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Inspired Invention: Cristóbal de Villalpando's Paintings of the Life of Saint Francis

by

Mark A. Castro

April 2018

Submitted to the Faculty of Bryn Mawr College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of History of Art



## **Abstract**

Inspired Invention: Cristóbal de Villalpando's Paintings of the Life of Saint Francis

By

Mark A. Castro

Chair: Clara Bargellini

This project is an in-depth study of Cristóbal de Villalpando's cycle of paintings depicting the life of Saint Francis of Assisi, commissioned in 1691 for the Franciscan Convent in Antigua, Guatemala. This seminal group has not been the subject of a focused study since 1986 and the sources of its unique iconography, as well as its impact on later depictions of this saint's life in New Spain, have never been fully explored. In a larger context, examining the scenes illustrated in Villalpando's series, which were likely selected under the guidance of his Franciscan patrons, tells us something about the Franciscans conception of their mission in the Spanish colonies. I posit that these works offered the Franciscan brothers in Antigua a carefully constructed visual model of their founder's life, which they could aspire to imitate and which reinforced the importance of their order's work in the Americas.





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1 <i>The Master Painter of New Spain and the Sons of Saint Francis</i>	7
CHAPTER 2 <i>The Life and Death of Saint Francis of Assisi</i>	47
CHAPTER 3 <i>In the True Prophecy: Saint Francis and the Apocalypse</i>	127
CHAPTER 4 <i>Networks of Transmission: The Antigua Series in New Spain</i>	183
CONCLUSION	205
APPENDIX 1	211
BIBLIOGRAPHY	215
ILLUSTRATIONS	225



## Acknowledgements

In my work as a curator, I have had the opportunity to write and cowrite Acknowledgements for a number of exhibition catalogues. I have noticed that some authors choose to be succinct, simply listing the names of those they wish to acknowledge as efficiently as possible. Others, tend to go into greater detail, highlighting the specific ways that countless individuals have helped them along the way in completing their projects. I am decidedly the latter type. I've always been a rather chatty person, as my elementary school report cards all attest to. I ask my reader's indulgence as I try to thank all of the individual and institutions that have helped me to write this dissertation.

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## Introduction

“As in a painting of the Lord and the Blessed Virgin on wood, it is God and the Blessed Virgin who are honored; God and the Blessed Virgin are held in memory. The wood and the paint attribute nothing to themselves because they are merely wood and painting. In the same way, a servant of God is a painting, that is, a creature of God, in whom God is honored because of His goodness. Like wood or paint, he must not attribute anything to himself, but give all honor and glory to God.”<sup>1</sup>

The passage above is attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi in a *Mirror of Perfection, Rule, Profession, Life and True Calling of a Lesser Brother*, a series of recollections from the saint’s earliest followers, compiled from written records assembled by the Franciscan Order at the start of the fourteenth century. The discovery and publication of previously unknown accounts of the saint’s words and life at the end of the last century, led the Franciscan leadership to instruct brothers throughout Europe to scour their records for scrolls and texts written by Francis’s early companions.<sup>2</sup> The above passage is part of a response said to have been given by the saint to those who praised or honored him for his holiness and piety. He sought to remind both these admirers and his followers that his devout nature came from God. Like the painting of the Lord and Virgin he describes above, Francis the man is merely physical material; all that animates and endows him with goodness or sanctity is derived from God.

It is tempting to speculate on how Saint Francis would have regarded the multitude of painted images with his likeness produced in the centuries since his death in

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<sup>1</sup> “Mirror of Perfection, Rule, Profession, Life and True Calling of a Lesser Brother,” (c. 1318), in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, ed. Regis Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, and William J. Short, 3 vols. (New York: New City Press, 1999-2001), 3: 224. For most of the Franciscan texts used in my dissertation of I have relied on this collected edition for the care and consistency used in their transcription and translation.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 207.



1226. Among these, narrative cycles depicting key events from the saint's life were enthusiastically embraced by his followers and created in great numbers to adorn Franciscan spaces in Europe and the Americas, including the Spanish viceroyalties. The Franciscans were by no means unique in this regard; nearly all the various religious orders that traveled to the Americas created narrative series depicting the lives of their founders and notable members. The earliest of these were often done directly on the walls of cloisters and churches, but beginning in the seventeenth century they were soon replaced with large-scale canvas series. As Kelly Donahue-Wallace notes:

“Illustrating visions and miracles, the series not only demonstrated ideal Christian lives, but also divine rewards for spiritual perfection. The series, therefore, both educated and inspired the clerical and lay viewers who passed beneath them. They also demonstrated the divine favor (and wealth) enjoyed by the institutions responsible for their execution and display.”<sup>3</sup>

For the Franciscans, among the earliest of the religious orders to reach the Americas and one that played a pivotal role in the missionary endeavors supported by the Pope and the Spanish crown, these cycles undoubtedly also reminded them of the spiritual heritage they shared with the Franciscans preaching, praying, and living throughout the globe.

At the same time, this dissertation will argue that the scenes from the saint's life selected for inclusion in these series frequently spoke to local contexts, both of the Franciscan patrons who commissioned them and the artist who painted them. It does so by examining the surviving works from one of the earliest extant series on the life of Saint Francis from New Spain, painted by the Mexican master Cristóbal de Villalpando

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<sup>3</sup> Kelly Donahue-Wallace, *Art and Architecture of Viceregal Latin America* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 155. For a general discussion of these narrative series in the Spanish viceroyalties, see: Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, “Ciclos pintados de la vida de los santos fundadores; Origen, localización y usos en los conventos de España e Hispanoamérica,” in *La imagen religiosa en la Monarquía hispánica; usos y espacios*, ed. María Cruz de Carlos Varona, Pierre Civil, Felipe Pereda, and Cécile Vincent-Cassy (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2008), 3-21.

(c. 1645-1714) for the cloister of the Franciscan Convent in Antigua, Guatemala.<sup>4</sup> Among the most renowned painters of the viceregal era, Villalpando has been fortunate to receive a substantial amount of scholarly attention and has been the subject of three monographic publications.<sup>5</sup> His astounding ability to synthesize a variety of materials, both textual and visual, in the creation of his compositions, make his narrative cycles among the most noteworthy works in his oeuvre.

Villalpando's surviving paintings for the Franciscan Convent in Antigua Guatemala, which I will refer to as the Antigua Series throughout my dissertation, are among his most complex yet understudied works. Their first substantial examination was by Francisco de la Maza in his 1964 monograph on the painter, in which he discusses ten of the canvases in detail.<sup>6</sup> Two important texts were published by Luis Luján Muñoz some twenty years later.<sup>7</sup> These incorporated much of de la Maza's original arguments and interpretations, but included four additional paintings then identified in Guatemala and, perhaps most significantly, the commission's contract, located in the Archivo de Notarías (Notary Archive) in Mexico City. The contract, discussed in detail in Chapter 1, obliged the painter to create thirty-three large and sixteen small canvases, depicting

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<sup>4</sup> In Spanish 'convent' and 'monastery' may apply to either male or female institutions. Since this is not the case in English, I have chosen to use the word convent to apply to both male and female institutions, specifying the gender of its inhabitants in the few cases that I discuss female religious orders. I have found that in Mexico the term 'convento' is also more frequently used than 'monasterio', allowing the translation of names of religious institutions to remain more in-line with one another.

<sup>5</sup> The first was: Francisco de la Maza, *El pintor Cristóbal de Villalpando* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1964). Scholarship was significantly expanded with the publication of a new catalogue raisonné: Juana Gutiérrez Haces, Pedro Ángeles, Clara Bargellini, and Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, *Cristóbal de Villalpando* (Mexico City: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1997). An English translation of biographical essays in the 1997 catalogue raisonné was recently published, along with other texts, in: Cándida Fernández de Calderón, ed. *Cristóbal de Villalpando: Mexican Painter of the Baroque* (Mexico City: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> De la Maza 1964, 143-51.

<sup>7</sup> Luis Luján Muñoz, *La Pintura De Cristóbal De Villalpando En Guatemala* (Guatemala, C.A: Editorial Académica Centroamericana, 1983); Luis Luján Muñoz, "Nueva Información Sobre la Pintura de Cristóbal de Villalpando en Guatemala," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, no. 57 (1986): 113-40.

scenes from the life of Saint Francis. When Luján first published the transcript of the contract, there were fourteen extant paintings identified from the series.

Although all of these paintings were included in the artist's 1997 catalogue raisonné, with an entry by Pedro Ángeles, much of the information presented recounts the material presented in de la Maza and Luján Muñoz's texts.<sup>8</sup> Since the publication of the raisonné, three additional paintings from the series have been located in collections in the United States, bringing the total number of surviving paintings to seventeen. These three works were first published in an article by Clara Bargellini in 2011, examining a number of new paintings by Villalpando that have been identified since the publication of his raisonné.<sup>9</sup>

The present study is a fresh opportunity to reconsider the series in its entirety, as well as previous interpretations of some of the individual works. It also allows the series to be contextualized within the wealth of new scholarship around Villalpando that has been produced in the last twenty years. Indeed, the study of New Spanish painting has flourished in that time, providing a great deal of new information previously unavailable to researchers. The Antigua Series, as it is now constituted, has never been studied in its entirety, and never with a focus on understanding its complex iconographies. A number of scenes included in the series by Villalpando have not been found to appear in any other series on the saint's life, certainly in the Spanish viceroyalties, but possibly even in Europe. In some cases, when other versions of Villalpando's subjects do exist in other cycles on the life of Saint Francis produced in New Spain, they speak to potential

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<sup>8</sup> Gutiérrez Haces, et al. 1997, 258-63; 385-90. Cat. Nos. 75.1-14.

<sup>9</sup> Clara Bargellini, "Nuevos hallazgos y las narraciones de Cristóbal de Villalpando," in *Amans Artis, Amans Veritatis: Coloquio Internacional de Arte e Historia en Memoria de Juana Gutiérrez Haces*, ed. Gustavo Curiel. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2011), 309-24.

connections between the master painter and subsequent generations of artists in the region. All of this together makes the Antigua series an important source for deepening our understanding of a central artist, as well as the patronage practices of the Franciscan in the Americas.

The first chapter of my dissertation is divided into three sections that offer important contextual information for understanding the Antigua Series. The first section recounts Villalpando's known biography, examining key moments in his career and emphasizing his connections with other artists and his previous commissions for the Franciscans. The second section provides a brief history of the city of Antigua and the role the Franciscans played in its development and that of the region. It also discusses the larger mission of the Order in the Spanish viceroyalties. The final section will build on the previous two to recount what is known of the circumstances surrounding the Antigua Series' commission, including an analysis of the surviving contract, as well as a history of the series following its initial installation in Antigua.

Chapters 2 and 3 contain in-depth analyses of the seventeen surviving paintings from the Antigua Series. Chapter 2 looks at fourteen of these works that depict events from the saint's life, as well as two canvases depicting related miracles. The visual elements of each work are carefully examined and I attempt to identify the textual and visual sources that Villalpando may have drawn on for the creation of his compositions. In Chapter 3, I examine the three remaining canvases, which all show Saint Francis in the context of scenes or themes drawn from the Book of Revelation and other apocalyptic literature. In addition to an analysis of their imagery and source material, this chapter

investigates the importance of the Apocalypse to the Franciscans in the Americas and its influence on these new adaptations to the Saint's legends.

In Chapter 4, I give some further context to the Antigua Series within the painting traditions of New Spain by examining four subsequent cycles of the life of Saint Francis that demonstrate the impact of Villalpando's compositions for the Antigua Series. Each of these series merits further in-depth study and together they represent a fraction of the extant material, most of which is also largely unresearched at this time. Nevertheless, by bringing these later series into dialogue with the Antigua Series, this chapter suggests the existence of various networks that allowed for the dissemination of Villalpando's compositions by other artists and his Franciscan patrons. Closely related, in my brief Conclusion, I will summarize my thoughts on the Antigua Series and its larger significance for how scholars consider Villalpando's paintings, as well as his relationship with patrons. It discusses what, in turn, the subjects included in the series may say about the Franciscans own conception of their founder and their order's mission in the Spanish viceroyalties.

## Chapter 1

### *The Master Painter of New Spain and the Sons of Saint Francis*

Of the many noteworthy painters throughout the history of New Spain, few have received the scholarly attention of Cristóbal de Villalpando. He has been the subject of three dedicated monographs, as well numerous articles and exhibitions, while many of his contemporaries still await much needed study. This focus on Villalpando is completely justified, in my opinion, not only for his considerable skill as a painter, but as Jonathan Brown recently stated, for the strength of his compositions.<sup>10</sup> A prolific painter, Villalpando left behind many canvases ranging from small to monumental that require careful reading - their imagery often layered and complex. Some of these works, such as his paintings for the sacristy in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Mexico City or his painting of the *Transfiguration* in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Puebla, have been extensively researched. Yet many important works remain to be studied and, as stated in the Introduction, the present study aims to increase and revise scholarly understanding of the compositions in the artist's cycle depicting the life of Saint Francis.

The following chapter offers the necessary contextual information for considering the Antigua Series, beginning with a section devoted to the artist's biography. The most detailed account of the artist's life and career is the series of four essays included in the artist's 1997 *raisonné*, although I will also draw on subsequent texts when relevant.<sup>11</sup> My account of the artist does not aim, however, to repeat this material in detail, but rather to

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<sup>10</sup> Jonathan Brown, "From Spanish to New Spanish Painting, 1550-1700," in *Painting in Latin America, 1550-1820*, ed. Luisa E. Elena Alcalá and Jonathan Brown. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 103-147. 138.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapters 1 – 4 in Gutiérrez Haces, et al. 1997. An English translation of these was recently published in Fernández de Calderón 2017.

highlight aspects of the artist's life and career that may have relevance to Villalpando's receipt of the commission for the Antigua Series. Although there remains a paucity of documentary information about the painter, certainly when compared to many of his contemporaries in Europe, what is known places him within a very small group of artists capable of executing such a large undertaking. In addition, his relationships with other painters in New Spain, his previous work for the Franciscans, and the prominence of New Spanish painting in the churches of Guatemala, may all have contributed to making him the ideal candidate for this assignment.

The second section provides a brief history of the Spanish conquest in Guatemala, as well as its colonization and establishment within the larger viceroyalty of New Spain. Within this broader history, I will focus on the role of the Franciscans in the early settlement of the region, building on their already strong presence in New Spain. For the Franciscans, the Americas represented an opportunity to return to the work of their founder Saint Francis, reviving his orders for them to disperse throughout the world and preach the word of God, converting all to the true faith. They were willing, in some cases even desirous, to die in the service of this cause and in emulation of their founder and the early Franciscans. As will be established in this section, and explored further in Chapter 3, their actions as missionaries and preachers had ramifications beyond the immediate world. For the Franciscans, it was also part of a larger role many believed their order was meant to play in the Apocalypse, as first described in the Book of Revelation. As the authority of the secular clergy grew in the Spanish viceroyalties, the Franciscans found both these spiritual and Apocalyptic missions imperiled.

The final section of this chapter examines the circumstances surrounding the commission of the Antigua Series, including an analysis of its contract, preserved today in the Archivo de Notarías in Mexico City. This document was once accompanied by additional materials that were meant to aid Villalpando in his construction of the series. Although these are now lost, a great deal of information can be gleaned from the contract's terms. Previous scholarship has also suggested that Villalpando was likely selected for this commission due to his established fame and reputation, and perhaps the size of his workshop, necessary for the undertaking of a commission of this scale. Without disagreeing with these assertions, I suggest further aspects of Villalpando's career that may have made him a desirable candidate for the project. Finally, I will give a brief history of the series since their completion, including the loss of most of the paintings, as well as an explanation of their current whereabouts.

### **Painted by His Hand: Master Cristóbal de Villalpando**

The exact date of Cristóbal de Villalpando's birth is unknown and there is little information regarding his early life. The first documentary source for the painter is the proclamation of his impending marriage in May 1669, listed among the marriage banns for citizens of Spanish descent in the Sanctuary of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City.<sup>12</sup> In addition to indicating his intent to marry, it states that Villalpando was born and lives in the capital, the legitimate son of Juan de Villalpando and Ana de los Reyes. It was from this document that Manuel G. Revilla first calculated the artist's birthday to around 1649, working from the assumption that he must have been at least twenty years

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<sup>12</sup> Archivo del Sagrario Metropolitano. *Libro I amonestaciones de españoles*. 1666-1669. F. 59v.



of age when he announced his marriage.<sup>13</sup> The artist's bride, María de Mendoza, was also from Mexico City, the daughter of Margarita Corcuera and Diego de Mendoza, who may have been a painter.<sup>14</sup> A second document from June 2, 1669 records their marriage in the Sanctuary of the Metropolitan Cathedral.<sup>15</sup>

Baptismal records for Villalpando and María de Mendoza's children offer some clues into the artist's training and his relationships to the flourishing community of painters in New Spain.<sup>16</sup> Their second child, a son Félix, was baptized on June 26, 1672, with the painter Pedro Ramírez de Contreras (1638-1679) and his wife serving as godparents. The painter Baltasar Echave Rioja (1632-1682) and his wife acted as godparents for the painter's daughter María Manuela, baptized on January 10, 1677, and his son Carlos Solano, in August of 1680. A decade later, the painter Nicolás Rodríguez Juárez (1667-1734) became the godfather of another son Cristóbal Francisco.<sup>17</sup> Although today assuming the role of godfather may seem relatively insignificant, among Catholics in the seventeenth century it was a sacred act, one which established a near familial bond. Villalpando would only have entrusted this solemn responsibility to men with whom he had a substantial relationship. Two of these artists, Pedro Ramírez de Contreras and

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<sup>13</sup> Manuel Revilla, *El arte en México durante la época Antigua y el gobierno virreinal*, (Mexico City: Oficina Tipográfica de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1893), 83.

<sup>14</sup> Francisco Pérez de Salazar first connected this Diego de Mendoza with a painter documented in Puebla in 1685. See Francisco Pérez de Salazar, *Historia de la pintura en Puebla*, (Mexico City: Imprenta Universitaria, 1963), 76. Although this assertion is noted in Villalpando's catalogue raisonné, the authors rightly point out that given the common nature of the name Diego de Mendoza, it is difficult to conclusively connect Villalpando's father-in-law to the painter indicated by Pérez de Salazar. See Gutiérrez Haces, et al. 1997, 31.

<sup>15</sup> Archivo del Sagrario Metropolitano. *Libro 9 de matrimonios de españoles. 1667-1672*. F. 48. Oddly, a note in the margin of this document details that the official marriage blessing took place some ten years after the wedding, on February 14, 1679, in the church of the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción, now known as the Hospital de Jesús.

<sup>16</sup> For a complete analysis of the located documents related to Villalpando's family see Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, "En entorno familiar de Cristóbal de Villalpando," in *Amans Artis, Amans Veritatis: Coloquio Internacional de Arte e Historia en Memoria de Juana Gutiérrez Haces*, ed. Gustavo Curiel. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2011), 325-45.

<sup>17</sup> Juana Gutiérrez Haces, "The Painter Cristóbal de Villalpando: His Life and Legacy." in *Exploring New World Imagery*, ed. Donna Pierce (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 2005), 106-30. 108.

Baltasar de Echave Rioja, appear to have been particularly central to Villalpando's formation in general and perhaps to the making of the Antigua Series specifically.

Ramírez came from a large family of artists; his father, also named Pedro Ramírez, was a sculptor and *ensamblador*, a carpenter that specialized in the making of altarpieces and other ornate wooden structures. The younger Ramírez's career appears to have been successful, with commissions for prominent ecclesiastical institutions such as the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City. Nevertheless, relatively few works have been connected to him, although those that have been identified clearly demonstrate his skill and sophistication. *The Liberation of Saint Peter* (**Fig. 1.1**), with its delicate handling of the light illuminating the saint's awed visage, place Ramírez among the best chiaroscuro painters in New Spain.<sup>18</sup> The painting was once believed to be by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664) until a cleaning of the canvas revealed the artist's signature. Yet as Rogelio Ruiz Gomar has asserted, Ramírez's painting shares only passing similarities with the work of the Spanish master. Instead he stands out for his ability to juxtapose elements – the static seated Saint Peter and the dynamically moving angel, for example – while still maintaining a sense of pictorial balance.<sup>19</sup>

Only six years younger than Ramírez, Echave Rioja also came from a family of artists, with both his father and grandfather among the most well-known painters in New Spain.<sup>20</sup> In fact, Ramírez and Echave Rioja share many similarities; Echave also had a

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<sup>18</sup> Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, "Nuevas noticias sobre los Ramírez, artistas novohispanos del siglo XVII," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, no. 77 (2000). 67-121. 91. No monographic study of the painter has yet been published and Gomar's 2000 essay is the most extensive and up to date. See also Efraín Castro Morales, "Los Ramírez, una familia de artistas novohispanos del siglo XVII," *Boletín de Monumentos Históricos*, no. 8 (1982): 5-36.

<sup>19</sup> Ruiz Gomar 2000, 99.

<sup>20</sup> Baltasar de Echave Rioja was the son of the painter Baltasar de Echave Ibía (c. 1585/c. 1604-1644) who in turn was the son of Baltasar de Echave Orio (1548-1623), a Basque painter who emigrated to New Spain. Of the three great Echave painters, only Echave Orio has been the subject of a monograph. See José

flourishing career as a painter of religious images to decorate walls and altarpieces in churches throughout New Spain. Works such as *The Burial of Christ* (**Fig. 1.2**) display a mastery of chiaroscuro akin to Ramírez, but also a marked attention to conveying the emotional state of the figures depicted, enhancing the narrative appeal of his canvases. The pale and horrified face of the Virgin, who appears near emotional collapse, heightens the viewer's sense of her pain. This dramatic tone is present in many of Echave Rioja's paintings, such as his wrenching depiction of *The Martyrdom of Saint Peter Arbués* (**Fig. 1.3**), where the blood of the saint's wound is sharply contrasted against the pristine white of his priestly garments. Echave's attention to these vivid elements foreshadows Villalpando's own theatrical style of narrative painting.

Both Ramírez and Echave Rioja have also been identified as possible students of the Spanish painter Sebastian López Arteaga (1610-1652) who arrived in Mexico City in 1640. More recently however, scholars have suggested that they may have trained in the workshop of José Juárez (1617-1671), himself a member of another dynasty of painters in New Spain.<sup>21</sup> Certainly there are similarities in the practices of both artists that may speak to related experiences during their formative training, such as their favoring of

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Guadalupe Victoria, *Un pintor en su tiempo Baltasar de Echave Orio*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1994). For summary biographies and key works of all three artists see Lupina Lara Elizondo, ed., *Visión de México y sus Artistas: Herencia plástica del México colonial. Renovaciones a tres siglos de distancia*, (Mexico City: Quálitas Compañía de Seguros, 2004), 60-81. A recent article by Rogelio Ruiz Gomar raises new questions about the three Echave painters, particularly their relationship to a fourth artist, Manuel de Echave. See Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, "Nuevo enfoque y nuevas noticias en torno a "los Echave"," in *De arquitectura, pintura y otras artes*, ed. Cecilia Gutiérrez Arriola and María del Consuelo Maquívar. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2004), 183-207.

<sup>21</sup> See Chapter 1 in Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997 for a summary of the arguments regarding Ramírez and Echave Rioja's connection to López de Arteaga and José Juárez. Juárez has been the subject of a monograph, see Museo Nacional de Arte, *José Juárez: recursos y discursos del arte de pintar*, (Mexico City: Museo Nacional de Arte, 2002); as has his father Luis Juárez, see Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, *El pintor Luis Juárez: su vida y su obra*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1987). For a summary overview of the careers of the brothers Nicolás and Juan Rodríguez Juárez, see Lara Elizondo 2004, 148-167.

compositions drawn from Flemish prints based on the works of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), something that Villalpando would take up with even greater sophistication. Regardless of where they conducted their training however, Ramírez and Echave Rioja were clearly well known to each other. The same familial bond that tied them to Villalpando also joined them to each other, with Ramírez acting as godfather to Echave Rioja's daughter María on February 12, 1662.<sup>22</sup>

Ramírez and Echave were a generation older than Villalpando and scholars have speculated that he may have trained in at least one of their workshops, a notion that is supported by the important familial relationships he chose to establish with them.<sup>23</sup> Both painters were also active in Mexico City and Puebla; the two cities where Villalpando would complete many of his most significant works. Although the relationships between the three painters must always be treated with a modicum of doubt, unless further documentary evidence comes to light, it is possible to imagine them as a small “family” of painters within the larger network of artists working in New Spain. Even as his training became complete, Villalpando would have maintained a relationship with the two elder painters and through them would have made important professional contacts, allowing him to become a candidate for commissions in the two most important cities in New Spain, as well as further afield.

An example of the artist benefiting from his association with one of his teachers may be Villalpando's earliest dated work, the main altarpiece for the church in the Franciscan convent of Saint Martin of Tours (**Fig. 1.4**) in Huaquechula, roughly thirty-

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<sup>22</sup> Archivo del Sagrario Metropolitano. *Libro 20 de bautismos de españoles, 1660-1663*. F. 132v.

<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 1 in Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 39-44; Gutiérrez Haces 2005, 108.

five miles southwest from Puebla.<sup>24</sup> Villalpando's contribution to the altarpiece consists of sixteen paintings (**Fig. 1.5**) divided into two groups; a series of eight works depicting scenes from the life of the Virgin and Christ running vertically along the outer sides and top of the altarpiece, and a series of individual saints stacked vertically on either side of the central niches.<sup>25</sup> The only signed work in the group, the *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the lower-right corner, bears the signature "Cristóbal de Villalpando ft. año de 1675".<sup>26</sup> Villalpando was then still a relatively young man of around twenty-five and it is surprising that he would have received such a large commission. That he did, may in part be explained by the proximity of Baltasar de Echave Rioja, who was then completing several works in Puebla's cathedral. In the first chapter of Villalpando's *raisonné* the authors speculate that perhaps the project was first offered to Echave Rioja, who passed it on to his most promising apprentice given that he was already occupied with more important projects.<sup>27</sup> Even if the connection was not so direct, it is not implausible that Villalpando would have become known to the Franciscans at Huaquechula through earlier work in Puebla as part of Echave Rioja's workshop and that they might have then sought him out for this commission, or even that the elder artist might have recommended him for the task.

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<sup>24</sup> For a complete overview of the work see Clara Bargellini's entry on the work in Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 132-5, cat. 1.

<sup>25</sup> A seventeenth painting depicting *The Marriage of the Virgin*, is believed to be by another artist. It was likely taken from a later series on the life of the Virgin and enlarged to fit the space in the altarpiece. Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 132. This appears to have been further confirmed by an examination of the painting during a treatment of the altarpiece in 2012, conducted by conservators from Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia [INAH]. See Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, "INAH restaura retablo con pinturas de Villalpando," *Boletines*, (November 8, 2012). unpaginated.

<sup>26</sup> The altarpiece structure may date to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with Villalpando's 17<sup>th</sup> century canvases used to replace its original paintings, which were likely on panel. In 1886, Villalpando's paintings were restored by Antonio de Padua García, leaving them heavily overpainted. Despite a modern treatment in 2012, much of Padua García's restoration was left in place due to losses in the original paint layer. See INAH 2012.

<sup>27</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 43-4.

Even at this early moment in his career, Villalpando demonstrates a familiarity with the compositions of European painters, particularly those of Rubens that he likely learned from Ramírez and Echave Rioja. Several of the paintings in the Huaquechula altarpiece were adapted from prints of Rubens works, notably the painting of *The Annunciation* (**Fig. 1.6**), made after Rubens painting of the same subject (**Fig. 1.7**) in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Villalpando knew of the work through an engraving of the painting (**Fig. 1.8**) by Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert (c. 1586-1659) and although a comparison of the print and Villalpando's painting shows that he retained the key elements and poses, the artist also made several adjustments. In the upper portion of the canvas Villalpando increased the number of angels, leaving some tossing flowers on the scene below, as in the painting and print, but also adding a group playing music along the right. He also included an image of God the Father, who gestures downward at the Virgin Mary, as if to guide the Holy Spirit to her.

Villalpando's career appears to have developed rapidly in the years following the commission in Huaquechula, if judged by the proliferation of paintings he produced over the next decade. All the paintings in this period depict religious subjects - something which, with only a handful of exceptions, would not change throughout his career.<sup>28</sup> His patrons came from both the secular clergy as well as the various active religious orders, the Franciscans prominent among them. Villalpando continued to draw, like most painters in New Spain, on imagery from European prints for his compositions, with engravings after works by Rubens continuing to play a significant role. The painter's

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<sup>28</sup> Despite a flourishing tradition of portraiture in New Spain, only two portraits by the painter have been identified. See Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, cats. 74 & 99. His only other "secular" painting is the monumental *View of the Plaza Mayor* (c. 1695), depicting the city's main square. See Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, cat. 82.

interests, however, were not limited solely to the Flemish master. Villalpando's painting of *Our Lady of Sorrows* (1680) for example, was based on another engraving by Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert, based on a work by Abraham Bloemaert. Nor were the artist's interests limited only to prints depicting works by Northern European artists. His startling depiction of *The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* (c. 1680) (**Fig. 1.9**) now in the Hermitage of Saint Lawrence in Tlalpujahua, was based on a print by Cornelis Cort (1533-1578) (**Fig. 1.10**) after two paintings of the same scene by Titian (1490-1576), now in the Jesuit Church in Venice and the Escorial (**Fig. 1.11**) in Madrid.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the multitude of prints available for the artist to study, there were numerous paintings available for his review, including the works of Ramírez, Echave Rioja, and other New Spanish artists. Although Villalpando's *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* shares a clear relationship with the Cort print, it is also worth noting a painting of the same subject from some thirty years earlier, attributed to José Juárez, (**Fig. 1.12**) now in the Museo Nacional de Arte in Mexico City. In accepting a commission to paint his own version of the events surrounding the saint's death, it seems unlikely that an artist as knowledgeable and connected as Villalpando would have been unaware of such a monumental work devoted to the same subject.

Paintings by European artists, from substantial works by important artists to smaller genre paintings by unknown painters, were also available in New Spain. A flourishing market existed for these works throughout the Spanish viceroalties, both for ecclesiastical settings and private homes. Although works came from throughout Europe,

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<sup>29</sup> On the use of Flemish and Italian prints in Spanish colonial painting see: Clara Bargellini, "The Spread of Models: Flemish and Italian Prints and Paintings in America," in *Painting of the Kingdoms. Shared Identities: Territories of the Spanish Monarchy, 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, coord. Juana Gutiérrez Haces. (Mexico City: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 2009), 964-1007.

many Spanish painters, including Juan de Valdés Leal (1622-1690) and Francisco de Zurbarán, accepted commissions from the Americas as well as sent large numbers of canvases for sale on the viceregal market. The influence of one such European work is visible in Villalpando's painting of *The Immaculate Conception* (c. 1680-89), (**Fig. 1.13**) now in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Puebla and based directly on a lost work (**Fig. 1.14**) by the Spanish painter Francisco Rizi (1614-1685). Dated to 1652, it is unclear how Rizi's painting came to New Spain, but it was recorded as being in Puebla.<sup>30</sup> Although still relatively unknown in the canon of European art, Rizi's composition appears to have been popular among the painters in New Spain. It exists in several versions in the Americas by various artists, including one by Pedro Ramírez (**Fig. 1.15**), who included it in a series of paintings on the life of the Virgin now in the Cathedral in Guatemala City.<sup>31</sup>

Villalpando's familiarity with the works of his colleagues in New Spain, as well as European masters, provided the artist with the elements that he could combine to create ever more sophisticated compositions, often representing complex religious subjects and themes. In a recent passage regarding the artist, Jonathan Brown writes:

“Like New Spanish painters before him, Villalpando carried past masters of the art in his head. This “spectrum of motifs,” as I have named it, was there to be used as needed. The learned canons who devised the iconography identified the visual quotation and appreciated the artist's skill in adapting them to new circumstances.”<sup>32</sup>

This ability to synthesize the messages of his educated patrons with his “spectrum of motifs” to create new works would be at the forefront of several large-scale projects that

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<sup>30</sup> The only surviving photograph of the work was published by Manuel Toussaint. See Manuel Toussaint, *Pintura Colonial en México*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1990), fig. 207.

<sup>31</sup> See Ruiz Gomar 2000, 102-4.

<sup>32</sup> Brown 2014, 143.



Villalpando would complete in the 1680s that would establish him as the leading painter of New Spain. The first was his monumental depiction of *Moses and the Brazen Serpent and the Transfiguration of Jesus* (c. 1683) (**Fig. 1.16**) for the Metropolitan Cathedral in Puebla, likely devised with Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, who may have been the work's patron. A noted theologian and author of the *Antilogiae Sacrae Scripturae*, a three-volume commentary on the Old Testament, he may have utilized his knowledge to assist Villalpando in constructing the painting's unique subject matter. It also appears to have been designed with some attention to his particular needs. It was in the Chapel of Our Lord of the Column, where the painting still stands, that Bishop Fernández would frequently hear confessions. The tormented Israelites in the lower portion of the canvas, punished for speaking against God and Moses, would no doubt have provided good motivation for the parishioners seeking redemption for their sins.<sup>33</sup>

Villalpando soon returned to the capital to embark on his most ambitious works to date, a group of mural-scale canvases, decorating the walls of the Sacristy (**Fig. 1.17**) in the Metropolitan Cathedral. Painted from 1684 to 1688, their collective effect is one of unparalleled grandeur, their scale seeming to underscore the power of the Church, as well as the Cathedral itself, the highest seat of ecclesiastical authority in New Spain. The first two completed, *The Church Militant and Triumphant* (1685) and *The Triumph of the Eucharist* (1686) (**Fig. 1.18**) are both scenes that reinforce the legitimacy of the Church and its rituals. In the *Triumph of the Eucharist*, a figure wearing a papal tiara, possibly Saint Peter himself, is shown enthroned beneath a cloth of honor with a personification of

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<sup>33</sup> For an in-depth examination of the painting's commission and models, see Ronda Kasl, "Cristóbal de Villalpando: Invention and Transfiguration," in *Cristóbal de Villalpando: Mexican Painter of the Baroque*, ed. Cándida Fernández de Calderón. (Mexico City: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 2017), 24-37. See also, Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, cat. 42.

Holy Spirit seated to his right. They sit atop an enormous triumphal cart that grinds unbelievers beneath its golden wheels, while a woman dressed in white and holding aloft the Eucharist sits at its front. Villalpando drew on several prints in his creation of the composition, most notably Bolswert's *The Triumph of the Church through the Eucharist*, (**Fig. 1.19**) done after one of Rubens tapestries for the Convent of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid.<sup>34</sup> Despite his appropriation of multiple sources, the resulting work is seamlessly integrated, presenting an image of the church's supremacy on an epic scale.

Villalpando would complete two more paintings for the Sacristy, *The Woman of the Apocalypse* (c. 1685-6) and *The Triumph of the Archangel Michael* (c. 1686-88) before, in a move that remains puzzling, he left the capital for Puebla. Elena Estrada de Gerlero has suggested that the vaults for the two final paintings, eventually completed by Villalpando's contemporary Juan Correa (c. 1646-1716), needed repairs that caused a delay in the project.<sup>35</sup> Clara Bargellini has argued that, given the lack of a unifying structure for the themes of the Sacristy canvases, Villalpando was not leaving the project incomplete, rather, he may have instead been absorbed in other projects and chose to move on.<sup>36</sup> Jonathan Brown recently took up a version of this line of reasoning, suggesting that Villalpando was drawn to Puebla by the opportunity to undertake an even greater project, the decoration of the cupola in that city's cathedral.<sup>37</sup> These arguments all have merit and, in my opinion, may have all played some role in the artist's decision.

What is certain, however, is that his work on the cupola in Puebla, depicting *The Glorification of the Virgin* (**Fig. 1.20**), cemented Villalpando's name among the leading

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<sup>34</sup> Villalpando produced another painting after this print in the early 1680s, now in the Museo Regional in Guadalajara. See Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, cat. 30.

<sup>35</sup> Elena Estrada de Gerlero, "Sacristía," *Catedral de México. Patrimonio artístico y cultural*, (Mexico City: SEDUE-Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1986), 376-429. 380-1.

<sup>36</sup> Clara Bargellini, "Sacristía de la Catedral de México," in Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 202-11. 211.

<sup>37</sup> Brown 2014, 143.

painters of New Spain. Although common in Europe, the dome in Puebla is one of the few examples of this type of architectural decoration in the Spanish viceroyalties. Its composition has long been thought to be unique, although it has recently been suggested that it may be based directly on an oil sketch by Francisco Rizi.<sup>38</sup>

The monumental works described above represent an enormous undertaking for an artist whose career was likely a little over a decade old. We know almost nothing of the artist's workshop, but the scale of these works suggests that at this point it must have been substantial in size, made up of several apprentices and assistants. Although only speculative, it has been suggested that Villalpando may have inherited some of the workshop of Echave Rioja, who died in 1682.<sup>39</sup> This certainly seems a logical possibility given the close ties between the two artists. It has been noted that Villalpando would have needed a great deal of support to maintain his production of smaller scale works even as he focused on the various Cathedral commissions.<sup>40</sup>

As his reputation grew, Villalpando was also awarded a key role in the oversight and development of his profession in the viceroyalty. In 1686 the departing viceroy of New Spain, Tomás de la Cerda, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquis of la Laguna and Count of Paredes, appointed Villalpando *veedor* (inspector) of the guild of painters and gilders, a position that he would retain for nearly the rest of his life.<sup>41</sup> It was a significant moment, as the painters guild in Mexico City had only just been reorganized in 1681-3 following nearly a century of dormancy, and its ordinances were revised the year of Villalpando's

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<sup>38</sup> In a recent article in *The Art Bulletin*, Aaron M. Hyman cites a forthcoming article on the subject by Eduardo Lamas-Delgado. See: Aaron M. Hyman, "Inventing Painting: Cristóbal de Villalpando, Juan Correa, and New Spain's Transatlantic Canon," *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 99, no. 2 (June 2017). 102-35. 128, fn. 108.

<sup>39</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 74.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

appointment.<sup>42</sup> As a *veedor* he wielded substantial influence within the guild, most notably carrying out the required examinations of painters seeking to hold the title of master, a requirement for those wishing to take on apprentices and operate within the city.<sup>43</sup> Inspectors were also responsible for monitoring the operation and production of the workshops in the city, imposing penalties for works that did not meet guild standards. In 1690 Villalpando was elected by his peers to the position of *alcalde*, or head official, further reinforcing his authority within the organization.<sup>44</sup>

It was in 1691, toward the end of the most critical period in his career that Villalpando agreed to produce a series of paintings on the life of Saint Francis of Assisi for the Franciscan Convent in the city of Santiago de los Caballeros, known today as Antigua, in Guatemala. Before moving on to the history of that city and this commission, it is worthwhile to press on one final aspect of Villalpando's biography that has recently been the subject of increased scholarly attention, namely the artist's signature.<sup>45</sup> Despite guild regulations requiring artists to sign their paintings, a substantial number of Villalpando's paintings are unsigned. Most of the signed works are marked "Villalpando" or more commonly "Villalpando fact," short for the Latin *faciebat*, meaning roughly "Villalpando made" or "constructed" this painting. Beginning with *The Transfiguration*

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<sup>42</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the guild ordinances and the roles of painters within the guild, see: Chapter 3, "La Formación del pintor y el concepto de pintura en la Nueva España," in Paula Mues, *La Libertad del pincel: Los discursos sobre la nobleza de la pintura en Nueva España*, (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 2008), 171-238. See also: Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, "El gremio y la confradía de pintores en la Nueva España," in *Juan Correa: Su vida y su obra*, ed. Elisa Vargaslugo. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1991), 3:204-22; and Susan Dean-Smith, "This Noble and Illustrious Art': Painters and the Politics of Guild Reform in Early Modern Mexico City, 1674-1768," in *Mexican Soundings: Essays in Honor of David A. Brading*, ed. Susan Deans-Smith and Eric van Young. (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, 2007), 67-98.

<sup>43</sup> It is worth mentioning that it does not appear Villalpando was ever the subject of such an examination, having been a political appointee.

<sup>44</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 89.

<sup>45</sup> For an examination of artist signature practices in New Spain see: Clara Bargellini, "Consideraciones acerca de las firmas de los pintores novohispanos," in *El proceso creativo*, ed. Alberto Dallal. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2006), 203-22.

in Puebla's cathedral however, Villalpando signed a handful of works, including *The Triumph of the Archangel Michael* and *The Glorification of the Virgin*, with the word *inventor* following his name. In the case of *The Triumph of the Archangel* he wrote "XTOVAL D VILLALPANDO YNVENTOR POR SU MANO PINTO" or "Cristóbal de Villalpando inventor, painted by his hand."<sup>46</sup>

This provocative addition to the artist's otherwise formulaic signature was explored by Clara Bargellini in an essay on the use of the term "inventor" in the signatures of New Spanish painters.<sup>47</sup> The matter was taken up again by Ronda Kasl in a recent essay on *The Transfiguration* and examined more thoroughly in a recent article by Aaron M. Hyman.<sup>48</sup> I would argue that whether this addition to the artist's signature expresses Villalpando's awareness of his accomplishment as a painter, as asserted by Bargellini and Kasl, or is a more open-ended representation of the artist's complex relationship with European art, as is astutely posited by Hyman, requires further study – perhaps pulling in the few other examples of this distinct signature in the artist's oeuvre. Nevertheless, their scholarship, particularly Hyman's, establishes that the distinction between the direct copying of European models and New Spanish artist's appropriation, adaptation, and reconfiguration of those materials, continues to dissolve. Furthermore, the notion that the use of painted and engraved sources was particular to the painters of the Spanish viceroyalties has proven inaccurate – European painters frequently drew on prints and each other's works for inspiration. As seen in the subsequent analysis and

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<sup>46</sup> Beside the three paintings noted above, I have noted at least five other works with some version of this signature.

<sup>47</sup> Clara Bargellini, "El artista "inventor" novohispano," in *Nombrar y explicar: La terminología en el estudio del arte Ibérico y Latinoamericano*, ed. Patricia Díaz Cayeros, Montserrat Galí Boadella, and Peter Krieger. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2012), 121-38.

<sup>48</sup> Kasl 2017. Hyman 2017.

discussion of Villalpando's Antigua Series, even while adhering to the constraints set by patrons, there was considerable space for artists to generate compositions that exist both simultaneously tied to and apart from antecedent visual material.

### **Saint James's City and Saint Francis's Sons in the Kingdom of Guatemala**

The city of Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala, known today as *La Antigua Guatemala*, or simply Antigua, is the third capital city to be named after Saint James the Greater in present day Guatemala (**Fig. 1.21**). The first Santiago was established in 1524 near Iximché, the capital of the Cakchiquel, a Mayan people who had sent emissaries to Mexico City, seeking allies in their war with their more powerful neighbors, the Quiché. Determined to secure the region, Hernán Cortés (1485-1547) dispatched an expeditionary force under one his most experienced commanders, the Spanish conquistador Pedro de Alvarado (c.1485-1541), who was accompanied by several members of his family. Included among his personnel were two chaplains, the Franciscan friars Juan Godínez and Juan Díaz.<sup>49</sup> After the subjugation of the Quiché and the establishment of Santiago at Iximché, they would say the first masses within the Guatemalan territory and establish the Franciscans as the first religious order in the region.<sup>50</sup>

Santiago at Iximché never developed significantly beyond a military encampment, in large part due to wars and instability that were continuously ravaging the region. With another conflict looming, this time with the Quichés and the Cakchiqueles allied against the Spanish, Pedro de Alvarado's brother Jorge, acting as interim governor while his

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<sup>49</sup> Oakah L. Jones, Jr., *Guatemala in the Spanish Colonial Period*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 18-21.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

brother was in Spain, decided to move the capital.<sup>51</sup> He selected a site in the valley of Panchoy that Pedro de Alvarado had visited in 1524, at the base of a mountain known by the Spanish as the Volcán de Agua, or Water Volcano. Near the Cakchiquel site of Almolonga, the new capital was established in 1527, also with the name Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala.<sup>52</sup> From there Alvarado's brothers would continue their conquest of the region's various indigenous peoples, finally ending any resistance to their rule by 1530.

The new settlement grew and when Pedro de Alvarado returned to the region in 1530 (finding his capital at a new site) he was accompanied by Father Francisco Marroquín (1499-1563), replacing Friar Juan Godinez as the army's chaplain and the town's parish priest.<sup>53</sup> Born in Spain, Marroquín had studied philosophy and theology at the University of Huesca before entering the priesthood.<sup>54</sup> In 1534, Pope Paul III established the bishopric of Guatemala and appointed Marroquín as the region's first bishop, elevating the church in Santiago at Almolonga to the status of cathedral.<sup>55</sup> Unbeknownst to the developing city's leadership, their new capital was not to last long. In 1541, a little over a decade after its founding, Santiago at Almolonga was beaten with torrential rains for several days. During the night of September 10, with water in the street nearly knee deep, an earthquake struck. In addition to the damage and terror wrought by the tremor, the face of the eastern side of the Volcán de Agua collapsed, releasing water and mud that swept down through the city, killing upwards of seven

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<sup>51</sup> Pedro de Alvarado departed Santiago in 1526 and made his way to Spain where he sought and received an official decree granting him the government of the "Kingdom of Guatemala."

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-4. The city is known today as Ciudad Vieja.

<sup>53</sup> A. C. Oss, *Catholic Colonialism: A Parish History of Guatemala, 1524-1821*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 12.

<sup>54</sup> Francisco Pérez de Antón, *In Praise of Francisco de Marroquín*, (Guatemala City: Universidad Francisco Marroquín, 1999), 5.

<sup>55</sup> Oss 1986, 12.

hundred people and leaving much of the city destroyed.<sup>56</sup> Quickly elected as one of the ruined city's co-governors, Bishop Marroquín and the surviving leadership decided to relocate the city some two miles north in the valley of Panchoy, establishing the final city of Santiago de Guatemala in October of 1541, known today as Antigua.<sup>57</sup>

Even though the Spanish had been active in the region for nearly twenty years, it was after the establishment of Santiago in 1541 that a structured colonial society truly began to form in Guatemala.<sup>58</sup> After their initial conquest of the region, the primary goal of Alvarado and his successors was to secure any precious materials, especially gold and silver. Once the region's portable wealth had been seized it soon became clear that Guatemala was not rich in valuable metals, but rather that its most profitable resource was its large indigenous populations coupled with its fertile soil. According to the historian Christopher Lutz:

“Santiago's Spanish vecinos [citizens] hastened the day when Indian labor would become a precious commodity. Acutely aware that the scarcity of gold and silver in Guatemala could be compensated for only in agricultural production, recognizing in turn that their lands were worthless without the slaves to till them, they, too, captured and purchased Indians in huge numbers...”<sup>59</sup>

In addition to a flourishing slave trade of natives, an *encomienda* system was soon instituted, similar to the one put in place in the Viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru, in which the labor and annual tribute of a certain number of natives was granted by the

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<sup>56</sup> Jones 1994, 29.

<sup>57</sup> Christopher Lutz, *Santiago De Guatemala, 1541-1773: City, Caste, and the Colonial Experience*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 6-8. For clarity, I will refer to the city by its modern name from this point onward.

<sup>58</sup> Initially the region was administratively part of New Spain. In 1609, the Spanish established the Captaincy General of Guatemala, sometimes called the Kingdom of Guatemala, which oversaw territories that ranged from present day Chiapas to Panama.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.



Spanish Crown to “deserving” subjects, most often the region’s conquistadors and their families.<sup>60</sup> The native slave trade and the *encomienda* system were abolished in 1542 by Charles V’s (1500-1558) *New Laws of the Indies for the Good Treatment and Preservation of the Indians*, in part due to the advocacy of Bartolomé de las Casas (c.1484-1566). The now famous Dominican friar lived and worked for a time among the natives in Guatemala and is still revered. Although the implementation of the New Laws was met with resistance by some Spanish *encomienderos* and slave owners, it would eventually put an end to both systems in the region.<sup>61</sup>

For the city of Antigua, the immediate effect of both slavery and the *encomienda* was the resettlement of a concentrated indigenous population in and around the city, which was either owned by, or beholden to, its Spanish citizens. This population continued in place after the slavery of indigenous peoples and the *encomienda* had ended and became an intrinsic part of viceregal Antigua. In addition to the Guatemalan natives that settled the area, indigenous groups from other parts of the Spanish colonial empire also settled in the capital, often arriving as part of the various exploratory expeditions passing through on their way to South America.<sup>62</sup> There were also African slaves, imported in greater numbers following the loss of native slave labor. The number of African slaves brought to Guatemala remained relatively small in comparison to other territories in the Americas, perhaps because of the presence of the large indigenous population as a workforce. As they did throughout the Spanish viceroyalties, the successive generations of these three populations would also intermarry, their progeny

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<sup>60</sup> For a more complete overview of the *encomienda* system and the native slave trade see the chapter on “Population and Labor” in Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 111-44.

<sup>61</sup> Lutz 1994, 15.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-25. A large group of Nahuatl speaking Tlaxcaltecas for example, called Mexicanos in Antigua’s city records, had accompanied Alvarado’s original expedition and settled in the region.

being known as *castas*, to denote their mixed racial heritage. In Antigua, however, as in much of Guatemala, the majority of the population was of indigenous descent, although that population was dominated by the interests of the native Spanish and growing Creole population throughout the viceregal period.<sup>63</sup>

As influential as demographic and economic factors, the city of Antigua was also shaped by the Spanish crown's mission to spread Catholicism to the various native populations of the Americas. At the time of Bishop Marroquin's elevation, meeting the spiritual needs of the Spanish settlers while carrying out the conversion of the natives must have seemed an impossible task. Although on a map his diocese encompassed present day Guatemala and El Salvador, Marroquin's authority extended almost no further than the city's boundaries. The few secular priests within Marroquin's jurisdiction remained insulated within the slowly emerging Spanish population centers, in part due to fears for their own safety, but also because they were almost certain to receive a higher salary from the settlers than they would from the natives.<sup>64</sup> The lack of qualified secular clergyman led Bishop Marroquín to request that the Crown send missionaries from the religious orders to begin the conversion and evangelization of the indigenous populations.

Perhaps unknown to Marroquín, these orders already had a presence in the region. In his discussion of the history of the Catholic Church in Guatemala, historian A.C. Oss writes: "With characteristic independence they [the religious orders] had already explored parts of Guatemala on their own and may have known it better than the bishop himself."<sup>65</sup> Both the Franciscans and Dominicans had already established a presence in the region by the end of the 1520s and more friars were moving southward from New Spain, extending

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 21-24

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 14.

the church's reach. Due to their lack of numbers, they were often forced to abandon their small convents and churches almost immediately after establishing them in the remote frontiers between northern Guatemala and Southern New Spain. With the influx of brothers from Spain answering Marroquin's request, they were soon able to become an organized and permanent presence, wielding a great deal of influence – especially among the indigenous population.<sup>66</sup>

More than any of the other religious orders, the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Mercedarians would dominate religious life in Guatemala during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In addition to preaching the gospel to the natives, they oversaw the *reducción*, or reduction, of the indigenous populations. This was a process by which the natives were resettled into Spanish-style villages to aid not only in their conversion to the Catholic faith, but also to assimilate them into Spanish culture. A painting by an unknown artist in the Museo del Prado depicts the *Conquest and "Reducción" of the Indians of the Paraca and Pantasma Mountains in Guatemala*, (**Fig. 1.22**) a relocation carried out by Franciscan friars that began in 1675.<sup>67</sup> Although it was almost certainly painted by an artist who never actually saw these events, a large key in the upper left corner both narrates and legitimizes the painting's content. The viewer is led through the *reducción* process, shown the native's original villages, the Franciscan friars preaching to them, and finally, in the lower right corner, the new Spanish-style village in which several churches are prominently seen.<sup>68</sup> These new villages and towns often came under the influence of the religious orders that founded them and could remain loyal to that

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Landmarks depicted in the painting place the scene in present day Nicaragua, then a part of the Captaincy General of Guatemala.

<sup>68</sup> For an in-depth study of the painting see Luisa Elena Alcalá, "'A Call to Action': Visual Persuasion in a Spanish American Painting," *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 94, no. 4 (December 2012), 594-617.

order for generations, in some cases supporting them with gifts of supplies and materials, or tithes.

In a relatively short time, much of the Kingdom of Guatemala was divided among the three orders, each controlling ecclesiastical life within their own territory while also competing with the other orders for more territory. It is likely that when Bishop Marroquín requested the aid of the religious orders, he was unaware that he would be hobbling the authority of the secular clergy for his successors. The religious orders would argue for many years that they alone were equipped to continue the slow process of Hispanicization and the stamping out of native heresies among the growing indigenous communities. Their evidence for this claim was their knowledge of indigenous languages, their roots in the founding of the towns, and their familiarity with each town's citizenry. The subject of language was central, as mass and other ceremonies continued to be conducted in native dialects for many generations following the arrival of the Spanish in the region, and indeed this still occurs in some parts of Guatemala today.<sup>69</sup> As an example, Friar Francisco de Suassa y Otálora, the Provincial head of the Franciscan order in Guatemala who would commission the Antigua Series, spoke Quiché, Cakchiquel, and Zutuhil.<sup>70</sup> The lack of such critical skills forced the secular clergy to remain largely in colonial Guatemala's Spanish-speaking centers until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

For the Franciscans, acting as missionaries had a larger meaning beyond the immediate purpose of converting the native populations to Catholicism. During the

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<sup>69</sup> Oss 1986, 14-37.

<sup>70</sup> Fray Francisco Vázquez, *Crónica De La Provincia Del Santísimo Nombre De Jesús De Guatemala De La Orden De N. Seráfico Padre San Francisco En El Reino De La Nueva España* (1695), (Guatemala: Biblioteca "Goatemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia, 1944) 4:12.

founding of their order, Saint Francis emphasized the act of preaching, the renewal of faith, and evangelizing the unbeliever as actions that followed in the footsteps of Christ. Among Francis's guidelines for the governing of the new order was a chapter entitled *Those Going among the Saracens and Other Unbelievers*. The saint exhorts his followers:

“Wherever they may be, let all my brothers remember that they have given themselves and abandoned their bodies to the Lord Jesus Christ. For love of Him, they must make themselves vulnerable to their enemies, both visible and invisible, because the Lord says: Whoever loses his life because of me will save it in eternal life.”<sup>71</sup>

In later texts describing the life of saint, such *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis* (after 1337), the unknown author writes:

“The wonderful servant and follower of Christ, that is, Saint Francis, in order to conform himself perfectly to Christ in everything, who according to what the Gospel says, sent His disciples two by two to all those cities and places where they had to go, after the example of Christ, sent them [his followers] two by two through the world to preach.”<sup>72</sup>

To be martyred among unbelievers while carrying out Francis's mission thus brought those friars closer to the model of their founder and by extension to Christ. Throughout the Americas, Franciscan institutions frequently displayed images that glorify these brothers, sometimes using them as models to inspire novitiates. A well-known example eulogizing two martyred brothers, *The Destruction of the Saint Saba Mission in the Province of Texas and the Martyrdom of the Priests, Friar Alonso Giraldo de Terreros and Friar José de Santiesteban* (c. 1758-65) (**Fig. 1.23**), is now in the Museo Nacional de

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<sup>71</sup> Saint Francis of Assisi, “The Earlier Rule,” (1209-21), in Armstrong et al. 1999-2001, 1:74.

<sup>72</sup> “The Little Flowers of Saint Francis,” (After 1337), in Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3: 587.

Arte, but may have once hung in the College for the Propagation of the Faith in Querétaro, of which both friars were members. Further afield, a painting now in a Franciscan Convent in Cuzco, Peru (**Fig. 1.24**) depicts Franciscan brothers and their converts that were martyred in Nagasaki, Japan in 1597.

The Franciscan's mission to preach and convert indigenous populations throughout the Americas was also shaped by prophecies and mystical thinking from the Middle Ages. The "discovery" of the continent and its inhabitants in the fateful year of 1492 precipitated attempts by men from various creeds to explain the presence of this unknown land and its peoples. In the Christian world, many believed that these events had apocalyptic significance, signifying that the end of days as described in the Book of Revelation was near. The conversion to the true faith of this vast number of souls might even act as a sort of catalyst for its initiation. For the Franciscans, this gave one of the original aims of their order, to preach and evangelize, new meaning. A.C. Oss writes:

"These tendencies embodied a pronounced apocalyptic strain, continuing a common motif of monastic thought during the Middle Ages. Medieval monks saw exile among the pagans as a path which would lead them to union with God...According to the Franciscan concept of their mission, the order's divinely inspired task was to renew evangelical life in the final age of the world."<sup>73</sup>

The mystical beliefs of the Franciscans in the Americas will be explored more fully in Chapter 3, but what is clear is that many Franciscans arriving in Guatemala carried a heightened awareness that their work in the Americas served a divine purpose that went beyond conversion.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Oss 1986, 4.

<sup>74</sup> An important text for understanding the apocalyptic aspect of Franciscan activities in the Americas continues to be John Leddy Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970).

The friar's sense of the momentous and historic nature of the task ahead of them seems reflected in their very first act in the Americas. In 1524, having traveled overland from the coast, the first twelve Franciscans, by no means an accidental number, arrived in Mexico City. In the early 1540s, they sent a second delegation of twelve brothers, again following the tradition of Christ's apostles, southward to Antigua. Nevertheless, their influence would eventually begin to wane. By the end of the seventeenth century, the now Captaincy General of Guatemala was sufficiently developed to support a larger population of secular clergy who were anxious to assume their traditional role of ministering to the population. Although by no means marginalized immediately, the Franciscans in Antigua found themselves being slowly deprived of the authority and privileges to which they had become accustomed.<sup>75</sup> Still, they remained a prominent part of the city's spiritual life and their activities were centered on the Church of Saint Francis, only a few blocks south of the city's main plaza.

### ***“Thirty-Three Large Canvases and Sixteen Small”***

The Franciscans established their principal convent in Santiago at Almolonga in 1530, remaining there until the city's flooding in 1541.<sup>76</sup> Within a year of the move, a new structure was already in place in Antigua and the income from various towns, all populated by indigenous peoples, was assigned for its maintenance by the civil government.<sup>77</sup> This was likely only a temporary structure and in 1544 it was relocated to its present site and construction began on a new convent. Although the site continued to

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<sup>75</sup> See Chapter 5, “Secularization of the regular parishes and attempts at Hispanization,” in Oss 1986.

<sup>76</sup> At the request of Bishop Marroquín, they maintained a church there to minister to those who did not wish to relocate to the new capital. See Verle Lincoln Annis, *The Architecture of Antigua Guatemala, 1543-1773*, (Guatemala City: University of San Carlos of Guatemala, 1968), 78.

<sup>77</sup> Sidney D. Markman, *Colonial Architecture of Antigua Guatemala*, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1966), 118.

develop, with buildings being enlarged and added as needed, the complex suffered significant damage in 1565, prompting the Franciscans to seek aid for its repair. The convent was the principle headquarters for the Franciscans posted in Central America, yet the brothers' request for aid would not be met until 1576, when a royal order was issued for its reconstruction.<sup>78</sup> The new church and convent were completed in 1582.<sup>79</sup> In his chronicle of the Franciscan order's activities in Guatemala, Fray Francisco Vázquez claims that the friar and novices worked on the buildings construction and that everyday citizens joined in, so great was the enthusiasm to see the structure completed.<sup>80</sup>

Several campaigns of repairs and rebuilding took place throughout the end of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, greatly expanding the complex. At its height, the monastery could likely have accommodated nearly one hundred friars and, as seen on a modern floor plan (**Fig. 1.25**), it included a belfry, clock tower, library and infirmary.<sup>81</sup> In 1689, an earthquake damaged the convent, necessitating some 30,000 *pesos* in repairs.<sup>82</sup> It was likely after this latest round of reconstruction that Friar Francisco de Suassa y Otálora, the *provincial*, or head of the Franciscan province administered from Antigua, decided to commission a series of a paintings to line the two stories of the rebuilt cloister. It is unclear how the cloister was decorated previously, although fragments of wall paintings (**Fig. 1.26**) survive in a long room running along the south side of the cloister that may have functioned as an oratory, as well as in a ruined chamber (**Fig. 1.27**) near the west side of the cloister. It is possible that the series Suassa

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<sup>78</sup> The various Spanish American territories were divided into various administrative 'provinces' by the Franciscans. A province was established encompassing much of Central American in 1565 under the name "La Provincia Del Santísimo Nombre De Jesús" or Province of the Sainly Name of Jesus.

<sup>79</sup> Markman 1966, 118.

<sup>80</sup> Vázquez 1944, 1:317.

<sup>81</sup> Annis 1964, 81-2.

<sup>82</sup> Vázquez 1944, 4:329. For a summary of the work conducted on the complex see Markman 1966, 119-20.



commissioned was meant to replace murals, perhaps even a narrative cycle that had once surrounded the cloister's open patio and fountain.

The contract (**See Appendix 1**) for the Antigua series, witnessed by the notary Martín del Rio, is signed by the painter and the merchant Francisco Gómez del Corral. The latter was acting on behalf of Friar Francisco de Suassa y Otálora, as empowered by a letter he received from the friar on August 25, 1691.<sup>83</sup> In his entry on the series in the artist's *raisonné*, Pedro Ángeles Jiménez suggests that the Franciscans likely did not have a specific painter in mind, instead charging Gómez del Corral to identify a painter in the capital, no doubt exhorting him to select someone of the highest ability.<sup>84</sup> This notion seems sound, particularly given a later clause in the contract that states that Gómez del Corral could make a new agreement with another painter should Villalpando be unable to finish the project. Works of art produced in Mexico City can be found throughout the Spanish viceroyalties and it seems clear that displaying them carried a degree of cachet. In his second article on the series, Luis Luján Muñoz points out that numerous sculptures and paintings were imported from the capital of New Spain to adorn altars and churches in Guatemala.<sup>85</sup>

In Ángeles Jiménez's entry he also asserts that Gómez del Corral may have selected Villalpando due his already prestigious reputation, as well as the size of his workshop, a more pragmatic yet necessary requirement for a commission this size.<sup>86</sup> As seen in the artist biography at the beginning of this chapter, Villalpando was certainly at the height of his career. The monumental commissions for the cathedrals in Mexico City

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<sup>83</sup> This letter is thus far unlocated.

<sup>84</sup> Pedro Ángeles Jiménez, "Serie de la vida de San Francisco," Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 259-62.

<sup>85</sup> Luján Muñoz 1986, 118.

<sup>86</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 258-9.

and Puebla would have necessitated the development of a large workshop and would have established his name in both artistic and ecclesiastical circles. His appointment as *veedor* and then *alcalde* of the painter's guild elevated his status, making him an even more desirable candidate. Luján Muñoz's claim regarding the popularity of New Spanish painting in Guatemala also has relevance to Villalpando.<sup>87</sup> Pedro Ramírez, one of the artist's colleagues and possible teachers produced a number of works that then would have hung in Antigua, most likely in its Cathedral.<sup>88</sup> In addition to the series of thirteen paintings on the life of the Virgin (see **Fig. 1.15**) the artist produced two monumental canvases depicting *The Triumph of the Church* (1673) and *The Triumph of the Eucharist Over Pagan Idols* (1673) (**Fig. 1.28**) based on engravings by Bolswert (see **Fig. 1.19**) of Rubens compositions for the tapestry series in the Descalzas Reales.<sup>89</sup> Given Friar Suassa y Otálora's high position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Antigua, it is almost certain he was aware of these works. Although Ramírez had died over a decade before the Antigua Series commission, perhaps his name helped lead Gómes del Corral to Villalpando, his most successful student.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Luján Muñoz 1986, 114. Interestingly, the artistic ties between Antigua and Mexico City may have extended in the other direction as well. Luján Muñoz notes that on April 22, 1698, Villalpando was among the guild masters who examined the work of an artist identified as "Alfonso Álvarez de Urrutia, citizen of Santiago de Guatemala [Antigua]." No works by the artist have been identified, nor has information about him been discovered. Luján Muñoz 1986, 115, note 8.

<sup>88</sup> Ramírez's paintings now hang in the cathedral in Guatemala City. It is tempting to think that these works were brought there from the cathedral in Antigua, following the abandonment of that city in 1775, however this remains speculative.

<sup>89</sup> Ruiz Gomar 2000, 96-7, 102-4. See also Rogelio Ruiz Gomar's catalogue entries on these paintings in Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (CONACULTA), *México en el mundo de las colecciones de arte. Nueva España*, (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994), 3:221-31.

<sup>90</sup> Another possibility is that Villalpando was recommended to Gómes del Corral by the Franciscans in Mexico City, who he could have contacted at the suggestion of Friar Suassa y Otálora. Villalpando was well known to them; in addition to his altarpiece for the brothers in Huaquechula, at the end of the seventeenth century he completed a painting of *Our Lady of Aránzazu* that may have been painted for a chapel dedicated to that Virgin in the Franciscan Convent in Mexico City. See Pedro Ángeles Jiménez. "Virgen de Aránzazu," Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 246. See also Clara Bargellini's entry on this painting in Joseph Rishel, ed., *The Arts in Latin America, 1492-1820*, (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2006), Cat. VI-23.

The contract specifies forty-nine paintings depicting the life of Saint Francis of Assisi, for which Gómes del Corral agreed to pay a total of two thousand nine hundred and sixty pesos. At the time of the contract's signing, Villalpando had already received one thousand pesos, and the document goes on to outline a second payment of five hundred pesos to be made while the work was being carried out. The remaining one thousand, four hundred and sixty pesos was to be given when the paintings were completed. At first glance, this seems a vast sum; as a comparison, the painter received a total of four hundred pesos for *The Triumph of the Eucharist* in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City.<sup>91</sup> Yet when the quantity of paintings to be produced is considered, the sum seems almost paltry.<sup>92</sup>

The contract gives two sources of information that are to guide Villalpando's creation of the forty-nine canvases, repeating them on three separate occasions at different points in the document:

“...thirty-three large canvases and sixteen small with the life of N.S.P.S. Francisco, conforming [to] those of the cloister of the principal Convent of Mexico City, so that all [together there] will be forty-nine canvases, all by brush, conforming to the map which was sent from the city of Guatemala by the Most R.P. Friar Francisco de Suassa y Otálora...”<sup>93</sup>

“...Master Cristóbal de Villalpando, who is obligated to make by brush the large and small canvases that are expressed and referred to in this map sent from Guatemala...”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 74.

<sup>92</sup> Divided by forty-nine, Villalpando's fee comes to just over sixty pesos per painting. Even given that the not all the paintings were the same size, and that some may have been produced by assistants, the number is surprising.

<sup>93</sup> “...treinta y tres liensos grandes y diez y seis chicos con la vida de N.S.P.S. Franco, conforme está la del claustro del Convento principal desta Ciudad de México, de suerte que todos sean quarenta y nueve liensos, todos de pincel, conforme el mapa que se remitió de la Ciudad de Goatemala por el Muy R.P. Fray Franco de Suassa y Otálora...” See Appendix 1.

<sup>94</sup> “...Maestro Xptoal de Villalpando, quien se obliga de hacer de pincel los liensos grandes y pequeños que van expresados y se refieren en el dicho mapa remitido de Goatemala...” See Appendix 1.

“...the work composed of the painted canvases that are expressed in accordance to the cloister of the principal Convent of St. Francis of this City and is expressed in the map sent from said City of Guatemala...”<sup>95</sup>

The first and third passages refer to a series of paintings depicting the life of the saint in the Franciscan Convent in Mexico City, which either do not survive to the present day or do so unidentified. The cloisters in which these paintings hung were built in 1649, as part of a general renovation that expanded the convent to nearly three hundred cells.

Following the official suppression of the religious orders in 1860, much of the convent complex was divided into lots, publicly auctioned and demolished the following year.<sup>96</sup>

Whether the paintings in the cloisters were removed before their destruction, or if they were lost along with this important structure, is unknown. Today only the main church and a single chapel survive of what was arguably the most important Franciscan complex in the Americas.

The series is briefly mentioned by Friar Agustín Vetancurt in his chronicle of the Franciscan activities in New Spain:

“The lower cloisters are adorned with large canvases from the famous brush of Baltazar de Chávez, in which is depicted all the life of N.P. Saint Francis and between each painting a shield that has two angels on which is written the story of each canvas...”<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> “...la obra compuesta de los lienzos de pincel que van expressados conforme a la del claustro del Convento principal de San Fran<sup>co</sup> desta Ciudad y se expresaran en el mapa remitido de la dicha Ciudad de Goatemala...” See Appendix 1.

<sup>96</sup> Fidel de J. Chauvet, “The Church of San Francisco in Mexico City,” *The Americas*, vol. 7, no. 1 (July 1950), 26-30.

<sup>97</sup> “Los claustros bajos están adornados con lienzos grandes del pincel famoso del Baltazar de Chávez, en que se registra toda la vida de N.P. San Francisco y entre cuadro y cuadro una tarja que tienen dos ángeles en que está escrita la historia de cada lienzo...” Author’s translation. Fray Agustín Vetancurt. *Teatro Mexicano: Descripción Breve De Los Sucesos Ejemplares, Históricos Y Religiosos Del Nuevo Mundo De Las Indias. Crónica De La Provincia Del Santo Evangelio De México. Menologio Franciscano De Los Varones Más Señalados, Que Con Sus Vidas Ejemplares, Perfección Religiosa, Ciencia, Predicación Evangélica En Su Vida, Ilustraron La Provincia Del Santo Evangelio De México*. México: Editorial Porrúa, 1971.

Although “Baltazar de Chávez” must refer to one of the painters with that name in the Echave (to use the modern spelling) family, it is difficult to identify the artist conclusively given that three of the painters went by that name.<sup>98</sup> Luján Muñoz identifies the artist as Baltasar Echave Ibía (c. 1583-1644), although he states no reasons why.<sup>99</sup> I would suggest it is more likely that the passage refers to Baltasar de Echave Rioja. If the cloisters were rebuilt in 1649, it seems probable that the paintings would have been commissioned afterward, although this is by no means certain. Echave Ibía had already died by that time, whereas Echave Rioja was still a young man of seventeen and just beginning his career. If the paintings were by Echave Rioja this could add an important link between the series in Mexico City and Villalpando. Francisco de Suassa y Otálora could have established with Gómez del Corral his desire to have the Antigua series follow the Echave works in Mexico City and the merchant’s search for a painter could thus have led to Villalpando, Echave’s leading student. As seen with the altarpiece in Huaquechula, it appears likely that the two painter’s names were closely linked.

The language of the contract does not elaborate on how strict a relationship was to exist between the two series. It states that the Antigua series will “conform” and be “in accordance” with the Mexican works, which may or may not mean that Villalpando was to directly copy its compositions and content. As will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, Villalpando clearly utilized print sources in the making of some of the Antigua series paintings, which would seem to indicate that the Echave paintings were not the only materials available to him. Villalpando, ever the master of synthesizing disparate materials for the creation of new works, would have had no trouble identifying forty-nine

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<sup>98</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 258.

<sup>99</sup> Luján Muñoz 1986, 121.

scenes from the saint's life using the visual and textual materials available to him. It is worth noting that forty-nine, although a large number, is by no means the largest extant cycle of paintings on the life of Saint Francis in the Spanish Americas.<sup>100</sup>

The three passages quoted above all mention a *mapa*, meaning a map or chart, sent by Friar Suassa y Otálora with his letter to Gómez del Corral authorizing the merchant to commission the series.<sup>101</sup> Luján concluded that this document would have specified the dimensions and themes for the paintings in the Antigua series.<sup>102</sup> Although the contract repeats the phrase “thirty-three large canvases and sixteen small” several times, it gives no other information. The use of the phrases “thirty-three large” and “sixteen small” also does not indicate that in each group these works were necessarily all the same size. The surviving paintings are within a general range of one another in terms of their dimensions, but there does not appear to be a uniform size among them. Several of the paintings show signs of being cut down, which may contribute to the discordance in their sizes. Yet, with the exception of one of the paintings, none appear to have lost a significant portion of their composition. The surviving canvases also do not have a consistent orientation; thirteen of the paintings depict horizontal compositions, while four are oriented vertically. It seems likely therefore that Luján was correct that the *mapa* must have contained specifications for the sizes and orientations of the paintings to be certain they would fit properly in the cloister in Antigua.

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<sup>100</sup> The series now in the Museo de San Francisco in Santiago, Chile, for example, contains fifty-four canvases, many with multiple scenes.

<sup>101</sup> Neither this letter, or the *mapa*, has been located.

<sup>102</sup> Luján Muñoz 1986, 120. Interestingly, Luján refers to the document as a *croquis* or a “sketch” rather than a *mapa*, as it is called in the contract.

The scale of the surviving paintings would seem to indicate that they all belonged in the category of “thirty-three large” canvases specified in the contract.<sup>103</sup> It is worth noting that the Echave series called out in the Antigua contract is described as having “between each painting a shield that has two angels on which is written the story of each canvas.” Paintings in New Spain frequently incorporated decorative cartouches with textual descriptions of their subject matter, as seen, for example, in Villalpando’s painting of *The Triumph of the Eucharist* (**Fig. 1.18**). In the upper right corner of the work a group of angels hold aloft a large plaque framed in gold, perhaps not completely dissimilar from the shield with two angels described as accompanying each canvas in the Echave series. Although it is speculative, it is possible that the “sixteen small” canvases referred to in Villalpando’s contract were in fact painted cartouches like those included with the Echave series, meant to hang between each of the larger canvases. If each of the sixteen cartouches contained text describing the two larger paintings on either side of it, these would serve to explain thirty-two of the larger canvases, leaving one outlier. This last painting may have been of a sufficiently familiar subject to require no further explanation, or perhaps contained a painted cartouche identifying its subject.

Narrative painting series were also hung in a predetermined sequence, following the chronology of Saint Francis’s life in the case of the Antigua series. Luján’s assertion that the *mapa* would have also specified subjects is thus also sound, as each canvas would have specific dimensions determined by its physical location in the cloister. In other words, it would not be sufficient for Villalpando to have only known the dimensions of

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<sup>103</sup> Luján suggests that none of the “sixteen small” works survive and that, given the spaces of the cloister, they may have depicted subjects not taken from the life of Saint Francis and hung in another part of the complex. Luján Muñoz 1986, 119-20. In my opinion this runs too contrary to the terms of the contract to be plausible, however it remains difficult to account for the content of these smaller canvases without further information.

the canvases; he would need to have some idea, even generally, of the subject matter of each painting to place its correct location in the overall narrative. Given some of the more unusual subjects of the surviving paintings, *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* (see **Fig. 3.33**) prominently among them, this indicates that the Franciscans must have played an active role in their selection. It is possible that some were drawn from the series by Echave Rioja, but even in selecting that series as a model, the friars made themselves active participants in the construction of the Antigua series.

The contract specifies a timetable for completion of the works, stating that it “...obligates this Cristóbal de Villalpando from the date of this letter that in one year he will have delivered with all perfection and in accordance as art, the work composed of the painted canvases...”<sup>104</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that Villalpando did not meet this deadline. The paintings were described in place by 1695 by Friar Francisco Vázquez in his *Crónica De La Provincia Del Santísimo Nombre De Jesús De Guatemala De La Orden De N. Seráfico Padre San Francisco En El Reino De La Nueva España*. He writes that cloisters of the Franciscan convent were “...adorned with excellent Mexican paintings of all the life of Our Father Saint Francis, trimmed with very bright gilded frames...”<sup>105</sup> As Ángeles Jiménez alluded to, it is certain that Villalpando’s workshop played a crucial role in the commission for him to complete forty-nine works within a

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<sup>104</sup> *Se obliga el dicho Xptoal Villalpando a que para de (h)oy día de la fecha de esta carta en un año primero siguiente (h)abrà entregado con todo perfección y segun arte, la obra compuesta de los liensos de pincel...*” See Appendix 1.

<sup>105</sup> Author’s translation, in the original Spanish: “...adornaron con cuadros de excelente pintura mexicana, de toda la vida de nuestro Padre San Francisco, guarnecidos con muy lucidos marcos dorados...” Vázquez 1944, 4:390.



single year.<sup>106</sup> Given the available information, the surviving canvases can be dated to 1691-92, and their travel and installation in Guatemala to sometime in 1693-95.<sup>107</sup>

Unfortunately, Villalpando's series would not survive long in its cloister in Antigua. In 1717, an earthquake centered on the city significantly damaged the complex, destroying a chapel dedicated to Saint Anthony of Padua in the infirmary and cracking several vaults in the church. The church was damaged again by an earthquake in 1751 that necessitated further repairs. Finally, a sequence of earthquakes in 1773, beginning on the feast of Saint Martha, extensively damaged the city of Antigua and destroyed much of the Franciscan complex.<sup>108</sup> The scars of the Saint Martha earthquakes are still visible on colonial buildings in present day Antigua. Although the main church of the Franciscan complex (**Fig. 1.29**) was restored and put back into use in the 1960s, the damage is still visible on its façade. The cloister where the paintings once hung is still discernable among the ruins (**Fig. 1.30**) that surround the church and in a few places fragments of decorative carving (**Fig. 1.31**) hint at the structure's former splendor.

The Saint Martha earthquakes so devastated Antigua that the city was left nearly uninhabitable. Viceregal officials temporarily moved their government across the mountains to the valley of La Ermita, and in 1775 issued orders for the abandonment of the city. Although there was significant resistance to the directive, it was upheld by the Spanish King in June of that same year. Although some of the population would remain, the majority relocated to the new capital of La Nueva Guatemala de la Asunción, known

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<sup>106</sup> Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 258-9.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. As Ángeles Jiménez notes in his entry, legal documents show that Francisco Gómez Corral was in Guatemala in 1695 and he may have been charged by the Franciscans with bringing the works to Antigua.

<sup>108</sup> Markman 1966, 122.

today as Guatemala City.<sup>109</sup> It is unknown how many of the Antigua Series paintings survived the Saint Martha earthquakes and the capital's relocation, but it seems certain that some were destroyed or abandoned due to damage. The canvases that were salvageable were moved to the new Franciscan church in Guatemala City, where they hung until the suppression and expulsion of the religious orders from Guatemala in 1873. After that, the whereabouts of the paintings become unclear, although some may have remained stored in the church and been destroyed in the 1917 and 1918 earthquakes that struck Guatemala City.<sup>110</sup>

Fourteen paintings from the original series of forty-nine remain in Guatemala today. In 1936, the Museo de Arte Colonial (**Fig. 1.32**), housed in the former building of the University of San Carlos in Antigua, inaugurated a gallery devoted to displaying eleven of the paintings, where they remain today.<sup>111</sup> Two other canvases are in the custody of the Franciscan Church (**Fig. 1.33**) in Guatemala City; *The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire* hangs in a room behind the main altar, *The Granting of the Portiuncula Indulgence* is believed to be kept in a basement storage room.<sup>112</sup> The final work, *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis* is on deposit at the laboratories of the

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<sup>109</sup> Vera Kelsey and Lilly de Jongh Osborne, *Four Keys to Guatemala*, (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1939), 138-9.

<sup>110</sup> For the most complete account of the history of the paintings see Luján Muñoz 1986, 122-3, 130; Gutiérrez Haces et al. 1997, 385-6.

<sup>111</sup> In the late nineties, one of the paintings, *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, was cut from its stretcher and stolen from the Museum. This painting was later recovered in 2007 in Mexico City, sadly cut into two pieces. It is currently in the conservation lab at the Museo de Arte Colonial, where the two pieces have been rejoined and will be reintegrated with the portions of canvas that remained attached to stretcher following the theft.

<sup>112</sup> The painting was seen there in 2005 by Joseph Rishel, then curator of European Painting at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and others, during a research trip related to *The Arts in Latin American, 1492-1820* exhibition. On a visit in 2011, I was told by an official from the Ministerio de Cultura y Deportes that the painting was no longer at the church, although I was unable to verify this conclusively.

Centro de Restauración de Bienes Muebles<sup>113</sup> [CEREBIEM] in Guatemala City, where it awaits eventual restoration.

Three additional paintings from this series have been discovered in the last twenty-five years in the United States. Two of these, *The Last Supper of Saint Francis* and *The Vision of Brother Leo* were acquired by a private collector and purchased by the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts in San Angelo, Texas. The final painting, *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, is a fragment, having been cut down on all four sides, although most substantially along its top edge. Purchased by a dealer at an estate sale in Geneseo, New York, in 1998, it was then acquired by the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 2008.

## Conclusion

Following his completion of the series on the life of Saint Francis in the early 1690s, Villalpando's career continued unabated until his death in 1714. In addition to numerous smaller narrative series on the lives of saints, the Virgin, and Christ, he would produce another grand cycle of twenty-two canvases on the life of Saint Ignatius of Loyola in 1710, now in the Museo Nacional del Virreinato in Tepotzotlán.<sup>114</sup> The artist's work also appears to have remained desirable south of New Spain, in the Kingdom of Guatemala. A small altarpiece devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe, with three canvases by Villalpando, still stands in the Church of Saint Jerome in Baja Verapaz, and two paintings depicting *The Death of Saint Joseph* are in private collections in Guatemala City.

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<sup>113</sup> Center for the Restoration of Movable Works.

<sup>114</sup> See Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, "El ciclo de la vida de San Ignacio de Loyola pintado por Cristóbal de Villalpando en Tepotzotlán. Precisiones iconográficas," *Ars longa: cuadernos de arte*, no. 5 (1994), 53-60.

It is possible that further works by the artist will be discovered in Guatemala, or in Europe and the United States, judging by the recent discoveries of new works outside of Mexico.<sup>115</sup> Additional paintings may even be discovered from the series on the life of Saint Francis. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the surviving paintings offer a glimpse of an artist at the height of his compositional abilities. Although the contract he signed with the Franciscans in Antigua offered him ample material to draw from, in the form of a *mapa* and a model series in the Franciscan convent in Mexico City, Villalpando nevertheless approached the series with his characteristic originality and talent for dramatic narration.

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<sup>115</sup> See Bargellini 2011, 309-24.



## Chapter 2

### The Life and Death of Saint Francis of Assisi

Scattered across five institutions in two countries, the seventeen surviving canvases from Villalpando's Antigua commission – less than half of the original forty-nine works – have traveled and endured a great deal since Friar Francisco Vázquez described these “excellent” paintings hanging in the cloister of the Franciscan convent.<sup>116</sup> Many have been severely damaged over the course of their rigorous histories and, in some cases, their appearance has suffered further due to inadequate attempts to treat them, resulting in muddled sections that can sometimes detract from the overall clarity of the painting.<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, the works retain a grandeur that is a hallmark of Villalpando's unique style. Drawing on material from a variety of textual and visual sources, Villalpando imbued these works with an almost theatrical level of drama, while at the same time conveying the complex spiritual underpinnings of the scenes depicted. His paintings provide an engaging and appealing narrative of the saint's life, yet also seems to speak specifically to their intended Franciscan audience.

In this chapter and the next, I will analyze each of the seventeen surviving canvases in depth.<sup>118</sup> This chapter examines fourteen of these paintings, most of which depict events from Francis's life, including miracles or visions that the saint or his followers experienced during his lifetime, or immediately following his death. For each

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<sup>116</sup> Vázquez 1944, 4:390. See Chapter 1 for a history of the series.

<sup>117</sup> It is important to note that by drawing attention to the condition of these works my intent is not to criticize those who care for them now, or in the past, but instead to draw attention to their plight. Conserving and restoring works of this scale and number require a significant investment of resources and expertise, which unfortunately few institutions have the means to provide.

<sup>118</sup> I will present the canvases in an order that roughly follows the events of the saint's life, as they were presumably hung in their cloister. This is by no means an exact chronology – contradictions exist between the saint's biographies regarding the order of certain events, miracles, and visions.

work, I will closely read and investigate the imagery that Villalpando employed, connecting it to the relevant episodes in the saint's biography.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the contract for the Antigua Series twice stipulates that Villalpando's paintings were to be in accordance with the cycle in the cloister of the Franciscan Convent in Mexico City, now thought to be lost. I believe that my examination of the paintings, however, will demonstrate that there is ample evidence that Villalpando employed other visual sources as well. In some cases, this comes in the form of prints that Villalpando may have used as departure points for his compositions, often selecting secondary scenes from within the prints to develop into subjects for his paintings. In at least one case Villalpando based his painting directly on a print, adapting it only slightly to fit the spatial needs of his canvas.

Equal attention is paid to textual sources for the individual scenes, which were most commonly drawn from biographies of the saint and histories of the early years of the Franciscan movement. Although biographies and treatises on the life of Saint Francis have been written with regularity throughout the history of the Franciscan order, I have focused most of my attention on the earlier texts written in the two centuries immediately following the saint's death. These texts were often given privileged status by the Franciscans and became essential for understanding their conception of the life of their founder. Many of the miracles and events described in later texts were likely adapted from these early biographies.

This type of "sourcing" can illuminate, at least in part, how these works were conceived, but I am equally interested in how a careful visual analysis illustrates Villalpando's own influence on their creation. It is my assertion that the familiar idiom,

“the devil is in the details,” rings especially true for Villalpando’s paintings. It is through the configuration of often minor details – the direction of a gaze, the inclusion of extraneous figures, or the design of a garment – that Villalpando instilled his paintings with their compelling sense of dramatic narrative. Without impinging on the spiritual character of their subject, or straying from the legends of the saint’s life, he introduces numerous minor players and sub-plots. This transforms these static images into near theatrical performances, in which the audience’s gaze can roam across the movements of various actors on a packed stage. For the intended viewers of these works - the brothers of the Franciscan convent in Antigua - these paintings were undoubtedly as intellectually stimulating as they were enjoyable; they offered the brothers an opportunity to contemplate their founder’s life as they delved into its nuanced representation in Villalpando’s paintings.

### ***The Baptism of Saint Francis (Fig. 2.1)***

Villalpando’s series may have originally begun with a canvas depicting Saint Francis’s birth, but the first surviving painting depicts his baptism. Although the event undoubtedly occurred, no historical records of Francis’s baptism have ever been found. Based on the ages given for his conversion and death in early sources, he was born in late 1181 or early 1182. It was common practice in Italian cities to baptize all healthy children during the Easter Vigil in Holy Week, which, if true for Francis, would date his baptism to Saturday, March 28, 1182. This mass baptism would have included children born in 1181 following the previous year’s Easter celebrations.<sup>119</sup> Most scholars agree that the ceremony would have taken place in Assisi’s Romanesque cathedral, San Rufino,

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<sup>119</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 6.



although the church may have been undergoing repairs at the time. If this were true, Francis may have been baptized at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, which acted temporarily as the city's cathedral.<sup>120</sup> The bishop would likely have presided over the baptism of at least the first few children, before handing off the duty to other clerics. The possibility that Francis was among those first few gives some legitimacy to the tradition of depicting the infant saint being baptized by a bishop, as seen in Villalpando's painting.

The lack of official records of Francis' baptism is mirrored in the absence of references to the event in the key texts describing the saint's life. The earliest is in Thomas of Celano's *The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul* (1247), commonly referred to as *The Second Life*. In chapter one of *The Remembrance*'s first book, Thomas writes: "He was named John by his own mother when, being born again through water and the Holy Spirit he was changed from a child of wrath into a child of grace."<sup>121</sup> This singular reference would over time be embellished by later Franciscan writers, who developed new legends that reinforce the notion that his saintly nature was divinely recognized from the moment of his birth.

Villalpando appropriately sets his depiction of Francis' baptism within an opulent cathedral setting, not altogether dissimilar from the interior of Assisi's cathedral. Although the figures are crowded in the foreground of the picture, the vaulted length of the church is visible behind them, culminating in the distance with a large gilded altarpiece.<sup>122</sup> The immediate architecture surrounding the figures is less clearly organized

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<sup>120</sup> Cf. Omer Englebort. *Saint Francis of Assisi: A Biography*. Trans. Eve Marie Cooper, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised and augmented by Ignatius Brady and Raphael Brown. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966. pp. 405-6.

<sup>121</sup> Thomas of Celano, "The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul," (1247) in Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:241.

<sup>122</sup> Francisco de la Maza asserted that this architectural setting may be modeled on the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City, or the interior of the Church of Saint Augustine in Mexico City. It would have been recently completed in 1691 and Maza states that nineteenth century historians believed Villalpando do

then the cathedral space behind them. The silhouette of a Solomonic column is visible on the extreme left, while on the extreme right the ceiling is supported by two Corinthian columns. Given these architectural cues, the baptism appears to be taking place in an auxiliary space, removed from the main body of the cathedral. Barely visible below and to the left of the Solomonic column is a *mostrador*, a tiered stand used for the display of valuable objects that here appears to display pieces of metalwork.

The painting's figures encircle a large stone baptismal font (**Fig. 2.2**) that sits on a tiered base in the foreground of the painting. The side visible to the viewer is decorated with a relief that depicts Saint John the Baptist, his proper right hand raised in the act of baptizing Christ, although the latter is partially obscured by an ornate gold ewer.<sup>123</sup> The ewer was presumably used to fill the baptismal font with water and its placement creates a striking visual relationship with the relief. John the Baptist's raised hand appears to bless the ewer and by extension the water soon to be poured over the infant Francis's brow.<sup>124</sup> The connection was not without precedent, as ornate ewers of this type were sometimes decorated with images of the baptism of Christ, as seen in an ornamental print by Jean Lepautre (1618-1682) (**Fig. 2.3**) from the mid-seventeenth century. By including John the Baptist in this fashion, Villalpando creates a connection between the lives of

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be the church's designer, although he offers no reference for this claim. See de la Maza 1964, 146. Luis Luján Muñoz repeats this claim in both his texts on the Guatemala series: Luján Muñoz 1983, 9; Luján Muñoz 1986, 124.

<sup>123</sup> de la Maza 1964, 145. A painting of the *Baptism of Christ* by Villalpando is in the Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato.

<sup>124</sup> In the Museo Nacional de Arte there is an eighteenth-century painting by an unknown artist depicting *Saint Francis Xavier Baptizing the Infidels* that has a baptismal font that is very similar to the one in Villalpando's painting. In addition to having generally the same shape, it also included a relief depicting Saint John Baptizing Christ, with a large ewer placed in roughly the same position. See Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, ed., *Catálogo comentado del Museo Nacional de Arte. Nueva España Tomo I*, (México: Museo Nacional de Arte, 1999), 239-40.

Francis and Christ, in a sense implying that both received the sacrament with the blessing of John the Baptist.

Directly behind the baptismal font stands an angel, his dark wings outstretched above the crowd of people, holding the infant Francis above the basin. He is dressed as a religious pilgrim with his walking staff visible to his right, mimicking the positioning of the bishop's crozier, and a small shell pinned on his proper right shoulder. This "pilgrim angel" appears in several of the later legends mentioned above that developed around Francis's birth, sometimes revealing his divine nature and sometimes posing as a human pilgrim. In *The Kinship of Saint Francis* (1365) by Arnald of Sarrant, the author writes that a pilgrim begged at the door of Francis's home on the day of his birth. After receiving alms from the serving maid, he begged to see the new child born to the household. Although initially refused by the maid, the pilgrim insisted and Francis's mother, Pica de Bourlemont, allowed the maid to bring the child to him:

"When she had done this, the pilgrim took him in his arms, and said joyfully and devoutly to the maid: "Today two children were born in this neighborhood; one of whom, this one, will be among the better of the world, the other among the worst.""<sup>125</sup>

This scene is depicted in the first print (**Fig. 2.4**) of Philip Galle's (1537-1612) series on the life of the saint. Later texts embellish the legend further, describing the pilgrim angel as presenting the infant Francis at the baptismal font, as he does in Villalpando's painting.<sup>126</sup> Friar Pedro de Alva y Astorga's (1604-1667) *Naturae Prodigium gratiae*

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<sup>125</sup> Arnald of Sarrant, "The Kinship of Saint Francis," (1365) in Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:696. In a footnote, the authors cite Fortini's text on the saint, which states that according to the *Chronicle* of Albert of Strade, the Empress Constance gave birth to the future Emperor Frederick II while staying with family near Assisi. Arnaldo Fortini, *Francis of Assisi*, (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 108-9.

<sup>126</sup> Friar Miguel de la Purísima, *Vida Evangélica y Apostólica de los Frailes Menores*, (Barcelona: Gabriel Nogués, 1641).

*portentum* (1651), discussed in greater depth in the next chapter, further identifies the angel as Saint Michael, who, with God's assistance, assigns angels to protect the child.<sup>127</sup>

To the left of the angel stand two figures (**Fig. 2.5**) who are likely Francis's parents, Pietro di Bernardone and Pica de Bourlemont. Francisco de Maza identifies the pair as the infant's godparents, an identification that is repeated by Lujan Muñoz.<sup>128</sup> Although their assertion makes sense within the context of the ritual of the Baptism, I can find no mention of the saint's godparents in any of the biographies of Francis's life, whereas his parents are included in numerous descriptions of his early life. It is likely that they would have appeared in other paintings from the series that are now lost. Pietro di Bernardone does appear in the next surviving painting in the series, *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, and the similarity in appearance between Bernardone in that painting and this figure further indicates him to be the saint's father.

This identification is reinforced by the rich clothing Villalpando has depicted them wearing. Pietro di Bernardone was a successful urban merchant, although the specifics of his business are unclear and recent biographers of Saint Francis have speculated that he may have begun life relatively poor. Pica de Bourlemont's family appears to have been better established and it is possible that it was from her dowry that Pietro built his business.<sup>129</sup> Rather than depict the saint's parents as prosperous twelfth century Italian merchants, Villalpando has instead garbed them in the fashion of late seventeenth century nobles from Spain or its viceroyalties. Bernardone is dressed in a

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<sup>127</sup> Friar Pedro de Alva y Astorga, *Naturae Prodigium gratiae portentum*, (Madrid: 1651), Tabula XXV, Privilegio XIV & XVI.

<sup>128</sup> de la Maza 1964, 145; Luján Muñoz 1983, 9; Luján Muñoz 1986, 124. Both de la Maza, and Luján Muñoz also identify the male figure as a possible self-portrait of Villalpando, based on his similarity to the supposed self-portrait of the artist in the *Apparition of Saint Michael* in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City.

<sup>129</sup> Thompson 2012, 5-6.

fine doublet of black cloth, contrasted with a thick white *lechuguilla*, or ruff collar. His proper right leg is stretched outward, revealing his gray stocking and buckled shoes.<sup>130</sup>

The ornate hilt of a sword is visible at his proper left hip, while he clutches his hat against his side in his proper right hand. Bernardone stares out directly at the viewer, which, when taken with his open stance and outstretched proper left hand, seems to invite the viewer in to witness the ritual.

Pica de Bourlemont's focus, in contrast to that of her husband, is on the ritual before her. Although the angel supports Francis's weight, her hands are visible on the blanket that covers his lower half in an almost tender fashion, as if she has just finished tucking it tighter around his waist. Although only the upper portion of her corseted dress is visible, we glimpse the richness of her garments in the gathering of lace visible at her wrists and along the broad, off-the-shoulder collar. Her wealth is further underscored by the abundance of her jewelry; gold rings and earrings, a large gold pin in her hair, and a heavy pendant centered on her chest, suspended from a stand of pearls that follows the upper line of her bodice. A translucent veil is draped over her head and down her shoulders, adding a note of sobriety that seems in keeping with the seriousness of her expression. Like her husband's, her clothes are consistent with those of a Spanish noblewoman. Villalpando would have seen such garments in prints and portraits, as well as worn by aristocratic women in New Spain. His depiction of Pica recalls portraits of noblewomen created at the court of Charles II, such as a portrait in the John G. Johnson Collection (**Fig. 2.6**) attributed to Juan Carreño de Miranda (1614-1685).

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<sup>130</sup> A figure stands next to Pietro di Bernardone's leg, its small height indicating that it could be a child. This portion of the canvas has suffered significant damage and the face and body of the figure appear crudely overpainted, making it difficult to ascertain even its gender, let alone its purpose in the composition.

The bishop stands opposite from Francis's parents, (**Fig. 2.7**) his proper left hand lightly holding his golden crosier while he leans forward to pour the baptismal water on the infant Francis using a small shell, likely one made of silver, similar to an eighteenth-century example (**Fig. 2.8**) now in the Museo Nacional del Virreinato in Tepotzotlán, Mexico. He wears a heavy cope, embroidered with gold thread on the outside, but lined with a plush red fabric that matches the interior of his miter. The cope is pulled back to reveal his delicate surplice and a gold cross that dangles from his neck as he leans forward. The cross has caught the gaze of the infant Francis, who turns his head in its direction. In a surprising addition to the scene, a small white dog sits at the bishop's feet, its paw upraised and face turned upward to witness the baptism. The meaning of the dog's presence is unclear, although the addition of a small toy dog at a baptism ceremony seems quite a deliberate choice. Perhaps it is an allusion to fidelity and Francis's future devotion to the church. The fact that it is a small toy dog, similar to those sometimes found in aristocratic portraits of this period, may make it an allusion to the wealth and status of Francis's family. One final possibility is that it alludes to Francis's special relationship with animals, as evidenced by his later preaching to fishes, birds, and wolves.

Behind the bishop crowd numerous clerics, their white collars sometimes visible above their black cassocks. One of the priests behind him carries a tray on which two goblets are visible. A man on the far-right edge of the composition stares out at the viewer in similar fashion to Bernardone, drawing the viewer's attention. He also carries a sword, his proper left hand resting on its gold hilt while clutching his hat. His other hand

appears to be clutching an edge of the bishop's cope, pulling it upward.<sup>131</sup> The faces of other figures appear interspersed in the spaces between Francis's parents and the angel's outstretched wings. As seen in the works of this series and numerous other paintings in his oeuvre, Villalpando is a master at depicting layered crowds of people, their faces becoming less clearly defined as they recede further from the foreground of the painting. The overall effect is one of intense activity – all seem aware they are witnessing a momentous event and they appear to press forward for a closer look.

The drama of the scene is further enhanced by a burst of clouds (**Fig. 2.9**) that have opened above the baptismal font, revealing a small cartouche at their center inscribed with Hebrew inspired letters. Although their exact forms are difficult to discern due to paint losses in that area of the canvas, it is likely that these were intended to depict a form of the Hebrew name of God, Yahweh, used in the Bible. Similar characters appear in some engraved depictions of the baptism of Christ, such as an engraving by Jan Harmensz. Muller (1571-1628) (**Fig. 2.10**) from 1590. In the engraving, the characters appear in a burst of light and clouds, surrounded by angels playing musical instruments. The Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove descends to the baptism scene below, drawing a connection between it and the textual representation of God. Although Villalpando's painting lacks a representation of the Holy Spirit, in a sense the pilgrim angel may act in the same capacity, forming a similar vertical relationship between the heavenly and earthly planes seen in the pictures.

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<sup>131</sup> The outward gaze of the figure is striking and it is possible that the image is a portrait, or even a self-portrait of the artist. It is difficult to examine the figure closely – in early images there is significant damage around the face, making it difficult to read fully. In 1995 this painting was restored the face was heavily overpainted, leaving its appearance dramatically changed.

Villalpando employs a similar element in his paintings of *The Marriage of the Virgin*, in which a light filled group of clouds opens above the Virgin and Saint Joseph to again reveal Hebrew inspired letters. The version now in the Museo de El Carmen in Mexico City (**Fig. 2.11**) has lettering that is very similar to that of the *Baptism of Saint Francis*. Writing about a similar painting of *The Marriage of the Virgin* by Villalpando, now in the Museum of the Cathedral of Jaén, Spain, Rogelio Ruiz Gomar describes these clouds as indicative of God's attendance of the event depicted. "The vivid brilliance it emits signals the presence of God, whose hands emerge from the bottom of the cloud and seem to push the bride and groom together in divine benediction of their union."<sup>132</sup> Although God's hands do not emerge in this painting, his support for the child Francis is further demonstrated via the two-winged cherubs that appear among the clouds and cast lilies, roses, and other blossoms down on to the scene below. Strwn on the floor around the baptismal font, they act as a physical reminder of the Lord's blessing on this event and in particular on its main participant.

Saint Francis's baptism was not included in either of the two editions of Philip Galle's (1537-1612) influential print series depicting the life of the saint, nor was it included in the subsequent versions of the series adapted by Giacomo Franco (1550-1620) or Thomas de Leu (1560-1612).<sup>133</sup> These series all begin with Francis's birth and then jump forward to his youth, depicting his vision before the cross in the Chapel of San

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<sup>132</sup> Donna Pierce, Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, and Clara Bargellini, eds., *Painting a New World: Mexican Art and Life, 1521-1821*, (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 2004), 181.

<sup>133</sup> For a detailed analysis of Galle's set, see Servus Gieben, "Philip Galle's Original Engravings of the Life of Saint Francis and the Collected Editions of 1587," *Collectanea franciscana*, vol. 46 (1976), 241-307. Unless specified, I will draw on Galle's second edition of prints, sometimes referred to as the Anvers edition. For further discussion of these print series see Simonetta Prospero Valenti Rodinò, "La diffusione dell'iconografia francescana attraverso l'incisione." in *L'immagine Di San Francesco Nella Controriforma*, ed. Valenti R. S. Prospero and Claudio M. Strinati. (Rome: Quasar, 1982), 159-223.



Damiano. Francis's baptism is the subject of the second print in Francesco Villamena's (1564-1624) set of forty-nine prints on the saint's life, first published in 1594. In the print (**Fig. 2.12**) a small crowd of people cluster around the baptismal font, where the bishop is in the act of pouring water over the head of the infant Francis. The saint is held by a pilgrim, but unlike in Villalpando's painting he is not revealed to be an angel.

The Villamena print bears only a passing resemblance to Villalpando's painting, making it appear unlikely that he used it as the basis for his painting in a significant fashion. However, given Villalpando's use of print sources in the conception of many of his works, it is possible that this print and others like it would have offered a general scheme from which Villalpando could model his composition. Another relevant example could be a print from the *Obsequies for the Sacred Catholic and Royal Majesty Margaret of Austria, Queen of Spain*, published in 1612. Among the twenty-six prints showing scenes from the life of Queen Margaret of Austria (1584-1611) is a depiction of the baptism of one of her sons (**Fig. 2.13**), by Jacques Callot (French, 1592-1635). Pietro di Bernardone's pose in Villalpando's painting is reminiscent of that of the Spanish nobleman who stands at the right of the print, both wearing similar garments and standing with their legs extended. In both works an attendant lifts the bishop's cope, revealing the garment underneath. Another possibility is an engraving of the *Baptism of Saint Dominic* (1611) (**Fig. 2.14**) by Theodoor Galle (1571-1633) from a set of engravings made to accompany a biography of the saint published in 1611. Galle's placement of the baptism at the forefront of a long receding architectural space recalls the setting of Villalpando's composition.

Nevertheless, as with the Villamena engraving, the Callot and Galle prints do not appear to be direct sources for Villalpando's composition, but again hint at Villalpando's possible use of such source material. Synthesizing elements from each and perhaps drawing on painted examples as well, such as from the lost series of paintings by Echave, Villalpando's painting would have read as both new and yet familiar to the Franciscan brothers. The work builds upon an established language of images while at the same time emphasizing elements, such as the pilgrim angel, which reinforce the identification of the work with Saint Francis.

***Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods (Fig. 2.15)***

The next surviving painting in Villalpando's life of Saint Francis is set several years later, when Francis was a young man. After selling goods that belonged to his family in order to free himself to devote his life to God's work, Francis was imprisoned by his father. Bernardone recovers the money Francis made and, attempting to force his son into renouncing his new lifestyle, takes the young man to see the Bishop of Assisi. The ensuing scene was first described in Thomas of Celano's *The Life of Saint Francis* (1229), commonly known as *The First Life*. The earliest biography of the saint's life, it was commissioned shortly before Francis's canonization by Pope Gregory IX in 1228 and was completed the following year. As described in *The First Life*, Bernardone's strategy backfires:

“Then he [Bernardone] led the son [Francis] to the bishop of the city to make him renounce into the bishop's hands all rights of inheritance and return everything that he had. Not only did he not refuse this, but he hastened joyfully and eagerly to do what was demanded.

When he was in front of the bishop he neither delayed nor hesitated, but immediately took off and threw down all his clothes and returned them to his father. He did not even keep his trousers on, and he was completely stripped bare before everyone. The bishop, observing his frame of mind and admiring his fervor and determination, got up and, gathering him in his own arms, covered him with the mantle he was wearing.”<sup>134</sup>

This pivotal moment, when Francis abandons his worldly life and its exterior trappings for a life of pious devotion and contemplation, is often described as Francis’s spiritual rebirth. It is almost always included in the saint’s biographies, with many of the later texts building on Thomas of Celano’s description.<sup>135</sup>

Villalpando sets the scene within a small, nondescript room decorated with brocade panels that today have largely faded into the painting’s red ground. There is a doorway and window behind the various figures, through which several Corinthian columns and a vaulted ceiling are visible, reminiscent of the architecture in the painting depicting Francis’s *Baptism*. On the far-right side of the open doorway, between a column and the doorways edge, (**Fig. 2.16**) a choir space is visible below the vaulted ceiling, further suggesting that the scene is unfolding in a religious building in Assisi, perhaps the city’s cathedral.<sup>136</sup>

Bernardone leads a group of seven men, (**Fig. 2.17**) nearly all of whom wear the *lechuguilla*. Although popular among the Spanish nobility in the sixteenth century, the

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<sup>134</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Life of Saint Francis,” (1229), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:193.

<sup>135</sup> Other early texts that recount this event include *The Life of Saint Francis* (1234) by Brother Julian of Speyer; *The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul* (1247) by Thomas of Celano; *The Major Legend of Saint Francis* (1260-63) and *The Minor Legend of Saint Francis* (1260-66) by Bonaventure of Bagnoregio.

<sup>136</sup> In *The Legend of Three Companions* the authors describe this scene as taking place in the “bishop’s rooms,” although it does not specify where. Other texts describing the scene are similarly vague. Brother Leo, Brother Angelo, and Brother Rufino, “The Legend of the Three Companions,” (1241-47), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:80.

collar was later banned by Philip IV in 1621.<sup>137</sup> Black fabrics predominate, a color that by the seventeenth century was seen to express a degree of moral virtue, but also was particularly associated with the Spanish monarchy and court.<sup>138</sup> A single figure on the extreme left of the canvas disrupts this image of wealth and privilege, wearing a simple white collar open to reveal his bare neck, perhaps indicating that he is a servant of one of the others.<sup>139</sup> Bernardone stands with one of his hands tucked into his belt while the other reaches out toward Francis as if to admonish him against proceeding. The noblemen seem more focused on Bernardone than they do on the young Francis, although their faces gaze in different directions, as if they have just chaotically arrived on the scene. One nobleman has placed his hand on his chest, as if taken aback either by Francis's actions, or the reaction of his father.

Francis kneels (**Fig. 2.18**) upon a raised platform, covered by a rug, on which the bishop stands with his throne visible behind him. Behind Francis's feet, (**Fig. 2.19**) his fine clothes lie on the tiled floor, the gold hilt of his sword placed prominently atop the pile. The unlaced *lechuguilla* and rich gold embroidery visible on the discarded garments intentionally echoes the finery worn by the group of noblemen, acting as witnesses to his shocking actions. In contrast to the varied expressions of the noblemen, the Bishop appears serene as he stands under an embroidered cloth of honor that extends outward above his head. Beneath that same cloth, just above the bishop's throne, hangs a gold trimmed processional banner depicting an image of the crucified Christ.

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<sup>137</sup> Amanda Wunder, "Dress," in *Lexikon of the Hispanic Baroque: Transatlantic Exchange and Transformation*, ed. Evonne Levy and Kenneth Mills. (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014), 108.

<sup>138</sup> See José Luis Colomer, "Black and the Royal Image," in *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, ed. José Luis Colomer and Amalia Descalzo. (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2014), 77-112.

<sup>139</sup> Much of the lower half of this figure is currently obscured by damage to the picture, so it is difficult to speculate on his purpose in the painting. However, the difference in his costuming seems a deliberate choice, clearly indicting some difference between him and the other nobleman.

The bishop is flanked by two clerics in black cassocks, one of whom holds an indistinct garment in his arms, ready to offer it to Francis. Saint Bonaventure, in *The Major Legend of Saint Francis* (1260-63), writes that the bishop “bade his servants give him [Francis] something to cover his body. They brought him a poor, cheap cloak of a farmer who worked for the bishop.”<sup>140</sup> As in the painting of Francis’s baptism, the bishop opens his arm to reveal the white surplice beneath his cope. He uses his proper right arm to drape a portion of his cope around the saint, as if to shield him from his father’s wrath. Francis holds his hands outward in a supplicating gesture and the bishop’s cross dangles just above his proper left palm.

Francis is left wearing only a pair of voluminous white breeches that were common undergarments during Villalpando’s lifetime. This contradicts Celano’s account, and other texts that describe the scene, which often highlight Francis’s nakedness before the bishop and witnesses. In *The Life of Saint Francis*, written in 1234 by Brother Julian of Speyer, the author reuses much of Celano’s languages but further emphasizes Francis’s nakedness, drawing a connection between the stripped-down Francis and the bare body of Christ on the cross:

“Thus the naked man of God [Francis] had conformed himself to the naked one on the cross, and had perfectly fulfilled the counsel of renouncing all his possessions. He was now separated from the contemplation of God by no earthly thing except the barrier of the flesh.”<sup>141</sup>

The linking of the nakedness of Francis to that of Christ on the cross is reiterated in later texts, with Saint Bonaventure writing in the *Major Legend*: “Thus the servant of the Most

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<sup>140</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:538.

<sup>141</sup> Julian of Speyer, “The Life of Saint Francis,” (1234-5), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:375.

High King was left naked that might follow his naked crucified Lord, whom he loved”<sup>142</sup> and in the *Minor Legend* “Drunk in spirit, he was not afraid to stand naked out of love for Him who for us hung naked on the cross.”<sup>143</sup> This relationship is visually reinforced in Villalpando’s painting by the presence of the banner with an image of Christ crucified hanging behind the bishop. Indeed, as Francis kneels, his gaze is not inclined fully upward to meet that of the prelate, but instead seems to linger on the image of Christ.

This scene appears in Galle’s series (**Fig. 2.20**), as well as in the adapted versions by Giacomo Franco and Thomas de Leu, but interestingly in all three it is depicted as a secondary scene in the background, rather than as the critical event portrayed in Francis’s hagiography. The focus of *Examples of Chastity and Virginity*, as the print is titled in the upper cartouche, is Francis’s rejection of carnal temptation. In the foreground Francis lies naked on a bed of burning coals and invites a beautiful woman, the source of his temptation, to join him. In another scene in the background temptation takes the form of a demon, who Francis escapes by again shedding his clothes, this time lying in a bed of snow. There he constructs several figures, a woman and children visible among them, which act as representations of worldly temptations that may distract him from his devotion to God. At the right in the background sits a large building, (**Fig. 2.21**) its side open to reveal Francis taking off his clothes before the Bishop. In a sense, this scene represents the rejection of another form of temptation, specifically a life of wealth and comfort. Francis’s father stands between his son and the bishop, his fur-lined coat a small reminder of his role as the source of the rich lifestyle that Francis abandons.

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<sup>142</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:538.

<sup>143</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Minor Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-66), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:687.

Villamena's series also includes a print devoted to this scene (**Fig. 2.22**) that is slightly more elaborate than the work by Galle. It incorporates several clerics who act as attendants to the bishop and Bernardone is given a large club to carry, presumably to aid him in forcing his son to accede to his wishes. As in the Villamena print depicting the saint's baptism, neither this image nor the work by Galle seems to provide a specific compositional source for Villalpando's painting. Again, it seems likely that these prints could have offered general cues for the artist, denoting the essential elements of the scene. He may have also drawn on other works already present in New Spain, including early mural cycles that depict the life of the saint, such as a rare surviving example of this scene (**Fig. 2.23**) from the sixteenth century in a convent in San Pedro Cholula. In contrast to the lack of detail in the visual depictions of this vital moment in the saint's life, the richness of the textual descriptions, as seen in the passages given above, would also have allowed the artist to elaborate and embellish the composition, heightening its drama. Villalpando's focus on capturing the anger and shock of Bernardone and his companions, as well as the spiritual understanding between Francis and the bishop, reinforce the significant nature of this event, reminding us that it is in this episode that Francis is fully reborn into the pious figure that will have a profound effect on the early modern Church.

### ***Saint Francis and the Tempest (Fig. 2.24)***

A significant chronological leap occurs between the previous painting and the next surviving canvas in Villalpando's series. Although they were undoubtedly included, none of the paintings depicting Francis's life following his spiritual conversion, or the

founding of the Franciscan order are known to survive. Instead the next canvas depicts a scene from c.1212 when, accompanied by several brothers, Francis attempted to sail to the Holy Land. As described in Celano's *First Life*: "In the sixth year of his conversion, burning with the desire for holy martyrdom, he wished to take a ship to the region of Syria to preach the Christian faith and repentance to the Saracens and other unbelievers."<sup>144</sup> In the summer of 1211 Francis traveled overland from Assisi to the Adriatic coast. He boarded a ship there, but a storm forced them into port in Dalmatia. Unable to find a ship leaving for the Holy Land in late summer, Francis and his companions begged to be taken on a ship departing for Ancona, but were denied passage due to their inability to pay.<sup>145</sup>

Surprisingly, Francis and his companions secretly stowed away aboard the ship. Although they had no provisions, a man (perhaps meant to be interpreted as Christ) miraculously arrived at the port and gave one of the sailors on their ship extra provisions, entreating him "Take with you all these things and in their time of need give them to those poor men hiding on your ship."<sup>146</sup> Following their departure the ship was beset by a great storm, which left the sailors exhausted and made it impossible for them to go ashore. They soon used up their supplies, save the food provided for the Franciscans, which miraculously multiplied to sustain all aboard. The tale is an allusion to Christ's miracles involving the loaves and fishes, in which a scant amount of food somehow sustained a multitude of people.<sup>147</sup> The connection was noted by Franciscan biographers;

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<sup>144</sup> Thomas of Celano, "The Life of Saint Francis," (1229), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:229.

<sup>145</sup> Thompson 2012, 45.

<sup>146</sup> Thomas of Celano, "The Life of Saint Francis," (1229), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:230.

<sup>147</sup> The first miracle, sometimes called the "Feeding of 5,000" is recounted in Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14. The second, sometimes called the "Feeding of 4,000" is recounted in Matthew 15:32-39 and Mark 8:1-9.



in his *Life of Saint Francis*, Julian of Speyer writes before his description of the miracle “And so, through him the Lord recalled to memory his miracles.”<sup>148</sup>

Variations of the story appear in later biographies of the saint, but in this canvas rather than depict the miracle, Villalpando has instead focused on the storm that waylaid Francis’s journey. He has contorted the ship to fit snugly in the boundaries of the canvas, its stern and bow both curved upward toward its mast. In part, this may have been done to accommodate the vertical format of the picture, but it also allows for a clearer view of the central portion of the deck where Francis stands, the straight line of his posture mimicking the ship’s mast. Wearing only his habit, he appears oblivious to the chaos around him. Sailors pull on ropes in a frantic attempt to secure the ship’s sail against the wind, while another has grabbed the tiller and attempts to steer the vessel. The painting recalls Henri d’Avranches account of the scene in *The Versified Life of Saint Francis* (1230-35):

“Fast roll on the clouds, winds rise out of every quarter,  
Waves build up and crash against one another, nowhere  
Is there level sea, all is rough; billows foam with rage.  
There’s a rush for the ropes, the sailors release the sea-anchor.  
But the storm-wind hisses at the mast enmeshed with ropes,”<sup>149</sup>

Amidst this drama three monks surround Francis (**Fig. 2.25**) and attempt to draw his attention to the activity, while another kneels by Francis’s feet, gesturing at the choppy waters beneath the ship. The saint’s expression remains impassive, his eyes lidded and his head turned slightly downward as if in submission to the events around him. He holds

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<sup>148</sup> Julian of Speyer, “The Life of Saint Francis,” (1234-5), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:394.

<sup>149</sup> Henri d’Avranches, “The Versified Life of Saint Francis,” (1232-39), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:483.

his arms outward in front of his body, the proper right one partially raised, as if blessing the turbulent sea.

The scene recalls another of Christ's miracles, in which he and his disciples were caught in a storm while sailing across the Sea of Galilee. Discovered to be asleep despite the tempest, Christ was roused by his followers and, after admonishing them for their lack of faith, caused the storm to cease.<sup>150</sup> Rather than draw on one of the print series depicting the life of Saint Francis, none of which include images of Francis's abortive journey to the Holy Land, Villalpando's composition appears to be directly inspired by a depiction of that miracle from *The Life and Passion of Christ*, published by Adriaen Collaert (Flemish, c. 1560-1618) in 1598. Among the 51 engravings in the series is an image of *The Miracle of Christ on the Sea at Galilee* (**Fig. 2.26**) by Cornelis Galle the Younger (Flemish, 1615-1678) after drawings by Maarten de Vos (Flemish, 1532-1603). It was not the first time that Villalpando drew on a print from this series for inspiration; his painting of *The Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes* (1670-80), now in the Church of San Felipe Neri in Mexico City, is also based on a print of the same subject from this set.

In the print, as in the painting, sailors attempt to secure the ship during a storm while several of Christ's disciples attempt to rouse him from slumber. Despite Villalpando's adaptation of the overall structure of the ship – straightening the mast and contorting it to fit the vertical format – some features from the print remain, such as the ship's prow jutting out from the bow and the shape of the visible rudder. The figure pulling hard on the ship's tiller, leaning out over the edge of the ship's rail, is in a similar

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<sup>150</sup> Matthew 8:18,23-27; Mark 4:35-41; and Luke 8:23-25.

pose in both print and painting. Two other sailors visible in Villalpando's painting – the man closest to the bow that is attempting to secure a rope and the man who is attempting to secure the sail – both also appear in a similar fashion in the print, although Villalpando has changed the latter's position and wrapped part of the sail around his torso, heightening the sense of drama and frantic action. Villalpando also positions four brothers around Saint Francis in the painting, much as four disciples crowd around the seated Christ in Galle's engraving. The poses of the two brothers to Francis's left appear to be modeled on the two corresponding figures in the engraving, with each of their faces focused on Saint Francis or Christ, but gesturing dramatically to the scene around them.

In selecting a print from *The Life and Passion of Christ*, Villalpando has used the parallels between Christ and Francis's lives to his advantage, drawing on a print source available for one to create a composition about the other. Although it is likely that the Franciscans had significant input in the designation of scenes to be included in the series, either via the *mapa* mentioned in the contract or through their selection of the Echave series as a model, it seems unlikely they would have specifically recommended the use of Collaert's series. Instead this would appear to represent Villalpando's own creative problem solving in action, drawing on his knowledge of European compositions and, perhaps more importantly, on his familiarity with the parallels between the lives of Francis and Christ. A popular and frequent theme in Franciscan literature, Villalpando has with this work created something of a unique image. It is worth noting that I have yet to locate another canvas depicting this scene from the saint's life among the sets produced in the Spanish viceroalties.

***The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire (Fig. 2.27)***

In Thomas of Celano's *Life of Saint Francis* he relates an important early vision witnessed by several of the brothers that underscored Francis's holiness for his followers. Once, when Francis was not with them, the brothers took shelter in a small building for the night. Celano writes that after midnight, as some of them lay sleeping and others praying, a fiery chariot burst through the door of the small house, circling over their heads. He continues:

“On top of it sat a large ball that looked like the sun, and it made the night bright as day. Those who were awake were dumbfounded, while those sleeping woke up in a fright, for they sensed the brightness with their hearts as much as with their bodies.”<sup>151</sup>

Initially unsure what to make of their vision, the strength they drew from the experience later led them to reveal their inner conscience to each other. The brothers interpreted the brilliant orb to have been Francis:

“At last they understood, realizing that the soul of the holy father radiated with great brilliance. Thus, thanks to the gift of his outstanding purity and his deep concerns for his sons, he merited the blessing of such a gift from the Lord. They learned time and time again by clear sights and their own experience that the hidden recesses of their hearts was not hidden from their most holy father.”<sup>152</sup>

Celano continues by relating other examples of Francis's ability to discern the inner strengths and frailties of his followers. The vision thus seems to both inspire his followers to work to achieve Francis's divine grace, but also warns them that to do so they must look inward and see their own shortcomings.

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<sup>151</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Life of Saint Francis,” (1228-9), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:224.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

Elements of the story were enhanced and further explained in later biographies of the saint. In *The Major Legend*, Bonaventure keeps the events of the vision the same but its effect is more explicit. Although the brothers are terrified by what they witness, “they sensed the brightness with their hearts as much as with their bodies, while the conscience of each was laid bare to the others by the power of that marvelous light.”<sup>153</sup> Rather than share their thoughts verbally, they are now imparted via the light that is a representation of their founder. This notion of Francis (as an orb of light) aboard a fiery chariot is also significant, as it links the saint to other key figures in the legends of the Church.

Bonaventure continues:

“As they [the brothers] looked into each other’s hearts,  
they all understood together that the holy father,  
while away from them in body,  
was present in spirit  
transfigured in such an image  
radiant with heavenly brilliance  
and inflamed with burning ardor  
in a glowing chariot of fire,  
as the Lord had shown him to them  
that they might follow him as true Israelites.  
Like a second Elijah,  
God had made him  
a chariot and charioteer for spiritual men.”<sup>154</sup>

Francis’s connection to Elijah is repeated throughout Bonaventure’s *Major Legend* and other Franciscan texts. In the Old Testament, Elijah was an important prophet who defended the faith against the worshippers of Baal, calling down fire upon them and performing miracles, including the raising of the dead. Elijah eventually ascends to

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<sup>153</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:552.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

heaven aboard a fiery chariot, without suffering a physical death.<sup>155</sup> He thus provides a biblical antecedent for the vision of Francis aboard a fiery chariot, and indeed as the legend of the vision continued to develop Francis soon becomes the charioteer, driving the fiery chariot rather than appearing as a glowing orb within it.<sup>156</sup>

In Villalpando's painting Saint Francis rides comfortably in a golden chariot that seems to reflect the light radiating from a brilliant orb, or sun, set behind the saint's body.<sup>157</sup> The chariot is drawn by four white horses, the two closest to Francis with faces reminiscent of the horses in the painting showing *The Conversion of Two Thieves* (**Fig. 2.32**). Their anthropomorphic expressions seem to embody the fiery character of the chariot, which rides on light drenched clouds painted in shades of yellow and russet. The vision of the saint dominates the canvas, occluding any sense of the setting – there is no sign of the small building or doorway described in the textual accounts of the event. The eight monks who share in the vision mirror each other in their astonishment, gazing at the Saint with a mix of fear and awe. The only other object in the room are a pair of books, presumably prayer books, left open and discarded on the floor. They further heighten the tension of the scene, reminding viewers that the brothers have been caught completely unaware by this unexpected vision.

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<sup>155</sup> 2 Kings 2:2-11.

<sup>156</sup> In a later sermon, Bonaventure describes Francis as “like a horseman in the chariot.” Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “Sermon on the Feast of the Transferral,” (May 1267), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001., 2:743. In another sermon from that same year he states after appearing to the brother, Francis was “taken up with Elijah and made pleasing to God.” Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Evening Sermon of Saint Francis,” (October 4, 1267), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:761.

<sup>157</sup> Villalpando has shown Francis with the wounds of the stigmata, although biographies indicate this scene took place before that miracle. The brothers were given a vision of Saint Francis; however, it is not assumed that Francis was bodily taken up in the chariot. Although speculative, perhaps this allowed Villalpando to represent him here with the stigmata; it is not the physical Francis who we see in the chariot, but rather something of a manifestation of his spiritual self. This would imply that Francis already carried the stigmata – and thus his connection to Christ – even before he carried the physical wounds.

In the first edition of Galle's print series he seems to conflate this scene with legends surrounding Francis's death that describe Franciscan brothers witnessing Francis's soul ascend to heaven.<sup>158</sup> In the first edition of Galle's print, the saint perishes (**Fig. 2.28**) within a vaulted interior space, but is shown outside ascending to heaven aboard a fiery chariot. In the altered second edition, (**Fig. 2.29**) a new print was created with the vision of the fiery chariot as its primary subject. The small structure in which the vision took place is represented by several wood beams that enclose the scene. Outside the structure, the miracle is witnessed by two groups of supplicants, who kneel and clasp their hands together as they gaze at Francis – as if somehow able to see into the building. The group on the right is made up of Franciscan nuns, led by Saint Clare visible at the front of the group, identified by her halo and in the inscription at the bottom of the print. Similarly identified are Saint Louis, King of France, and Saint Elisabeth of Hungary, who kneel at the front of the group on the left.

Galle's print lacks the drama and intensity of Villalpando's composition, and there is little formal resemblance between them. The same is true for Villamena's print (**Fig. 2.30**), which depicts the scene outdoors rather than within an enclosed structure. Francis, encircled by the glowing orb, soars upward aboard the chariot in peaceful pose, kneeling in prayer and gazing heavenward. Only a single brother witnesses the event, and gestures toward it as he attempts to rouse his sleeping companions. If Villamena's print lacks the drama of Villalpando's painting, even more so than the Galle prints, Thomas de Leu's print comes closest to imparting a similar level of narrative spectacle. In de Leu's adaptation of Galle's composition (**Fig. 2.31**) the shocked bodies of the brothers fill the

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<sup>158</sup> See the section of this Chapter devoted to *The Vision of Brother Leo* or *The Assumption of Saint Francis*.

foreground outside the wood shelter while the attendant figures are set further into the background. The poses of the brothers are more dynamic and natural, conveying their shock at their vision. Even Francis, who in de Leu's version has drawn up the hood from his habit, seems surprised. His arms are outstretched and raised, as if trying to maintain his balance on the swiftly moving chariot.

The formal similarities between de Leu's print and Villalpando's painting are not sufficient to identify the print as the source of the painting, but the manner with which both artists capture the drama of this scene points to a larger connection. European prints supplied Villalpando with more than just inspiration for his compositions; they tied him into a larger network of images that allowed artists to become familiar with stylistic developments taking place throughout Europe. For artists on both sides of the Atlantic, prints were a means of broadening their knowledge. De Leu's interpretation of this well-known scene from the saint's life captures all of the dramatic posing and stagecraft of the Baroque. While it may not have been Villalpando's direct compositional source, prints like this one would have likely set the stage for his creation of an equally cosmopolitan version.

***The Conversion of Two Thieves or Saint Francis Converts Two Noblemen (Fig. 2.32)***

De la Maza and Luján identify this canvas as *The Conversion of Two Thieves*, drawn from a story told in *The Little Flowers* (after 1337), a re-edited translation of *The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions* (1328-37) by Ugolino Boniscambi of Montegiorgio.<sup>159</sup> In the area around the Franciscan hermitage of Montecasale, in San

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<sup>159</sup> de la Maza 1964, 146-7; Luján Muñoz 1983, 10; Luján Muñoz 1986, 125. See the "Introduction" to the "Deeds and the Little Flowers" in Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3: 429-34.



Sepolcro, there were three robbers who were well known for their evil deeds. One day they came to the Franciscans, asking their Guardian, Brother Angelo, for something to eat. Recognizing them, he rejected their request and sent them away, refusing to give thieves alms that were meant to support true servants of God. When Francis later returned to Montecasale, Brother Angelo told him what had transpired. Rather than praise him, Francis admonished him for not following Christ's example:

“They would be brought back to God more easily by sweetness than by cruel rebukes. Therefore our teacher Jesus Christ whose Gospel we have promised to observe, says that it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick, and that He did not come to call the just but to call the sinners to repentance, and for that reason He often ate with them.”<sup>160</sup>

Giving Brother Angelo a sack of bread and a jug of wine, Francis ordered him to present it to the robbers and to kneel before them and apologize for his cruelty. Francis also promised that if they would commit no further evil acts that he would provide for their earthly needs. The three robbers were so moved by Angelo's actions that they later came to Francis and renounced their criminal ways, eventually joining the Order.

In Villalpando's painting, the Saint meets with two men in a wooded setting. At the upper left, in the distance, a walled church is visible, presumably Montecasale, with a large cross standing just outside its gate. The two men (**Fig. 2.33**) kneel on the ground before Francis, who seems to be in the act of accepting their supplication and blessing them with his proper right hand. The brother attending Francis raises his hands seemingly in apprehension about the scene taking place in front of him – perhaps an indication that this is the reluctant Brother Angelo. The men are finely dressed and heavily armed; both carry pistols at their belt and the one closer to Francis leans on his rifle. A second rifle

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<sup>160</sup> “The Little Flowers of Saint Francis,” (after 1337), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:610.

lies on the ground next to the other man, who holds the reins of their two horses. If the men appear to submit calmly to Francis's authority, the faces of the two horses (**Fig. 2.34**) seem animated with aggression. Their large eyes and disheveled manes give them the appearance of being far more menacing than the two supposed robbers.

De la Maza's identification of the painting with the story of the three thieves in *The Little Flowers* is convincing, however, there are some inconsistencies between the two that are worth noting and that raise a measure of doubt about the identification. Most notably, the legend involves the conversion of three thieves, rather than the two depicted in Villalpando's painting.<sup>161</sup> Also, as told in *The Little Flowers*, it is Brother Angelo who comes to meet the thieves in the wood, who then "went quickly" to Francis to seek their repentance, implying that they came to him at the hermitage rather than in the forest, although that is by no means certain.<sup>162</sup> An earlier version of the story is found in *The Assisi Compilation* (1244-60), a loose group of texts likely written by brothers who witnessed the early years of the order and which present anecdotes regarding Francis's early years and his interactions with the brothers. This version is less specific as to the number of thieves, but also lacks Francis's direct involvement, or that of Brother Angelo. Instead the saint offers some advice to the brothers of the hermitage about how to deal with thieves, exhorting them to approach the men through kindness and thus draw them to a moral and spiritual life. The brothers again bring the criminals food and drink, causing many of them to repent and some eventually to join the order.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Both *The Deeds of Blessed Francis* and *The Little Flowers* describe three thieves and the story continues after their conversion with information about their lives as Franciscan brothers. Ugolino Boniscambi of Montegiorgio, *The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions*, (1328-37), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:494-500; "The Little Flowers of Saint Francis," (after 1337), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:609-14.

<sup>162</sup> "The Little Flowers of Saint Francis," (after 1337), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:611.

<sup>163</sup> "The Assisi Compilation," (1244-60), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:221-2.

Another possible identification for the painting also comes from *The Little Flowers*. In the chapter that follows the legend of the three thieves, Francis gives an impressive sermon in Bologna, capturing the attention of all who heard him. Among them are two students, Pellegrino and Rinieri, who are so moved by the saint's words that they go to him and ask to be allowed to leave their worldly lives and come to live among the brothers. Francis accepts them and the passage goes on to describe the virtuous lives that each live as Franciscan brothers.<sup>164</sup> This story is slightly more consistent with the painting; two finely dressed young men submit themselves to Francis, who is accompanied by an attendant Franciscan brother. The setting of the scene remains a problem, however, as according to the text the scene takes place in Bologna, rather than in a forest. It is conceivable that placing the figures in the woods, with a church in the distance, allowed for the story to be better understood by a viewer unfamiliar with such an obscure tale. Francis's raised right hand that blesses the two men could also be seen to be gesturing to the church in the distance, as if to indicate their future lives as brothers.

This explanation of the painting and that of de la Maza both resonate with the content of Villalpando's canvas, but the inconsistencies within both interpretations demonstrate that the identification of this scene remains in doubt. Similarly, neither this scene nor one that resembles it appears in any of the prints on the saint's life or in earlier painted series. It may be that the composition was drawn from a source unconnected to the life of Saint Francis and yet to be identified, or that Villalpando invented it himself. The pistols and rifles, for example, as well as the clothing of the two men, seem far more in keeping with late seventeenth-century Mexico than twelfth-century Italy. The large

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<sup>164</sup> "The Little Flowers of Saint Francis," (after 1337), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:614-16.

stone cross that stands outside of the church in the distance also recalls the atrial crosses sometimes found outside Franciscan institutions in New Spain.

### ***The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence (Fig. 2.35)***

The Porziuncula is a small church (**Fig. 2.36**) within the parish of Santa Maria degli Angeli, roughly four kilometers from Assisi, which is now housed within the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels. Its existence is documented in papal records back to the twelfth century, but the name ‘Porzucle’ also appears in a document from the Assisi cathedral archives dated to 1045. Legends also exist that push the origins of the church into antiquity, claiming that it was built during the papacy of Pope Liberius (352-366) by hermits who carried relics of the Virgin Mary with them from the Holy Land.<sup>165</sup> Built on a small portion of land (a “Portiuncula” from which it derives its name) the church belonged to the Benedictine monks of Monte Subasio, but by Francis’s lifetime the church had fallen into disrepair and was being overtaken by the forest.

Francis first came to the Porziuncula not long after the break with his father, as he worked to rebuild various churches in the area around Assisi. Celano writes “When he the holy man of God saw it [the Porziuncula] so ruined, he was moved by piety because he had a warm devotion to the Mother of all good and he began to stay there continually.”<sup>166</sup> Throughout his life Francis would return to the church, which became a hub of activity for the newly founded Franciscan order. Francis even exhorted his followers to revere the structure, according to Celano:

“The saint loved this place more than any other.  
He commanded his brothers

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<sup>165</sup> Noel Muscat, *In Defence [sic] of the Portiuncula Indulgence*, (Malta: TAU Edition, 2012), 9.

<sup>166</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Life of Saint Francis,” (1228-9), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:201.

to venerate it with special reverence.  
He wanted it, like a mirror of the Order,  
always preserved in humility and highest poverty,  
and therefore kept ownership in the hands of others,  
keeping for himself and his brothers only the use of it.”<sup>167</sup>

Despite his claim that he did not desire ownership, Francis would later arrange with the abbot of Monte Subasio to have the Franciscans take over the Porziuncula. Its importance continued to grow, in part due to the many key events in the saint’s life, including his death, which took place there. The Porziuncula was also the site of numerous General Chapters, a regular meeting between the representatives of the rapidly growing Franciscan order.

It was at the Porziuncula that Francis would have a series of important visions that culminated in the granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence, a plenary indulgence that offers complete forgiveness of all previously committed sins for those faithful who complete the required devotions – in this case confessing one’s sins at the Porziuncula from sunset to sunset beginning on August 1, later to be known as the Feast of the Perdono (Pardon).<sup>168</sup> Such universal indulgences were extremely unusual during Francis’s time and the validity of the Porziuncula Indulgence was widely questioned. Although not discussed in the early texts on the life of Saint Francis, scattered references to the miracle were later compiled by Franciscans in the early fourteenth century. A key text from this period is the *Tractatus de Indulgentia Portiunculae* (c. 1334), by Francis Bartholi of Assisi.<sup>169</sup> Divided into forty-two chapters, it gathers and synthesizes testimonies by friars who

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<sup>167</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul,” (1247), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:257.

<sup>168</sup> For the most recent and complete study of the Porziuncula Indulgence see Mario Sensi, *Il Perdono di Assisi*, (Assisi: Edizioni Porziuncola, 2002).

<sup>169</sup> See Muscat 2012, 22-28 for a full biography of Francis Bartholi of Assisi.

knew Francis, as well as later accounts, with the aim of offering proof of the Indulgence's legitimacy.

According to the *Tractatus*, while praying one evening Francis was drawn to enter the Porziuncula and there saw Christ and the Virgin, accompanied by a multitude of angels. He pleaded with Christ to confer “to all and single persons who come to this place and enter this church forgiveness and indulgence of their sins after having confessed to a priest and received their penance.”<sup>170</sup> Francis also begs the Virgin to intercede on behalf of his request, which she promptly does, asking Christ to heed the prayers of his “servant” Brother Francis. Although Christ accepts Francis's appeal, he surprisingly orders Francis to seek approval from the Pope Honorius III, who is in nearby Perugia.<sup>171</sup> As described in the *Tractatus*, the Pope initially hesitates in granting Francis's request, wishing to set a limit on the number of years the indulgence would be in effect and appearing to assert that the requirements for receiving the indulgence were too low. However, he grants the request after Francis explains, “Lord, I am not asking this out of my own initiative, but because the Lord Jesus Christ himself sent me.”<sup>172</sup>

This statement ultimately reflects the crux of the controversy that surrounded the granting of the Porziuncula indulgence; whether Francis truly received approval for the unusual dispensation directly from Christ. Although the Pope appeared to believe Francis, his cardinals had doubts and raised concerns that such an arrangement would divert pilgrims who seek a similar indulgence in the Holy Land. As a compromise, the Pope granted the Porziuncula Indulgence in perpetuity, but only for a single day a year. The Pope offered Francis a document to certify the arrangement, but surprisingly the

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<sup>170</sup> Muscat 2012, 36.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Muscat 2012, 37.

saint refused, claiming that the pontiff's word was sufficient. "If this is truly the work of God, it is up to Him to manifest the truthfulness of this initiative, and therefore I do not need any written proof, but only that the Blessed Virgin Mary be the parchment, Christ the notary, and the angels be the witnesses."<sup>173</sup> This event would be among the explanations given by the Franciscans to explain the lack of documentation of the privilege granted to them by Honorius, claiming that Francis confided the event only to some of his close companions.

The Indulgence was later further endorsed in a second vision, which Villalpando depicts in *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence* and that appears in other painted series of the life of Saint Francis found in the Americas. In January while Francis prayed in his cell, Satan appeared and attempted to tempt him to sin. Francis left his cell and entered a garden that existed behind the Porziuncula, removing his clothes and laying down amid a dense bush full of thorns. As he lay bleeding a radiant light began to appear around him and despite the winter season the bush produced many fragrant red and white roses. A group of angels appeared and told him to join them in the church, where he was told Christ and the Virgin were waiting. Villalpando places this encounter in the background of his composition, (**Fig. 2.37**) at the extreme right of the canvas. Although it is difficult to fully make out this scene due to the painting's condition, Saint Francis is visible lying at the feet of three angels.<sup>174</sup> They carry tapers and one of them appears to be gesturing toward the foreground as if to indicate where they will lead the saint.

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<sup>173</sup> Muscat 2012, 38

<sup>174</sup> It is difficult to be certain due to the condition of the painting in this area, Francis appears to be wearing his habit, despite descriptions stating that he had removed his clothes before rolling in thorns to combat his temptation, although the garment may be a later addition.

Before accompanying the angels into the Porziuncula, Francis gathered “twelve white roses and twelve red roses,” placing them on the altar of the church.<sup>175</sup> Christ and the Virgin again appeared above this altar, this time accompanied by many angels.

Francis and Christ again spoke of the indulgence, and the saint was given more specific information:

“Thus Christ, in his divine majesty, ordered that whoever would come from vespers of the first day of August until vespers of the following day, and would be contrite and confess all sins he could possibly remember to have committed, would be forgiven from all his sins from the day of baptism until the day and hour in which he entered the aforementioned church.”<sup>176</sup>

Christ again orders Francis to visit the Pope, this time in Rome, to seek the pontiff’s aid in announcing the indulgence. As further proof of his endorsement, Christ assured Francis that three of his companions had heard their exchange despite being sequestered in their cells. He also told Francis to gather several roses to take with him to the pope as further evidence of their miraculous interaction. As Francis exited the church, carrying three red and three white roses, the angels broke into song.<sup>177</sup>

Villalpando’s painting focuses on Francis’s vision of Christ, the Virgin, and their attendant angels. The saint kneels at the center of the composition (**Fig. 2.38**) with his hands open before him, seemingly in ecstasy. He is positioned before a wood platform, atop which sits an altar draped in an embroidered altar frontal, the top surmounted by a small white cloth. The structure of the altar and its spatial relationship to Francis is similar to that of other depictions of saints by Villalpando, such as his painting of *Saint Bridget* (**Fig. 2.39**) in the Templo de Santo Domingo in Mexico City, or his images of

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<sup>175</sup> Muscat 2012, 40

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 40-41.



*Saint John of God Penitent* and *Saint Theresa Penitent* in the Museo del Carmen in Mexico City. A single lit taper in a silver candlestick sits atop the altar and to its left, just below the Virgin and Christ, a segment of a carved wood altarpiece is visible.

Francis is attended by four angels that wear garments made of colorful fabric that seems to billow and flow around them, as if animated by some heavenly wind. The angel that stands at the rear of the group, (**Fig. 2.40**) looking out from the canvas, carries a flowering stem of lilies, identifying him as the Archangel Gabriel. His importance seems further underscored by the increased attention given to his clothing, which is festooned with more sashes, brooches, and metal embroidery than that of the other angels. The clothing is reminiscent of the numerous depictions of archangels throughout Villalpando's oeuvre and the emphasis on the movement of the fabric is similar to his painting of the *Archangel Baraquiel* (**Fig. 2.41**) in the Templo de la Magdalena in Coacalco.

In the upper portion of the painting, golden clouds have opened to reveal a heavenly scene that is suffused with light. Directly above the altar (**Fig. 2.42**) the Virgin and Christ sit atop a dense group of putti. Christ appears to gesture toward Francis as he confers with the Virgin, perhaps giving his blessing to the saint's request or drawing his mother's attention to the scene below. In either case, the Virgin touches her finger tips together in front of her in a posture that echoes that of prayer, but also seems to convey her acceptance of Christ's judgment and by extension her endorsement of the indulgence granted to Francis by her son. To the right of them appear a small cluster of cherubs, two of whom stand as if holding back the clouds to reveal the heavenly scene. Another group behind them throws flowers down on the earthly scene below, which appear scattered

around the floor, perhaps a reference to the miraculous roses that Francis carried with him as an offering to place on the altar. To the right of them (**Fig. 2.43**) a larger group of cherubs are engaged in making the music that Francis will hear as he exits the church. One of them holds a large stringed instrument that he plays with a bow, similar to a cello, while another is playing a harp. In a charming addition to the scene, two of the cherubs carry sheets of music that they appear ready to give the players and the remaining cherubs seem to act as the concert's audience.

The granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence was frequently represented in print series on the life of the saint, in some cases with scenes from the legend as the subject of individual prints or multiple scenes combined in a single composition. Villamena used the former strategy, spreading the legend across four prints (**Fig. 2.44**) that show the saint lying in the thorn bush, being led to the Porziuncula by angels, kneeling before a vision of Christ and the Virgin, and finally presenting the Pope with a group of roses.<sup>178</sup> Villalpando's painting is similar to the composition of the third print, which also features Christ and the Virgin in a radiant group of clouds above the altar, seated among a number of putti. In the series by Galle and the later sets derived from it, one of the print's main scenes is devoted to Francis's vision of Christ and the Virgin (**Fig. 2.45**) but is markedly different from Villalpando's painting. Although also set before an altar, Francis bows his head in supplication to the heavenly pair, both of whom are depicted full-length and standing on the ground. Galle does not create separate heavenly and earthly plains in his print. Instead, despite the two angels that stand behind Christ and the Virgin, the entire

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<sup>178</sup> The three subsequent prints depict a debate among Francis, the Pope, and the bishops regarding the Indulgence, followed by the bishops announcing the new indulgence to a crowd of people.

scene is presented as more of an encounter within the Porziuncula church rather than a vision.

Villalpando's painting presents a far more elaborate representation of this legend than the prints described above, although again he need not only have relied on engraved images for sources. An important legend from Francis's life due to its explanation of the granting of the indulgence, Villalpando would have undoubtedly encountered this scene represented in other paintings in Franciscan institutions. One well known example from 1609-10 by Baltasar de Echave Orio (1548-1623) (**Fig. 2.46**), the Basque grandfather of Echave Rioja, is now in the Museo Nacional de Arte in Mexico City.<sup>179</sup> Once part of a set of fourteen paintings by the artist made for the main altarpiece in the Franciscan church in Tlatelolco, its Mannerist figures may seem unrelated to those in Villalpando's painting. Nevertheless, connections can be drawn between the two works, most notably the similarities in the poses of Christ and the Virgin Mary, who in both works seem to discuss the kneeling saint below. Given Villalpando's connection to the Echave family, and the importance of the Franciscan complex at Tlatelolco, it is quite possible that Villalpando would have seen this painting in its original setting.

***The Porziuncula Indulgence*** [formerly *The General Confession*] (**Fig. 2.47**)

Francisco de la Maza identified the next surviving painting in Villalpando's series as the *Conversión General* or "General Conversion," a reference to the spiritual conversion that Francis's preaching frequently brought about in those who came to hear him.<sup>180</sup> De la Maza quotes a passage from Celano's *Life* that reads:

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<sup>179</sup> See Guadalupe Victoria 1994, 111-16; cat. no. VII.

<sup>180</sup> de la Maza 1964, 147.

“Men ran, women also ran,  
clerics hurried,  
and religious rushed to see and hear the holy one of God,  
who seemed to everyone a person of another age.  
People of all ages and both sexes hurried to behold the wonders  
which the Lord worked anew in the world through his servant.”<sup>181</sup>

In his articles on the Antigua series, Luján Muñoz changed the title to the *Confesión General* or “General Confession,” drawing again on the same quote from Celano.<sup>182</sup>

Although Villalpando’s painting indeed depicts a great multitude of people – men, women and clerics – as Celano describes in his text, a closer examination of the painting reveals that the text and image are in fact unconnected.

A key point is that Saint Francis does not appear in the work. Although several Franciscans hear confessions prominently in the foreground, none are the saint, whose appearance has been rendered throughout the series with a relative degree of consistency, allowing for his easy identification. More importantly, much of the imagery depicted is too specific to simply represent a medieval public’s general fascination with the popular Francis. Villalpando is a master of narrative painting and, as seen with the other works in the series, his works are based on established scenes, legends, or theories, associated with his subject. Although I have uncovered no prints that exactly depict the scenes shown in Villalpando’s painting, I believe that rather than a general conversion or confession, this painting builds on the previous canvas depicting *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*. It draws on miracles described in the *Tractatus de Indulgentia Portiunculae* that offer examples of divine support for the Porziuncula Indulgence.

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<sup>181</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Life of Saint Francis,” (1229), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:215. De la Maza shortened the quote, leaving out the line “who seemed to everyone a person of another age.”

<sup>182</sup> Luján Muñoz 1983, 10; Luján Muñoz 1986, 126. The same title was also listed in the 1997 catalogue raisonné. See Gutiérrez Haces, et al. 1997, cat. 75.6.

The scenes in the background relate to the vision of Brother Conrad of Offida (1241-1306), a Franciscan brother who lived at the Porziuncula, described in Chapter 20 of the *Tractatus*.<sup>183</sup> On the evening of the Indulgence in 1303, a large group gathered around the church, waiting to enter and make their confession. Suddenly a great commotion was heard among the people and they claimed to have seen a snow-white dove circle the church five times in rapid flight.<sup>184</sup> In Villalpando's composition (**Fig. 2.48**) a dove appears in a burst of light above a large gilded structure that is surrounded by a group of people, pilgrims holding staffs visible among them. This structure has previously been described as a Baroque altarpiece, housing a painting of the Annunciation.<sup>185</sup> If this is indeed the case, then this may be Villalpando's representation of a 1393 altarpiece (**Fig. 2.49**) by Ilario of Viterbo (active 1375-1393), known as Prete Ilario, housed in the Porziuncula Chapel. The altar's main image depicts the Annunciation and is visible through the chapel's main door.

It is also possible that, rather than depict Villalpando's Baroque interpretation of a late fourteenth century altarpiece, the entire structure is instead his interpretation of the chapel itself. The arched frame that surrounds the image of the Annunciation could in fact be the arched doorframe (**Fig. 2.50**) of the Porziuncula chapel, through which the altarpiece's main panel is visible. The entire structure is also positioned in Villalpando's painting beneath a light filled dome, as the chapel was during Villalpando's time (**Fig. 2.51**) and remains today. To accommodate the large number of pilgrims visiting the Porziuncula, Pope Pius V (1566-1572) ordered the removal of all the buildings that had grown around the chapel since Francis's time, preserving only the Porziuncula and the

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<sup>183</sup> Muscat 2012, 55-6.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>185</sup> de la Maza 1964, 147; Luján Muñoz 1983, 10; Luján Muñoz 1986, 126.

Transito, believed to be the cell in which Francis died. Construction on the Basilica, which would eventually enclose the two small structures, began in 1569. Its imposing dome, which sits on an octagonal drum with eight windows (the same number seen beneath the dome in Villalpando's painting) was completed in 1667 and the church in 1679. It is possible that Villalpando could have seen the Porziuncula's new home via a yet to be identified architectural print, perhaps similar to this engraving (**Fig. 2.52**) by the Italian artist Francesco Providoni (1633-1697), included in the *Collis paradisi amoenitas, seu sacri conventus Assisiensis historiae* by Francesco Maria Angeli and Francesco Antonio Felice Carosi. This illustrated history of the Franciscan convent in Assisi was first published in 1704, a little over a decade after Villalpando painted the Antigua Series. It is possible that earlier renderings existed at the end of the seventeenth century, although given the short period of time between the basilica's completion and the Antigua commission, it also seems unlikely that such material would have made its way to Mexico so quickly. Nevertheless, it is possible that Villalpando encountered an early architectural description of the space in a text or it was described to him, perhaps by a Franciscan.

Returning to the legend, this commotion attracted the attention of several of the brothers, among them Brother Francis Cocti, who entered the church and found Brother Conrad of Offida praying before the altar. After recounting to him the miracle that had taken place, Brother Conrad told him of a vision he had in the church, asking Francis Cocti to keep it secret until the day of his death. He explained,

“I have seen the Virgin, the glorious queen of heaven and earth, who was surrounded by an indescribable and most radiant brightness, who was holding the child Jesus in her arms. She was descending from the high heavens. That most sweet child was blessing all the time the crowds of

people who are here present out of devotion, and was imparting his blessing to all of them. That is the reason of the commotion and agitation that you witnessed among the people.”<sup>186</sup>

Villalpando also depicts Conrad’s vision in the background of this painting, where a monk can be seen kneeling (**Fig. 2.53**) along with several onlookers and gazing upwards. Just above his head appear the Virgin and Child, framed in a radiant burst of clouds among which several cherubs float, two of them hovering with a crown above her head. The Virgin holds the Christ Child in both her hands and he gazes downward at the scenes below, his proper right hand raised in blessing.

These two scenes in the background of the painting demonstrate divine approval of the Porziuncula Indulgence, in a sense legitimizing the scenes in the foreground. On either side of the canvas sits a Franciscan brother in a scallop-topped wood confessional, attended by a crowd of people seeking pardons. The brother on the left (**Fig. 2.54**) hears the confession of a finely dressed nobleman who appears to whisper in his ear. In what could be interpreted as an act of contrition, the nobleman has laid his sword at the foot of the confessional, which rests atop a long wooden platform. Several other noblemen, holding their hats to their chests, wait in line behind him, as well as two ladies who wear black veils over their hair. Perched at the edge of the platform are two richly dressed boys that appear to be discussing the two groups, facing one another yet also gazing at the clusters of people around the two confessionals.

On the right, (**Fig. 2.55**) the Franciscan brother is in the act of blessing a man who has presumably finished confessing his sins. A shell is pinned to the short cape he wears around his shoulders, identifying him as a pilgrim who has journeyed to receive the

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<sup>186</sup> Muscat 2012, 56.

Indulgence. Poised behind him is a finely dressed man, his coat and breeches appearing to shimmer with embroidery, perhaps implying gold thread. He wears a sword with an ornate hilt and in his proper right hand he clutches his feathered cap as well a rosary that appears to be made of precious stones. The woman next to him watches the pilgrim's blessing with clasped hands, a string of pearls around her neck contrasting with the somber black veil she wears over her hair. From the viewer's perspective, just behind the pilgrim stands a man dressed in black, broken only by the flaps of his white collar. He holds his upturned hat before him and draped over the opening is another rosary. His clothing indicates that he may be a member of the clergy, a subtle reminder that even those who have been ordained sought to be pardoned. Behind him a small group of women await their turn, some wearing delicately decorated black veils that come down over their eyes.

One final figure in Villalpando's canvas deserves attention. Between the scenes in the background and foreground of the painting, a female pilgrim, (**Fig. 2.56**) identifiable by her staff, stands with her hand clasped together in prayer. Her gaze appears fixed on the vision of the Virgin and Child happening behind her. The *Tractatus de Indulgentia Portiunculae* mentions several female Franciscan saints and mystics connected with the Porziuncula indulgence, including Saint Angela of Foligno, who undertook a pilgrimage to the Porziuncula in 1300.<sup>187</sup> Visiting Francis's nearby tomb on August 1<sup>st</sup>, she attempted to enter the Porziuncula the next day but could not due to the great number of people. She then had a vision in which the church expanded to become a great basilica, writing in *Il Libro della Beata Angela da Foligno*:

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<sup>187</sup> Angela of Foligno had several mystical experiences involving the Virgin and Christ, including one in the church of Saint Francis in Foligno, in which the Virgin appeared carrying the Christ Child and handed him to Angela.



“I saw the church expanding, by the power of God, into one of an astonishing magnitude and beauty. There was nothing material in this church; everything about it was totally indescribable. My soul was amazed at how it expanded as soon as I set foot in it, because I knew that the church of Saint Mary of the Portiuncula was extremely small.”<sup>188</sup>

The inclusion of Saint Angela in a painting that seeks to emphasize the legitimacy of the Porziuncula Indulgence is a particularly inspired choice, whether on the part of Villalpando or his patrons. As described above, Angela’s vision was prophetic for in the years preceding the creation of this painting the structure around the Porziuncula was indeed expanded and transformed into what is still one of the largest Roman Catholic basilicas in the world. The scenes in Villalpando’s painting thus seem to take place in the structure seen in her vision, as well as in the newly constructed monument that was undoubtedly a source of pride to Franciscans throughout the world.

As stated above, I have been unable to find a print that directly depicts the miracles shown in Villalpando’s painting, however, the series by Thomas de Leu does include a print entitled *Miracles Confirm the Indulgence* (**Fig. 2.57**) that shows other miracles that endorse the legitimacy of the Indulgence. The left half of the print, for example, as explained in the Latin and French inscriptions along the bottom edge of the work, depicts a woman that died shortly after receiving the Indulgence and thus was “saved” from suffering in the afterlife. The inclusion of this print in de Leu’s series, and Villalpando’s painting in the Antigua Series, speaks to the larger importance of the Indulgence to the Franciscans and their need to defend it against skeptics. Despite being an ocean away from the Porziuncula, where few of their parishioners were ever likely to

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<sup>188</sup> Muscat 2012, 138. The passage was originally included in Instruction 26 in *The Book of Blessed Angela*. See Angela of Foligno, *Angela of Foligno. Complete Works*, trans. Paul Lachance. (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 283-84.

make a pilgrimage, the brothers in Antigua still saw this as a vital part of their founder's legend and worth representing within the private space of their cloister.

### ***The Chapter of Mats (Fig. 2.58)***

In 1219 Francis convened a General Chapter, a meeting of representatives from throughout the Franciscan order, near Assisi. This assembly of some five thousand brothers became known as the Chapter of Mats, due to the woven reed mats that the brother used to construct their shelters. Cardinal Ugolino, the future Pope Gregory IX, was present at the Chapter and the following year, at Francis's request, he would be named Cardinal Protector of the Order by Pope Honorius III. An early description of the Chapter survives in *The Assisi Compilation* (1244-60), which recounts how several brothers approached the Cardinal and asked him to persuade Francis to be guided by them, citing evidence from the *Rules* of Saints Benedict, Augustine, and Bernard. Francis forcefully rejected the cardinal's advice on behalf of the brothers, stating: "God has called me by the way of simplicity and showed me the way of simplicity. I do not want you to mention to me any *Rule*, whether of Saint Augustine, or of Saint Bernard, or of Saint Benedict."<sup>189</sup> Furthermore he promised the brothers divine punishment for their attempted insubordination: "But I trust in the Lord's police that through them He will punish you, and you will return to your state, to your blame, like to or not."<sup>190</sup>

This scene of internal discord during the early years of the Franciscan order is replaced in Villalpando's painting with a bustling meeting of friars. The background features a deep landscape set against distant mountains, where the reed mat shelters (**Fig.**

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<sup>189</sup> "The Assisi Compilation," (1244-60), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:483-4.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:484.

2.59) of the brothers are visible amongst the scattered trees. As if to emphasize the identification of this General Chapter, a rolled woven mat sits by a boulder at the lower left of the canvas. Francis stands at the center of the composition, beneath a large tree, speaking with a brother who carries a basket full of loaves of bread and fruits. Kneeling in front of Francis, a finely dressed man offers another basket of provisions, while to his right another carries a similarly laden tray of food. Scattered throughout the painting other similarly dressed men deliver food to the brothers, who can be seen in the background sharing a meal at a long table.

These elements are described in *The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions* (1328-37) and *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis* (after 1337). Both texts recount that Francis preached to the brothers, “By virtue of holy obedience, I command all you gathered here: have no care or anxiety about what to eat or drink or things necessary for the body, but to concentrate only on praying and praising God; and leave all care for your body to Him, since He has a special care for you.”<sup>191</sup> Later in the passage it states,

“But the principal shepherd, the blessed Christ, wishing to show His care for His sheep, and love for His poor ones, immediately inspired the people of Perugia, Spoleto and Foligno, Spello and Assisi and the surrounding areas to bring food and drink to that holy gathering...Moreover, they brought tablecloths, pots, dishes cups and other utensils that could be used by such a multitude. People considered themselves blessed if they could bring more things, or could serve more attentively, so that even the knights, barons, and other noblemen who came to see them, served them with great humility and devotion.”<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> “The Little Flowers of Saint Francis,” (after 1337), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:596-7.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:597.

To the right of the Saint, the bishop carrying a basket of food and standing with a group of noblemen may also be a reference to the “noblemen, common people, cardinals, bishops, abbots and many other clerics” from the papal court, then in Perugia, that were drawn to the chapter by the Franciscan’s reputation for holiness.<sup>193</sup>

Another element that appears in both texts and the painting is the presence of Saint Dominic, who appears in the background (**Fig. 2.60**) of the right half of Villalpando’s painting, arriving at the Chapter accompanied by a group of Dominican friars. According to *The Little Flowers*, Dominic was on his way to Rome from Burgundy when he heard of the momentous gathering and decided to attend. He initially doubts Francis’s ability to govern the group, given his lack of concern for providing for their nourishment, but is later amazed by the way in which God provides for them and begs Francis’s forgiveness for his poor judgement:

“Kneeling before Saint Francis, he humbly confessed his fault, and added: “God truly takes special care of these holy little poor men and I did not know it. From now on I promise to observe holy and evangelical poverty, and on behalf of God I curse all the brothers of my Order who presume to have something of their own in the Order.””<sup>194</sup>

This chastening episode for Saint Dominic implies that it was through his interaction with Francis that he came to believe in the sanctity of preaching in poverty and chose to implement it in the rules governing his order. Indeed, the Franciscan brother Peter of John Olivi (c. 1272-97) claims in an undated text that Dominic’s visit to the Franciscan General Chapter took place during his trip to Rome to receive approbation for the

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 3:596.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 3:597.

founding of his order, thus assigning Saint Francis a key role in the formation of the Dominican tradition.<sup>195</sup>

Despite its prominence in the biographies of Saint Francis, I have found no print or earlier painting that depicts the Chapter of Mats. Although a General Chapter appears in Galle's *Imitation of Christ's Miracles* (see **Fig. 2.77**) it is a different Chapter held in Assisi and shares no similarities with the scene depicted in Villalpando's painting. Much like *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, the artist may have assembled the scene from written descriptions. This notion of course remains speculative; although the painting's profusion of details based on passages from Franciscan texts indicate a stronger connection between text and painting than is found in some of the other works in the Antigua Series. As with *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, and other paintings by Villalpando, this canvas seems to again highlight the authority of the Franciscans – emphasizing how the population brought provisions to sustain them and even how Saint Dominic was apparently humbled by them. Given the contentious relationship between the various mendicant orders in the New World, as each sought a greater role in the religious life of the viceroyalties, this painting would appear to underscore the primacy of the Franciscan tradition.

### ***The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis* or *The Sacred Conversation* (Fig. 2.61)**

Luján Muñoz was the first to publish this painting, titling it *The Eucharistic Supper of Saint Francis*. He described the painting as an allegory representing a meal shared between Christ and Saint Francis, noting that although the iconography appeared in images associated with the saint, it had not been connected to a specific scene from the

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<sup>195</sup> Peter of John Olivi, "Lectura Super Lucam et Lectura Super Marcum," (n.d.), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:813.

saint's life.<sup>196</sup> At the center of the canvas Christ and Saint Francis (**Fig. 2.62**) are seated facing one another, each with their arms raised and their hands open. They are depicted as if in conversation, although neither looks at the other; Christ's gaze seems fixed upward as if looking beyond Francis, whereas Francis humbly looks downward. Although the painting's poor condition makes it difficult to ascertain what the two men are sitting on, the dense landscape that surrounds them seems to imply they are seated upon some sort of natural formation, such as a fallen log or rock. Two loaves of bread and a large metal cup of water are set on a frayed white cloth between them, its edges ragged, partially draped on Francis's lap.

The presence of the bread and water call to mind Francis's propensity for fasting throughout the year, often for forty days, in imitation of Christ's fast in the desert.<sup>197</sup> These fasts sometime took place within the confines of his cell, but also in wilderness. One such occasion, recounted in both *The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions* and *The Little Flowers*, describes a Lenten fast that Francis took on an island (now called Isola Maggiore) in Lake Trasimeno, historically known as the Lake of Perugia. While visiting a devotee near the lake, Francis asked to be secretly ferried to the uninhabited island the night before Ash Wednesday. He brought with him only two small loaves of bread and asked the ferryman to return for him on Holy Thursday.<sup>198</sup> On the island, he

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<sup>196</sup> Luján Muñoz 1983, 11. See also Luján Muñoz 1986, 128-9.

<sup>197</sup> According to Bonaventure, Francis would fast for forty days beginning on the feast of the Epiphany, and again beginning on the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, "The Major Legend of Saint Francis," (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:597-99. Celano also describes him as fasting for that same amount of time between the Feast of the Assumption and Saint Michael's feast day. Thomas of Celano, "The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul," (1247), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:374.

<sup>198</sup> One of the paintings from the series on the life of Saint Francis in the Monastery of San Francisco in Quito depicts Francis in prayer on the Isola Maggiore and the devotee departing in a small boat. See Suzanne Stratton-Pruitt, Judy Bustamante, and Carmen Fernández-Salvador, *The Art of Painting in Colonial Quito: El Arte De La Pintura En Quito Colonial*, (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2012), 103-105, cat. 22.

sheltered within “a dense thicket where thorn bushes had formed an enclosure, and he stayed there immobile for the whole forty days, neither eating nor drinking.”<sup>199</sup> When the ferryman returned to collect Francis he found that he had eaten part of one of the loaves, but this is explained as a concession to prevent him from usurping the piety of Christ:

“It is believed that Saint Francis ate part of one loaf so that with a little bread he would expel the poison of vainglory and thus the glory of a forty day fast be reserved for the blessed Christ. Yet he did fast forty days and forty nights after the example of Christ.”<sup>200</sup>

The presence of Christ in a scene depicting Francis’s forty day fast is in a sense unsurprising given that the fast itself was intended as an imitative act, meant to underscore the parallels between the lives of Christ and Francis. Yet no mention of Christ’s appearance is included in descriptions of Francis’s fast.

Other details in the composition provide clues that may resolve the inconsistency and deepen the interpretation of the scene. As noted above, the bread and water sit atop a cloth that is draped only over Francis’s lap, indicating that this may in fact not be a shared supper. It is Francis alone who seems to note the meager meal, looking downward at it, perhaps contemplating whether to break his fast. Although it is possible that Francis is having a vision of Christ, the disconnect between their two gazes seems to contradict this idea. Although seated closely together, these compositional details nevertheless create a sense of distance between them. Returning to Luján’s original title and description of the painting, in addition to depicting a moment from the saint’s life, the painting may indeed be a Eucharistic allegory. As Francis considers whether to eat and drink, the presence of Christ next to his meal evokes the ritual of receiving the Eucharist.

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<sup>199</sup> Ugolino Boniscambi of Montegiorgio, “The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions,” (1328-37), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:448.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

The flesh and blood of the human Christ can be interpreted as a reflection of Francis's bread and water, themselves suggestive of the Eucharistic wafer and wine. This connection casts the saint's decision to eat a small portion of bread during his Lenten fast in a new light, not only demonstrating that Francis does not aspire to Christ's perfection, but that he remains Christ's loyal servant, as shown through his performance of the sacrament.

Cherubs appear in the dense vegetation, some sitting on the ground amidst flowers and others hovering betwixt the branches of trees, all of them watching the interaction between the saint and Christ. To further stress their interest in this heavenly interaction, Villalpando includes two pairs of cherubs (**Fig. 2.63**) who seem to discuss what they are witnessing, similar to the pair of figures he employs in *The Porziuncula Indulgence* and *The Return from Mount Alverna*. These may have acted as visual prompts to those viewing the work, signaling them to ponder and discuss the scene in emulation of its painted participants. It is easy to imagine that scenes such as this one, with its allegorical interpretations, would have been the subject of intense rumination by the Franciscan brothers and novitiates who walked the cloister in Antigua.

The lush landscape in which the scene is set contains further iconographic elements that complicate the painting's meaning. Luján draws a connection between its vegetation and the verdant landscape depicted in *Adam and Eve in Paradise* (**Fig. 2.64**), Villalpando's stunning painting on copper for the Ochavo Chapel in Puebla Cathedral, completed some three years earlier. *The Lenten Fast* shows a similar attention to detail, such as Villalpando's emphasis on the flowers, which are often identifiable. Alongside flowers frequently depicted in religious paintings in Mexico from this period, such as



roses, less common blossoms appear, such as the peonies and daffodils (**Fig. 2.65**) in the lower right corner of the canvas. Even more notable is the tall stand of sunflowers (**Fig. 2.66**) that grow along the right side of the painting. Of the seventy varieties of sunflower, all but three are native to North America, the rest originating in South America.<sup>201</sup> This seemingly minor detail introduces a degree of ambiguity to the setting of Francis's interaction with Christ, regardless of the identification of the scene at the canvas's center.<sup>202</sup> Has Francis somehow, whether bodily or spiritually, been transported to an American landscape? At minimum, the sunflower's presence draws a connection between the circumstance of the painting's patrons – Franciscan brothers traveling and preaching across American soil – and Francis's own journey into the wilderness.

In the context of examining this painting, there are several series of canvases on the life of Saint Francis painted in Cuzco, Peru that contain what appears to be a related variation on the scene. Two of these were produced from the mid-to late seventeenth century, likely in the workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (active Cuzco, 1661-1700). By far the best studied of these is the series of fifty-four canvases housed in the Museo de San Francisco in Santiago de Chile.<sup>203</sup> The thirty-ninth painting in the series shows *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata* (**Fig. 2.67**) in the forefront of the image, but in the background, there appears a small scene (**Fig. 2.68**) where Christ and

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<sup>201</sup> See Debra N. Mancoff, "Solas Indianus," in *Sunflowers* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 15-20.

<sup>202</sup> This is not the only occasion in which Villalpando introduces elements that signal his knowledge of the American landscape. In the previously mentioned *Adam and Eve in Paradise*, a pair of parrots, their size notably larger than the other birds, is seen perched just above the scene of Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden. See Clara Bargellini's text in Fernández de Calderón 2017, 56.

<sup>203</sup> The other is housed in the Convento de San Francisco, Cuzco, Peru. See Gabriel Guarda, *Barroco hispanoamericano en Chile: Vida de San Francisco de Asís según la serie que representa su nacimiento, vida, milagros, santidad y último trance, pintada en el siglo XVII para el Convento Franciscano de Santiago de Chile y expuesta en el Museo de San Francisco del citado Convento*. (Madrid: Corporación Cultural 3C para el Arte, 2003).

Saint Francis appear in “sacred conversation.”<sup>204</sup> As related in *The Little Flowers*, during his vision of the flaming seraph Francis also was told “certain secret and high things” regarding privileges granted by his receipt of the stigmata.<sup>205</sup> In the Santiago painting Christ thus appears twice, marking Francis with stigmata in the foreground while also speaking to him in the background.

An alternative interpretation of Villalpando’s painting is that it depicts the revelations Francis learned from Christ while receiving the stigmata, which would likely have been depicted in the painting immediately preceding this canvas. Interestingly, it was during a forty day fast on Mount Alverna in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel that the miracle occurred. The pose and placement of both figures is similar in the two paintings; however, the Santiago canvas lacks the loaf of bread between Francis and Christ that appears to be a focal point of Villalpando’s picture. Even though my identification of the scene with *The Lenten Fast* appears to fit more closely with the Villalpando’s composition, one final related element in the painting from Santiago is worth noting; in the lower right corner (**Fig. 2.69**) of that work two turkeys appear, a small element that is replicated in all the related series produced in Cuzco. Much like the sunflower in Villalpando’s painting, turkeys are native to the Americas.<sup>206</sup> Their presence in this scene, which takes place on Mount Alverna in Italy, again presses on the question

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<sup>204</sup> Guarda 2003, 117.

<sup>205</sup> *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003. p. 101. The seraph tells Francis that on the day of his death each year, he will be able to descend into limbo and deliver members of the three orders from Purgatory. The legend is recounted in the third “Consideration,” a group of texts sometimes included with *The Little Flowers*, but believed to be by a different author.

<sup>206</sup> See A.W. Schorger. “Discovery of the Turkey in Central America,” *The Wild Turkey: Its History and Domestication*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980. pp. 3-18. If the depiction in the Santiago painting is meant to represent a specific variety of turkey, it resembles the ocellated turkey, a species that lives only in the Yucatán Peninsula, roaming southward into present day Guatemala and Belize.

of location and may hint at a wider visual strategy employed in Franciscan painting in the New World to anchor their legends in the landscape of the Americas.<sup>207</sup>

***Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna (Fig. 2.70)***

Francis journeyed back to Assisi after receiving the stigmata on Mount Alverna, accompanied by Brother Leo and later joined by other friars as he stopped in the villages and towns along his route. The saint rode on an ass, lent to him by a devout peasant, as he could not go comfortably afoot due to the wounds in his feet. Everywhere he went the common people flocked to see him, drawn by his reputation, but also because local shepherds had seen a light about Alverna and took it as a sign that the famous preacher had been the subject of a miracle.<sup>208</sup> As told in the *Little Flowers*, along the way Francis performed miracles, including healing a small child that was sick with dropsy. As he neared the town of Borgo San Sepolcro,

“the crowds there and from the villages made towards him; and many of them went before him, bearing olive branches in their hands, crying with a loud voice, “Behold the saint! Behold the saint!” And by reason of the devotion and desire that the folk had to touch him, they made a great throng and press about him; but he went on with mind uplifted and rapt in God, through contemplation; and albeit he was touched and held and dragged about, yet as one insensible he felt naught that was done or said to him; nay, he perceived not even that he was passing by that town or through that land.”<sup>209</sup>

Later, long after the procession had passed Borgo San Sepolcro, Francis would emerge from his contemplation to ask his companions when they would reach the town, so totally

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<sup>207</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>208</sup> *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003. p. 104.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 105. See also Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:606.

absorbed in thought he had been. The sequence of events closely parallel Christ's descent from the Mount of Olives and his entry into Jerusalem, as told in the Gospels, further cementing Francis connection to Christ following his receipt of the stigmata.<sup>210</sup>

Villalpando transforms Francis's entry into Borgo San Sepolcro into one of the most vibrant of the surviving Antigua paintings. The scene unfolds at the left side of the canvas, where Francis (**Fig. 2.71**) enters the city on the ass and carrying a palm branch in his proper left hand. A small group of Franciscan brothers are clustered around him, many of them also carrying branches. This humble assemblage of monks is besieged on all sides by the excited citizens of Borgo San Sepolcro, many of them also bearing palms or olive branches, excited to witness and welcome the illustrious preacher. Several richly dressed men in front of Francis (**Fig. 2.72**) have removed their hats and cloaks, laying the latter on the ground for the ass to walk across, a detail that is mentioned in accounts of Christ's entry into Jerusalem in the Gospels.<sup>211</sup> Children dart among the open space around Francis; two appear to have joined his procession and look back at the saint as they lead his group forward, while another, in a charming act of comedy, appears to feed his palm branch to the donkey.

A larger group of townspeople have gathered around this initial throng, including an older woman at the far-right (**Fig. 2.73**) who dons her spectacles to get a better look at the saint entering the city. Villalpando included a similar figure in *Moses and the Brazen Serpent and the Transfiguration of Jesus* (see **Fig. 1.16**) standing at the foot of the cruciform pole in the lower half of the composition, adjusting his spectacles as he stares open-mouthed at the brazen serpent. The artist would reuse this pose again in a painting

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<sup>210</sup> Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-44, and John 12:12-19.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

of *The Birth of the Virgin* (**Fig. 2.74**), depicting Saint Joachim holding his spectacles on his nose as he peers down at his infant daughter. In all three paintings, these figures gaze through their lenses at the focal point of the composition, raising interesting possibilities regarding their purpose.<sup>212</sup> Their use of spectacles seems to emphasize sight and the act of looking, both integrally tied to the nature of the art of painting. Perhaps these figures, like Villalpando's use of small children or cherubs (see the sections on *The Porziuncula Indulgence* and *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis*) in the foreground of some of his other pictures, are meant to offer cues to their viewers. Adjusting their spectacles as they stare intently, they seem to ask us to do the same, guiding the viewer's gaze to the picture's critical element.<sup>213</sup>

Beyond the townspeople, a large procession of clerics dressed in white surplices and wearing theologian's caps emerge from a church (**Fig. 2.75**) in the distance, following three priests at the forefront who carry a processional cross flanked by candleholders.<sup>214</sup> Behind them, a group of attendants shoulder a large open prayer book for a group of clerics, who appear to read from it as they walk. Alongside this central procession, two further lines of clerics carrying palms accompany them, the leader of the group on the left pausing to speak to a group of well-dressed townspeople. The presence

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<sup>212</sup> In the case of the painting of *Moses and the Brazen Serpent and the Transfiguration of Jesus*, the man is looking at the key element of the lower portion of the canvas – the serpent. This is in keeping with the separation of the two scenes depicted in the canvas, although it is tempting to think that perhaps he looks above and beyond the serpent as well, to the depiction of the Transfiguration above.

<sup>213</sup> I wish to thank Dr. Clara Bargellini for her suggesting this possible explanation for these figures.

<sup>214</sup> Richard Kagan incorrectly identifies the scene as depicting Francis's entry into Rome and further claims that the church facade visible in the difference represents Villalpando's interpretation of the facade of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Tepeyac. Although the two bear some formal resemblance, it appears insufficient in my opinion to indicate that Villalpando was making a direct quotation of the basilica's architecture. Richard L. Kagan and Fernando Marias, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 166.

of such a large group of clerics emerging to officially welcome the saint would seem to denote the high esteem in which he was held, even by members of the secular clergy.

The various crowds of people fill the open street, or square, and the stone buildings that line it each have balconies that are further laden with onlookers watching the scene unfold. The balconies behind Francis (**Fig. 2.76**) are full of women dressed in clothing appropriate for seventeenth century noblewomen in Spain, similar in style to the dress worn by Pica de Bourlemont in the *Baptism* painting. Many have ribbons and flowers in their hair and hold fans, gesturing with them to one another and to the scene below. Bolts of vibrant fabric are hung from the railings of the balconies, some of solid colors, while others sport floral and foliate decorations. In the upper right corner of the canvas, a particularly finely dressed group of young women stand at the railing of their balcony, while behind them a shorter figure, perhaps a young girl, seems to draw an older woman (judging by the dark veil over her hair) forward to join them.

A simplified depiction of Francis's arrival in Borgo San Sepolcro was among the scenes included in Galle's print (**Fig. 2.77**) *Cristi Miraculorum Imitatio*, or Imitation of Christ's Miracles.<sup>215</sup> In the landscape visible in the background at the center of the print, Francis can be seen (**Fig. 2.78**) approaching the gate of a walled town, its residents rushing forth to meet him.<sup>216</sup> In his adaptation of Galle's series, Thomas de Leu separated out several of the secondary scenes from this print to form two compositions, providing a closer view of Francis' entry into the town. In Leu's print (**Fig. 2.79**) the saint is shown following a column of people entering the city's gate. A herald walks in front of him carrying a blank banner and further ahead a processional cross is visible among the

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<sup>215</sup> Gieben 1976, 256.

<sup>216</sup> The scene is marked with the letter "D" and the inscription below quotes a short fragment from chapter 10 of Saint Bonaventure's life, which includes a description of the Saint's arrival to Borgo San Sepolcro.

crowd. Numerous Franciscan brothers follow and flank the saint, acting as somber attendants in contrast to the jubilant townspeople.<sup>217</sup>

Both the Galle and Leu prints could have served as sources for Villalpando's creation of this composition, but he also may have again drawn on prints depicting scenes from the life of Christ. There are numerous prints from this period showing Christ's entry into Jerusalem, including one in Collaert's *The Life and Passion of Christ*, from which Villalpando found a source for *Saint Francis and the Tempest*. It is also possible that Villalpando may have drawn, at least in part, on more local sources. The same year that he signed the contract to paint the Antigua Series, Juan Correa was completing his monumental *Entry of Christ into Jerusalem* (**Fig. 2.80**) in the sacristy of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City, taking up a project that Villalpando himself had abandoned in 1686.<sup>218</sup> Although dramatically different in scale and focus, the formal similarities between their subjects, enshrined as they are in the legends that surround Saint Francis, could not have been lost on the artist given his connection to the sacristy commission.

### ***The Last Supper of Saint Francis* (Fig. 2.81)**

As Francis's health began to fail and he appeared near death, many brothers gathered around him at Santa Maria degli Angeli. He offered them his blessings, but also exhorted them toward pious behavior and charged them with the care of the order's future. *The Last Supper of Saint Francis* depicts a scene just prior to the saint's death when, in imitation of Christ, he shares in a final meal with several of his disciples.

Although none of the early Franciscan sources describe this meal, several passages do

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<sup>217</sup> Interestingly, Leu's version includes a papal tiara over the town's gate, perhaps indicating that he means the print to depict one of Francis's trips to Rome rather than Borgo.

<sup>218</sup> See the discussion of this comparison in Chapter 1.

recount Francis breaking bread with his followers before the end. Thomas Celano's *The Remembrance of a Soul* describes that "As the brothers shed bitter tears and wept inconsolably, the holy father had bread brought to him. He blessed and broke it, and gave each of them a piece to eat."<sup>219</sup> Francis asked the brothers to read to him from the Gospel of Saint John, starting from just prior to the feast of Passover. As Celano elaborates "He was remembering that most sacred Supper, the last one the Lord celebrated with his disciples. In reverent memory of this, to show his brothers how he loved them, he did all of this."<sup>220</sup> Other texts further stress Francis's deliberate simulations of the actions of Christ, describing how he desired "to imitate his Lord and Master in death as he had so perfectly done in his life," or calling Francis "His [Christ's] perfect imitator."<sup>221</sup>

In Villalpando's work, Francis is placed near the center of the canvas, with twelve companions seated in a semi-circle around the perimeter of the table. Two other Franciscan brothers watch the scene from the doorway, one carrying a pitcher as if ready to come and serve those seated at supper. The table is set with meager fare – a loaf and slices of bread, as well as a few pale root vegetables, perhaps parsnips. Only a single chalice is visible on the table and as Francis (**Fig. 2.82**) reaches for it with his proper left hand, his right is raised in blessing over the loaf of bread. The head of a nail is visible in the open palm of his proper right hand and just to the left of it a tear in Francis's habit reveals the wound in his side.

As Clara Bargellini has written, the priestly character of Francis's pose – showing him seemingly in the act of performing the sacrament of the Eucharist – reflects a certain

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<sup>219</sup> Thomas of Celano, "The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul," (1247), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:387.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> "A Mirror of the Perfection of the Status of a Lesser Brother," (1318), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:336.



degree of boldness on the part of Villalpando and his Franciscan patrons.<sup>222</sup> Francis was not an ordained priest and therefore unable to perform the sacrament, yet in this imitation of Christ, as seen in the painting and described in Franciscan texts, his followers appear to place him above such restrictions. Bargellini notes another element, a painting (**Fig. 2.83**) of Christ's Last Supper, partially obscured by a hanging lantern directly above Francis. Although the details of the picture are not clearly defined, Christ is clearly visible, seated in a position roughly equivalent to that of Francis in the main scene. A similar space also appears at the front of the table and two decorative objects, perhaps a basket and several vessels, are visible on the floor.

As Bargellini points out, the presence of this painting serves as an insistent reminder of the parallels between the life of Christ and Francis, which only further legitimizes Francis's actions in the painting as described above.<sup>223</sup> Rather than usurp the role of a priest in performing the Eucharist, his actions should be interpreted as following in the footsteps of Christ, his spiritual role model. Nevertheless, a tension remains regarding when Francis's (and perhaps by extension his followers) devotion to following the actions of Christ collide with the traditions and policies of the seventeenth century Church.<sup>224</sup> As Bargellini comments, the presence of contentious imagery in this canvas, as well as in several other works in the series, may be explained by the fact that they were manufactured for a space where non-Franciscans had limited access.<sup>225</sup>

In front of the table in an empty space between two brothers sits a gold pitcher (**Fig. 2.84**) on a wide stand. The brother to its right is reaching for it, as if to fill the

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<sup>222</sup> Bargellini 2011, 318.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> It is similarly worth noting that in *The Porziuncula Indulgence* several brothers are shown hearing confessions, another act forbidden to those who had not been ordained.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. See Chapter 5.

chalice in front of him. Although reminiscent of the ewer in the *Baptism of Saint Francis*, Villalpando has made this pitcher more ornate, creating a handle of two intertwined cords that are surmounted by foliate decorations where they meet the vessel's spiraled neck. The foliate spout appears to cascade downward, perhaps pouring a stream of faux liquid, which then connects to the main body of the pitcher. Villalpando includes a particularly elaborate detail, adding two small figures on either side of the spout. Whether they depict putti or some other identifiable type is unclear, as is the meaning (if any) behind their poses. One of the figures appears to lean away from the body of the vessel, as if about to leap off it; the other appears to gesture upward toward the main scene, almost calling the other to witness Francis's final meal.

Villalpando may again have looked to Galle's print of the *Imitation of Christ's Miracles* (see **Fig. 2.77**) as a source for this work.<sup>226</sup> Along the left side of the print (**Fig. 2.85**) a small building is visible, one of its walls cut away to reveal Francis and several brothers gathered around the table within. The same scene was also included in Thomas de Leu's version (see **Fig. 2.79 & 2.86**) with some minor changes to the characteristics of the building. But as with *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, Villalpando would have been able to draw on the multitude of prints and paintings depicting the Last Supper of Christ. The print depicting the *Last Supper* in Collaert's *The Life and Passion of Christ* (**Fig. 2.87**) contains many elements that are evocative of details in Villalpando's painting. In the print, a doorway is placed to the right of the scene through which a servant is visible, similar to the treatment of the two monks in the painting. Collaert places a cloth of honor behind Christ in his print and the painting hanging on the wall behind Francis

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<sup>226</sup> The connection between this print and the Galle painting was first noted by Clara Bargellini. See Bargellini 2011, 317-18.

could be seen to have a similar function, both registering the status of the person below them in the scene. Finally, the presence of the two pitchers in the lower right corner of the print that evoke the presence of the pitcher in the foreground of Villalpando's painting.

My argument here is not that Villalpando directly based his composition on Collaert's – other seventeenth century prints showing the Last Supper contain similar details. Instead I would argue that this painting represents another example of Villalpando's ability to synthesize an available body of visual material to create a new work.<sup>227</sup> The arguments put forth about this painting by Bargellini also point to Villalpando's ability to fashion scenes that represent the politics of his patrons. He manipulates Francis's placement within the composition sufficiently to underscore his parallels to Christ, elevating him almost to the point of performing his own version transubstantiation. Yet the treatment is subtle enough to only hint at this reading, falling short of crossing any boundary of propriety. Although we can only speculate as to how the Franciscans reacted to this canvas, I agree with Bargellini that within the confines of their cloister they would have been more inclined to explore interpretations of these works that would have been censured by a wider ecclesiastical audience.

### ***The Death of Saint Francis (Fig. 2.88)***

Ironically, among the most recounted moments of Francis's life are the events of his final illness and death in 1226 at the Porziuncula. In the saint's first biography Thomas of Celano describes the gathering of the brothers around the now blind and

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<sup>227</sup> I have found two other examples of this iconography: in an unresearched series on the life of Saint Francis in the former Convent of Saint Mary Magdalene in San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla; in the series in the Convent of Saint Francis in Quito. For this work, see Stratton-Pruitt 2012, 103-6, cat. 22a.

extremely ill Francis, caring for him not only as their leader, but also as their spiritual father.<sup>228</sup> Immediately following his death, one of the brothers claimed to have seen the saint's soul rise upward to heaven. The verses that conclude this chapter recount:

“Let me cry out therefore:  
“O what a glorious saint he is!  
His disciple saw his soul ascending to heaven:  
beautiful as the moon,  
bright as the sun,  
glowing brilliantly as it ascended upon a white cloud!”<sup>229</sup>

The verse goes on to explain that Francis had left the company of his human brothers for that of angels and saints, but begs him to remember his earthly sons.

In Villalpando's painting, Francis lies on the ground wearing only a pair of white undergarments, the heads of nails in his hands and feet, as well as the wound in his side, clearly visible. This follows later textual accounts of the saint's death, such as Celano's *Remembrance*, in which he explains that following his lengthy illness Francis asked to be “placed naked on the naked ground, so that in that final hour, when the Enemy could still rage, he might wrestle naked with the naked.”<sup>230</sup> In *The Major Legend*, Bonaventure connects Francis's decision to die naked back to his disrobing before the bishop at the time of his spiritual conversion, in a sense bringing his death full circle to the moment of his spiritual rebirth.<sup>231</sup> On the ground next to Francis's body (**Fig. 2.89**) are his discarded Franciscan habit and cord, as well as a silver aspersorium and hyssop. Filled with holy

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<sup>228</sup> Thomas of Celano, *The Life of Saint Francis*, (1229), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001. 1:278.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>230</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul,” (1247), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:386. This passage alludes to a common quotation in medieval ascetical literature derived from the *Homilia in Evangelium* by Gregory the Great, in which he explains how all men of Faith must wrestle with evil spirits. He advises that it is better to confront them naked and deny these demons anything to hold on to.

<sup>231</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:643.

water, priests would dip the hyssop in the aspersorium and then use it to sprinkle the water on the faithful during various rituals, including Last Rites, which Francis received as he neared death. Aspersoriums with this form (**Fig. 2.90**) were common in Spain and its viceroyalties, their lobed rim made to cradle the hyssop, as it is shown in Villalpando's painting.

Francis is attended by five brothers, but his head and upper body is cradled in the arms of a woman who wears a Franciscan habit, her head covered by a tightly fitted white veil. This is undoubtedly the Lady Jacoba of Settesoli, an early devotee of Francis and a patroness of the Franciscan order. As a young widow from the noble Frangipani family in Rome, she met Francis during his visit to that city to seek papal approval for the Franciscan Rule. Becoming a close associate of the saint, who would frequently stay in her home when he visited Rome, Jacoba devoted herself to charitable good works. As Francis lay near death, he asked the brothers to write to Lady Jacoba and notify her of his condition, asking her to send him a type of unbleached wool cloth made by Cistercian monks from which he might make a tunic. He also asked that she send some *mostacciolo*, a confection of almonds, sugar, and honey, which the Lady had often made for him when he was in Rome. Before the letter could be sent however, the brothers heard the arrival of a great retinue and were shocked to discover that Lady Jacoba, warned by a voice that spoke to her during her prayers, had already arrived in Assisi bearing the goods Francis requested. Her arrival was met with uncertainty by the brothers, given that women were forbidden to enter the cloister.<sup>232</sup> Upon hearing the news however Francis immediately replied "Blessed be God, who has brought our "Brother" Lady Jacoba to us! Open the

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<sup>232</sup> "The Assisi Compilation," (1244-60), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:417-18. The story also appears, with some variation, in Thomas of Celano's *The Treatise on the Miracles of Saint Francis* (1250-52).

doors and bring her in. The decree about women is not to be observed for Brother Jacoba.”<sup>233</sup> Lady Jacoba then remained with the saint until his death.

The darkness and simplicity of the earthly scene in the lower half of the painting is contrasted by the radiance of the heavenly plane (**Fig. 2.91**) that crowds the upper half of the canvas, forming a dome around the scene below. Francis’s soul, depicted as a miniature version of the saint, follows a path upward along the extreme left of the canvas, passing numerous souls that seem to plead with the saint, entreating him to pull them with him to heaven.<sup>234</sup> Francis’s soul arrives in heaven (**Fig. 2.92**) at the feet of the Virgin and Christ, both of whom sit atop a cloud of putti. They each gaze adoringly at the Holy Spirit, which hovers above the scene at the center of the canvas at the source of the heavenly light. The Holy Spirit is flanked by the Virgin and Christ at its left and by God the Father, also sitting atop a group of putti and holding an orb, on its right. Rather than join the various saints that populate the two wings on either side of the heavenly family, it is worth noting Francis’s placement between Christ and the Virgin, his head turned to gaze upon the latter. His position places him within the Holy Family, reinforcing his closeness to Christ and serving as visual reminder that his importance is greater than that of other saints.

To the left of this heavenly group (**Fig. 2.93**) sit, from left to right, Saints Peter, Paul, and Joseph. The latter two carry their attributes (Paul a sword and Joseph a flowering rod), but interestingly Peter is without his usual keys. Instead he appears to sit

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<sup>233</sup> Thomas of Celano, “The Treatise on the Miracles of Saint Francis,” (1250-52), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:418.

<sup>234</sup> Saint Francis visiting souls in Purgatory was a common subject both for standalone paintings, as well as within painted and engraved narrative cycles. Such scenes commonly appear after Francis’s death, as it is believed he visited souls in Purgatory before ascending to heaven. See Cat. 46 in Guarda 2003. In doing so he also emulated the actions of Christ following the Crucifixion, and thus it also appears in both Galle’s and Leu’s prints of the *Imitation of Christ’s Miracles*. (See **Figs. 2.77 & 2.79**)

on a layer of cloud directly above a stone pillar that extends upward from the scene below, the only object besides Francis's soul that moves between the two planes.<sup>235</sup> A fourth male figure sits behind the three men. Although that section of the canvas has been heavily repainted, he appears to be accompanied by a crude eagle, likely identifying him as Saint John the Evangelist.<sup>236</sup> Joseph's presence is understandable given the presence of the Virgin, but also due to his prominence in the Spanish viceroalties. The inclusion of Peter and Paul could be explained given their roles as central founders of the Catholic faith, but also because both appeared to Saint Francis in a vision in the Church of Saint Peter in Rome.<sup>237</sup> Saint John the Evangelist's presence may derive from his importance in two of the Apocalyptic themed paintings in Villalpando's series, but he too appeared in the saint's visions.<sup>238</sup>

To the right (**Fig. 2.94**) is a large cluster of saints, some clearly meant to be identifiable by the attributes they hold. Closest to God the Father sits Saint John the Baptist, who holds his long cruciform topped staff, coiled with a banner.<sup>239</sup> To his right is Saint Benedict, dressed in the black habit of the Benedictine order, and then Saint Augustine, who clutches a book in his hand. Lower and to the right sits Saint Dominic, dressed in a Dominican habit and holding a processional cross. Next to him sits a saint with a tonsure, wearing a brown habit. Although in his hands he holds a sword and a small book, clearly objects that are meant to make him recognizable, his identity remains

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<sup>235</sup> Saint Peter and Paul are sometimes referred to as two "pillars" of the church.

<sup>236</sup> The area of sky above the four saints appears to have been heavily damaged and repainted sometime during the work's history. Several black brush strokes appear above Saint Joseph's head that may have once been text, although I was unable to verify it during my examination of the painting.

<sup>237</sup> Ugolino Boniscambi of Montegiorgio. "The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions," (1328-37), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:462-65.

<sup>238</sup> See Chapter 3. "The Little Flowers of Saint Francis," (after 1337), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:594-5.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid. John the Baptist also appeared in the same vision as John the Evangelist.

a mystery. Behind them are two saints dressed in white habits, one tonsured and the other hooded, who may be Saint Bernard of Clairvaux and Saint Bruno. Several other figures are visible behind them, appearing in the space between the figures at the forefront of the group. Although one of the saints remains unidentified, the others were all, like Francis, involved in the founding of monastic orders.<sup>240</sup> Villalpando has thus depicted Francis being welcomed to heaven by “colleagues” of a sort, many of whose teachings shaped his own.

Francis’s death was always included in print series depicting the saint’s life, some adhering to the textual accounts more than others. Villamena’s series (**Fig. 2.95**) shows the saint lying fully dressed in a bed beneath a cloth of honor, rather than lying naked on the floor. He does, however, include Lady Jacoba and her retinue, showing her kneeling and kissing the saint’s feet. Although she is left out of Galle’s print, his composition (**Fig. 2.96**) appears more relevant to Villalpando’s painting. Galle shows the saint within an interior in the foreground, surrounded by several brothers, lying naked upon a stone floor. The saint’s arms are awkwardly crossed across his chest, allowing him to simultaneously bless two brothers who kneel on either side of him. Two angels stand by Francis’s head, their faces turned as if in conversation with one another, yet one of them appears to reach for Francis as if to comfort him.

Much like in Villalpando’s painting, in the print a naked miniature version of the saint representing his soul can be seen ascending to heaven, emerging from his mouth. In the landscape on the left side (**Fig. 2.97**) of the print, the saint’s soul can be seen soaring

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<sup>240</sup> Saint Benedict did not found the Order of Saint Benedict, but wrote the Rule of Saint Benedict that the Benedictine movement would follow. A similar relationship exists between Saint Augustine and the Augustinian movement. Nevertheless, both orders claim the writers of their rules as their founders. Saint Dominic founded the Dominicans, while Bernard of Clairvaux and Bruno founded the Cistercian and Carthusian brotherhoods respectively.



upward above the buildings. As it nears the clouds, the saint's soul reappears clothed in his habit, rising vertically upward in a burst of light with his arms raised. Above this in heaven, he can be seen being led to God the father, flanked on either side by Christ and the Virgin. Although Thomas de Leu makes numerous changes in his version (**Fig. 2.98**) of Galle's composition, he maintains the key narrative scenes, retaining many of the same figures and poses.

Much as with the painting of *The Last Supper*, Villalpando appears to have utilized elements from available print sources, such as the depiction of Francis's soul ascending to heaven, but also moved beyond these materials to create a new composition. The inclusion of other monastic founders among the host that welcomes Francis to heaven, for example, demonstrates Villalpando's ability to embellish the details around narrative events in a highly sophisticated fashion. It is easy to imagine the way such details would have appealed to his patrons; the Franciscan brothers who studied this painting would undoubtedly have endorsed the notion that their founder was among his equals in heaven, while at the same time elevated to special status through his welcome by the Holy Trinity and the Virgin. Villalpando's treatment of Lady Jacoba shows another aspect of the artist's cleverness, showing her dressed in a modified Franciscan habit and thus visually reconciling her presence, much as Francis did by naming her among the "brothers" welcome within the monastery.

***The Vision of Brother Leo* or *The Assumption of Saint Francis* (Fig. 2.99)**

This monumental canvas from Villalpando's Antigua Series is divided horizontally into an earthly and heavenly realm, separated by a thick brown arch that has

the appearance of a metal studded wood frame. The heavenly scene is suffused with light, each figure appearing to almost glow from within. They move in a setting that lacks any physical structures, but rather is atmospheric; clouds frame the scene along the top and interweave between the figures, giving a sense that they are being carried on currents of air. Below the arch, the scene is dark with only a hint of light. This, coupled with the dense landscape visible among the shadows, gives this portion of the composition a sense of stillness, as if none of the breeziness of the scene above penetrates to the world below.

In the earthly portion (**Fig. 2.100**) of the painting, a small shelter is visible in the landscape, similar to the mat huts in Villalpando's painting of the *Chapter of Mats*. A single Franciscan brother kneels in the open side of the structure, his arms stretched outward and his hands open, in a pose that reads as both one of awe and of supplication. Dark circles are visible on the palms of his hands, indicating that this may be Saint Francis. He stares up at the sky as if he can see beyond the boundary to the heavenly scene above. A book lies open on the ground before him as if he has been interrupted in his prayers by this divine vision. On the far left, just before the edge of the brown arch, a burst of light is visible; perhaps indicating this scene takes place at dawn. Further underscoring this possibility is the presence of a small sun on the upper part of the arch, roughly in the location where the sun would be in relation to the light in the earthly scene below. It is possible that this arch, although depicted as a hard structure, is in fact a representation of the atmosphere that separates the earth from the heavens.

The scene above focuses on the meeting of Francis and Christ (**Fig. 2.101**) amidst a dense host of putti, cherubs, and angels. Christ sits atop a throne of putto heads and wings, his head ringed by a densely packed mandorla similarly made up of more small

faces and wings. Clothed in a red robe, Christ also wears a dark mantle that billows behind him, further adding to the sense of air and movement in this portion of the composition. His arms are open to welcome Francis and the stigmata are clearly visible in the palm of his proper left hand and foot, although not on the back of his right hand. While Christ appears firmly seated in place, Francis appears to float in midair, as if he had soared up from the earth below. He seems poised to embrace Christ, although his gaze is turned downward, as if looking past Christ to the world below. Much like with the depiction of Christ, there are inconsistencies in the depiction of his wounds; the stigmata are clearly visible on the palms of his hand, but no wound appears on his foot.

Christ and Saint Francis are surrounded by cherubs and angels who seem to sail about them in a state of agitation. Behind each of them are a group of clothed angels kneeling atop clouds, acting as witnesses to this momentous meeting. Another angel appears by Christ's knee, its hand raised as it smiles boldly outward, as if eager to draw our attention. Nude cherubs fly about the clouds, most carrying a small billowing piece of fabric that hides their nakedness. Several of these appear to lie atop the brown arch, gripping it with their hands or sliding along its surface. Of special note is the cherub who flies below Saint Francis, clutching the trailing cord from his habit in both its hands. The effect is reminiscent of a modern-day parade balloon; Francis floats amidst the scene and this small cherub acts as guide, pulling him toward his meeting with Christ.

As Clara Bargellini has noted, although this painting clearly belongs to Villalpando's Antigua series, its precise subject is difficult to pinpoint.<sup>241</sup> The textual and visual material that I have been able to identify hint at possible subjects for the work, but no interpretation fits Villalpando's depiction completely. One element of the painting that

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<sup>241</sup> Bargellini 2011, 317.

is particularly vexing is the identity of the monk in the lower portion of the canvas. Given that he appears to have the stigmata on the palms of his hands, therefore identifying him as Saint Francis, the overall subject of the painting would appear to be a vision that Saint Francis received in which he rose from the earth to encounter Christ. I have been unable to find a legend that fits that scene convincingly, although it is worth noting that Francis had a multitude of visions that are inconsistently recounted in the biographies of his life.

Another possibility is that the wounds seen on the figure are not there, that instead two dabs of paint in an already dark portion of this canvas are being misread as the stigmata. This painting was extensively cleaned and restored following its discovery in the United States. It is not impossible that some of the confusion may arise from that treatment, something that seems borne out by the missing stigmata on the proper right hand of Christ and on the foot of the heavenly Saint Francis. Finally, the face of the monk in the lower portion of the painting bears little resemblance to Saint Francis's face in the upper portion of the painting. Nor does it resemble Francis in any of the other surviving paintings in the series. This monk has drawn up his cowl, something that Francis does in none of the other surviving paintings.

If the monk seen kneeling in the shelter is not Francis, as I wish to assert, then two specific legends from the saint's life become convincing possible subjects for Villalpando's painting. The first is one of Brother Leo's visions of Saint Francis levitating. Brother Leo was one of Francis's closest confidants. In *The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions*, the author explains that Francis:

“...frequently took Brother Leo as his companion and both day and night admitted Leo to his secrets, because he discerned in Brother Leo great purity and dove-like innocence. Therefore, among all the

companions of the holy father, that same Brother Leo was the one who knew more about his secrets and marvels.”<sup>242</sup>

During sojourns into the wilderness of Mount Alverna and other parts of the Italian countryside, Brother Leo would frequently witness Francis be lifted into the air, sometimes hearing him speak to Christ, the Virgin, or angels.<sup>243</sup> As Francis’s virtue and grace grew, he rose higher and higher above the ground:

“That same Brother Leo once saw Saint Francis lifted so high above the earth that he could touch the saint’s feet. Another time he deserved to see the same most holy Father lifted to the tops of the trees; and once he was taken up to such a height that he was hardly able to see him...When Brother Leo saw him lifted so high that he could not touch him, he would prostrate himself below Saint Francis and say a prayer...”<sup>244</sup>

Villalpando’s painting could be based on these legends, showing Francis lifted from the earth to speak with Christ as Brother Leo watches below, his arms open in awe as he offers prayers heavenward. The scene appears in the upper right corner of Galle’s print (**Fig. 2.102**), the *Immense Ardor of the Religious and God-Devoted Soul*. The saint can be seen standing in a landscape with his arms outstretched, framed by a burst of light, with a diminutive Brother Leo crouching by his feet. Thomas de Leu retains the scene (**Fig. 2.103**) in the same position in his version of the print, although he pulls the scene forward in the landscape to increase the prominence of Francis and Leo. This event was also included in the Santiago series, appearing along the left side (**Fig. 2.104**) of the canvas that shows *Friar Bernard of Quintaval Stepping on the Mouth of Saint Francis*. In

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<sup>242</sup> Ugolino Boniscambi of Montegiorgio. “The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions,” (1328-37), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:511-2.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., 512.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 513.

this rendition (**Fig. 2.105**) Francis is clearly seen to be above the treetops, while Brother Leo again kneels below and gazes upward at the levitating saint.

A second possible subject for the paintings takes places following Saint Francis's death. In *A Book of the Praises of Blessed Francis* (1277-83) by Bernard of Besse (d. 1283), he describes how many brothers who could not journey to be with Francis at the time of his death nevertheless witnessed his ascent into heaven. "In the very hour of his passing away, he appeared to – among others who saw him ascending into heaven – a holy brother who was absorbed in prayer."<sup>245</sup> This scene is included along the left side of Galle's and Leu's prints (see **Figs. 2.96 & 2.98**) showing Francis's *Death and Emigration to Heaven*. In Galle's version (**Fig. 2.96**) the monk kneels beneath the open arch of one of the buildings, with hints of the landscape visible through the open passage – a potential source for Villalpando's depiction of the domed earth, separated from the heavenly realm above. A painted version of the print (**Fig. 2.106 & 2.107**) was included in the Santiago series, but with the kneeling monk omitted. Although the figure of Francis levitating skyward remains, the artist has added two angels that carry the saint upward by his feet, reminiscent of Villalpando's cherub that pulls Francis along by the cord at his waist.

Villalpando's painting shares similarities with both scenes from the Saint's life, but I believe Brother Leo's vision to be the more convincing identification. As discussed in the section of this chapter devoted to *The Death of Saint Francis*, Villalpando included a detailed scene of Francis's soul being received in heaven. It seems unlikely that he would duplicate it in another painting, thus creating two conflicting accounts of the saint's assumption. The formal similarities between Villalpando's painting and the Galle

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<sup>245</sup> Bernard of Besse, "A Book of the Praises of Blessed Francis," (1277-83), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:66.

and Leu prints showing Francis's *Death and Emigration to Heaven* may indicate that artist still utilized them in fashioning his depiction of Brother Leo's vision – taking advantage of their similar themes to suit his needs. Nevertheless, the possibility remains that the canvas relates to the legend of the brothers not present at Francis's death witnessing his soul traveling to heaven. Rather than depict the saint's *assumption*, which is instead shown in *The Death of Saint Francis*, this canvas focuses on a *vision* of that assumption conferred on one of Francis's followers. As I will note in Chapter 4, the lingering ambiguity regarding the subject of this canvas, and others in Villalpando's series, may only be able to be resolved through the identification of later works with the same composition.

### ***The Dream of Pope Gregory IX (Fig. 2.108)***

After Francis's death in 1226 his followers almost immediately called for his canonization. He was created a saint only two years later, in part due to the efforts of his longtime supporter and champion, Pope Gregory IX. Nevertheless, in a section of *The Major Legend* devoted to the miracles that Francis performed after his death, Bonaventure relates that the Pope harbored doubts as to whether Francis had truly been given the spear wound of Christ in his side when he received the stigmata. One night as the pontiff lay sleeping, Bonaventure writes that Francis appeared to him in a dream.

“Reproving him for his inner uncertainty, blessed Francis raised up his right arm, uncovered the wound at his side, and asked him for a vial in which to gather the spurting blood that flowed from it. In the dream the Supreme Pontiff brought him the vial requested, and it seemed to be filled to the brim with the blood which flowed abundantly out of the side.”<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:651.

Following this experience, the Pope's doubts were dispelled and he became advocate for the genuineness of Francis's wounds, writing three declarations in 1237 defending the miracle against any who attacked its veracity.<sup>247</sup>

In Villalpando's painting the pope sleeps in a large canopy bed set alongside the left side of the canvas. He wears a long white shirt and a closely fitted red cap, his head resting on his arm atop a pyramid made of three pillows. The massive carved wood bed is decorated with crimson curtains and a similarly colored coverlet, all bearing gold embroidery. Lace trim is visible on the edge of the white sheets. The bed rests on a raised platform that is covered in a red and gold embroidered rug, which separates it from the alternating dark and light tile floor of the rest of the room. The pope's slippers are resting on the floor by the bed, as if they were the last thing he removed before settling in for the night.

Francis appears on the right half of the canvas in a golden burst of clouds, a darker yellow halo visible behind his head. Although the Franciscan habit and cord he wears are the same in their form as in the other works in the series, they are made of far richer materials. Francis's habit is heavy with gold embroidery, leaving very little of its original homespun surface visible. The cord that hangs from his waist (**Fig. 2.109**) appears to be made of gold rather than rope and is encrusted with dark shapes that may be jewels. The nail heads (**Fig. 2.110**) that protrude from his proper left foot and hand appear to be made of a lighter colored metal rather than their typical dark iron. The brilliant embroidery of his garments gives the impression that the saint is radiant with heavenly light, which only further highlights that he has appeared from a heavenly plane.

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid. See reference "a".



Blood from the wound in Francis's side flows in a thin stream into a large silver bowl that rests on the bottom tier of a large *mostrador* (**Fig. 2.111**) laden with metalwork necessary for the performance of Catholic services. Identifiable among the display are large gold salvers with scalloped rims; tall silver ewers resembling those that appeared in *The Baptism* and *Last Supper* paintings; and several round silver ciboria, used for carrying the consecrated host, one of which is surmounted by a winged angel balanced on the tip of its toe. A ciborium with faceted sides, or perhaps an incense burner, appears at the center of the group crowned by a standing figure holding a tall staff with a banner. Closest to the sleeping pope sits a golden *naveta*, a container used for storing incense that has the vague shape of a ship. Above the display hangs a large metal lantern with several burning candles, similar in form to the lantern that hangs above the table in the painting of Francis's *Last Supper*. Of special note is the vessel into which the saint's blood is flowing. Rather than a vial as described in Bonaventure's text, the blood is gathered in a matching cup and salver, its rim decorated with dark enamels similar to a piece (**Fig. 2.112**) made in Antigua in the second half of the seventeenth century. The overall effect of the display is one of overwhelming wealth, but the objects also serve to highlight the ambience of the scene; the objects seem to sparkle as they reflect the light that surrounds the saint.

Gregory IX's miraculous dream was included as a secondary scene in Galle's series, under the title *Demonstration of the Stigmata in Saint Francis's Body*. Although the focus of the print (**Fig. 2.113**) is the miracle of the stigmata, a large structure stands along the left side of the work, one of the walls cut away to reveal the pope's bedroom. He can be seen asleep in a large canopied bed with a table at its foot. Francis's blood

flows from his wound into a small chalice, sitting on the table next to the papal tiara. Thomas de Leu's version is slightly more elaborate, (**Fig. 2.114**) with the overall size of the scene increased and embellishments added to the furniture in the pope's bedroom.

Although the key elements from the legend are present in both prints, the scene bears little formal resemblance to Villalpando's painting, perhaps again indicating that works such as these would have acted as departure points for the artists. Villalpando's painting does, however, bear a close similarity to the painting from the Santiago series (**Fig. 2.115**) that includes Gregory IX's dream.<sup>248</sup> As in the painting from the Antigua Series, the Pope's bed is positioned along the side of the canvas and a similar style and degree of ornamentation has been lavished on the furnishings in the room. The Pope in the Santiago painting even slips on a pyramid of pillows, although his is made up of only two cushions. Most importantly, in the two prints Francis stands on the ground in the pope's bedroom, whereas in the two paintings he floats above, the blood from his wound descending to a vessel below. Although in Villalpando's painting the blood is gathered in a cup, in the Santiago painting it flows into a small vial, as described by Saint Bonaventure, clutched in the Pope's hand. In place of a *mostrador* laden with silver, the Santiago painting includes a small altar next to the Pope's bedroom, set with two golden candlesticks and a large monstrance.

The correspondences between the two paintings may hint at some possible shared source, yet to be identified. Regardless, the intricate details of Villalpando's painting again show his ability to enhance the impact of events from the saint's life through inspired embellishments. His treatment of Saint Francis, for example, clearly

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<sup>248</sup> In the Santiago painting, roughly two-thirds of the canvas depicts Gregory IX's dream, while the remaining portion shows another miracle related to doubters of the stigmata.

demonstrates to the viewer a change in Francis's status. A humble penitent no longer, nearly every aspect of his clothing has been modified to display signs of material wealth, but spiritual richness as well. The brothers studying this work in their cloister could note the rewards that awaited their founder (and by extension themselves) in heaven after a lifetime of avowed poverty.

## **Conclusion**

These fourteen canvases from Villalpando's Antigua series clearly demonstrate the variety of sources that the artist utilized in their creation. Biographies and treatises related to the life of Saint Francis, print series, as well as costumes and objects drawn from the seventeenth-century Hispanic world, all populate the scenes. Integrated together with Villalpando's characteristic attention to detail, the resulting canvases draw viewers into the narrative of the saint's life, their contemporary elements giving them a sense of familiarity and accessibility. These works not only demonstrate the artist's ability to adapt available materials for his needs, drawing on a vast body of knowledge, but also his inventiveness. The number of paintings that appear to have no clear compositional antecedents prove the painter's ability to innovate, dispelling any notion that cycles such as these were always based directly on existing print series.

Though they are only a small fraction of the total original series, these fourteen paintings also offer some clues into the themes favored by Franciscan patrons. Certain scenes from the saint's life were no doubt a standard requirement – the renouncement of Francis's worldly goods, the granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence, or the saint's death, for example. Other works, however, seem to indicate a preference for subjects that

highlight Francis's special connection to Christ. This appears in the selection of miracles in which Francis's actions mirror those of Christ, such as the Saint's return from Mount Alverna or his reenacting of the Last Supper. It is also present in works that emphasize their almost personal connection, such as in Villalpando's depiction of the Lenten fast or Francis's discussion with Christ in Brother Leo's vision. As will be discussed further in Chapter 4, the relationship between Christ and Francis gave the Franciscans a unique type of legitimacy that was likely a vital part of their efforts to maintain their standing in the Americas.



### Chapter 3

#### *In the True Prophecy: Saint Francis and the Apocalypse*

In 1501-2, following his third voyage to the Americas, Christopher Columbus (c. 1451-1506) compiled his treatise *A book, or handbook, of sources, statements, opinions and prophecies on the subject of the recovery of God's Holy City and Mount Zion, and on the discovery and evangelization of the islands of the Indies and of all other peoples and nations*, now commonly known as *The Book of Prophecies*. Columbus's text reflects the view, shared by many scholars and theologians of the period that the "discovery" of these new lands and peoples indicated that the events described in the Book of Revelation, collectively referred to as the Apocalypse, would soon begin.<sup>249</sup> Columbus writes:

"By this count, only one hundred and fifty-five years remain of the seven thousand years in which, according to the authorities cited above, the world must come to an end..."

I said above that much that has been prophesied remains to be fulfilled, and I say that these are the world's great events, and I say that a sign of this is the acceleration of Our Lord's activities in this world. I know this from the recent preaching of the gospel in so many lands.<sup>250</sup>

In this passage, Columbus makes an important connection between the preaching of the gospel and the coming Apocalypse, citing the former as a sign of the latter. Indeed, many

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<sup>249</sup> For a broad view of the Apocalyptic connotations of the discovery of the Americas and its effects, see the chapter titled "The Visual Imagination and the End of History" in Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 41-89. Dr. Lara's research, particularly his recent publication on representations of Saint Francis of Assisi in Spanish viceregal art, is vital to my study of Villalpando's Antigua series. I feel, however, that I cannot in good conscience ignore the deeply distressing revelations that have come to light regarding his time at the Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn. Although I draw on his research and cite his publications in this project, I do so with a heavy heart and a strong sense of discomfort. My thoughts are with his victims as they seek justice.

<sup>250</sup> Roberto Rusconi, ed. *The Book of Prophecies, Edited by Christopher Columbus (Repertorium Columbianum)*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 71-77. The "authorities" that Columbus cites, were various Old and New Testament prophets.

in this period believed that the peoples of the various non-Christian lands *must* be ministered to and converted to the true faith, in preparation for this final conflict. This notion was based in part on biblical descriptions of the signs of the Apocalypse, such as a passage in the Gospel of Matthew that states “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”<sup>251</sup> A version of this passage would be included in the catechism produced by the Council of Trent, listing the preaching of the Gospel throughout the world as one of the three principal signs that precede the Last Judgement.<sup>252</sup>

If the European colonization of the Americas had Apocalyptic connotations for the Catholic leadership of Europe, it held even more meaning for the Franciscans, many of whom saw their activities as the culmination of prophecies dating to the time of their order’s founding. Of particular importance were the writings of the Calabrian mystic Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202), who died while Francis himself was a young man. Although an ordained member of the Benedictine order, serving as the abbot of their monastery in Corazzo in the 1180s, Joachim eventually captured the interest of Pope Lucius III, who encouraged him to record his theories on the Apocalypse and the future of mankind. Joachim theorized the coming of a third age, the age of the Holy Spirit, when all Christians would join together in a monastic inspired community, dedicated to the contemplation of God and coming closer than ever before to understanding His words.<sup>253</sup>

The coming of this final age would begin with the formation of two new religious orders that would work to bring all of mankind to the Christian faith, in anticipation of

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<sup>251</sup> Matthew 24:14. All biblical quotes are taken from the New International Version.

<sup>252</sup> Paul A. Böer, ed., *Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests* (Veritatis Splendor Publications, 2013), 130-31.

<sup>253</sup> For an overview of the life and influence of Joachim of Fiore, see: Marjorie Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977); Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Age: A Study of Joachimism*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993).

this final age. The years immediately following Joachim's death would see the establishment of the Franciscan and Dominican orders, who quickly became identified as the two groups described in the monk's prophecies. In addition to preaching to mankind, Joachim also prophesied that these two orders would eventually confront the Antichrist, whose coming was also included in the Council of Trent's catechism, and his forces.<sup>254</sup>

Joachim's description of these two orders builds on the biblical legend of the two witnesses, described in Chapter 11 of the Book of Revelation, sent to challenge the Antichrist:

“And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. They are “the two olive trees” and the two lampstands, and “they stand before the Lord of the earth.” If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies ... Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them ... For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial ... But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.”<sup>255</sup>

Although slain by the Antichrist for their preaching, becoming in a sense martyrs, the two witnesses are resurrected by God and taken to heaven. This miracle helps prove the Antichrist's false nature and acts as final warning to those who have been deceived by him to repent before the Last Judgement. These two witnesses have frequently been identified as the prophet Elijah and the patriarch Enoch, both of whom did not suffer a

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<sup>254</sup> Böer, ed. 2013, 130-31

<sup>255</sup> Revelation 11:3-12.



bodily death, but were instead taken up to heaven while alive, thus allowing them to return and be killed by the Antichrist.<sup>256</sup>

Joachim in a sense updates the legend, replacing two Old Testament prophets with contemporary figures, Francis of Assisi and Dominic de Guzmán, who would soon become widely known among the faithful. Although in his prophecies he does not identify them by name, Joachim's description of these future heroes fits neatly with the two men and the organizations they founded. Joachim for example writes, "There will be two men ... one from here and the other from elsewhere, that is, one Italian, namely from Tuscany, and the other a Spaniard; one like a dove, the other like a raven..."<sup>257</sup> Joachim correctly identifying the region where each saint was born and medieval Christians would soon associate the dove with the grey habits worn by the Franciscans, and the raven with the black habit worn by the Dominicans.<sup>258</sup>

As Joachim of Fiore's writings were disseminated throughout the Christian world, they would exert a significant influence on the formation and reception of the Franciscan and Dominican orders. The Franciscans in particular, perhaps due to the numerous portents and miracles that surrounded the life of their founder, most significantly his receipt of the stigmata, accepted the notion that their founder was connected to the events described in Revelation.<sup>259</sup> In *The Major Legend*, Saint Bonaventure would famously write:

"And so in the true prophecy  
of that other friend of the Bridegroom,

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<sup>256</sup> For a more in-depth examination of the two witnesses, see the section in this chapter on Villalpando's painting, *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*.

<sup>257</sup> Reeves 1992, 182-3

<sup>258</sup> Jaime Lara, *Birdman of Assisi. Art and The Apocalyptic in the Colonial Andes* (Tempe, AZ: ACMRS (Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies) and Bilingual Press / Editorial Bilingüe, 2016), 21.

<sup>259</sup> The prophecies of Joachim of Fiore would be taken up particularly by the Spiritualist Franciscans, who believed in a stricter interpretation of Francis's Rule for governing the order.

John the Apostle and Evangelist,  
he [Francis] is considered not without reason  
to be like the angel ascending from the rising of the sun  
bearing the seal of the living God.  
For “at the opening of the sixth seal,”  
John says in the Apocalypse,  
“I saw another Angel  
ascending from the rising of the sun,  
having the sign of the living God.”<sup>260</sup>

Bonaventure conflates Francis with the angel described by John the Evangelist in Revelation: “Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God.”<sup>261</sup> His primary evidence for the connection was the “seal of the living God,” interpreted as the wounds of the stigmata borne first by Christ and subsequently by Francis.

Later texts, such as *The Tree of the Crucified Life of Jesus* (1305) by Ubertino da Casale (1259-c. 1329), would repeat the idea of Francis as one of the angels described in Revelation. Da Casale, for example, connects him to the “angel of the church in Philadelphia” to whom Christ asks John the Evangelist to send a missive.<sup>262</sup> Christ praises this angel for faithfully adhering to his teachings and promises to shield him and those of his church from the global trials that are soon to come.<sup>263</sup> Da Casale writes “Oh, how accurately this holy Order and its most holy father [Francis] match this Philadelphia and its angel! For here is preserved the heritage of the life of Christ and a complete attachment to His cross.”<sup>264</sup> Efforts were made within the Franciscan movement to stamp out such unorthodox beliefs about the order’s founder. Texts that overtly showed the

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<sup>260</sup> Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, “The Major Legend of Saint Francis,” (1260-63), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 2:527.

<sup>261</sup> Revelation 7:2.

<sup>262</sup> Revelation 1:11.

<sup>263</sup> Revelation 3:7-13.

<sup>264</sup> Ubertino da Casale, “The Tree of the Crucified Life of Jesus,” (1305), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3-191.

influence of the writing of Joachim of Fiore, such as friar Peter of John Olivi's (1248-1298) commentary on the Book of Revelation, published in 1280 and discussed later in this chapter, were often censured and even condemned by the Franciscan General Chapters.<sup>265</sup>

In his book, *Birdman of Assisi. Art and The Apocalyptic in the Colonial Andes*, Jaime Lara points out that despite these efforts, Joachim of Fiore's teachings continued to exert a profound effect on Franciscan's understanding of their founder and the order's purpose. Indeed, the discovery of the Americas and the renewal of the Franciscan's mission to spread the Gospel to unbelievers only heightened the sense among many friars that the time had come for them to fulfil Joachim of Fiore's prophecies.

As Lara asserts throughout his book, this Joachimite influence was soon visible in works of art commissioned by the Franciscans in the Americas. The painting cycles produced in Cuzco in the second half of the seventeenth century, discussed in the previous chapter, frequently begin with a canvas titled *The Prophecy of Saint John the Evangelist* (**Fig. 3.1**). A winged Francis appears as the angel "bearing the seal of the living god" described by John the Evangelist and promoted by Saint Bonaventure, both of whom appear in the foreground on either side of the composition. Joachim of Fiore is also shown (**Fig. 3.2**) within a small hut in the upper right side of the work, painting a small portrait of the winged saint, an allusion to another legend associated with mystic's prophecies about Francis and Dominic.<sup>266</sup> Versions of this composition were also

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<sup>265</sup> Lara 2016, 25.

<sup>266</sup> For a full exploration of the legend of Joachim of Fiore painting Francis's portrait, see Lara 2016, 37-41. For the Cuzco series, see Lara 2016, 120-28; and Guarda 2003, 30-31.

included in painting series on the life of the saint in Franciscan churches in Lima and Quito.<sup>267</sup>

I disagree with Lara's assertion that paintings like *The Prophecy of Saint John the Evangelist* inspired a "magical and shamanic interpretation of Francis" in the minds of indigenous Americans.<sup>268</sup> These works were typically displayed in spaces where the friars were the primary intended audience. Functioning in conjunction with biographies of Francis's life that were prominent in convent libraries, these paintings were studied and reflected upon by friars who were familiar with the Apocalyptic theories that led to their inclusion in depictions of the saint's life. Although my description of the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore and their influence on the Franciscans is by no means an exhaustive account, which would be significantly beyond the scope of this project, it serves to offer a context for understanding the remaining three paintings from Villalpando's Antigua Series. These three works, two of them intact and one a fragment, present subjects drawn from the Book of Revelation. As will be clear in my analysis, the decision to include these works in a depiction of the life of their order's founder demonstrates the complex views Franciscans held regarding Francis's prophesied roles in the Apocalypse. By extension, they also tell us something about how the friars conceived of their own role in those events, but also how they connected them to their present circumstances in the Americas.

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<sup>267</sup> Lara 2016, 149-58.

<sup>268</sup> Lara 2016, 59.

### *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands (Fig. 3.3)*

In the opening passages of the Book of Revelation, John the Evangelist describes several visions he received while on the island of Patmos, where legend holds he had been banished by Roman authorities following a period preaching in the city of Ephesus, in modern Turkey. In the first of these visions, he heard the voice of Christ behind him, asking him to write all that he witnessed on a scroll and send it to seven churches in seven different cities throughout Asia Minor.<sup>269</sup> The passage continues:

“I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.”<sup>270</sup>

Initially overwhelmed by his vision, John falls limply at Christ’s feet, but Christ exhorts him not to be afraid and to take down messages for each of the seven churches. Before continuing he explains, “The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”<sup>271</sup> In the proceeding chapters the reader is told each of the seven messages that Christ intends for John to send to the churches.

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<sup>269</sup> The cities are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea; all are in modern Turkey.

<sup>270</sup> Revelation 1:12-16.

<sup>271</sup> Revelation 1:20.

In Villalpando's rendition of the scene John (**Fig. 3.4**) lies on a small outcropping on the shores of Patmos, his body pressed against a tree and other vegetation. Wearing a green robe, but draped in a deep red mantle, the saint appears in trance. Although he lies prone along the shore, his eyes closed as if he is sleeping, his hands remain active. One reaches out to rest a finger on the book lying open on the ground before him, while the other holds up a quill pen. Two more pens sit in an inkwell beside John's book. Villalpando thus recasts the biblical account from a conscious vision into something of an unconscious one; after the overwhelming sight of Christ among the lampstands John has collapsed, yet even so he continues to follow Christ's orders, preparing to write down his messages to the seven churches.

In the place of Christ, Francis stands (**Fig. 3.5**) among seven golden lampstands within a dense burst of clouds, his arms outstretched and his palms facing outward.<sup>272</sup> John does not specify in Revelation where his vision takes place, simply that it happens on Patmos. Villalpando presents the scene on the island's shore, with Francis hovering above the waters. Despite the spiritual nature of the vision, with John experiencing it in some form of meditative state, Francis's clouds have a physical effect on the world around him. The ocean churns (**Fig. 3.6**) in response to the burst of atmosphere and a group of shells appear along the water's edge, as if the roiling sea has pulled back to reveal them. The biblical passage describes Christ's voice as sounding like rushing waters and Villalpando's treatment can be read as something of a visual manifestation of Francis's speech to the saint.

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<sup>272</sup> In his discussion of the painting, Jaime Lara describes Francis as "winged", however I see no evidence that this depiction of Francis ever included angelic wings. Lara 2016, 219.

The seven tall lampstands are arranged in a row before the saint, each of them reaching to his thigh and each carrying a thin, lit candle. As in the passage from Revelation, six white stars (**Fig. 3.7**) appear in a semi-circle around the saint's proper right hand, while a seventh red star takes the place of the stigmata in his open palm. A double-edged sword dangles from his mouth, its ornate gold hilt resting against his bottom lip and its blade steeply tapered, making it appear more like a large dagger or rapier. Although the background behind the saint is difficult to make out, in part due to abrasion to the painting's surface, a large orb appears behind Francis's head and his face is surrounded by golden light. The orb, although darkened in appearance, may represent the sun that seems to fuel the "brilliance" that emanates around his face.

As seen in the writings of Saint Bonaventure and Ubertino da Casale in the introduction to this chapter, it was not unheard of for Franciscan authors to insert Francis in place of Christ in descriptions of visions from Revelation. Friar Peter of John Olivi, a key promotor of Joachim of Fiore's prophesies, included several such depictions in his 1280 commentary on the Book of Revelation. In addition to describing him as the saint bearing the "seal of the living God" as Bonaventure did, Olivi also describes Francis as the angel in Revelation 10:1-7, "robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars."<sup>273</sup> Portions of Olivi's text would be censured by the Franciscans in the 1319 General Chapter of Marseilles, and the entire text was officially condemned seven years later. Nevertheless, along with the other texts, it demonstrates a precedent for applying the descriptions of various figures in Revelation to the thirteenth century saint.

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<sup>273</sup> Revelation 10:1. For an analysis Peter of John Olivi's text, see: Warren Lewis, *Peter of John Olivi: Commentary on the Apocalypse* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2017).

Scenes of Saint Francis as a character from the Book of Revelation were not included in any print series on the life of Saint Francis, such as those by Galle or de Leu, discussed in the previous chapter. Depictions of the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands* however, were frequently included in print series showing the events recounted in Revelation, often made to accompany treatises on the subject, as well as sets of illustrations for the Bible. Among the earliest and perhaps most famous is the woodcut by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) (**Fig. 3.8**) included in his 1498 Apocalypse series. Dürer's prints would inspire numerous imitators, particularly among German printmakers, such as the versions by Georg Lemberger (1490-1540) (**Fig. 3.9**) and Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473-1531) (**Fig. 3.10**), which in turn served as sources for further iterations of the iconography, such as an example from 1544-6 (**Fig. 3.11**) by Matthias Gerrung (1500-1570). Dürer's influence was also not limited to Germany. The French engraver Jean Duvet (c. 1485-after 1561) produced a denser, yet clearly Dürer inspired, version of the scene (**Fig. 3.12**) in c. 1555 as part of his own set of twenty-three engravings on the Apocalypse.

These German prints bear little formal resemblance to Villalpando's composition, but prefigure examples by Flemish printmakers. An etching from 1563-74 (**Fig. 3.13**) by Gerard van Groeningen (active 1550-1599) diverges from the previous images by collapsing John's vision of Christ with his terrestrial placement on Patmos, showing them both within the same cloud-enclosed space. However, the most significant example of this scene by a Flemish printmaker is an engraving attributed to Adriaen Collaert (**Fig. 3.14**), likely after a design by Jan Snellinck (c. 1548-1638). First published in 1585 by Gerard de Jode (1509-1591) in a history of the Old and New Testament, the engraving



was widely disseminated and reused in picture bibles and other publications through to the mid-seventeenth century. The Polish engraver Jan Ziarnko (c. 1575-c. 1630), for example, adapted the composition's design slightly (**Fig. 3.15**) for inclusion in a commentary on the Book of Revelation, the *Figurae libri apocalypsis beati Ioannis apostolic*, with engravings by Jan van Haelbeck (active 1600-1630). Despite the lack of landscape elements, both prints share notable similarities with Villalpando's painting. The seven lampstands in the engravings have a similar size and structure. More importantly, John the Evangelist's eyes are closed in the prints, although he appears to hold himself upright, creating a relationship similar to that of the painting. The Evangelist again receives this vision without the input of sight, instead interacting with Christ via a non-sensory means.

In his recent book, Lara discusses Villalpando's rendition of the vision of the seven lampstands, identifying its "iconographic model" as an engraving (**Fig. 3.16**) attributed to the French painter and printmaker Jean Le Clerc (c. 1587-1633).<sup>274</sup> The engraving is part of a set of twenty-nine prints made to illustrate the *Apocalipsis traducido y declarado por el venerable Gregorio Lopez* or *Apocalypse, Translated and Declared by the Venerable Gregorio Lopez*, a commentary on the Book of Revelation by the Mexican hermit and mystic Gregorio López (1542-1596) (**Fig. 3.17**) written in 1586 and published in 1620. Born in Madrid, López came to New Spain at the age of twenty, traveling throughout the territory before eventually taking up residence outside of Mexico City.

López embraced the life of an ascetic hermit, sleeping on the bare floor, wearing rough unkempt clothing, and devoting many hours to prayer. Eventually he became

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<sup>274</sup> Lara 2016, 219-20.

something of local celebrity, drawing people that sought his spiritual counsel despite his lack of formal position. Ecclesiastical authorities eventually sent a young priest, Francisco de Losa (1536-1634), to investigate López and determine whether he was the deeply pious man many believed him to be, or whether he held heterodox beliefs that should make him a target of the Inquisition. When the two men met in 1578, Losa not only became convinced of López's orthodoxy, he came to see the hermit as a saintly figure. Over the coming years, Losa would devote himself to López's care and protection, defending him against suspicions by the church clergy and documenting his life and teachings. Following López's death in 1596, Losa composed a biography about his friend, *La Vida Que Hizo El Siervo de Dios Gregorio López, or The Life of the Servant of God Gregorio López*, first published in Mexico in 1613.<sup>275</sup>

López's treatise on the Apocalypse was first published at Losa's urging in 1620, no doubt to garner support for a movement to have the hermit made a saint.<sup>276</sup> As explored in an article by Marta Fajardo de Rueda, López's text was strongly influenced by the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore.<sup>277</sup> Like Christopher Columbus and many others, he believed the events described in Revelation would occur soon and, like Joachim, he also believed the world was heading toward a semi-monastic state, in which man would live in a fashion similar to the saints.<sup>278</sup> López's text was reprinted in several subsequent editions and made its way into libraries throughout the Americas. It was likely well received by the Franciscans in particular, given their own connection to Joachim of Fiore.

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<sup>275</sup> For a more detailed account of the two men, see Jodi Bilinkoff, "Francisco Losa and Gregorio López: Spiritual Friendship and Identity Formation on the New Spain Frontier," in *Colonial Saints: Discovering the Holy in the Americas*, ed. Allan Greer and Jodi Bilinkoff (New York: Routledge, 2003), 115-28.

<sup>276</sup> The movement to canonize López ultimately failed, but his sanctity was sufficiently recognized for him to receive the title of *Venerable*.

<sup>277</sup> Marta Fajardo de Rueda, "Milenarismo y arte: a presencia del pensamiento de Joaquín de Fiore en la Nueva Granada," *Palimpsestus*, 4 (2004), 236-58.

<sup>278</sup> Fajardo de Rueda 2004, 247.

Villalpando would undoubtedly have heard of Gregorio López, given that he was such a well-known and revered figure, and perhaps even have read his biography or the Apocalypse treatise.<sup>279</sup>

Le Clerc's engraving, particularly the figure of Christ among the lampstands, seems to descend from the design first created by Jan Snellinck, discussed above. Le Clerc published the *Figurae libri apocalypsis beati Ioannis apostolic*, which included the version of the composition engraved by Jan van Haelbeck, which Le Clerc then likely adapted for his engraving to accompany López's treatise. Le Clerc has changed the overall setting of the composition however, by placing it within a landscape. As Lara asserts, this engraving was likely used by Villalpando in the creation his painting for the Antigua series; the tree along the left side of the Le Clerc engraving closely resembles the tree in the same position in Villalpando's work. There are, however, significant differences that suggest that Le Clerc's engraving was but one of possibly several sources that inspired the painter.

Villalpando places the scene on the shores of Patmos, with Francis appearing above a churning ocean, whereas Le Clerc places the entire scene somewhere inland on the island. Another potential source would have been a print (**Fig. 3.18**) by Pieter van der Borcht the Elder (c.1530-1608) from an illustrated Bible, which shows John's vision of Christ taking place on a small promontory, surrounded by ocean. Interestingly, a similar twisted tree occupies the left side of the engraving, as it does in Le Clerc's print and Villalpando's painting. The arrangement of the lampstands in the painting also more

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<sup>279</sup> In a footnote, Jaime Lara writes "López, in his *Tratado del Apocalipsi*, suggested that this text circulated in the early seventeenth century in Mexican-Guatemalan convents and artists' workshops." Lara 2016, 312, note 48. Lara does not give a specific source in the text for this assertion and I have been unable to locate it. I have so far only been able to examine the text in two mid-eighteenth century editions. It is possible Lara's reference exists only in the 1620 edition.

closely follows the engraving by Jan van Haelbeck than that of Le Clerc, showing them in a single line rather than with one candlestick set apart and placed next to the body of the saint. Finally, John the Evangelist's pose in Villalpando painting is like none of the prints referenced above, including Le Clerc's. This may indicate a yet to be identified source, but I believe it more likely that it speaks to the painter's awareness of the larger visual tradition that these prints exemplify. Villalpando's decision to depict John as both unconscious, yet also actively reacting to his vision of Saint Francis, may come from the various representations of this scene by Dürer, Collaert, and others. As successive printmakers explored different configurations for this facet of the iconography, so too has Villalpando created his own interpretation.

The inclusion of this scene from Revelation in the Antigua Series, with Saint Francis replacing Christ, represents a provocative escalation in the conflation between the two figures. As seen in the previous chapter, numerous subjects from the saint's biography highlight the parallels between his life and that of Christ. This painting, however, builds on Joachimite theories regarding the saint's prophesied Apocalyptic role, manipulating a biblical passage to create what is, in a sense, a new iconography. Among the duties assigned to Villalpando as *veedor* of Mexico City's painter's guild was to assure the orthodoxy of the paintings produced by guild members, counteracting the creation of apocryphal images, something that had been proscribed by the Council of Trent.<sup>280</sup> It remains unclear the extent to which artists in the Spanish viceroyalties understood and/or enforced those rules in Villalpando's time. Nevertheless, his creation of works like *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, given his status, is

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<sup>280</sup> See Alain Saint-Saëns, *Art and Faith in Tridentine Spain (1545-1690)*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1995).

noteworthy. It raises questions regarding the painter's willingness to stretch the boundaries of orthodoxy, perhaps at the urging of his Franciscan patrons.

***Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss (Fig. 3.19)***

The next Apocalyptically themed painting in Villalpando's series depicts a passage from one of the closing chapters of Revelation. Following the defeat of the Beast and his false prophet, sometimes interpreted as Satan and the Antichrist respectively, John the Evangelist witnesses Satan's imprisonment:

“And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended.”<sup>281</sup>

The text continues with a description of those who had not been misled by Satan and his prophet, instead having been martyred for their belief in the true God, being resurrected to reign with Christ for the thousand years. The remainder of Revelation then describes Satan's eventual release from prison, defeat, and the Last Judgement of mankind.

In Villalpando's painting John the Evangelist (**Fig. 3.20**) sits by the shore of the island of Patmos, as he did in the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, but this time is an alert and active witness to the scene before him. The book sits open in his lap and an ink well with two quill pens sits on the ground to the saint's left. His arms are raised and his hands open in a gesture that seems to invite us to follow his gaze to the scene unfolding before him.

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<sup>281</sup> Revelation 20:1-3

At the center of the canvas Saint Francis (**Fig. 3.21**) stands atop a small cloud that floats on, or perhaps above, the sea, framed by land and vegetation on either side. The upper half of the saint's body is enclosed by a field of radiant clouds that emanate from a darker sphere behind the saint's head. A break in this light (**Fig. 3.22**) encircles Francis's head, creating a sort of halo. Nonetheless, the saint's face and body are suffused with light that leaves no doubt that he has descended from heaven and underscores that this is not the same corporeal Francis seen in other paintings in the series. This is further reinforced by the saint's pair of long wings, raised and outstretched behind him. Depictions of Saint Francis and other saints with wings were not uncommon in Spanish art, or in the art of the Spanish viceroyalties.<sup>282</sup> Although their meaning can have specific connotations related to the saint depicted, or to the specific context of the work, in a general sense, the wings serve to express the piety and "angelic" qualities of those shown with them. In Villalpando's case, they help cement the identification of the scene with the passage in Revelation; John's vision was of an angel that here has been replaced with an angelic Francis.

In Francis's right hand he holds a large metal key, while his left clutches the end of a slender chain. This chain trails from his hand through a heavy metal grate (**Fig. 3.23**) inset into the cliff that lines the right side of the painting. Although this portion of the canvas has suffered numerous tears and losses, a figure can be seen behind the grate, its arm outstretched through the grate. Villalpando has depicted Satan a horned demon with clawed fingers (**Fig. 3.24**) and reptilian skin, imprisoned not only by the metal grate, but also by the chain that loops around its neck, its end held like a leash in the saint's hand. The painting thus represents the events after the actions described in the relevant passage

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<sup>282</sup> See Lara 2016 for a full account of depictions of Saint Francis with angelic wings.

in Revelation; the angel/Francis has already imprisoned Satan and is now rising heavenward, the demon's chains trailing behind him.

As with the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, there is no direct reference in the early Franciscan literature for Francis taking the place of the angel chaining Satan in the Abyss. The angel from Revelation has typically been identified as Saint Michael Archangel, leader of the armies of heaven. Depictions of him defeating Satan in a variety of forms are common throughout the Catholic world, including in New Spain. An early seventeenth century painting by Luis Juárez (**Fig. 3.25**) is one of a multitude of examples that show the youthful saint, dressed in the style of a Roman centurion, dispatching a winged devil whose appearance is not dissimilar to the chained creature in Villalpando's canvas.

Descriptions of the scene that reference Saint Francis are not completely unknown however, in later Joachimite influenced texts. In his exegesis on the Book of Revelation, written in 1329, Nicholas of Lyra's (c. 1270-1349) was careful to avoid Father Olivi's overt use of Joachim of Fiore's prophecies. Yet he continues to promote the idea that the Franciscans and Dominicans were meant to defeat the Antichrist during the Apocalypse. Among his arguments is an explanation of the passage regarding the angel holding a key:

“If one were to interpret this text as if it were fulfilled in the past...it seems that it would be better to interpret this text with Pope Innocent III, who approved the order of the Friars Minor and the Preachers through whom the teaching and preaching of the Church were in a certain way renewed, and the power of the Devil was restricted, whence many illusions of the demons that occurred earlier ceased.

And this is what John says, *Then I saw an angel* (20:2), that is, Pope Innocent III. *Coming down from heaven*, that is, stooping down from the papal summit for Saint Francis and Dominic. *Holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit*, that is, the power

to approve these orders to repress the powers of the Devil. *And a great chain*, that is, the multiplication of the friars and of each other. *He seized the dragon* (20:2), because through their teaching the power of the Devil was curbed and will be restrained...”<sup>283</sup>

This passage is not a direct identification of Francis as the angel holding the key, but it nonetheless offers context for connecting him to the scene. It also further demonstrates the degree to which, in many texts available to the friars, Francis has become enmeshed in the legends of the Apocalypse.

Images of *The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss* are also included in print series depicting the events of Revelation, but less frequently than other scenes, like the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands*. Dürer included it in his 1498 series, (**Fig. 3.26**) although it bears little formal resemblance to Villalpando’s canvas. Some German printmakers again developed their own designs based on Dürer’s model; a woodcut (**Fig. 3.27**) by Erhard Altdorfer (c. 1480-1561), clipped from the 1534 Lübeck Bible, shows a similarly positioned angel forcing a chained demon into a pit, this time accompanied by thick door bearing a heavy padlock. A little over decade later, Matthias Gerrung included the scene (**Fig. 3.28**) in the illustrations for an unpublished commentary on the Apocalypse.

In his analysis of the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, Lara connects Villalpando’s canvas to Le Clerc’s engraving from Gregorio López’s *Apocalipsis traducido*, but in his examination of the *Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss* he incorrectly claims that Le Clerc did not illustrate the scene.<sup>284</sup> In Marta Fajardo de Rueda’s article on the influence of Joachim of Fiore on art in New Granada, which includes a section on Le

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<sup>283</sup> Nicholas of Lyra, *Nicholas of Lyra’s Apocalypse Commentary*, trans. Philip D. Krey. (Kalamazoo, MI: Published for TEAMS (The Consortium for the Teaching of the Middle Ages) by Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 212.

<sup>284</sup> Lara 2016, 221.



Clerc's engravings for López's text, she publishes reproductions of two engravings that depict this moment from Revelation.<sup>285</sup> The first (**Fig. 3.29**) print by Le Clerc is related, as with the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, to engravings after a composition originally by Jan Snellinck. An almost identical version can be found in the series engraved by Adriaen Collaert (**Fig. 3.30**) and by Jan van Haelbeck (**Fig. 3.31**), discussed above. The second engraving from the set accompanying López's commentary (**Fig. 3.32**) is attributed to Le Clerc and shows the same scene as the other version in the foreground, but with addition of secondary scenes in the background related to other passages in the Book of Revelation.<sup>286</sup>

Although Lara overlooked the two prints by Le Clerc, he suggests that Villalpando's composition is either an "invention from several sources" or is based on a painting from the now lost Echave cycle.<sup>287</sup> Leaving aside Villalpando's potential use of Echave's models, the assertion that Villalpando built this composition from multiple sources fits with his creation of the other scenes in the series. No painting or print with the same composition as this canvas has been identified and it does not share an immediate resemblance with the known prints depicting this scene. Returning to the engravings based on Jan Snellinck's designs however, it is worth noting the angel (**Figs. 3.30 & 3.31**) is forcing the chained Satan into a fiery abyss that is not depicted as a hole in the ground, but rather as an inset in a cliff that extends into the landscape behind the scene. This tantalizing similarity between print and painting may hint at Villalpando's

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<sup>285</sup> Fajardo de Rueda 2004, 257, nos. 26 & 27.

<sup>286</sup> Marta Fajardo de Rueda's article offers an assessment of the influence of Joachim of Fiore's prophecies on López's text, however questions remain about the associated engravings. Most notably the presence of several prints, such as the second version of *The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, that are not signed by Le Clerc. None of these are present in the earlier engraving series after designs by Snellinck. A larger studying, incorporating the various prints series and their associated texts might further illuminate their relationship and explain the presence of these extra prints.

<sup>287</sup> Lara 2016, 221. See Chapter 1 for a discussion of the Echave cycle.

use of printed sources for minor visual elements, departing more extensively from established sources when they lack the abundant iconographic history present for some of the other subjects in the Antigua Series.

As with the painting of the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, Villalpando's depiction of *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss* is constructed through the alteration of imagery drawn from the Book of Revelation. Although it has some foundation in Joachimite influenced Franciscan literature, it is by no means an established scene from the life or miracles of the saint, nor can it be labeled canonical in any wider sense of Christian art. It may be reasonable to infer, as with other works from the artist's oeuvre, that this work and the *Vision of the Seven Lampstands* were developed with input from a learned Franciscan.<sup>288</sup> As Lara asserts in his comments on the commissioning of painting cycles on the life Saint Francis, the selection of subjects for the individual canvases, and even the identification of visual models to follow, were almost always the purview of the commissioning official, in this case, Friar Francisco de Suassa y Otálora.<sup>289</sup> Are we to assume therefore, that he sanctioned the inclusion of these scenes and perhaps assisted Villalpando in their design by suggesting textual or visual sources to the artist? Before attempting to answer this question, it is worth examining the final surviving canvas from the Antigua series and its highly unusual subject.

### ***Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist (Fig. 3.33)***

The most recently discovered survivor of Villalpando's Antigua Series, *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, was first attributed to Cristóbal de Villalpando by Clara

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<sup>288</sup> See, for example, the discussion in Chapter 1 of *The Transfiguration* in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Puebla.

<sup>289</sup> Lara 2016, 128.

Bargellini in 2000.<sup>290</sup> Purchased from a private dealer by the Philadelphia Museum of Art (PMA) in 2008, the painting's appearance was then dramatically different from how it appears today.<sup>291</sup> Suffering from structural instabilities, a discolored varnish and dirty surface, as well as several distinct campaigns of overpaint, the work immediately entered the museum's paintings conservation lab, where it would undergo a two-year long treatment under the supervision of Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero. Although other works in the series have been treated at various points in their history, none but *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* have received the analysis and treatment options available at a large international museum.<sup>292</sup> Due to this more extensive body of documentation and the painting's complicated conservation history, my analysis of the work is lengthier than with the other works in the series and I have thus broken it down into subsections.<sup>293</sup>

I will return to the subject of the painting's treatment at various points in my analysis, but it is important to note that Saloma quickly established the work to be a fragment. An examination of the canvas's cusping marks, a visible scalloping in the canvas weave produced when it is stretched, revealed that the painting had been reduced on all four sides.<sup>294</sup> Remains of cusping marks along the two sides indicate a loss of between one and two inches of canvas, while those found on the bottom show a likely

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<sup>290</sup> In spring of 2000, the painting was examined by Dr. Bargellini in New York City, and used in a seminar at the Institute of Fine Arts entitled *Cristóbal de Villalpando In New Spain*. See also, Bargellini 2011, 318-21.

<sup>291</sup> I should note here that it was around this time that I first encountered this painting, and indeed Villalpando's Antigua Series, as the curatorial assistant charged with researching the painting for acquisition.

<sup>292</sup> I was extremely fortunate to be able to witness Miguel's treatment of this painting firsthand. That experience, and my richer understanding of this painting and its history, are due to the collegiality that Miguel brought to the project and the collaborative spirit of the Painting Conservation staff at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. With that in mind, I wish to warmly thank Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero, Teresa Lignelli, Mark Tucker, Kristin Patterson, Lucia Bay, and Allen Kosanovich.

<sup>293</sup> Throughout this section I will cite unpublished reports and documents produced by Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero from the painting's conservation file at the PMA.

<sup>294</sup> Following the painting's cleaning, this would be further confirmed by the presence cut off figures now visible in the sky above the figures in the foreground. See the discussion below.

loss of two to three inches.<sup>295</sup> No cusping marks were found along the top edge of the painting. Although it remains uncertain, Saloma estimated the painting may have lost as much as thirty inches of canvas from the top of the work, based on marks left by the canvases original stretcher supports and a comparison to the measurements of the surviving paintings.<sup>296</sup>

Thus, any examination of the painting must acknowledge that portions of the overall composition are lost and, although there is strong evidence regarding what they may have once depicted, a degree of ambiguity surrounds our understanding of its iconography. If for example, as with the previous two paintings discussed in this chapter, John the Evangelist appeared somewhere in one of the lost portions, it would notably change our interpretation of the painting's meaning. My intention here is not to raise an unproductive degree of doubt about any analysis of the painting's subject, but instead to acknowledge the possibility that some vital element from the work is lost. This, sadly, is simply a fact of studying this painting, and indeed, many Spanish colonial art objects given their active histories.

### **Precedents in Christian and Franciscan Literature**

As was discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the idea that Francis would one day return to combat the Antichrist during the end of days comes first from the writings of Joachim of Fiore. His prophecies regarding Francis's Apocalyptic mission quickly had an effect, taking hold among a wider audience in the years leading up to, and

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<sup>295</sup> The painting is unsigned, but if it did once have a signature this may have been lost when the canvas was reduced.

<sup>296</sup> Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero, *Villalpando Examination Report* (Philadelphia Museum of Art, Conservation Department. February 18, 2010). Even with these lost portions of canvas, it is worth noting that the Philadelphia painting would be significantly smaller than the other surviving works in the series.

following, Francis's death. The preacher, historian, and eventual Bishop of Perugia, Jacques de Vitry (c. 1165-1240) was a strong supporter of the early Franciscan movement, praising the brothers for modeling their lives after the apostles. In his *Historia Occidentalis* (c. 1221/5), the second volume in a history of the Crusading movement, de Vitry focuses on the current state of Christianity in western Europe, and includes a section on the Franciscans. Written in the last years of Francis's life, the author heaps praise on the Franciscans, particularly for their willingness to preach to the Saracens. Summarizing the brother's virtues, de Vitry writes:

“Such is the holy Order of Lesser Brothers, a religious way of life which should be admired and imitated. These are the men whom, we believe, the Lord has raised up in these last days to oppose the son of perdition, the Antichrist, and his unclean henchmen.”<sup>297</sup>

The passage goes on to describe the Franciscans as “soldiers of Christ,” leading and protecting mankind. What is particularly remarkable about the passage is that Francis was still living at the time of its writing, indicating that, at least among educated circles, the belief that he would combat the Antichrist was already recognized.

Indeed, Francis himself was said to have spoken of times in the future when the order, and indeed all of Christianity, would be in great peril. *A Collection of Sayings of the Companions of Blessed Francis* includes “The Words of Brother Conrad of Offida,” a group of passages that circulated in the early fourteenth century that claim to repeat prophecies and advice given by Francis to his early companions. The twelfth passage speaks of the great tribulation that will be suffered by the order in the future, when many would turn away from Christ and reject Francis's teachings. As if to grant his followers some hope, Francis claimed:

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<sup>297</sup> Jacques de Vitry, “*Historia Occidentalis*,” (c. 1221/5), Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 1:585.

“The Lord shall be the refuge of the afflicted; he will save them and rescue them from sinners and free them because they hoped in him. For the Antichrist and his members wretchedly extol themselves against Christ and above Christ. Then the poor and the faithful servants of Christ, to be conformed to their head, will act confidently and will buy eternal life through death. They will not at all fear choosing to obey God rather than men and to die rather than assent to falsehood and faithlessness. These, word for word, are the words of the companions of blessed Francis.”<sup>298</sup>

Regardless of the veracity of the claim that these were Francis’s words, passed to us by his companions, they would have been among the multitude of such texts studied by future Franciscans. Their description of the future perils that would befall the order, including the presence of the Antichrist preaching against Christ and those loyal to his teachings, help set the stage for the Franciscans viewing their evangelizing mission as part of a much larger conflict.

Two later Franciscan texts, both well known in the Americas, may have significantly contributed to the presence of this “new” scene in a series on the life of Saint Francis. The earlier of the two is the *Floreto de San Francisco*, written by an anonymous friar in Castilian, which surfaced in Seville around the middle of the fifteenth century and was published in that city in 1492.<sup>299</sup> Recounting a selection of events from the life of Saint Francis, its thirteenth chapter is titled *Which speaks of a prophecy of the Abbot Joachim about the Order of Preachers about the [Friars] Minors*. Describing the two orders foretold by Joachim of Fiore, it alludes to the Franciscan’s future as missionaries, stating that “the Dove-like Order will last until the last days and times, and

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<sup>298</sup> “The Words of Brother Conrad of Offida,” (Late 13th – early 14th century) Armstrong, et al. 1999-2001, 3:136.

<sup>299</sup> For an in-depth study of the *Floreto*, see Juana María Arcelus Ulibarrena, *Floreto de Sant Francisco [Sevilla, 1492]: Fontes Franciscani y literature en la península Ibérica y el Nuevo Mundo. Estudio crítico, texto, glosario y notas* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española & Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1998).

will pass through the Sea of the North, and will taste harsh conditions.”<sup>300</sup> The “Dove-like Order” refers to the Franciscans, while the “Sea of the North” likely refers to the Atlantic. After crossing the Atlantic and coming to the Americas, the Franciscans indeed experienced “harsh conditions” as they ventured into unexplored landscapes, sometimes being martyred during their attempts to preach to indigenous communities.

The text continues with its description of the future of the Franciscans, tying their existence both to their function as missionaries and to their role in the events of the Apocalypse. The *Floreto* explains:

“Many by that Order, that is, the Friars Minor, shall be converted. And idolatrous peoples, whose language shall not be known nor recognized, shall come from the ends of the earth, sent by God in aid of the Holy Land, and they will be converted to the Catholic faith.

And to come is that the Dove-like Order, that is, the Minors, will set itself manfully against the Angel of Death [Antichrist].

And preaching against him, many and a great multitude of the sons of that Order, shall pass on to the Lord by martyrdom...”<sup>301</sup>

This passage, in addition to offering a further textual foundation for Villalpando’s painting, in many ways encapsulates the Franciscan’s conception of their work in the Americas. They have converted the “idolatrous” indigenous peoples to the true faith, mastering their unknown and unrecognized languages. In the future they will confront the Antichrist and many of them will be martyred, as many had already been while preaching in the Americas.

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<sup>300</sup> Arcelus Ulibarrena 1998, 431. Author’s translation.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., 431-2. Author’s translation. The same passage, earlier on, states “angel of death, who is the Antichrist.”

One further passage in this chapter of the *Floreto* is worth noting not directly in connection to Villalpando's painting, but in relation to the larger motivations his patrons, the Franciscan friars in Antigua. After continuing to describe the success of the brothers in converting the peoples of the world, the author writes:

“And the very clumsy derision and poisonous malice of the clerics will be opposed against the Order of the Dove-like ones, and will strive to put them down, but they will not be able to, for the Lord shall visit that Order and preserve and govern it in its needs and works.”<sup>302</sup>

If the previous passage spoke directly to the Franciscans as missionaries in the Americas, this passage seems to recount the experiences of the Franciscans in the late seventeenth century, when the secular clergy throughout the Spanish viceroyalties was attempting to displace their authority. For the Franciscans, one can imagine how these passages in the *Floreto* might serve to calm their fears regarding the order's future in the Americas. They could be assured that they had a pivotal role to play in the Apocalypse, and thus in the future of mankind. Attacks on their status by the secular clergy are foreordained signs of jealousy, which in due time would be quashed by divine support for their order.

Several copies of the *Floreto de San Francisco* were known to have traveled to the Americas as early as the early sixteenth century.<sup>303</sup> It is likely that Juan de Zumárraga (1468-1548), a Spanish Franciscan and the first Bishop of Mexico, had a copy in his personal library, given that it was one of the only texts on the life of Saint Francis written in Spanish at that time. He would later donate his Franciscan texts to the library of the Franciscan convent in Mexico City.<sup>304</sup> Another copy of the *Floreto* that is now in the

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<sup>302</sup> Ibid., 432. Author's translation.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid. See also the section “Presencia del *Floreto* en la evangelización del Nuevo Mundo.” Ibid., 135-8

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., 137.



Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid is also known to have been in the custody of the Franciscan order in Mexico during the early to mid-sixteenth century, before being returned to Spain.<sup>305</sup>

Francis's connection to the Antichrist was not only remarked upon by European writers, but also by Franciscans in the Americas. Friar Pedro Alva y Astorga (1601-1671), was born in Spain but as a child relocated with his family to Cuzco, Peru. A famous theologian and prodigious writer, in 1651 he published the *Naturae Prodigium gratiae portentum*, or *The Prodigy of Nature and Portent of Grace*. Alva y Astorga's text builds on previous Franciscan texts, such as Bartholomew of Pisa's *Liber de conformitate vitae beati Francisci ad vitam Domine Jesu* (*The Book of the Conformities of the Life of Blessed Francis to the Life of the Lord Jesus*) (1385-90), that explore the concept of *Franciscus alter Christus*, the notion that Francis was a second Christ. In the *Naturae prodigium*, Alva y Astorga lists the events of the men's lives in two columns, documenting three thousand, six hundred and twenty-six similarities between them. The book's fascinating frontispiece by the Flemish printmaker Juan de Noort (active Madrid, 1628-52) (**Fig. 3.34**) shows the bodies of the two men fused together, framed on each side by the cities and landscapes that served as the settings for the most important events in their lives.

Alva y Astorga notes that Francis had been granted special revelations regarding the future of the Franciscan order and the final days of the world, alluding to the "sacred conversation" that passed between Francis and Christ as he received the stigmata on Mount Alverna.<sup>306</sup> Specifically Alva y Astorga's text states "The Blessed Francis foretold

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid., 143-6.

<sup>306</sup> See the section in Chapter 2 on *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis or The Sacred Conversation*.

many things in the presence of his brethren, of the Antichrist, his suit, appearance, violence, and the future trials.”<sup>307</sup> This passage further underscores that for American Franciscans like Alva y Astorga, the Apocalyptic prophecies regarding their order originate with their founder, and the special knowledge granted to him by God. Despite the repeated suppression of such ideas by Franciscan leadership and wider Church authorities, many no doubt felt that to ignore it would be to ignore Francis’s teachings.

### Two Iconographic Models

Villalpando’s painting appears to draw less on a single textual source or identifiable passage from the saint’s life, but rather on prophecies that were abstractly described in several texts and which were circulating among Franciscan intellectuals. Yet he betrays none of this vagueness in his composition, which is perhaps the most forceful of the surviving works from the Antigua Series. At the center-left of the canvas, (**Fig. 3.35**) Saint Francis stands in a resolute pose, unaffected by the dramatic scene taking place around him, in a stance similar to *Saint Francis and the Tempest*. The stigmata are visible on the saint’s hands and feet. Despite his calm composure, Villalpando has captured the saint in a moment of naked violence; he steps forward, brandishing a crucifix in his proper left hand, while plunging a sword into the chest of the Antichrist with his proper right.

In contrast to the saint’s calm visage, the Antichrist appears shocked and horrified, his mouth agape and his body twisted in sharp contrapposto. His proper right arm is thrown tensely upwards, as if he has attempted to halt the saint’s attack with a slash of his scimitar. Beneath his proper left foot (**Fig. 3.36**) lie his polished shield and

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<sup>307</sup> de Alva y Astorga 1651. Tabula CLIII, Privilegio MCCCXXIII. Author’s translation.

plumed helmet. The Antichrist is garbed as a soldier, wearing a fitted green tunic with a bottom trim of tassels edged in gold, a single tassel revealed above his proper left leg. His collar is richly edged in curled gold ornaments and each of his shoulders bears a gold anthropomorphic face that emits the pink cloth of his shirt from its mouth (**Fig. 3.37**). The shirt also pours out from the bottom of his green tunic, forming a voluminous skirt, its hem turned upward to reveal the gold stripes painted on the inside of the material. Another strip of pink fabric loops over his shoulder and down the opposite side of his waist, possibly acting in place of a belt to hold his scabbard, its opening visible at his proper left hip and the metal-tipped point visible between his legs. Over his tunic the Antichrist wears a long gold-stripped blue mantle that coils around his proper left arm up to his neck and down across his chest and waist. Richly ornamented greaves protect his feet and shins, (**Fig. 3.38**) each lined with a striped cloth visible at the top of the greave where it is pinned with a large brooch set with a green stone.

In addition to creating a strong contrast to Francis's simple homespun habit, the Antichrist's garments are reminiscent of those used by Villalpando and other period artist in their depictions of Archangels, particularly Saint Michael. His painting (**Fig. 3.39**) of *Saint Michael Archangel* (c. 1680), now in the Wadsworth Atheneum, employs a similar fitted tunic and elaborate greaves, both lined with expensive fabrics. In both works, the hard, armor-like surface of the tunics are contrasted with large bolts of rich cloth that seem to flow around their figures, animating them with a sense of movement. The resemblance between the depictions of both figures may also have served as a subtle reminder to period viewers that the Antichrist is in a sense a representation of Satan, himself a fallen Archangel.

The confrontation between Saint Francis and the Antichrist, in which the former violently slays the latter, is the central focus of the composition. To understand the current appearance of that portion of the painting, it is necessary to pause my visual analysis here and discuss the work's examination and treatment at the PMA. A comparison of the painting as it looks today (**Fig. 3.33**) to a pre-treatment image (**Fig. 3.40**) taken after its purchase, clearly shows dramatic improvement of the painting's overall appearance and legibility. Less immediately apparent, is what this comparison reveals about the history of the painting's central passage and how it came to look the way it does today.

At the time of the painting's purchase, it still depicted Francis slaying the Antichrist; however, in this version (**Fig. 3.41**) the saint dispatches him not with the thrust of a sword from his hand, but with a sword that acts as the physical manifestation of the Word of God. This sword strikes the Antichrist in his chest, but is in line with the saint's mouth, as if Francis has struck down his enemy by speaking. Rather than being based on Franciscan prophecies, this depiction of the Antichrist's defeat is more directly drawn from passages in the Book of Revelation. Prior to Satan's imprisonment, a rider appears in the heavens atop a white horse. It continues:

“The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”<sup>308</sup>

“Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet

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<sup>308</sup> Revelation 19:14-16.

who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.”<sup>309</sup>

The figure described in Revelation is sometimes identified as Saint Michael the Archangel, and sometimes as Christ, as alluded to in his description as the ‘King of Kings’ who will rule in the future. The scene was often included in print series depicting the events of Revelation, such as the series engraved by Adriaen Collaert (**Fig. 3.42**) after Jan Snellinck, described earlier in the chapter. In Collaert’s version, the heavenly figure rides forth from a cloud, the sword hanging suspended in front of him with its hilt at his lip.

The notion of Francis confronting the Antichrist with a sword from his lips may not be completely without precedent in church literature. As Lara notes, Pope Gregory IX composed a hymn in 1240 recognizing Francis’s receipt of the stigmata that foreshadows the Apocalyptic beliefs that would soon become associated with the saint’s legend. The *Caput Draconis*, or *Dragon’s Head*, recounts Christ’s return to vanquish the Antichrist as described above in Revelation. Pope Gregory IX writes:

“But yet, from Christ’s own side was sent  
A legate [Francis] with a mission new,  
Upon whose holy body marked  
The ensign of the Cross was seen.

Protected by the shield of faith,  
And helmeted with hope, he bore  
The sword of the Word, and for belt  
He was girded with chastity.”<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> Revelation 19:19-21.

<sup>310</sup> Lara 2016, 27.

In this hymn Francis is not the cause of the Antichrist's demise, he instead aids Christ, yet it ascribes the same 'weapons' to him as those given to the victorious figure in Revelation.

Following the purchase of Villalpando's painting, x-radiographs (**Figs. 3.43 & 3.44**) and photographs taken using infrared reflectography (**Fig. 3.45**), a technology that allows us to see through the surface paint layers, revealed that this interpretation of the scene was not original to Villalpando's composition. An analysis of the painting layers show that it was instead the result of a later campaign of overpainting, intended to alter the appearance of the picture.<sup>311</sup> The exact dating of these changes remains unclear, although they appear to be historic, having happened long after the painting arrived in Guatemala, possibly in the late eighteenth or nineteenth century.<sup>312</sup> Maintaining the same entry point on the Antichrist's chest (**Fig. 3.46**), the sword held in Francis's hand was overpainted and the "Word as sword" iconography inserted, radically altering the meaning of the painting. Rather than being vanquished by a direct physical act on the part of Saint Francis, the Antichrist was now slain through divine intervention – the transmutation of the saint's words into a sword.

Further analysis by the conservators at the PMA revealed more alterations that are believed to be contemporaneous with the changes made to the sword, some of which were visible at the time of the painting's purchase and others which had been partially removed, perhaps in a previous cleaning campaign. In Villalpando's version, Saint Francis's hands held the crucifix and the hilt in his sword, but both objects were at one point suppressed and the saint's hands repainted (**Figs. 3.47 & 3.48**) as open, with their

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<sup>311</sup> Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero February 18, 2010).

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

palms forward.<sup>313</sup> At the time of the painting's purchase, Villalpando's original sword was fully covered, yet the crucifix was visible. Remnants of green and black pigment found on the crucifix indicate that it too was once painted over, but was partially recovered during the previous cleaning mentioned above.<sup>314</sup>

Another group of changes to the figure of Saint Francis were also noted by conservators at the PMA. Most visible in the painting's present state (**Figs. 3.33 & 3.35**) is the addition of a blue mantle over the saint's habit, cascading over his left arm and draped around his body. Fragments of blue paint were also found atop the upper portion of the saint's habit, indicating that when the blue mantle was added, the remaining portions of his gray-brown Franciscan habit may have also been toned with blue pigment.<sup>315</sup> More remnants of this campaign were found around Francis's head and face, (**Fig. 3.49**) with traces of dark paint identified on the saint's brow and on his cowl, as well as further traces of pink flesh toned pigment on his cowl. Further fragments of pink flesh tone were found scattered across the saint's face, which, even in the work's current state, give it a fuller, fleshier appearance than in the other surviving paintings in the series.<sup>316</sup> Finally, an examination of the painting under ultra violet light (**Fig. 3.50**) revealed several golden rays forming an aura around Francis's head. Although small traces of gold leaf were found to verify its presence, this addition was almost completely removed, again likely during a previous cleaning campaign.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid. I wish to thank Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero for the use of his sketches of the original positions of Saint Francis hands, included in his Project Summary presentation.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid. In his discussion of the painting, Jaime Lara incorrectly asserts that the cross is a later, non-Villalpando, addition. Lara 2016, 232

<sup>315</sup> Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero February 18, 2010.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid. See also, Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero, *Villalpando Project Summary Presentation*, (Philadelphia Museum of Art, Conservation Department. October 28, 2011).

<sup>317</sup> Saloma Guerrero October 28, 2011.

Taken together, these modifications to Villalpando's composition represent an attempt to alter the subject of the painting by effecting changes to the figure of Saint Francis and his means of slaying the Antichrist. Although it remains purely speculative, Saloma suggested that whoever altered the painting may have wished to make Francis appear more like Christ, thus bringing the painting more in line with the biblical description of the Antichrist's defeat. By digitally manipulating a photograph of the painting, based on the findings described above, Saloma produced reconstructions (**Figs. 3.51 & 3.52**) of the work that show how he believes Villalpando's original composition appeared when fully intact, as well a version that shows its possible appearance with all the noted changes in place.<sup>318</sup> Reconstructions such as these, digitally manipulated on the basis of the discovery of minute amounts of pigment, must of course be treated with a degree of skepticism; it is impossible to corroborate them without further documentary information. Nonetheless they do serve to demonstrate the degree to which Villalpando's painting may have been altered and help us better understand the painting's appearance today.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Ibid. I wish to thank Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero for the use of his digital reconstructions, included in his Project Summary presentation.

<sup>319</sup> Curators from the European Painting department at the PMA and conservators from the Painting Conservation Lab met throughout the course of Saloma's project to discuss the goals of the treatment. Ultimately, a decision was made to restore certain portions of Villalpando's original composition, while allowing facets of the later intervention to remain. This was decided based on physical factors, such as a concern that portions of Villalpando's composition were sufficiently damaged to make any reconstruction lack a sufficient degree of veracity, and ethical concerns. It has long been the philosophy of the institution to respect object's physical histories, including changes that may represent shifting perspectives on the works subject. Thus, in its current appearance, Villalpando's original sword was uncovered, with the later sword being overpainted to a sufficient extent to suppress it for the viewer, although not enough to make it completely invisible. Similarly, Francis's blue mantle was left in place, as were the open positions of his hands, allowing visitors to note that the painting's condition and appearance had changed over time, while still maintaining the general intent of the Villalpando's composition. In keeping with standard Conservation practices, all of these changes and adjustments were designed to be reversible, should some future generation decide that the painting's current appearance requires revisiting.



In his analysis of the painting, Jaime Lara suggests that given the censorship of Joachimite influenced Franciscan texts, Villalpando's painting may have been found to be sufficiently heterodox to require its alteration, creating a more orthodox version that was safely in keeping with Revelation.<sup>320</sup> Without further documentary information about the painting's history it remains impossible to verify such a claim, although I certainly find it to have a degree of plausibility. It is easy to imagine, if I may do so for a moment, that a more conservative minded Franciscan abbot or a Guatemalan bishop touring the Franciscan church, might have objected to Villalpando's radical scene and required its modification. Yet it is also important to acknowledge that the reasons may be far more mundane. In the course of its travels the painting may have come into the hands of someone who found its subject matter undesirable, thus requiring its alteration to make the work more palatable for an individual owner's taste. Similarly, an art dealer might have found the painting unsellable in its previous state and had it modified to increase the chances of it being profitable.

### **Saint Francis's Faithful Supporters**

The dramatic effect of the confrontation between Saint Francis and the Antichrist is enhanced by a complex array of figures that surround the two protagonists and witness their cataclysmic encounter. For period audiences the scene represents the ultimate clash between the forces of good, representing the Catholic faith, and those of evil, who seek to lead mankind away from the righteous path.

On either side of Saint Francis (**Fig. 3.53**) are the Old Testament figures Elijah and Enoch, the 'two witnesses' from the Book of Revelation described earlier in the

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<sup>320</sup> Lara 2016, 232-34.

chapter. In the Book of Kings, Elijah is described as a prophet and miracle worker, defending the Jewish faith in the Kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Ahab and his infamous wife Jezebel, a priestess of the Canaanite deity Baal. Among the most well-known miracles attributed to him was his ‘duel’ with the prophets of Baal, in which he called down fire from the heavens, proving the supremacy of the Jewish God.<sup>321</sup> Elijah’s use of fire to destroy these false prophets likely contributed to the frequent depiction of him carrying a flaming sword, which became his most common iconographic attribute. As was touched upon in Chapter 2, Elijah and Francis were frequently connected in Franciscan literature, with many describing Francis as “a second Elijah,” in part due to the vision of Francis aboard a fiery chariot, which mirrored Elijah’s own ascent to heaven.<sup>322</sup> Accompanied by his disciple Elisha, Elijah parts the waters of the river Jordan and as the two men crossed the exposed land together “suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.”<sup>323</sup>

Elijah is typically depicted as an older bearded man wearing a spotted white woolen mantle over a simple brown habit.<sup>324</sup> Villalpando adheres to established iconography, which he had previously utilized in two other works; a painting of *The Vision of Saint Bridget* (**Fig. 2.39**) (c. 1680), which includes Elijah among a host of heavenly figures that process behind the Virgin, and in his decorations for the dome (**Fig.**

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<sup>321</sup> 1 Kings 18:20-40.

<sup>322</sup> See the section in Chapter 2 on *The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire*.

<sup>323</sup> 2 Kings 2:11.

<sup>324</sup> Héctor H. Schenone, *Iconografía Del Arte Colonial: Los Santos*, 2 vols. (Argentina: Fundación Tarea, 1992), 290-4. Elijah’s clothing is reminiscent of the habit of the Carmelites, who revered him as one of their order’s spiritual founders.

1.20) of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Puebla.<sup>325</sup> In the Antigua painting, the prophet is depicted in mid-stride; his left hand brushing Francis aside to make way for the blow that he hopes to strike with his fiery blade. Although Elijah's pose seems derived from the context of Villalpando's composition, it is worth noting its similarities to depictions of the prophet (**Fig. 3.54**) by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664). The Spanish painter produced several versions of this Elijah composition, all with similar poses, as part of his series of canvases depicting the founders of the monastic orders. Several of these sets were made for export to the Spanish viceroalties, including New Spain, where it is possible Villalpando would have encountered them.<sup>326</sup>

The Old Testament Patriarch Enoch stands between Francis and the Antichrist (**Fig. 3.53**), the palm of his right hand coming forward toward the viewer, as if he too is entering the fray. His bearded face is turned to gaze at Francis and around his shoulder we glimpse a sliver of the white fabric, perhaps a mantle. Below Enoch's hand an expanse of his green garment is visible, stretched at the point of his knee to denote that he is stepping forward. Although later apocryphal books would expand the legend of Enoch, little is said about him in the Bible; he is listed among the genealogy of the patriarchs in the Book of Genesis, which notes that he lived a total of three hundred and sixty-five years.<sup>327</sup> Perhaps the most significant biblical account of Enoch is that of his death, or more specifically his non-death. In Genesis it is claimed that "Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away."<sup>328</sup> Later theologians and

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<sup>325</sup> In 1704, several years after completing the Antigua Series, Villalpando also produced a painting of Elijah that is now in the Templo de Santa Teresa la Nueva in Mexico City.

<sup>326</sup> For a study of these exported series, see Benito Navarrete Prieto's essay in, Odile Delenda & Benito Navarrete Prieto, *Zurbarán y su obrador: pinturas para el nuevo mundo* (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 1998).

<sup>327</sup> Genesis 5:18-24.

<sup>328</sup> Genesis 5:24.

church scholars interpreted this to mean that, like Elijah, Enoch did not suffer a mortal death. Instead he was taken up to heaven to serve God, or to a kind of Edenic paradise.

The notion that the prophet Elijah and the patriarch Enoch were both whisked away before death only further supported their identification as the two witnesses described in Revelation. Having never suffered a bodily death, they could return to preach against the Antichrist and be slain by him. Beliefs regarding the two Old Testament figures' non-death and their future Apocalyptic role, combined with later theories regarding Saint Francis. In Alva y Astorga's *Naturae prodigium*, the author explains that:

“At the birth of Francis many rejoiced and were glad; to wit, the mother, the parents, and the relatives of the child, as well as the neighbors and friends and the whole household of his father. And those three, Joachim the Abbot, Enoch the Patriarch, and Elijah the Prophet, when they heard about his birth rejoiced with great gladness.<sup>329</sup>

Canvases depicting Francis's birth, a subject frequently included in cycles on the life of the saint in the Americas, often incorporated a depiction of Elijah and Enoch being notified of his arrival. The various series produced in workshops in Cuzco in the mid-to-late seventeenth century, such as the cycle now in the Museo de San Francisco in Santiago, Chile, show an angel (**Fig. 3.55**) telling the two men the news in a secondary scene on the left side of the canvas. Elijah and Enoch stand in the framed doorway of a walled garden, presumably the paradise where they await their eventual return to preach against the Antichrist.

Another version of the iconography exists in paintings from New Spain depicting the birth of Saint Francis. The earliest, likely from an unidentified series, is now in the

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<sup>329</sup> De Alva y Astorga 1651. Tabula CV. Translation from Lara 2016, 223-4.

collection of the Museo Nacional de Arte in Mexico City. Once attributed to Villalpando's teacher, Pedro Ramirez, the painting (**Fig. 3.56**) shows the saint's parents at the center of the composition, flanking the infant Francis who lies on a blanket atop a table between them. On the left side of the canvas Elijah and Enoch again appear in a lush landscape, although more of a wild forest rather than a walled garden. Instead of being told of Francis's birth by an angel, they seem able to see the scene taking place at the center of the canvas. Enoch gestures toward the new child as he turns his head to confer with his colleague.<sup>330</sup> Although I have been unable to locate either a painted or engraved source for the composition, I have found three other examples of the same composition in Mexico that postdate this anonymous painting.<sup>331</sup>

Behind the defined figures of Francis, Elijah, and Enoch, several other figures are partially visible. Two (**Fig. 3.57**) on either side of Saint Francis appear heavily damaged. Between the faces of Francis and Enoch, another face is clearly visible, a small portion of collar readable along its left side. Having been abraded over time, much of its detail has faded into Villalpando's red ground, although the small view of fabric evokes a cowl, indicating that this may be another friar. To the left of Francis, an even more ghostly face is visible. Initially thought to have been similarly destroyed by abrasion, PMA conservators have instead suggested the face was never painted.<sup>332</sup> Although an infrared image (**Fig. 3.58**) shows the face as part of Villalpando's underdrawings, conservators were unable to find any pigment to support its ever being completed. Instead abrasion has

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<sup>330</sup> For further information on this painting, see Clara Bargellini, "Nacimiento de San Francisco," *Arte y mística del barroco* (Mexico City: Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso, 1994), 313-5.

<sup>331</sup> Antonio de Torres (1666-1731) included it in his c. 1718-22 series on the life of Saint Francis, for the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi in San Luis Potosí; another version attributed to the painter Francisco Martínez (1687-1758) is part of an altarpiece with scenes from the life of Saint Francis in the Regina Coeli Church in Mexico City; another version by an unknown painter is in the former Convent of Saint Mary Magdalene in San Martín Texmelucan, near Puebla.

<sup>332</sup> Miguel Ángel Saloma Guerrero October 28, 2011.

thinned the paint layer in that portion of the canvas and begun to reveal the drawing underneath.<sup>333</sup>

To the right of Elijah (**Fig. 3.59**) stands a tonsured friar, although the portions of his habit that are visible do not indicate that he is a Franciscan. The pale brown of his hood and the dark brown of the rest of his robe (seen between the legs of Elijah and Francis) do not immediately identify him as being from any particular order, making it possible that he is instead meant to be understood simply as a generic friar, one of the many faithful mendicants that will one-day answer Francis's call to confront the Antichrist. The upper halves of two other faces are seen behind Elijah, and above their heads the points of two spears and a flowing white banner.

### **The Antichrist's Henchmen**

The Antichrist is accompanied by his own group of followers (**Fig. 3.60**), the 'henchmen' described in de Vitry's *Historia Occidentalis*. Rather than depict specific individuals, most instead appear to represent various groups that were in danger of being led astray by this false prophet. Closely tied to the belief that the Gospel must be preached throughout the world, was the fear that the population of many nations would fall under the Antichrist's sway, frequently alluded to in passages describing his time on earth, such as many of those quoted throughout this chapter. A visual representation of this idea, and one of the few other depictions of the Antichrist made in the Americas, is a painting of *The Reign of the Antichrist* (c. 1739) (**Fig. 3.61**) in the Church of Caquiaviri, Bolivia. Its composition is inspired by an engraving of the same subject by Johannes Wierix (1549-c. 1620), published in Father Jerónimo Nadal's *Evangelicae Historiae*

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<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

*Imagines* (1607).<sup>334</sup> Densely packed with figures and written legends, the focus of the painting is the scene in the foreground where the Antichrist, seated atop an ornate throne, receives the adoring supplication of his followers.<sup>335</sup> Included among the crowd that encircles the throne are Muslims, depicted wearing white turbans, men wearing conical caps, denoting them as Jewish, and an Andean man, designated by his feathered headdress. Although the full context of this painting's commission remains unclear, it illustrates a prevalent anxiety that indigenous Americans would, along with Muslims and other non-Christian peoples, find themselves on the wrong 'side' during the events of the End of Days.

Pushed backward by the force of Francis's sword, the Antichrist appears to step backward, colliding with the man behind him (**Fig. 3.62**) who is in the process of drawing his sword. This man wears a long red cape, richly lined in white fur and held together by a golden pendent on his chest. The yellow robe he wears beneath his cape has an elaborately decorated hem which, when combined with his gold embellished greaves, projects a sense of richness and wealth. Perhaps the most eye-catching element is his voluminous turban, surmounted by several large pink plumes and pinned with a large gold brooch from which two pieces of fabric dangle.

Villalpando, like many painters, frequently depicted figures in turbans to denote the wearer as being from the East, such as in his depictions of the magus Caspar in

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<sup>334</sup> For an in-depth study of this painting, see Gabriela Siracusano, "No Escuchas? No Ves? Interacciones entre la palabra y la imagen en la iconografía de las postrimerías," in *Entre Cielos e Infiernos. Memorias del V Encuentro Internacional sobre Barroco 2010*, ed Norma Campos Vera. (La Paz: Fundación Visión Cultural, 2010), 75-84.

<sup>335</sup> Around the main scene is a narration of the reign of the Antichrist, including the legend of Elijah and Enoch as the two witnesses.

various versions of the Adoration of the Magi.<sup>336</sup> The addition of a golden crescent on the top of this figure's turban, however, combined with the green banner bearing three crescents that is visible just to the right of his head, indicates that we are to read this man as being Muslim. Crescents, both singular and in groups of three, were a common visual trope in viceregal art that alluded to Turkish armies, with which Spain was in frequent conflict. A painting (**Fig. 3.63**) of the *Defense of the Eucharist by Philip V of Spain* from Cuzco, for example, shows several turbaned men bearing a banner with three crescents as they attempt to pull down a golden monstrance containing the Eucharist. As Lara has noted, prophecies surrounding the Apocalypse offered the Spanish an opportunity to combine their political interests, specifically the destruction of the Turks, with spiritual aims, namely protecting the true faith from the Antichrist.<sup>337</sup>

Among the Antichrist's followers are two indigenous American men, identifiable by iconographic attributes. To the left of the Antichrist, (**Fig. 3.64**) partially obscured by his raised arm, the upper half of a man's face is visible. He wears a tall headdress, composed of white, green, and red feathers, similar to those seen in other depictions of 'Indians' in New Spain, such as a painting by Antonio de Torres (1667-1731) (**Fig. 3.65**) showing *Saint Francis Xavier Baptizing* various peoples from throughout the world. To the right of the Antichrist's face another figure appears, this time only his eyes and forehead visible, as he peers above the head of another man. Encircling his brow is a thin yellow band, from which emerges a single white feather. These men's native status is further asserted by the presence of a bow, partially visible, above the Antichrist's head. In

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<sup>336</sup> See for example, Ronda Kasl's entry on the *Adoration of the Magi* by Villalpando, in the collection of Fordham University in Fernández de Calderón 2017, 48-9.

<sup>337</sup> Lara 2016, 111.



his book, *Engraving the Savage*, Michael Gaudio argues that the presence of bows, and by extension arrows, was an immediate signifier:

“To be sure, European artists had at their disposal a well-developed iconography of otherness, and the bow and arrow became an important part of this iconography during the sixteenth century. When a figure is intended to stand for America, or simply to embody the savage condition of the New World, we can usually expect to find a bow and arrow in the hands or at the feet.<sup>338</sup>

Although in his text Gaudio is discussing European artists and their depictions of North American natives in sixteenth century prints, I believe that the argument can be extended to Mexican artists like Villalpando. These figures were undoubtedly meant to be read as indigenous Americans, which for the Franciscans in Antigua would have provoked thoughts of the entire missionary endeavor. Recalling that the majority of the population of Guatemala was of native descent, the friars might have seen the painting as a compelling reminder to ensure that their spiritual charges found themselves on the right side of the Apocalyptic conflict.

Another of the Antichrist’s supporters that is worth examining is the man whose face is visible between the Antichrist and the Muslim figure, shown (**Fig. 3.64**) with dark hair and a thin mustache and beard. Although it is difficult to identify him with any type based only on his face, it may be that he is meant to be ‘read’ as being from Asia. Depictions of peoples from the Asian continent by Mexican painters frequently lack the correct physiognomic traits, instead relying on certain tropes, such as pulled back dark hair, thin mustache, and beard. A painting of *Saint Francis Baptizing* (**Fig. 3.66**) by Villalpando’s contemporary Juan Correa shows an Asian man being baptized, his features

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<sup>338</sup> Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 7.

not dissimilar from those of the figure in *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*. The presence of this man among the Antichrist's forces may be partially explained by the Franciscan's missionary presence in several Asian kingdoms. Given their concern that Muslims and indigenous Americans might be fooled by the Antichrist, it seems feasible that their fears may have extended to those they sought to convert in Asia.

The identities of the remaining two figures, who stand beneath the banner with the three crescents, remain unclear, perhaps due to the loss of some of the canvas along that side. One more supporter of the Antichrist deserves mention; the figure who appears between his legs (**Fig. 3.67**) along the bottom register of the picture. He appears sprawled on the ground, his body facing the right side of the canvas, yet his face is turned back toward Francis. His mouth is open in terror as he witnesses Francis plunge his sword into the Antichrist's chest. The presence of this minor addition serves to further reinforce the drama of the scene, as if we are witnessing the moment when one of the Antichrist's followers realizes his defeat. Through the physical act of slaying the Antichrist, Francis has also unmasked him, revealing him to be false and powerless in the face of the forces of God.

### **Eighteenth-Century Examples**

As the lengthy analysis above has shown, *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* presents a highly developed iconography, one that has strong underpinnings in the Book of Revelation, but also in Franciscan literature. To date, no compositional source has been identified for the painting. In fact, Villalpando's late seventeenth century canvas remains the earliest known depiction of this iconography, which so far has been found

only in two other instances in Mexico. I will explore the potential impact of Villalpando's Antigua series on other Franciscan cycles in Mexico in Chapter 4, however, I think it worth exploring these two other versions here in greater depth. They reinforce the subject identification of Villalpando's canvas and, more importantly, offer a look at this iconography in an unaltered form.

The earlier of these two pictures belongs to a series of paintings by Antonio de Torres, himself a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis, for the Franciscan convent in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. The paintings date to c. 1718-22, a period in which Torres completed several commissions for ecclesiastical institutions in San Luis Potosí.<sup>339</sup> Although Torres's *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* (**Fig. 3.68**) is horizontally oriented, unlike Villalpando's work, the two compositions are nearly identical. Francis is again accompanied by Elijah, Enoch, and several friars, slaying a shocked Antichrist, whose body is in an almost identical pose to that seen in Villalpando's painting. It is worth noting that Torres's version shows the original Villalpando iconography; Francis thrusts the killing weapon with his right hand, while brandishing a crucifix in his left.

The Antichrist's three supporters (**Fig. 3.69**) are again three representative types; a Muslim man, who is similarly shown attempting to draw his sword; an indigenous American wearing a feather headdress, and a figure between them with hair pulled back and a narrow mustache and beard, indicating he is from Asia. Above their heads several weapons are visible, including a bow brandished by an arm. Although Torres painting has suffered some damage, particularly in its bottom half, a fallen figure (**Fig. 3.70**) is visible. Rather than place his face between the Antichrist's legs, Torres has placed him among

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<sup>339</sup> Rafael Morales Bocardo. *Tres Siglos De Pintura Religiosa En San Luis Potosí* (San Luis Potosí: Pro San Luis Monumental, 1991), 115.

the legs of the crowd of followers, an adjustment that may be due to the artist's adaptation of Villalpando's composition to this horizontal format.

A comparison of the two canvases also offers an important glimpse of the likely appearance of the now lost upper portion of Villalpando's painting. The sky in Torres's version (**Fig. 3.71**) depicts a clash between heavenly and demonic forces that mirrors the battle below. Saint Michael Archangel flies above Saint Francis, sword and baton in hand, rushing to meet a group of demons that hover above the Antichrist. Interestingly, one of the leading demons carries a bow, ready to fire an arrow across the divide between the two groups. When first purchased by the PMA in 2008, Villalpando's painting showed no full figures in the sky. A group of what appeared to be legs (**Fig. 3.40**) above the Antichrist, were shown against a yellow background, although their overall meaning and placement was unclear. In the course of the painting's treatment, further legs were revealed (**Fig. 3.72**) above Saint Francis and those above the Antichrist clarified, to reveal at least two pairs of dark legs each accompanied by a tail. Based on the comparison to Torres's painting, it is now reasonable to assume that Villalpando's painting once showed a similar group of angels lead by Saint Michael Archangel, whose armored greaves may be the feet visible above the Francis's half of the composition, confronting a group of demons. In the Villalpando's current state, it is worth noting the tonality of the sky, which changes from a bright pink to a dark purple as one moves from the left of the canvas to the right.

Although *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* had not been identified at the time of the publishing of the Villalpando catalogue raisonné, Pedro Ángeles Jiménez notes the similarity between Villalpando's and Torres's series on the life of Saint Francis in his

entry on the Antigua Series. He remarks that although there are stylistic differences between the two artists, which are not unexpected given the nearly three decades between the two series, the similarities are sufficient to raise the question of whether Torres was familiar with Villalpando's series. Ángeles speculates that perhaps Torres worked on the paintings in Villalpando's workshop and later repeated aspects of the iconography in his own paintings.<sup>340</sup> The strong compositional similarity between their two versions of the Antichrist iconography certainly supports Ángeles's claim; the inclusion of such specific details as the fallen figure can hardly be coincidental. The possibility, of course, also remains that although no painted or printed source has to date been identified for the iconography, that at one time such material did exist and was used by both artists.<sup>341</sup>

The second version of the painting dates nearly four decades later (**Fig. 3.73**) and is part of a series of canvases on the life of Saint Francis by the Mexican artist Ignacio Berbén (c. 1733-c. 1814), for the lower cloister of the Franciscan Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide in Guadalupe, Zacatecas.<sup>342</sup> Although certain elements are the same, Berbén's version is significantly different from that of Villalpando and Torres. Francis appears here on the right side of the painting, again accompanied by Elijah and Enoch, but this time joined by a sword wielding Saint Dominic. The presence of the Spanish saint is understandable, given his inclusion in many of the Joachimite derived prophecies regarding his role, along with Saint Francis's, during the Apocalypse. Rather than an

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<sup>340</sup> Gutiérrez Haces, et al. 1997, 262-3.

<sup>341</sup> The lost series by Baltasar Echave Rioja for the Franciscan Convent in Mexico City could have contained a version of the scene and acted as a common source for both paintings. Further research into this lost series is certainly warranted and may offer clues as to whether the works were destroyed along with their cloister, or if they perhaps survive somewhere unattributed.

<sup>342</sup> For a study of the artist, and this series, see Maricela Valverde Ramírez, *Ignacio Berben: Un Pintor Del Reino De La Nueva Galicia, Siglo XVIII* (Zapopan, Jalisco: Amate Editorial, 2009).

army of angels lead by Saint Michael, the group is accompanied by a single cherub that is dwarfed by the round shield he carries in front of him.

Francis again holds a crucifix in one hand while stabbing the Antichrist with a sword but, adding a new layer to the iconography, the Antichrist is seen to fall backward into an open hell mouth. Its large teeth (**Fig. 3.74**) seem poised to clamp down on the Antichrist's body and flames are visible in the recesses of its mouth. Several horned demons appear above the hell mouth, perhaps fleeing into the safety of its maw to escape the cherub above. In Berbén's painting the Antichrist's supporters have been reduced to three Muslim men, identifiable by their turbans and the scimitar brandished by one of them. Interestingly, the man directly behind the Antichrist is shown caught in the act of drawing his sword, in a pose that seems to echo the Muslim figure in both Torres's and Villalpando's versions.

Unlike the previous two versions, Berbén's painting contains a cartouche (**Fig. 3.75**) that includes a biblical passage in Latin, written in red, and a text describing the painting's subject, written in black. The cartouche has suffered some damage that has rendered portions of the inscription illegible, although the content of some of the missing parts can be ascertained based on the context. With these portions restored, it reads:

*Proebuifti el – m / ur oscideret nos. Exo – 9. / Asi como el Mundo ha visto  
/ en Francisco las **señales** / más claras, e individuals / del Redentor  
Jesuschristo, / Así verá el Antichristo / a este Campeon – **segundo** /  
defendiendo á todo el Mundo / Armado de espada en Mano / y con valor  
más humano / arrojarle en el – <sup>343</sup>*

In her monograph on Ignacio Berbén, Maricela Valverde Ramírez transcribes the series' cartouches and translates each of their biblical passages, but she does not translate or

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<sup>343</sup> Transcribed from Valverde Ramírez 2009, 241. The dashes denote unreadable places in the text, the blue text denote places where I have completed fragmentary words.

identify the verse that accompanies the Antichrist painting.<sup>344</sup> The “Exo (missing text) 9.” indicates that it is from the book of Exodus, from a verse ending in the number nine; however, none of the relevant verses contain the above passage.

The Latin quotation does match a portion of text from Exodus 5:21, which reads “*praeuistis ei gladium ut occideret nos*” or “put a sword in their hand to kill us.”<sup>345</sup> It comes from a passage describing Moses and Aaron’s visit to the Pharaoh after Moses’ vision of the burning bush. They demand that the Pharaoh allow the Israelites to journey into the wilderness to make sacrifices to Jehovah. He refuses and orders that the Israelites be punished for Moses and Aaron’s brazenness, forcing them to gather their own straw for brick-making. The angry Israelites confront Moses and Aaron and say to them: “May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his official and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.”<sup>346</sup> The connection between Exodus 5:21 and Berbén’s painting is not clear, although perhaps it is intended to draw a kind parallel between the two scenes. The Antichrist and the Pharaoh are both figures with the ability to harm the faithful, and in both cases a champion, Francis and Moses respectively, must strive to protect them. Just as some of the Israelites accost Moses and Aaron for defying Pharaoh, some who have been deceived by the Antichrist may set themselves against Francis.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Valverde Ramírez 2009, 237-41.

<sup>345</sup> Exodus 5:21. The number 9 seen on the cartouche may be the result of a erroneous repair to the painting, or perhaps the verse was incorrectly cited.

<sup>346</sup> Exodus 5:21.

<sup>347</sup> This relationship is speculative, but indicates that a greater analysis of the text in this cartouche, and perhaps further examination of the cartouches of the other works in the series, could prove a fruitful avenue of research.

The remaining cartouche text, directly addresses the scene in the painting, highlighting that in his slaying of the Antichrist, Francis is again acting in the tradition of Christ. Translated from Spanish it reads:

“As well as the World has seen / in Francis the **signs** / most clear, and individual / of the Redeemer Jesus Christ; / So will the Antichrist see / this **second** champion / defending all of the World / Armed with sword in hand / and valor most human / cast him in the – ”<sup>348</sup>

The ‘signs’ that the second line of the inscription refer to are the numerous moments in Francis’s life that have repeated events from the life of Christ, most prominently his receipt of the stigmata.<sup>349</sup> Just as the world recognizes the power Francis derives from his connection to Christ, so too will the Antichrist, who will be slain by this ‘second champion’. Although the final word of the passage is missing, the passages from Revelation quoted earlier in the chapter, describe Satan being thrown into an abyss, where he is imprisoned by the angel holding the key. Berbén shows the Antichrist falling backward into the hell mouth, and it is possible that the cartouche text ended by alluding to this fact, perhaps finishing with the line ‘cast him in the abyss.’

As was stated earlier in this chapter, these three paintings are the only known examples of the ‘Francis slaying the Antichrist’ iconography. A direct connection between Villalpando’s and Torres’s paintings may exist, with the latter participating in Villalpando’s workshop or perhaps simply being present in Mexico City at the time of the Antigua Series creation. The origin of Berbén’s painting remains unclear, although perhaps the Franciscans involved in commissioning his series had seen the iconography

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<sup>348</sup> Author’s translation. The dash denotes an unreadable places in the text, the blue text denote places where I have completed fragmentary words.

<sup>349</sup> It is worth noting the texts described throughout this chapter, such as Alva y Astorga’s *Naturae prodigium*, that seek to document these similarities.



previously, perhaps via Torres's canvas.<sup>350</sup> Regardless of their precise origins, the three versions when considered jointly strongly suggest that Franciscans in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries remained aware of the prophecies that surrounded their order and were incorporating them into their artistic patronage. Although on the surface this is perhaps unsurprising, it is shocking when one considers that they did so by altering common perceptions of their founder, a sacred figure. We see the famously peaceful Francis, protector of thieves and lepers, birds and wolves, recast as an aggressive warrior. In all three works, the painters highlight the physical nature of his actions; it is the saint's hand that pushed the sword into the Antichrist's flesh, even as his other hand holds the crucifix, a representation of Francis's own spiritual forefather in mentor.

## Conclusion

The three paintings discussed in this chapter represent something of a subgroup within the larger Antigua Series. Their shared thematic focus on events drawn from Revelation imply that they may have been grouped together in their original installation, forming a narrative, possibly with other now missing canvases, of Saint Francis as an Apocalyptic figure. Furthermore, all share a lack of clear visual models. Although there are numerous European paintings and prints that depict events from the Apocalypse, including some of the scenes depicted in these paintings, images where Saint Francis is their protagonist have yet to be identified. In the Spanish viceroyalties, no other examples of Saint Francis participating in *The Vision of the Seven Lampstands* or acting as *The*

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<sup>350</sup> Maricela Valverde Ramírez, in her discussion of Berbén's Franciscan series, suggests that they may have been commissioned by Friar José Antonio de Oliva, who was then Prelate General of the Provinces of New Spain, Philippines, and adjacent islands. Some two decades earlier that he had was the Custodian of the Franciscan Convent in San Luis Potosí, where Torres's paintings are housed and where he may very well have seen his version of *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*. Valverde Ramírez 2009, 25-6.

*Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss* have been found. While *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* exists in three versions, these are found only in the context of New Spain, and as was discussed above, Villalpando's composition served as the source for Torres's painting.<sup>351</sup>

These works are equally remarkable for their inventive use of biblical passages and Franciscan literature to, in a sense, invent new iconographies for Saint Francis, one of the most well-known and frequently depicted figures in Catholic art. Whereas paintings of *The Prophecy of Saint John the Evangelist* (**Fig. 3.1**) primarily derive from the writings of Saint Bonaventure, who explicitly identifies Francis as the angel seen by John the Evangelist, I have found no similarly precise statements to explain Villalpando's works. Depicting Francis as capable of stabbing another figure, albeit the ultimate enemy of Christianity, hints at the artist's willingness to depart dramatically from the saint's established story. To do so he delved into far less canonical literature, drawing on ideas only vaguely described in Joachimite influenced texts, some of which were considered suspect by church authorities.

Returning to the question I asked at the end of my examination of *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, I think it highly unlikely that three scenes such as these could have appeared in Villalpando's series without the consent and even guidance of his Franciscan patrons. It is clear from what we know about him that Villalpando was a highly educated man, something which is abundantly apparent from the richness and complexity of his paintings. I would propose, however, that the theories and prophecies that underpin these paintings speak to a degree of specialized knowledge

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<sup>351</sup> The extent to which the lost Echave series may have provided models for these specific works remains unknown.

that suggests a Franciscan familiar with the literature circulating within his order. Whether the information Villalpando needed was included in the now lost *mapa* sent to him by the friars in Guatemala, or he sought assistance from someone among the order in Mexico City, where he no doubt had contacts, is unclear.<sup>352</sup>

These paintings also demonstrate that for the Franciscans the Apocalypse was an ever-present affair and one that was intertwined with notions about their roles as missionaries in the Americas. As Lara argues throughout *Birdman of Assisi*, the Franciscans saw themselves as players in a much larger divine narrative, preparing the way for the initiation of events promised in Revelation and elaborated upon by subsequent prophets and theologians. Even while accepting this as an important aspect of the Franciscan's collective identity, I think he and other scholars have focused too heavily on that same missionary project when considering Villalpando's paintings and others like them. It is important to recall that the cloisters where these paintings typically hung were privileged spaces, where only the friars moved freely. These paintings offered them the opportunity to contemplate the life of their founder, educate themselves and their novitiates about his most important acts. This is not to say that these paintings did not hold any meaning for the friars work of evangelizing and guiding indigenous communities, but instead that this was not the only purpose they served.

If Villalpando's three Apocalyptic themed paintings reinforced for the Franciscans that their work in the Americas was vital and part of a larger divine plan, then they would have also served to galvanize them to resist efforts by the secular clergy to deny them the authority necessary for continuing this essential task. Ignoring this very

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<sup>352</sup> Refer back to Chapter 1 for a discussion of this lost document, referenced in the surviving contract for the series, as well a description of Villalpando's work for the Franciscans in and around Mexico City.

present concern faced by Franciscans throughout the Spanish viceroyalties creates an incomplete picture of how these paintings may have been interpreted by the friars. Ruminating on *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, a friar might have noted the indigenous men who follow the Antichrist and been inspired to dedicate himself more fully to his duties evangelizing in the communities under his convent's care. At the same time, witnessing Francis's use of force in the work, he may also have been moved to pursue a more aggressive defense against those who might suggest that he should return to a more traditional mendicant life, remaining within his cloister and devoting himself to prayer. After all, no bishop or priest guides Francis to victory in the painting. It is the saint's hand, marked with the wounds of Christ, which delivers the force behind the killing blow.



## Chapter 4

### *Networks of Transmission: The Antigua Series in New Spain*

The previous two chapters have examined the surviving canvases in Villalpando's series with the aim of understanding the written and visual sources that aided the painter in their creation, as well as contextualizing them within the Franciscan's conception of the life of their founder and the role of their order in the Americas. This chapter pivots from a focus on the series' formulation to concentrate on its potential impact on other cycles depicting the life of Saint Francis subsequently made in New Spain. Once completed, the forty-nine canvases would have been rolled and wrapped in protective coverings, then transported, most likely overland, from Mexico City to Antigua. Assuming that Villalpando completed the paintings within the deadline stipulated by the commission's contract, they would have been present in his studio for only a year. Despite this short window of time when other painters in the capital could have encountered the Antigua Series, they nevertheless seem to have been a source of inspiration for later painters, who in some cases produced works that may have been directly adapted from Villalpando's compositions.

The Antigua Series is by no means unique in this regard; numerous compositions and stylistic elements from the artist's oeuvre were adapted by later generations of painters in Mexico City and Puebla. Villalpando remained a noted figure among his peers until his death in 1714, in some cases forging important ties with these younger artists. As was mentioned in Chapter 1, for example, the painter Nicolás Rodríguez Juárez (1667-1734) acted as godfather to Villalpando's son Cristóbal Francisco in 1690, just a

year before he signed the contract for the Antigua series. A member of the Juárez painting dynasty, Nicolás was the brother of Juan Rodríguez Juárez (1675-1728), who overtook Villalpando and Juan Correa in the last decade of their lives as the most preeminent painter in Mexico City. Nevertheless, Villalpando appears to have remained a venerated local celebrity and by drawing on his works, even long after his death, painters connected themselves to his illustrious reputation and to a larger tradition of painting in New Spain. A noteworthy example of this type of visual appropriation occurs with Villalpando's astounding painting of *The Lactation of Saint Dominic* (Late 17<sup>th</sup> – early 18<sup>th</sup> century) (**Fig. 4.1**) made for the Dominican church in Mexico City. The three armies of allegorical figures that march into the large cave to witness the saint being comforted by the Virgin Mary in Villalpando's composition are much reduced in a version by the painter José de Alzibar (1726-1803) (**Fig. 4.2**) painted in the second half of the eighteenth century. Alzibar undoubtedly knew Villalpando's painting and likely intended for viewers to make the connection between their two works. As stated in an essay from the catalogue of a recent exhibition on eighteenth-century painting in Mexico, works like these confirm the significance placed on local painting traditions by Mexican painters.<sup>353</sup>

Returning to the Antigua Series, the transmission of Villalpando's compositions to later Mexican painters may have occurred via both direct and indirect means. The *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* by Antonio de Torres, discussed in the previous chapter and again below, follows Villalpando's earlier version to a sufficient extent to suggest that Torres had firsthand knowledge of the work. If, as Pedro Ángeles suggests, Torres spent time in the artist's workshop he may well have been present during its

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<sup>353</sup> Luisa Elena Alcalá, Jaime Cuadriello, Ilona Katzew, and Paula Mues Orts, "Painted in Mexico, 1700-1790. Pinxit Mexici," in *Painted in Mexico 1700-1790. Pinxit Mexici*, edited by Ilona Katzew. (Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2017), 16-49; 35.

creation.<sup>354</sup> It is worth noting here that Torres was a cousin of the Juárez brothers and it is possible, given their connection to Villalpando, that they helped place the young artist in the venerable painter's orbit or even assisted him in securing a place in Villalpando's workshop. Tasked with assisting the master painter on such a large commission, Torres might have been sufficiently involved to familiarize himself with this work and then recall it years later while painting his own cycle on the life of Saint Francis. Although this remains speculative, it is possible that Torres could even have made a reproductive sketch of the work as part of his training. It would not be inconceivable that he would continue to utilize such materials throughout his career.

It also remains possible that eighteenth century painters had access to the same source material as Villalpando, such as the lost series of canvases by Baltasar Echave Rioja for the Franciscan convent in Mexico City, discussed in the first chapter. Given the information available, the paintings would have been in place until at least 1860 when the property was seized from the Franciscans and later demolished. If Echave's works indeed served as a reference point for Villalpando, as stipulated by the Antigua series contract, it is possible they did the same for other artists. Similarly, although in my study I have been unable to identify direct print sources for each of the surviving Villalpando canvases, the possibility remains that later painters were drawing on the same engravings, even an unidentified series on the life of Saint Francis that is no longer extant. The existence of these hypothetical source materials is of course difficult to rule out conclusively, but should not be allowed to hinder analysis based on the materials – namely the paintings themselves – that have been identified.

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<sup>354</sup> Gutiérrez Haces, et al. 1997, 262-3. See discussion of this work in Chapter 3.



Regardless of their compositional sources, the shared subjects and themes present in the examples discussed in this chapter may speak to a network of transmission perpetuated not only by the artists but by their patrons. In her essay *The Spread of Models: Flemish and Italian Prints and Paintings in America*, Clara Bargellini notes the recurring occurrence of certain Franciscan subjects and iconographies, derived from engraved sources, across both New Spain and Peru. She writes:

“Faced with a body of gradually accumulating evidence, we cannot continue to sustain that the use of engraved models was indiscriminate among American painters. Artists were not randomly finding prints here and there. What we have observed in the cases discussed above leads us to think that the Franciscans themselves were controlling the circulation of prints, and not only locally or for isolated cases. Instead, we might posit that there was a policy that required decisions on a more general level on the part of the order...In synthesis, just as intentions in communication may be perceived on the part of painters adapting engraved models, reasons and patterns may be attributed to the distribution of prints. These patterns could have been individual, for example in the case of Rubens whose attention to all the process involving the dissemination of his work is well-known, but they could also have been institutional, as in the case of the religious orders.”<sup>355</sup>

I believe that Bargellini’s argument can be extended beyond engraved sources to describe the Franciscan’s management of their art patronage in general, especially cycles representing the life of their founder. As the number of such series grew in the eighteenth century, it seems probable that the Franciscans would have exerted an increasing degree of control, endorsing via repetition the scenes and compositions that best suited their needs. As discussed in the previous two chapters, the selection of scenes from the life of Saint Francis could indeed be a loaded choice, meant to express as much about the Franciscans who displayed the painting as they tell us about the saint’s life.

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<sup>355</sup> Clara Bargellini 2009, 990-1.

It is worth noting the range of existing research for the series and individual canvases discussed below; some have been the subject of articles, and in one case a publication, while many remain relatively unstudied. With the spread of digital photography and social media, images of Franciscan paintings previously known only to a handful of scholars are beginning to become more widely accessible. Although this can be heartening for scholars such as myself who are always on the search for variants of established scenes or compositions, the information attached to these images can be scant and often unverified. More importantly, no attempt has yet been made to draw all these various series and canvases into dialogue with one another. Although this chapter makes a tentative step in that direction, it is important to remember that it is indeed a first step. A great deal of further research must be done on these works individually, as well as cumulatively, for a fully defined understanding of Franciscan patronage in New Spain to emerge.

### ***Antonio de Torres - Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí***

Eighteen canvases are currently extant from the series on the life of Saint Francis that Antonio de Torres made for the Franciscan convent in San Luis Potosí, Mexico.<sup>356</sup> It is likely that some are now missing, although the exact number of the original series is

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<sup>356</sup> For the most in-depth study of Torres's cycle on the life of Saint Francis see: Morales Bocardo 1997; See also Francisco de la Maza, *El Arte Colonial en San Luis Potosí* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1969); Pro San Luis Monumental, *Tres siglos de pintura religiosa en San Luis Potosí*, (San Luis Potosí: Gobierno del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1991) For biographical information on Antonio de Torres see: Mina Ramírez Montes, "El testamento del pintor Antonio de Torres," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 15, no. 59 (1988), 265-72; Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, "Noticias en torno al pintor Antonio de Torres en el Archivo del Sagrario Metropolitano," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 25, no. 60 (1989), 231-41. Although in his 1997 publication Bocardo lists the eighteen subjects of Torres's series, I have been able to only see twelve of these canvases – either in person or in photographs. The others are presumably kept in parts of the complex where visitors are not permitted.

unclear; an accounting note for the works states: “Forty-one canvases of the Life of Saint Francis and the Stations of the Cross were created for the upper and lower cloisters, which cost in Mexico City 953 pesos.”<sup>357</sup> Nine surviving paintings of the Stations of the Cross have been identified from Torres series, leaving a total of fourteen paintings from both series still unaccounted for.<sup>358</sup> They were painted between 1718 and 1722, when Torres was at work on a number of large commissions for religious institutions in San Luis Potosí, as well as the neighboring city of Zacatecas. Much like with the Antigua Series, the bulk of these works were probably completed in the artist’s workshop in Mexico City and then transported northward, although it has been suggested that given the volume of works he was producing for the area, the artist may have traveled there to view the spaces where his paintings would hang.<sup>359</sup>

The comparison of Villalpando’s and Torres’s paintings of *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, discussed in Chapter 3 and above, confirms the close relationship between the two artists.<sup>360</sup> Given the degree of similarity between the two paintings, it seems certain that Torres had firsthand knowledge of Villalpando’s composition. Although none of the scenes that appear in the surviving works of both series have this same degree of resemblance, many of Torres’s works do suggest a familiarity with the Antigua Series. Torres’s version of *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods* (**Fig. 4.3**) follows Villalpando’s model (**Fig. 4.4**) closely. Although Torres has eliminated much of the ornate architectural features used by Villalpando, the essential elements of the scene

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<sup>357</sup> Morales Bocardo 1997. p. 481.

<sup>358</sup> For the paintings of the Station of the Cross, see: Ilona Katzew “The Radiating Image: The Mobility of Painting in Eighteenth-Century Mexico,” *Painted in Mexico 1700-1790. Pinxit Mexici*. Ilona Katzew, ed. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2017. pp. 78-109. pp. 98-103.

<sup>359</sup> Katzew, ed. 2017. p. 102.

<sup>360</sup> In Morales Bocardo’s study of de Torres series he identifies this scene as *Saint Francis Combats Heresy*, interpreting it as an allegorical representation of the saint’s loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church through his willingness to vanquish various pagan peoples. Morales Bocardo 1997. pp. 472-3.

remain the same. Francis kneels on a similarly raised platform and is embraced by the bishop who, in a pose quite similar to the prelate in Villalpando's painting, throws his cope protectively over the young man. Torres has also reduced the entourage that accompanies Bernardone down to a single figure, yet he maintains the period of dress used by Villalpando, showing the angry merchant wearing the *lechuguilla* and dressed in the black fabric associated with the court of the Spanish Hapsburgs.<sup>361</sup>

Torres painting of *The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire* (**Fig. 4.5**) also shows some striking compositional similarities with Villalpando's painting. Both artists (**Fig. 4.6**) have eliminated any reference to the small structure in which the brothers have sheltered for the night, instead focusing on their vision of the saint. Although the poor condition of Torres's canvas has dampened the artist's use of light to enhance the drama of the scene, it is still possible to discern that the saint has appeared in a burst of radiance that contrasts sharply with the darkness that envelops the monks in the foreground. Their twisted poses, many with arms open and exaggeratedly outstretched, their bodies turned completely away from the viewer, recall Villalpando's own treatment of these figures. Torres, like Villalpando, has interestingly also shown Francis with the nails of the stigmata embedded in his palms, despite the fact that he received the stigmata after he appeared to the brothers in the fiery chariot.

Similar relationships exist between several other surviving works in both series, although in some cases it is less distinct, possibly due to the difference in orientation of some of the canvases. As was seen with *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, Torres adapted Villalpando's vertically oriented composition onto a horizontal canvas, in a sense compressing the scene downward and then reconfiguring it along the horizontal format.

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<sup>361</sup> This was despite the fact that such garments had long since fallen out of fashion in Spain.

Something similar may have happened in his painting of *The Baptism of Saint Francis* (Fig. 4.7) which, although it bears little immediate resemblance to Villalpando's composition (Fig. 4.8), contains many of the same key elements. The scene is centered on the stone baptismal font, the infant Francis held above the water by a pilgrim angel. The bishop, identified by his miter, is shown pouring water over the child's head, while his parents stand witness. Both are again shown richly dressed in the clothes of the Spanish nobility. Behind the bishop are several architectural elements that also appear in the background of Villalpando's painting: a large Solomonic column, a *mostrador* laden with metalwork, and a large gilded altarpiece, here containing an image of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception. These attributes that in Villalpando's painting serve to give the painting its depth and sense of setting, have been brought closer to the foreground in Torres's work. As with the Antichrist composition, this may again be a result of his redistribution of the elements in Villalpando's painting to fit the canvas's different orientation.

The four examples noted above are by no means the only canvases that demonstrate the strong connection between these two series, and I believe by extension, these two artists.<sup>362</sup> Further research is needed to more fully explore their potential relationship and perhaps identify conclusive proof that Torres indeed served in Villalpando's workshop, perhaps as an apprentice. Nevertheless, the role of their Franciscan patrons should not be overlooked. Commissioned during a period of expansion and renovation of the Franciscan complex in San Luis Potosí, it is in some ways unsurprising that the brothers turned to Antonio de Torres, a painter who was

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<sup>362</sup> Strong compositional similarities also exist, for example, between the paintings of *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna* and *The Death of Saint Francis*.

already well known in the region and a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis.<sup>363</sup> Despite leading a secular lifestyle, the painter would have been familiar with the Franciscan rule and perhaps read biographies of the saint that recount scenes reflected in his paintings.<sup>364</sup> A pivotal question therefore remains the inclusion of *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* among the series for San Luis Potosí.<sup>365</sup> Perhaps even more so than Villalpando, Torres would have known that this scene was not a part of the saint's sanctioned biography, and must have included it at the Franciscans request. This suggests that some of the same concerns that may have influenced its inclusion in the Antigua series – the Apocalyptic beliefs of the Franciscans along with their increasing concern about the growing influence of the secular clergy – were equally at play in northern New Spain in the eighteenth century.

***The Berrueco Family – Church of Saint Francis, Huaquechula & Church of Saint Claire, Atlixco***

In the state of Puebla, two incomplete series on the life of the Saint have been attributed to the painter Luis Berrueco, who was active in Puebla in the first half of the eighteenth century. The more numerous set, numbering twelve known canvases, are from a Franciscan convent in the town of Huaquechula, some fifty-six kilometers south-west of the city of Puebla.<sup>366</sup> The second, with six known paintings, is in the convent of the

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<sup>363</sup> For a full account of the convent's expansion, see Morales Bocardo 1997. Chapter 6.

<sup>364</sup> Although we do not know their content, it is worth noting that the artist's will lists several boxes of books among his belongings. Ramírez Montes 1988, 270-72.

<sup>365</sup> It is unknown if any other Apocalyptically themed paintings existed among the lost paintings from Torres's series. It is worth noting, however, the inclusion of Elijah and Enoch receiving word of Francis's birth in Torres's painting on that subject. See the discussion of this iconography in Chapter 3.

<sup>366</sup> For the most complete study of the series, see: Elisa Vargas Lugo and Marco Díaz, "Historia, leyenda y tradición en una serie franciscana," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 12, no. 44 (1975), 59-82.

Poor Clares in Atlixco, a town roughly thirty kilometers south-west of Puebla.<sup>367</sup> Despite a number of extant works, little is known about Luis Berrueco – in fact numerous painters from that family are believed to have signed their works simply “Berrueco”, as is the case with *The Baptism of Saint Francis* (**Fig. 4.9**) in Huaquechula.<sup>368</sup> Although both the Huaquechula and Atlixco series have been attributed in Luis Berrueco, a comparison of the canvases depicting *The Birth of Saint Francis* in each series (**Fig. 4.10 & 4.11**) shows that the compositions are quite similar to one another, but the stylistic differences between them are sufficient to suggest that the series may be by different artists within the Berrueco dynasty.<sup>369</sup>

In her article on the series in Huaquechula, Elisa Vargas Lugo draws a connection between the work of Luis Berrueco on this series and the painting of Villalpando and Juan Correa. She writes:

“There is no doubt that to understand the art of Luis Berrueco, we must bear in mind the work of Villalpando and Correa, from whom he is a direct descendent in stylistic terms. This Villalpando-esque art, agile, graceful, lively colored, with very imaginative Baroque forms that endow the human figures with graceful movement...”<sup>370</sup>

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<sup>367</sup> Ibid. Vargas Lugo touches upon the series in relation to the set in Huaquechula. It is unclear how many works survive in situ. The six I have been able to identify include: *The Birth of Saint Francis*; *Saint Francis Receives Approval of the Rule*; *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Statue*; *Saint Francis Intercedes for a Dying Man*; *Saint Francis Conducts Saint Clare to the Porziuncula*; and *Saint Francis Presents the Three Franciscan Orders to Christ*.

<sup>368</sup> Vargas Lugo and Díaz 1975, 62.

<sup>369</sup> Although still speculative, the elaborate costuming of the figures in the Huaquechula series indicate that it may date from the end of the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, whereas the more reserved garments and brighter color palette of the Atlixco paintings appears to place it more firmly in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. It is possible that these series are by two different generations of artists within the same family, sufficiently familiar with one another’s work to explain the compositional similarities between some of the paintings in each series.

<sup>370</sup> “No cabe duda que para entender el arte de Luis Berrueco hay que tener presente la obra de Villalpando y Correa, de quienes es descendiente directo en sentido estilístico. Ese arte villalpandesco, ágil, graciosos, de vivo colorido, de formas imaginativas muy barrocas, que comunica a las figuras humans un grácil movimiento...” Vargas Lugo and Díaz 1975, 64-5. Author’s translation.

Vargas Lugo's description of the similarities between Berrueco's and Villalpando's style is convincing; in these series both artists focus significant attention on the creation of narrative through the posing and costuming of figures, as well as the establishment of setting. As with the Torres painting discussed above, a comparison of Villalpando's and Berrueco's paintings of *The Baptism of Saint Francis* again shows that the same elements from Villalpando's canvas have been filtered through Berrueco's stylistic language. We again have figures arrayed around a stone baptismal font, with the setting further established by the presence of a large *mostrador*, a Solomonic column, and a gilded altarpiece – visible in Berrueco's painting on the left side of the canvas. Interestingly, the painting also includes various flowers strewn about the floor in a fashion similar to Villalpando's canvas, however, without the heavenly scene above to explain their presence.<sup>371</sup>

Another similarity between the Huaquechula and Atlixco paintings and the Antigua Series, is the presence of Apocalyptic themes. In his discussion of *The Birth of Saint Francis* (**Fig. 4.10 & 4.11**) canvases from both of the Berrueco series, Jaime Lara identifies the numerous figures present in each painting, connecting them to the Book of Revelation, prophecies surrounding the Apocalypse, or beliefs about the Apocalyptic role of Saint Francis.<sup>372</sup> Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Bonaventure, who first identified Francis as one of the angels seen by the Evangelist, appear in the upper left of the canvas. Lara identifies the female figure that appears in the lower left of both paintings as the Erythraean Sibyl. She holds a quill and book in her hands and in the Huaquechula painting the book contains the prophecy “There will be a fearful beast that will come

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<sup>371</sup> See the discussion of *The Baptism of Saint Francis* in Chapter 2.

<sup>372</sup> Lara 2016, 222-27.



from the East and two stars will rise up against it.”<sup>373</sup> Typically identified as Saints Francis and Dominic, these stars appear on the lower right of both canvases, (**Fig. 4.12**) vanquishing a multi-headed, dragon-like beast, that cowers by the feet of Francis’s mother.<sup>374</sup> Although work remains to be done on these paintings, the presence of these elements again points toward the Franciscan’s belief in the prophecies surrounding their founder and by extension their own institutional role in the coming end of days.<sup>375</sup>

A great deal of further research is owed to the Berrueco family painters before more definitive conclusions can be drawn about the family’s relationship with the painting traditions of Mexico City, as well as its activities in and around the city of Puebla. That members of the same family completed two series on the same subject for Franciscan institutions only a short distance from one another may indicate that they had a favored relationship with both the male and female branches of the order. The existence of at least two other canvases showing scenes from the life of Saint Francis, both attributed to the Berrueco family, but as yet unconnected to a specific commission, may indicate that they completed even more cycles for that order.<sup>376</sup> It is clear though that their prominent role as painters of these series make them pivotal players in any discussion of Franciscan patronage in New Spain.

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<sup>373</sup> Ibid., 222.

<sup>374</sup> Its placement may be an allusion to the iconography of the Virgin Mary, perhaps specifically the Virgin of the Apocalypse, who is frequently shown stepping on the head of a serpent or defeating a similarly multi-headed beast.

<sup>375</sup> Lara’s analysis of these works is detailed, but problematic in my opinion. He presents conflicting iconographies for certain figures, such as Joachim of Fiore, to whom he ascribes at least three different types of habits. Without a greater consistency of attributes ascribed to these figures, or further information regarding the specific characters that appear in this scene, any identification of these ancillary figures remains tenuous.

<sup>376</sup> A painting of *Saint Francis Before the Pope* attributed to Luis Berrueco is in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, while a *Saint Francis Before the Cross at San Damiano* is in the Museo Regional de Historia de Aguascalientes. At this time, neither appears to belong to the Huaquechula or Atlixco series.

*Francisco Martínez – Church of Regina Coeli, Mexico City*

There is little published on the career of the painter Francisco Martínez (1687-1758), although he has long been a well-known figure with a large number of extant works.<sup>377</sup> Martínez, like Antonio de Torres, is an important ‘bridge’ figure in the history of painting in New Spain. He was born and undoubtedly began his training when Villalpando and Correa were still alive and painting, but matured and came of age professionally in the eighteenth century.<sup>378</sup> One group of unstudied canvases that have been attributed to him based on stylistic similarities are a set of paintings depicting the life of Saint Francis that are integrated into an altar (**Fig. 4.13**) devoted to the saint in the Church of Regina Coeli in Mexico City. Although this study has not yet included a survey of altarpieces that feature scenes from the life of Saint Francis, these works by Martínez merit special inclusion for their repetition of certain compositions from Villalpando’s Antigua Series.

The uppermost painting on the right side of the altarpiece shows Francis floating above a spherical shape (**Fig. 4.14**) and encountering Christ, both of them accompanied by cherubs. It bears a close resemblance to Villalpando’s painting of *The Vision of Brother Leo* (**Fig. 2.99**) and is the only other example of this exact iconography that I’ve been able to identify. The height of the altarpiece makes it currently impossible to tell if a landscape scene similar to Villalpando’s painting exists within the sphere beneath Francis and Christ, but an examination from the ground below and in photographs seems to show some further elements along the bottom of the canvas. It is worth noting the placement of the painting in the altarpiece; rounded to fit the curve of the ceiling, and surmounting the

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<sup>377</sup> For the most complete account of Martínez’s career to date, see: Luisa Elena Alcalá, “La obra del pintor novohispano Francisco Martínez,” *Anales del Museo de América*, no 7 (1999), 175-87.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*, 175-6.

altarpiece, Francis appears to float above it and the church below, much like he floats above the Earth in the painting.

Similarly, among the paintings on the left side is a painting (**Fig. 4.15**) that shows Christ and Francis engaged in conversation within a forested landscape, a composition that closely recalls Villalpando's painting of *The Lenten Fast* (**Fig. 2.61**). The height of the work again makes it difficult to study in detail, but a group of cherubs are clearly visible around the two main figures, positioned much as they are in Villalpando's painting. An expanse of white cloth also appears near the lap of Saint Francis and may bear the loaf of bread that the saint brought with him during his fast in the wilderness. Much like *The Vision of Brother Leo*, this composition is largely unseen in other series on the life of the Saint produced in New Spain.<sup>379</sup>

Martínez is further removed stylistically from Villalpando than Torres or the Berrueco family painters, yet he nevertheless repeats two of the most unique compositions from the Antigua Series. Further research may illuminate whether the artist shared any connection with Villalpando; though he would have been too young at the time of the Antigua Series commission to be an apprentice in the artist's studio, he was likely already an active painter at the time of Villalpando's death. As with Torres, a question of the mode of transmission again remains; were Martínez and Villalpando drawing on some yet to be identified source, or does the presence of these compositions indicate some other connection between the two artists? The possibility of reproductive drawings again seems pertinent. As an active painter in Mexico City, Martínez would

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<sup>379</sup> In the course of my research I was able to locate one other version of this scene in the Convent of the Church of Saint Michael Archangel in Huejotzingo, Puebla. It belongs to an unpublished and unattributed series containing at least eight surviving canvases. Based on the style of painting, the works appear to date to the second half of the eighteenth century. The work is different, however, from both Villalpando's and Martínez's scene, showing Christ and Saint Francis seated at a table covered with a white cloth within a landscape.

have been known to Torres, as he was to many painters in his time.<sup>380</sup> Perhaps within the flourishing community of painters in Mexico City in the first half of the eighteenth century there were opportunities for the sharing of reproductions of important compositions, not only the form of European prints, but also drawings of works by well-known local painters.

### ***Ignacio Berbén - Church of Saint Francis, Guadalupe, Zacatecas***

The series by Ignacio Berbén (c. 1733-c. 1814) for the lower cloister of the Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide in Guadalupe, Zacatecas appears to be complete and contains twenty-six canvases.<sup>381</sup> Painted nearly seventy years after the Antigua Series, Berbén's stylistic language is dramatically different from that of Villalpando, or even Antonio de Torres and the Berrueco family. The presence of cartouches on each work with explanatory text, as well as an inscription identifying the citizens who funded their creation, also add a didactic element that is lacking in the other series on the life of the saint. These works were truly meant to be studied and understood by the Franciscans walking this cloister, perhaps reflecting the Colegio's educational mission. The inclusion of a canvas devoted to *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, however, connects Berbén's series back to that of Torres and Villalpando.

As I noted in Chapter 3, Maricela Valverde Ramírez suggests that the paintings in Guadalupe may have been commissioned by Friar José Antonio de Oliva, the Prelate General of the Provinces of New Spain.<sup>382</sup> In 1730, after returning from the General

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<sup>380</sup> Martínez's relationship with the painter José de Ibarra (1685-1756), for example is noted in Alcalá 1999.

<sup>381</sup> For a study of the known works by the painter, including the series on the life of Saint Francis, see Valverde Ramírez 2009.

<sup>382</sup> Valverde Ramírez 2009, 25-6.

Chapter in Milan, Italy, Oliva was named the Custodian of the Franciscan Convent in San Luis Potosí, where Torres's paintings would recently have been installed. It is almost certain that he would have seen the painter's version *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, perhaps deciding to include it years later when commissioning the series in Guadalupe. This may explain the notable compositional differences between Villalpando's and Torres's paintings, and that of Berbén (**Fig. 3.73**). While Torres may have witnessed Villalpando's painting directly, Berbén would have likely received his description of the scene from Oliva, a non-artist. Although this connection remains speculative, given the absence of details about the commission for Guadalupe, it could represent another network for the transmission of certain subjects. Rather than being passed from artist to artist using visual materials, or even from patron to patron with the aid of prints, there were the recollections of works of art that the brothers would have carried with them as they moved to different Franciscan institutions in the course of their careers, later relating them to painters.

As with the works by Torres, the paintings by Berbén often contain the same elements as those in the Antigua Series, although depicted in a notably different fashion, reflecting the changing tastes of eighteenth century painting in New Spain. As was noted recently:

“Growing transatlantic trade as well as the influx of contraband from France, facilitated the introduction of artworks that reflected new courtly tastes, precisely as New Spanish painters were exploring ways of reorganizing their profession to satisfy their own interests and that of their clients. Gradually, Mexican painting began to incorporate into its well-established tradition a more international and modern visual vocabulary and to experiment with new pictorial solutions.”<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Katzew, ed. 2017, 20.

One of the notable ways that this manifests in the painting's in Berbén's series is the artist's reduction of material components and simplification of the overall compositional structure. Although his *The Baptism of Saint Francis* (**Fig. 4.16**) again shows the same conception of the scene as the other artists – the bishop performing the rite, the infant Francis held by a pilgrim angel as his parents look on – the emphasis on the figure's garments and the richness of the church setting is gone.

As Valverde Ramírez notes in her discussion of the work, the elaborate textiles and jewelry lavished on the saint's mother in the versions by Villalpando, Torres, and Berrueco are greatly reduced.<sup>384</sup> Wearing a modest pearl necklace and earrings, her clothing is more in keeping with that of a wealthy merchant or member of the lower nobility in the Spanish viceroalties than with the fashions of the court in Madrid. Similarly, although a *mostrador* is again present, along the left side of the canvas, the metalwork it displays is composed of surprisingly plain silver objects. Finally, Berbén has abandoned the elaborate architectural cues that are present in the paintings by Torres and Berrueco (**Fig. 4.17**) that hinted at the larger, cathedral-like space, used by Villalpando. Instead the saint's baptism takes place in a nondescript space, walled by unornamented stone. An arched doorway along the right side of the canvas reveals a scene associated with Francis's birth, in which the family's maid presents Francis to the angel pilgrim that appears on their doorstep seeking to see the newborn.<sup>385</sup> Despite the presence of a large red curtain in the upper-left corner of the canvas, a popular element in the eighteenth century for its evocation of a theatrical revealing of the scene depicted, the painting feels drained of much of its visual drama.

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<sup>384</sup> Valverde Ramírez 2009, 45.

<sup>385</sup> See the discussion of *The Baptism of Saint Francis* in Chapter 2.

Other works in the series show a similar treatment of these familiar subjects. In Berbén's *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods* (**Fig. 4.18**), the artists reconfigure the orientation of the scene, presenting the bishop's throne facing outward rather than placing it to the side, as in Torres's and Villalpando's (**Fig. 4.19**) paintings. The result is a painting that is more readily accessible to the viewer; in addition to the focus of the painting, the bishop's acceptance of Francis, we are now able to more clearly see the facial expressions and bodies of the other figures, who are arrayed on either side of the raised throne. At the same time, the architecture again becomes more indistinct, with a portion of sky visible in the upper right corner of the canvas. Are viewers meant to interpret this scene as taking place outdoors, despite the presence of the raised throne, covered by various carpets and textiles? Similar reconfigurations in Berbén's series often also include the material reductions highlighted in *The Baptism of Saint Francis*. His version of *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX* (**Fig. 4.20**) again reconfigures the protagonists – in this case Francis and the sleeping Pope Gregory IX – to a more accessible, frontally oriented position. At the same time, the sumptuous trappings of the Pope's rooms in Villalpando's painting (**Fig. 4.21**) are almost entirely gone. Whereas in the earlier work the blood from Francis's wound flowed into a golden chalice, for example, here it fills a simple glass decanter.

In closing my discussion of Berbén's series it seems worthwhile to return to his version of *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist* (**Fig. 3.73**) in light of the trends discussed above. In many ways this painting follows those patterns; the number of figures in this work compared to Villalpando's and Torres's paintings is reduced, and so too is their diversity. Saint Francis is now accompanied only by the figures alluded to in Joachimite

influenced texts: Saint Dominic, the Prophet Elijah and the Patriarch Enoch. Similarly, gone are the Antichrist's forces that represented the "idolatrous" peoples of the worlds, the three men that follow him are all identifiable by their clothing and weapons as Muslims. The background also has lost nearly all detail, leaving only a few scant pieces of vegetation in the foreground to orient the viewer that these events take place outdoors.

It's tempting to see these changes as solely owing to the stylistic changes occurring in painting in New Spain referenced above, but the efforts to subsequently modify Villalpando's painting into a more dogmatic subject matter may point to something else taking place in Berbén's painting. If the selection of this subject came to the artist by way of Friar Oliva, perhaps he made suggestions to bring the painting's iconography more in line with the thinking of the contemporary Mexican church. The presence of Saint Dominic among the Catholic forces in the painting shifts some of the focus from Saint Francis. Although he remains the primary protagonist – it is, after all, Francis who dispatches the Antichrist – he is now one of two modern saints depicted. Similarly, the decision to remove indigenous American and Asian figures from the Antichrist's forces reorients attention on the threat of the Islamic faith, or by extension that of the Ottoman Empire, which remained an enemy of Spain in the eighteenth century.<sup>386</sup> Although further research is needed into Berbén's painting to better understand these modifications, it is possible that Oliva carried out his own adaptation of the 'Francis and Antichrist' iconography, much as some unknown figure carried out the physical modification of Villalpando's painting with the same intent.

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<sup>386</sup> It is worth noting that Berbén's series includes a painting devoted to *Saint Francis Preaching Before the Sultan*, which recalls the saint's meeting with Malik al-Kamil, the Sultan of Egypt. With the exception of a few details, the Sultan's appearance is consistent with that of the figures who support the Antichrist.



## Conclusion

This brief discussion of four cycles on the life of Saint Francis with connections to Villalpando's Antigua Series represent only a small fraction of the available works that could be drawn into a larger study of the iconographies of Saint Francis in New Spain. In smaller churches throughout Mexico, particularly in the state of Puebla, are numerous unattributed canvases – individual works, canvas cycles, and altarpiece decorations – that hint at further complex interpretations of the saint's life and its importance in Franciscan visual culture.<sup>387</sup> A series of at least twelve paintings by an unknown artist, for example, flank the main altarpiece (**Fig. 4.22**) in the former Convent of Saint Mary Magdalene in San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla. Although to my knowledge they are unstudied, though known by scholars, an examination of the few photographs available of the works show that they may share many compositional similarities with the works discussed above.

Still other works seem to relate events – both real and legendary – from the saint's life to Franciscan activities in the Americas, much like Villalpando's *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*. In the former Franciscan Convent in Churubusco, now the Museo de las Intervenciones, is a large canvas (**Fig. 4.23**) that is believed to depict *The Prophecy of the Eagle at the Stream*, a prophecy supposedly uttered by Francis as he selected a new site for a Franciscan church in Extremadura, Spain.<sup>388</sup> Near a stream the saint saw an

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<sup>387</sup> One well-documented series that was not included in my project is the cycle of twelve paintings on the life of Saint Francis in the Museo Regional de Guadalajara by the Spanish painter Esteban Márquez de Velasco (1652-1696). For a complete study of these works see: Adriana Cruz Lara Silva, *De Sevilla al Museo Regional de Guadalajara: atribución, valoración y Restauración de una serie pictórica franciscana* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2014).

<sup>388</sup> The painting is impossible to photograph by conventional means due to its size and the restrictive space within which it hangs. For the most complete study of this work, see: Clara Bargellini, "Una historia franciscana: La profecía del Arroyo del Águila y Cosimo III de Medici," *Los colegios apostólicos de propaganda fide; su historia y su legado. Memoria del congreso, Guadalupe, Zacatecas 27, 28, 29 de enero de 2004* (Zacatecas: Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas, 2008), 420-29. A second version, by the Pueblan painter Pablo José Talavera (active c. 1728-49) is in the Franciscan Convent in Huaquechula, Puebla.

eagle flying, and prophesized that this place, and perhaps by extension Spain, would always remain loyal to God. Among the numerous scenes depicted in this complex canvas is an image of the first twelve Franciscans disembarking in Veracruz, where they began their trek overland to Mexico City. Works such as this one, which undoubtedly require further study and consideration within a larger context of Franciscan patronage, nevertheless speak to the order's reflection on their purpose in the Americas. A deeper understanding of this work and others like it could further illuminate the changes that must have occurred in the Franciscan's perspective as they completed their missionary endeavors in much of New Spain and found themselves marginalized by the secular clergy.

Another theme that has been revisited several times in this chapter is the manner in which these works chart the stylistic evolution of painting in New Spain. Indeed, although saint cycles have received relatively less attention than some other genres in New Spanish painting, perhaps due to their repetitive nature, it is that use of repetition that could make them an important source of information for understanding these stylistic developments. A comparison of the treatment of a single scene by successive generations of artists, such as the discussion of the series by Villalpando, Torres, and Berbén, in this chapter, illustrates with a high degree of specificity the changes that each artist implemented. In the case of cycles of the life of Saint Francis, the Franciscans may have required certain scenes be included and had defined expectations of the settings to be utilized, the figures to be incorporated, etc. This expectation of standardization puts the artists approach into starker relief, revealing their individualized styles.



## Conclusion

The principal aim of this project was to deepen and enhance scholarly knowledge of an important commission in Villalpando's career – himself a pivotal figure in the development of painting in New Spain. Although he produced a number of narrative painting series throughout his career, the Antigua Series was the largest and among the earliest, perhaps establishing a model for the completion of such cycles by Villalpando and his workshop. The in-depth analyses of the seventeen surviving paintings demonstrate the importance of this type of careful iconographic study, even in the case of relatively well-documented works, such as the Antigua Series. It can correct mischaracterization of important works, as was the case with *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, or uncover new interpretations, such as in the painting of *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis*. A thorough examination of a single work's visual imagery, both its individual elements and overall composition, can also open up new avenues into our understanding of a painter.

What became clear in the case of Villalpando is the multitude of strategies he employed in the development of his works. Although he has long been recognized for his ability draw on a “spectrum of motifs” in the creation of his compositions, to recall Jonathan Brown's quote from Chapter 1, I would argue that my analysis of the Antigua Series proves that Brown and others have over-simplified the artist's practice, and perhaps his abilities. As seen in his use of Galle's print for the creation of his painting of *Saint Francis and the Tempest*, or in the potential use of series on the life of Saint Francis by Galle and de Leu, Villalpando certainly utilized European engravings when creating

his work - in some cases directly adapting them, whereas others may simply have functioned as points of inspiration. The creative act, however, remains Villalpando's own; it should be explicitly stated that an engraving is not a painting. The creation of a painting with engraved materials as sources nonetheless requires a multitude of adaptations and decisions that only a talented painter can execute. I would thus argue that the Antigua Series demonstrates that it is not Villalpando's ability to draw on previously seen motifs that makes him a great painter, but his ability to take his works far beyond them.

If this is true of paintings where images of the subject exist in other visual formats, it is particularly true of works based on textual sources. The painting of *The Chapter at Mats*, which so closely follows descriptions in the Franciscan literature, nevertheless required a significant generative act on the part of Villalpando. Although the selection of the scene, or perhaps even the quotation from which to construct the image, may have involved input from his Franciscan patrons (discussed further below) the execution remains with the artist. The multitude of figures moving and interacting in this work animates the otherwise static textual description, drawing viewers into a narrative that, although based on a written source, is nevertheless *invented* by Villalpando.

'Invention' is something of a loaded concept in the study of Spanish viceregal painting, as noted several times in this dissertation, and as experienced by its author. During my research into the series, particularly *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, I have been struck by the insistence of some scholars that these works *must* be at least partially based on European visual sources. Despite my assertion that no such works have yet been identified, the possibility that Villalpando invented these compositions himself

is consistently discounted. Instead it has been suggested that the source material is simply no longer extant, but still must be assumed to have existed in my analysis. I strenuously disagree with this position. If such works are some day identified, I would welcome incorporating them into my research; however, until such time, I choose to attribute the invention of these compositions to the artist that painted them. To do otherwise would be to perpetuate the mistaken notion that painters in New Spain were reliant on European sources and incapable of working without them.

This anecdotal experience nevertheless represents a prejudice that, although many times disproven, persists in the field of Spanish viceregal art. I would assert that the Antigua Series is another example of its falsehood, one of many from throughout Villalpando's career. Similarly, when Villalpando does draw on visual source materials, performing what might be termed an act of 'inspired invention,' I would again assert that the existence of such material in no way diminishes the inventive nature of the work.

Turning from Villalpando, the Antigua Series equally speaks to the active participation of the Franciscans as artistic patrons. Early accounts of the painting cycle treated the brothers as relatively passive participants; their decision to commission a series from a Mexican painter was, in a sense, the most important role ascribed to them in the creation of the series. The established nature of saint's biographies meant that once the commission was contracted, they need only await their receipt of an already well-defined product. The paintings in the Antigua series, however, particularly the three Apocalyptically themed works discussed in Chapter 3, suggest that the Franciscans were in fact active shapers of their founder's legacy. Such scenes could not have been included without their approval or, more likely, their active participation. Although we may never

conclusively know the content of the *mapa* given to Villalpando, or whether he had any other contact with members of the order either from Guatemala or in Mexico, the originality and complexity of these three paintings suggest their input in orienting Villalpando on how to construct these new iconographies.

This in turn speaks to the willingness of the Franciscans – or perhaps specifically the Franciscans of Antigua – to stretch the boundaries of dogmatic imagery. Whether done in a subtle fashion, as with the benedictive gesture of Saint Francis in *The Last Supper*, or more overtly, with Francis appearing as various angels from the Book of Revelation, the Antigua Series collectively reveals that the rules against ‘new’ imagery could be sidestepped. Their approval of doing so in the context of these works speaks not only to the persistence of their Apocalyptic beliefs, but also their use of the life of their founder as propaganda for their own importance within the Catholic society of the Spanish viceroyalties.

The scenes endorsed by the Antiguan Franciscans reinforce some standard events from Francis’s biography that highlight his piety and saintly nature. Many however, also underscore the special rights granted to their order by the events of the saint’s life. Two of the paintings attest to the sanctity of the Porziuncula Indulgence, for example, a right granted to the Franciscans despite opposition from the wider clergy. The three Apocalyptic paintings also place Saint Francis at the heart of Christ’s victory in the Book of Revelation, elevating the Franciscans by association. Threatened by competing forces, such as the secular clergy or other religious orders, themselves also fearful of losing their treasured status in the Americas, these paintings sent a message of empowerment to the brothers who saw them on a daily basis. Their organization’s lineage, as well as its future,

was blessed by Francis's sanctity and close relationship with Christ, his own spiritual model. Under the watch of these paintings, an emboldened brotherhood could face the challenges of their work in the city of Antigua, and the American landscape beyond.

Ultimately, as my discussion of various series in Chapter 4 explains, an abundant amount of work remains to be done cataloging and researching other extant series on the life of Saint Francis in Mexico. Accompanying this will be the necessary investigation into the history of specific churches and convents where these works are housed, as well as a more thorough examination of the careers of lesser known regional painters. However, further iconographic studies like this one could lay the foundation for a more complete picture of Franciscan artistic patronage in New Spain. Equally important, I believe it could offer a new path of inquiry for constructing a more complete model of the region's networks that connected artists to one another and aided in the circulation of images and works. Just as Villalpando played a pivotal role in the development of painting in New Spain, my hope is that this study of his majestic Antigua series will play a key role in future studies of this important genre.





## Appendix 1

### Transcription of the Contract for the Antigua Series<sup>389</sup>

En la ciudad de México, a veinte de septiembre de 1691, ante mí escribano y testigos, parecieron de la un parte Xptoal de Villalpando, Maestro pintor, y de la otra Fran<sup>co</sup> Gómes del Corral, mercador, vecinos desta ciudad, a los cuales doy fe conozco. Otorgan que están convenidos y concertados el uno con el otro y por la presente se obliga el dicho Maestro Xptoal de Villalpando de hacer treinta y tres liensos grandes y diez y seis chicos con la vida de N.S.P.S. Fran<sup>co</sup>, conforme está la del claustro del Convento principal desta Ciudad de México, de suerte que todos sean quarenta y nueve liensos, todos de pincel, conforme el mapa que se remitió de la Ciudad de Goatemala por el Muy R.P. Fray Fran<sup>co</sup> de Suassa y Otálora, del orden de San Francisco y Provincial de aquella provincia, por cuya disposición y en virtud de horden hace el dicho concierto el dicho Francisco Gómes del Corral, por carta firmada del dicho R.P. Fray Fran<sup>co</sup> Suassa, su data en Goatemala a veinte y cinco de agosto pasado deste presente y dicho año. En cuya virtud (h)a hecho el dicho concierto con el dicho Maestro Xptoal de Villalpando, quien se obliga de hacer de pincel los liensos grandes y pequeños que van expresados y se refieren en el dicho mapa remitido de Goatemala, firmado de ambas partes y rubricado de sus manos el presente año, por el cual se (h)a de dictar y pasar. Por cuyo travaxo, materiales, lienso y paga de oficiales esta concertada dicha obra en 2,960 pesos. Los un mill pesos de ellos que le paga adelantados el dicho Francisco Gómes del Corral, de quien los (h)a recibido en reales de contado el dicho Xptoal de Villalpando, de los cuales se da por entregado, renuncia leyes de la pecunia y su prueba y otorga carta de pago en forma. Otros quinientos pesos que se le (h)an de satisfacer en el discurse de(1) plaso de dicha obra y los mill quatrocientos y sesenta pesos restantes que se le (h)an de satisfacer el día que la diere acavada. Se obliga el dicho Xptoal de Villalpando a que para de (h)oy día que la diere acavada. Se obliga el dicho Xptoal Villalpando a que para de (h)oy día de la fecha de esta carta en un año primero siguiente (h)abrà entregado con todo perfección y segun arte, la obra compuesta de los liensos de pincel que van expresados conforme a la del claustro del Convento principal de San Fran<sup>co</sup> desta Ciudad

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<sup>389</sup> This text was transcribed from: Luján Muñoz 1986, Apendice Documental.

y se expresaran en el mapa remitido de la dicha Ciudad de Goatemala, aparejando los liensos con toda perfección segun arte, para su permanencia dándole al pincel todo el primor que pudiera para su realsse y mexor perfección, estando todo ello a contento y satisfacción de dos Maestros que lo entiendan. Y por defecto de no dar acavada la dicha obra al fin del plasso de dicho a cumplirá el veinte de septiembre del que viene de mill seissientos y noventa y dos años o que no esté de dar y resevir según arte y a satisfacción de Maestros que lo entiendan, da facultad al dicho Fran<sup>co</sup> Gómez del Corral para que se pueda concertar con los maestros del arte que le pareciere para que la acaven dicha obra en la forma expresada. Y por lo que más le costara de los dichos dos mill nuevecientos y sessenta pesos de su concierto, que deja diferido en su declaración simple, sin otra prueba de que le releva, se lo pagará. Y por lo que fuere y montare y por los dichos un mill pesos que al pressente (h)a resevido de contado y por los demás que en adelante constare (h)aver resevido se le pueda executar como por deuda líquida y al plasso passado con las costas de la cobranza.

Y el dicho Fran<sup>co</sup> Gómez del Corral en conformidad del orden expresado en la carta de suso sitada de dicho R.P. Provincial Fray Fran<sup>co</sup> de Suassa, declara que (h)a hecho el concierto de dicho obra con el dicho Maestro Xptoal de Villalpando, en los dichos dos mill nuevecientos y sesenta pessos, y en su cumplimiento le tiene entregados los un mill pesos de ellos, según va referido, procedidos de los un mill quinientos pessos que el dicho Fran<sup>co</sup> Gómez del Corral, cobró del Alférez Andrés Fernández de la Torre, vezino desta ciudad, en virtud de libransas que para este efecto se le remitieron de la dicha Ciudad de Goatemala, según se expresa en dicha orden y carta que queda en su poder para su resguardo. Y se obliga el dicho Fran<sup>co</sup> Gómez del Corral de resevir la dicha obra al fin del passo de dicho año, estando con toda perfección acavada y a satisfacción de Maestros que lo entiendan y de pagar al dicho Maestro Xptoal de Villalpando o a quien su poder (h)ubiere y su derecho le presentare los dichos quinientos pessos en el discursso del plasso del dicho año. Y asimismo se obliga de pagar al dicho Mro. o a quien el dicho poder (h)ubiere los un mill quatrocientos y sessenta pessos de los dos mill nuevecientos y sessenta pessos de su concierto, en reales de contado, en esta ciudad o en otra parte que se le piden, el día que diere acavada toda la dicha obra, porque se le puede

executar come por deuda líquida y de plasso passado con las costas de la cobranza. Y para la primera paga y cumplimiento de todo lo que dicho es, amabas partes, cada una por lo que toca obliguen sus perssonas y bienes (h)ávidos y por (h)aver y con ellos se someten a las Justicias de so Magd de cualesquiera parte, en especial a las desta Ciud, Corte y Real Audiencia de ella, renuncian su fuero y la ley si convinerit para que todo rigor de derecho en vía executiva les compelan al cumplimiento, paga y execución desta escriptura, como si fuesse sentencia definitiva passada en cosa juzgada, renuncian leyes de su favor y la general del derecho y la firmaron testigos Juan López, Juan del Castillo y Fernando Veedor... Real, Vesno de México. Entre renglones: De suerte que todos sean quarenta y nueve liensos: Vale. Y assimismo se obliga de hacer otros dies y seis liensos más. No vale tillannos (?)

Xptoal de Villalpando  
Corral

Franco Gómez del

Ante mí,

Martín del Río  
Escribano Real y Público



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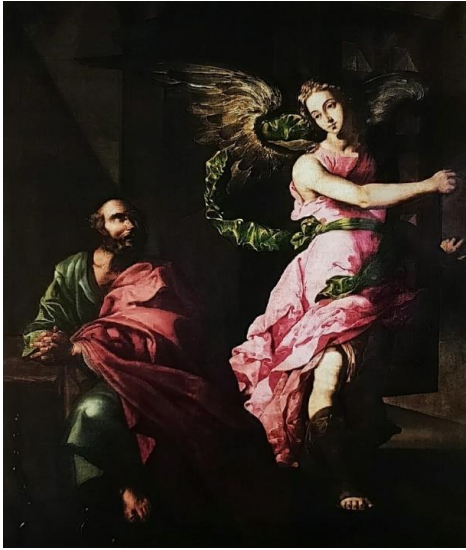
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## Chapter 1: The Master Painter of New Spain and The Sons of Saint Francis



**Figure 1.1**

*The Liberation of Saint Peter*, c. 1670

Pedro Ramírez de Contreras (Mexican, 1638-1679)

Oil on canvas

85 x 98 ½ in (216 x 250 cm)

Museo Nacional del Virreinato, INAH, Tepetzotlán, Mexico



**Figure 1.2**

*The Burial of Christ*, 1665

Baltasar de Echave Rioja (Mexican, 1632-1682)

Oil on canvas

100 x 109 ¾ in (254.5 x 279 cm)

Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City





**Figure 1.3**

*The Martyrdom of Saint Peter Arbués, 1667*

Baltasar de Echave Rioja (Mexican, 1632-1682)

Oil on canvas

80 ¾ x 126 in (205 x 320 cm)

Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City



**Figure 1.4**

*Main Altar, Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Huaquechula, c. 1675*

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas (paintings)

472 ½ x 354 in (1200 x 900 cm)

Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Huaquechula, Puebla



**Figure 1.5**  
*Main Altar, Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Huaquechula, c. 1675*  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Huaquechula, Puebla





**Figure 1.6**  
*The Annunciation*, c. 1675  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Huaquechula, Puebla



**Figure 1.7**  
*The Annunciation*, 1609  
Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640)  
Oil on canvas  
88 x 78 ¾ in (224 x 200 cm)  
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



**Figure 1.8**

*The Annunciation*, 1620-40

Engraved by Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert (Flemish, c. 1586-1659); after Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640)

Engraving

17  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 13 in (45.3 x 33.3 cm)

The British Museum, London



**Figure 1.9**

*The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, c. 1680

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

108  $\frac{1}{4}$  x 68  $\frac{3}{4}$  in (275 x 175 cm)

Hermitage of Saint Lawrence, Tlalpujahua, Michoacán



**Figure 1.10**

*The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, 1571

Cornelis Cort (Dutch, 1533-1578); after Tiziano Vecelli (Italian, 1490-1576)

Engraving

19 x 13 ¼ in (48.5 x 34 cm)

The British Museum, London



**Figure 1.11**

*The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, 1567

Tiziano Vecelli (Italian, 1490-1576)

Oil on canvas

173 ¼ x 126 in (440 x 320 cm)

Monasterio de San Lorenzo, El Escorial, Madrid



**Figure 1.12**

*The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, c. 1650

José Juárez (Mexican, 1617-1671)

Oil on canvas

198  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 129  $\frac{1}{2}$  in (505 x 329 cm)

Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City



**Figure 1.13**

*The Immaculate Conception*, c. 1680-89

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

79  $\frac{7}{8}$  x 55  $\frac{1}{8}$  in (203 x 140 cm)

Metropolitan Cathedral, Puebla





**Figure 1.14**  
*The Immaculate Conception*, 1652  
Francisco Rizi (Spanish, 1614-1685)  
Oil on canvas  
Location Unknown



**Figure 1.15**  
*The Immaculate Conception*, Late 17<sup>th</sup> century  
Pedro Ramírez de Contreras (Mexican, 1638-1679)  
Oil on canvas  
81 x 48 ½ in (206 x 123 cm)  
Metropolitan Cathedral, Guatemala City



**Figure 1.16**

*Moses and the Brazen Serpent and the Transfiguration of Jesus, c. 1683*

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

28 ft 1 in x 14 ft 1 in (856 x 427 cm)

Metropolitan Cathedral, Puebla





**Figure 1.17**  
*Sacristy, Metropolitan Cathedral Mexico City*  
Metropolitan Cathedral, Mexico City





**Figure 1.18**  
*The Triumph of the Eucharist*, 1686  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
354 x 301 ½ in (899 x 766 cm)  
Sacristy, Metropolitan Cathedral, Mexico City





**Figure 1.19**

*The Triumph of the Church through the Eucharist*, c. 1647-52

Engraved by Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert (Flemish, c. 1586-1659); after Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640)

Engraving

25 x 40  $\frac{3}{4}$  in (64 x 103.4 cm)

The British Museum, London



**Figure 1.20**

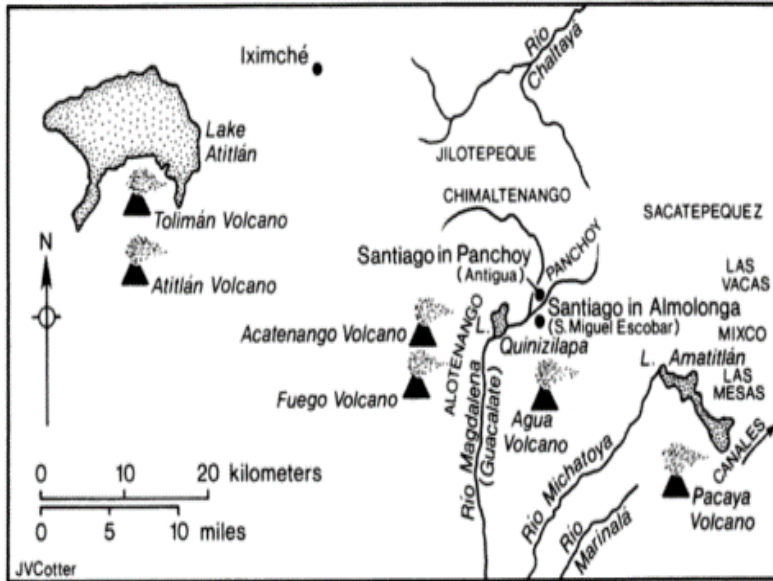
*The Glorification of the Virgin*, 1688-9

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on plaster

413  $\frac{1}{4}$  x 492 in (1050 x 1250 cm)

Cupola of the Chapel of the Kings, Metropolitan Cathedral, Puebla



**Figure 1.21**  
Map of the Guatemalan Central Highlands, with three early capitals marked.



**Figure 1.22**  
*Conquest and Reduction of the Heathen Indians of the Mountains of Paraca and Pantasma in Guatemala*,  
c. 1684-6  
Oil on canvas  
55 x 80 ¾ in (140 x 205 cm)  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (On permanent loan to the Museo de América, Madrid)





**Figure 1.23**

*The Destruction of the Saint Sabá Mission in the Province of Texas and the Martyrdom of the Priests, Friar Alonso Giraldo de Terreros and Friar José de Santiesteban, c. 1758-65*

José de Páez (Mexican, 1727-1790)

Oil on canvas

115 x 82 ¾ in (292 x 210.5 cm)

Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City



**Figure 1.24**

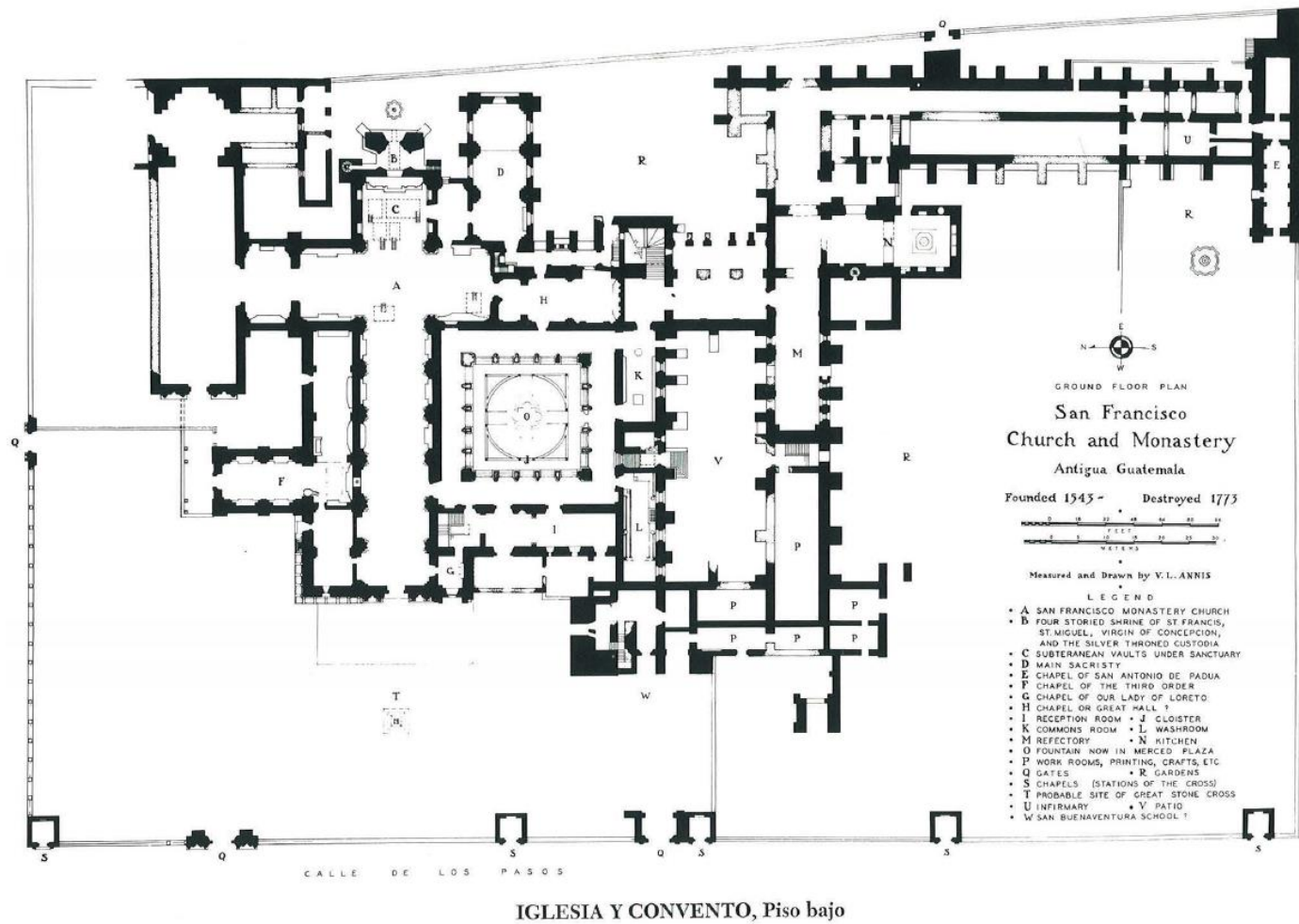
*Franciscan Martyrs in Nagasaki, 1630*

Lázaro Pardo de Lago (Peruvian, active Cuzco, c.1630-69)

Oil on canvas

118 ⅞ x 196 ⅞ in (300 x 500 cm)

Convento Franciscano de La Recoleta, Cuzco, Peru



**Figure 1.25**

Floor plan for the Church of Saint Francis, Antigua, Guatemala. From Annis 1964. The cloister is at the left center, marked with the letter “J”





**Figure 1.26**  
*Wall Painting Fragment, Late 16<sup>th</sup> – early 17<sup>th</sup> century (?)*  
Church of Saint Francis, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 1.27**  
*Wall Painting Fragment, Late 16<sup>th</sup> – early 17<sup>th</sup> century (?)*  
Church of Saint Francis, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 1.28**  
*The Triumph of the Eucharist Over Pagan Idols, 1673*  
Pedro Ramírez de Contreras (Mexican, 1638-1679)  
Oil on canvas  
81 x 48 ½ in (206 x 123 cm)  
Metropolitan Cathedral, Guatemala City



**Figure 1.29**  
Frontal view of the Church of St. Francis, Antigua, Guatemala. Author's photo.





**Figure 1.30**  
Ruins of the cloister of the Church of St. Francis, Antigua, Guatemala. Author's photo.



**Figure 1.31**  
Ruins of the cloister of the Church of St. Francis, Antigua, Guatemala. Author's photo.



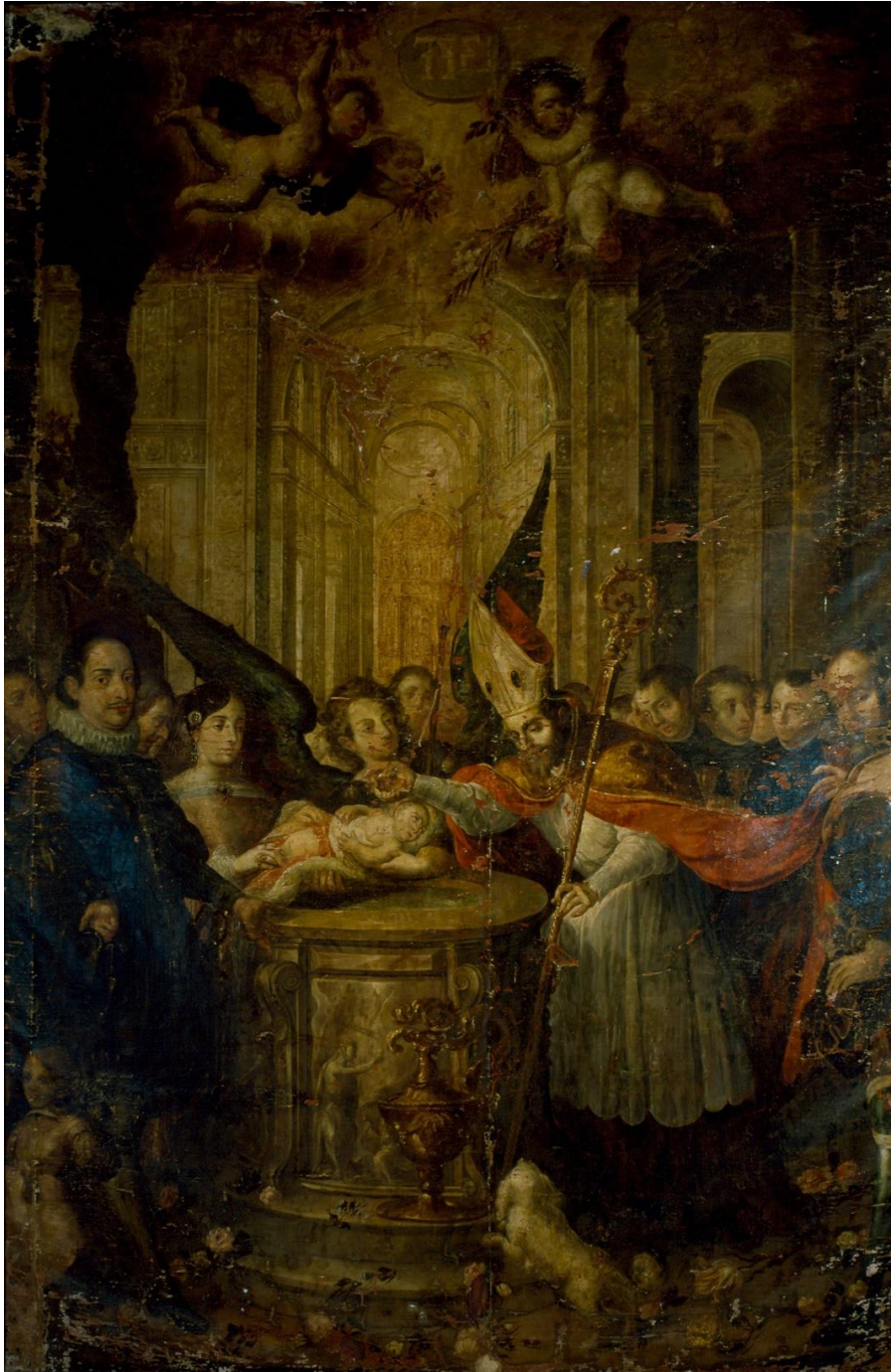
**Figure 1.32**  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala. Author's photo.



**Figure 1.33**  
Church of Saint Francis, Guatemala City, Guatemala. Author's photo.



Chapter 2: The Life and Death of Saint Francis of Assis



**Figure 2.1**

*The Baptism of Saint Francis*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

137 x 94 in (348 x 239 cm)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.2**  
[detail] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.3**  
*Two Ewers*, Mid-seventeenth century  
Jean Lepautre (French, 1618-1682)  
Etching  
6 x 9 in (15.2 x 22.8 cm)  
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam





**Figure 2.4**  
*Birth and Love of Poverty*, 1587  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 ¼ x 9 ½ in (16 x 24.1 cm)



**Figure 2.5**  
 [detail] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



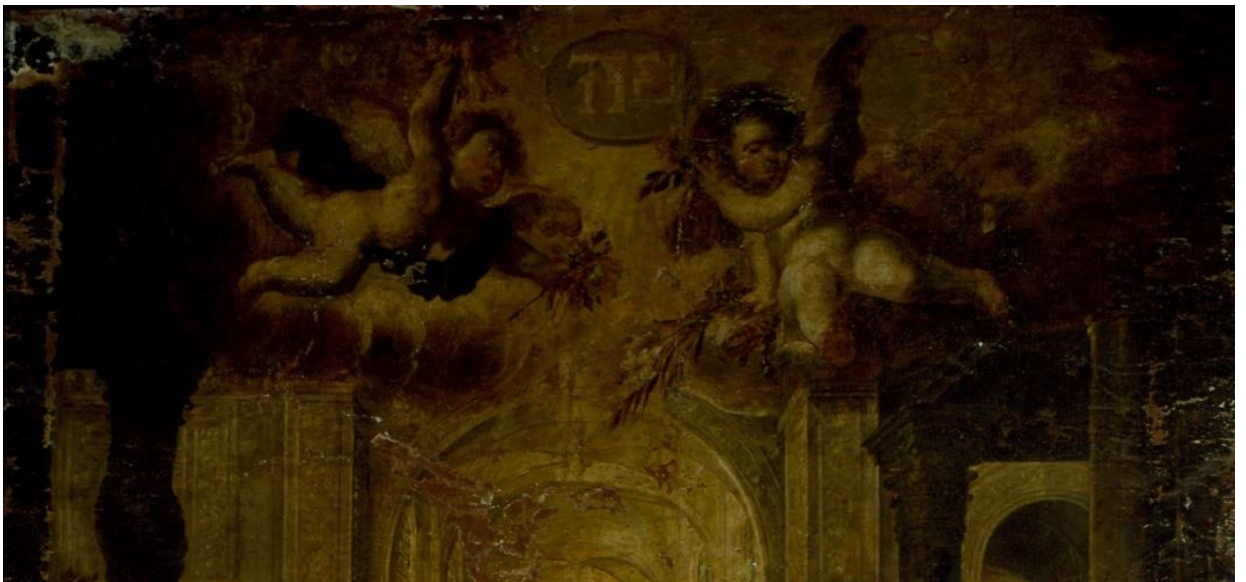
**Figure 2.6**  
*Portrait of a Lady*, Late 17th century  
Attributed to Juan Carreño de Miranda (Spanish, 1614-1685)  
Oil on canvas  
31 1/8 x 25 in (79.1 x 63.5 cm)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection



**Figure 2.7**  
[detail] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.8**  
*Baptismal Shell*, 18<sup>th</sup> century  
Mexican  
Silver  
1  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 5 in (4.5 x 13 cm)  
Museo Nacional del Virreinato, Tepetzotlán, Mexico



**Figure 2.9**  
[detail] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.10**  
*The Baptism of Christ*, 1590  
 Jan Harmensz. Muller (Flemish, 1571-1628)  
 Engraving  
 12 ½ x 8 ½ in (32.1 x 21.6 cm)  
 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 2.11**  
*The Marriage of the Virgin*, 1690-1700  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Oil on canvas  
 70 x 112 1/5 in (178 x 285 cm)  
 Museo de El Carmen, Mexico City





**Figure 2.12**  
*The Baptism of Saint Francis, 1594*  
Francesco Villamena (Italian, 1564-1624)  
Engraving  
4 ½ x 3 in (11.3 x 7.5 cm)



**Figure 2.13**  
*The Baptism of the Prince of Spain, from Obsequies for the Sacred Catholic and Royal Majesty Margaret of Austria, Queen of Spain, 1612*  
Jacques Callot (French, 1592-1635)  
Etching  
5 x 7 in (13 x 17.8 cm)  
The British Museum



**Figure 2.14**

*The Baptism of Saint Dominic, 1611*

Theodoor Galle (Flemish, 1571-1633)

Engraving

3 ½ x 6½ in (9 x 15 cm)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam





**Figure 2.15**  
*Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
103 ½ x 118 ½ in (263 x 301 cm)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.16**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.17**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.18**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.19**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.20**  
*Examples of Chastity and Virginity*, 1587  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 x 9 ¼ in (15.4 x 23.8 cm)



**Figure 2.21**  
 [detail] *Examples of Chastity and Virginity*, 1587  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)



**Figure 2.22**  
*Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1594  
Francesco Villamena (Italian, 1564-1624)  
Engraving  
4 ½ x 3 in (11.3 x 7.5 cm)



**Figure 2.23**  
*Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, Early 16<sup>th</sup> century  
Mexican  
Convento de San Gabriel, San Pedro Cholula, Mexico





**Figure 2.24**

*Saint Francis and the Tempest*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

142 1/8 x 99 1/2 in (361 x 253 cm)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.25**  
 [detail] *Saint Francis and the Tempest*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.26**  
*The Miracle of Christ on the Sea of Galilee*, c. 1598  
 Engraving by Cornelis Galle I (Flemish, 1576-1650); after Maarten de Vos (Flemish, 1532-1603)  
 Engraving  
 3 x 8 ½ in (17.9 x 22 cm)  
 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 2.27**  
*The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
87 ½ x 116 in (222 x 295 cm)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City



**Figure 2.28**  
*Death and Emigration to Heaven, 1587*  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 x 9 ¼ in (15.9 x 23.8 cm)



**Figure 2.29**  
*Transfiguration of a Man of God, 1587*  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 x 9 ¼ in (16 x 23.7 cm)





**Figure 2.30**  
*The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire, 1594*  
 Francesco Villamena (Italian, 1564-1624)  
 Engraving  
 4 ½ x 3 in (11.3 x 7.5 cm)



**Figure 2.31**  
*Transfiguration of a Man of God, 1600-10*  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)  
 Engraving  
 5 ¼ x 7 ¼ in (13.5 x 18.5 cm)  
 Universitat de Barcelona, Spain



**Figure 2.32**

*The Conversion of Two Thieves or Saint Francis Converts Two Noblemen, 1691-92*

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

89 1/3 x 115 3/4 in (227 x 294 cm)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.33**

[detail] *The Conversion of Two Thieves or Saint Francis Converts Two Noblemen*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.34**

[detail] *The Conversion of Two Thieves or Saint Francis Converts Two Noblemen*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.35**  
*The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
92 1/8 x 115 1/3 in (234 x 293 cm)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City





**Figure 2.36**  
Porziuncula Chapel, Present Day

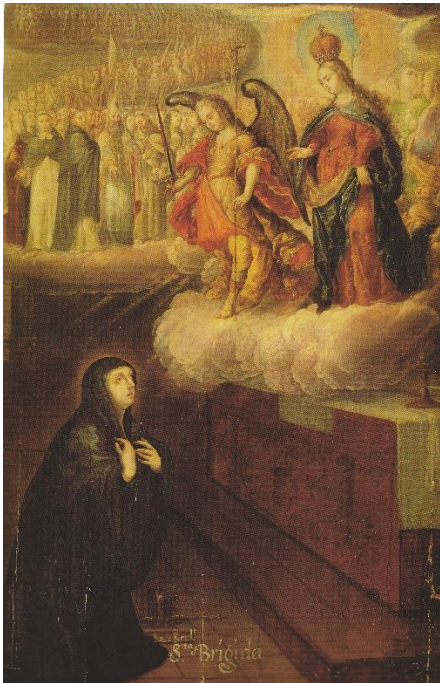


**Figure 2.37**  
[detail] *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City





**Figure 2.38**  
[detail] *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City



**Figure 2.39**  
*Saint Bridget*, c. 1680-9  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
67 x 45 ¼ in (170 x 115 cm)  
Templo de Santo Domingo, Mexico City



**Figure 2.40**  
[detail] *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City



**Figure 2.41**  
*Archangel Baraquiel*, c. 1680-9  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
81  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 49  $\frac{1}{2}$  in (208 x 126 cm)  
Templo de la Magdalena, Coacalco de Berriozábel, Mexico



**Figure 2.42**  
[detail] *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City



**Figure 2.43**  
[detail] *The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Iglesia de San Francisco, Guatemala City





**Figure 2.44**  
*Four Scenes Related to the Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence, 1594*  
 Francesco Villamena (Italian, 1564-1624)  
 Engraving  
 4 ½ x 3 in (11.3 x 7.5 cm)



**Figure 2.45**  
*The Pardon of Crimes Granted Through the Merit of Saint Francis, 1587*  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 x 9 ¼ in (15.6 x 23.5 cm)



**Figure 2.46**  
*The Granting of the Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1609-10  
Baltasar de Echave Orio (Spanish, 1548-1623)  
Oil on panel  
97 ½ x 71 ½ in (248 x 182 cm)  
Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City





**Figure 2.47**  
*The Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
99 ½ x 125 ½ in (253 x 319 cm)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.48**  
[detail] *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.49**  
*Porziuncula Altarpiece*, 1393  
Ilario of Viterbo (active 1375-1393)  
Tempera and gold on panel  
Porziuncula Chapel, Papal Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels, Assisi



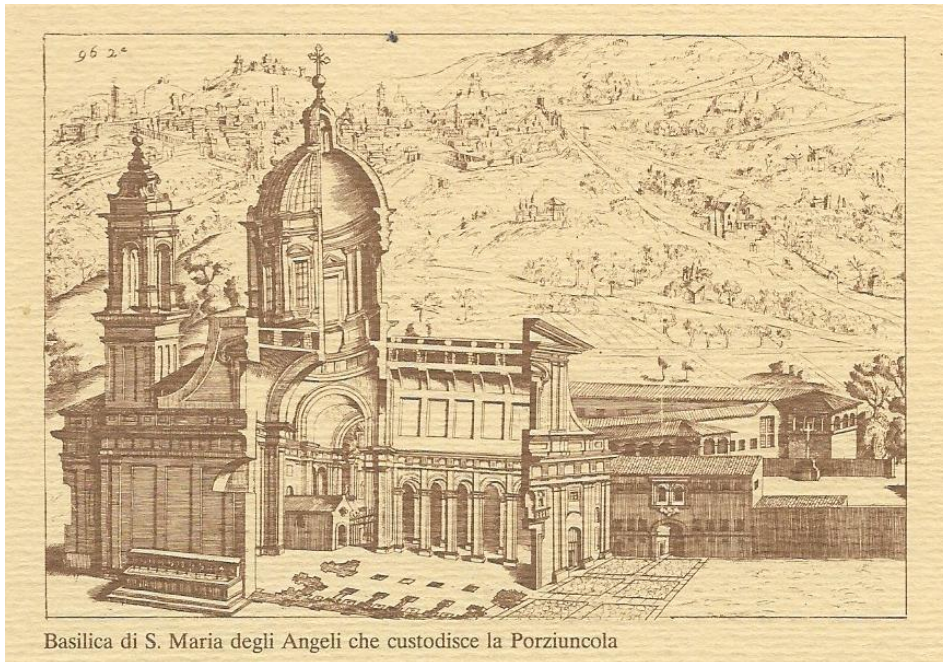


**Figure 2.50**  
Porziuncula Chapel, Present Day



**Figure 2.51**  
Porziuncula Chapel, Present Day





**Figure 2.52**

Interior of the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels, Assisi, 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century  
 Francesco Providoni (Italian, 1633-1697)

Engraving

*Collis paradisi amoenitas, seu sacri conventus Assisiensis historiae*, 1704



**Figure 2.53**

[detail] *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.54**  
[detail] *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.55**  
[detail] *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.56**  
 [detail] *The Porziuncula Indulgence*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.57**  
*Miracles Confirm the Indulgence*, 1600-10  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)  
 Engraving  
 5 ¼ x 7 ¼ in (13.5 x 18.5 cm)  
 Universitat de Barcelona, Spain



**Figure 2.58**  
*The Chapter of Mats*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 118 7/8 in (254 x 302 cm)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.59**  
[detail] *The Chapter of Mats*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.60**  
[detail] *The Chapter of Mats*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.61**

*The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis or The Sacred Conversation, 1691-92*

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

92 ½ x 105 ½ in (235 x 268 cm)

Centro de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Muebles (CEREBIEM), Guatemala City



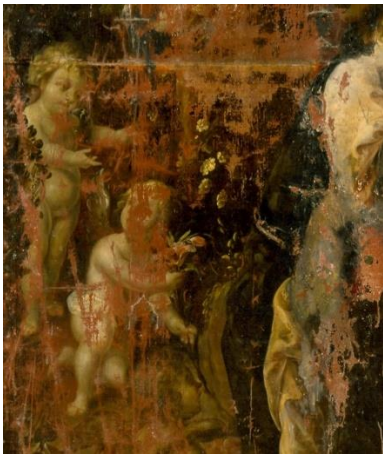


**Figure 2.62**

[detail] *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis or The Sacred Conversation*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Centro de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Muebles (CEREBIEM), Guatemala City

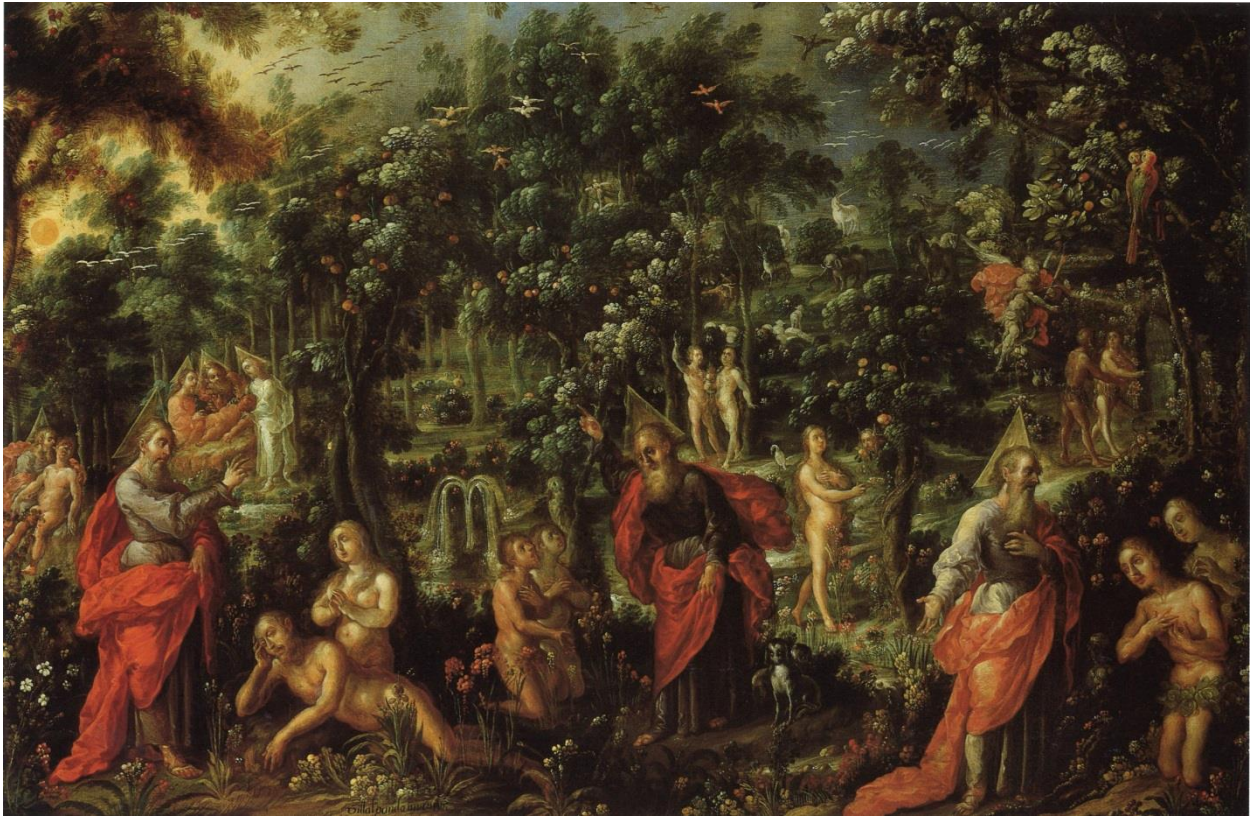


**Figure 2.63**

[detail] *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis or The Sacred Conversation*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Centro de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Muebles (CEREBIEM), Guatemala City



**Figure 2.64**  
*Adam and Eve in Paradise*, c. 1688  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on copper  
23 5/8 x 34 5/8 in (60 x 88 cm)  
Puebla Cathedral, Mexico



**Figure 2.65**  
[detail] *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis or The Sacred Conversation*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Centro de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Muebles (CEREBIEM), Guatemala City





**Figure 2.66**

[detail] *The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis or The Sacred Conversation*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Centro de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Muebles (CEREBIEM), Guatemala City



**Figure 2.67**

*Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Oil on canvas

74 ¾ x 113 ¾ in (190 x 289 cm)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 2.68**

[detail] *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, c. 1668-84  
Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)  
Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 2.69**

[detail] *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, c. 1668-84  
Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)  
Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile





**Figure 2.70**  
*Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
98 7/8 x 115 in (251 x 292 cm)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.71**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.72**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.73**

[detail] *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.74**

*The Birth of the Virgin*, Early 18<sup>th</sup> century

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

73 x 114 in (185.6 x 290 cm)

Museo de la Basílica de Guadalupe, Mexico





**Figure 2.75**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.76**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Returns from Mount Alverna*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.77**  
*Imitation of Christ's Miracles*, 1587  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 ¼ x 9 ½ in (16 x 24.2 cm)



**Figure 2.78**  
 [detail] *Imitation of Christ's Miracles*, 1587  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)





**Figure 2.79**  
*Imitation of Christ's Miracles*, 1600-10  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)  
 Engraving  
 5 ¼ x 7 ¼ in (13.5 x 18.5 cm)  
 Universitat de Barcelona, Spain



**Figure 2.80**  
*Entry of Christ into Jerusalem*, 1691  
 Juan Correa (Mexican, c. 1646-1716)  
 Oil on canvas  
 Sacristy, Metropolitan Cathedral, Mexico City





**Figure 2.81**  
*The Last Supper of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
91 x 104 1/3 in (231 x 265 cm)  
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX



**Figure 2.82**  
[detail] *The Last Supper of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX



**Figure 2.83**  
[detail] *The Last Supper of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX





**Figure 2.84**  
[detail] *The Last Supper of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX



**Figure 2.85**  
[detail] *Imitation of Christ's Miracles*, 1587  
Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)



**Figure 2.86**  
 [detail] *Imitation of Christ's Miracles*, 1600-10  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)



**Figure 2.87**  
*The Last Supper*, c. 1598  
 Engraving by Adriaen Collaert (Flemish, c.1560-1618); after Maarten de Vos (Flemish, 1532-1603)  
 Engraving  
 3 x 8 ½ in (17.9 x 22 cm)  
 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam





**Figure 2.88**

*The Death of Saint Francis*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

98 ½ x 110 ½ in (250 x 281 cm)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.89**  
[detail] *The Death of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.90**  
*Aspersorium and Hyssop*, c. 1690  
Mexican  
Silver  
Colegiata de Santa Juliana, Santillana del Mar, Cantabria, Spain





**Figure 2.91**  
[detail] *The Death of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.92**  
[detail] *The Death of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.93**  
[detail] *The Death of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.94**  
[detail] *The Death of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala







**Figure 2.97**  
 [detail] *Death and Emigration to Heaven*, 1587  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)



**Figure 2.98**  
*Death and Emigration to Heaven*, 1600-10  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)  
 Engraving  
 5 ¼ x 7 ¼ in (13.5 x 18.5 cm)  
 Universitat de Barcelona, Spain



**Figure 2.99**

*The Vision of Brother Leo or The Assumption of Saint Francis*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

130 x 91 in (330 x 231 cm)

San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX





**Figure 2.100**

[detail] *The Vision of Brother Leo or The Assumption of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX



**Figure 2.101**

[detail] *The Vision of Brother Leo or The Assumption of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, TX



**Figure 2.102**  
*Immense Ardor of the Religious and God-Devoted Soul, 1587*  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 1/4 x 9 1/3 in (16 x 23.8 cm)



**Figure 2.103**  
*Immense Ardor of the Religious and God-Devoted Soul, 1600-10*  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)  
 Engraving  
 5 1/4 x 7 1/4 in (13.5 x 18.5 cm)  
 Universitat de Barcelona, Spain





**Figure 2.104**

*Friar Bernard of Quintaval Stepping on the Mouth of Saint Francis*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Oil on canvas

80 1/3 x 115 in (204 x 292 cm)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 2.105**

[detail] *Friar Bernard of Quintaval Stepping on the Mouth of Saint Francis*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 2.106**

*The Death of Saint Francis*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Oil on canvas

79 x 153 in (201 x 389 cm)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 2.107**

[detail] *The Death of Saint Francis*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile





**Figure 2.108**

*The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

102 x 143 in (259 x 363 cm)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 2.109**  
[detail] *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.110**  
[detail] *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.111**  
[detail] *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 2.112**  
Salver, c. 1675  
Antigua, Guatemala  
Silver, gilt and enamel  
Diameter: 10 in (25.2 cm)  
Várez Fisa Collection, Madrid, Spain



**Figure 2.113**  
*Demonstration of the Stigmata in Saint Francis's Body, 1587*  
 Philips Galle (Flemish, 1537-1612)  
 Engraving  
 6 ¼ x 9 1/3 in (16 x 23.8 cm)



**Figure 2.114**  
*Demonstration of the Stigmata in Saint Francis's Body, 1600-10*  
 Thomas de Leu (French, 1560-1612)  
 Engraving  
 5 ¼ x 7 1/4 in (13.5 x 18.5 cm)  
 Universitat de Barcelona, Spain





**Figure 2.115**

*The Miracle of the Wounds*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Oil on canvas

75 9/16 x 98 7/16 in (192 x 250 cm)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile

### Chapter 3: In the True Prophecy: Saint Francis and the Apocalypse



**Figure 3.1**

*The Prophecy of Saint John the Evangelist*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Oil on canvas

75 9/16 x 98 7/16 in (192 x 250 cm)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 3.2**

[detail] *The Prophecy of Saint John the Evangelist*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile





**Figure 3.3**  
*Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
101 x 115 in (257 x 292 cm)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.4**  
[detail] *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.5**  
[detail] *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 3.6**

[detail] *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.7**

[detail] *Saint Francis and the Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.8**  
*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1498  
Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471-1528)  
Woodcut  
15 ½ x 11 in (39.4 x 28.4 cm)  
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 3.9**  
*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1523  
Georg Lemberger (German, 1490-1540)  
Woodcut  
5 ¾ x 3 ¾ in (14.7 x 9.4 cm)  
British Museum, London



**Figure 3.10**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1523

Hans Burgkmair the Elder (German, 1473-1531)

Woodcut

6 ¼ x 5 in (16.1 x 12.8 cm)

British Museum, London



**Figure 3.11**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1544-6

Matthias Gerrung (German, 1500-1570)

Woodcut

9 x 6 ¾ in (23.3 x 16.2 cm)

British Museum, London





**Figure 3.12**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, c. 1555

Jean Duvet (French, c. 1485 – after 1561)

Engraving

12 x 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  in (30.5 x 22.2 cm)

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



**Figure 3.13**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1563-74

Gerard van Groeningen (Flemish, active 1550-1599)

Etching

10  $\frac{1}{2}$  x 9  $\frac{3}{4}$  in (26.8 x 25 cm)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 3.14**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands, 1585*

Engraving attributed to Adriaen Collaert (Flemish, c.1560-1618); after Jan Snellinck (Flemish, c. 1548-1638)

Etching

3 ¼ x 3 in (8.2 x 7.7 cm)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 3.15**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands, 1600-21*

Engraving by Jan van Haelbeck (Flemish, active 1600-1630); after Jan Ziarnko (Polish, c. 1575-c. 1630)

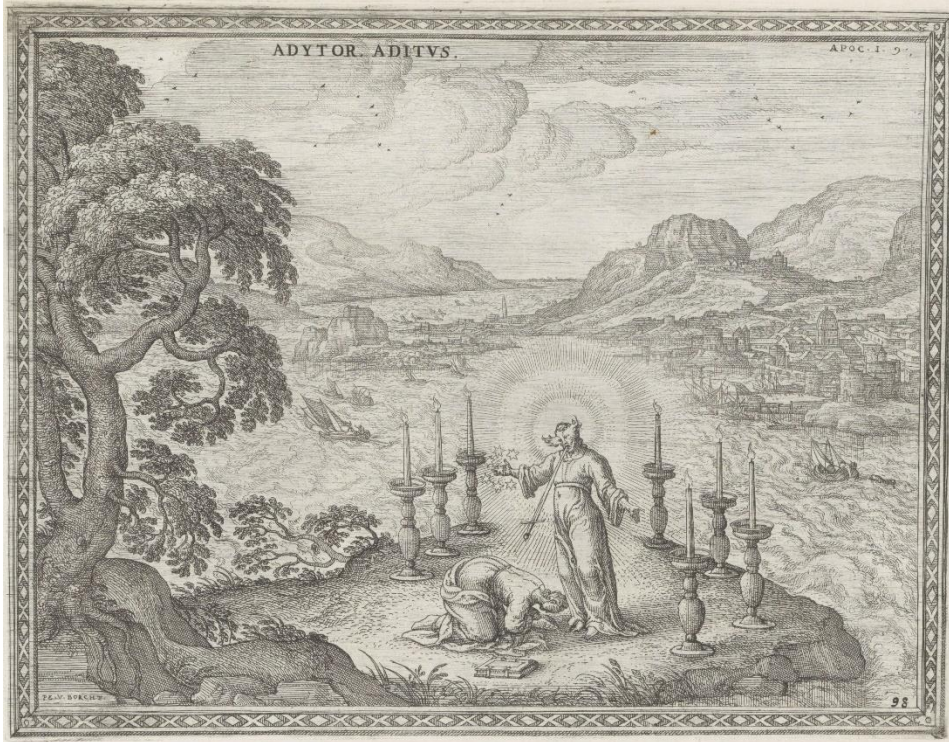
Etching

5 x 6 ¾ in (13.1 x 17.2 cm)

Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany







**Figure 3.18**

*The Vision of the Seven Lampstands*, 1582-1593 and/or 1653-1654

Pieter van der Borcht the Elder (Flemish, c.1530-1608)

Etching

7 ½ x 9 ½ in (19.2 x 24.4 cm)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam





**Figure 3.19**

*Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Oil on canvas

99 ½ x 116 ½ in (253 x 296 cm)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.20**  
[detail] *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



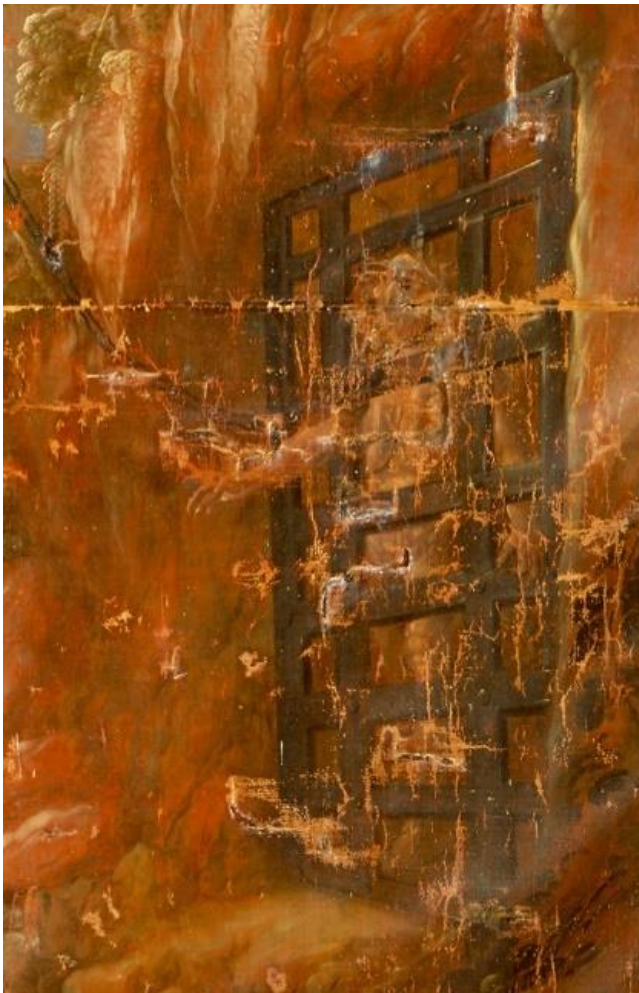
**Figure 3.21**  
[detail] *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 3.22**

[detail] *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.23**

[detail] *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.24**  
[detail] *Saint Francis as the Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 3.25**  
*Saint Michael Archangel*, c. 1615  
Luis Juárez (Mexican, c. 1585-1639)  
Oil on wood  
67  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 60  $\frac{1}{4}$  in (172 x 153 cm)  
Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City



**Figure 3.26**  
*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1498  
Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471-1528)  
Woodcut  
15 ½ x 11 in (39.4 x 28.4 cm)  
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 3.27**  
*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, c. 1530-34  
Erhard Altdorfer (German, c. 1480-1561)  
Woodcut  
5 ¼ x 3 ½ in (13.4 x 8.9 cm)  
British Museum, London





**Figure 3.28**

*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, 1544-6

Matthias Gerrung (German, 1500-1570)

Woodcut

9 x 6 ¾ in (23.3 x 16.2 cm)

British Museum, London



**Figure 3.29**

*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss*, c. 1620

Jean Le Clerc (French, c. 1587-1633)

Engraving

5 x 6 in (13 x 15 cm)

Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá



**Figure 3.30**

*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss, 1585*

Engraving attributed to Adriaen Collaert (Flemish, c.1560-1618); after Jan Snellinck (Flemish, c. 1548-1638)

Etching

3 ¼ x 3 in (8.2 x 7.7 cm)

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



**Figure 3.31**

*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss, 1600-21*

Engraving by Jan van Haelbeck (Flemish, active 1600-1630); after Jan Ziarnko (Polish, c. 1575-c. 1630)

Etching

5 x 6 ¾ in (13.1 x 17.2 cm)

Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany





**Figure 3.32**

*The Angel Locking Satan in the Abyss, c. 1620*

Attributed to Jean Le Clerc (French, c. 1587-1633)

Engraving

5 x 6 in (13 x 15 cm)

Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá



**Figure 3.33**  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
65  $\frac{3}{8}$  x 60  $\frac{3}{4}$  in (166.1 x 154.3 cm)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.34**

*Frontispiece from the Naturae Prodigium gratiae portentum*, c. 1651

Juan de Noort (active Madrid, 1628-52)

Engraving and etching

11 ¼ x 7 in (28.6 x 17.5 cm)



**Figure 3.35**

[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Philadelphia Museum of Art





**Figure 3.36**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



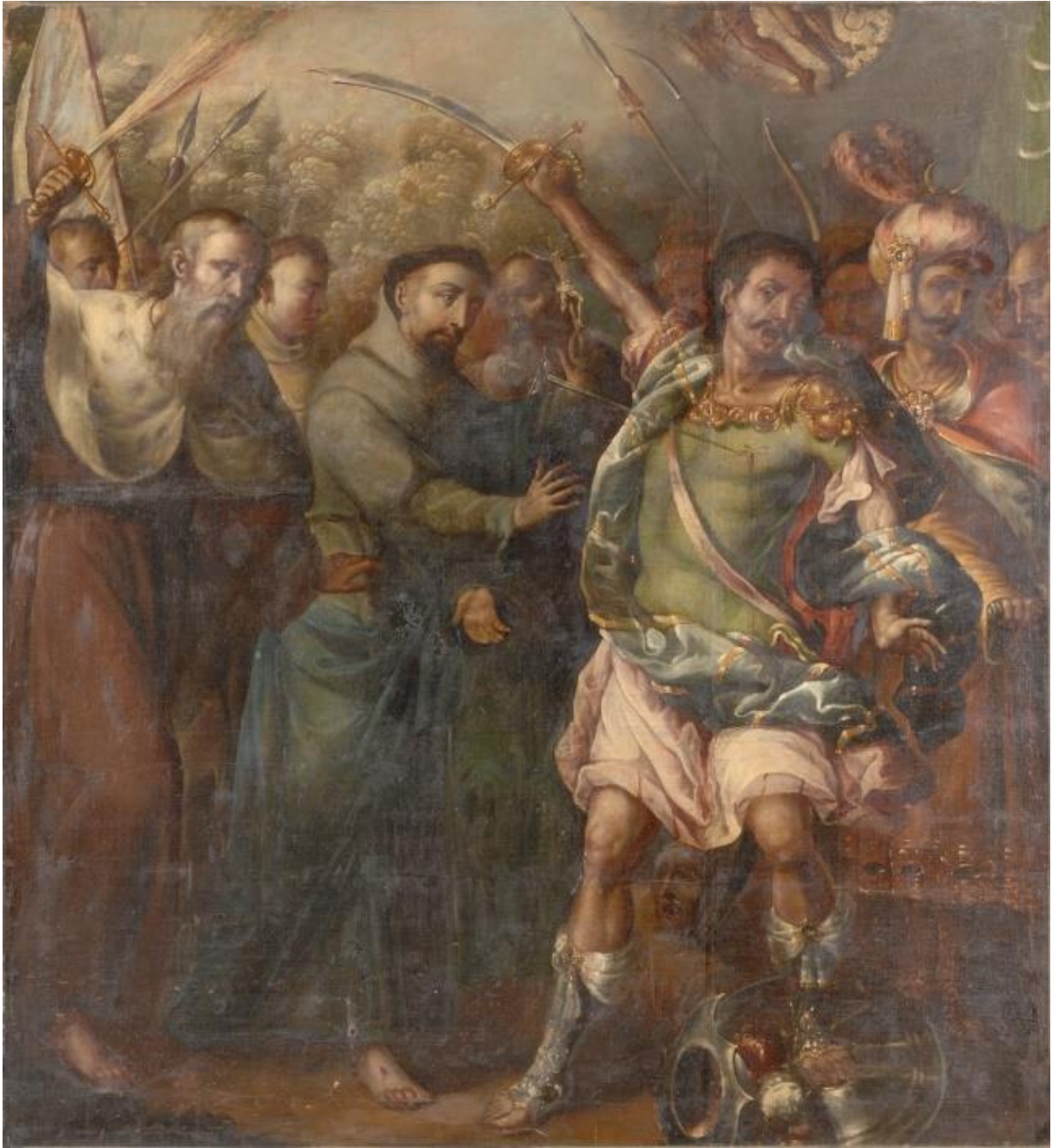
**Figure 3.37**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.38**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.39**  
*Saint Michael Archangel*, c. 1680  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
73 ¼ x 48 1/8 in (186 x 107 cm)  
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut



**Figure 3.40**  
Pre-Treatment Photograph  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art





**Figure 3.41**  
 [detail] Pre-Treatment Photograph  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.42**  
*The Battle Between the Heavenly and Earthly Armies*, 1585  
 Engraving attributed to Adriaen Collaert (Flemish, c.1560-1618); after Jan Snellinck (Flemish, c. 1548-1638)  
 Etching  
 3 ¼ x 3 in (8.2 x 7.7 cm)  
 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam





**Figure 3.43**  
X-radiograph Composite, with Stretchers Digitally Suppressed  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



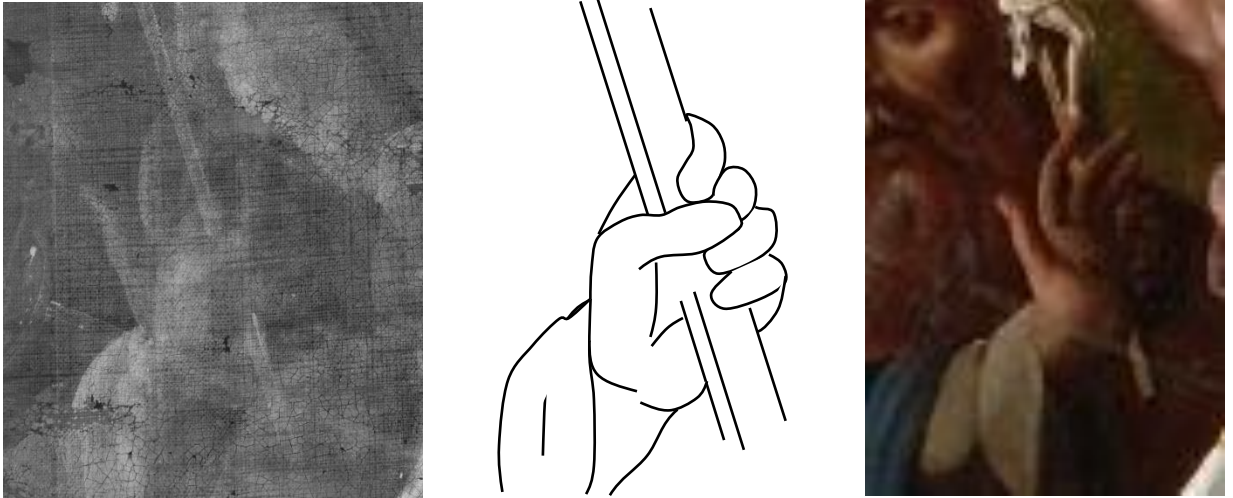
**Figure 3.44**  
[detail] X-radiograph Composite, with Stretchers Digitally Suppressed  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.45**  
[detail] Infrared Photograph  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.46**  
[details] Pre-Treatment Photograph (left) Current State (right)  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



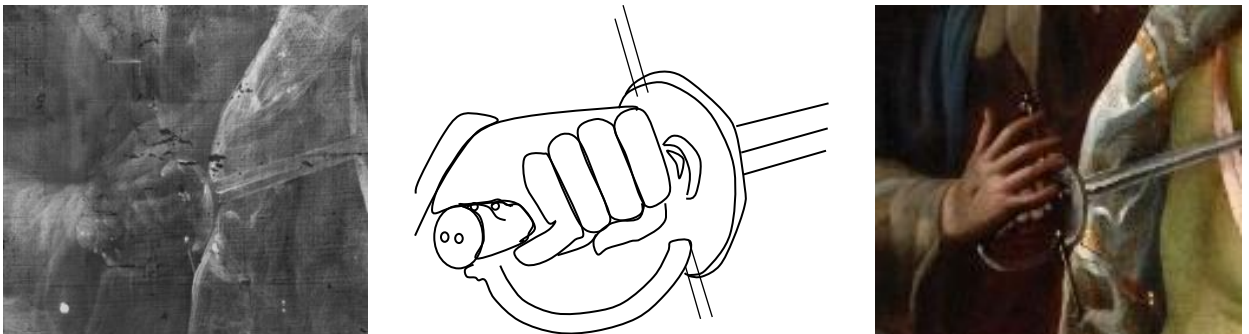
**Figure 3.47**

[details] X-radiograph (left) Diagram of Original Hand Position (center) Current State (right)

*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.48**

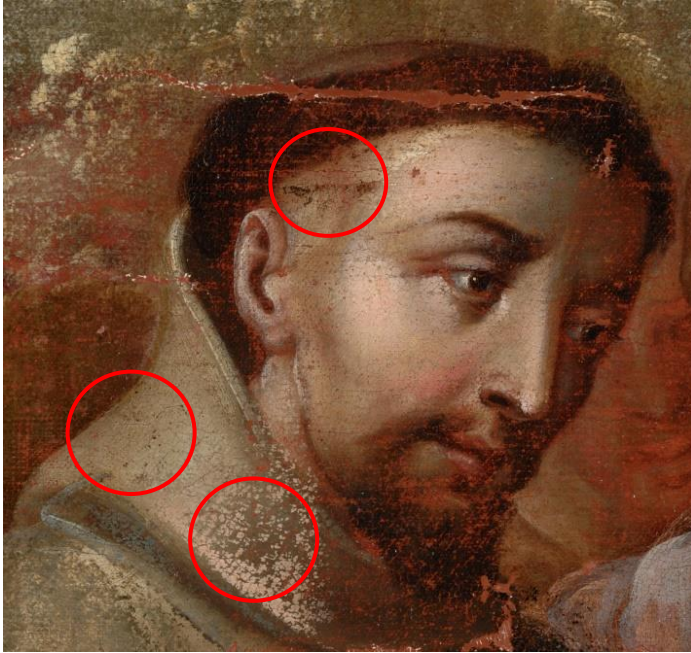
[details] X-radiograph (left) Diagram of Original Hand Position (center) Current State (right)

*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92

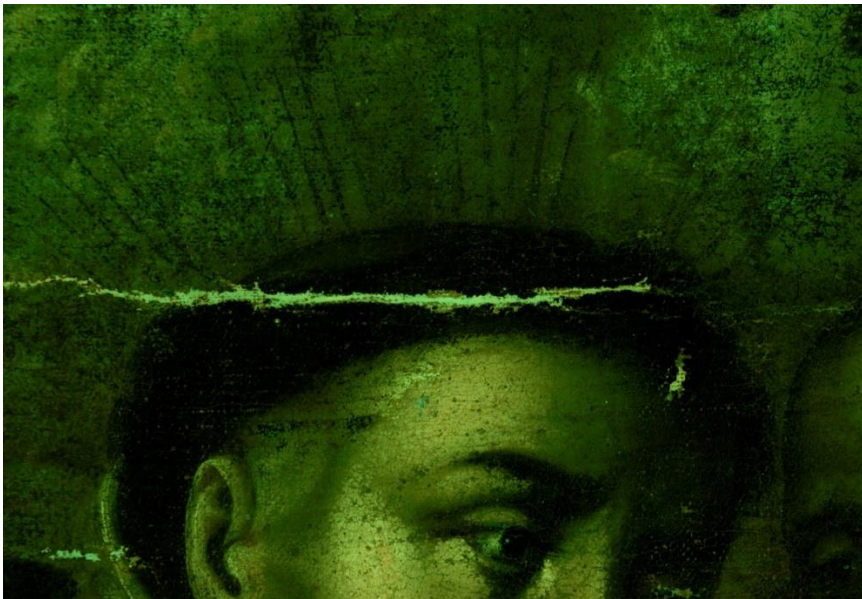
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Philadelphia Museum of Art





**Figure 3.49**  
[detail] Post-cleaning and Varnishing, Prior to Inpainting  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.50**  
[detail] Ultra Violet Light Exposure; Post-cleaning and Varnishing, Prior to Inpainting  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.51**  
Digital Reconstruction, Prior to Campaign of Alterations  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.52**  
Digital Reconstruction, After Campaign of Alterations  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.53**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.54**  
*The Prophet Elijah*, c. 1640-45  
Francisco de Zurbarán (Spanish, 1598-1664)  
Oil on canvas  
6 ft 3 ¼ in × 41 in (191.1 × 104.6 cm)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art





**Figure 3.55**

*The Birth of Saint Francis*, c. 1668-84

Workshop of Basilio de Santa Cruz Pumacallao (Peruvian, 1635-1710)

Oil on canvas

74 ¾ x 113 ¾ in (190 x 289 cm)

Museo de San Francisco, Santiago, Chile



**Figure 3.56**

*The Birth of Saint Francis*, Mid-seventeenth century

Unknown Mexican artist

Oil on canvas

74 ¾ x 113 ¾ in (190 x 289 cm)

Museo Nacional de Arte, INBA, Mexico City



**Figure 3.57**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.58**  
[detail] Infrared Photograph  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.59**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.60**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art





**Figure 3.61**  
*The Reign of the Antichrist*, c. 1739  
Bolivian  
Oil on canvas  
137 x 302 in (348 x 767 cm)  
Church of Caquiaviri, Bolivia



**Figure 3.62**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.63**

*Defense of the Eucharist by Philip V of Spain*, First half of the eighteenth century

Cuzco, Peru

Oil on canvas

64 x 48 in (162.6 x 121 cm)

Carl and Marilyn Thoma Collection, Chicago, Illinois



**Figure 3.64**

[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.65**

*Saint Francis Xavier Baptizing*, 1721

Antonio Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)

Oil on canvas

85 3/8 x 56 1/4 in (217 x 143 cm)

Museo del Colegio de San Ignacio de Loyola (Vizcaínas), Mexico City



**Figure 3.66**

*Saint Francis Xavier Baptizing*, Early 18<sup>th</sup> century

Juan Correa (Mexican, c. 1646-1716)

Oil on canvas

64 x 52 3/4 in (162 x 134 cm)

Private Collection





**Figure 3.67**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



**Figure 3.68**  
*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1718-22  
Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
Oil on canvas  
110 ¼ x 86 5/8 in (120 x 180 cm) [approximate]  
Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 3.69**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1718-22  
Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 3.70**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1718-22  
Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 3.71**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1718-22  
Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 3.72**  
[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, 1691-92  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Philadelphia Museum of Art





**Figure 3.73**

*Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Oil on canvas

84 ¼ x 114 in (214 x 290 cm)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico

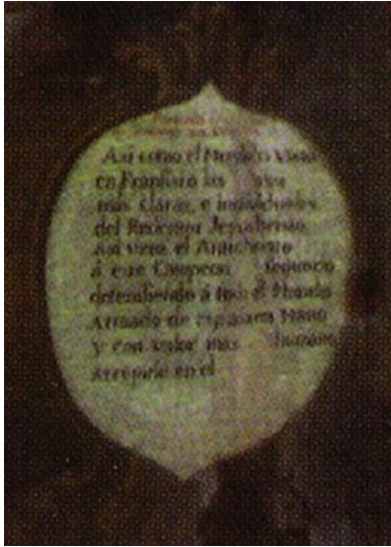


**Figure 3.74**

[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico



**Figure 3.75**

[detail] *Saint Francis Defeats the Antichrist*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico

**Chapter 4: Networks of Transmission: The Antigua Series in New Spain**



**Figure 4.1**  
*The Lactation of Saint Dominic*, Late 17<sup>th</sup> – early 18<sup>th</sup> century  
Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
Oil on canvas  
142 x 189 3/8 in (361 x 481 cm)  
Church of Saint Dominic, Mexico City



**Figure 4.2**  
*The Lactation of Saint Dominic*, Second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
José de Alzibar (Mexican, 1726-1803)  
Oil on canvas  
85 x 74 in (216 x 88 cm)  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Texcoco, Mexico





**Figure 4.3**  
*Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, c. 1718-22  
 Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
 Oil on canvas  
 110 ¼ x 86 5/8 in (120 x 180 cm) [approximate]  
 Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 4.4**  
 [left] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, c. 1718-22  
 Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
 Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico  
  
 [right] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 4.5**

*The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire*, c. 1718-22

Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)

Oil on canvas

110 ¼ x 86 5/8 in (120 x 180 cm) [approximate]

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 4.6**

[left] *The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire*, c. 1718-22

Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

[right] *The Vision of Saint Francis and the Chariot of Fire*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala



**Figure 4.7**  
*The Baptism of Saint Francis*, c. 1718-22  
 Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
 Oil on canvas  
 110 ¼ x 86 5/8 in (120 x 180 cm) [approximate]  
 Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico



**Figure 4.8**  
 [left] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, c. 1718-22  
 Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)  
 Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

[right] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, 1691-92  
 Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)  
 Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala





**Figure 4.9**

*The Baptism of Saint Francis*, First half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (?)  
Attributed to Luis Berrueco (Mexican, active first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)  
Oil on canvas  
110 ¼ x 86 5/8 in (251 x 283 cm)  
Parish Church, Huaquechula, Puebla, Mexico



**Figure 4.10**

*The Birth of Saint Francis*, First half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (?)  
Attributed to Luis Berrueco (Mexican, active first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)  
Oil on canvas  
110 ¼ x 86 5/8 in (251 x 283 cm) [approximate]  
Parish Church, Huaquechula, Puebla, Mexico



**Figure 4.11**

*The Birth of Saint Francis*, c. 1725-50

Attributed to Luis Berruenco (Mexican, active first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)

Oil on canvas

Church of the Poor Clares, Atlixco, Puebla, Mexico



**Figure 4.12**

[detail] *The Birth of Saint Francis*, c. 1725-50

Attributed to Luis Berruenco (Mexican, active first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)

Church of the Poor Clares, Atlixco, Puebla, Mexico





**Figure 4.13**

*Altar to Saint Francis*, First half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century

Francisco Martínez (Mexican, 1687-1758)

Carved and gilded wood with oil on canvas paintings and polychromed wood sculptures

Church of Regina Coeli, Mexico City





**Figure 4.14**  
*The Vision of Brother Leo*, [detail] *Altar to Saint Francis*, First half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
Francisco Martínez (1687-1758)  
Church of Regina Coeli, Mexico City



**Figure 4.15**  
*The Lenten Fast of Saint Francis*, [detail] *Altar to Saint Francis*, First half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
Francisco Martínez (Mexican, 1687-1758)  
Church of Regina Coeli, Mexico City



**Figure 4.16**

*The Baptism of Saint Francis*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Oil on canvas

84 ¼ x 114 in (214 x 290 cm)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico



**Figure 4.17**

[left] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, c. 1718-22

Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

[center] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, First half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (?)

Attributed to Luis Berrueco (Mexican, active first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)

Parish Church, Huaquechula, Puebla, Mexico

[right] *The Baptism of Saint Francis*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico



**Figure 4.18**

*Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Oil on canvas

84 ¼ x 114 in (214 x 290 cm)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico



**Figure 4.19**

[left] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala

[center] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, c. 1718-22

Antonio de Torres (Mexican, 1667-1731)

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

[right] *Saint Francis Renounces His Worldly Goods*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico





**Figure 4.20**

*The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Oil on canvas

84 ¼ x 114 in (214 x 290 cm)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico



**Figure 4.21**

[left] *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, 1691-92

Cristóbal de Villalpando (Mexican, c. 1645-1714)

Museo de Arte Colonial, Antigua, Guatemala

[right] *The Dream of Pope Gregory IX*, c. 1756

Ignacio Berbén (Mexican, c. 1733-c. 1814)

Colegio Apostólico de Propaganda Fide, Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico



**Figure 4.22**  
*Main Altar, Convent of Saint Mary Magdalene, 17<sup>th</sup> century (?)*  
Former Convent of Saint Mary Magdalene, San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla, Mexico



**Figure 4.23**  
*The Prophecy of the Eagle at the Stream, 18<sup>th</sup> century*  
Mexican  
Oil on canvas  
106 ¼ x 267 ¾ in (270 x 680 cm)  
Museo de las Intervenciones, Churubusco, Mexico