentation.

Paintings of severed heads elicit violence through body fragmentation, but they eschew portrayal of prolonged torments and suffering before the actual fall of the sword, which artists elsewhere were keen to depict. Martyred saints typically suffered countless inventive tortures before death, and early modern interests in pondering such abuses are made manifest in texts such as Antonio Gallonio’s *Trattato de gli instrumenti di martirio* (1591).<sup>493</sup> Decapitation, on the other hand, typically comes only at the very end of it all. As Esther Cohen has recently put it, “One after another, martyrs in legends survive the most terrible of tortures, mutilation and fires only to be taken aside and summarily

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<sup>492</sup> Edward J. Sullivan, “Herod and Salome with the Head of John the Baptist by Josefa de Ayala,” *Source* 2, no. 1 (1982): 29. Sullivan introduces this idea to draw a distinction with a contemporary painting by the Josefa de Ayala of Herod and Herodias with the Baptist’s head.

<sup>493</sup> See the discussion of torture instruments in Opher Mansour, “Not Torments, but Delights: Antonio Gallonio’s *Trattato de Gli Instrumenti Di Martirio* of 1591 and Its Illustrations,” in *Roman Bodies: Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Andrew Hopkins and Maria Wyke (London: British School at Rome, 2005), 167–83.

beheaded at the end.”<sup>494</sup> With the exception of Saint Denis and other cephalophores who are revived for a short period after decapitation to carry their heads to their designated place of rest, the severing act marks the end of life on earth. In Seville, paintings of severed heads, I suggest, allow for a resurgence of the horror of martyrdom and sacrifice for God in painting in different terms. In place of narrative suspense in anticipation of death, or depiction of the deathly act itself, as seen in Navarrete’s *Martyrdom of Saint James*, depicted is the aftermath of violence.

As a picture focused on a fragment – and not just any fragment, but the head with its capital importance – the Coruña *Head of the Baptist* and other such works conjure associations with the saint’s head relic (Figure 51). Of European representations in general, Isabel Stuebe Combs suggests that the rise in popularity of depictions of the head of John the Baptist in sculpture and later in painting during the early modern period was likely a response to ongoing disputes over the authenticity and whereabouts of the saint’s head relic.<sup>495</sup> The cathedral in Amiens in France and the church of San Silvestro in Capite in Rome competed in their claims to possess the head relic of the saint.<sup>496</sup> Relics were vital in linking the heavens with the earthly world in Catholic belief, and thus held a distinct place in the sacred economy of objects. To borrow the words of Simon Ditchfield, in the post-Tridentine period “there could be no more concrete or expressive symbol of the continuity of the Catholic devotion and ecclesiastical practice than the

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<sup>494</sup> Esther Cohen, “The Meaning of the Head in High Medieval Culture,” in *Disembodied Heads in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, ed. Catrien Santing, Barbara Baert, and Anita Traninger (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 59.

<sup>495</sup> Combs Stuebe, “The ‘Johannisschüssel,’” 11.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.



honoring of relics of the Early Christian martyrs.”<sup>497</sup> Relics were central to devotion in seventeenth-century Spain, and paintings of the heads of early Christian martyrs, such as John the Baptist, Saint Catherine, Saint Paul and others, would surely have elicited links with their earthly remains.<sup>498</sup> However, while a relic calls to mind the saint’s life on earth and the saint now in heaven, where mangled bodies torn apart during martyrdom are again made whole, the paintings studied here focus quite acutely on the material remains of the saintly head. In the Coruña *Head of the Baptist*, we understand the Baptist’s beheading to have occurred only moments before, and are thus inclined to see the depicted head as the last look of the saint here on earth.

Llanos, who painted a wider range of decapitated heads of saints and martyrs than any of his Sevillian contemporaries, also went further than others in lending animation or, in this case, deathliness to a severed head. Llanos’ signed and dated *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (1660), recently for sale at Sotheby’s, positions the Baptist’s head in a silver platter at the center of an unadorned ledge (Figure 57).<sup>499</sup> Llanos darkened the saint’s skin in certain areas, which is noticeably visible on the saint’s cheeks and brow. Given contemporary emphasis on the incorruptibility of saintly bodies, the decision to include

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<sup>497</sup> Simon Ditchfield, “Martyrs on the Move: Relics as Vindicators of Local Diversity in the Tridentine Church,” in *Martyrs and Martyrologies: Papers Read at the 1992 Summer Meeting and the 1993 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Published for the Ecclesiastical History Society by Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 287. See also Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

<sup>498</sup> For recent studies on issues of authenticity involving relics in seventeenth-century Spain, and especially in the region of Andalusia, see A. Katie Harris, “Gift, Sale, and Theft: Juan de Ribera and the Sacred Economy of Relics in the Early Modern Mediterranean,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 18, no. 3 (2014): 193–226; Katrina Beth Olds, “The ‘False Chronicles,’ Cardinal Baronio, and Sacred History in Counter-Reformation Spain,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 100, no. 1 (2014): 1–26.

<sup>499</sup> Sotheby’s “Contemplation of the Divine, Lot 9, 05 July 2014– 16 July 2014,” accessed January 20, 2015, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2014/contemplation-divine-114906/lot.9.html>.

visible signs of bodily decay is an odd choice for the portrayal of a saint.<sup>500</sup> In vividly registering the effects of death and time on the earthly body, it appears that Llanos is attempting to convey that what is offered for visual contemplation are the material remains of the saint. A reed cross, the saint's attribute, is incorporated into the composition. Set at an angle against a dark ground, the reed cross is sufficiently illuminated to allow viewers to make out the words inscribed on the banderole that winds around it. The Latin *ecce agnus dei*, or "behold the Lamb of God," recall the words spoken by John as Jesus approaches him, as told in John 1:29, by which John identifies Christ as savior to thus fulfill his role as prophet. With the phrase, "Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world," John identifies the future sacrifice of Christ.<sup>501</sup> Llanos has arranged it that the only word on the banderole that can fully be made out is "ecce," beseeching us to look and acknowledge the severed saintly head rendered present before us.

### **Painted assemblages**

Earlier in the chapter, I explained how conventions employed by artists to depict the saintly head – stark black backgrounds, unadorned ledges and spatial proximity – were associated in the Sevillian context with still life, and were particularly conducive to pictorial illusion. Given the important precedents of the severed head in polychrome sculpture in the city, I suggested that the illusion of relief would have been imperative when the head was eventually translated into painting. After all, it is relief that allows a painted head to best approximate the three-dimensionality of a real head, as well as a

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<sup>500</sup> On the issue of decay, see Piero Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>501</sup> John 1:29. (NRSV).

sculptural one. While an emphasis on relief oriented the head's pursuit in painting, painters also had recourse to other visual strategies – ones that were more in the realm of the pictorial.

For instance, artists also elaborated their displays by positioning the saintly fragment in relation to other objects. Painted by an unnamed Sevillian artist, *Heads of Saints Paul, John and James the Great* (c. 1660-1670) in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden exemplifies the interest in pictorial embellishment (Figure 58).<sup>502</sup> Three hallowed heads, which lie in matching gold platters, are set upon a rumpled white fabric that drapes over the threshold of the ledge. In this painting, the saints' heads are noticeably recessed in space, eschewing the proximity to the picture plane that was central to Llanos' painting of the Baptist's head (Figure 57). Behind the heads are the different attributes of the three saints. The pilgrim's hat fastened with shells that belongs to Saint James the Great is set on an elevated platform and is accompanied by an adjacent sword. The Baptist's familiar reed cross is located behind the saint's centrally-positioned head while a sword with a metal base identifies the head of Saint Paul on the left. While this artist is less preoccupied with generating relief than with placing the heads amid a display of attributes and fabrics, other artists, as will be seen, employ relief together with embellishment to great pictorial effect.

Around the time that Murillo painted his only securely attributed picture of the Baptist's head, he was also charged with making four paintings depicting the life of the

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<sup>502</sup> This work was attributed to Sebastián Llanos de Valdés during its auction in 1993. Christie's "Old Master Pictures Sale 6708, Lot 83, 9 April, 2003," accessed January 20, 2015, [http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot\\_details.aspx?intObjectID=4076995](http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=4076995). In a recent essay, however, Mina Gregori lists the work as by an unidentified Sevillian artist. Gregori, "La Trayectoria en un tema," 363.

Baptist for the San Leandro convent of the Shod Sisters of Saint Augustine in Seville.<sup>503</sup> *Saint John the Baptist Pointing to Christ* (c. 1655) in the Art Institute of Chicago is one of four works (Figure 59). In Murillo's painting, Christ and John the Baptist stand adjacent to one another in the foreground of a landscape setting. The Baptist, standing to Christ's left, extends his right arm to gesture to him, thereby visualizing the significant role played by the Baptist as he who identifies Christ and utters the words *ecce agnus dei*. Both precursor and Christ are depicted with nearly identical features, slender faces and long hair; it seems Murillo even employed the same cartoon in reverse when painting both heads.<sup>504</sup> The resemblance between the Baptist and Christ is in keeping with decorum, as Pacheco outlines in the painstaking *Adiciones* section of *Arte de la pintura* wherein is stipulated the requisite iconography of religious scenes. In explaining how the Baptist was to be portrayed, Pacheco compares him to Christ, noting that both men were Nazarenes and second cousins, and thus shared similar features as in the color of their beards and hair.<sup>505</sup>

The resemblance between Christ and the Baptist, avowed in no uncertain terms in *Saint John the Baptist Pointing to Christ*, also has a role to play in Murillo's *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (c.1660), which is currently held in a private collection (Figure

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<sup>503</sup> For a reconstruction of these monastic works (and others) in their original locations in Seville, see Enrique Valdivieso and Gonzalo Martínez del Valle, *Recuperación visual del patrimonio perdido: conjuntos desaparecidos de la pintura sevillana de los Siglos de Oro* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, Secretariado de Publicaciones, 2012), 152-3.

<sup>504</sup> Claire Barry, "Looking at Murillo's Technique," in Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682): Paintings from American Collections, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt (New York: H.N. Abrams, in association with the Kimbell Art Museum, 2002), 81-82.

<sup>505</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 662.

60).<sup>506</sup> At the center of the painting, the Baptist's face is rotated towards the viewer as his delicate curls spill over the gilded platter. Due to the similarity in facial features between precursor and Christ, we are urged to see Christ's sacrifice prefigured in that of the Baptist. Such an understanding, however, is generated not only by way of resemblance between the two, but also on account of the crucial labor done by accompanying inanimate objects that resonate with presence in the image, such as the banderole inscribed with the significant phrase, *ecce agnus dei*. The Baptist's own sacrifice is also elicited in the display of material objects.<sup>507</sup> In *Saint John the Baptist Pointing to Christ*, the saint's body is swathed in his bright red mantle and he holds the reed cross whose considerable length nearly equals the saint's height. In Murillo's *Head of the Baptist*, in contrast, the garment is again deployed; however, this time it is distinctly robbed of the shape granted to it by a body and instead extends flat along the ledge, doubling as a tablecloth. The red mantle is a garment that already signals the Baptist's martyrdom, but its shapelessness here evokes the absent body and sacrifice in more material terms.<sup>508</sup> In this painting, accouterments such as the mantle and the reed cross, now set in dialogue with the severed head, are called upon to do a different kind of work.

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<sup>506</sup> The dating of Murillo's work is taken from Enrique Valdivieso, *Murillo: catalogo razonado de pinturas* (Madrid: Ediciones el Viso, 2010), 359.

<sup>507</sup> In an essay on the Italian artist Francesco Cairo's paintings of Salome with the head of the Baptist, Bronwen Wilson discusses the important role of objects in prompting consideration of the saint's narrative, highlighting how objects elicit contemplation of different temporal moments. In my analysis of paintings of severed heads, I suggest that objects also have a role of play in evoking different instances in the saint's narrative, which is due in part to their juxtaposition with the decapitated head. See Bronwen Wilson, "The Appeal of Horror: Francesco Cairo's Herodias and the Head of John the Baptist," *Oxford Art Journal* 34, no. 3 (October 2011): 355-72. In the same volume, see also the discussion of horror and decapitation in David Young Kim, "The Horror of Mimesis," *Oxford Art Journal* 34, no. 3 (October 2011): 335-53. For more on the theological connections between the Baptist and Christ, see Baert, *Caput Johannis in Disco*, esp. 166-204.

<sup>508</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 663.

In the hands of diverse Sevillian artists, the Baptist's solitary head was juxtaposed with a number of his accouterments. In another painting of the Baptist's head, the same objects found in Murillo's picture are brought together in a different arrangement. In *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (1650-1675), which is currently in the Prado and uncertainly attributed to Murillo, though more likely made by another Sevillian artist, the Baptist's reed cross and sweeping red mantle are arranged so as to embellish the saintly head (Figure 61).<sup>509</sup> Suspending from above, the mantle hangs down and gathers on the table – this time eliciting a curtain as if to theatricalize the painting's surprising subject matter.<sup>510</sup> The ceremonial role of curtains was well understood during the early modern period and even articulated by Sebastián de Covarrubias in his *Tesoro de la lengua castellana*, (1611).<sup>511</sup> As Covarrubias explains, “to lift the curtain sometimes signifies the revelation of something marvelous, as well as to cover it, as is also done with paintings.”<sup>512</sup> Not unlike Llanos' cleverly positioned banderole that allows *ecce* to be visible, the mantle as makeshift curtain petitions us to behold with fascination the head newly exhibited for visual contemplation.<sup>513</sup> A final example of a pictorial assemblage

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<sup>509</sup> The painting is uncertainly attributed to Murillo in the Prado. Diego Angulo Iñiguez classifies it as a work of debated attribution, and proposes that it might refer to, or is a copy of, a Murillo original. Angulo Iñiguez, *Murillo: Catálogo crítico*, Vol. 2, 513.

<sup>510</sup> A similar image, which measures 40 x 42 cm, was last documented in a private collection in the city of Jerez de la Frontera. I am grateful to the Frick Art Reference Library for making available to me a black and white reproduction of this painting.

<sup>511</sup> Sebastián Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española* (Madrid: Luis Sanchez, 1611), 243r.

<sup>512</sup> “Y assi correr la cortina, significa algunas vezes hazer demonstracion de algun caso maravilloso, y otro de encubrirle, como tambien se haze en las tablas de pinturas.” Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> Belting discusses the supplanting of the ritual role of the curtain in the exhibition of holy images by a curtain that signaled a painting's status as a work of art. See Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

includes *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (1650-1675), which was last documented in a private collection in Barcelona (Figure 62).<sup>514</sup> Like the previous work, the painting has yet to be confidently attributed to a specific painter in Seville, but its composition and contents closely match a drawing and a painting created by Valdés Leal, which I discuss below. In the Barcelona *Head of the Baptist*, a knife is added to the Baptist's parade of accouterments. Poised in the right foreground, the instrument of martyrdom calls to mind the act of severing that resulted in the bodily fragment found on the platter adjacent.

In Murillo's *Head of the Baptist* and the other paintings introduced, the objects – the platter, the reed cross, red mantle and even knife – help to register in non-narrative terms different aspects of the Baptist's life and the violence of his death. While these accounts are firmly rooted in text, in the Gospels and later in hagiographical narratives, Murillo's painting eschews the linear temporality of narrative. Such a display activates processes of memory and elicits interpretation, to slide from the present sacrifice to other moments in the Baptist's life and to his vital connection to Christ and his future sacrifice.<sup>515</sup> Additionally, while the platter in Baptist imagery functions as a presentational device, it also recalls the proximity of the deathly act. That is, once the Baptist's head is severed from his body, it is soon after presented to Salome, Herodias

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1994), 481. On the role of curtains in seventeenth-century cabinet painting, see Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 60-63.

<sup>514</sup> I am grateful to the Frick for supplying me with a black and white reproduction of this work. The Library catalogues the image as a Sevillian work.

<sup>515</sup> See note 507.

and Herod at the ruler's birthday feast.<sup>516</sup> In Murillo's painting, the nearness to death's threshold is also emphasized by other pictorial means. Note, for instance, the bright red blood that continues to pool in the platter, and the saint's half-open eyes and parted lips, which is seen also in the Prado *Head of the Baptist*, and conjures through pictorial means the retreat of the last vestiges of life (Figure 61).

Certainly, Llanos' decision to paint his *Head of Saint Catherine*, which I introduced at the outset of the chapter, developed out of ongoing experiments in Seville with painting that of the Baptist (Figure 2). After all, there is nothing in the saint's story or imagery regarding the presentation of her severed head. Saint Catherine of Alexandria was an early Christian martyr who suffered a number of ghastly tortures at the behest of the Roman Emperor Maxentius.<sup>517</sup> By converting to Christianity, Catherine angered the pagan emperor whose advances she also refused since she had promised herself in mystical marriage to Christ. As punishment, Catherine was beaten, abandoned with undressed wounds, and then tied to a spiked wheel that was to tear her body apart.<sup>518</sup> Eventually, she was beheaded, which put an end to her earthly life. In Llanos' *Head of Saint Catherine*, the saint's head is uncannily presented among a collection of objects, hemmed in by the palm leaf and golden crown at the left and by the ominous wheel in the right foreground. Her head is turned away, withdrawing our ability to see any part of the wound at the neck. This is an artistic choice likely informed by heightened requirements

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<sup>516</sup> The portrayal of the solitary head of the Baptist was identified long ago by Erwin Panofsky as a moment isolated from the larger narrative. Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), 12-14. Cited in Combs Stuebe, "The 'Johannisschüssel.'" 1.

<sup>517</sup> The life of Saint Catherine of Alexandria is recounted in Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum, libro de las vidas de los santos*, 813-818.

<sup>518</sup> Ibid.



for withholding gore when the saint was female, though hints of blood are faintly detectable in the shadows around the stump.<sup>519</sup> The whiteness of her skin elicits the pallor of death and the pink ribbon wrapped around the delicate braid in her hair charges the scene with dismay at the sacrifice of the innocent.

Like Murillo's *Head of the Baptist*, Llanos' *Head of Saint Catherine* brings forward the process of assembling objects in visual dialogue with the saintly severed head. Adopting the practice from still life, artists like Llanos presumably set out immobile objects – one at a time or all together, possibly adding others along the way – on flat, horizontal surfaces to observe and paint them. The rotation of Catherine's head in this picture evokes the movements of the artist in the workshop who endeavors to translate objects set upon a horizontal ledge onto a vertically installed canvas (or panel).<sup>520</sup> While I am not proposing that any of the decapitated heads were painted from real severed ones – though the claims of accuracy in naturalism might give momentary cause for suspicion and even heighten the effect – I do suggest that the process of assembling objects together for display became a way for artists to reflect on how to effectively present the decapitated head. Exploiting the descriptive potential of lifeless objects that was familiar from still life, painters sought to invest them with narrative resonance, which was facilitated by their juxtaposition with the saintly fragment.

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<sup>519</sup> For more on the issue of decorum in representations of female saints, see Vincent-Cassy, *Les saintes vierges et martyres*.

<sup>520</sup> On the relationship in still life between horizontal table and vertical panel (or canvas), see Joanna Woodall, "Laying the Table: The Procedures of Still Life," *Art History* 35, no. 5 (2012): 977–1003.

## Pairs of pictures and the head of Saint Paul

Paintings of the head of the Baptist and other saints were chiefly made for private, domestic settings in Seville, which make them distinct from earlier sculptural heads like Mesa's that furnished spiritual establishments.<sup>521</sup> As far as I know, there exists one known example of this pictorial type forming part of an institutional commission in the seventeenth century. In 1655, Valdés Leal included two inset paintings depicting severed heads in an altarpiece for the convent of the Carmen Calzado in Córdoba (Figures 63 & 64).<sup>522</sup> Valdés Leal's works in the Carmen Calzado differ in execution from the majority considered so far; they are painted with loose brushwork that would have been advantageous in an altarpiece viewed from a distance. Preliminary drawings were unusual for paintings of severed heads, but Valdés Leal created one around the time of the Carmen Calzado commission. As the only extant drawing associated with this pictorial type, Valdés Leal's *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (1654-1655) could have served as a presentation drawing for his institutional patrons (Figure 65).<sup>523</sup>

Seventeenth-century inventories demonstrate that Seville's principal artists were painting pictures of saintly heads, while they also document that collectors of different professions were acquiring such works. Miguel Ayza, a doctor and *titular* of the Inquisition, owned in 1678 a set of decapitated saint heads painted by the prolific still-life

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<sup>521</sup> Although a number of paintings are now in the possession of religious institutions across Spain, published inventories reveal that they often featured in private Sevillian collections in the seventeenth century. Many are documented in the inventories from 1650-1699 published in Kinkade, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla."

<sup>522</sup> Valdivieso, *Juan de Valdés Leal*, 62-64.

<sup>523</sup> Valdés Leal also made pictures for private patrons. A set of paintings of the heads of Saint John the Baptist and Saint Paul attributed to Valdés Leal are documented in the private picture gallery of José Lerdo de Tejada in nineteenth-century Seville. See José Amador de los Ríos, *Sevilla pintoresca, ó, Descripción de sus mas célebres monumentos artísticos* (F. Alvarez y ca., 1844), 482.

artist Pedro de Camprobín.<sup>524</sup> In 1687, a set of heads painted by the Flemish artist Cornelius Schut the Younger (1629-1685), who was then in residence in Seville, is recorded in the possession of a Flemish merchant.<sup>525</sup> The practice of displaying together paintings that share a similar story or related theme was common enough in collections, and severed heads were no exception.<sup>526</sup> In Sevillian collections, more often than not, a painting of the head of the Baptist would be paired with another of the head of Saint Paul the Apostle, making this saint's head the unofficial companion to the Baptist's. The paintings are typically listed sequentially in inventories, which suggests that they were displayed adjacent to one another. Only rarely in the inventories do we see a head of the Baptist recorded without a head of Saint Paul immediately following it, or vice versa. In some instances, the two are even listed together as a single entry. For instance, the inventory of Diego de Paiva, a Portuguese merchant who resided in Seville, lists "two small canvases with two heads, one of Saint John and the other of Saint Paul" (Dos lienzos pequenos de dos cavezas, una de San Juan y otra de San Pablo).<sup>527</sup> At times,

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<sup>524</sup> To give a sense of ascribed value, the patron Miguel Ayza, who valued the works in his collection himself, listed the two paintings of heads by Camprobín at 400 reales together, each with its frame. A single painting by the same artist of the annunciation is listed 270 reales without its frame. APS, Oficio 17, 1676, libro 1, f. 886-93. For the published inventory, see Kinkad, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla," 132. See also note 65.

<sup>525</sup> Inventory of Don Alberto Rodrigo Anequelman, APS, Oficio 22, 1687, libro 1, f. 111-13. The inventory is published in *ibid.*, 150.

<sup>526</sup> The 1689 inventory of the impressive collection of Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán, the count-duke Olivares, in Madrid lists sequentially two paintings by Lucas Giordano. The first is described as "a painting of David cutting the head of Goliath" (Otro Lienzo del Gigante Goliath y David que le Corta la Caveza original de Lucas Jordan) and the second is described as "a painting of Judith cutting the head of Holofernes" (Otro Lienzo de Judiq que le corta la Caveza a olofernes orig. de Lucas Jordan). See item 447 and 448 in the published inventory in Burke and Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part 1*, 855.

<sup>527</sup> I draw from Diego de Paiva's published inventory in José Roda Peña, "Los bienes artísticos de Diego de Paiva, un comerciante portugués en la Sevilla del siglo XVII," *Atrio: Revista de Historia del Arte* 13-13 (2008): 149.

patrons sought to possess one saint head by one artist and the other by a different artist, as Duncan Kinkead has observed.<sup>528</sup> For example, registered in the 1670 inventory of Doña Ana de Auriaga, the widow of a deputy accountant to Seville's Casa de Contratación, is a head of Saint Paul by Herrera the Younger.<sup>529</sup> Directly following the entry is a second head – this one a head of John the Baptist by Murillo – that, according to the entry, is of the same size and frame as the picture before it.<sup>530</sup>

The reasons for the sudden pairing in private collections of the heads of John the Baptist and Paul the Apostle are not entirely clear. Saint Paul, who was initially a Roman soldier and persecutor of Christians, underwent a spectacular conversion to become one of most loquacious preachers of the faith.<sup>531</sup> Paul travelled the world proselytizing to many before his fateful return to Rome. Taken prisoner for many years, by order of Nero, he was sentenced to death around 70 AD by decapitation, which was considered the more noble form of death and granted because he was a Roman citizen.<sup>532</sup> As Enrique

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<sup>528</sup> Kinkead, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla," 119-120. In his text, Kinkead provides the example of pairing images that I outline here.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid.

<sup>530</sup> "Un lienzo de la cabeza de San Pablo original de don Francisco de Herrera el Mozo con moldura estofada y dorada de una bara de largo sin la moldura." This entry is immediately followed by "Otro lienzo del mismo tamaño con moldura como del antecedente de la cabeza de San Juan Bautista que es original de Bartolomé Murillo." Inventory of Doña Ana de Auriaga, APS, Oficio 16, 1670, libro 3, f. 588-90. The inventory is published in Kinkead, "Artistic Inventories in Sevilla," 126.

<sup>531</sup> The life of Saint Paul the Apostle is summarized in Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum, libro de las vidas de los santos*, 439-448.

<sup>532</sup> The narrative of Saint Paul's martyrdom was not frequently depicted. In fact, to illustrate the importance of an artist acquiring knowledge of sacred histories, especially those with which one was less familiar, Pacheco recounts his attempt in 1593 to compose an image of the decapitation of Saint Paul. In explaining to readers that it required soliciting advice from those learned in theological stories, and consulting contemporary hagiographies, Pacheco gives a fairly lengthy description of the narrative of Paul's decapitation and the saint's iconography, claiming that other artists would benefit from knowing these particulars. Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 286-289.

Valdivieso has pointed out, the two saints preached the doctrine of Christ, and announced Christ's arrival, and were consequently both silenced by the same method of martyrdom by decapitation.<sup>533</sup> In addition, more than one contemporary author thought that Saint Paul had passed through Spanish lands during his travels, which perhaps, though unlikely, contributed to interest in portraying his severed head.<sup>534</sup>

The solitary head of Saint Paul, as far as I know, is without a clear precedent in pictorial imagery. Because of this, and the surge in demand for its depiction over a short period of time in Seville, paintings of this saint's head are fascinating for the various ways they cast the fragment in representation. A *Head of Saint Paul* (1650-1675), in the Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art in Vitoria-Gasteiz, which still carries the attribution of Valdés Leal, is liable to be an early attempt at the head's portrayal (Figure 66). Paul's head is set upon a platter even though there is no mention of one in the saint's story, which suggests that the platter's role as presentational device is appropriated from the existing convention of painting the head of the Baptist. The platter is set slightly above eye level and we are made to see the underside of the platter that is set on a red table covering, which might also have been adopted from Baptist imagery.<sup>535</sup> Another take on this saint is *Head of Saint Paul* (1650-1675), which belongs to the Prado, but is held in the Museum of Fine Arts of Coruña (Figure 67). Like its companion, the Coruña *Head of the Baptist* introduced earlier, the painting of Paul's head carries the uncertain attribution

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<sup>533</sup> Valdivieso, *Juan de Valdés Leal*, 64.

<sup>534</sup> Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum, libro de las vidas de los santos*, esp. 447.

<sup>535</sup> A similar painting of Paul's head is held in a private collection. For a reproduction, see entry 73 in Consuelo Sanz-Pastor y Fernández de Pierola, *San Pablo en el arte: XIX centenario de su venida a España* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Dirección General de Bellas Artes, 1964).

to Murillo (Figure 51).<sup>536</sup> In the Coruña *Head of Saint Paul*, in lieu of a platter, the head rests alone on the ledge, accompanied only by a faint sword detectable in the left background, and illuminated by a strong light cast from the left that allows the head to emerge from the darkness of the scene. The graying tips of his tactile white beard extend beyond the wooden surface, bizarrely mimicking the convention of protruding fruit in still life.

Although a platter was understood in imagery as a device with which to present a severed head, it was not conducive to the accurate portrayal of the decapitation of Saint Paul. According to Ribadeneyra, and to Pacheco's accounts of Paul's beheading in *Arte de la pintura*, after decapitation the saint's head was thought to land on the ground, bounding three times before eventually becoming still.<sup>537</sup> While the artist of the Coruña *Head of Saint Paul* employs the convention of the ledge to display Paul's stilled head, the artist of another *Head of Saint Paul* (1650-1675) attempts a different approach (Figure 68). Like its pair, the Prado *Head of the Baptist, Head of Saint Paul*, also housed in the Prado, maintains an uncertain attribution to Murillo, but was probably painted by another Sevillian artist (Figure 61).<sup>538</sup> Worth noting is that the artist has chosen to depict the head of Saint Paul in a setting vastly different from his painting of the Baptist. In the Prado *Head of Saint Paul*, Paul's head is not set on a ledge against a stark black ground, but moved outdoors to a shallow rocky landscape. A sword extends across the width of the

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<sup>536</sup> According to scholars, the work was more likely painted by one of Murillo's Sevillian contemporaries. For the issue of attribution, see note 445.

<sup>537</sup> Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum, libro de las vidas de los santos*, 448; Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 288.

<sup>538</sup> On the current attribution, see note 509.

painting, running directly below the neck that it seems to have only just severed. Fresh blotches of blood still drip from the tip of the sword while blood from the neck wound stains the rocky surface below.

I suggest that the artist's decision to move the severed head of Saint Paul from the conventional setting for still life to an outdoor one can be attributed to an interest among painters in creating proximity to the violent act by evoking its aftermath. The painting depends on the outdoor setting to elicit the moment when Paul's head lands soundly on the ground. This is not the only Sevillian example of the depiction of the head of Saint Paul set outdoors, but can also be seen in Valdés Leal's version for the Carmen Calzado (Figure 64). Recall also that, in his *Martyrdom of Saint James*, Navarrete sets his narrative portrayal of the saint's decapitation in a rocky exterior landscape in a bid to convey the accuracy of his depiction, which demonstrates that the artistic convention of execution in such a setting was already in use (Figure 55). In the case of Paul, pictorial emphasis on the ground – the surface upon which the saint's head is stilled – is far more poignant than a platter since it allows for the evocation of closeness with death's threshold. As mentioned, the heads of the Baptist and Saint Paul were destined to hang together. Given that the offering of the Baptist's head on a platter at Herod's banquet conjures the proximity of the decapitating act, it is not surprising that artists would experiment with different means of portraying the aftermath of Paul's decapitation with an eye toward drawing us closer to the threshold.

Before continuing with the issue of death's threshold, it is worth briefly highlighting that the setting employed in the Prado *Head of Saint Paul*, which differs from the conventional format for still life, resonates with that newly adopted by painters

of still life during the same period. Take, for instance, the Sevillian artist Pedro de Medina's (c. 1620-91) *Still Life with Fish and Sea Creatures* (1655), now in a private collection (Figure 69).<sup>539</sup> Medina was a member of the artist-run academy founded in Seville in 1660, and would thus have associated with colleagues who painted severed heads. While Medina's earlier still lifes make use of the more conventional scenario of display, his *Still Life with Fish* launches the still life assemblage off the ledge and out of doors. Fish of the same variety are heaped together amid an assortment of shells and clams and set in a shallow exterior space created by a buffering tree trunk or other natural formation – not unlike the setting used in the Prado *Head of Saint Paul*.<sup>540</sup> This example reminds us that still life was not only associated with a particular format, but was also, and significantly, understood as a mode of assembling objects for display, which in Seville was newly being realized in diverse settings. After all, it is the visual potential elicited in a display that would orient much production of still life in Spain during the seventeenth century.

In the vast majority of paintings of decapitated heads examined so far, the artist endeavors to animate the saintly face, if only ever so slightly. Note, for instance, Paul's open mouth, partially opened eyes and furrowed brow in the Coruña *Head of Saint Paul* (Figure 67). Such a portrayal exists in marked distinction from conventions followed in postmortem portraits made during the same period. Postmortem portraits in seventeenth-

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<sup>539</sup> Little is known about Pedro de Medina. For the artist's dates, I draw on the brief overview given in William B. Jordan and Peter Cherry, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1995), 115.

<sup>540</sup> I have only seen this work reproduced in Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca sevillana*, 386. A still-life painting of fish by Pedro Medina is listed in the 1690 inventory of the important Sevillian collector Don Nicolas Omazur. See entry 75 of Omazur's inventory published in Duncan Kinkead, "The Picture Collection of Don Nicolas Omazur," *The Burlington Magazine* 128, no. 995 (1986): 140.



century Spain were principally made of recently deceased holy persons who died not a martyr's death but one due to natural causes. As we learn from Pacheco in his unpublished portrait book *Libro de descripción de verdaderos retratos de ilustres y memorables varones*, an artist would often make a sketch from life of the deceased.<sup>541</sup> The resulting portrait was to record and preserve the person's likeness for the Catholic faithful, which could be put to use, in required, in future beatification trials. With postmortem portraits, the body is depicted whole and the facial features suggest not death, but restful sleep.<sup>542</sup> An example recently attributed to Carducho is *Deathbed Portrait of Father Simón de Rojas* (1624), a painting of the Spanish queen's confessor in his Trinitarian robe (Figure 70).<sup>543</sup> Fully reclined on his deathbed with his head slightly lifted by a white pillow, Father Simón clasps a rosary and a crucifix to his chest. A smile plays on the lips of the deceased as if to suggest that he has peacefully left the earth to be united with God. Carducho takes care to document a likeness without registering changes or any deterioration to the body in death. Although the work evokes the last presence of the deceased body on earth, there is no attempt in this post-mortem painting to register in the facial features the moment of death. Certainly, in a context in which preparing for

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<sup>541</sup> See the discussion of the portrait of Juan Bernal in Marta Cacho Casal, "The 'True Likenesses' in Francisco Pacheco's *Libro de Retratos*," *Renaissance Studies* 24, no. 3 (2010): 401-404.

<sup>542</sup> One example in Andalusia is the anonymous *Sister Maria of Santa Clara* (1644) in the Convent of Santa Clara in Estepa. In this painting, the sister clasps her hands together in prayer, which suggests a peaceful serenity in sleep rather than in death. This observation is made in Fernando Quiles García, "Varias imágenes y un pensamiento sobre los retratos de difuntos," *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía* 15, no. 30 (2006): 361.

<sup>543</sup> It is thought that Velázquez made an unidentified portrait of Simon de Rojas in Madrid, yet William Jordan has recently attributed this work to Carducho. See William B. Jordan, *Juan van der Hamen y León & the Court of Madrid* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 129-130.

death was a fundamental aspect of life, an image like Carducho's would have fostered thoughts of a peaceful transition from this world to the next.<sup>544</sup>

The aim differs when the portrayal involves a saintly head violently estranged from its body. Artists instead invest a minimal degree of deathly animation in a saint's face in order to conjure the end of earthly life, and the transformation of living into dead. Earlier I mentioned that the setting of the head – in a platter or on the ground – also labored to this effect. Sigüenza's praise of Navarrete's narrative painting *Martyrdom of Saint James* was rooted in the painting's ability to render the moment of James' decapitation, to render the moment when “the eyes turned, colour drained, [and] the face changed” (Figure 55).<sup>545</sup> There is visual poignancy in evoking the transition, or proximity to it, which is what painters in Seville attempt with their stilled representations of severed heads. By giving minute animation to a saint's facial features, the paintings of violence's aftermath draw us closer to the deathly act that ultimately renders the head utterly lifeless.

In what is likely one of Llanos' last paintings of the head of Saint Paul, since he died two years later, the artist goes further in his endeavor to animate the face than any of the pictures so far described. In his *Head of Saint Paul* (1675) in the Louvre, the head of Paul again hovers above a rocky surface or outcropping (Figure 71). The saint's cheeks are sunken in death, and his color has already begun to alter, as is evident from the ashen color of his skin and lips. His eyes, however, are horrifically open and rolled back, and the hollow of his mouth visible as if uttering a death cry, or the name of Jesus, which

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<sup>544</sup> For a study on death in Habsburg Spain, see Fernando Martínez Gil, *Muerte y sociedad en la España de los Austrias* (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla La Mancha, 2000).

<sup>545</sup> See note 479.

Paul was to pronounce at the time of his death.<sup>546</sup> Generally speaking, artists typically visualize the triumph of saintly sacrifice in martyrdom by picturing saints with serene expressions who transcend bodily suffering and focus their gaze heavenward. Such an overflow of animation in Llanos' Louvre *Head of Saint Paul* was liable to slip the saintly head into ambiguity. This was the opinion of one eighteenth-century learned ecclesiast and reformer. In *El pintor christiano y erudite* (1782), Juan Interián de Ayala warns precisely against the desire to give excessive expression to the severed head of John the Baptist in sculpture or in painting.<sup>547</sup> Of such images, Interián de Ayala writes,

Some [artists] to display, or exaggerate their abilities, paint or sculpt the head of the Baptist strangely disproportioned, which far from representing sanctity, and the steadfastness that the Precursor maintained at his death, they show us instead the fierceness and even drunkenness of Holofernes. They paint the head of the Baptist strangely disproportioned, with eyes not entirely closed, a wide-open mouth, and a tongue ferociously stuck out, and other similar things, which are very foreign to a thing as sacred as the head of the divine precursor.<sup>548</sup>

For this critic, such excesses in depictions of the Baptist result in images that signify less like a saint and more like a drunk Holofernes, by which Interián de Ayala probably means one callously suspended between life and death between sequential blows to the

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<sup>546</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 287. In recounting the saint's life, Pacheco is drawing from various contemporary sources, as he himself states.

<sup>547</sup> Juan Interián de Ayala, *El pintor christiano, y erudito, ó tratado de los errores, que suelen cometerse freqüentemente en pintar, y esculpir las Imágenes Sagradas: dividido en ocho libros con un apendice .... Vol. 2. Traducido en castellano por Luis de Durán y de Bastéro* (Madrid: Por Joaquín Ibarra, 1782), 367-368. Juan Interián de Ayala's text was first published in Latin in 1730 and later translated into Castilian.

<sup>548</sup> "Lo primero, que algunos para ostentar, ó exâgerar su habilidad, pintan, ó forman extrañamente disforme la cabeza del sagrado Bautista, lo que lejos de representar la santidad, y constancia que tuvo en su muerte el Gran Precursor, parece nos pone á la vista la ferocidad, y aun la embriaguez de algun Holofernes; pintan, digo, la cabeza del Bautista extrañamente disforme, esto es, sin cerrar totalmente los ojos, abierta en gran manera la boca, sacando ferozmente la lengua, y otras cosas semejantes: lo que es muy ageno de una cosa tan sagrada, como es la cabeza del Divino Precursor." Interián de Ayala, *El pintor christiano*, 367-368. Also cited (in Spanish) in Natalia Horcajo Palomero, "La Cabeza de San Juan Bautista del Museo Salzillo y las joyas del siglo XVI," in *Estudios de platería: San Eloy 2007*, ed. Jesús Rivas Carmona (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2007), 120-121.

neck. While his comments are directed to portrayals of the Baptist's head, the complaint about overt animation and its connection to artistry rather than to sanctity surely is applicable to depictions of other saintly heads. The animation of a dead head requires the successful intervention of the artist in order to summon the threshold with death; yet, if pushed too far, it could pose problems around religious decorum.

Llanos' rendering of Paul's face in the Louvre painting increases the shock value of the decapitated head, but the painting is also of interest for other reasons. Although making overt reference to one's role in the creation of a sacred work is not common in seventeenth-century Seville, the visual arrangement of objects in the Louvre painting suggests that Llanos might have had something to this effect in mind. The shiny handle of the decapitating sword is advantageously placed in the right foreground where the artist's right hand would normally touch the canvas. The sword appears to dip into a pooling fountain, which sprung up, according to the story as Pacheco recounts it, where the (bouncing) head of Saint Paul lands on the ground.<sup>549</sup> The impressed contact between the mirroring pool and the handle of the sword suggest the contact of paint to canvas and the coming into being of the painting. The sword evokes the artist's brush, casting he who wields it as perpetrator of violence. Furthermore, the artist's signature carved prominently on the rock in the left foreground runs along the same horizontal axis as the handle of sword, emphasizing the point that he who has inscribed his name has also (mis)handled the saintly head.

Possibly, the Louvre picture was made for a patron who would have appreciated the reference to the artist's intervention in the visual play between sword and brush. As

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<sup>549</sup> Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura* (1990), 288.

indicated, the exuberant show of artistic conceit is unusual in Llanos' oeuvre and in the Sevillian context more generally, and undeniably slides the painting away from other works described in this chapter. Yet Llanos' work also elucidates an issue that pertains more broadly to the gamut of painted heads. In their paintings, artists such as Murillo, Llanos and others experimented with new ways of exhibiting the sacred fragment. As I have been suggesting, they turned to the conventions of still life in order to stage the head, drawing on the genre's familiar format and its mode of assembling. Painted assemblages that positioned the severed head and material objects in visual dialogue with one another were unlike any display found in the real world. Invented and brought into being by the hands of the artist, the head of the Baptist and other saints displayed like a still life undoubtedly draws attention to the work's status as a carefully crafted assemblage. The visibility of *ecce* on the banderole in Llanos' *Head of the Baptist*, and the use of a curtain effect in the Prado *Head of the Baptist* and also in the Dresden *Heads of Saints Paul, John the Baptist and James the Great* are divergent mechanisms beseeching a beholder to take notice (Figures 57, 61. 58). One is solicited to pay attention not only to the marvel associated with the sacred fragment, but also, and due largely to its display as a still life, to the alluring manner in which it has been constructed as a representation.

In seventeenth-century Spain, painting had yet to be officially recognized as a liberal art. While recognition occurred in Italy in the sixteenth century, in the Spanish context the polemic was ongoing and is easily traceable in contemporary writings about painting. Support for the nobility of painting was frequently articulated along sacred lines, emphasizing the value of religious imagery, and by extension the artist as maker of

sacred images.<sup>550</sup> Despite the absence of official recognition, however, for knowledgeable Sevillian patrons the artist as a valued creator of religious imagery would have been a well-understood concept. Javier Portús explains that, “Fascination with art coexisted in Seville with a pronounced religiosity and with practices of extreme piety.”<sup>551</sup> Patrons, I am suggesting, would have valued these works for the inventiveness with which artists portrayed the saintly head, understanding the discrete manner in which such painted assemblages summoned the notion of the artist as maker of religious pictures.

## Conclusion

This chapter examines how the genre of still-life painting became a means with which painters approached the severed head of John the Baptist and other saints in Seville in the second half of the seventeenth century. Excavating a subject matter that had been the domain of polychrome sculpture in the city since the end of the previous century, artists such as Murillo, Llanos, and others mobilized the early conventions of still life to newly render the head on painted canvas. In attending primarily to depictions of the heads of John the Baptist and Saint Paul, which were commonly exhibited together in Seville, I look to how artists used still life’s conventions of shallow spaces, dark backgrounds, intense lighting, pictorial relief and others to create fascinating paintings that portray the severed head in the aftermath of violence. While focus in these pictures is fittingly on the head of the saint, attention to facial features is also a significant component since they

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<sup>550</sup> On this issue, see Javier Portús, “The Holy Depicting the Holy: Social and Aesthetic Issues,” in *Sacred Spain: Art and Belief in the Spanish World*, ed. Ronda Kasl and Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos (Indianapolis; New Haven: Indianapolis Museum of Art; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2009), 37–53. On the role of religious images in Spanish art theory, see the essays in Jose Riello, ed., “*Sacar de la sombra lumbre*”: *La teoría de la pintura en el Siglo de Oro (1560-1724)* (Madrid: Abada Editores, 2012).

<sup>551</sup> Javier Portús, “Discourses on the Art of Painting in Seville in Justino de Neve’s Time,” in *Murillo & Justino de Neve: The Art of Friendship*, ed. Gabriele Finaldi (Madrid: Museo Nacional de Prado, 2012), 48.

convey the proximity of the deadly blow, which was to summon an intensity of feeling in a beholder according to contemporary texts. In addition to still life's association with certain visual conventions, it must also, I suggest, be understood as a mode of assembling, the artistic process of positioning objects on a ledge to scrutinize and render together on canvas. As such, still life was a mode of recreating worlds on canvas by gathering and stilling inanimate objects for pictorial effect. Artists in Seville invoke the still life mode by displaying the severed head contiguous with material objects. These objects reiterate the presence of the sacred head in the image while they also call up different temporalities, as in the sword positioned adjacent to the head of Saint Paul that strongly elicits the decapitating act.

Still life was a means with which artists in Seville experimented with painting the severed head in unforeseen ways. The works examined in the chapter demonstrate that these artists constructed remarkable compositions that offer an alternative approach to portraying saintly martyrdom. As mentioned, Seville's domestic interiors were spaces in which narrative depictions of martyrdom, especially painted by the city's local artists, were rarely to be found. Yet the sacrifice of saintly death was far from insignificant. The period saw a deluge of hagiographies reconstruct the stories of saints and the details of martyrdom, whose sacrifices encouraged pity and compassion. It is likely that paintings of severed heads became a way for artists such as Murillo, Llanos, Valdés Leal, Herrera the Elder, Herrera the Younger, Camprobín and others to give visual form to the violent deaths of martyr-saints, especially that of the precursor John the Baptist, while adhering to expectations for pictures in private settings. Without a doubt, picturing the saintly head in the aftermath of violence permitted the horrors of martyrdom to surge

forward in ways unlike conventional portrayals of static saintly figures equipped with their attributes. Sacrifice is conjured not in a depiction of the deadly fall of the sword, but in the decapitated remainder and surplus of material objects that surrounds it, alluding in part to the impossibility of ever truly representing death.<sup>552</sup> The severed head is martyrdom's recognizable and indisputable proof. Relying on the conventions of still life, whose domain was unmistakably the earthly world, paintings of the heads of the Baptist, Saint Paul and other saints conjure the last look of the saint on earth. At the same time, by following still life's method of assembling, which is visible in the resulting fictive displays, the artist's role in the creation of the image is made part of the viewing experience. We are prompted to take note that it is the painter who makes present in representation the dead or dying head and the imminent conversion of living thing into relic.

In the early modern period, the head of John the Baptist was an especially prized relic, and surpassed with little exception only by the veil of Veronica believed to be impressed with an image of Christ's face. The sacred resonance of both the precursor's head and the face of Christ, and their relation to each other, is brought forward in a drawing by the Italian artist Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, known as il Guercino (1591-1666). Guercino's *Veronica's Veil and the Head of St. John the Baptist* (17<sup>th</sup> century) in the Princeton University Art Museum portrays two putti that exhibit the Veronica veil while below lies the head of the Baptist on a platter whose features mirror those of Christ's image (Figure 72).<sup>553</sup> The putti hover in mid air with the Veronica veil as if it is

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<sup>552</sup> For a discussion of the impossibility of death's portrayal and images of decapitation, see Julia Kristeva, *The Severed Head: Capital Visions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>553</sup> The drawing is published as Figure 10 in Combs Stuebe, "The 'Johannisschüssel.'"



in raising the veil that the head of the Baptist below becomes obscured in shadow. The visual depiction has a theological meaning; as precursor to Christ, the Baptist foretells of his coming and prepares the way with his own sacrifice.

I introduce Guercino's drawing at the chapter's close as a means to transition to the thesis' conclusion. Like the head of John the Baptist, the Veronica veil was also represented with considerable frequency in seventeenth-century Seville. As I will propose by way of conclusion, for one artist in particular, Francisco de Zurbarán, still life would again play a significant role in attending to the concerns of this most sacred image.

## Chapter Five: Conclusion

This thesis has argued for the ways in which the new genre of still-life painting became a forum for experimentation for artists in seventeenth-century Spain. In a context wherein the production of visual imagery was overwhelmingly religious, and profane genres were generally limited to only a few, the genre of still life elicited new modes of looking at, and thinking about, visual imagery. Focusing on the period between 1600 and 1675, the thesis first traced the early conventions of still life to then examine the intriguing development of mixed images – images that repurpose still life’s conventions with sacred subject matter.

Building on earlier scholarship, this thesis has sought to situate still-life painting in Spain within burgeoning artistic practices and theoretical ideas of the seventeenth century. Although considered lowly in emerging hierarchies for painting, still life was recognized among contemporaries for its novelty, especially in the first third of the century, and linked to growing interests in naturalism. These issues were examined in chapter two, where I move between the notion of still life as a form of inquiry in naturalistic painting in the works of artists in Toledo and Madrid and the evocation of still life in contemporary writings about painting by Vicente Carducho and Francisco Pacheco. In the context of evolving preferences for pictures, especially amid the variety of works from Italy and the Netherlands found in the Habsburg court capital in Madrid, I proposed that still life functioned as a reference point for certain pictorial practices and conventions. Looking at textual references to still life, and considering them in relation to the visual evidence of the pictures themselves, brought into focus an important connection between still life and informal artistic training. Significantly, I suggested, the

process of setting out and scrutinizing real objects before an artist who then strives to convert them deftly into painted portrayals on canvas not only allowed one to hone skills in technical virtuosity, but also offered a means with which to think through the potential of naturalistic description and still life as an effective mode of staging.

Still life is a genre that was forged out of, and in dialogue with, the spaces of the early modern private collection. This is certainly the case in Spain where the correlation between the rise of still-life painting in the early seventeenth century coincided with the aspirations of the nobility and middling classes to form picture collections.<sup>554</sup> In the context of the home, new interests in collecting, and the activities involving pictures fostered by it, came into contact with the notion of the domestic interior as a space for devotional imagery. The mixed images – the sheep and lambs, severed heads of saints, and even Zurbarán’s paintings of the Veronica veil discussed briefly below – considered in the thesis were all painted for private settings. While the domestic interior as a context for pictures in Seville has been little studied, I nevertheless attempted in chapter three to call attention to its importance for understanding a painting like Francisco de Zurbarán’s *Bound Sheep* (1635-1640) in the Prado. As a picture made of a single, stilled and bound animal on a ledge, which is exhibited like a still life but carries sacred resonance, the work forcibly summons viewer discernment. The painting was made in dialogue with a host of different categories of pictures that are called forth upon the work’s viewing. Its interpretation, I suggested, largely depends on an intertextual reading that is summoned when considering a picture in relation to others around it in a collection, or in one’s

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<sup>554</sup> See the essays and published inventories in seventeenth-century Madrid in Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, *Collections of Paintings in Madrid, 1601-1755 Part I*, ed. Maria L. Gilbert (Los Angeles: Provenance Index of the Getty Information Institute, 1997).

memory.<sup>555</sup> In a space populated by pictures of sacred and profane subject matter, how to interpret such a painting is put to a beholder.

Although the fervently religious context of the southern city of Seville, whose leading art patrons were its manifold religious institutions, can partially account for the trend toward mixing still life with sacred subject matter, a close study of the pictures themselves elucidated the different kinds of mixing that resulted, allowing for a better understanding of the ends to which such images were produced. In chapter four, for instance, I explained that the move toward painting the severed heads of Saint John the Baptist, Saint Paul and other saints between 1650 and 1675 by the majority of the city's leading artists must be understood in relation to the absence of narrative imagery of martyrdom in domestic settings. The severed head of the Baptist had been depicted in polychrome sculpture earlier in the century for religious houses in Seville, and the head's eventual pursuit in painting is testament to the proximal relations between the two media in the Sevillian context. Painted heads, however, were made for private patrons. By focusing attention of the saintly severed head, which pulsates with sacred resonance, the paintings respond to contemporary demands for the visualization of saintly sacrifice, while refraining still from depicting the violent act itself. In these works, I argued, the embellishment of the head intensifies references to the narrative of the deathly act in the absence of death's portrayal.

In both chapters three and four, the conventions of early still life, as artists in Madrid and Seville developed them, are put to new use in order to stage the sacred. In both instances, the visual proximity permitted by still life is marshaled to evoke the

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<sup>555</sup> Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting*, Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 111-114.

threshold between life and death. Still life was recognizably a staging ground for the immobile and the inanimate. If the bound animal that would typically be portrayed dead in still life is shown alive but purposely stilled in a painting like Zurbarán's *Bound Sheep*, in the images of severed heads, by contrast, that which was once living is now irrefutably dying or dead. As I demonstrated, narrative is evoked in both types of paintings by way of impending violence or the aftermath of it. Elucidated by minimal means, the poignancy of death and sacrifice relies on the potential of naturalism and stillness found in still life. Remarkably, Christ's sacrifice on the cross is conjured in all three pictorial types. Whether the sheep and lambs, the head of the precursor John the Baptist, or the divine imprint of Christ's own face on the Veronica veil, Christ's ultimate sacrifice for humanity is made part of the viewing experience.

Still life in seventeenth-century Spain was mobilized by artists to accommodate the materiality of religion as evidenced by paintings made of the severed head of the saint and, as I turn to shortly, the Veronica veil imprinted with the face of Christ. With the conventions of still life, sacred material remnants of extraordinary significance are replicated and exhibited in representation. In chapter four, I posited that paintings of a severed saintly head evoke the relic's potency, not in terms of the presence of the sacred, but as a picture that references the conversion of a living body (part) into relic. The exhibition of the bodily fragment and the elicitation of death's threshold is only made possible, though, by the artist's intervention, a notion directly linked in this instance to the use of still life as a mode of picturing. Still life is not only connected to a set of visual conventions, as I explained, but also, and importantly, to a mode of assembling. The process of setting out inanimate objects one at a time, or all together, on a surface in order

to render their naturalistic portrayal is a mode of making imagery that is registered in still life's pictorial outcome on canvas. In displaying the decapitated saintly head as a still life, the artist's role as maker of sacred images is conjured up as well.

In seventeenth-century Spain, still-life painting developed as a genre apart from religious imagery, one that permitted artists the opportunity to enhance their skills in naturalism by directing unprecedented levels of attention to inanimate objects. In chapter two, as mentioned, I introduced the contemporary writings of Carducho and Pacheco to elicit how the genre became a reference point in wider debates about imagery. While artistic practice of still life was certainly partly informed by theory, and vice versa as I explained, my suggestion that still life functioned as a locus for thinking is grounded primarily, though not exclusively, in the notion of practice. That is, artists of still life experimented with the process of staging and assembling objects in close proximity to the picture plane, with the effects of color and light to generate relief and surface texture, and with finding modes of display that heightened the impact of their naturalism. Later artists of mixed images, I suggested, exploited the possibilities of still life for other purposes. Artists in Seville such as Zurbarán, Bartolomé Murillo, Sebastián Llanos y Valdés, and others produced mixed images that not only reinvigorated sacred subject matter, but also drew attention to issues around the portrayal of the sacred at a moment when religious imagery was increasingly juxtaposed with other types of pictures in the setting of the private collection.<sup>556</sup> Importantly, still life did not develop to accommodate sacred imagery in Spain. Nevertheless, the visual potential of the genre's conventions, which were worked out by artists in the workshop, was ultimately put to use to stage the sacred.

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<sup>556</sup> For a discussion of issues that arise in Flemish garland paintings, which combine still life and religious imagery, in private collections, see *ibid.*, 76-88; Susan Merriam, *Seventeenth-Century Flemish Garland Paintings: Still Life, Vision, and the Devotional Image* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).

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In his *Sevilla pintoresca, ó Description de sus mas célebres monumentos artísticos* (1844), a text that describes for readers the artistic inheritance of Seville, the nineteenth-century historian and critic José Amador de los Ríos stresses the singularity of a painting of the Holy Face of Christ by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664).<sup>557</sup> In the West, the Holy Face became closely associated with a piece of cloth in Saint Peter's in Rome that had reportedly been transported there from Jerusalem in the East in the twelfth century.<sup>558</sup> The cloth, which became commonly known as the Veronica, purportedly contained a miraculous image of Christ's face, which had been generated during Christ's lifetime when he touched his face to the fabric, leaving his holy likeness. According to a legend that had gained considerable traction by the early modern period, the origins of the Veronica were rooted in the story of Christ's Passion.<sup>559</sup> During his arduous journey to Calvary, a woman named Veronica offered her veil to Christ to wipe the blood and sweat from his face. Upon returning the veil to the woman, Christ's divine face was imprinted on the cloth, thereby fashioning a "true image" of him – a *vera icona*, a homonym of the

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<sup>557</sup> José Amador de los Ríos, *Sevilla pintoresca, ó Descripcion de sus mas célebres monumentos artísticos* (F. Alvarez y ca., 1844), 421–422.

<sup>558</sup> There exists a substantive body of literature on the Holy Face. For a recent assessment of the Veronica as well as King Abgar of Edessa's Mandylion, see the essays collected in Herbert L. Kessler and Gerhard Wolf, *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation: Papers from a Colloquium Held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996*, Villa Spelman Colloquia 6 (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale; Distributed in the U.S. by Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "Vision and the Veronica," in *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York; Cambridge, MA: Zone Books; MIT Press, 1998), 317–82; Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

<sup>559</sup> For an overview of the legendary origins of the Veronica in Rome, see Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 215–224.

name of its first owner, Veronica.<sup>560</sup> As a “true image” of Christ and a (contact) relic that had touched his sacred body, the Veronica garnered extraordinary prestige, especially since there remained little material evidence on earth of the resurrected Christ.

In *Sevilla pintoresca*, Amador de los Ríos is keen to underscore for readers what is distinct about Zurbarán’s approach to picturing the Veronica. With little exception, other paintings made in Spain and elsewhere are marked by a preference for a front-facing Christ, one whose face occasionally even surges forward from its cloth background.<sup>561</sup> Conversely, as Amador de los Ríos explains, Zurbarán did not render the impression of Christ’s face in an *acabado*, or smooth, finish as “someone who was making a portrait” (como quien hace un retrato).<sup>562</sup> Instead, the artist knowingly depicted the face of Christ in a manner that resembled more closely the image left imprinted on the veil.<sup>563</sup> Amador de los Ríos describes a painting of the Veronica by Zurbarán that hung in the nineteenth century in the picture gallery of the collector Aniceto Bravo, where the historian had occasion to view it. Bravo’s picture was one out of close to a dozen images of the Veronica painted by Zurbarán over his long career.<sup>564</sup> Two of the paintings are

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<sup>560</sup> Ibid., 542. In his *Speculum ecclesiae* (c. 1215), Gerald of Wales states “...And some say that Veronica is a play on words [*vocabula alludentes*], meaning the true icon [*veram iconiam*] or the true image [*imaginem veram*]. Gerald of Wales’ comments are reproduced in Belting’s appendix.

<sup>561</sup> For an analysis of the naturalistic portrayal of Christ’s face in relation to the *ostensio* of the actual relic in St. Peter’s, and a viewer’s process of self-scrutiny, see Louis Marin, “The Figurability of the Visual: The Veronica or the Question of the Portrait at Port-Royal,” *New Literary History* 22, no. 2 (1991): 281-296.

<sup>562</sup> Amador de los Ríos, *Sevilla pintoresca*, 421.

<sup>563</sup> Ibid., 421-22. Delenda quotes José Amador de los Ríos’ comments on Zurbarán’s Veronica painting in full in Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*, 706.

<sup>564</sup> For reproductions of twelve different versions and their provenances, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*. For identified workshop versions, see volume two, Odile Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, 1598-1664: Los conjuntos y el obrador, Volumen II*, with the collaboration of Almudena Ros de Barbero (Madrid: Fundación Arte Hispánico, 2009), 384-386.



dated; one is signed and dated to 1631, and is considered the earliest version, and the other is signed and dated over twenty-five years later, in 1658. Amador de los Ríos' remarks on the portrayal of Christ's likeness are applicable to the whole lot, if to varying degrees; indeed, the swift, almost fleeting portrayal of Christ's face is a constant feature of Zurbarán's paintings.

To take one example in the GMG Foundation in Madrid, *Holy Face* (ca. 1635) displays the face of Christ in three-quarter profile at the center of a white veil (Figure 73).<sup>565</sup> Christ's facial features, beard, hair, and the crown of thorns are all sketchily rendered in soft brown paint with subtle splotches of red used sparingly to depict blood. In contrast to the subtle delineation of the face, the veil is meticulously painted in an *acabado* finish that lends it a material presence in the painting, especially when set against a uniform stark black ground. The veil's white fabric is bunched together at the top corners, and attached to string that extends upward outside of the border of the picture. The cascading folds along with the prominent shadows that form in them accentuate the surplus of cloth.

The remarkable tactility of the cloth in the GMG *Holy Face* and other versions by the artist has prompted scholars of Spanish art to comment on the pictures' resemblance to still life. As early as 1965, Maria Luisa Caturla devised the phrase *trampantojos a lo divino* to signal, with the familiar affixation "a lo divino," the translation of *trompe l'oeil*

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<sup>565</sup> For a reproduction of this painting, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*, 295. In his 1991 article, Victor Stoichita calls attention to the uniqueness of Zurbarán's depiction of Christ's face. He proposes that Christ's face in three-quarter profile gestures to the narrative of the Passion, and thus makes reference to the miraculous making of the Veronica image. See Victor Stoichita, "La Verónica de Zurbarán," *Norba: Revista de Arte* 11 (1991): 73.

into something divine.<sup>566</sup> More recently, Victor Stoichita has taken the supposition further, especially in relation to the artist's signed painting of 1658.<sup>567</sup> In Zurbarán's *Holy Face* (1658) in the National Sculpture Museum in Valladolid, Christ's features are virtually obscured (Figure 74). Only a smudge at the veil's center allows us to detect the contours of Christ's three-quarter profile delineated in sweat and blood. Unlike the GMG *Holy Face*, and all others painted by the artist, in the Valladolid painting a small *cartellino* on which is written *Fran[co] de Zurbarán./1658* is visible affixed to the red background in the bottom left corner.<sup>568</sup>

In the Veronica, Christ's presence is registered by way of bodily trace created by the bodily fluids secreted onto the veil. Formed as a result of the contact between Christ's face and the cloth, the Veronica is recognized as an *archeiopoetos*, or an image not made by human hands.<sup>569</sup> The veil thus bears Christ's true image, one that he himself generated. As scholars of early modern painting have often noted, a contradiction thus presented itself to painters wishing to portray the *archeiopoetos*.<sup>570</sup> How is an artist to portray an image like the Veronica that was crafted without human hands, and thus

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<sup>566</sup> For María Luisa Caturla, the naturalistic rendering of the veil is indicative of an overall effort in the artist's oeuvre to recreate the real to facilitate viewers' contemplation. M.L. Caturla, "La Santa Faz de Zurbarán, Trompe-l'oeil 'a lo divino,'" *Goya* 64–65 (1965): 202–5.

<sup>567</sup> Stoichita, "La Verónica de Zurbarán," 81–84. See also the more recent Victor Stoichita, "Bodegones a lo divino," in *El bodegón*, ed. John Berger (Madrid: Fundación Museo del Prado, 2000), 87–105.

<sup>568</sup> For a reproduction of the signature, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán, Vol. I*, 689.

<sup>569</sup> Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti gives an explanation of such images in his art treatise published in Bologna in 1582. Gabriele Paleotti, *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, trans. William McCuaig, with an introduction by Paolo Prodi (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2012), 100. For a brief discussion of the term itself, see Koerner, "Not Made by Human Hands," 80–85.

<sup>570</sup> For the ways in which early modern artists made use of the conventions of portraiture to address this dilemma, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 428–432. On images by Albrecht Dürer, see Koerner, "Not Made by Human Hands," 80–126.

without artistic intervention? For Stoichita, such a paradox is brought forward in Zurbarán's *Holy Face* in Valladolid by way of the prominent cartellino on which is inscribed the artist's name and date that ultimately refers to the whole canvas.<sup>571</sup> Such a device, he explains, communicates to viewers that displayed is not an *archeipoetos*, but a representation of one.<sup>572</sup> As he rightly points out, this is heightened by the artist's decision to render the veil as an object of *trompe l'oeil*, which can be considered the limit of representation.<sup>573</sup>

With its conspicuous cartellino, Zurbarán's *Holy Face* in Valladolid boldly visualizes the artist's role in crafting the image made without human hands more emphatically than his other versions. For my purposes, though, it is worthwhile to bring forward how the gamut of Zurbarán's Veronica pictures – of which the GMG *Holy Face* is illustrative though the images all differ – also astutely register the artist's presence, and thus to respond to the problem posed by the *archeipoetos*. As Amador de los Ríos pointed out, Zurbarán endeavors to make the markings that constitute Christ's face on the veil understood as imprint in each of his paintings of the Veronica. In order to do so effectively, ample pictorial attention had to be directed to the cloth upon which it manifested. In the GMG *Holy Face* and in most others, except the picture in Valladolid, the veil nearly takes up the entire canvas. In each occasion, the veil is painted with a level of tactility that forcefully conveys its presence in the image as material object.

We only have to turn briefly to visual and textual evidence to be reminded of Zurbarán's dexterity with painting textures, especially white ones, a point introduced in

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<sup>571</sup> For the reference to this as paradox, see Stoichita, "La Verónica de Zurbarán," 71.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>573</sup> Ibid., 79.

chapter three's discussion of the artist's pictures of sheep and lambs. When Antonio Palomino provides a short biography of Zurbarán in his *El museo pictórico y escala óptica* (1715-24), he lavishes praise on the portrayal of the monks' habits in paintings of the life of Saint Peter Nolasco, which the artist painted for the second cloister of the monastery of the Shod Mercedarians of Seville.<sup>574</sup> Palomino writes, "In these, the habits of the monks are a thing of wonder, for although they are all white, they are differentiated by their individual values. They are done with such admirable realism in the folds, color, and form that they counterfeit reality itself."<sup>575</sup> Palomino considers the monks' white habits "a thing of wonder" because of the artist's ability to render each habit distinct in its folds and shadows, despite their being all made of the same white color.

Significantly, this is not the only instance where the artist demonstrates a particular mastery of white cloth. As I touched upon in chapter three, the artist and his workshop painted Crucifixion scenes for Seville's religious institutions on numerous occasions. In each painted Crucifixion, Zurbarán endows Christ with a carefully wrought loincloth – which is different in each original painting – as Odile Delenda observes in her catalogue of the artist's work.<sup>576</sup> To return to the *Crucifixion* (1627) in the Art Institute of Chicago, a loincloth made of white fabric gathers and drapes down on the right side of the body of the dead Christ (Figure 42). In this painting, a small cartellino signed by the artist is placed at the base of the cross, at the bottom edge of the picture. Undoubtedly, its

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<sup>574</sup> For an overview of Zurbarán's (and workshop) paintings for the Shod Mercedarians, see Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán. Vol. II*, 73-88.

<sup>575</sup> Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *Lives of the eminent Spanish painters and sculptors*, trans. Nina Ayala Mallory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 184. Mallory provides an English translation of Palomino's artist biographies, which comprise the third part of his *El museo pictórico y la escala óptica*.

<sup>576</sup> Delenda and Wildenstein Institute, *Francisco de Zurbarán. Vol. I*, 334.

placement is both discreet and also judiciously chosen to entice viewers to see it in relation to the loincloth that descends toward it.

Zurbarán's dexterity with fabric, especially white fabric illuminated against a darker ground, is a feature of his work, I venture, to which the artist was keen to direct viewers' attention. In the majority of his signed works, Zurbarán inscribes his name into a darker region of the picture, typically in the lower foreground. On a few occasions, however, a small cartellino, which is routinely made of white paper and equipped with the artist's signature, is included in a work. Notably, in his *Holy Face* in Valladolid and the *Crucifixion* in Chicago, Zurbarán judiciously inserts a white cartellino in a place in the picture that suggests a visual relationship between the cartellino and marvelously painted white cloth.<sup>577</sup> Amador de los Ríos even ends his short commentary on Zurbarán's Veronica painting in *Sevilla pintoresca* with an observation about the artistry in the depiction of the veil. Zurbarán, he states, "knew also how to show off his profound knowledge in the way [he painted] the folds in fabric" (quien también supo ostentar sus profundos conocimientos en la manera de plegar los ropajes).<sup>578</sup> Indeed, white cloth was an aspect of Zurbarán's painting for which the artist was well recognized.

The sketchiness that constitutes Christ's face in a painting like the GMG *Holy Face* and others is likely attributed to Zurbarán's attempt at naturalism. It was, after all, an imprint that was left on the veil of the divine face, though the artist has granted Christ's face a degree of three-dimensionality. To successfully render the imprint, the artist must have determined, was also to execute the veil to which it is bound. The veil

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<sup>577</sup> Another significant example is Zurbarán's *Saint Serapion* (1628) in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

<sup>578</sup> Amador de los Ríos, *Sevilla pintoresca*, 422.

was where the artist hand could be elicited – where his intervention in rendering an image made without hands could discreetly be made known. That is, Zurbarán counts on viewers to locate his hand, in the portrayal of Veronica’s holy veil, in the fashioning of white cloth. Perhaps he is also evoking the parallel between the *lienzo* as linen and the *lienzo* as canvas, the support used by most painters in the profession, a connection that Palomino was to reference in a general discussion of the Veronica in his treatise.<sup>579</sup> The author of the *lienzo* of Veronica’s veil is also the author of the entire *lienzo* or canvas, a point that is underscored by the prominence of the veil in the GMG painting, and the distance collapsed between face and cloth when rendering Christ’s face as imprint. By giving prominent place to the portrayal of the material object of the veil in *Holy Face*, Zurbarán clearly conveys that it is a representation or, more accurately, *his* representation of the *archeiopoetos*.

I end my thesis with this cursory discussion of Zurbarán’s GMG *Holy Face* because, like the paintings examined in previous chapters, the picture is testament to how still life and its conventions were mobilized in depictions of sacred subject matter in seventeenth-century Seville. In this instance, white cloth is made the focus of representation in response to pictorial concerns inherent in painting an *archeiopoetos*. The veil is knotted at the corners and suspended with string in an artful manner that recalls the tradition of vertically suspending foodstuffs found in the early still lifes of Juan Sánchez Cotán (1560-1627) and other artists discussed in chapter two. In lavishing the fabric of the veil with pictorial attention and rendering it with intense naturalism and

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<sup>579</sup> Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *El museo pictorico, y escala optica, Tomo Segundo* (Madrid: Por L.A. de Bedmar, impressor del reyno, 1715), 90.

relief, Zurbarán here appropriates for sacred representation still life's unyielding concentration on material objects.

## Figures



Figure 1 Juan Fernández el Labrador, Bunches of Grapes, c. 1636. Oil on canvas, 45 × 61 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.



Figure 2 Sebastián Llanos y Valdés, Head of Saint Catherine, c. 1652. Oil on canvas, 53.7 × 66.3 cm. Castres, Goya Museum.





Figure 3 Juan Sánchez Cotán, Still Life with Quince, Cabbage, Melon and Cucumber, c. 1600. Oil on canvas, 69.2 × 85.1 cm. San Diego, San Diego Museum of Art.



Figure 4 Ambrogio Figino, Metal Plate with Peaches and Vine Leaves, 1591-94. Oil on panel, 21 × 29.4 cm. Private Collection.

Redacted due to copyright

Figure 5 Spanish artist, Plate of Pears, 1595-1600. Oil on canvas, 23 × 32.5 cm. Madrid, Naseiro Collection.



Figure 6 Juan Sánchez Cotán, Still Life with Game Fowl, c. 1600. Oil on canvas, 67.8 × 88.7 cm. Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leigh B. Block, 1955.1203.



Figure 7 Juan Sánchez Cotán, Still Life with a Basket of Cherries, c. 1600. Oil on canvas, 90 × 109 cm. Private Collection.

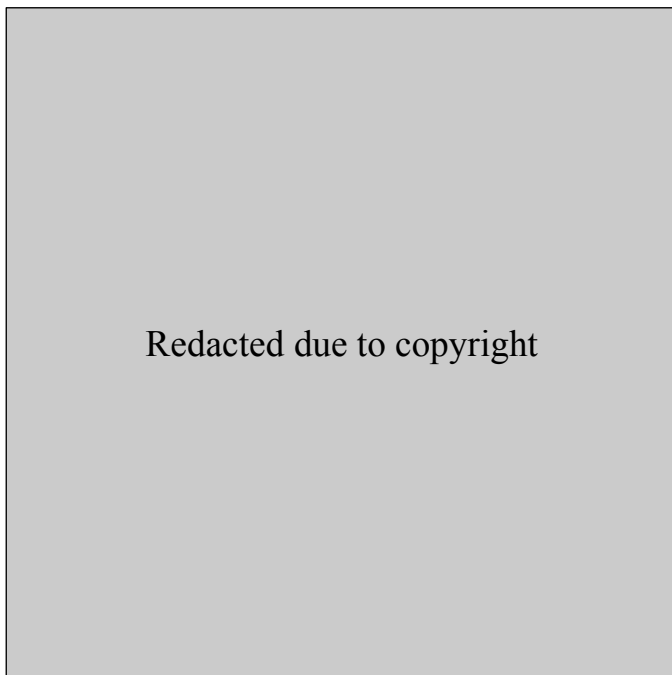


Figure 8 Juan Conchillos Falcó, Domestic Scene, undated. Pen and ink drawing, 26.6 × 19.7 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

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Figure 9 Juan Sánchez Cotán, Still Life with Game Fowl, Fruit and Vegetables, 1602. Oil on canvas, 68 × 89 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

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Figure 10 Juan Sánchez Cotán, Cardoon and Carrots, 1603-1627. Oil on canvas, 63 × 85 cm. Granada, Museum of Fine Arts.



Figure 11 Diego Velázquez, Tavern Scene with Two Men and a Boy, c. 1618. Oil on canvas, 108.5 × 102 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.

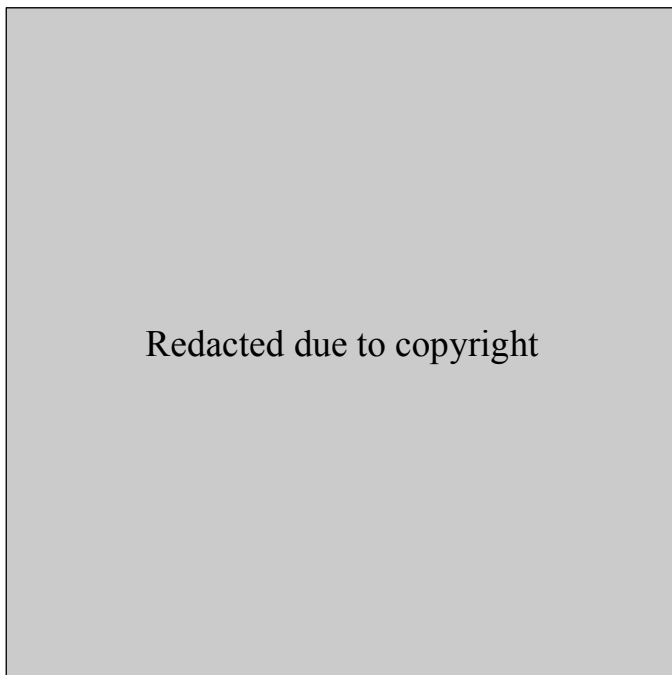


Figure 12 Alejandro Loarte, Still Life with Fruit, 1624. Oil on canvas, 81.5 × 108 cm. Madrid, Plácido Arango Collection.

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Figure 13 Alejandro Loarte, Still Life with Hanging Meat and Vegetables, 1625. Oil on canvas, 81 × 108 cm. Madrid, Várez Fisa Collection.



Figure 14 Alejandro Loarte, Still Life with Meat, Fowl and Tavern Scene, 1623-26. Oil on canvas, 49.5 × 70 cm. London, Matthiesen Gallery.

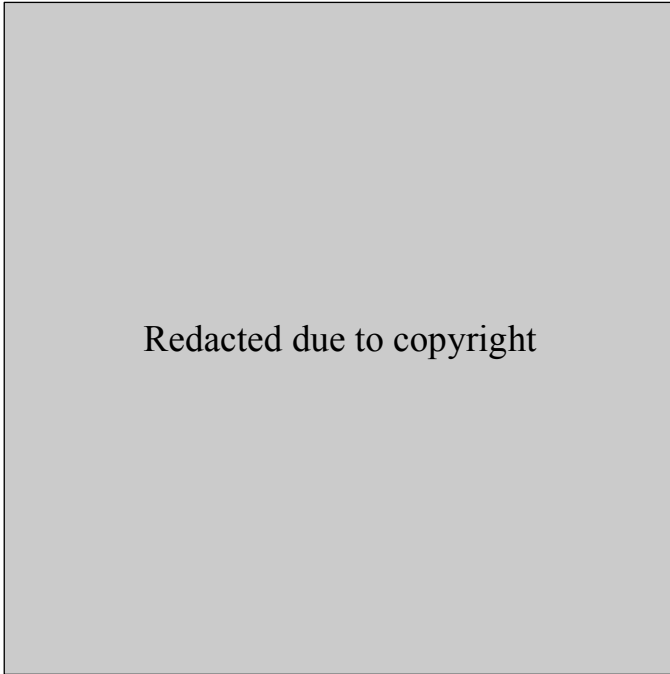


Figure 15 Joachim Beuckelaer, Kitchen Scene, 1568. Oil on canvas, 150 × 204 cm. Naples, Capodimonte Museum.



Figure 16 Juan van der Hamen, Basket and Boxes of Sweets, 1622. Oil on canvas, 84 × 105 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

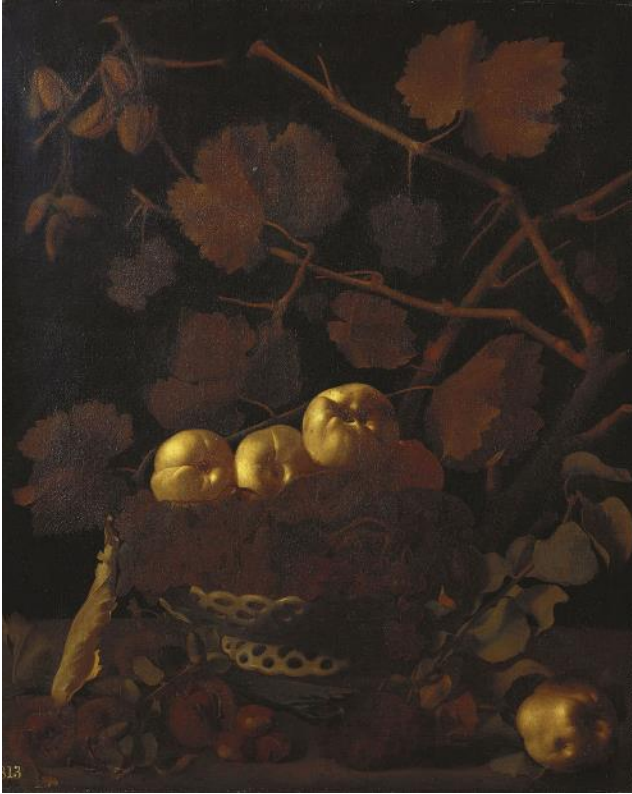


Figure 17 Juan Fernández el Labrador, Still Life with Quinces and Acorns, c. 1633. Oil on canvas, 83 × 68.4 cm. London, Royal Collection Trust/Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015.



Figure 18 Antonio Pereda, Still Life with Walnuts, 1634. Oil on panel, 20.7 cm. Private Collection.





Figure 19 Juan van der Hamen, Still Life with Flowers and Fruit, 1629. Oil on canvas, 84 × 131 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure 20 Juan van der Hamen, Plate of Pomegranates, c. 1630. Oil on canvas, 34 × 46 cm. Private Collection.

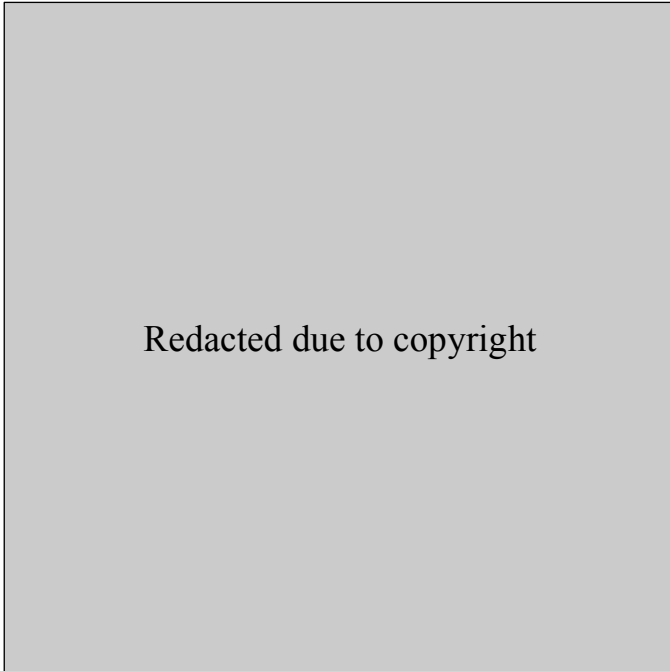


Figure 21 Juan van der Hamen, Glass Fruit Bowl on a Stone Plinth, late 1620s. Oil on canvas, 38.1 × 56.2 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 22 Francisco de Zurbarán, Bound Sheep, 1635-40. Oil on canvas, 38 × 62 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

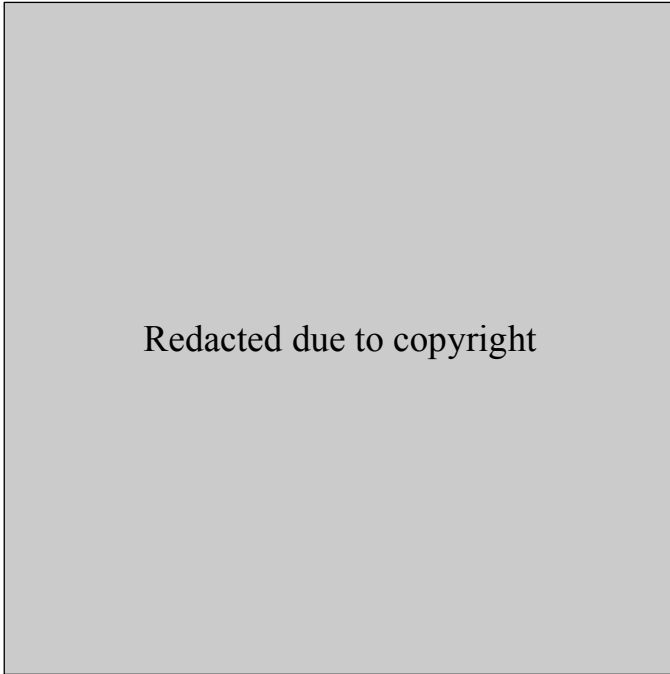
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Figure 23 Francisco de Zurbarán, *Agnus Dei*, 1635-40. Oil on canvas, 35.56 × 52 cm. San Diego, San Diego Museum of Art.



Figure 24 Francisco de Zurbarán, *Basket of Oranges*, 1633. Oil on canvas, 60 × 107 cm. Pasadena, Norton Simon Foundation.



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Figure 25 Francisco de Zurbarán, Plate of Sweets, 1630-32. Oil on canvas,  $28.5 \times 39$  cm. Private Collection.



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<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/francisco-de-zurbaran-a-cup-of-water-and-a-rose>

Figure 26 Francisco de Zurbarán, A Cup of Water and a Rose, c. 1630. Oil on canvas,  $21.2 \times 30.1$  cm. London, National Gallery of Art.

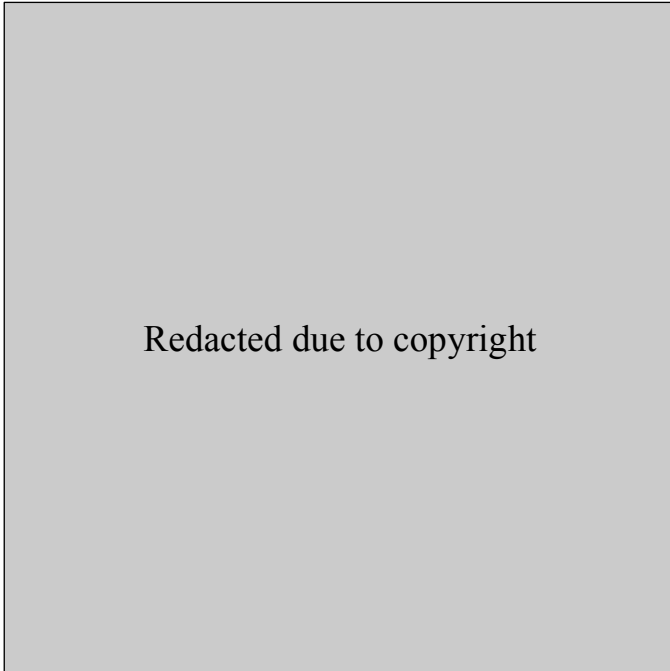


Figure 27 Francisco de Zurbarán, Miraculous Cure of the Blessed Reginald of Orleans, 1626-27. Oil on canvas, 190 × 230 cm. Seville, Parochial Church of Santa María Magdalena.



Figure 28 Francisco de Zurbarán, Adoration of the Shepherds, 1638. Oil on canvas, 267 × 185 cm. Grenoble, Grenoble Museum.

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Figure 29 Hieronymus Wierix after Bernardino Passeri, *In aurora natalis domini: De Pastoribus* (At the Dawn of the Birth of the Lord: The Shepherds) in Jerome Nadal, *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp, 1595). Engraving. San Marino, Huntington Library.



Figure 30 Frederik I. van Valckenborch (or workshop), *Market Scene*, 1590. Oil on canvas, 119 × 209 cm. Vienna, KHM-Museumsverband.

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Figure 31 Francesco Bassano, Month of April, c. 1591. Oil on canvas, 153 × 248 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

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Figure 32 Francisco Barranco, Still Life (c.1650) Oil on canvas. 60 × 90.8 cm. Current whereabouts unknown.



Figure 33 Francisco Barrera, Still Life with Meat, Fruit and Vegetables (the Month of April), 1640s. Oil on canvas, 101.5 × 156 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 34 Caravaggio, Saint John the Baptist, 1609-10. Oil on canvas, 159 × 122 cm. Rome, Borghese Gallery.



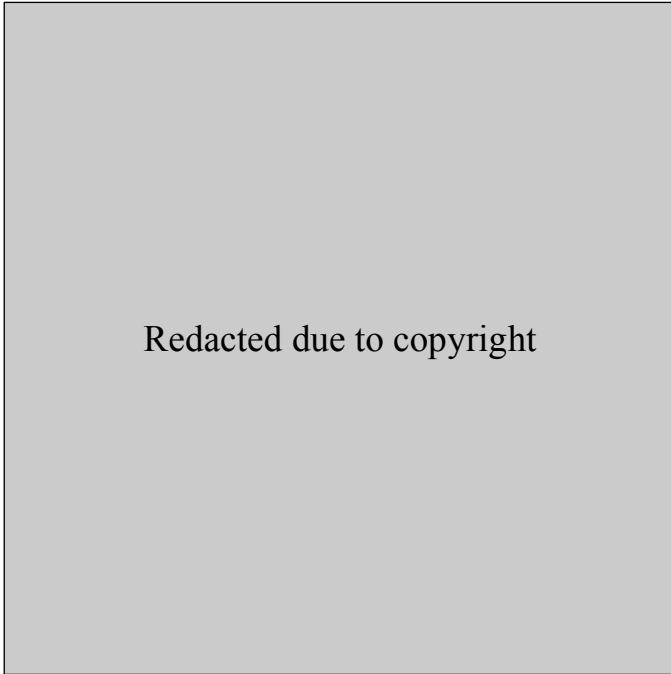


Figure 35 Francisco de Zurbarán, Saint John the Baptist in the Desert, c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 160 × 164 cm. Seville, Cathedral Museum.



Figure 36 Francisco de Zurbarán, Bound Sheep, 1631. Oil on canvas, 84 × 116 cm. Private Collection.

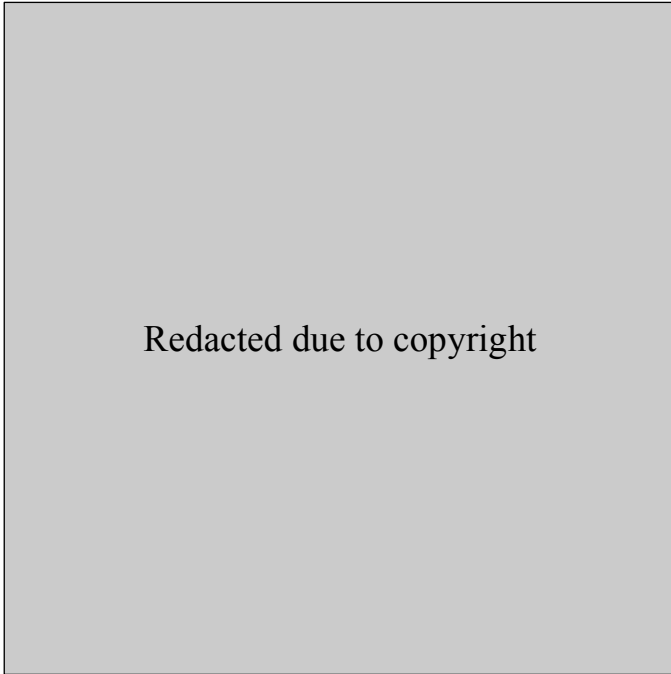


Figure 37 Francisco de Zurbarán, Bound Sheep, 1632. Oil on canvas, 61.3 × 83.2 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 38 Francisco de Zurbarán, Bound Sheep, 1635-40. Oil on canvas, 37 × 58 cm. Private Collection.

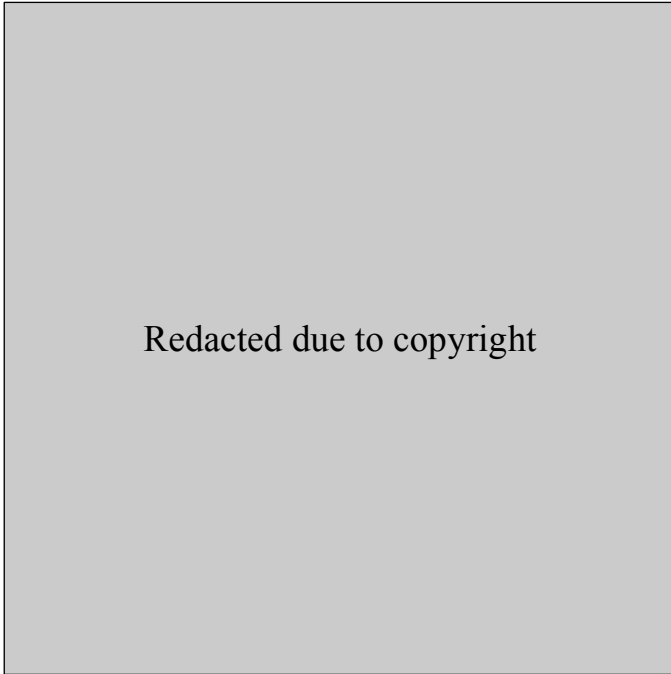


Figure 39 Francisco de Zurbarán, Bound Sheep, 1635-40. Oil on canvas, 36 × 51 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 40 Frans Snyders, The Pantry, early 1630s. Oil on canvas, 99 × 145 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

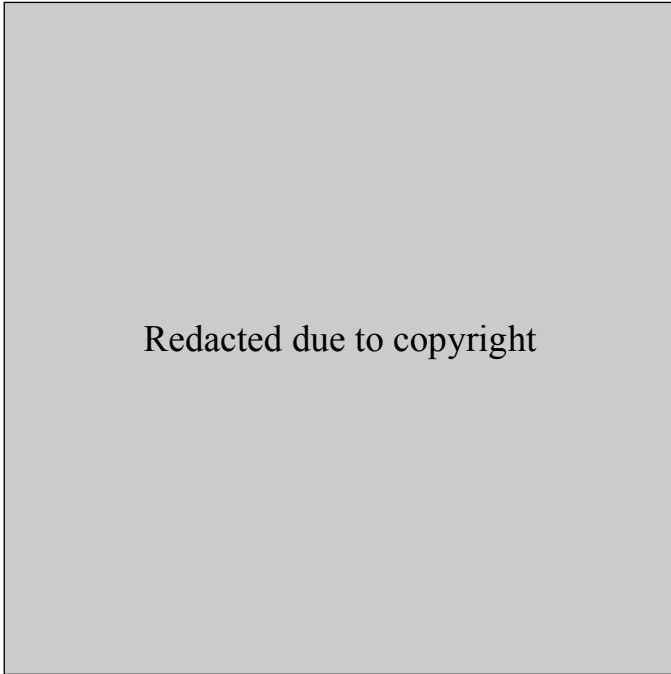


Figure 41 Juan van der Hamen, *Still Life with Fruits and Birds*, 1621. Oil on panel, 54.5 × 69.3 cm. Madrid, National Heritage.



Figure 42 Francisco de Zurbarán, *Crucifixion*, 1627. Oil on canvas, 290.3 × 165.5 cm. Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, Robert A. Waller Memorial Fund, 1954.15.

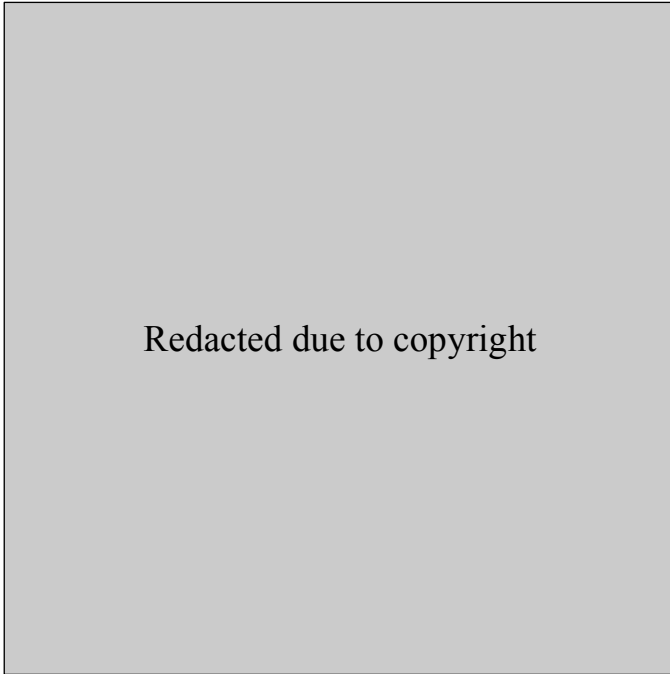


Figure 43 Francisco de Zurbarán, Christ on the Cross, 1635-40. Oil on canvas, 232 × 176 cm. Seville, Museum of Fine Arts.



Figure 44 Diego Velázquez, Christ in the House of Mary and Martha, c. 1618. Oil on canvas, 60 × 103.5 cm. London, National Gallery.



Figure 45 Pieter Aertsen, Christ in the House of Mary and Martha, 1552. Oil on oak, 60 × 101.5 cm. Vienna, KHM-Museumsverband.



Figure 46 Francisco de Zurbarán, Agnus Dei, 1639. Oil on canvas, 47.6 × 55.9 cm. Madrid, Museum of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando.



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Figure 47 Francisco de Zurbarán, A Painter before the Crucifixion, 1630-1655. Oil on canvas, 105 × 84 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

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Figure 48 Baltazar Gomes Figueira, Bound Sheep with Hanging Game, 1645-55. Oil on canvas, 102 × 131 cm. Évora, Évora Museum.





Figure 49 Andrea Solario, Head of John the Baptist, 1507. Oil on wood, 46 × 43 cm. Paris, Louvre Museum.

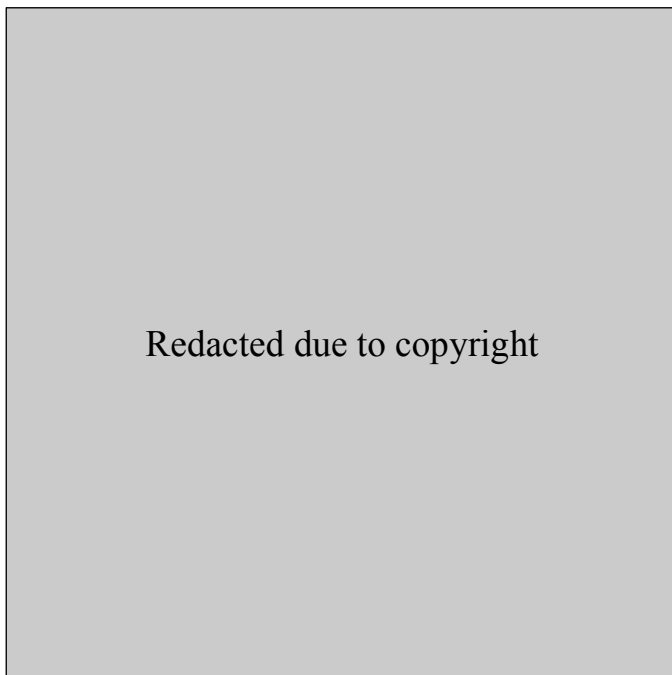


Figure 50 Italian artist, Head of Saint John the Baptist, 16th century. Oil on wood, 45 × 57 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum. Deposited in the Lope de Vega Museum.

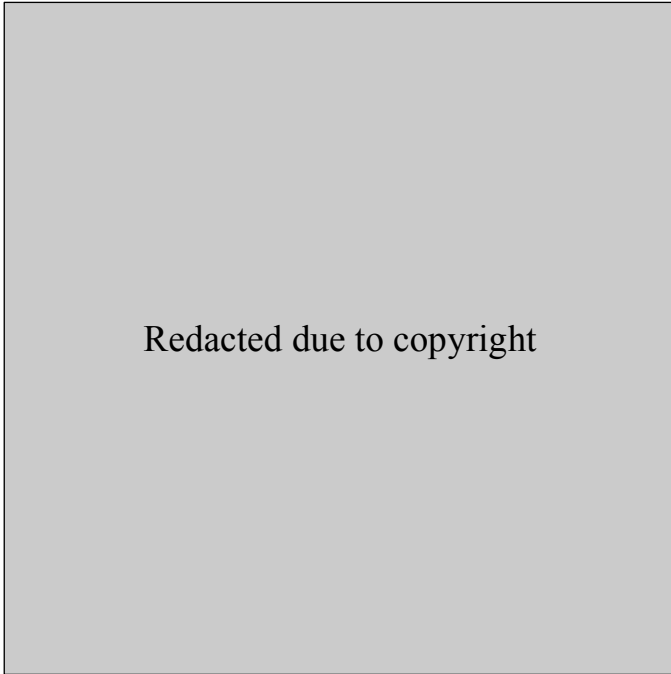


Figure 51 Bartolomé Murillo (uncertainly attributed), Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1650-1675. Oil on canvas, 50 × 77 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum. Deposited in the Museum of Fine Arts of Coruña.

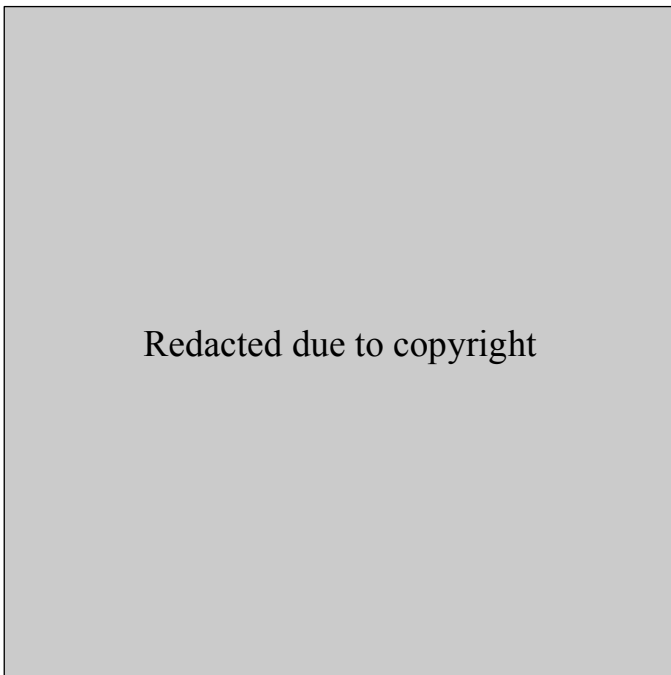


Figure 52 Juan de Mesa, Head of Saint John the Baptist, c. 1625. Polychromed wood, 30.5 × 31 × 20 cm. Seville, Cathedral Museum.



Figure 53 Juan de Zurbarán, *Plate of Lemons*, c. 1640. Oil on canvas, 36.1 × 50.3 cm. Madrid, Museum of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando.



Figure 54 Pedro de Campobón, *Still Life with Sweets*, 1663. Oil on canvas, 42.5 × 62.5 cm. Private Collection.

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Martirio\\_de\\_Santiago\\_\(Navarrete\\_el\\_Mu  
do\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Martirio_de_Santiago_(Navarrete_el_Mudo).jpg)

Figure 55 Juan Fernández de Navarrete, Martyrdom of Saint James, 1569-1571. Oil on canvas, 340 × 210 cm. El Escorial, Royal Palace of El Escorial.

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Santa\\_Rufina.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Santa_Rufina.jpg)

Figure 56 Diego Velázquez, Santa Rufina, 1628-29. Oil on canvas, 77.1 × 64.7 cm. Seville, Focus-Abengoa Foundation.



Figure 57 Sebastián Llanos y Valdés, Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1660. Oil on canvas, 42.2 × 55.8 cm. London, Sotheby's.



Figure 58 Sevillian artist, Heads of Saints Paul, John the Baptist and James the Great on platters on a draped ledge, c. 1660-1670. Oil on canvas, 108.2 × 132.7 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meiser.



Figure 59 Bartolomé Murillo, Saint John the Baptist Pointing to Christ, c. 1655. Oil on canvas, 270.2 × 184.5 cm. Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, Louise B. and Frank H. Woods Purchase Fund, 1960.2.

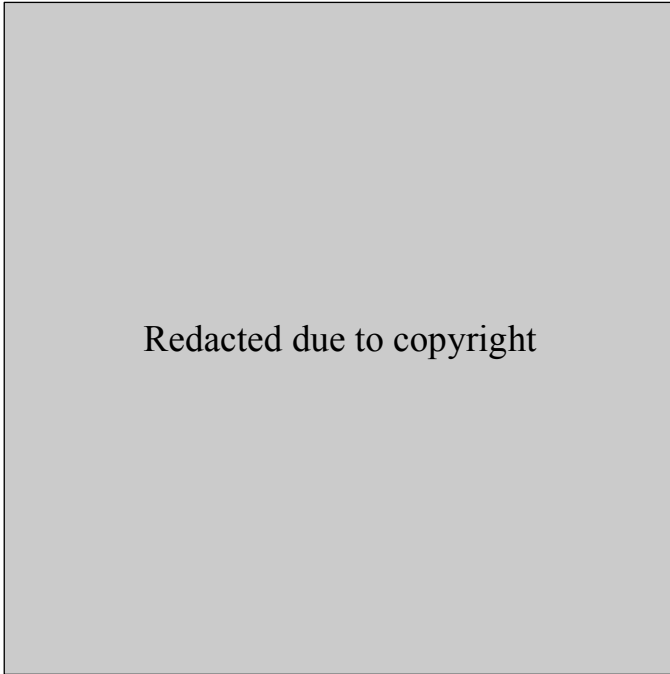


Figure 60 Bartolomé Murillo, Head of Saint John the Baptist, c. 1660. Oil on canvas, 61 × 71 cm. Private Collection.

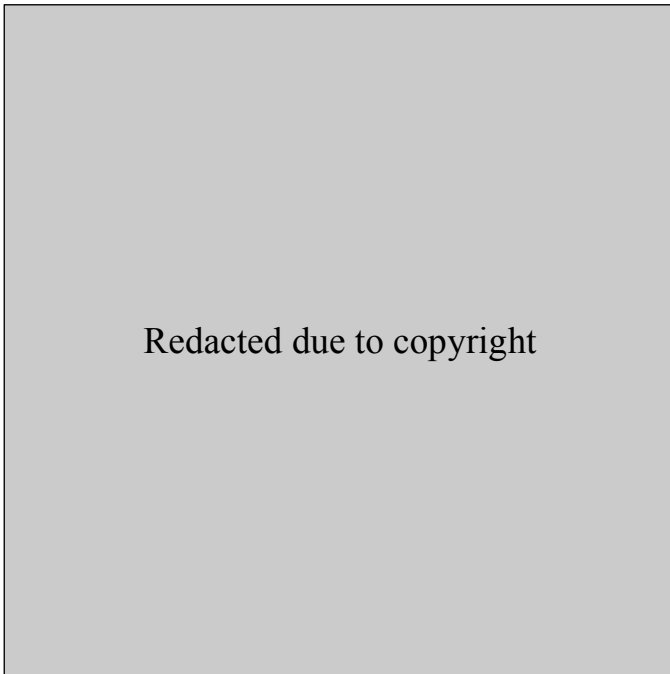


Figure 61 Bartolomé Murillo (uncertainly attributed, or copy of), Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1650-1675. Oil on canvas, 55 × 74 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

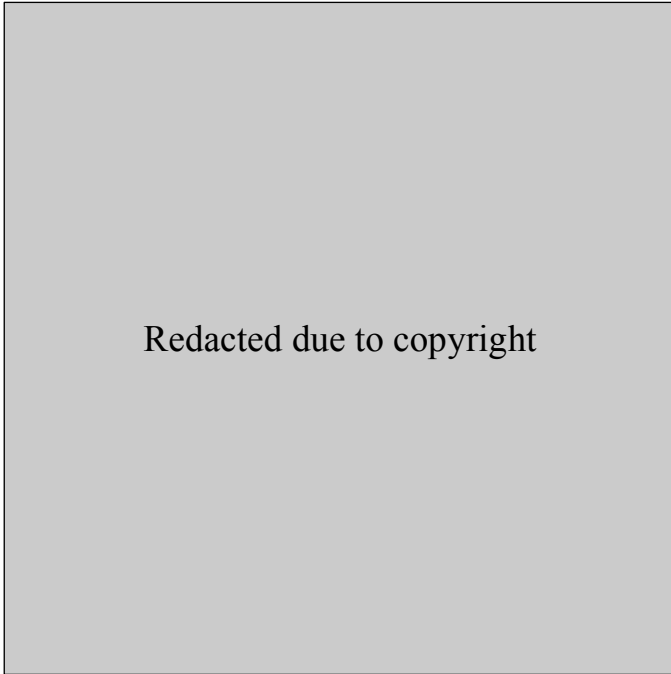
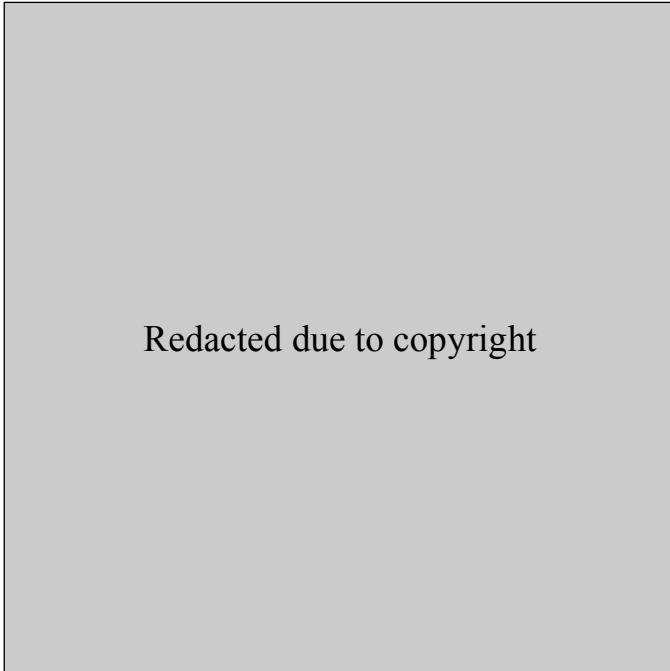


Figure 62 Sevillian artist, Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1650-1675. Oil on canvas, 46 × 61 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 63 Juan Valdés Leal, Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1655. Oil on canvas, 80 × 80 cm. Córdoba, Convent of Carmen Calzado.





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Figure 64 Juan Valdés Leal, Head of Saint Paul, 1655. Oil on canvas, 80 × 80 cm. Córdoba, Convent of Carmen Calzado.



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Figure 65 Juan Valdés Leal, Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1654-1655. Pencil drawing, 16.3 × 23 cm. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle.

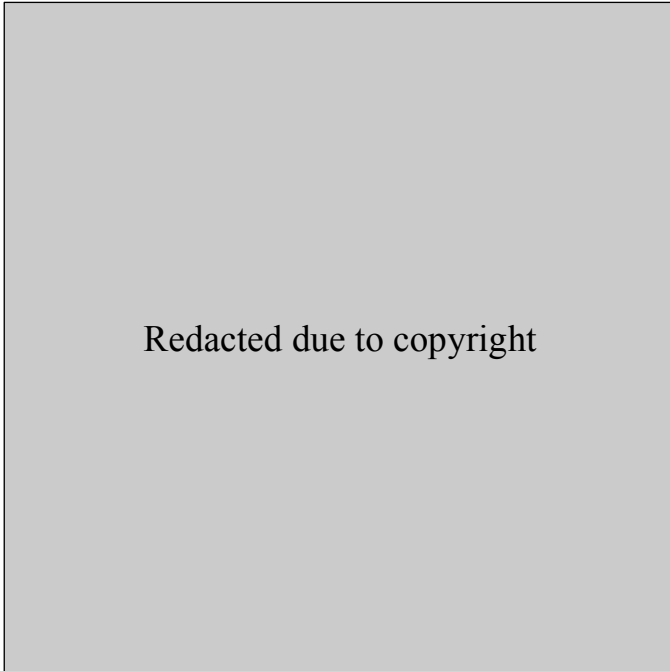


Figure 66 Sevillian artist, Head of Saint Paul, 1650-1675. Oil on canvas, 40 × 60 cm. Vitoria-Gasteiz, Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art.



Figure 67 Bartolomé Murillo (uncertainly attributed), Head of Saint Paul, 1650-1675. Oil on canvas, 50 × 77 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum. Deposited in the Museum of Fine Arts of Coruña.

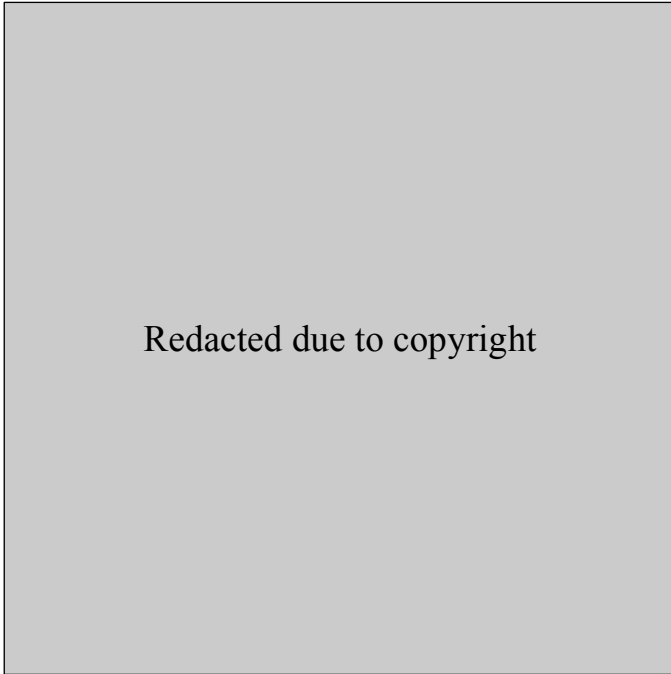


Figure 68 Bartolomé Murillo (uncertainly attributed, or copy of), Head of Saint Paul, 1650-1675. Oil on canvas, 55 × 73 cm. Madrid, Prado Museum.

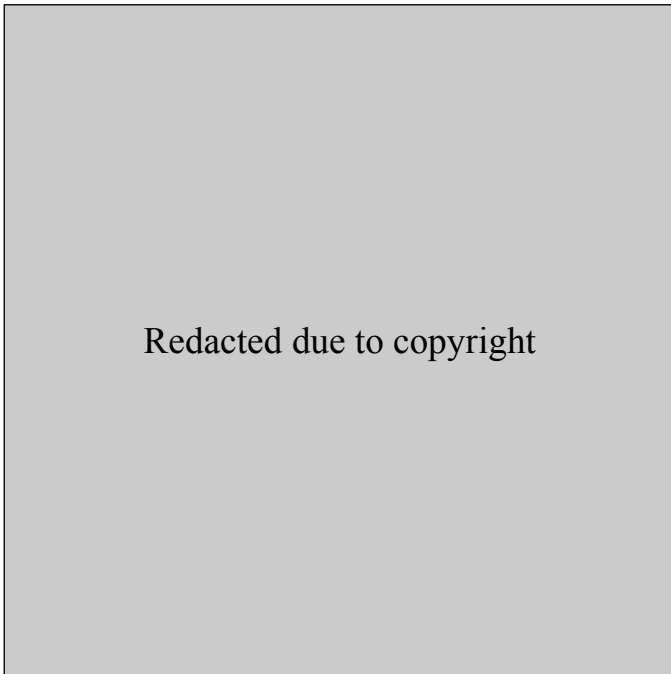


Figure 69 Pedro de Medina, Still Life with Fish and Sea Creatures, 1655. Oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Private Collection.



Figure 70 Vicente Carducho (attributed), Deathbed Portrait of Father Simón de Rojas, 1624. Oil on canvas, 101 × 121 cm. Madrid, Private Collection.



Figure 71 Sebastián Llanos y Valdés, Head of Saint Paul, 1675. Oil on canvas, 53.5 × 72 cm. Paris, Louvre Museum.

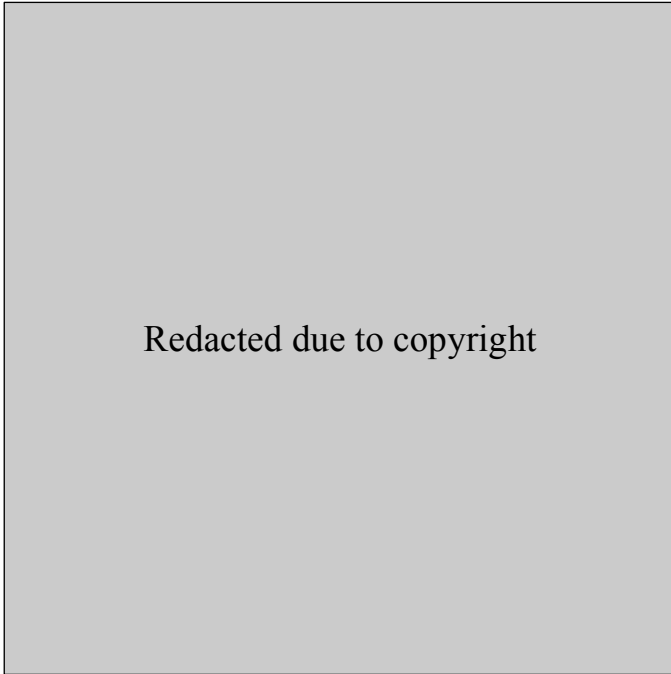


Figure 72 Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (il Guercino), *Veronica's Veil and the Head of St. John the Baptist*, 17th century. Princeton, Princeton University Art Museum.

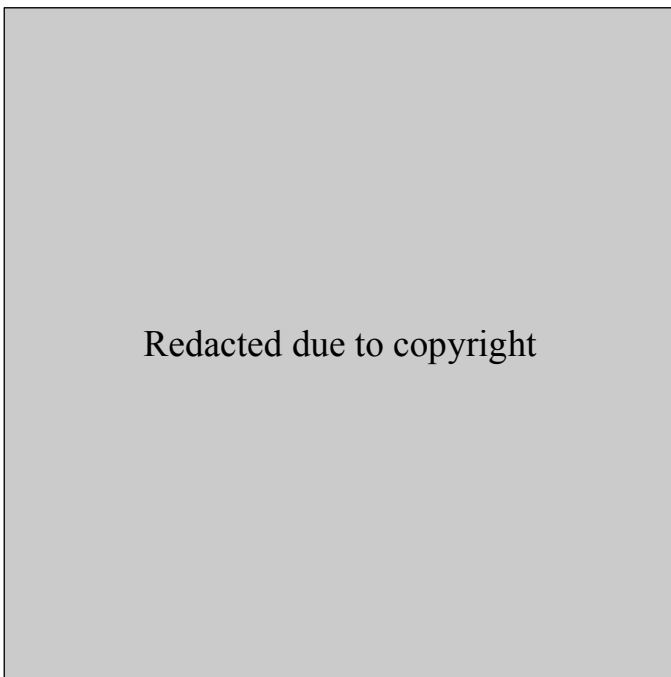


Figure 73 Francisco de Zurbarán, *Holy Face*, 1635-40. Oil on canvas, 104.5 × 89.8 cm. Madrid, GMG Foundation.



Figure 74 Francisco de Zurbarán, Holy Face, 1658. Oil on canvas, 105 × 83.5 cm. Valladolid, National Museum of Sculpture.

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