Art, Trade, and Patronage in Seventeenth-Century Lima: Francisco de Zurbarán's Commission for the Convent of La Encarnación

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Art, Trade, and Patronage in Seventeenth-Century Lima: Francisco de Zurbarán’s Commission for the Convent of La Encarnación

by

Lori Kata

May 2009

Submitted to the faculty of Bryn Mawr College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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The writing of a dissertation requires the help and support of many individuals from both personal and professional facets of life. First I wish to thank my advisor, Gridley McKim-Smith, without whose enthusiasm and support this project never could have been conceived or completed. David Cast and Lázaro Lima provided much-needed encouragement and insight in their readings of this work. I particularly wish to thank Steven Z. Levine and María Cristina Quintero who stepped in at the eleventh hour to serve on my committee and gave me the benefit of their fresh eyes and thoughtful commentary. Susan Shifrin, Larry Silver and Elaine M. Beretz have my gratitude for the many years of advice and reassurance they all have given me. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Center for Visual Culture at Bryn Mawr have both provided me with the tuition and travel funding as well as graduate assistantships that enabled me to keep going financially.

I have benefitted in more ways than I can count from the emotional and financial assistance of my friends and family, namely: Lawrence L. Saporta, Denise Vogeney, Karen Maurer, Natalie Weidman, Peter and Maria Kata, Stephen Kata, my parents Stanley and Virginia Kata and my three patient cats, Stinker, Abby and Minnie. Finally, I owe a special debt of gratitude to Kelly Michael Hatt
whose love and encouragement, as well as his ability to brew fabulous coffee made the completion of this dissertation possible on the most practical level.
ABSTRACT

Art, Trade, and Patronage in Seventeenth-Century Lima: Francisco de Zurbarán’s Commission for the Convent of La Encarnación

by

Lori Kata

Chair: Gridley McKim-Smith

Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664) was the most famous of the Sevillian painters who participated in the overseas art trade. The artist sent several hundred works to destinations in the viceroyalty of Peru during his career. While his participation in this long-distance endeavor can be documented between 1636 and 1662, a time span which covers the majority of his career, to date this aspect of the artist’s production has remained a minor focus of scholars.

This dissertation uses the lost commission of 1646-47 that Zurbarán produced for the nuns of the convent of La Encarnación in Lima to help formulate a social history of the overseas art trade. Although the convent and its art treasures were lost, a large amount of documentary evidence remains with which the transaction can be reconstructed. This evidence includes the fortuitously detailed commission documents themselves and a court case that
Zurbarán brought against the captain of a ship who damaged an earlier shipment of paintings the artist had sent to Portobelo in 1636. Also considered is Zurbarán’s technique and the logistics of packing and shipping works for delivery to distant patrons. This dissertation also examines the nature of female monastic patronage in the Post-Tridentine world. This was a world in which Spanish and Latin American nuns were limited by enclosure and other rules that came out of the Council of Trent, but it was a world in which these women thrived as patrons of the arts despite such limitations. Finally, a reconstruction of the lost commission is offered using the structure and language of the commission documents.
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Introduction

During the seventeenth century Seville was among the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. By royal decree it was the hub through which all trade in the Spanish Empire eventually passed. Any practicing artist who resided in the Andalusian city could potentially count as clients any church, monastery or convent in the viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru if they were willing to undertake the risks of this transatlantic trade. Private individuals in the New World also often bought Spanish art objects either for their own consumption or for later donation to a religious institution. Francisco de Zurbarán’s (1598-1664) participation in this market is documented between 1636 and 1662, and his artistic influence, which was extensive, may be viewed in painting later produced in both viceroyalties.

This dissertation does not focus, however, on Zurbarán’s impact on Latin American painting, although his influence was foundational. Instead it examines Zurbarán’s connections with New World markets, using as a point of departure his commission of 1646-47 for the Augustinian nuns of La Encarnación in Lima.\footnote{In Spanish the words for convent and monastery may apply either to male or female institutions. Because generally in English this does not work, I use the word convent to refer to a female house and the word monastery for male institutions regardless of which term would be used in the original Spanish.} La Encarnación was the oldest and one of the most wealthy and powerful of the
convents in the viceregal capital of Peru. In July of 1646 the abbess contracted with the captain of a ship to enlist the services of Francisco de Zurbarán to paint thirty-six paintings for the convent. By May of 1647 the captain had found the artist and signed a further contract with him to produce the works. These two fortuitously detailed documents enable us to discuss this commission despite the fact that the convent no longer exists, and it seems highly likely that the paintings were destroyed by the late nineteenth century. In fact the contract for La Encarnación is exceptional in the history of Spanish art, and unusually revealing. In it the abbess details far more aspects of making and fulfilling contracts than most patrons do. Whether because of inexperience or anxiety, she over-explains what she wants. By doing so she clarifies for us the conventions of the Atlantic trade, which were conventions too routine to be mentioned in most contracts. These documents form the core of the following analysis, together with the records of a court case Zurbarán brought against the captain of a ship that was carrying some of his paintings to the New World. This court case confirms some of the details that we find in the abbess’s contract and provides additional information about how paintings were shipped from Seville to the Americas.

Methodologies
Because Zurbarán has already benefitted from competent scholarship in the areas of biography, documentary research and connoisseurship, my own approach is different: to gather several smaller methodological threads in an attempt to fill in some of the gaps in current research. The key problem in approaching this project of examining Zurbarán’s role in the overseas art trade is the lack of a developed critique on the subject of this trade. While we have


documents that inform us that Zurbarán and other Sevillian artists sent paintings to the Americas, those paintings that survive from the era are generally not considered of high enough quality, based on connoisseurship, to be by Zurbarán. Why is it that these two elements that should be cornerstones of this research do not seem to match up? Additionally, we have to contend with our own perception of the Atlantic ocean as a barrier between Spain and her colonial possessions in the Americas. The regularity of departure of the fleet and the apparent nonchalance with which viceroys and other individuals would ship their art collections back and forth across the expanse of the sea, suggests that it would be more correct to conceive of the ocean as a highway, rather than a barrier. Indeed, the very lack of detailed instructions in most commissions and receipts about how to go about procuring and returning works of art to patrons suggests that this trade was sufficiently regularized by Zurbarán’s time that it was not required that such things be spelled out. This is what makes documents such as the commission for La Encarnación and Zurbarán’s lawsuit against Captain Diego de Mirafuentes so important for the study of the overseas art trade.

In addition to a close look at documents, if we are to engage the question of why the numbers of Zurbarán paintings documented as having been sent to the Americas do not appear to match what has survived, we need to understand
something of the artist’s technique, working habits and the pigments he used. Otherwise, how do we decide whether the “quality” level of the zurbaranesque paintings that survive in Peruvian collections is high enough to be by the master himself? To this end, one of the methodologies employed in this dissertation is the comparative analysis of scientific examinations that have been undertaken by conservators. In chapter one I look at the artist’s technique, some practical issues surrounding the production of his art and some financial considerations in Zurbarán’s late career.

Chapter two takes a close look at the logistics of producing and shipping commissions to the Americas. Several scholars have commented on Zurbarán’s participation in New World markets, but very few made this topic the sustained focus of their work. In this dissertation, however, a chapter is devoted to this market. In the early 1980’s Duncan T. Kinkead published a cache of archival documents that began the conversation. In 1983 he published twelve documents pertaining to Zurbarán’s overseas production between the years 1655 and 1662. Because it is believed that little commissioned work was forthcoming from Sevillian patrons in these years because of an economic crisis, Kinkead concluded that Zurbarán was probably almost completely dependent on overseas trade and rental payments at this point in his career. In an article published the following

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year, Kinkead offered more archival research on the overseas market, introducing the otherwise unknown Sevillian painter, Juan de Luzón, to scholars.⁶ To date no Luzón work has been identified, but the subject matter of his documented paintings is substantially the same as those works sent to the Americas by Zurbarán. Kinkead pointed out that Zurbarán and Luzón had the two most active studios participating in the New World art trade and calculated that the total number of paintings sent from Seville in the second half of the seventeenth century was around 24,000 which is an enormous quantity. Kinkead concluded generally that the zurbaranesque style might not have reached the New World solely through the artist’s own efforts and that some of his compositions may have reached the New World through paintings by lesser-known Sevillian painters who borrowed his formulas. Kinkead pointed out, however, one clear example of an autograph Zurbarán work being sent.

Juan Miguel Serrera, César Pacheco Vélez and Juan José Junquera y Mato have subsequently built on Kinkead’s foundations and reached similar conclusions, tending toward thinking of the question of the noticeable zurbaranesque presence in South America as a broader-based Sevillian

phenomenon rather than as something coming directly from Zurbarán himself.\textsuperscript{7} Francisco Stastny and Benito Navarrete Prieto take a different point of view and seem inclined to favor the idea that Zurbarán’s influence on New World artists was to some degree personal.\textsuperscript{8} Both scholars focus on the sets of series that Zurbarán is believed to have produced with the assistance of his workshop and sent to the Americas. These contain groups of related works such as the apostles, twelve tribes of Israel, founders of the monastic orders, virgin martyrs or Roman emperors. According to published documents, sets of all these types left Zurbarán’s studio for destinations across the Atlantic. Several series still survive today in Lima that are believed to have left Zurbarán’s workshop; an apostolado of fifteen paintings is in the collection of the monastery of San Francisco. A set of thirteen paintings depicting the founders of the religious orders resides at the monastery of La Buena Muerte and a series of seven archangels belongs to the convent of La Concepción. When these works were exhibited together in 1988, Francisco Stastny identified passages, usually in the heads and hands of the


saints, that he attributed to Zurbarán himself. These observations were largely echoed by Benito Navarrete Prieto’s examinations published ten years later. Navarrete remains sympathetic to the notion of Zurbarán’s personal influence on Latin American painting, but includes the workshop in his analysis. Finally, in 1990 eight documents were published by Jesús Palomero Páramo relating to a court case brought by Zurbarán in 1636 against Captain Diego de Mirafuentes for damages in the loss of paintings the artist had agreed to send to a fair for sale in Portobelo, Panama. For the first time it was established that Zurbarán participated in the overseas market prior to the 1650’s. This means that Zurbarán’s American works were already in production at the same time as his most lucrative Andalusian commissions, therefore these New World paintings were not produced merely as a response to a failing career, as had previously been suggested.

While these works are foundational to this dissertation, employing traditional art historical methodologies and looking at any commission from the point of view of the painter is only half of the story. Since the commission

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9 Francisco Stastny, Zurbarán en los Conventos de América (Caracas: Fundación Amigos del Museo de Bellas Artes, 1988), 57.


addresses a wide variety of concerns for the patrons, it seems logical to view the commission from the patron’s point of view as well. La Encarnación was a major convent in the viceregal capital. In recent years a large number of patronage studies have been undertaken by historians whose interests are directed toward female patronage. These studies at their heart are by and large feminist in approach. Although some of these scholarly works focus on royal or aristocratic lay women, others highlight the patronage of socially prominent nuns. These investigations, many of which concern convents in cities within the Spanish Empire, inform the methodology for chapter three which also introduces us to the nuns of La Encarnación and the known facts about the built environment of their convent.

My methodological models for how to think about the women of the Spanish empire include specifically the works of Mary Elizabeth Perry and Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt.12 Both scholars are historians who have interested themselves in the activities of early modern Spanish women; Perry works on the women of Seville, while Lehfeldt has concerned herself with the women of

Valladolid. While Perry often focuses on transgressive women and this focus does not readily translate to a discussion on the patronage of nuns, her work is foundational to anyone studying early modern Spanish women. Lehfeldt’s work is more readably applicable to the present project in that she works on nuns, their built environment and other aspects of the convent life of interest to social historians. Included in her work is a thoughtful consideration of Castilian law and women’s property rights that has influenced not only my approach to nuns’ patronage but the reconsideration of Zurbarán’s late career and the question of his financial status at the end of his life.\textsuperscript{13} Women who fell under the jurisdiction of Castilian law possessed greater rights to own, inherit and manage property in their own right, than women who resided in more thoroughly studied countries such as Italy. Conclusions drawn from other jurisdictions do not necessarily apply to women in Spain and the Americas who fell under Castilian law. Therefore works about early modern Castilian laws and how the culture of respect for law in those realms functioned, such as those by Richard L. Kagan,

\textsuperscript{13} Lehfeldt, 2005, 40-48.
Stephanie Fink De Backer and Eugene H. Korth and Della Flusche are vital cornerstones on which aspects of this dissertation are built.\(^{14}\)

For many years it has been suggested that the Zurbarán entered a period of decline late in his career and that he died in straitened circumstances. One piece of evidence offered in support of this theory has been his death inventory. However, this document has to date been analyzed without discussing the fact that the artist’s widow had the right to subtract her property and dowry from the estate prior to the settling of any debts and sharing out the estate to his heirs.

Finally in chapter four, I attempt a reconstruction of the proposed hanging of the lost commission based on the language found in the commission documents. First and foremost this portion of the dissertation would not have been possible without the work of Guillermo Lohmann Villena who transcribed and published the full text of both versions of the commission.\(^{15}\) The interpretation of documents must be undertaken carefully, first because those concerned here are in seventeenth-century Spanish and secondly because it is


necessary to understand something of the social and historical context within which such documents were created. Among my methodological models have been publications by Peter Cherry, Jonathan Brown and Richard L. Kagan, and John Michael Montias.\textsuperscript{16} Cherry’s publication and interpretation of a contract between Zurbarán and the Hieronymite monks of the monastery of Guadalupe changed our understanding of this commission, important in Zurbarán studies because it is the only large scale commission painted by the artist which remains in situ.

Brown and Kagan published a study of the art collection of the Duke of Alcalá based on two inventories taken several years apart, which they used to attempt to reconstruct the Duke’s collection. The larger context within which the article is set is that of the phenomenon of the European seventeenth-century art collection. The smaller context within which it is set is that of the developing phenomenon of the aristocratic art collections being assembled by nobles residing in Madrid.

John Michael Montias’s work on artists based in Delft is inspiring for its careful examination and management of a great deal of raw data. This type of

detailed socio-economic study is dearly needed for Spanish and Latin American art markets, but it would be completely inappropriate to undertake at this time. This is because of the difficulty in finding large numbers of reliable documents relating to the overseas trade and the lack of a skeleton on which to build such a thorough study. My own study I recognize is rather atheoretical and positivist in approach, with the exception of my focus on female patronage and feminist methodology. I am aware that this could be viewed as a limitation, but the study of Zurbarán’s production for the overseas market and the mechanisms of this market generally lack a developed critique. It is to be hoped that by examining the artist’s technique, the nature of the overseas trade and the concerns of his patrons, the nuns of the convent of La Encarnación, we might develop a better understanding of art production for Latin American patrons.
Chapter 1: Zurbarán’s Paintings as Primary Sources: Why Pigments and Grounds Matter

Before one can attempt a study of a lost commission like the one Francisco de Zurbarán undertook for the nuns of La Encarnación in Lima in 1647, one needs to consider how the artist produced and delivered the work as well as what concerns the patrons had. More fundamentally, the reader also needs to understand how the paintings were made. This chapter addresses what is known of the artist’s painting procedure. When one reads the available literature on Zurbarán, it quickly becomes apparent that the interpretation of available documentation in the form of contracts and notarized receipts has provided the lion’s share of our understanding of his methods of conducting business. It is from the interpretation of these documents that we have formed our opinion of the personality of the artist and the trajectory of his career. The other primary documents we have, the paintings, can at times seem only to be illustrations for the narrative that we have woven out of the other documentation. While conservation scientists have discussed his technique in a few published reports, rarely has Zurbarán’s method of applying paint been used by art historians to shed light on his professional life. What can we learn if we gather the
information from the few published scientific studies? The aim of this chapter is
twofold. One aim is to look beneath the surface of these paintings to see how
these findings fit with our current understanding of Zurbarán’s career. The other
goal is to attempt to create a framework with which we can try to separate the
works of Zurbarán’s imitators from works that were created in his shop and
under his direction. It seems logical that learning his materials and methods will
assist in this differentiation.

Before settling into the discussion, some terms and limitations must be
clarified. First is to define the terms “technique” and “technical study” here. The
term technique can mean many things in art history. In a connoisseurship study
of any painter the term could refer to his or her method of applying paint, which
affects how we perceive the artist’s style or manner. Such studies usually
concern themselves with what can be observed about the paint surface or the
artist’s use of color or the construction of light and shadow, and so on. The
connoisseur makes a visual study of how such details change over the length of
the artist’s career and this often helps to date paintings. Additionally these
details can be helpful in separating one artist’s work from another’s.

On the other hand, when conservators write an article discussing
technique, they often employ sophisticated chemical analyses such as gas
chromatography to arrive at an understanding of the exact compounds used in
the construction of the work and how these materials have changed over time. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages. Educating the connoisseur’s eye to a painter’s stylistic tendencies is fundamental to art historical studies, but such studies can be accused of being rather subjective in approach. At the other end of the spectrum, chemical analysis of paint layers can result in losing the painting itself in its context of scientific detail and jargon. Paint sampling must be limited because this often means the loss of the painted material; thus rarely is the complete construction of all layers over the entire surface of a work known. Noninvasive technological advances such as the use of IRR cameras or x-radiographs have their limits as well. These are good at showing us certain types of materials, but unable to show us others. The great advantage to chemical analysis is that in theory it is less subjective; although the meaning of the results is always a matter of personal interpretation. My own approach to a painter’s technique posits an ideal that falls between these two perspectives, the connoisseurship and the scientific. I personally prefer chemical and scientific analysis, but because I am trained as a historian and not a scientist I try to take a wider view of the work by using the scientific analyses conducted by others and blending this with a historian’s approach. I am interested in how the artist’s materials can supplement what we know of the artist’s life and career from documents and connoisseurship studies. To that end, although I use pigment
names and some chemical terms, I attempt to be clear about what these terms communicate and how they are significant for Zurbarán. In some ways my approach raises additional questions about Zurbarán’s career, while in others it suggests slightly different answers to old questions.

Our current understanding of the art of Francisco de Zurbarán rests on our interpretation of just over 200 documents and approximately the same number of paintings. Not a single painting is currently dated to the first eight years of the artist’s career, and many of the later works are dated only approximately, and entirely on stylistic grounds. Of the extant documents a substantial percentage provide us with purely biographical information. Although many of these are useful because they inform us of his income from sources other than selling paintings, such as the dowries his three wives brought him, or inform us when he is located in one city or another, they do not provide us with direct data about his career. Many of the remaining documents that deal with the transactions of his career are incomplete in some way or provide us with a simple basic fact that represents just a snapshot of a moment in a career that still requires interpretation. In a life that spanned 65 years and was lived in multiple locales, the snapshots provided by these documents are tantalizing, but limited. Using the artist’s paintings as a different type of primary source I
attempt to discern Zurbarán practices as a painter, and to see if knowledge of these practices can shift our understanding of the artist.

So, to begin at the beginning, what do we know of the artist’s early training? Because his family resided in a small town in Extremadura that offered few opportunities to receive artistic training, on December 19, 1613, Luis de Zurbarán granted his power of attorney to Pedro Delgueta Rebolledo for the purpose of finding a Sevillian painter with whom he could apprentice his son Francisco.\(^1\) This mission was apparently successful because an apprenticeship contract was signed with the “painter of images” Pedro Díaz de Villanueva on January 15, 1615, for a term of three years.\(^2\) Because no other information is known about Díaz de Villanueva and none of his works is known to have survived, we have to turn to Zurbarán’s paintings and other contemporary sources in order to understand his early training and working methods.

Despite intensive archival work on Zurbarán’s early life, María Luisa Caturla was never able to find any suggestion that the artist had received any training prior to his apprenticeship with Díaz de Villanueva, and no indication that painting was a trade practiced in the Zurbarán family. Because we know that Zurbarán was trained in Seville, once we’ve established something about his


working methods it seems most sensible to compare his works with those of other artists, notably Velázquez who was his exact contemporary. I also will look at the later adaptations of his technique that appear to date to his residency in Madrid from 1658 to his death in 1664.

Few scientific examinations of works by Zurbarán have been published. Any conclusions drawn from these studies must be carefully considered because the number of works examined is quite small. Additionally, the artist’s method of applying his paint layers often differs among works executed at similar times as well as among works painted many years apart. What we know of Zurbarán’s methods has been discovered through paint sampling and the examination of x-radiographs. Of the five studies that have been published on Zurbarán’s technique, two were produced as a result of the restoration of the paintings for the Carthusians at Jeréz in 1997 and 1998\(^3\), one was published in 1981, by an art historian and conservator studying the *Christ and the Virgin in the House at Nazareth*\(^4\), one focused on the paintings produced for the chapel of St. Jerome at


the Real Monasterio de Guadalupe and the most recent, published in 2000, focused on several paintings in the collection of the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao. Of these the last is the most valuable for the current project since it covers the artist’s technique from his late Sevillian works to some of the last works he painted in Madrid. Lastly, after a recent visit to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D. C. where I discussed the two Zurbarán works in that collection with Ann Hoenigswald and Sara Fisher, they kindly granted me access to the condition reports. The information gained from the published works and the condition reports may in some cases be supplemented by data obtained from the study of Velázquez’s paintings, particularly the early works. In the footnotes of such articles one often finds otherwise unpublished information about Zurbarán paintings.

**Preparation Layers: Grounds, Underdrawing and Pentimenti**

Zurbarán’s earliest works dating to 1617-26 have been lost or are not recognized. Many of the works that have been examined are usually dated on connoisseurship grounds to approximately the same period of c. 1635-40. These

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7 This meeting took place on March 19, 2008.
include the *St. Lucy* at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D. C. (Fig. 1.1), dated to c. 1636 and the *Christ and the Virgin in the House at Nazareth* (Fig. 1.2) at the Cleveland Museum of Art, dated c. 1635-40. The paintings that formerly composed the altarpiece for the Carthusians at Jeréz de la Frontera are dated to c. 1638-40 on the basis of documentation and that two of the paintings are signed and dated, and the paintings for the chapel of St. Jerome at the monastery in Guadalupe are dated 1639. Lastly, the *St. Isabel of Turingia* (Fig. 1.3) and the *St. Catherine of Alexandria* (Fig. 1.4) at the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao are dated c. 1636.

The grounds employed in these paintings share a number of common characteristics. Zurbarán’s mid-career grounds are often dark grey-brown in appearance, but the materials that compose them can differ. In the case of the *St. Lucy* in Washington there is a double ground layer with the lower level consisting of a mixture of pigments including lead white, azurite, red lake, black and red and yellow iron earths that could be palette scrapings. A second layer made of siliceous earth and iron oxides is visible above this layer. The composition of the lower ground in this painting differs from that found in the Cleveland work and the Bilbao virgin martyr paintings in its inclusion of lead white, azurite and red lake. Zurbarán’s *St. Francis in Meditation* of (Fig. 1.5) c. 1635-39 at the National Gallery of Art in London has a similar ground that is
formed of iron earths and chalk which is nearly identical in composition to the
ground in several of Velázquez’s early works including the *Supper at Emmaus*
(Fig. 1.6) of about 1622-23 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.\(^8\)

In 1981 Zahira Véliz published her study of *Christ and the Virgin in the*
*House at Nazareth* (Fig. 1.2) in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art in
which she compared this painting with other versions of the same subject by
Zurbarán and his workshop.\(^9\) From this study we learned that Zurbarán
exploited light colored partial grounds under the portions of his painting that he
wished to highlight, and that he apparently had a very clear idea of his
composition before he began painting because few *pentimenti* were found. Pale
grounds are employed in this painting under the figures of Christ and the Virgin,
while the majority of the painting has the dark brownish ground typical of
Zurbarán’s Sevillian period. Zurbarán used this type of ground consistently
until the 1650’s. We will discuss these later grounds in a moment.

The presence of few *pentimenti* in any of the Zurbarán works that have
been studied to date makes the lack of surviving drawings by the artist

somewhat puzzling. Although as fragile objects, one would expect most

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\(^8\) Additional information about Zurbarán’s technique is sometimes available when one reads the
footnotes of articles on the technique of other painters, particularly of Velázquez and Murillo. See

\(^9\) Zahira Véliz, “A Painter’s Technique: Zurbarán’s *The Holy House of Nazareth,*” *The Bulletin of The*
drawings to have been lost, those Spanish drawings seemingly related to
Zurbarán paintings published by Angulo and Pérez Sanchez could not be
confirmed as preparatory works by the artist.¹⁰

Véliz found no indication of underdrawing in the *Christ and the Virgin in
the House at Nazareth*, and this was also the case when the *St. Isabel of Turingia
and the St. Catherine of Alexandria* from Bilbao were examined by Ana Sánchez-
Lassa de los Santos in 2000.¹¹ It is possible that conservators should look for dark
black-brown paint strokes forming the contours of figures. This technique of
underdrawing was employed by Velázquez in a variety of early works including
the *Portrait of Juan Martínez Montañes* (Fig. 1.7) from the Museo del Prado in
which it is visible on the paint surface forming the terra cotta head at Martínez’s
right. Another type of underdrawing that Zurbarán could have used is
described by Zahira Véliz who discovered its use in the early works of

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¹⁰ Diego Angulo Iñiguez, and Alonso E. Pérez Sanchez, *A Corpus of Spanish Drawings: Seville
1600-1650* (London and Oxford: Harvey Miller Publishers and Oxford University Press, 1975): 9,
58-61. The authors state that these drawings have been associated with Zurbarán based on their
similarities to paintings by the artists, but that they could easily have been drawings after the
paintings by later artists. Regarding the survival rate of Spanish drawings, see the article
published by Angulo about a drawing by Murillo which contains a letter to the artist from
Zurbarán on the verso. It is worth asking which of the two pieces of ephemera ensured the
survival of the other. See Diego Angulo Iñiguez, "Murillo: Varios Dibujos de la Concepción y de
Santo Tomas de Villanueva," *Archivo Español de Arte* 35 (1962): 231-36. See also: Gridley McKim-
Smith, *Spanish Baroque Drawings in North American Collections* (Lawrence, KS: University of
Kansas Museum of Art, 1974).

¹¹ Ana Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos, "Entre Sevilla y Madrid: Aportación al estudio de la técnica
de Zurbarán," in *Zurbarán La obra final: 1650-1664* (Bilbao: Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, 2000)
129-48.
Velázquez. In scientific examinations of Velázquez’s _Immaculate Conception_ (Fig. 1.8) and _St. John the Evangelist on the Island of Patmos_ (Fig. 1.9) both of c. 1618-19 at the National Gallery, London, Véliz discovered incised lines composed of white lead and other materials applied with a stiff brush, which served as underdrawing for these paintings.\textsuperscript{12} The white lead would be equally as effective as the dark brown paint in providing guidelines that contrast well against the mid-toned Sevillian ground both artists used. Several similarities have been observed in the working methods of the two Sevillian painters and these two methods of underdrawing could be fruitful lines of inquiry on the question of Zurbarán’s drawing. Other similarities in the working methods of Zurbarán and Velázquez will be discussed below.

When _pentimenti_ occurred in the Zurbarán works that have been studied, they amounted to slight adjustments and were not dramatic departures from the planned composition. In the case of the Cleveland painting, _pentimenti_ were found only in the placement of the edges of the garments of the Virgin and Christ.\textsuperscript{13} On the Bilbao _St. Isabel_ a garment contour as well as the position of the hand holding the book were changed.\textsuperscript{14} Numerous changes in outer contours are


\textsuperscript{13} Véliz, 1981. 281.

\textsuperscript{14} Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos, 2000. 143.
found in the *St. Jerome with St. Paula and St. Eustochium* (Fig. 1.10) in the National Gallery of Art, Washington D. C. though this work appears to have been painted with the assistance of the workshop and this could account for the compositional alterations.\(^\text{15}\) In the *Virgin and Child Christ and St. John as a Child*, (Fig. 1.11) dated 1662 at the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao small changes were made to the mouth of the Virgin, her chin and the white blouse that she wears.\(^\text{16}\) Also the shoulder of the Christ child and the white cloth in which he is wrapped demonstrate changes and Sánchez-Lassa believes that the Christ Child once held something in his hand, which he was handing to John the Baptist.\(^\text{17}\)

What can we make of the recent findings about the grounds of Zurbarán’s late works? Ana Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos’s examination of the *Virgin and Child Christ and St. John as a Child* from Bilbao and the *Virgin and Child with St. John* (Fig. 1.12) of c. 1659 presently in a private collection in Zurich that will be discussed below and the *Holy Face* which she dates to c. 1658-61 (Fig. 1.13) at the Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao strongly suggests that even in this late period of Zurbarán’s career the artist was still evolving his methods of working. Paintings that clearly date from the Sevillian phase of Zurbarán’s career have grounds that contain calcium carbonate with dark earths, carbon black or palette scrapings

\(^\text{15}\) This is noted in the condition report on the painting in the files at the National Gallery.


\(^\text{17}\) Ibid. 138.
over which the artist may have added local grounds to brighten figures as he did in the Cleveland and Washington paintings.

In the case of the Holy Face we appear to have a hybrid work with a ground that contains calcium carbonate, earths and carbon black that corresponds to the Sevillian grounds, but the pigment layers appear more fluid, which seems to be a feature of the late paintings done in Madrid. Ana Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos, Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Odile Delenda have interpreted this to mean that Zurbarán took some canvases with him to Madrid for which he had already prepared the grounds and later employed what Sánchez-Lassa has termed a “court” ground which will be explained in a moment. This seems perfectly reasonable.

The Virgin and Child with St. John (Fig. 1.12) from the private collection and the Virgin and Child Christ and St. John as a Child (Fig. 1.11) from Bilbao possess a technical difference from earlier works. This is the use of a double ground layer made of a lower layer of animal glue mixed with calcium carbonate over which the artist applied another layer that is red-orange in appearance and composed of iron oxides and calcium carbonate, a type of chalk, mixed with an oil siccative

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19 Ibid. 134.
or dryer. This is a departure from the darker grounds the artist used in his Sevillian works, grounds that appear to have consisted mainly of dark brown earths or charcoal black mixed with a variety of other elements. For example, Véliz found that the ground on the *Christ and the Virgin in the House at Nazareth* (Fig. 1.2) consisted of chalk, charcoal black and lead white.

As Sánchez-Lassa has pointed out, this late red-orange ground might account for the more golden, softer glow that appears in these late works. It is also a ground mixture that was used by the painters at court in Madrid at this time, which leads Sánchez-Lassa to call this Zurbarán’s “court ground”. These late Zurbarán paintings are often described as comparatively “softer” than his more famous works dating from the 1630’s such as his *St. Francis in Meditation* in London (Fig. 1.5). The stark contrast between light and shadow visible in this painting is the significant, defining feature of his style as practiced in that mid-career period. The perceived “softness” of Zurbarán’s late style has presented a problem to scholars. Certainly the earlier style is the one that is most discussed and remembered, while the later style seems to inspire art historians to attempt

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21 Véliz, 1981., 278.

22 Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos, 2000.,

23 Ibid., 134, 135.
to explain it. One factor in this late evolution in the artist’s style is surely the change in the ground, which, increasingly as paintings age, influences the overall tone.

**Pigments**

In terms of pigments, judging from the paintings about which there is published information and the conservation report on the *St. Lucy* (Fig. 1.1) in the National Gallery of Art in Washington D. C., Zurbarán used: lead white, lead-tin yellow, vermilion, red lake containing cochineal, azurite, carbon black, verdigris, ochres and earths.24

Cochineal was a red pigment derived from an insect that was native to Mexico and had been carefully cultivated for centuries by the indigenous people in the region of Oaxaca. It was discovered by the Spaniards in the late sixteenth century.25 Because of its relative colorfastness and its rich scarlet color, it was much prized in Europe as both a dyestuff and a pigment for painters. The Spanish attempted to keep secret how this dyestuff was produced in order to maintain their monopoly on its trade, so it became an extremely expensive

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24 I am immensely grateful to Ann Hoenigswald and Sarah Fisher for allowing me access to their conservation files and for discussing the two Zurbaráns at the National Gallery with me.

commodity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was readily obtainable in Seville during Zurbarán’s time.26 It is notable that Zurbarán seems to have used it often.

Samples of the flesh tones of the St. Isabel of Turingia (Fig. 1.3) and the St. Catherine of Alexandria (Fig. 1.4) from Bilbao reveal that the pigment was laid on in two layers.27 The base layer consisted of lead white, minio28 and ochre, while the upper layer was composed of lead white, vermilion and azurite. It may or may not be significant that in his treatise on painting Francisco Pacheco specifically states that the colors for matte flesh tones should consist of two layers of paint applied over the ground.29 In his St. Isabel of Turingia and St. Catherine of Alexandria Zurbarán has used a similar method to achieve the flesh tones.

26 Greenfield, 76. By the 1570’s cochineal was readily available in cosmopolitan Seville. Seville maintained the royal monopoly on trade from 1503 to 1680, therefore shipments continued to reach Seville during Zurbarán’s lifetime.


28 Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos, 2000. Sánchez uses the term minio which could be translated as minium, but this was an extremely expensive and rare red pigment in Spain at this time and it seems unlikely that Zurbarán would have used it. The word however can also mean either red lead or alternatively, vermilion. Since Sánchez uses bermellón to mean vermilion in all other cases in her article it is possible that what she found in these works was red lead which has also been found in Zurbarán’s St. Margaret of Antioch at the National Gallery, London. See Elisabeth West Fitzhugh, “Red Lead and Minium,” in Artists’ Pigments: A Handbook of Their History and Characteristics, ed. Robert L. Feller (Cambridge and Washington D. C.: Cambridge University Press and National Gallery of Art, 1986): .

In a recent examination of several mid- to late-career works by Zurbarán, Ana Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos established for the first time that Zurbarán used the expensive pigment ultramarine, which she found in two very late works, the *Virgin and Child with St. John* (Fig. 1.12) of about 1659 presently in a private collection and the *Virgin and Child Christ and St. John as a Child* (Fig. 1.11) from the Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, which is signed and dated 1662.\(^{30}\) This is a significant finding worth focusing on for a number of reasons. The first is the powerful impression that is left by reading in Francisco Pacheco’s famous treatise *Arte de la Pintura* that ultramarine was not a pigment that was used by Spanish artists because as he claimed these painters did not have the skill to work the pigment.\(^{31}\) The importance of the literary works by Francisco Pacheco to scholars who work on Sevillian painters cannot be overstated. Pacheco was a practicing artist who trained several of the most important painters who worked in Seville during the first half of the seventeenth century, including Velázquez and Alonso Cano; therefore his comments on technique and methods of preparing pigments are often examined alongside works by these artists. Additionally Pacheco was at the center of a humanist artistic circle in Seville, which is thought to be one of the methods by which Italian philosophy and painting techniques may have

\(^{30}\) Sánchez-Lassa de los Santos, 2000. 136-137.

\(^{31}\) Véliz, ed., 1986. 73.
found their way into the Sevillian artistic community. Lastly there is his famous treatise on painting, which is the closest in time to the careers of Velázquez, Zurbarán, Cano and Murillo among the extant Spanish treatises. There are many aspects of technique described by Pacheco that are in agreement with technical findings on the works of Velázquez, Zurbarán and Murillo, but it is those ways in which the paintings differ from Pacheco’s prescriptions that are intriguing. Among the most interesting differences is the finding of ultramarine in the works of Zurbarán and Murillo. For some time it has been known that Velázquez used ultramarine in his *Rokeby Venus* and a few works, but this could be easily explained away by Velázquez’s personal knowledge of Italian painting techniques and the change in the artist’s palette that seems to have taken place at the time of his trips to Italy in 1629-31 and again in 1649-51.


34 Claire Barry states that Murillo used ultramarine in his Immaculate Conception paintings. See Barry, 2002. 83.

The prohibitive expense of the pigment is most often the reason given for its rarity in Spain though as a court artist it may be theorized that some of Velázquez’s patrons could afford to pay for ultramarine. I will return to Velázquez’s patrons in a moment. Zurbarán and Murillo, however, most often worked for individual monastic patrons around Seville who usually specified what they would pay for works, but not what pigments should be used. One would not expect these artists to employ ultramarine in cases when the less expensive azurite would do equally well, and without incurring higher costs.

Possibly the most important use of ultramarine in Spanish oil painting and arguably among the most profuse occurs in Velázquez’s *Coronation of the Virgin* (Fig. 1.14) painted for Queen Isabella de Bourbon and intended to hang among several Italian paintings of the Feasts of the Virgin in the Queen’s personal chapel.36 In this work ultramarine is used both to paint the mantle of the Virgin and is mixed with red lake to create the purple robe of God the Father. Such use is extravagant on two counts, first in that it is unusual for Spanish painters at this date to use ultramarine to paint the Virgin’s mantle rather than azurite, but unheard of in Europe to mix it with other colors. As Michael Baxandall pointed out in his study of fifteenth-century Italian painting, the point

of employing the expensive pigment was that it should be seen and recognized since its use would reflect favorably on the patron, demonstrating the patron’s status and spending power.\textsuperscript{37} It was expensive due to the fact that this semi-precious stone was and still is mined in Afghanistan and had to be transported to Europe.\textsuperscript{38} It is an extremely hard substance that is difficult to extract from the ground and it is arduous to prepare and use as a pigment. In the contracts that Baxandall studied, it becomes apparent that ultramarine came in different grades since most of the patrons were anxious to make sure that the artists employed the highest grade of ultramarine available. These documents also suggest that patrons could discern ultramarine from other blue pigments, even if they worried about being taken advantage of by artists who might use a lower grade pigment than requested. Additionally Baxandall suggests that, like the patrons, the viewing public in Italy might have been able to discern the pigment as well. Ultramarine’s rich hue is distinctive and it is certainly possible that both fifteenth-century Italian viewers and seventeenth-century Spanish viewers could have educated their eye sufficiently to recognize it. Although smalt can initially


look very similar to ultramarine, it was known by Velázquez’s time that smalt fades quickly and dramatically.\textsuperscript{39} This trait is mentioned in Pacheco’s treatise so it is unlikely that seventeenth-century Spanish artists would have attempted to use pure smalt in place of ultramarine if a patron requested the latter pigment, though few patrons requested particular pigments at this date. Since ultramarine does not cover well, painters often layered it with one of the less expensive blues, leaving a thin, luminous layer of ultramarine on top of a thicker body of azurite or smalt. Sánchez-Lassa reports that in the two cases in which she found the ultramarine, Zurbarán had applied his paint in two layers. The lower layer is composed of blue smalt mixed with white lead in both late Holy Family works over which is placed a thin layer of ultramarine mixed with white lead and calcium carbonate in the case of the Bilbao painting (Fig. 1.11) and ultramarine mixed with white lead in the case of the painting from the private collection (Fig. 1.12). This demonstrates that Zurbarán was familiar with the problems and advantages of working with this pigment. With these thoughts in mind, several questions must be raised about the use of ultramarine in Velázquez’s \textit{Coronation of the Virgin} that are also pertinent to our discussion of the use of ultramarine in Zurbarán’s works.

Velázquez’s use of ultramarine in the Virgin’s robe in his *Coronation of the Virgin* could have been conditioned by the fact that it would hang with several Italian paintings in the chapel which may have made liberal use of ultramarine in the Virgin’s clothing. It is difficult to say now if they did since the works were lost in the fire of 1734 and with the Queen as his patron perhaps Velázquez used the best materials he could find although even in the royal collection in 1640 it was rare to find a Spanish painting that contained a great deal of the pigment. We should probably consider the role that the great aristocratic art collections that were being formed in these years in Spain played in the commissioning of works containing ultramarine. If Spanish works were to hang next to Italian works conspicuously containing ultramarine in such collections, perhaps patrons played a role in promoting the use of ultramarine by mid century. In the case of the *Rokeby Venus*, Velázquez’s other major work from the 1640’s to contain ultramarine, evidence presented by a variety of scholars suggests that it could have been commissioned by Don Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán to be the pendant of a Venetian painting and it could be argued that Velázquez might have used ultramarine to make it conform to the ultramarine visible in the Italian paintings with which it was to hang.\(^{40}\) Although this line of argument is somewhat

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\(^{40}\) Duncan Bull, and Enriqueta Harris, "The Companion of the *Rokeby Venus*," *The Burlington Magazine* Vol. 136, No. 1097 (1994): 555. This theory has more recently been questioned and another owner cited as the first owner of the *Rokeby Venus* but it appears there is no question that it was in Haro’s collection by the early 1650’s. See Ángel Aterido Fernández, "The First Owner of the *Rokeby Venus*," *The Burlington Magazine* Vol. 143, No. 1175 (2001): 91-94.
speculative in nature, the fact that large collections were being assembled and viewed by aristocratic Spanish patrons in Madrid during this period could be related to Zurbarán’s adoption of ultramarine in the two late works painted in Madrid in which it has been found.41 It has been theorized by several scholars that these late, smaller format works by Zurbarán were commissioned by court officials and aristocrats in Madrid. Although some have also suggested that these were works that Zurbarán painted to sell on speculation based on the fact that he signed and dated far more of his works late in his career than he did in earlier times and that he would have done so as a form of advertising had he been painting works on speculation for the market. There is no evidence that Zurbarán at any point in his career sold works on speculation in Spain, although since his lawsuit in 1640 tells us he did so in the Americas he could have done so in Spain as well. We simply have not yet discovered evidence that he did. If, as seems a reasonable theory, these late paintings were painted for court functionaries and other aristocrats the application of ultramarine was probably requested, perhaps to keep these paintings in harmony with others in their collections.

It may be worth pointing out that although Francisco Pacheco’s treatise *Arte de la Pintura* was published in 1649, he worked on the text over approximately forty years with the modern reader having no clear way of discerning when any particular passage was written.\(^{42}\) This raises the possibility that his comments on technique and in particular on the scarcity of ultramarine in Spanish paintings could have been outdated by the time of publication. For example, by the 1650’s Murillo, who spent most of his working life in Seville, was producing paintings of the Immaculate Conception in which he used ultramarine to paint the Virgin’s mantle.\(^{43}\) One early example is the *Virgin of the Immaculate Conception* (Fig. 1.15) presently in the Meadows Museum at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. This work is dated c. 1655-60. It is notable, however, that this pigment has not yet been found in the robes or mantles of any other saints or figures Murillo painted. Additionally of course there is the contradiction that despite Pacheco’s comments on Spanish painters not using ultramarine, he also mentions that he uses it.\(^{44}\)

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\(^{42}\) See Zahira Véliz, ed. *Artists’ Techniques in Golden Age Spain: Six Treatises in Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 31. Bassegoda addresses some of the issues of dating in the introduction and notes to his edition of Pacheco. Bassegoda estimates the dating of the comments on painting in the *Arte de la Pintura* to c. 1619-20. In any case Pacheco’s death in 1644 predates the earliest possible dating for the Zurbarán and Murillo works that contain ultramarine. See Bassegoda, 14.


\(^{44}\) See McKim-Smith et. al., 1988., 107
As has been said, in the case of Zurbarán’s oeuvre, ultramarine has thus far only been found in two very late works. In both cases, like Murillo, Zurbarán has reserved his use of ultramarine for the mantle of the Virgin. The fact that Zurbarán used this very expensive pigment at a time when he is conventionally believed to have fled Seville for Madrid due to being in financial straits is something that needs examination. Little documentary evidence exists for this late period of the artist’s career and the paintings produced in this period differ in subject matter and size from much of what Zurbarán produced in his Sevillian career. Late in his career, Zurbarán painted a number of images of the Virgin holding the Christ Child, none of which has been dated earlier than 1650. It is not clear who Zurbarán’s patrons were for such works, but it seems extremely unlikely that the artist would employ ultramarine in works made to sell on speculation because the cost would be his to bear. If as has long been suggested Zurbarán was in financial straits at this point in his career, and one could hardly expect him to purchase such an expensive pigment, when he is not known to have used it at the height of his fame when he employed the cheaper azurite.\footnote{It should be stressed that few technical studies of paintings from Zurbarán’s Sevillian period have been published, so it is possible that the artist began using this pigment prior to his move to Madrid. The Annunciation of about 1650 currently in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art is a viable candidate to search for ultramarine pigment, but according to Mark Tucker, no samples were taken in the two most recent cleanings of this work.}

The question of Zurbarán’s financial status
It has long been speculated whether Zurbarán capitalized on his forty-year friendship with Velázquez when he arrived in Madrid in 1658 and testified at the hearing that would determine Velázquez’s suitability to be made a knight of the Order of Santiago. This speculation has at least some of its basis in the thus far unproven but long-standing belief that Zurbarán’s move to Madrid was based on a need to get away from Seville after getting out of the overseas art market. Murillo’s career was then in ascendance while Zurbarán’s is perceived to have been in decline.\(^{46}\) The loss of the treasure fleets in 1656 and 1657 on which is it proposed without supporting documentation that Zurbarán had substantial funds returning to him and his apparent artistic decline are naturally believed to have caused financial problems for the artist.\(^ {47}\)

Duncan Kinkead believed that Zurbarán’s perceived insolvency in his later Sevillian career had been exaggerated by earlier scholars. His important contribution is in finding the rental agreements that are our only knowledge of

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\(^{46}\) A wide variety of scholars have held this point of view beginning with María Luisa Caturla, *Fin y muerte de Francisco de Zurbarán. Documentos recogidos y comentados ofrecidos en la conmemoración del III centenario* (Madrid: Dirección General de Bellas Artes, 1964), although she later modified her view. References to the eclipse of Zurbarán by Murillo and to Zurbarán’s declining financial situation appear also in George Kubler, and Martin S. Soria, *Art and Architecture in Spain and Portugal and their American Dominions 1500 to 1800* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1959) 248-249. See also Jonathan Brown, *Painting in Spain 1500-1700*, Pelican History of Art (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998) 205-206, 264. Although Brown appears to agree with the theory of Zurbarán’s eclipse by younger painters and that financial losses played a role in his move, he does include a note in the footnote that he believes that some authors have exaggerated Zurbarán’s poverty late in life.

Zurbarán’s financial transactions in the early 1650’s. However it is the nature of these isolated documents without context that makes it so difficult to interpret why Zurbarán did not pay his rent for three years while he had income from a variety of real estate transactions. There are any number of reasons apart from financial insolvency that might have caused the artist to withhold these payments.

Additionally, although it is not often brought up in the literature on Zurbarán’s late career, the artist had received a large dowry at the time of his marriage to his third wife Leonor de Tordera in 1644. This dowry was valued at 27,300 reales, a tremendous sum which is unlikely to have been spent by 1658 when Zurbarán left for Madrid. Although under Castilian law dowries remained legally the property of the woman who brought them to the marriage, husbands administrated them unless they proved spendthrift. In such cases a woman could petition the court for a different executor, usually one of her relatives, to be appointed the administrator. There is no indication that Zurbarán ever misspent

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48 Ibid.


50 Eugene H. Korth, and Della Flusche, “Dowry and Inheritance in Colonial Spanish America,” *The Americas* 43, No. 4 (1987): 398. Despite the title, the legal information described in this article applies also to Zurbarán and his peninsular family. As Korth and Flusche point out, the colonies were administered under Castilian law which was the same law that applied to citizens of Seville and Madrid.
any of the three dowries he administered. The sum he received on his marriage in 1644 is dramatically larger than any sum the artist ever received for any single commission and when we think about the artist’s late career and the question of his financial status, we have to consider all of the sums to which he had access.

A second point about dowries under seventeenth-century Castilian law is that if the husband predeceased the wife, his widow took the remainder of her dowry with her since it was defined as her property.51 This means that the other piece of evidence scholars often turn to as suggestive that Zurbarán died relatively poor, his death inventory, might not reflect his true financial circumstances at the time of his death. Leonor de Tordera had this document drawn up shortly after Zurbarán’s death in August 1664 and scholars are divided about whether the contents suggest that he died in dramatically reduced circumstances or whether his goods were in keeping with the amount and value found in other artists’ death inventories. I suggest that given what we know about the rights women had to reclaim their dowries, perhaps Leonor de Tordera never included the money and property she brought with her in this inventory since these items were not legally Zurbarán’s property.52 At this time this cannot be proven, but it is worth considering when we make judgments about the success or failure of Zurbarán late in life.

51 Korth, and Flusche, 398-399.

52 Ibid.
We have no documentation that the artist was expecting payments from overseas on the treasure fleets in 1656 or 1657. However, because of the wider dire financial conditions in Seville the loss of these treasure fleets could have had a detrimental effect on Zurbarán and many other residents of the city whether he personally was expecting payments to arrive on those ships or not. The theory proposes that he intended to solve these compounded financial problems by moving to Madrid. The evidence for this depends on how one interprets several disparate documents. I would argue that the move to Madrid might have come about because of an opportunity that presented itself after he arrived to testify in Velázquez’s behalf, rather than a sort of desperation brought about by artistic decline.

One pertinent point is that the evidence of lawsuits and unpaid rental obligations that serve to support evidence of Zurbarán’s “decline” in his late Sevillian period took place in the context of an overall economic decline that
struck Seville after the plague epidemic of 1649. Many Sevillians suffered as a result of these conditions, not just master painters. The dire financial situation in the city strongly suggests that Zurbarán did not need to have personal funds tied up in these shipments for the loss of those fleets to affect him financially.

Although rich institutions such as the city’s cathedral were still commissioning large scale artistic works, the fact that these were awarded to Murillo rather than Zurbarán could have more to do with pricing scales than the conventionally argued shift in artistic taste, to which critics often claim Zurbarán could not adapt. Murillo was just reaching his maturity as a painter in these years and it is possible that in addition to his obvious talent and skill he offered lower prices to patrons than his Sevillian colleagues offered. A young painter offering a price concession to patrons in an effort to generate commissions has a precedent in something Zurbarán is believed to have done in his own early commission for the Dominican Monastery of San Pablo, Seville, which was

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53 This economic decline is described in detail in John H. Elliot, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716*, Reprint ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2002); Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, and et. al., *La Crisis del siglo XVII: la población, la economía, la sociedad* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1989); Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), Ruth Pike, *Enterprise and Adventure: The Genoese in Seville and the Opening of the New World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), and Mary Elizabeth Perry, *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Statistics provided by Pike suggest that although the population of Seville grew in the century prior to the plague of 1649, economic opportunities remained relatively stagnant. Perry points out that the increase in the number of monastic institutions in the years before the plague may have inadvertently caused a financial problem for painters seeking commissions because although more institutions theoretically needed decorations, the donations on through which such commissions were funded shrank because money was distributed more thinly.
signed on January 16, 1626, for which he painted 21 paintings for about 250 reales apiece. For the purposes of comparison, one can juxtapose a nearly contemporary commission by the more established Herrera the Elder for which Herrera received about 900 reales per painting.

Few of the monastic institutions that had been the bread and butter of Zurbarán’s career were commissioning works during these years, and Zurbarán was not the only painter who migrated to Madrid in the 1650’s. Alonso Cano had been resident in Madrid since early 1657 and stayed until 1660, and Herrera the Elder had arrived in the early 1650’s and died there in 1654. Herrera the Younger was also resident in Madrid from 1650 to 1654 when he returned to Seville. Murillo was present in the city from at least the spring of 1658 until December of that year when he returned to Seville. These observations suggest that we should attempt to view Zurbarán’s move to Madrid within the context of the artistic and economic climate of his times, rather than examining his activities alongside only the documents pertaining to his life. So many of the greatest Spanish painters of that era were in Madrid at this time that we should probably consider Zurbarán’s move as an example of a broader trend among mid-century artists.

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From approximately 1650 to the end of the artist’s life, there are fewer documents to tell us of his activities than for the mid portion of his career. It has been believed by several scholars that the artist had made a trip to Madrid around 1650, but this has never been substantiated. The only evidence that could suggest such a trip is the shift in the artist’s style that is visible in his *Annunciation* (Fig. 1.16) dated 1650 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This is thought to have been painted as the result of a trip to the capital, because the patron for whom it was painted was an aristocrat from Salamanca whom the artist presumably would have met in Madrid. Additionally the relative softening of Zurbarán’s style that occurs late in his career is perceived to have begun with this work. It is thought by many that this softening would have been due to his having viewed paintings in Madrid around 1650. However, the artist’s earlier participation in the decoration of the Hall of Realms in 1634 would have already exposed him to the royal collection and to less hard-edged styles of painting.

After his testimony on Velázquez’s behalf on December 23, 1658, we have little documentation on paper of Zurbarán’s artistic life in Madrid. We do have many signed and dated paintings, however we know of only one documented

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commission for paintings for the monastery of San Diego in Alcalá de Henares, a commission undertaken in 1658.\textsuperscript{57} The lack of any other documentation of his work has contributed to a belief that Zurbarán led a sad, failed life in the capital, but the presence of ultramarine in the two late Holy Family paintings examined in 2000 suggests that this last act of the artist’s life was not a tragedy. Additionally the substantial dowry he received in 1644 and the nature of Castilian law regarding the property of women suggests that the artist was not necessarily entirely financially dependent on his career by this point in his life.

Although more technical studies need to be undertaken on works from the artist’s Sevillian period because these paintings form the majority of his oeuvre, what we have recently learned of his late career is an excellent argument for promoting the use of paintings as primary documentary sources for dates. The presence of ultramarine in at least two of his late works complicates the conventional view of this period of Zurbarán’s career. It is unlikely that the artist would have employed one of the most expensive pigments available to painters in this era if he was in desperate financial trouble. The use of a completely different preparation layer in some late works may be an argument against the case made that Zurbarán had to leave Seville because he was incapable of changing his method. If he was temperamentally capable of a dramatic change

\textsuperscript{57} See Brown, 1998., 206.
in technique once he reached Madrid, he was certainly capable of effecting a change in Seville.
Chapter 2: The Problems and Pitfalls of Shipping Artistic Commissions to the Americas

Now we turn to another aspect of the painter’s responsibilities, namely the logistics of how an artist went about delivering his commissions and what recourse he had when things went wrong. Zurbarán provided paintings to patrons residing in Latin America as well as in Spain. Recent evidence informs us that the artist participated in the overseas art trade from 1636.¹ This is nearly twenty years earlier than previously thought and invites us to revisit further this problem of Zurbarán’s late career. Prior to 1990 scholars believed that Zurbarán only started shipping paintings to the Americas in the 1650’s after failing to receive any lucrative commissions in Seville. This was incorrect. Armed with the information that Zurbarán and other Sevillian artists such as Martínez Montañés viewed the overseas market as financially profitable, it is time to reconsider its significance to Zurbarán’s career.

During the seventeenth century, the viceregal city of Lima was an important center of trade that attracted the rich and powerful, who were interested in conspicuously displaying their wealth. Many major monastic

¹ This is the date mentioned in the court case discussed at length below. See Jesús Palomero Páramo, “Notas sobre el taller de Zurbarán: Un envío de lienzos a Portobelo y Lima,” in Extremadura en la Evangelización del Nuevo Mundo, ed. Sebastián García (Guadalupe: Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario and Turner Libros, 1990), 313-330.
orders had established foundations there, and when it came to commissioning works of art for their churches and cloisters, they often looked to Spain to supply the paintings, sculptures and other liturgical objects they required. How these paintings, sculptures and implements were commissioned and delivered is the focus of this chapter. Here I investigate some of the logistics of shipping paintings across long distances by looking at several documents. These include testimony from Zurbarán’s 1640 lawsuit with Captain Diego de Mirafuentes, who may have been responsible for the destruction of a shipment of the artist’s works in 1636. I also examine the lengthy and detailed documents surrounding Zurbarán’s commission for the nuns of La Encarnación in Lima in 1646-47. These shipments will be contextualized with evidence from other Sevillian artists such as Juan de Luzón and from a Flemish colleague who was also a Spanish citizen, Peter Paul Rubens, who in his letters describes some of the perils of shipping paintings over long distances. These documents reveal important details about how risk and liability were managed during the journeys that paintings took, whether in mainland Europe or across the ocean. Francisco de Zurbarán’s participation in the overseas art trade, which is documented from 1636 to 1662,
suggests that despite the obvious risks of shipping paintings across the Atlantic, he found such ventures reasonably profitable.²

Painters had a number of logistical problems to solve when they produced and delivered paintings. First they had to address their patron’s requirements in terms of design and iconography. Then they had to paint and transport the art objects. After the patron’s terms were met, including using the correct canvas size, specified pigments and acceptable iconography, painters next faced the problem of packing and shipping the works to the patron’s location. Here Peter Paul Rubens’s letters give us some clues to how these tasks were accomplished, though he shipped his paintings exclusively within Europe. Speaking of his

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commission for Marie de Medici’s Luxembourg Palace, Rubens wrote to Palamède de Fabri on January 10, 1625:

M. de St. Ambroise writes...that I must be in Paris, with all my pictures, on the second, third or at the latest, the fourth of February. This period is so short that I must resolve, from this hour, to take my hands off my pictures; for otherwise there will be no time for the colors to dry or for the journey from Antwerp to Paris. However, this will not cause any great inconvenience, for I should have had to retouch the entire work, anyway, in its destined place (I mean in the gallery itself). If a little, more or less, is lacking, it can be done all at once; and whether I do the necessary work in Antwerp or Paris, the result will be the same.³

It is difficult to judge from this letter how long it took paintings to dry because we do not know precisely how long it would have taken Rubens to get from Antwerp to Paris, but he addresses this issue in another letter dated December 26, 1624: “...it is necessary to allow fifteen days at the least for the journey of the cart which will bring the pictures from Brussels to Paris, since the roads are all torn up and ruined.... I pledge myself, by divine grace, to be in Paris, with all the pictures, at the end of February at the latest.”⁴ Based on this letter, we can estimate that Rubens would have to allocate a minimum of four weeks to permit his paintings to dry enough that they could be rolled and packed safely during winter in the Low Countries. From this estimated drying

⁴ Ibid. 99.
time we can probably subtract some days for Zurbarán who was working in arid Andalusia, and estimate that he would generally need at least two weeks to allow his paintings to dry.

One definite, though rarely addressed problem with shipping paintings over long distances during the seventeenth century is the lack of a standardized system of measurements throughout Europe and the Americas. Patrons usually specified a particular size when commissioning works. It appears that patrons based these measurements either on the size of the space for which the works were intended or in some cases on the size of frames already in the patron’s possession. The standard measurement used in Spain, the *vara*, varied by several inches depending on the region in which one was located.\(^5\) Differing systems of measurement was an issue that Rubens had faced. The resolution of such a problem in 1620 required some diplomatic skill. Rubens wrote to his patron Duke Wolfgang Wilheim of Neuberg:

> I have learned, to my great satisfaction...that the two pictures sent lately to Your Highness have arrived in good condition. But on the other hand, I regret to hear that they are too short in proportion to the ornamental frame already set in place. This error, however, is not the result of any negligence or fault of mine; nor can it be a misunderstanding of the measurements.... But I comfort myself with the hope that the difference is not so great that it cannot easily be remedied by adding, either at the upper or lower part of the

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\(^5\) According to the *Diccionario de la lengua Española* published by the *Real Academia Española* the length of a *vara* fluctuated between 30.2 and 35.9 inches (768 and 912 mm) depending on the region of Spain in which one was located. It is more difficult to establish what this term meant in Lima at the time.
ornamentation, a little piece to fill the space without destroying the symmetry.\(^6\)

The readiness with which Rubens provides the solution to settling a work into a frame that was too large for it suggests that adjustments of this kind were fairly common, but they were clearly a matter of concern to patrons. In another letter dated June 1, 1618 Rubens assures his patron Sir Dudley Carleton as follows:

As for the measurements, which proved somewhat less than you had expected, I did my best, taking the dimensions according to the measure current in this country. But you may be sure that this slight difference has no effect upon the price. For one evaluates pictures differently from tapestries. The latter are purchased by measure, while the former are valued according to their excellence, their subject, and number of figures.\(^7\)

In this case, it appears that the patron’s concern about the size of the canvases produced is caused by the belief that the value or the price of the works would be altered by the final products being smaller than expected. Rubens’s explanation of the value of paintings based on subject matter and number of figures is consistent with how Spanish artists were paid as well. It is unknown whether in Zurbarán’s case a difference in size between what a patron expected and what the artist delivered was ever a problem, but since he shipped several

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\(^6\) Magurn, ed. *The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens*: 75.

\(^7\) Ibid. 67.
hundred paintings to the Americas as well as to various locations within Spain it is conceivable that it might have occurred and would have had to be remedied.

The chief legal mechanism for conducting business over distance in seventeenth-century Spain was the power of attorney. This was a type of document that Zurbarán signed many times in his career for a wide variety of reasons. The power of attorney was the means by which he empowered another person to act in his name when he was unable personally to undertake delivery of his paintings or collection of payment. As Richard Kagan has pointed out, it was the nature of the society in seventeenth-century Castile that lawsuits were the only recourse for collecting disputed funds or resolving fundamental disagreements over business transactions.⁸ Therefore powers of attorney were signed as a matter of course in business affairs. This same tool was employed whether the distance traveled was to the next town or across the Atlantic.

One purpose served by powers of attorney was to establish who was legally liable for any loss or damage to commodities being traded. This was particularly important for Zurbarán and his colleagues who often signed commissions with patrons who required them to deliver paintings by a particular date or risk losing the commission to another artist and not receiving

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compensation for their time and materials. At all points during the journey between artist’s studio and patron’s location, paintings had to be recorded as being in someone’s custody. That person would be legally responsible if any theft or accident should befall either the paintings or perhaps more importantly the money that also exchanged hands in these transactions. One problem with this system was that at each point of transfer during the journey to the patron, another power of attorney was signed with a different person accepting liability and listing whatever additional tasks were assigned. This is why in 1646 when the abbess of the convent of La Encarnación in Lima wanted to commission thirty-six paintings from Zurbarán in Seville, she signed a lengthy power of attorney with Juan de Valverde who was the captain of a ship that was returning to Spain. Valverde in turn signed another similar document with Zurbarán upon arriving in Seville. In the following months as Zurbarán delivered paintings according to the deadlines that had been set, Valverde faithfully handed over the artist’s fee in installments as instructed by the abbess. The captain signed notarized receipts that made clear that the works had transferred


10 The document signed by Captain Valverde and Zurbarán is in the Archivo General de Andalucía, Sección Protocolos. Oficio XIV, Legajo 8618, folios 381-384 and a summary of the contents was published in Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la Historia del Arte: Desde Martínez Montañés Hasta Pedro Roldán (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932): 224. Lohman Villena provided a full transcription of this document in his 1999 article.
hands and that Valverde was now responsible for them until they were signed for in Portobello or Lima by one of the receivers who were agreed upon in the documents.\textsuperscript{11}

The responsibility assumed by Valverde was a serious undertaking. The voyage from Seville to the port of Portobello in Central America took approximately forty-five days, depending on the weather.\textsuperscript{12} From that port on the Atlantic the paintings had to be off-loaded and carried overland across the Isthmus of Panama where they would be reloaded onto a ship that would then take another two and a half months to sail against the wind down to the port of Callao, just above Lima. Francesco Carletti, an Italian merchant described this journey in 1594:

\begin{quote}
...in that sea no wind but the south wind...breathes throughout the entire year. Including day and night, we were advancing little by little, twelve or fifteen miles traveled during a day, and this by making a turn toward the land during the daylight, another turn out to sea by night. In that voyage of no more than 1,200 miles, one puts in no less than two months and a half of time.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

We know both that this was a risky trip and that an artist had legal recourse if anything went wrong because of a lawsuit Zurbarán filed against

\begin{flushend}
\textsuperscript{11} Zurbarán was granted a portion of his fee when he signed the contract with Valverde agreeing to paint the commission. He signed two further documents acknowledging receipt of 300 pesos on September 23, 1647 and another for 200 pesos on November 3, 1647. These were published in López Martínez. 225.


\end{flushend}
Captain Diego de Mirafuentes in 1640. According to the testimony of Zurbarán’s former assistant Diego Muñoz Naranjo, it was Mirafuentes’s idea that Zurbarán send works to the fair in Portobello. Muñoz Naranjo testified that the captain had promised the artist that he would earn three times the fee he could get for equivalent works sold in Seville. In April 1636 Mirafuentes sailed to the Americas with a consignment of Zurbarán paintings among his cargo, having agreed to deliver the paintings to Antonio de Velasco who would return the proceeds to Zurbarán. Unfortunately the paintings were severely damaged during the crossing and their eventual fate is uncertain. According to one of Zurbarán’s witnesses, a painter named Francisco López who was on board Mirafuentes’s ship, the damage suffered by the canvases was entirely the fault of the captain. López’s testimony reads, “In this same fleet were many other paintings, and this witness transported them also,...but never had he seen any that arrived so rotted, nor mistreated, nor has he heard any such thing said in his life.”

14 The testimony of Zurbarán’s witnesses and the list of questions asked of Mirafuentes are transcribed in Jesús Palomero Páramo, “Notas sobre el Taller de Zurbarán: Un Envío de Lienzos a Portobelo y Lima,” in Extremadura en la Evangelización del Nuevo Mundo, ed. Sebastián García (Guadalupe: Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario and Turner Libros, 1990): 320-30. The originals are in the Archivo General de las Indias, Contratación, legajo 4. 808. The original power of attorney that would have been signed by Mirafuentes and Zurbarán in 1636 has not yet been found.

15 Ibid. 324.

16 “dijo que, como dicho tiene, en la misma Flota y Armada fueron otras muchas pinturas y este testigo las llevó también y siempre se an llevado, mas nunca a visto que aian llegado podridas ni maltratadas ni tal cosa a oido desir en su vida...” Ibid. 329.
When Zurbarán eventually discovered the loss he sued for damages. The chronology provided by the testimony of this lawsuit and other documents gives us some idea of how long it could take from delivery to payment when an artist participated in the New World art market.

Mirafuentes left Seville on April 15, 1636, with a *memoria* or list of instructions from Zurbarán instructing him to take charge of a shipment of paintings, the subjects of which are unknown. He landed at the Panamanian city of San Felipe de Portobelo on June 28th after a stormy journey during which, according to Francisco López, Mirafuentes removed Zurbarán’s paintings from their packing case and hung them around the deck of the ship. Despite López’s accusation of negligence against the captain, Mirafuentes’s actions are not so simple to interpret. After all, he had just endured a stormy crossing during which it is perfectly reasonable that he might have discovered that his cargo had been soaked and he could have taken the paintings out of their case and hung them up to dry them.

We know that this sort of thing could even befall paintings that were carefully packed and transported personally by an artist, because of a letter written by Peter Paul Rubens about one of his shipping experiences. While on a diplomatic mission to the Spanish court from the court of Vincenzo I Gonzaga,

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17 Ibid. 315.
the Duke of Mantua, in 1603, Rubens discovered that a case of paintings with
which he had been entrusted had become damaged by incessant rain during the
journey. Rubens wrote to Annibale Chieppio:

Thus the pictures which were packed with all possible care by my
own hand, in the presence of my Lord the Duke; then inspected at
Alicante, at the demand of the customs officials, and found
unharmed, were discovered today, in the house of Signor Hannibal
Iberti, to be so damaged and spoiled that I almost despair of being
able to restore them. For the injury is not an accidental surface
mold or stain, which can be removed; but the canvas itself is
entirely rotted and destroyed (even though it was protected by a tin
casing and a double oil-cloth and packed in a wooden chest). The
deterioration is probably due to the continuous rains which lasted
for twenty-five days--an incredible thing in Spain. The colors have
faded and, through long exposure to extreme dampness, have
swollen and flaked off, so that in many places the only remedy is to
scrape them off with a knife and lay them on anew.18

Rubens’s letter provides us with a wealth of information about the
transportation of paintings in the seventeenth century. He relates with some
surprise that it was possible for paintings to become severely weather-damaged
in a fairly short period of time. The Flemish artist also informs us that despite
profound damage, a painter of sufficient skill could restore seriously damaged
works to a presentable condition. Rubens’s description of the damaged paintings
he shipped strongly resembles witness accounts of the condition of the ruined
works from Zurbarán’s ill-fated 1636 consignment.

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18 Magurn, ed. The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens.: 32.
Rubens’s letter, although illuminating, does not bring us much closer to understanding whether Mirafuentes was a victim of circumstances or intentionally behaved dishonestly when he handed the paintings to a different agent on his arrival in Portobello. It seems clear, however, that Mirafuentes did not honor his agreement with Zurbarán.

Although the testimony of the witnesses in Mirafuentes’s defense has not been found, the questions put to these witnesses were revealed by Palomero in 1990 and these are instructive for the study of the transatlantic art trade. In the six questions presented to Mirafuentes’s witnesses, a slightly different narrative of the 1636 journey is presented. In question two witnesses are asked to confirm if they know that having carried the said pictures to the city of Portobelo the said don Diego could not sell them there, and for this reason delivered them to the said Andrés de Yrruin, boxed and very well prepared he carried them to Peru, to the city of Lima, in two cases, one number 60 and the other number 65--and the witnesses know it from having seen it to be and to happen so...

With this question it appears that Mirafuentes argued that he had no success selling the works in Portobelo and that as a result of this failure he gave the paintings to a different agent than the one specified by Zurbarán. It is not

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19 “si saben que haviendo llevado las dichas pinturas a la ciudad de Puertovelo el dicho don Diego no las pudo vender allí, y por esta causa las entregó al dicho Andrés de Yrruin, el cual encajonadas y muy bien acondicionadas las llevó al Pirú, a la ciudad de Lima, en dos cajones, el uno núm 60 y el otro núm 65 = Y lo saben los testigos por haverlo visto ser y passar así y tener de ello muy entera noticia y haverse hallado presentes a ello, digan verdad.” In Jesús Palomero Páramo, “Notas sobre el taller de Zurbarán: Un envío de lienzos a Portobelo y Lima,” in Extremadura en la Evangelización del Nuevo Mundo, ed. Sebastián García (Guadalupe: Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario and Turner Libros, 1990): 330.
known why the captain did this. Perhaps if the crossing was as stormy as
testimony suggests, their arrival at Portobelo was delayed and Mirafuentes was
unable to find Velasco.

Next witnesses were asked “if they know that having arrived at Lima the
said cases were opened and that the canvases of the said pictures...seemed to be
rotted and of no benefit.” After this witnesses were asked whether the damage
could have been caused by having traveled in the South Sea and that “it is very
ordinary for the painted cloth of paintings to become corrupted and rotted
without being dunked nor having another accident of some sort, but more due to
the climate of the South Seas.” Although here we are seeing the defense of an
Atlantic captain who has been accused of negligence, it is worth considering
whether the very long journey against the wind in the South Sea contributed to
the loss of paintings due to an extended exposure to dampness or humidity. The
evidence from Rubens’s letter in which he describes the rotting of his paintings
over the course of twenty-five rainy days in Spain suggests that wrapping
paintings in cloth and packing them in wooden chests or cases that were not
airtight probably caused many paintings to rot because once moisture was
introduced into the container it had no way to evaporate or drain. Unlike the

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20 “si saben que haviendo llegado a Lima se abrieron los dichos cajones y los lienzos de las dichas
pinturas...parecieron estar podridos y de ningún provecho...” Ibid.: 330.

21 “...es muy ordinario la ropa de pintura en lienzos corrompore y pudrirse sin mojarse ni tener
otro accidente alguno, mas de la misma calidad del clima de el dicho mar de el Sur...” Ibid. 330.
galleons that sailed the Atlantic, the ships that navigated the South Sea were flat-bottomed ships and cargo was held on deck rather than below decks. This would undoubtedly expose the packing cases to more moisture and could contribute to the loss of works on this leg of the journey. This theory could be supported by question five from Mirafuentes’s case in which witnesses were asked to confirm whether

they know that...almost all the painting on canvas that was carried that year and navigated from Portobelo to Peru, being good and without corruption in Portobelo, upon having navigated the South Sea and arrived, appeared there carrying the same damage and putrefaction to their owners.22

Lastly, Mirafuentes’s witnesses are asked to vouch for the agent to whom the captain had given the paintings by saying:

if they know that the said Andrés de Yrurin is, and always has been a person of great care, diligence and experience in this matter and in the charge of property always gives a good account of it and has been two times Master of Silver and has been Encomendero as he was that trip, so the witnesses say certainly and without doubt, that the said damage and putrefaction results from the said fortuitous

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22 “si saben que...casi toda la pintura en lienzo que se llevó aquel año y navegó de Puertovelo al Pirú, estando buena y sin corrupción alguna en Puertovelo, sólo por haber navegado y passado el dicho mar de el Sur, padeció el mismo daño y pudrición llevándola sus dueños” Ibid. 330.
case and quality of sea and navigation and not of any fault, nor lack of diligence of the said Miguel [sic] de Yrurin. 23

It appears that Mirafuentes, despite his attempt to shift the time and location of the damage suffered by the paintings to the South Seas leg of the journey and therefore to disassociate himself from it, sought simultaneously to absolve Yrurin from any fault in the incident. Why might a captain attempt to tread such a fine line in this action? Without further information one cannot reach a firm conclusion. However, it seems likely that an individual as important as Yrurin would have been in the overseas trade was not a person from whom Mirafuentes would care to alienate himself. By stressing the experience and responsibility of his receiver and focusing on the weather conditions in the South Seas that year, Mirafuentes presumably attempts to evade or contradict the charge of negligence in the testimony provided by Francisco López. If López’s testimony is accurate, it would still be possible for the paintings to reach Portobelo undamaged although wet from being hung around the deck of the ship and then to have

23 “si saben que el dicho Andrés de Yrurin es y siempre ha sido persona de muy gran cuidado, diligencia y experiencia en esta materia y en el encargarse de hacienda agena y dar siempre buena cuenta de ella y la ha dado por dos veces que fue Maestre de plata y otras que ha sido Encomendero, como lo fue aquel viaje, y así tienen por cierto y sin duda los testigos, que el dicho daño y pudrición resultó de el dicho caso fortuito y calidad de mar y navegación y no de culpa alguna, ni falta de diligencia de el dicho Miguel de Yrurin...” Palomero offers no explanation as to why the agent is referred to as Andrés de Yrurin everywhere except for the last reference here. There are many reasons why the name Miguel de Yrurin could occur at this point including clerical error. The context of the document suggests that Miguel and Andrés are the same person. Ibid. 330.
rotted due to being repacked wet and shipped for a journey of another two and a half months.

To return to the chronology, sometime in 1637 Mirafuentes returned to Seville and told Zurbarán that he had delivered the artist’s paintings according to the terms of their agreement. On January 16, 1638 Zurbarán wrote a letter to his new son in law, José Gassó, promising to pay the remainder of his daughter María’s dowry “when the galleons return” from the Americas. The artist used the same phrase in a letter to lawyer Baltasar Barrera on March 22, 1639. Later that spring, Zurbarán signed a power of attorney with Antonio de Velasco instructing the merchant to collect the sums owed to him from the sale of paintings given to Mirafuentes. On April 29, 1638 Mirafuentes sailed again for the New World and did not return until July 17, 1639, bringing Velasco back to Seville on his ship. Zurbarán requested his money from Velasco and the merchant reported that Mirafuentes never gave him any money or paintings, whereupon the painter filed his lawsuit against Mirafuentes. The lawsuit was not heard until March 1640.

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25 Guinard, Ibid. 50.

26 Palomero Páramo. 316. Documents pertaining to these trips are in the Archivo General de Indias, Contratación, 2,900. Libro 1 donde se escriven y asientan los registros de as naos que se despachen para las Yndias así desta ciudad de Sevilla y Puerto de Sanlúcar, como de la de Cadiz y otras partes en los años 1627 a 1658. Folio 181v.
While the outcome of the lawsuit is not recorded, the dates provided by these documents give us a rough timetable for how long it took from the delivery of paintings to an agent traveling overseas to the time that a painter could reasonably expect to receive his payment. Since Zurbarán appears to have believed Mirafuentes would pay him up until the time of his return in 1639, it seems a reasonable conclusion that Sevillian artists who participated in the overseas market might expect to wait as much as two years to receive payment.

The conventional interpretation of the documentation of shipments from Sevillian artists to destinations in the Americas is that these artists shipped vast numbers of paintings across the ocean apparently without a buyer at the other end. If what Mirafuentes claimed was true, that an artist could earn three times his usual fee for paintings sent to the Americas, then this seems a perfectly reasonable theory. Sevillian artists were accustomed to sending works to fairs within Spain for sale on speculation, so it probably did not seem an odd business decision to ship works to Latin American fairs. Convents, monasteries and private individuals residing in Lima also commissioned art of course, but the success of the undertaking for the Sevillian artist would depend upon employing a trustworthy agent, regardless of whether the works being shipped were commissioned or not. We know that there was a great demand for religious art in Lima and other cities in the New World, and we know that patrons were
suspicious of the ability of indigenous artists to produce iconographically acceptable works; therefore it is not surprising that patrons would turn to Sevillian artists to supply their need for images. Paintings attributed to Zurbarán and Juan de Valdés Leal as well as sculptures by Juan Martínez Montañés have all been found in the former viceroyalty of Peru or are documented as having been sent there.

Collectively these documents and works suggest that top-rank Sevillian artists participated in this market and that, contrary to long-held art historical beliefs, artists did not consider this a secondary market to that of Seville. These facts and inferences suggest that we should examine the mechanics of the overseas trade more closely. It is possible that some of the transactions that we know of only from receipts showing that a person received paintings from Sevillian artists or that the artists received payments from agents actually refer to commissioned works. The conditions of the overseas trade would require such receipts to be signed regardless of whether it was a commissioned work or a work sent on speculation, therefore we should not continue to assume all works referred to in these receipts were uncommissioned.

It is possible that if any of Zurbarán’s paintings survived from the 1636 shipment, they could have been the impetus for his 1646 commission for the nuns of the Limeñan convent of La Encarnación, in which his services were
requested by name. Indeed in the text of the commission the abbess requires Zurbarán to agree that “he will place the said work in a box and it in good condition and strapped for security...” suggesting that the abbess was aware that sometimes damage befell works of art in transit. As we will see, however, there is another transaction equally likely to have been the immediate stimulus for that commission.

It is significant that the artist received at least one commission from Lima and that four series of paintings believed to have come from the artist’s studio still survive today in monasteries and convents in that city. That these objects arrived at all is largely the work of the merchants and sea captains who undertook to deliver the works safely to that city. It is the role of such agents that has received the least scholarly attention in studies that examine the overseas art trade. Indeed it is possible that it was Zurbarán’s relationship with his agent Antonio de Fajardo, which will be discussed below, that influenced the extent of his involvement in the colonial art trade during the 1640’s, although this is not something that can be proven at this time. We can, however, see the consequences painters faced when they entrusted their works to less reliable agents.

In February 28, 1649, Felipe de Atiença Ybañez and Alvaro Gómez de Santa María signed a receipt in Buenos Aires saying that they had received a chest of paintings and painting materials from Captain Jorge de Castro and promising to sell the contents on Zurbarán’s behalf. This would have been a valuable shipment, containing paintings of: fifteen virgin martyrs, fifteen kings and “famous men,” twenty four saints and patriarchs and nine Flemish landscapes along with pigments and brushes. Unfortunately by September 1660 Zurbarán had not yet been paid for these items, and he gave his power of attorney to Martín Rico de Cazereta to collect the debt, for which Rico was expected to travel to Peru. The mission apparently failed, since Zurbarán gave another power of attorney to Captain Miguel de Tordera to collect the same debt in September 1662. It is unknown whether Zurbarán ever collected this debt.

Zurbarán was not alone among painters who had to empower agents to travel to the Americas to collect fees for them. The Sevillian painter Juan de Luzón, whose career appears to have been entirely devoted to the overseas art trade, also had difficulty collecting debts from New World patrons.


29 See note 27 above. A copy of the earlier transaction is preserved with this one, the original document has not been found.

30 See note 27 above.

November 8, 1653, Luzón contracted with an agent named Juan Bautista Ibarquen that Ibarquen would take 194 paintings to the New World and sell them on his behalf. By 1658 he had not been paid and made arrangements for two men to travel to Tierra Firme and collect the debt.\(^{32}\) This mission evidently failed and in 1659 another agent was engaged to attempt the same errand.\(^{33}\) Because the sum at stake was 10,768 reales it appears that it would have been worth these strenuous efforts. Ibarquen is listed as owing the painter 8,000 reales on another power of attorney dated 1660.\(^{34}\) It is unclear whether this is for the same transaction, although it seems hardly likely that a painter would entrust a shipment of such value to an agent who has such a large outstanding debt to him. These documents demonstrate not only the risk involved in shipping paintings to the New World, but also that a painter engaged in producing works for this market stood to make a great deal of money doing so. Indeed despite Luzón’s experiences with Ibarquen, the painter and his wife sent over five hundred additional paintings to Peru and New Spain between 1658 and 1663, when his widow sold the remaining contents of Luzón’s studio.

A feature of the documents surrounding the commission for La Encarnación is their unusually detailed nature. Among the details is the naming

\(^{32}\) Kinkead. 307.

\(^{33}\) Kinkead. 308.

\(^{34}\) Kinkead. 308.
of acceptable individuals who would be empowered to receive the paintings on behalf of the convent when they arrived in Portobello or Lima. One of the people named by the abbess in 1646 as an acceptable receiver was Antonio de Fajardo, a resident of Lima. The same name also appears on another document associated with Zurbarán’s other shipments to Lima. In the same week of May 1647 when Captain Valverde was seeking out Zurbarán on behalf of La Encarnación, the painter signed a receipt for 1,000 pesos received from Luis López de Chabura which was money that had been sent to him by Antonio de Fajardo of Lima “for all the paintings he has sold for me to date.” Based on the timetable of two years between shipment to expectation of payment suggested by the Mirafuentes lawsuit, we can guess that Zurbarán may have shipped a fairly large number of paintings to Lima that Fajardo had sold for him around 1645 or 1646. The subjects of these works are not discussed in the 1647 receipt, but according to scholars Francisco Stastny paintings of the founders of the various religious orders such as the St. Augustine (Fig. 2.1) and St. Francis of Assisi (Fig. 2.2) which presently reside in the monastery of La Buena Muerte in Lima date from about this time.

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Concepción in Lima contains works such as the St. Gabriel (Fig. 2.3) and St. Raphael (Fig. 2.4) which appear to have been partially painted by Zurbarán himself. These paintings have also been dated to approximately 1645.

Attributing the surviving works in Latin America that resemble Zurbarán’s style is an ongoing problem in Zurbarán studies. Scholars who have discussed the subject are divided in opinion on the level of Zurbarán’s participation and the quality of the surviving works varies widely, as does the condition. These are not simple problems to resolve although scientific examination could go some way toward shaping and focusing these questions. One possibility to consider is that if some works were damaged due to water and the length and conditions of the journey from Spain, perhaps painters in Lima were able to “scrape [the colors] off with a knife and lay them on anew” as Rubens did and perhaps this has added to the confusion in attribution. However, this is unlikely to be the

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37 See Stastny, 1988: 57. Benito Navarrette Prieto disagrees with this particular attribution, but has found other such works that he attributes to Zurbarán with his workshop and he agrees that several of the works at La Buena Muerte were produced with Zurbarán’s participation. See Benito Navarrete Prieto, and Odile Delenda, Zurbarán y su Obrador: Pinturas para el Nuevo Mundo (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 1998): 176-177. Junquera also studied the problem and believes that the surviving works were largely produced by followers of Zurbarán. See Juan José Junquera y Mato, “Zurbarán y América,” in Zurbarán Ante su Centenario (1598-1664), ed. Alonso E. Pérez Sanchez (Soria: Universidad de Valladolid and Fundación Duques de Soria, 1997): 140-143. Mariazza believes that several of the archangels at La Concepción relate closely to firmly attributed works, though he thinks these were painted by a follower. See Jaime Mariazza Foy, “Francisco Zurbarán y su Taller en la Pintura Colonial Peruana,” in Francisco de Zurbarán y su Obrador: Obras en España y en el Virreynato del Perú (Segovia: Caja Segovia Obra Social y Cultural, 2001), 56. Mariazza also attributes portions of the works from La Buena Muerte to Zurbarán. These are attributions based on connoisseurship.

38 Magurn, ed. The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens.: 32.
solution to all of the attribution problems. While this is a viable theory regarding the varied quality of some of the surviving paintings found in Peru, it does not explain the comparable variations in the quality of other works such as the sculptures sent to the Americas by Juan Martínez Montañés. We are still left with questions about whether Sevillian artists conceived of their overseas clients differently from buyers closer to home in Spain and perhaps reserved the work of assistants and apprentices for this distant market.

Conducting business over the vast distances between Seville and Latin America had its problems. Certainly the journey could be risky, but as the documents pertaining to the careers of Francisco de Zurbarán and Juan de Luzón show, it was potentially lucrative for artists who undertook the project. The key to success or failure appears to have resided with the agents who brought the paintings to Lima and returned the fees to the artists.
Chapter 3: Gender and Patronage in the Post-Tridentine World: La Encarnación and its Social Context

Zurbarán scholars have known about the artist’s large-scale commission for the Convent of La Encarnación in Lima, Peru, since a summary of the commission was published by Celestino López Martínez in 1932.¹ This summary provided a list of most of the works requested, which included ten scenes from the Life of the Virgin, twenty-four virgin martyr saints and two other paintings. Although this discovery confirmed Zurbarán’s participation in the overseas art trade, this commission has attracted little additional scholarly attention. This is most likely due to the complete loss of the church for which it is presumed the paintings were intended in a fire in April 1874. Zurbarán’s paintings are believed to have been lost either in this fire or in any of several severe earthquakes that struck Lima, particularly those of 1687 and 1746. None of these works has been identified among Zurbarán’s surviving paintings.

A reconsideration of this lost commission is now possible for several reasons. One is the publication in 1999 by Guillermo Lohmann Villena of a full transcription of the document López had summarized together with another

¹ Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la Historia del Arte: Desde Martínez Montañes Hasta Pedro Roldán (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932), 224.
document pertaining to the commission that he had found in an archive in Lima.\textsuperscript{2}

Lohmann’s transcription has provided a wealth of information for the examination of the commission and its language which features in the following chapter.

In the last ten or fifteen years, scholars have turned their attention to nuns as patrons in the Post-Tridentine world and the built environment of the convent world.\textsuperscript{3} A variety of these studies have provided the foundations upon which


this chapter’s consideration of the convent of La Encarnación is based. The spiritual life of the convent was tied to worldly property in the forms of land and financial transactions, and the religious rituals practiced there required a wide variety of material objects of which paintings are only one example. Therefore Zurbarán’s commission for these socially prominent nuns may be considered within these wider cultural contexts of the material culture, sociology and lives of convent women.

Any consideration of the patronage of nuns during the seventeenth century must first come to grips with the rules and limitations imposed upon

these women by two decrees from the Council of Trent (1545-63). Although it should be stressed that the Council is vital to understanding European history during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and to understanding the Spanish Empire in particular, it is not possible to do justice to the vast historiography on the subject here. It should be stressed that what follows here concerns a small section of the decrees of the Council, and this could create a false impression for

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the reader that the Council was primarily concerned with the enclosure of women religious or the content of religious images. This is not the case. The overwhelming majority of the canons and decrees which came out of Trent dealt with doctrinal issues in an effort on the part of the Catholic Church to define clearly the line between Protestant beliefs and those held to be sacred doctrine. It was only in the last session, which took place in December 1563, that matters concerning the enclosure of nuns and the Church’s stand on appropriate religious imagery were decided.

Full enclosure, that is the physical restriction of a religious woman behind the walls of a convent, of all women religious had been required since Pope Boniface VIII’s papal directive *Periculoso* of 1298. Because this requirement had not been carried out to the Church’s satisfaction, it was reiterated at Trent. The enforcement of both active and passive enclosure was considered a priority by Church officials throughout the Spanish Empire. Active enclosure was the physical separation of nuns from the outside world by limiting the conditions under which they could leave their convent, and by putting up physical barriers, such as convent walls, or bricking up windows or walkways to shield the nuns from public view. Passive enclosure pertained to preventing the outside world from entering the convent by regulating the circumstances under which nuns could receive visitors who did not reside within the convent. Visits from
outsiders for family or business purposes were to be closely monitored. Often a
special room called a locutorio or visiting parlor was built with the objective of
providing physical barriers such as curtains or grilles between visitors and nuns
and where these visits were supervised by one or more chaperones.7

The Council of Trent specified the conditions under which enclosure could
be broken and set out a few other rules pertaining to nuns. After a nun professed
she was forbidden to leave her convent without the permission of her superior or
bishop. No one who was not associated with the convent was permitted to enter
its walls without the written consent of the superior or bishop. Convents that
were located outside of city limits were to be relocated inside cities. Additionally
the Council decreed that it was illegal for anyone to force a woman to become a
nun against her will; nor could anyone prevent a person from professing as a
nun if she wished to do so. No one under the age of sixteen could profess and
candidates had to serve a novitiate of a year and be tested on their catechism by a
qualified individual before they could be accepted. Such decrees suggest that the
prelates and bishops at the Council understood that convents and the nuns
residing there, despite their cloistered status, were understood to be part of the
social and economic fabric of the communities in which they resided. Nuns’

success at commissioning art and conducting other types of business required

7 A particularly useful discussion of this may be found in Kathryn Burns, Colonial Habits: Convents
and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999),
101-105.
creative negotiation with the rules of active and passive enclosure and it is clear that this was accomplished.

Some of the rules imposed on nuns by the Council of Trent can be considered to have been intended to protect the nuns, although how strictly they were observed remains an open question. Requiring the relocation of convents from outside city limits to inside, for example, was ostensibly to protect them from robbery and other crimes that could result from their isolation. The age requirement and the statement that coercion either toward or against profession was illegal could serve to protect young women from family pressures. Such coercion could result from a number of causes. Family patriarchs might try to place daughters in convents if they had many children because presumably convent dowries would be lower in most cases than dowries required for marriage. Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt has argued persuasively against this long-standing belief.⁸ Lehfeldt reasons that family patriarchs who lived under Castilian law would be unlikely to force multiple daughters to enter convents on the grounds that the dowries would be less expensive. This is because ultimately both the dowry and the daughter’s percentage of family inheritance would be forever alienated from the family fortune.⁹ The second decree regarding

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profession is perhaps more relevant in Spain. The Church would still need to protect Spanish women from family pressures to marry for dynastic or monetary reasons if they wished to enter a convent instead.

For the purposes of discussing female monastic patronage the key question is that of total enclosure of female religious. A large amount of archival evidence has been collected in recent years that suggests that this rule was frequently broken or otherwise evaded, and it is worth considering this evidence. For example, Mary Elizabeth Perry’s studies of women in Seville were foundational to the study of Spanish religious women. Her research has also been crucial to social history in Spain; however, her methodology of the sociology of deviance and use of the records of criminal proceedings means that she focuses on the breaking of enclosure when she discusses the issue in her work. She offers significant findings, but they cannot provide meaningful

10 The value of historical data obtained of course depends on how it is interpreted. This was pointed out by John Boswell, The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), 3-49, 53-94 passim. In attempting to research the rates of abandonment of children during the Middle Ages, Boswell had to question published figures from archival research for a variety of reasons, including differing definitions of the word “abandonment” over time and anachronistic assumptions, such as the twentieth-century perception that “abandonment” and “exposure” inevitably meant death for the children placed in those situations. Boswell’s caution is equally applicable to studies of seventeenth-century convents.

statistical data of how often and under what conditions enclosure was broken and in what percentage of convents this occurred.

Regarding scholarship on Limeñan convents during the viceregal period, few works focus on them. The main work on Limeñan convents is Luis Martín’s *Daughters of the Conquistadors: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru*, but the majority of his evidence regarding the breaking of enclosure comes from the episcopal archive in Lima. Since this was the same type of legal source that Perry used, the same problems apply to the interpretation of his evidence. Added to this problem is Martín’s position as the first historian to examine the women of the viceroyalty and the size of his task. Martín is interested in finding out why Peruvian women were considered to be so transgressive by officials and visitors to the territory. Because of his interest in this question his text, although foundational, has a limited utility for a consideration of the nuns of La Encarnación and their patronage of Zurbarán, although he theorizes that the Peruvian economic boom influenced the ability of nuns to exercise great personal power and patronage. Martín writes:

> The great numbers of women with wealthy dowries who took refuge in the colonial nunneries were a constant worry to the administrators of the viceroyalty. Too much wealth was concentrated in the hands of the Peruvian nuns, and that wealth

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gave the consecrated virgins an independence and power hardly compatible with traditional Iberian monasticism. The luxury of their cells, the hundreds of servants and slaves, the ample gardens and orchards, the richness of cloisters and chapels revealed an affluence hardly to be found in the convents of Castile. That affluence made the Peruvian nun into a lady of independence and leisure, a world apart from the nuns described by Saint Theresa of Avila. Without their wealth, the Peruvian nuns could not have challenged with impunity the authority of bishops and viceroys.\textsuperscript{13}

While more recent scholarly works refute Martín’s claim that Castilian convents were not as wealthy and well-appointed as those he studied in Lima, nevertheless his work is important and valuable for its focus on Limeñan women as a worthy subject for scholarly study.

Another important issue that must be considered when discussing convents for which archival evidence exists and has been studied is that of class. It is perhaps arguable whether this is a problematic term for any consideration of seventeenth-century pre-industrial societies; nevertheless I employ it because it is the most accessible one to use. The vast majority of convents that have been studied, particularly in early modern Spain and Italy, have been elite establishments. In general these were well-financed institutions that had royal or aristocratic patronage as well as nuns who came from royal, aristocratic or socially prominent families. Both Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt’s and Magdalena S. Sánchez’s studies feature extensive use of archival evidence of convents that

received royal or aristocratic patronage and contained nuns who were born into these classes. One reason why studies of convents in Spain and other countries feature such elite establishments could be simply a matter of survival; that if a convent is well-backed financially, its church, cloister, art treasures and documentary records have a much better chance at surviving for many hundreds of years and for scholars to have access to this material evidence. The convent of La Encarnación in Lima is yet another elite establishment, but its convent complex has not survived, leaving only a limited number of documents for scholarly perusal. A part of my project in this chapter is to apply the findings about elite convents in other parts of the Spanish empire to what is known or can be deduced about La Encarnación.

While convents in the Spanish empire were important spiritual centers and this level of importance should not be minimized, they were also worldly institutions with quite worldly concerns. Convents required money to sustain them. They acquired these funds from a variety of sources. Endowments and donations from the outer world were embraced, but these often came with strings attached. Patrons who donated money to convents usually expected something in return for their money. This could be the building of a burial chapel for the use of a family with their escutcheon emblazoned on it, or the
saying of prayers in perpetuity for the soul of the patron.\textsuperscript{14} Oftentimes relatives of professed nuns might provide money for such things in addition to the dowry presented to the convent upon the nun’s profession and a yearly maintenance fee called \textit{alimentos} to provide for feeding and clothing the nun. So one can see how convents as a whole, despite the desires of higher church authorities to keep nuns sequestered from the world, had to maintain a more lenient attitude toward enclosure when it came to the families of their nuns who were often also patrons of the convent.

Other sources of income could come from loaning money to members of the community, the sale of produce from convent-owned lands, educating the daughters of upper class patrons or from convent-made goods such as textiles, embroidery or sweets. The services and products that nuns produced reveal the nature of the symbiotic relationship between convent and community, and it is clear that the enforcement of enclosure would be compromised from the start. Indeed the close relationship between convents and the communities within which they resided was most likely the reason why medieval convents had not been able to sustain these rules and Church officials felt that total enclosure for female religious had to be reiterated and enforced at the Council of Trent.

\textsuperscript{14} This has been noted in a variety of scholarly works on nuns including: Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, \textit{Religious Women in Golden Age Spain: The Permeable Cloister} (Aldershot, Hampshire Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2005), 12-13, 16, 30, 32, 43. and Ann Roberts, \textit{Dominican Women and Renaissance Art: The Convent of San Domenico of Pisa} (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 148, 213-225.
Most of the data that has been collected about Spanish convents concerns the extent of enforcement of enclosure by secular and religious authorities in large Iberian population centers such as Seville, Valladolid and Toledo.\textsuperscript{15} Data on early modern nuns and their environments also exists for the viceregal cities of Naples, Italy and Cuzco, Peru.\textsuperscript{16} To some degree these studies may be complemented by those which examine convents in Florence and Rome\textsuperscript{17} and


common trends are shared by convents in France and Germany\textsuperscript{18} from the Middle Ages through the seventeenth century. These studies confirm that there was a close relationship between convents and their communities in economic as well as social terms both before and after the Tridentine reforms and that strict obedience to total enclosure would have hampered these relationships that were necessary for the financial survival of the nuns.

It seems that the complete sequestration of nuns from the secular world was in practice impossible. The physical and visual separation of the bodies of the nuns from the world around them is often thought by scholars to have negatively affected their ability to attract charitable donations. In broad terms, without visibility in the wider community, nuns would not attract the charitable donations necessary for the upkeep of convent structures, and to feed and clothe nuns and servants or attract novices to profess. Although the prevailing view seems to be that literal visibility of some type was necessary for nuns to attract and keep patronage, Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt has recently argued that in some ways

it was enclosure itself that attracted certain types of patronage.\textsuperscript{19} For example, the prayers of chaste and cloistered women were considered more valuable and effective than the prayers of secular individuals.\textsuperscript{20} Helen Hills has argued that the sight of the high walls, thick doors and iron grilles enclosing convent complexes served as reminders to the secular world that such prayerful activities were being undertaken on their behalf.\textsuperscript{21} One may assume that some form of visibility was necessary for maintaining patronage, depending on how one defines the term visibility, and that a convent had to present a face to the community in which it resided. However, it is not necessary to assume that if total enclosure was observed, the nuns would always lack visibility. Because portions of convent churches were open to the public, nuns had a stage set on which they could interact with the community through the art and architecture they commissioned. Indeed, Lehfeldt has suggested that convents may have needed to commission and pay for highly visible signs of their financial solvency, such as altarpieces, in order to attract necessary secular patronage.\textsuperscript{22}


\textsuperscript{20} Lehfeldt, 2005, 12-13.


On the question of inheritances and dowries, women’s legal rights differed in Spain from those in Italy. Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., has theorized that dowry funds in Italy between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries were considered by men to be “an investment in the perpetuation of male bloodlines” and were to serve to perpetuate memory. Cohn observed that generally men left dowry funds for marriage, while women left dowry funds specifically for joining convents or left the choice of marriage or convent up to the recipient.

In general, because of the differences between the legal rights of women who fell under Castillian law and those who fell under regional Italian laws, one sees a greater level of female patronage of convents in Spain. Stephanie Fink De Backer has found that in Toledo, noble and middle-class widows left bequests that founded convents and monasteries. These women also provided dowries to poor girls, often leaving the option open for these girls to use the dowries either to enter marriage or to enter a convent. In the case of Doña Blanca de la Cerda, a member of the nobility, in addition to paying for the expansion of a Dominican Monastery in Toledo, she imposed conditions that the monks who resided there

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24 Cohn Jr., 1996, 93.

provide burial space for her family and pray and say masses on her behalf. She also made other provisions for charitable dowry funds and education funds for orphaned young Toledan women and men with some to be held in reserve for her descendants. Such benefactors were vital particularly for female religious communities, which could receive fewer donations than male communities who could provide the service of saying masses for patrons. Patrons who invested a great deal in convents were viewed with suspicion by church authorities who saw the potential pitfall of divided loyalties, of conflict between worldly influences and church requirements.

On occasions when convents moved, they often lost their endowments. Indeed, as Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt noted, sometimes convents were ordered to relocate for the express reason of separating the nuns from the influence of their patrons in a particular locality. When nuns left their local environment, in which acts of exchange had been established, for a new location where they might find themselves in competition with other convents for patronage, there was a danger of privation. Such was the case in the New World for the convent of Santa Catalina when the nuns relocated from Arequipa to Cuzco in the wake of an earthquake that destroyed the convent as well as the local economy of

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Arequipa. In early 1605 the nuns of Santa Catalina made a three-day journey on foot to Cuzco to establish a new convent, but cut off from their earlier donors, they struggled for some time to set up new networks of exchange in a city that already had an established convent. Fifty years after their arrival, the nuns of Santa Catalina were still considered foreigners.

Such details are important because they remind us that patronage of convents and convents’ patronage of the arts during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were highly localized economic and social phenomena that Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt has aptly termed “microclimates.” In her studies on convents in Valladolid, Lehfeldt has noted that the reforms of Trent were often interpreted through a given locality’s experience with previous reform movements. Some reforms relating to physical enclosure were localized to the particular buildings in question. For example, Lehfeldt cited cases in which nuns had to make changes to their own buildings because a neighboring palace

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30 Burns, 1999, Chapter 3.


32 Lehfeldt, 1999, 1010.
overlooked the nuns’ cloister or garden.\textsuperscript{33} Windows and doors were bricked up or obstructed with grilles, and conversations with visitors were monitored.\textsuperscript{34} The vigilant guarding of the apertures in the convent wall seems to have been viewed as equivalent to guarding the chastity of the nuns and the honor of the Church.

Kathryn Burns has coined the term “spiritual economy” to describe the acts of exchange between convents and communities. Burns reports that convents in Cuzco often loaned money to secular individuals and exchanged prayers for money.\textsuperscript{35} Nuns even spoke of such worldly activities in religious-sounding terminology. Seizing collateral from a debtor for example was referred to as “spiritualizing” the property.\textsuperscript{36} Individuals might be performing spiritual acts expressed in economic terms or economic exchanges expressed in spiritual terms. The research of Burns, Lehfeldt and others plainly suggests that we oversimplify such relationships at the expense of our understanding of the true role of early modern nuns in their societies.

In her studies of early modern Seville, Mary Elizabeth Perry suggests that Sevillians believed that major social disorder would result if women’s bodies

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{34} Lehfeldt, 2003, 132-39.

\textsuperscript{35} Kathryn Burns, Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), 3-6, 82-87.

\textsuperscript{36} Burns, 1999, 3.
\end{footnotesize}
were not subjected to enclosure, whether in the convent or in marriage.\textsuperscript{37}

However, when local economies were under stress, the removal of nuns from visibility could result in serious financial consequences. To compensate for the loss of patronage that could be among the consequences suffered, convents would begin to require larger dowries. This effectively priced out many potential novices and this in turn could result in a further loss of connection to community and of patronage.

This self-perpetuating spiral was among the problems faced by women in Seville. The economic microclimate of Seville became increasingly stressed from the late sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth centuries as the city’s population doubled.\textsuperscript{38} As more convents and monasteries were endowed in the city, donations decreased as the population’s patronage choices became more dispersed.\textsuperscript{39} The enforcement of full enclosure in Seville meant that beatas, holy


\textsuperscript{39} Perry, \textit{Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville}. Chapter 5.
women who were not attached to a particular order and who often begged on behalf of convents, were forced to comply with enclosure and to abide by the rule of a recognized order.\textsuperscript{40} To compensate for this lost income, nuns began to weave and sell textiles, but this put them in direct conflict with moriscos who resorted to the same means of making money. In any case weaving was of limited utility at this time when domestic textiles were in decline in favor of imports from France.\textsuperscript{41}

The evidence from these Spanish cities suggests nuns both complied voluntarily with the requirements of enclosure while simultaneously seeking to find ways of subverting rules when they needed to ensure their economic and social survival. The archival evidence collected by Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, Saundra Weddle, Marilyn Dunn, Helen Hills and Ann Roberts in their specific case studies suggests that convent architecture and decoration formed a complex

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\textsuperscript{40} Perry, *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville*. 101.

locus of identity for the nuns who commissioned such works. Enclosed within convents, individual nuns may have been rendered essentially voiceless and invisible to the world outside the gates, but evidence suggests that they had a type of collective voice through their patronage. Convent architecture and decoration were means by which nuns could express their compliance with Church regulations, while acknowledging social, economic and familial relationships that remained part of their identities even after their profession.

The Convent of La Encarnación in Lima

La Encarnación was the first convent to be founded in Lima. Established initially as a collection of Augustinian *beatas* in 1558, in 1561 it was relocated to its final site, just a few blocks from the city’s main plaza. A victim of

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nineteenth-century convent reform, no vestige of the convent exists today and its site is presently occupied by the Plaza of San Martín. Its founders, doña Leonor Portocarrero and her daughter doña Mencía de Sosa, were two widows from the cream of Limeñan society. From the start this was an establishment for socially prominent Spanish women and criollas (women who were born in the Americas, but whose parents were ethnically Spanish).

Although La Encarnación arrived at its permanent site in 1561, by 1577 construction of the convent complex had stalled due to lack of funds. According to a royal decree passed on June 15, 1555, convents and monasteries could be built throughout Peru at the expense of the Real Hacienda. This was part of a wider program launched by Philip II to ensure that the churches, convents and monasteries founded throughout his New World realms could be built and properly fitted out with the decorative and practical objects that church liturgy required. Later the decree was clarified, stating that the Real Hacienda would absorb only initial building costs, not costs for later repairs or expansions. No

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45 Harold Wethey reported that following the devastation of the 1940 the abandoned remains of the convent complex were razed in 1944. See Harold E. Wethey, Colonial Architecture and Sculpture in Peru (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), 273.

46 Jorge Bernales Ballesteros, Lima, la Ciudad y sus Monumentos (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1972), 83.

47 See also Beatrice Gilman Proske, Juan Martínez Montañés: Sevillian Sculptor (New York: The Hispanic Society of America, 1967), 26-30. Martínez Montañés was commissioned by Philip II to provide 51 tabernacles that would be sent to various locations in the New World. None are known to have survived.
doubt the royal coffers had difficulty supporting the numbers of funding requests with which they were presented. Founding abbess of La Encarnación, doña Leonor de Portocarrero appealed to Philip II for financial assistance, saying “we are making a church that we cannot finish, nor can we begin...if Your Majesty does not recall that it is Your chapel.”

The total amount the abbess requested was 15,000 *pesos* and included costs for building the church, main altar, grilles to shield the nuns from the gaze of the public, and an elaborately carved wooden ceiling covering called an *artesonado*. It is unknown if any funds were dispensed by the Crown. Some portion of the construction costs were met by a professed nun, Sor Leonor de Arteaga, who provided money to complete these projects. Both the tone of the letter from doña Leonor de Portocarrero to the King and the money granted by Sor Leonor de Arteaga to complete the building of the convent complex suggest that the women who resided in this convent felt entitled to remind royalty of their obligations and that they were endowed with a

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48 “vamos haciendo una iglesia que ni se podrá acabar ni la casa comenzar si V. M. no se acuerda que es capilla suya.” The letter is quoted in Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 85.

49 The *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, defines an *artesonado* as a “ceiling, armature or vault formed with *artesonos* of wood, stone or other materials.” An *artesón* is defined as an “element used in construction that is polygonal, concave, molded and with adornments that disposed in series constitutes the *artesonado*.“ *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, s.vv. “artesonado,” and “artesón,” http://buscon.rae.es/draeI/ (accessed March 11, 2009). “artesonado: techo, armadura o bóveda formado con artesones de madera, piedra u otros materiales.” “artesón: elemento constructivo poligonal, cóncavo, moldurado y con adornos, que dispuesto en serie constituye el artesonado.”

50 Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 85.
certain amount of personal wealth, despite leaving the secular world to enter a convent.

The convent church was finished sometime before the first decade of the seventeenth century when the Dominican chronicler Reginaldo de Lizárraga informed us that it was an average building and that its chief attraction was the beautiful music performed by the nuns of the convent.\footnote{Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 85.} Lizárraga described a lower level nuns’ choir enclosed by a dense wooden grille underneath the “lateral facade” and mentioned a large belfry that rose over the main facade of the building.\footnote{Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 85-86.} The bell tower is visible in the view of La Encarnación that can be seen on the city plan that was published in Jorge Juan and Antonio Ulloa’s travel narrative in 1748 (Fig. 3.1). The city plan was based on notes taken during a trip to the city in late 1746 which was undertaken after the devastating earthquake that hit Lima in October of that year. This suggests that the convent church of La Encarnación survived this catastrophic event. The viceregal government commissioned a study of the damage of the earthquake of 1746 and reported that the only damage suffered by La Encarnación was the cracking of the church’s
cupola and the destruction of its perimeter walls. The damage to the cupola was probably minor since it was not repaired until 1791.

The view of La Encarnación that appears in the Ulloa travel narrative is the closest surviving visual evidence of what the convent complex looked like when Zurbarán was commissioned to provide his thirty-six paintings for the church. The plan is oriented upside-down when compared with present-day maps; therefore the church appears on the north corner of the convent complex, although to modern eyes it appears that this would be the south corner. Despite having been drawn a hundred years after Zurbarán’s commission, the Ulloa plan shows us a mudéjar style church, which was the usual model for monastic churches in Lima in the early seventeenth century. This was a basilica-style church with a peaked roof. No side aisles are visible in the plan, but a row of clerestory windows are clearly visible on what must be Lizárraga’s “lateral facade,” which opens onto the convent’s square located just north of the convent. The main facade with the bell tower faces a side street. I will return to the architectural features of this building when I discuss the reconstruction of the Zurbarán commission below.

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53 Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 299.

54 Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 299.
The other buildings of the convent dated from 1622-25 when an infirmary, grand cloister, a small cloister, and a sacristy were under construction.\textsuperscript{55} At that time the nuns again beseeched the royal treasury for 3,000 pesos to complete these works.\textsuperscript{56} In the course of this building program the nuns of La Encarnación undertook in the early part of the seventeenth century, the first evidence that the nuns would look to Seville to provide some of the practical and decorative objects they required for their church. In 1610 the nuns conferred their power of attorney on Captain Juan de la Fuente Almonte to ship to Lima a \textit{reja}, an elaborate iron choir screen, that had been bought in Seville at a cost of 1,000 pesos.\textsuperscript{57} This \textit{reja} may not have found its way to them because in 1616 another iron grille was ordered that was installed in front of the lower choir in the church.\textsuperscript{58}

By 1643 the original \textit{artesonado} ceiling had decayed from humidity and had to be replaced.\textsuperscript{59} An artisan named Diego de Medina was commissioned to rebuild it. That work was completed in 1645 and Medina was paid 1,000 pesos

\textsuperscript{55} AGI: Audéncia de Lima, Leg. 328 discussed in Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 163.

\textsuperscript{56} Bernales Ballesteros, 1972, 163.


\textsuperscript{58} AGN: Protocolo de Juan de Valenzuela, 1616-1617 (1929), fol. 75. Discussed in Lohmann Villena, 1999, 173.

\textsuperscript{59} The humidity experienced in the city of Lima is legendary and is mentioned in nearly every travel narrative that discusses the city.
and granted the right to profess his daughter Luísa in the convent without providing a dowry. Some idea of the potential value of waiving the dowry may be indicated by Luis Martín’s archival research through which he found that the average black veil dowry in Lima during the seventeenth century was between 2,000 and 2,500 pesos.\(^6\) Obviously if the artisan’s daughter professed at a lower level, as a nun of the white veil for example, her dowry would have been smaller.

Life inside the convent of La Encarnación was as socially stratified as the secular city outside its walls. Early chroniclers inform us that La Encarnación itself was considered almost a city. According to Bernabé Cobo, whose account was published in 1639:

In grandeur of site this convent takes the lead of all others for nuns in this city because it occupies an island of two and a half city blocks in length within which is such a quantity of edifices that it seems a planned town, and in truth it is, since enclosed within its walls live 700 souls. 300 are nuns with novices, sisters and donadas; and 400 are servants, slaves and secular girls who grow up within until coming of age.\(^6\)

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\(^6\) “En grandeza de sitio hace ventaja este monasterio a todos los otros de monjas de esta ciudad, porque coge una isla de dos cuadras y media en largo, dentro de la cual es tanta cantidad de edificios que hay, que parace un pueblo formado, y en hecho de verdad lo es, pues viven encerradas dentro de él setecientas almas; las trescientas son monjas con las novicias, hermanas y donadas; y las cuatrocientas criadas y esclavas y las doncellas seglares que se crián dentro hasta tomar estado.” Bernabé Cobo, “Fundación de Lima,” in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles desde la Formación del Lenguaje hasta Nuestros Días*, ed. Francisco Mateos (Madrid: Real Academia Española and Atlas, 1956), 429.
Many of the edifices to which Cobo refers were individual cells called *celdas-casitas* by Serrera and Figallo, or “cottage cells,” which were private living quarters for nuns, built and used by the most elite of the nuns together with the slaves or servants that they brought with them into the convent.\(^{62}\) The *donadas* to which Cobo refers were nuns who had entered the convent with a dowry that had been donated by a confraternity or other benefactor.\(^{63}\) *Donadas* were unlikely to have been able to afford the construction of an elaborate private residence and it is significant that the charitable source of their dowry became their chief identifying feature to early chroniclers who discussed convents.

Oftentimes these private cells were paid for and constructed by the family of a nun and this was a cost the family absorbed over and above the dowry, which was an expense that could vary widely depending on the level at which a nun professed.


\(^{63}\) The term *donada* is not a simple one to define. Covarrubias defines it as follows under the masculine *donado.* “a lay person admitted into the religious foundation for service to the house. These individuals are free to make a different type of profession from monastic religious.” “El lego admitido en la religión para el servicio de la casa. Estos suelen hacer una manera de profesión diferente de los religiosos conventuales.” See Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o Española.* (Madrid: Nueva Biblioteca de Erudición y Crítica, 1994), 439. All of the examples I have thus far seen of Peruvian convents during the viceregal period appear to have required a dowry of their *donadas.* Whether their professions were different from the nuns of the convents is unknown.
According to Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, by the period of 1615-19 when he was traveling through Peru, these private cottage-cells had grown quite numerous at La Encarnación. He wrote, “the convent is well built and the site is so grand that if a maid escapes from her mistress, many days can pass by before she is found, because [the convent] has streets and neighborhoods like a town, made up of cells so perfect they resemble a house with full complements and services....”64

Luis Martín has studied social conditions in the convents of Lima and has found that there was a great deal of class-based separation between the various levels of profession available to the women who entered one of the city’s elite convents.65 Women who became nuns of the black veil paid the highest dowry

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64 “la casa está bien fabricada y el sitio es tan grande que si una criada se huye de su ama pasan muchos días sin hallarla, porque tiene calles y barrios como un pueblo, de celdas tan cabales como una casa con todos sus cumplimientos y oficinas....” Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, Compendio y Descripción de las Indias Occidentales. (c. 1620) quoted in Serrera and Figallo, 1990, 304.

65 Luis Martín, Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), Chapters 5, 7-9. Martín’s book remains the key source on nuns in Lima in the viceregal period. Unfortunately Martín confused some of the historical events concerning La Encarnación, such as the date of its foundation, with the historical events concerning the convent of La Concepción. This error can be verified from early sources. La Concepción was the second-oldest convent for women in the city and was also an institution for socially prominent women. Wherever possible I have verified the historical events described by Martín with other earlier sources such as that of Bernabé Cobo. Some of the later events that Martín discusses come from his archival research and have not yet been published elsewhere. In these cases I follow Martín’s lead in repeating the identities of the convents as he wrote them. In some ways the specific identity of the convent in which a particular event occurred matters little because both institutions were elite, equally well-financed, populated by the same types of women and they shared the same problems; therefore as evidence for the social aspects of this dissertation they can be considered almost interchangeable. Martín published a Spanish-language version of his text in 2000 that repeats the same error. See Luis Martín, Las Hijas de los Conquistadores: Mujeres de Virreinato del Perú (Barcelona: Editorial Casiopea, 2000), Chapters 5, 7-9.
upon entrance and occupied the highest level in the convent hierarchy with the right to participate in the governance of the convent through voting in convent elections. Only nuns of the black veil could run for these offices and sing in the choir. They were also exempted from menial labor and from sleeping in dormitories. These nuns were usually among the wealthiest and were certainly the most powerful women in the community.66

Occupying the next rung were the nuns of the white veil who were usually of Spanish or criollo descent, but could be mestizas. They performed housekeeping chores and supervised the donadas. Despite the likelihood that the only thing separating them from entry as a nun of the black veil could be the ability to pay the larger dowry or a lack of sufficient education, their status within the convent was dramatically lower than that of the nuns of the black veil. It is notable that these nuns were not given the honorific title of Doña.67

The donadas endured the limitations of the convent life, while receiving few of the benefits. Although required to serve a novitiate and observe the rules


67 Documents forming the basis of this summary were found by Martín in the AAL under the entries for the convents of La Encarnación, La Concepción and La Trinidad. See Martín, 1983, 184-85, 323.
of the order, they could not take vows.\textsuperscript{68} Although they ranked above servants and slaves in the convent hierarchy, they shared the less desirable chores with them. At times it appears that \textit{donadas} were expected to provide a dowry for their entrance into the convent and other times, no dowry was required.

Some notion of the differences between the different levels at which a woman could enter a convent may be provided by an eighteenth-century account that reveals the dowries expected of entrants to the convent of Santa Clara la Real in Trujillo, Peru. Miguel Feijóo de Sosa reported in his travel narrative that, “The nuns of the black veil take in endowment when they enter 2,600 pesos, those of the white veil 1,500 and the \textit{donadas} 200 pesos, would be for the cost of the cells in which they live.”\textsuperscript{69} As stated above, regarding seventeenth-century Lima, Luis Martín found that the dowry for a nun of the black veil could vary from 2,000 to 2,500 pesos depending on the convent a woman wished to enter. Martín cites one seventeenth-century example for a nun of the white veil who paid a dowry of 800 pesos.\textsuperscript{70} Kathryn Burns found that in the convent of Santa Catalina de Sena in Cuzco, a black veil dowry by the mid-seventeenth century stood at 3,312


pesos, 4 reales while a white veil dowry was half that amount.\textsuperscript{71} Donadas usually paid 500 pesos there.\textsuperscript{72}

Although servants and slaves performed the hardest labor in the convent and occupied the lowest rung in the hierarchy, they were the servants or property of particular nuns and therefore they were not bound to the rules of the order, nor to enclosure.\textsuperscript{73} Nevertheless they had little power in the convent.

When Doña Ana de Frias, a troubled nun of the black veil in the convent of La Encarnación, was incarcerated in the convent’s jail for assaulting and severely wounding the slave of another nun, she protested her incarceration on the grounds that several other nuns had let men into the convent and gone unpunished while she in her opinion had committed a far lesser crime by only injuring a slave.\textsuperscript{74} This story suggests that the social problems of the economically stratified and racially diverse capital city did not stop at the convent gates.

One problem that La Encarnación was not unique in facing was the conflict between the private or communal ownership of nuns’ property,

\textsuperscript{71} Kathryn Burns, \textit{Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru} (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), 119, 258. Burns’s figures come from the \textit{Libro de Profesiones} in the private archive of the convent of Santa Catalina de Sena in Cuzco.

\textsuperscript{72} Burns, 1999, 119, 258.

\textsuperscript{73} Martín, 1983, 187-89.

\textsuperscript{74} AAL: Monasterio de La Encarnación, Expedientes 1605-25, Legajo 1, “Autos contra Doña Ana de Frías...” the story is summarized in Martín, 1983, 210-211.
including the question of cottage-cells. The practice of building private cottage-cells in which nuns of the black veil lived with a retinue of servants, slaves, and occasionally other relatives residing in the convent was in conflict with the expectation that nuns were to give up personal property when they professed. This was not a simple conflict because although the monastic orders expected nuns to give up personal ownership of property and to allow their property to be held in community with the convent, Castilian law itself provided for women’s ownership of property regardless of their marital status or their status as a professed nun. As I have stated earlier, dowries, whether for marriage or convent, were the legal property of women although they were administered by a husband or the convent to which a woman professed.\footnote{See Eugene H. Korth, and Della Flusche, “Dowry and Inheritance in Colonial Spanish America,” *The Americas* 43, No. 4 (1987): 395-410. Stephanie Fink De Backer also discusses the legal rights of women, particularly widows in Stephanie Fink De Backer, “Constructing Convents in Sixteenth-Century Castile: Toledan Widows and Patterns of Patronage,” in *Widowhood and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Allison Levy (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2003), particularly 177-182.} Dowries were also often a portion of a woman’s eventual inheritance and were doubly protected by the laws concerning the ability of women to inherit property. It is possible then, that when families built cells for certain nuns to occupy, these nuns and their families viewed them as their own or at least as family property rather than communal property that was theoretically available to the convent as a whole.

This had the potential to raise thorny issues when the nun for whom a particular
cell had been built died. If the cottage-cell and any slaves or servants a nun had brought with her were her personal property, then these could be inherited by her surviving family members. At the convent of La Encarnación it appears that in practice cottage-cells often did not pass to the convent community but would remain in use by members of the family that had originally built them. In the early seventeenth century the bishop of Lima was called upon to settle a dispute over which of two nuns from the Pizarro family would be permitted to occupy the cottage-cell of a recently-deceased family member. The abbess had granted permission for a newly-professed nun to take possession, but her aunt had installed herself in the cell with friends and refused to leave. The bishop eventually settled the matter, backing the abbess’s decision, after examining ownership titles.76 While in this case the occupancy of a vacant cottage-cell was nominally directed by the abbess with the support of legal documentation, in some cases we have nuns’ wills in which they bequeathed their cells, dowries, other possessions and future inheritances to particular individuals.77 At times

76 Luis Martín, Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 197-98. Martín does not cite, quote or transcribe the specific location of the document in this case although it would reside in the AAL.

77 Martín, 1983, 266. See also Gabriela Signori, “Wanderers Between Worlds: Visitors, Letters, Wills, and Gifts as Means of Communication in Exchanges Between Cloister and the World,” in Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, and Susan Marti (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 259-74. Although Signori’s article discusses the wills of nuns in convents located around Essen during the Middle Ages, there is every evidence that convents throughout the Spanish empire held propertied women who felt free to will their possessions to specific individuals.
nuns chose to leave their money to the convent, directing which particular projects or expenses they wished the funds to cover. It is not known whether such wills were always honored, but their existence suggests that nuns had reason to believe that their wishes would be considered.

All indications are that the convent of La Encarnación and its black veil nuns were quite wealthy and had spent lavishly on the building of the convent and its church decoration. An Augustinian friar, Antonio de la Calancha, who had two sisters who had professed at La Encarnación, described the situation in 1639 as follows:

[the convent is], the oldest in the kingdom and the font from which has emanated all those that have since been founded; and it is also one of the most populous, because usually the nuns of the black veil surpass 230 in number, and with the sisters of the white veil and the novices they often approach 300, which along with the high-born maidens who are raised in the convent and with the serving women, there are usually more than 700 women within its environs. Its church is beautifully proportioned with the most rich adornments now present in this city; the divine cult and observance is of the highest and its authority and grandeur are without equal.78

Calancha informs us that less than half of the residents were providing the convent with dowries. Although the convent presumably augmented its income

78 Antonio de la Calancha, and Bernardo de Torres, Cronicas Agustinianas del Peru, vol. 1 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1972), 30. “Es el más antiguo del Reino y como fuente de donde han emanado los más que después se han fundado, y es también de los más numerosos, porque de ordinario las monjas de velo negro pasan de 230, y con las hermanas de velo blanco y las Novicias suelen llegar a 300, que juntas con las doncellas principales que en él se crían y con la gente de servicio, hay de ordinario más de 700 mujeres dentro de su cerca. Su Iglesia es de hermosa proporción y de las más ricamente adornadas que al presente hay en esta ciudad; el culto divino y la observancia es de lo mejor y su autoridad y grandeza sin igual.”
by charging for the education they provided to wealthy secular girls or alternatively by produce from its landholdings and the sale of convent-made sweets, these sources of income must have been limited. Although judging from the numbers of secular girls they educated, the nuns probably collected a sizable income from them, the substantial sums needed to support such large numbers of women and also to commission rich church decoration suggests that the dowries that the nuns of the black veil brought must have been quite large. Their power within the convent walls, buttressed by family ties both within and outside the convent, must have been correspondingly substantial.

By 1640 there was dissension within La Encarnación. During that year several nuns, including Calancha’s two sisters, broke away and formed their own convent called Nuestra Señora del Prado under the discalced Augustinian rule.\textsuperscript{79} Among their criticisms of La Encarnación, which observed the rule of canons regular of the Augustinian order, was that the convent was so overpopulated with the servants and slaves of nuns of the black veil that it was impossible to find space and quiet for meditation and prayer. These critics wanted a hermitage built for this purpose that would be available for the use of the whole community. Although class tensions, family quarrels and other factors probably affected this schism as much as the desire for quiet contemplation and reform-

mindedness, the break was permanent. Possibly in response to these criticisms, La Encarnación did commission a hermitage to be built in 1647. The building was completed by 1649. The seventeenth century soldier and diarist Josephe de Mugaburu described an impressive scene at the dedication of this building, writing:

Sunday, the 17th of October of the year 1649, a holy crucifix was taken in great solemnity from [the church of] San Agustín to that of La Encarnación. It was the greatest procession ever held in this city, with [statues of] all the saints of that order ... adorned as for the procession of Corpus [Christi].... All the streets and all the altars along the way were decked with hangings, The Count of Salvatierra, viceroy of these kingdoms, all the audencia, and a great number of infantry preceded the procession, and a squadron was formed at the small Encarnación plaza.  

The dedication of this hermitage was not a private event. Indeed although the public may not have been able to enter the convent to see the new building, it is clear that the dedication was nevertheless an important public occurrence with the outer community taking part in it. It is also clear that the highest ranking members of the society decided to interest themselves in the ceremony, suggesting that the convent and its nuns played a vital role in Limeñan society.

The building of the hermitage was apparently accompanied by changes in religious practice. The hermitage contained fourteen tiny, sparsely decorated

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chapels in which nuns were to retire for prayer and mortification.\textsuperscript{81} It possessed two doors, one to the main church and one opening out to an interior street that the nuns used to stage processions.\textsuperscript{82} Such practices suggest that most likely this hermitage was not the site used for the vibrant paintings the nuns requested from Zurbarán in 1646, but this cannot be confirmed.

It appears that Zurbarán was commissioned by La Encarnación toward the end of a lengthy building program and during an internal crisis. Much of what is known or can be deduced about life in that convent bears a close resemblance to life in convents elsewhere in the Spanish Empire. These nuns were elite, powerful women in the Limeñan community who participated in a localized “spiritual economy,” negotiated around the rules of enclosure and built in their convent a city within the City of Lima that impressed a variety of travelers and chroniclers for the next 150 years. The nuns of this convent differed from their colleagues located in cities such as Valladolid, Toledo, Cuzco or Naples in that when it came to procuring art and decorative objects they had a tendency to award commissions to artisans residing in Seville rather than employ

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\textsuperscript{82} Serrera and Figallo, 1990, 309-310.
\end{flushright}
local individuals. Doing so provided the nuns with a unique set of logistical challenges that are discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 4: A Proposed Reconstruction: Examining the Commission Documents for La Encarnación

Finally we turn to a consideration of the documents surrounding Zurbarán’s commission for the convent of La Encarnación in an attempt to analyze how the patrons may have envisioned using the works they requested. Four documents have been found that unquestionably pertain to this commission. One is the version of the contract signed by Captain Juan de Valverde and Abbess Doña Inés de Cabrera Villalobos that is dated July 16, 1646, and was recently found in an archive in Lima and is transcribed as Document 1 in the appendix. Another is the commission document that was signed by Valverde and Zurbarán on May 22, 1647, which is housed in a Sevillian archive. This is transcribed as Document 2 in the appendix. On September 23, 1647 both men signed a notarized receipt stating that Valverde had given the painter a

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partial payment of 300 pesos when Zurbarán completed some of the work.\textsuperscript{3}

Finally, on November 3, 1647 Zurbarán acknowledged receipt of a further 200 pesos from Valverde.\textsuperscript{4} No other documents are known to have survived that pertain to this commission, so it is unknown whether Zurbarán completed the work as requested. Regardless of whether the work was completed, the document is still an invaluable guide to art practice and patronage.

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, it is an attempt to recreate the original installation plan that the nuns had envisioned, to the extent that this is possible. Additionally, this chapter is intended to parallel chapter two’s analysis of the artist’s responsibilities in delivering commissions with an examination of some of the patron’s concerns as presented in these documents.

Although the terms of artistic commissions differed from patron to patron and from locale to locale, many of Zurbarán’s surviving commissions were recorded by Sevillian notaries who rendered documents with a particular formula. An examination of many published commission documents from Seville dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth century yields the following

\textsuperscript{3} AGA: Protocolos. Oficio XIV. Published in Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la historia del arte: Desde Martínez Montañes hasta Pedro Roldán (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932), 225.

\textsuperscript{4} AGA: Protocolos. Oficio XIV. Published in Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la historia del arte: Desde Martínez Montañes hasta Pedro Roldán (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932), 225.
The principals and their occupations and places of residence are listed. They “commit and agree” that the artist will produce for the patron a number of paintings or sculptures for a particular sum of money to be delivered by a particular date. Often the details of the subject matter to be produced were listed on a separate document called a memoria. At times other clauses were added concerning what consequences the artist would suffer if he did not meet his deadline or if his composition did not please the patron or satisfy iconographic requirements.

A good example of the general format may be found in the contract signed by Zurbarán for a different commission, in this case with Felipe de Alcalá of the Hieronymite monastery of Guadalupe in March 1639. The document begins by stating the names and locations of the individuals signing the agreement, as well as their occupations and then Zurbarán agrees:

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\text{to be obligated... to make seven paintings in this manner: that they have to be painted on the widest available canvas and each one is to be of three and a half \text{varas} in height and two and a half \text{varas} in width of saintly religious sons of this monastery conforming to the memoria that I have in my possession from the said monastery, each one for the price of 1,500 \text{maravedís} for a total of 7,350 \text{reales}, half of}
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5 For large collections of such documents see: Universidad de Sevilla Laboratorio de Arte, Documentos para la Historia del Arte en Andalucía, vol. 1-9 (Seville: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 1927-37); Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la historia del arte: Desde Jerónimo Hernández hasta Martínez Montañés (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1929). and Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la historia del arte: Desde Martínez Montañés hasta Pedro Roldán (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932). For the known documents pertaining to Zurbarán’s career see the appendix of documents in María Luisa Caturla, Francisco de Zurbarán (Paris: The Wildenstein Institute, 1994), 287-326.
which will be paid in the first days of the month of April and the other half on the 15th of August.\textsuperscript{6}

The document goes on to say that if Zurbarán has not delivered the works by August 15, 1639, or that if his finished works did not comply with the instructions given in the memoria provided by the monastery (and now lost), that the Hieronymites could commission the paintings from another artist.\textsuperscript{7} In this case Zurbarán would be obliged to pay back any of the sums received from the monks together with an additional fine of 200 ducados for the benefit of the prisoners of the jail in Seville. Although these works still exist in situ and therefore we know that Zurbarán’s paintings met these requirements, these stipulations were potentially ruinous to an artist who would of course have to pay for the canvas and pigments and paint the works regardless of their eventual acceptance or rejection by the monastery.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{6} The original reads: “...ser obligado y por los pres.te me obligo de Hacer siete lienssos de pintura En esta manera==que an de ser pintados en mantos ancho Y cada uno de tres baras y media de alto y a dos baras y media de ancho de pinturas de santos rrelrixos hixos del dho conv.to conforme a la memoria que tengo en mi poder del dho conv.to==cada uno por presio de mill y cinquenta reales en m.da de vellon que todos montan siete mill trescientos E cinquenta reales==y la mitad dellos me an de pagar p.a los primeros dias del mes de abril==Y la otra mitad p.a quinse dias del mes de ag.to.” Archivo de Protocolos, Seville, notary Pedro Fernández Ortiz, Oficio 18, 1639, libro 1, folios 603-8. Published in Peter Cherry, "The Contract for Francisco De Zurbarán’s Paintings of Hieronymite Monks for the Sacristy of the Monastery of Guadalupe," \textit{The Burlington Magazine} 127, No. 987 (1985): 378.

\textsuperscript{7} Peter Cherry did not transcribe the document in its entirety, but he summarized this portion. Ibid. 381.

The artistic interpretation of the subject matter requested was important to patrons. The iconography was expected to adhere to the requirements set out in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent as well as to the standards of whichever order an artist happened to be working for at the time. As stated in chapter one above, guides such as Pacheco’s *Arte de la Pintura* assisted artists in their compliance, as did Flemish prints which often served as models. These prints had to pass an official inspection from both secular and religious authorities before they could be published in Spain; therefore an artist could safely rely on them as acceptable models on which to base his or her compositions. Another of Zurbarán’s contracts reinforces how important it was to patrons that the works they commissioned complied with acceptable iconography. The artist’s 1626 contract with the Dominicans of the Monastery of San Pablo el Real in Seville for 21 paintings includes the following clause: “if some of [the paintings] do not content the said father prior...they may return them to me and I commit myself to receiving one, two or more paintings which I commit myself to repaint and return.”

This suggests that many Sevillian commissions favored the interests of the patrons.

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9 The Text reads: “...si alguno dellos no contentare a el dich padre prior... me lo puedan boluer que yo me obligo de lo rescibir vno dos o mas quadros los quales me obligo de tornar a hacer de nuevo...” Archivo de Protocolos, Seville, notary Alonso de Alarcón, Oficio 19, 1626, libro 1, folio 352. Transcribed in María Luisa Caturla, *Francisco De Zurbarán* Edited by Odile Delenda (Paris: The Wildenstein Institute, 1994) 294.
Meeting deadlines was another important responsibility of the painter. In
the Hieronymite commission discussed above the monks specified that the
paintings must be delivered by a particular date or they would exercise their
right to engage another artist. We know that this option was occasionally
exercised and in two cases it appears that Zurbarán was the beneficiary of such
clauses. One occurrence was in 1629 when he finished a commission for the
Franciscans of the Colegio de San Buenaventura that Francisco de Herrera the
Elder had begun in 1626. In the 1650’s Zurbarán finished an altarpiece for the
chapel of San Diego at Alcalá de Henares, a commission that had originally been
received by Alonso Cano. Zurbarán provided two paintings when Cano
abruptly left the project.10

The commission documents for La Encarnación differ somewhat in
formula to the usual Sevillian commission, but the same basic issues are covered
in the text. Luckily for us the memoria regarding subject matter and the
measurements of the requested paintings is incorporated into the notarized
document. These details are incorporated in such a way that if interpreted
correctly we may be able to determine where the nuns intended to hang this

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10 Although supporting documentation for the transfer of this commission has not been found,
the paintings of St. Buenaventura and St. Jacob de la Marca have been judged to be by Zurbarán.
See Alonso E. Pérez Sanchez, “Zurbarán, Cano Y Velázquez,” in *Zurbarán Ante Su Centenario
[1598-1664]*, ed. Alonso E. Pérez Sanchez (Soria: Universidad de Valladolid
substantial number of large format paintings. I will return to this analysis in a moment.

Both documents are in accord on the number and type of paintings commissioned, which total thirty-six. Listed in order they are: ten paintings of scenes from the life of the Virgin, twenty-four paintings of twenty-four virgin martyr saints, requested by name, to be painted standing and full length and finally one painting of the Visitation and one of The Martyrdom of the 11,000 Virgins. The instructions provided for the first ten paintings are detailed and exacting, at times specifying particular layouts such as the painting of two scenes on the same canvas, requesting the depiction of a rich costume on the Virgin and eccentric measurements. This suggests that the nuns had a very clear idea where they were placing some of the works. Fewer instructions are provided for the virgin martyr paintings and still less are provided for the Visitation or The Martyrdom of the 11,000 Virgins.

The Limeñan document is fire damaged and occasionally deciphering it requires comparing it to the later document signed in Seville. The earlier document, signed between Captain Valverde and the abbess of the convent, concerns mainly the 2,000 pesos the captain has taken possession of for the purpose of finding and contracting Zurbarán to provide the paintings requested. It is interesting that in this document 2,000 pesos is the sum recorded for the
purchase of the paintings and that in the second document, Zurbarán is told he will receive 1,500 pesos for his work. It appears that there was nothing nefarious about the 500 peso shortfall because the contract Valverde signed with Zurbarán mentions that Valverde was given 2,000 pesos to contract the artist’s services. A clue to the question of why there is this discrepancy is probably found in the first document where the abbess states that this sum is to be used both to acquire the paintings and for the shipping costs to send them back.

The abbess is very clear about how the captain is to travel to Spain with the convent’s money, having made him swear to the following:

I obligate myself to carry [the 2,000 pesos] on this present occasion of the armada to those realms of Spain, traveling from the City of Panama to that of Portobelo and from there to that of Seville and always on a flagship or that of an admiral or another of His Majesty’s [ships] in which will be his royal treasure/ or personally and always registered and consigned as in this south sea, so in that of the north and always by calculating cost...and having arrived that I...will do and carry out that contained in the following memoria ... of the canvases of paintings...for the convent of Nuestra Señora de La Encarnación in Lima for 2,000 pesos that the abbess handed over to [me] for its making in the City of Seville.11

Obviously the abbess is concerned for the security of the money that she has just handed to Valverde, which is why she has directed him to take it on the

11 AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...me obligo de los llebar en esta presste. ocasion de armada a los dhos. reynos de españa passandoLos de la ciudad de panama a la de portobelo y della a la de ssebilla y siempre en el nabio caPitana / o almiranta / o en otro de su magd. en el que fuere su real thessoro / o mi perssona y siempre Rexistrados y consignados asi en este mar del Sur como en el del norte y siempre por quenta Costa...y llegados que sseamos yo y el dho. dinero hare e Cumplire con Lo contdo. en la memoria siguiente...de los Lienços de pinturas...pa. El monesto. de nra. ssa. de la encCarnon. de lima de los dos mill pesos que la abadesa del Le entrega para haCerlo en la ciudad de sevilla.”
next departing treasure fleet. While there is no reason to believe she was aware of Zurbarán’s 1640 court case in which he sued Captain don Diego de Mirafuentes for damages in the loss of a shipment of paintings he had sent in 1636, it is interesting that the abbess describes knowledgeably the route shipments took to and from Seville. It is also noteworthy that she seems aware that damage or loss could be sustained on either the northern, Atlantic portion of the journey or on the journey in the South Sea. In particular it is notable that she commands that when the paintings are sent back to her Valverde is to, “...put [them] in a box in good condition and wrap [them] for security in the City of Seville, bring [them] on the first occasion that I will find and with the most diligence possible to that of Portobelo/ or to this [City] of the Kings...”12 In chapter two, the problems presented by packing paintings in a box and the risk that they might sustain water damage were discussed.13 It appears that the possibility of mold or rotting due to moisture was the most likely reason that the abbess discusses the problem of protection and security of her newly-painted works during their long journey to her convent in Lima.

12 AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...la dha. obra La encaxonare y porne bien acondissionada y enbreada para El seguro della en la dha. ciud. de Seuilla La traere/ o La ynbiare en la primera ocassion que hallare y con la delixencia más pusible a la de portobelo/ o a esta de los rreyes del piru...”

13 See pp. 55-60 above.
It is clear that to the abbess the most important paintings were the ten large canvases that are mentioned first in the document. The careful instructions about their making, subjects and size, which will be discussed below, together with the fact that it is three of these works that she requires Zurbarán produce and send back to her with the fleet leaving Seville in 1647 tell us that these works were the most urgently desired. In contrast to this are the instructions that accompany the description of the virgin martyr paintings in the 1646 document. The abbess requests that Zurbarán produce, “...twenty-four virgins or those that more or less reach the cost of them and of the said painting....”\(^\text{14}\) This suggests that she will be prepared to accept fewer than twenty-four virgin martyrs if the money she has sent does not cover their cost. On the other hand she requires the same level of quality in these works as she does for the ten paintings from the life of the Virgin. The virgin martyr paintings are to be “...of a state and height and similarly the brocaded fabrics of the said ten colorful canvases and all the rest and delightful...as is asked for and the work requires....”\(^\text{15}\)

More of the ink spent in the course of these documents is spent on laying out how the money was to be handled and who was to have the power to act on

\(^\text{14}\) AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...veynte y quatro birxenes o Las que alcanssaren mas o menos conforme el costo dellas y de la dha. pintura...”

\(^\text{15}\) AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...de un estado de alto y ansimismo el campo de los dhos. dies Lienços bistroso y todo Lo demas y deleytosso...como Lo pidiere y rrequiriere La obra....”
behalf of the convent than is spent on describing the requirements for the paintings. Although this may seem peculiar from an art historian’s point of view, when considering the situation from the patron’s point of view it is obvious that these concerns are vital. Zurbarán’s name is not even mentioned until halfway through the document. After Valverde’s travel instructions have been issued and after the memoria of paintings drawn up, we find the instruction that Valverde is to bring the money to Seville and pay it to “Francisco de Zurbarán/ or to another master...” for the purposes of producing the paintings.\(^\text{16}\) This section of the document is fire damaged so we must turn to the Sevillian document to be sure what the instruction was here. This version of the commission states Valverde is to come to “the said Francisco de Zurbarán or another master of his art who seems best to me....”\(^\text{17}\) This appears to be a significant, confusing and important statement associated particularly to the problems of the overseas art trade. To modern eyes it may seem peculiar for a patron to leave the decision of what artist to employ up to the captain of a ship who is entrusted with judging what artist seems best. Although tempting to make this instruction about aesthetics, phrased this way and appearing in a document that is in large part concerned with money, security and legal responsibility, we need to seek an alternative

\(^{\text{16}}\) AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...francisco de surbaran/ o a otro maestro...”

\(^{\text{17}}\) AGA: Protocolos. Oficio XIV. “...a el dho. franco. De zurbaran o a otro Maestro de su arte qual mexor me Pareciere...”
reason for this instruction. One possible reason for this instruction is that
Valverde needed to be given the freedom to act as necessary on behalf of the
convent. If for some reason he could not find Zurbarán or if the artist had
refused the commission, Valverde was still charged to get thirty-six paintings
made, so he would require the freedom to engage a different artist.

Another consideration that was undertaken in the text of the document
was who could handle the money or paintings on behalf of the convent. In the
event of the death of Valverde or of Antonio de Fajardo, the two agents preferred
by the abbess in the document, three other individuals were named. Captain
Francisco de Vergara, listed as then resident in Seville, and Jacinto de Vargas and
Francisco de Bustamente, named as merchants who were leaving for the
“Spanish realms” are named as three other individuals who would be
empowered to act on the convent’s behalf. In case this was not enough to cover
all possible eventualities, Valverde is permitted to empower a person of his
choice to complete the mission. For the purposes of comparison, Zurbarán’s
commission with the Hieronomites quoted earlier mentions only the name of one
individual after which anyone named by the monastery is deemed enabled to act
in the matter. Naming several persons in the initial document probably reveals
the abbess’s concern that the money and her paintings will be in trustworthy
hands throughout their journeys.
The dimensions, subject matter and locations described in the commission for the first ten paintings suggests that some or all of these would have formed an altarpiece or retablo, most likely for the main altar of the church. The subjects chosen are: Tree of Jesse, The Annunciation to St. Joachim, Sts. Joachim and Anna Meeting at the Golden Gate, The Birth of the Virgin, The Betrothal of the Virgin to St. Joseph, The Annunciation, The Nativity, The Ascension, The Assumption and The Coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity. As stated earlier, the instructions for each painting were specific. For example, the second painting consisted of two scenes, The Annunciation to St. Joachim and Sts. Joachim and Anna meeting at the Golden Gate which are to appear side by side on the same canvas. “The second canvas is to be when the angel revealed to St. Joachim the conception of the Virgin, Our Lady on one side and on the other the Golden Gate where he encounters his wife…”

The instruction to depict two scenes on one canvas does not appear elsewhere in this commission. The other works with specific instructions were The Ascension and The Assumption which were to be painted “to the edge” of the canvas and which, because they were to hang “between the door of the retablo of St. John the Baptist” they are to have “diminution in the width [in

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18 AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “El Segundo: quando el angel Rebelo a ssan Joaquin La consevon. de la Virgen al lado y a otro La puerta dorada donde se encontró con su esposa...”
order to form a point below…” Obviously with instructions this precise, these paintings were to be unique objects and could not have been among paintings that the artist produced on speculation for the New World art market.

The first two paintings listed in the commission, the Tree of Jesse and the single canvas depicting both The Annunciation to St. Jerome and The Meeting of Sts. Jerome and Anna at the Golden Gate share the same unusual dimensions. The nuns requested paintings of “four and a half varas in height and two and a half varas minus four dedos in width.” Although the approximate size of a vara was thirty-three inches, it is unknown what measurement a dedo represented although one can assume that a finger’s breadth will not vary too drastically. The sharing of dimensions and the representation of the parents and ancestors of the Virgin are the elements that unite these works and it seems logical that these two paintings were meant to be a pair.

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19 AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “…quel octabo y noveno Lienço an de ser En la manera que ban figurados al marxen porque een aquella Concabidad que hay entre los dos Lienços entra la puerta del Retablo de ssn. Juo bapta. que tiene dos baras de ancho y dos de alto con desmenusion en lo ancho por lo que hace de punta de modo que a Cada vno se le dara vna Vara una Vara de bacio en la parte de abaxo de ancho y dos de alto con desminussion como dho…”

20 According to the Diccionario de la lengua Española published by the Real Academia Española the length of a vara fluctuated between 30.2 and 35.9 inches (768 and 912 mm) depending on the region of Spain in which one was located. The size of a dedo is even less precise. Covarrubias does not mention a unit of measurement in his definition of a dedo, neither does the Diccionario de la lengua Española. Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o Española, ed. Felipe C. R. Maldonado and Manuel Camarero (Madrid: Nueva Biblioteca de Erudición y Crítica, 1994). The word dedo can be translated as a “finger” or a “finger’s breadth,” but obviously this measurement would vary depending on the size of the finger in question. See Gerd A. Gillhoff, Crowell’s Spanish-English & English-Spanish Dictionary (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1963), 214.
The measurements of the third painting, *The Birth of the Virgin* and the sixth and seventh paintings, *The Annunciation* and *The Nativity of Our Lord*, are each unique, but are the largest of the canvases commissioned. This suggests that these three might be the three large canvases that the nuns wanted made and sent right away with the 1647 fleet. Two of these works are in horizontal format, wider than they are tall, and the notes about each tell us that they are to be hung above doors. *The Birth of the Virgin* was to hang over the door to the choir and *The Annunciation* was to hang over the “other door towards the altar of Holy Christ.”

This direction may mean that this canvas would be above a door facing the altar that held the Eucharist or perhaps an altar depicting the Crucifixion.

Paintings four and five, *The Presentation of the Virgin* and *The Betrothal of the Virgin*, share the same dimensions and no special instructions are attached to them. This suggests that these two may have been paired. Both represent events not present in the Gospels, but that were narrated in the Apocrypha, which makes them a logical pair.

Paintings eight and nine, *The Ascension* and *The Assumption*, are another likely pair. They are to be of the same dimensions and both carry the instruction that they are to diminish in width and come to a point. This instruction suggests

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21 AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “…para sobre La otra puerta de assia el altar…”
that these two may also have been meant to hang together over a doorway. If we look at an image of the chapter house of Santo Domingo in Lima (Fig. 4.1), we see two paintings hanging over a doorway, both cut to follow the curve of the ornate cornice above the door. Both paintings diminish in width and come to a point and this seems to resemble the instruction issued in the commission for La Encarnación.

Painting number ten appears to be a work that is not paired with any other in this commission. No other painting in these ten scenes from the life of the Virgin shares its dimensions or its subject matter, *The Coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity*, a subject that could easily stand alone.

After these ten paintings, the commission states that there is to be a further

...twenty-four virgins...that they will be of full length [with] the joyful embroideries and with the insignias of their life/ or martyrdom and *retulos* at the feet of a state and height and similarly the *campo* of the said ten colorful canvases...and the said virgins have to be: St. Inés, St. Catherine, St. Cecilia, St. Lucy, St. Agatha, St. Barbara, St. Christina, St. Anastasia, St. Margaret, St. Leocadia, St. Casilda, St. Marina, St. Eulalia, St. Clara, St. Victoria, St. Apolonia, St. Sabina, St. Dorotea, St. Vasilía, St. Elena, St. Gertrude, St. Prisca, St. Engracia and St. Martha....

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22 AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12.

“...veynte y quatro birxenes...que sean de cuerpo entero y los campos alegres y con las ynsignias de su bida/ o martirio y retulos a los pies de un estado de alto y ansimismo el campo de los dhos. dies Lienços bistroso...y las dhas. birxenes an de ser = ssanta ynes = santa Cathalina martir = ssanta cecilia = ssta. Lucia = ssanta agueda = ssanta barbola = ssta. Cristina = ssanta anastasia = ssta. margarita = ssta. Leocadía = ssanta casilda = ssanta marina = ssanta olalla = ssanta clara = ssanta. bitoria = ssanta polonia = ssanta sabina = ssanta dorotea = ssta. basilia = ssta. Elena = ssanta xetrudes = ssta. prisca = ssanta engracia = ssanta marta...."
This description matches that of many of Zurbarán’s surviving virgin martyr paintings and indeed several of the extant works are of some of these particular saints, enabling us to have some notion of what these works would have looked like. For example, his *St. Margaret of Antioch* (Fig. 4.2) of c. 1630-34 presently at the National Gallery, London shows the saint dressed as a shepherdess in colorful, weighty outer garments reminiscent of wool and a linen blouse. She dominates the serpent-like dragon that would be considered the symbol of her life.

The abbess’s request for joyful embroideries and the use of the term *campo* suggests that the fabrics and rich materials often found in Zurbarán’s depictions of virgin martyrs were at least in this case requested by the patron and not necessarily painted as the result of the personal taste of the artist. Sebastián de Covarrubias defines the term *campo* as “clothing or fabric, worked or embroidered, it is understood on color and the rest labored.” This is amply illustrated by the depiction of *St. Casilda* (Fig. 4.3) of c. 1640-45 presently in the collection of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid. The saint wears an elaborate, brocade overdress embroidered at the hem with gold thread and garnished with pearls and other semiprecious stones. The pale violet satin train

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that hangs from the saint’s shoulders possesses a lace border that appears to have been made with gold thread. Such is the skill of the painter’s ability to reproduce the sheen, weight and other characteristics of fabrics and appliques that one is tempted to speak of the garments as if they existed and perhaps they did.

This is perhaps more visible in the case of Zurbarán’s *St. Isabel of Portugal* (Fig. 4.4) of about 1640 at the Museo del Prado. The sheen of the crisp satin and the creases left by its wearing together with the elaborately embroidered hem of the blue bodice all stress the tactility of the materials and the attention to detail of the artist. The illusion of material reality is the defining characteristic of these works and appears to have been a trait that was very important to the vision presented in the commission for La Encarnación.

What is perhaps most interesting of all is that no specific dimensions for these virgin martyr paintings are given in either the document found in the Limeñan archive, nor in the contract dated May 22, 1647, in the Archivo General de Andalucía in Seville. The iconography of the saints and the necessity of bright embroidery or *campo* were perhaps more important to the client than a specific size for these works. The only reference to size in this portion of the contract refers to *The Martyrdom of the 11,000 Virgins* which was to be “...a wider canvas
than the others....”\textsuperscript{24} and to \textit{The Visitation} which was to be “...of the measure that the said work and art requires.”\textsuperscript{25} The anomaly of requesting a \textit{Visitation} at the end of the commission prompts one to ask why the nuns separated this scene from the others from the life of the Virgin. If not an error or an afterthought, this placement could be significant, suggesting that \textit{The Visitation} is not part of the group described at the beginning of the commission and that it was intended to hang elsewhere in the church, perhaps with \textit{The Martyrdom of the 11,000 Virgins}.

Other than those canvases that have special instructions as to size or state their location, “above the door to the choir,” for example, we know nothing about where these works were to hang.\textsuperscript{26} Early in the contract found in Seville, signed by Zurbarán and Valverde, we find the statement, “[the paintings are] for the church of the said convent...,” but this statement is not present in the earliest document found in Lima dated July 16, 1646, almost a year before the Sevillian contract was signed in May 1647.\textsuperscript{27} Although the main church was a likely the destination for these works, the nuns of La Encarnación commissioned a hermitage to be built in 1647, the year after Zurbarán’s commission. Some or all

\textsuperscript{24} AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...aunque sea un vn lienço mas ancho que los otros.”

\textsuperscript{25} AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “…de la mensura que rrequiera La dha. obra y arte.”

\textsuperscript{26} AGN. Protocolo de José de Aguirre Urbina, 1646-1649 (70), 4th reg. of 1646, folios 8-12. “...para sobre la puerta de assia el coro”

\textsuperscript{27} AGA Sección Protocolos. Oficio 14. Legajo 8618, folios 381-384. “...los dhos. lienços y Pintura es para la yglesia De dho. Monasterio...”
of these works could have decorated this newer building, which was to contain various chapels in which the nuns could pray in relative seclusion.

If the paintings were intended to hang in the main church, it is possible that they would have hung along the nave walls, as does a series of virgin martyr saints now in the convent church of Santa Clara Carmona Seville, which seems to have been modeled on the format Zurbarán pioneered. In this church the virgin martyr paintings hang on either side of the nave, yet all of the saints face the main altar as though they are processing toward it. The anonymous painter of these works may have been directed to paint the works with half of the saints facing left and half facing right. In the case of the virgin martyrs requested by La Encarnación, there are no directions about which way the saints should face, although their even number could suggest to the painter that he should consider painting half facing left and half right. Because other examples exist in which series of virgin martyrs decorated nave walls, such as the church of San Agustín in Bogotá and that of Santa Clara Carmona mentioned above, this arrangement

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28 With no surviving examples by Zurbarán of this type of commission in situ, most authors who deal with this question discuss the church of Santa Clara Carmona. These works are severely damaged and it is not known whether they have always hung as they do today, although scholars speak as if the paintings have. See Benito Navarrete Prieto, and Odile Delenda, Zurbarán y su Obrador: Pinturas para el Nuevo Mundo (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 1998), 35-37 and Elizabeth Du Gué Trapier, “Zurbarán’s Processions of Virgin Martyrs,” Apollo 85 (1967): 414-19.
must be a strong candidate for the way the twenty-four virgin saints requested by La Encarnación were hung.29

Two further possibilities are offered by examining the placement of other series of paintings that were shipped to Lima around the time that this commission was sent. Three Limeñan monasteries and one convent possess series of paintings that were painted by Zurbarán and/or his studio. Santo Domingo has an *Apostolado* from the workshop, as does San Francisco. The Camellian monastery of Buena Muerte has a series of the *Founders of the Religious Orders*, and the convent of La Concepción possesses a series of *Archangels*. In the case of both San Francisco and Santo Domingo the paintings presently hang in the sacristy of the monasteries' churches. This is not definitive evidence that they always occupied that space. In the case of the series which resides in the sacristy at San Francisco, an inventory dated 1785 tells us that the paintings have been displayed in that room since at least that date. In the case of the *Founders series* at the monastery of la Buena Muerte, however, it has been argued that the paintings only arrived at the monastery by donation in 1769 and that of the thirty

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29 The same problem applies to the hanging in the Church in Bogotá as applies to Santa Clara Carmona. The other church decoration at Bogotá looks as though it could date from the eighteenth century, therefore it is uncertain whether these paintings originally hung in this way.
paintings donated at that time, only these twelve remain. Their provenance prior to that date has not been established. In three of these cases the sacristy, a space that is not open to the public, held the paintings.

One last possible location for the paintings sent to La Encarnación might be one of the outdoor cloisters. In Zurbarán’s 1628 commission for the Monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Merced in Seville, the artist was commissioned to paint twenty-two paintings of scenes from the life of St. Pedro Nolasco for the open air Boxwood Cloister. Only ten of the scenes from the life of St. Pedro Nolasco survive, and travelers’ accounts dating from the eighteenth century mention only twelve paintings. This presents the possibility that Zurbarán may not have fulfilled the original terms of the contract, or perhaps

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30 Marqués de [Juan Contreras y López de Ayala] Lozoya, “Zurbarán en el Perú,” Archivo Español de Arte 16 (1943): 5. Lozoya provides us with this information without giving its source. Lozoya did not believe these paintings came from the hand of Zurbarán or his studio. Francisco Stastny disagrees about the attribution. See Zurbarán en los Conventos de América, (Caracas, Venezuela: Fundación Amigos del Museo de Bellas Artes, 1988), 57.

31 The New Catholic Encyclopedia defines a sacristy as, “A room in the church or attached thereto, where the vestments, church furnishings and the like, sacred vessels, and other treasures are kept, and where the clergy meet and vest for the various ecclesiastical functions. It corresponds to the secretarium or diaconicum of old. At present the almost universal practice is to have the sacristy directly behind the main altar or at either side. The sacristy should contain cases, properly labelled, for the various vestments in all the liturgical colors; a crucifix or other suitable image in a prominent position to which the clergy bow before going to the sanctuary and on returning...” See http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13322b.htm

32 AHP: Protocolos notariales, oficio 11, 29 August 1628. Published by Celestino López Martínez, Notas para la historia del arte: Desde Martínez Montañes hasta Pedro Roldán (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932), 221.

that the patrons altered their request. This last statement raises the question of whether the full commission of thirty-six paintings was ever delivered to the convent of La Encarnación.

While the question of whether the full commission was ever painted or delivered by Zurbarán must remain open, the language of the commission itself does suggest some theories for how the nuns of La Encarnación may have intended to use their paintings. Probably several of the first ten paintings were intended to be used in an altarpiece. The request for paintings of particular dimensions suggests that either the space for their hanging was already chosen or the frames they would hang in already existed. Based on the instructions in the commission and the measurements provided, I conclude that four paintings are the best candidates for being the three paintings that the nuns wanted to have sent right away with the 1647 fleet. These are *The Birth of the Virgin* at 2 varas by 5.5, *The Annunciation* at 2.5 varas by 4.5 and incidentally depicts the incident that the convent is named after, *The Nativity* at 4.5 varas by 3.75 and *The Coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity* at 4.5 varas by 2. Any of these four scenes would be appropriate to hang behind the altar of a chapel in the main convent church and it would be useful for them to be sent on ahead. The other works that share measurements in pairs sound like they would have formed the contents of a

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*retablo*, possibly with the addition of some sculpture. These works probably would have been wanted at the same time so that they could be settled into frames and the *retablo* assembled at one time. Lastly, the twenty-four virgin martyrs and *The Visitation* and *The Martyrdom of the 11,000 Virgins* sound as though they were intended to have lined the nave walls of the main church. Although all of this is speculation that cannot be confirmed because the surviving travel narratives that describe the convent do not discuss the art hanging in its church, the contents of the commission itself provide hints about how these works might have been used. All that can be confirmed from the surviving receipts is that Zurbarán did deliver the three large canvases that the nuns wanted sent in 1647. The other 200 pesos that the artist was paid in November 1647 inform us that more works were delivered, but no hint is offered about how many were sent or of which type. If the notary made an error in his receipt and it should have read 1,200 pesos, that could mean that the artist delivered all of the remaining paintings at that time. If the amount is accurate we cannot know which paintings were delivered in November. All that we can be certain of is that the abbess or any advisors she may have had took great care in phrasing her commission and thinking through the possible problems that could befall the paintings on their way back to her. This suggests that she had some understanding of the way the overseas art trade worked that can contribute to
our understanding of the logistics of this trade if we interpret the language of the commission properly.
Conclusion

Researching the somewhat neglected commission for thirty-six paintings that Francisco de Zurbarán produced for the Limeñan convent of La Encarnación in 1647 provides an opportunity to construct a social history for overseas commissions. The loss of the convent and its art treasures means that examining this commission requires the application of several methodologies. I have looked at this commission from the point of view of the problems and responsibilities taken on by both patron and artist.

Several recent publications on nuns and the built environment of the convent have concluded that commissioning works of art served multiple purposes for nuns. The fabric of the convent complex and its decoration were crucial for demonstrating compliance with Church decrees regarding mandatory enclosure of nuns. Simultaneously, when nuns were not literally visible to their communities, they were symbolically visible in the paintings on church walls as well as through the sturdy doors and barred windows that reminded their communities of their chastity. This implied visibility encouraged potential patrons of the convent to offer their financial support. At times it appears that commissioning art or architectural works was the impetus that inspired
patronage from the community. Nuns in elite convents such as that of La
Encarnación came from socially prominent classes and were often wealthy and
entitled. Like nuns in convents in Valladolid and Toledo, Peruvian nuns fell
under Castilian laws that permitted nuns to inherit and dispose of their own
property. When it came to commissioning art for their convents, the line between
personal property and community property could get blurred. Similarly family
ties, whatever demands the religious life placed on nuns, were not broken behind
convent walls, so family symbols often appeared in artwork commissioned for
the community as a whole.

The nuns of La Encarnación commissioned art from Sevillian artisans at
times. Although the paintings Zurbarán produced for the convent have been
lost, the text of the commission is an invaluable resource for understanding the
problems of making and shipping art for the New World market. The
commission written by the abbess provides us with details not readily available
elsewhere about the mechanics of trade and how money and commodities were
handled.

Zurbarán’s participation in New World art markets has been a minor
focus of scholars for the last twenty years or so. An analysis of the documents
surrounding his 1640 lawsuit with Captain Diego de Mirafuentes is instructive
on the subject of how this trade was carried out and what recourse artists had
when things went wrong. The description of the destruction of the paintings under Mirafuentes’s care as having rotted in their chest bears a close resemblance to that described in one of Peter Paul Rubens’s letters. Rubens’s solution was to scrape off the old paint and begin again. If such problems often befell paintings shipped to the New World it is possible that artisans in the viceregal territories scraped ruined paintings and reworked them. If they did, this may offer one solution to a longstanding question about why so few of the New World paintings can be attributed to Zurbarán’s hand despite the apparently large number of works he sent across the Atlantic. Exploring this question further would require a larger pool of examinations of original pictures than has been produced to date. One important thing to keep in mind is that recent evidence suggests that Zurbarán changed his working method late in his career. His employment of a different ground and use of the pigment ultramarine in his late works painted in Madrid suggests that the artist was capable of changing his working habits. Although the altered ground can be considered a result of working in Madrid where different materials were available, we do not yet know when he began using ultramarine. It is possible that he began this practice while still resident in Seville since we know that Murillo began using the pigment there during the 1650’s. What this recent discovery tells us is that paying attention to which grounds and pigments the artist used in Madrid means we must revise
our impression of Zurbarán’s late career. The prohibitive expense of the pigment implies that either the artist was quite well off at this date or he had patrons who requested and paid for ultramarine. Additionally, the large dowry that was brought to his third marriage in 1645 has never been considered in calculations and estimates of the artist’s net worth during his late career, possibly because the artist’s death inventory has not seemed to be particularly large. One possible reason for this is that according to Castilian law the artist’s widow, Leonor de Tordera, was entitled to reclaim her dowry and other personal property before any other debts of the estate were discharged. Since her property was considered legally separate from that of her husband, it is probable that the inventory she commissioned after the death of her husband did not list any of her personal assets and that therefore this inventory may not represent the true condition of the artist’s financial situation at the end of his life.

While it is clear that more work remains to be done on the subjects of Zurbarán’s work for the Americas, the art patronage of New World nuns, and the activities of the middlemen who took charge of money and delivered paintings, it is apparent that such topics offer an intriguing and fruitful line of inquiry concerning both the life of Francisco de Zurbarán and the careers of other Sevillian painters.
**Appendix of Documents**


Sepan qtos. esta Carta vieren como yo El cappn. Juan de balberde vzo. morador en esta ciud. de los rreyes del piru de partida pa. los rreynos de españa en esta presste. ocasson. de armda. otorgo por esta carta que pa. Effecto de hazer y Cumplir Lo que yra declarado Conffieso auer Receuido de doña ynes de cabrera villalobos abadessa deste monesto. y monxas de nra. ssa. de la enCarnon. desta dha. ciud. que esta pressente Dos mill pessos de a ocho Reales en rreales de Contado de los quales me doy por contento y entregdo. a mi boluntd. y porque del entrego dello de presste. no parece rreno. La exsevsion e leyes de la nonumerata peCunia prueba del rescuiuo como En ella se contiene Los quales me obligo de los llebar en esta presste. ocasion de armada a los dhos. rreynos de españa passandoLos de la ciudad de panama a la de portobelo y della a la de sebilla y siempre en el nabio caPitana / o almiranta / o en otro de su magd. en el que fuere su rreal thessoro / o mi perssona y siempre Rexistrados y consignados asi en este mar del Sur como en el del norte y siempre por quenta Costa E rriesgo
del dho. mo. y llegados que sseamos yo y el dho. dinero hare e Cumplire con Lo contdo. en la memamemoria de los Lienços de pinturas que el Capan. Juan de balverde a de mandar hacer pa. El monesto. de nra. ssa. de la enCarnon. de lima de los dos mill pesos que la abadesa del Le entrega para haCerlo en la ciudad de sevilla______________________________

Primero = Un arbol que nace de un hombre ques el tribu de la desendencia de nra. ssa. con toda su progenie en los rramos y a de tener quatro baras y media de alto y dos baras y media menos quatro dedos de ancho______________________________

El segundo = quando el angel Rebelo a ssan. Joaquin La consevon. de la Virgen al lado [sic] y a otro La puerta dorada donde se encontró con su esposa y a de tener quatro baras y media de alto y dos baras y media quatro dedos de ancho______________________________

El tercero = de la natuicidad de nra. Señora con Las mas figuras y graxexos posibles y a de sser anchicorto de dos baras de alto y cinco y media de largo para sobre la puerta de assia el coro______________________________

El quarto = qdo. La birxen fue pressentada en el templo de quatro baras y media de alto y tres baras de ancho______________________________
El quinto = el despossorio con San Joseph y a de tener quatro baras y media de alto y tres de ancho

El sexto = La adoracion del angel y enCannon. de xpto. nuestro Señor para sobre La otra puerta de assia el altar y a de ser anchicorto de dos baras y media de alto y quatro y media de ancho /o Largo

El septimo = La natividad de nro. Señor de quatro baras y media de alto y tres baras y tres quartas de ancho

El octauo = La subida a los cielos de xpo. nuestro ssor. y en el La Virgen y sus discipulos y a de tener quatro baras y media de alto y tres baras de ancho

El nobeno = el transito de la Virxen y su subida a los cielos y a de tener quatro baras y media de alto y tres baras de ancho

El decimo = La ssma. trinidad en la gloria Coronado a la Virxen y a de tener quatro baras y media de alto [testado: y tres baras] y dos baras de ancho

Con adbertencia = quel octabo y noveno Lienço [sic] an de ser En la manera que ban figurados al marxen* porque en aquella Concabidad que hay entre los dos Lienços entra la puerta del Retablo de ssn. Juo. batpa. que tiene dos baras de ancho y dos de alto con desmenusion en lo ancho por lo que hace de punta de modo que a Cada vno se le dara vna Vara una Vara [sic] de bacio en la
parte de abaxo de ancho y dos de alto con desminussion como dho. es y da la plata que sobrare E de hacer veynte y quatro birxenes o Las que alcanssaren mas o menos conforme el costo dellas y de la dha. pintura que sean de cuerpo entero y los campos alegres y con las ynsignias de su bida/ o martirio y rretulos a los pies de un estado de alto y ansimismo el campo de los dhos. dies Lienços bistosso y todo Lo demas y deleytosso con selaxes como Lo pidiere y rrequiriere La obra y las dhas. birxenes an de ser = ssanta ynes = santa Cathalina martir = ssanta cecilia = sst. Lucia = ssanta agueda = ssanta barbola = sst. Cristina = ssanta anastasia = ssta margarita = sst. Leocadia = ssanta casilda = ssanta marina = ssanta olalla = ssanta clara = ssanta bitoria = ssanta polonia = ssanta sabina = ssanta dorotea = ssta. basilia = ssta. Elena = ssanta xetrudes = ssta. prisca = ssanta engracia = ssanta marta = Las once mill Virxenes aunque sea un vn lienço mas ancho que los otros = La bissitassion de nuestra Señora a Santa yssabel de la mensura que rrequiera La dha. obra y arte__________________________________ toda La qual a de ser buena y de buen aparexo y sin que por mi [lost] falta o neglixencia mia se ponga embargo y segun buena dispusision y arte de pintura guardando en todo Las rreglas della y las mandare hacer toda Luego que yo sea Llegado en salbamto. a la dha. ciud. de ssebilla [lost] francisco de surbaran/o a otro maestro [lost] me parescier y la consertare de sus [lost] pinseles y mano
dellos hasta que tenga Effeto [lost] dinero y monesterio y aCabada toda la dha.
obra La encaxonare y porne bien acondissionada y enbreada para El seguro della
en la dha. ciud. de Seuilla La traere/ o La ynbiare en la primera ocassion que
hallare y con la delixencia más pusible a la de portobelo/ o a esta de los rreyes
del piru con el dho. Rexistro y por la dha. quenta costa y rriesgo dirigido y
consignado al dho. monesterio de nuestra señora de la enCarnon./ o/ a/ antonio
faxardo o a la persona que el susodho. me escririere y abissare para la brebedad
y seguro dello = y si demás de los dhos. dos mill pesos de a ocho rreales yo
diere supriere E pagare por el dho. monesterio alguna cantidad por los dhos.
Lienços A pintura/ o de costas fletes y derechos que se caussaren [lost] de la
llebada de los dhos. pessos [lost] dha. obra iy de su trayda y entrega a de ser y es
por qta. de los dhos. dos mill pesos y si el dho. monesto. Lo [lost] y supriere se
me a de dar y pagar [lost] contado y para ello y los gastos [lost] ser creydo por mi
quenta/ o [lost] Juramento/ o segun [lost] segun huso y costumbre [lost] y
encomienda [lost] no e de llebar ni pedir Cossa alguna porque Lo que dello me
biniera [lost] le hago gracia y donasion al dho. monesterio por que dios nro. SSor.
y su ssmo. nombre en cuyo serbicio me ofresco a hacer [lost] pa. su ssanta Cassa
me ayuden y den bueno y felix biaxe y a la firmeça y Cumplimiento obligo mi
perssona e bienes aVidos y por auer = e yo La dha. doña ynes de cabrera
villalobos abadesa deste dho. monesterio [lost] soy presente esta escritura La
acepto como en ella se contiene y por el y demas rreligiosas [lost] al dho. capan. Juo. de Valberde y a/ antonio faxardo por cuya mano se a effetuado Lo dho. / que estan presentes buen cuydado [lost] y donassion rreferido = y mas obligo como [lost]. Los dhos. Lienços y pintura [lost] monesto. y si dello y de su trayda [lost] y gastos/ se acudiere el dho. Capan. [lost] cantidad de pessos por cualquiera [lost] Luego que nos avisse por sus cartas o memorias o por el dho. antonio faxardo sin que sea necesario. otra prueba ni averiguacion Le dare y pagare La cantd. que asi fuere llanamente y sin pleito alguno con las Costas de su Cobrança = y prebiniendo cualquiera de los Cassos que suelen acaeser fortuitos pensados o no pensados En bida o muerte del dho. cappan. Juo. de Valberde Lo que dios no permita doy mi poder Cumpdo. qual de dro. se rreqre. y es nescesario al cappan. francisco de Vergara rreste. En la dha. ciudad de seuilla y a Jacinto de bargas y francisco de Bustamente mercaderes de partida para los rreynos españa y a todos Juntos y a cada vno de por si ynsolidum con ygual facultad para que en nombre deste dho. monesterio y como el y yo en su nombre y rrepresentando mi persona si del dho. Capitan Juo. de balberde acaesiere el dho. fallecimo./ o/ otro caso adberso penssado o no penssado que ynpida y estorue La administracion y Cumplimiento de lo en esta escrita. contenido puedan pedir [lost] ceuir auer y cobrar Judicial o extraJudicialmente. [lost] del susodho. y de sus bienes Caxa de los difuntos Jueces y ofciales dellas [lost] de
registros de los maestres alguaziles albaceas thenedores de bienes y herederos y
de qn. Con dro. puedan y deban Los. dhos. dos mill pos. de a ocho y dellos
hagan e Cumplan aquello mismo que el dho. [testado: mor. de galasteguí) capan.
Juo. de balberde lo podia hazer y en esta escrita. se contiene y si los dhos. pessos
estuVieren enpleados en la dha. obra o pintura La rresciuan y cobren en ssi y
estando por hacer La hagan e prosigan en ella y fecho La traygan o enbien y
rrremitan a este dho. monesterio o/ al dho. anto. faxardo por la dha. nuestra qta.
otorguen Cartas de pago Lastos ffiniquitos chancelaciones y satisfaciones [lost] y
demas necesos. y valgan como si yo misma Las [lost] presente siendo y si en
rrraçon de lo dho. [lost] contda. de Juicio/ o de cualquiera cosa E parte [lost] Su
magd. y otras que con dro. deuan y hagan pongan demandas rrespuestas
pedimtos. rrequerimtos. [lost] alegaciones exes. solturas embargos desembargos
ventas trançes e rremates de bienes y todos los demas autos y delixas. que
Judicial o extraJudicialmente Conbengan de se hacer y que yo haria presste.
siendo hasta que tenga entero y Cumpdo. Effeto Lo dho. que el poder que para
ello y dependiente se rrequiere y es necesario. Les doy y otorgo y a la ffirmeça de
lo que se hiciere y que ba dho. en esta esCritura obligo Los bienes E rrentas deste
dho. monesto. avidos y por auer = y ambas ptes. por lo que a Cada una de nos
toca damos poder Cumdo. a las Justas. E Jueces de Su magd. y eclesiasticas que
de las causas y de cada una conforme [lost] al fuero de las cuales me obligo
ssometo y renuncio y la ley sit combenerit de Jurisdicione y nos apremien Como
por senta. passada en cossa Juzgada renunciemos las Leyes [lost] de nro. fauor y
la que los prohiue y consentimos [lost] escritura se ssaquen Los treslados [lost] en
la ciud. de los reyes del piru en dies de seis de Jullio de mill y seisientos y
quarenta y seis años y los otorgtes. q. yo el escriuo. doy fe conosco Lo firmaron
testigos los bachilleres po. de Castro y mi. de gongora presbiteros y fco.
melgarejo.

   Doña ynes de cabrera villalobos abba.

   Juan de Valverde

**Document 2:** Contract between Captain Juan de Valverde and Francisco
de Zurbarán, dated May 22, 1647, located in the Archivo General de Andalucía.
Sección Protocolos. Oficio XIV. Legajo 8618, fols. 381-384. Summary published in
Celestino López Martínez, *Notas para la historia del arte: Desde Martínez Montañes
hasta Pedro Roldán* (Seville: Tipografía Rodríguez, Giménez y Compañía, 1932),
224. Transcribed in Guillermo Lohmann Villena, “Las Pinturas de Zurbarán para
el Convento de La Encarnación de Lima,” *Revista del Archivo General de la Nación*

SSepan qtos. la carta Vieren Como Yo el Capitan Joan de Balverde
Passajero q. Vine de las provincias de las provincias [sic] de el piru Residente en
esta ciud. de Seua. = y francisco de Zurbaran Maestro Pintor vezino Desta dha.
ciud. = otorgamos y conoçemos Cada Uno de nos En fauor del otro = e yo el dho.
Capitan Joan de Balverde = digo q. Por qto. La señora doña ynes de Cabrera
Villalobos abadessa del monesterio de nuestra señora de la EnCarnarçion de la
ciud. de los Reyes del piru me Entrego e yo Reciui de la dha. sa. Dos mill pesos
de a ocho Reales para traerlos a España y aViendo llegado a ella y sacadoLos de
la Cassa de La contratazion de las yndias desta ciud. en ella yo mandare hacer
Los lienços y Pintura Contenidos En La scrita. de Ruo. y obligon. q. yo otorgue
en la dha. ciud. de los Reyes q. en esta scrita. yran deClarados q. los dhos. lienços
y Pintura es para la yglesia De dho. Monasterio y ornamento del Cuerpo della
Los quales yo aVia de mandar hazer luego q. llegasse a esta dha. ciud. a el dho.
franco. De zurbaran o a otro Maestro de su arte qual me Pareciere Como
Mas en forma Lo conte. la dha. escripta. de Ruo. y obligon. que yo otorgue ante
Joseph de Aguirre Urbina sno. Puco. de su magd. en la dha. ciud. de los Reyes
del piru En dies y seis de Jullio del año pasado de seisos. y qta. y siete y
Poniendo En execuçion mi obligacion y el buen desseo que tengo de que la dha.
obra Pues es Para tan Justo efeto Por mi Mano tenga logro estamos Conbenidos y
Conzertados yo e el dho. françisco de zurbaran de otorgar esta scripta. Por el
horden q. sera deClarado = Por la qual yo el dho. franco. de zurbaran me obligo
de hazer y q. hare Los dhos. Lienço [sic] y Pintura q. en la dha. escripta. de
obligacion el dho. Capn. Joan de Baluerde tiene obligacion q. se hagan que son
del numero, forma, Medidas y Pinturas
Primeramente vn Lienço en q. vaya pintado Vn arbol que nace de vn hombre que es tribu De la decendencia de nuestra señora Con toda su progenie en los Ramos y a de tener quatro varas y media de alto y dos Baras y media
Menos quatro dedos de ancho______________________________
el segundo lienço a de ser quando el angel Rebelo a san Joachim La concepcion de la Virgen nuestra señora a vn lado = y a otro La puerta dorada Donde se encontro Con su esposa Y a de tener quatro varas y media de alto y Dos varas y media menos quatro dedos de ancho______________________________
el tercer a de ser de la natividad de nuestra señora con las mas y mexores figuras y Gracejos Posibles y a de ser anchicorto de dos baras de alto y cinco y media de Largo Para sobre la puerta de hazia el Coro______________________________
el quarto Lienço a de ser cuando La Virgen fue presentada en el templo de quatro varas y media de alto y tres varas de ancho______________________________
el quinto Lienço el desposorio de nuestra sa. Con san Joseph de quatro baras y media de alto y tres de ancho______________________________
el sexto La salutacion del angel y encarnacion de Xpto. nuestro sr. para sobre la otra puerta de hacia el altar del santo xpto. y a de ser anchicorto de dos varas y media de alto y quatro y media de ancho______________________________
el septimo de la natiuidad de el señor de quatro Baras y media de alto y
tres varas y tres quartas de ancho

El octauo La suvida a los çielos de xpto. nuestro señor y en el La Virgen y
sus dicipulos y a de tener quatro varas y media de alto y tres baras de ancho____

el nobeno el trancito de la Virgen y la suvida a los çielos, y a de tener
quatro baras y media de alto y tres baras de ancho___________________________

el deçimo La santisima trinidad en la Gloria Coronado a la Virgen y a de
tener quatro baras y media de alto y dos varas de ancho______________________

q. estos quadros grandes son por todos diez = Con adVertencia quel
octauo y nobeno an de ser de la forma q. estan a el margen*

Por q. [en] la conCauidad q. se hace entre los dos Lienços entre la puerta
del retablo de san joan baptista q. tiene dos varas de ancho y dos de alto con
demenuycion en lo ancho por lo que hacen punta de modo q. a Cada uno se le
dara una bara de bazio en La parte de abajo de ancho y dos de alto con
desmenuyvcion como dho.

es____________________________ y

assimismo demas de los dhos. diez quadros e de ser obligado de hacer y pintar
otros veynte y quatro lienços con veinte y quatro Virgenes q. sean de Cuerpo
entero de los nombres q. siguen sta. ynes = santa catalina martir = Santa sicilia =
santa lucia = santa agueda = santa Barbara = santa christina = santa anastasia =
santa margarita = santa leocadia = santa casilda = santa marina = santa olaya =
santa clara = santa Vitoria = Santa polonia = santa Savina = Santa dorotea = santa
baçilia = santa elena = santa Jetrudes = santa prisca = Santa engracia = Santa
Marta = Las onze mill Virgenes abnque sea Vn lienço mas ancho q. los otros = La
Visitaçion de nuestra Señora a Santa ysauel de la mensura q. Requiere La obra y
arte______________________________

todos los quales dhos. lienços q. todos son treynta y seis hare y aCauare
los dhos. Diez Lienços primeros de las medidas y formas Referidas y el campo de
la Virgen y todo lo demas deleytoso y con zelaje Como lo Requiriere la obra Y
para su Perfeccion sea neceso. = Y las dhas. Virgenes han de llebar sus ynsignias
de su Vida o martirio y Retulos a los pies de Vn estado de altor y los Vnos y otros
lienzos De Buena pintura y colores sin que por ello o pro falta o negligencia mia
se ponga en riesgo la dha. orden Porq. los e de entregar con toda proporcion y
perfezion y segun buena disposicion y arte de pintura Guardando en todo luego
el arte della Los quales Empezare a haçer desde luego y los yre y se yran
continuando sin alzar mano dellos de suerte q. Los tres Primeros lienzos de los
dies Grandes Referidos Los E de dar y entregar en tiempo Competente pa. que
bayan y el dho. Joan de Baluerde los Remita al dho. Reyno de ta. firme en la flota
q. al dho. reyno a de yr este año de seys y qta. y siete y el Resto de dhos. Lienços
sin q. falte alguno dellos Lo dare y entregare para el dia de pasqua de flores del
año que Viene de mil y seysos. y qta. y ocho haciendo el dho. entregó a el dho.

Capn. Joan de baluerde o antonio faxardo o franco. de bergara o a quien Poder de
qualqr. dellos obiere porq. con hazer el dho. entregó a qualqr. de los susodhos. o
a quien el poder de cualqr. dellos oviere e de auer Cumpdo. Por Razon de todos
los dhos. treynta y seis Lienzos manufactura y Costa dellos el dho. Capn. Joan de
Baluerde a de ser obligado de me dar y pagar mil quinientos pesos de a ocho
Reales en Reales de plata doble Por qta. de los cuales Confieso aber Rdo. del
susodho. trezientos pesos De ocho Rs. en plata doble y Los tengo en mi poder de
que me doy Por bien contento y satisfho. a mi voluntad sobre q. Renuncio Las
leyes de la Pecunia entrega y Ruo. Como en ellas se conte. = y los mill y
doçientos pesos Restantes yo el dho. Capn. Joan de baluerde me obligo de
Pagarselos/ al dho. franco. de Zurbaran en esta manera trezientos pesos dellos le
entregare quando el susodho. me hiziere el entrego de los dhos. tres quadros
Grandes q. an de yr en esta flota deste año de seisos. y qta. y siete = y a cada tres
quadros Grandes q. despues de los tres Referidos me entregare Le yre dando
otros treçientos Pesos Cada Vez q. me entregare dhos. tres quadros = y la Resta q.
quedare se lo Pagare quando el dho. franco. zurbaran me acaue de entregar el
Resto De dha. pintura [entre rengiones: q. a de ser acabado para Pasqua de flores
de seistos. y qta. ocho como dho. es] Por q. a Cada plazo y Paga me a de poder
exar. Como por deuda liquida Con solo esta escripta. y el Juramto. del susodho. y
difiero la prueba de todo qdo. sea neceso. de la execon. desta escripta. Porq. dello
Le relebo Con lo qual por mi pte. queda ajustado el Cumplimo. de Lo convdo. en
mi obligacion y La de mi El dho. franco. de zurbaran a de ser Como dho. es de
hazer y acabar Los dhos. treynta y seis Lienzos de la medida forma y calidades
Referidas y si no Los hiziere o parte alga. dellos o en algo faltare a la exon. Deste
Contrato y Consierto he por bien quel dho. Joan de baluerde se pueda concertar
con otro maestro del dho. mi arte para q. lo haga y Cumpla Lo q. aqui quedo
obligado y por lo que mas Le costare costas daños e yntereses que se le
reCrecieren y por lo q. E rescuido por todo y a cada cosa dello me Pueda
executar Como por deuda Liquida con solo esta scripta. y su Juramto. y
Declaracion de quien del dho. su poder oviere en que difiero La prueba de
quanto sea necesario. pa. que aya lugar La via exeua. porq. dellas le releuo usando
y que puedan ussar me compelan y apremien q. Cumpla este Concierto lo uno o
lo otro qual mas quisiere sin que por aber enpeçado a usar de un medio o por la
una vida se perjudiq. su dero. en cosa alga. Para vsar del y por el qo. = y en esta
conformd. ambos otorgtes. aprovamos y ratificamos esta scripta. y para el
cumplimto. della obligamos nuestras personas y vienes de Cada vno de nos
abidos y Por aber y damos poder a las Justicias ante qnes. esta carta pare. en
expecial a las desta ciudad de Seua. a Cuyo fuero y Juresdizion yo el dho. capn.
Joan de Bauerde me someto y Renuncio el mio propio domicilio y Vecindad en
Lima pregmática de las Juricaciones Como en ellas se pe. Para q. a ello nos
executen Compellan y aPremien Como por sentencia Passada en Cossa Juzgada,
Renunciamos las leyes y derechos de nuestro fauor y la q. defiende la genl.
Renon. y desta scripta. Consentimos se puedan sacar qualesqr. treslados
libremente = fha. La carta en Seua. en Beynte y dos de mayo de mil y seystos. y
qta. y siete y los otorgtes. a qn. yo el sno. publico Doy fe q. Conozco lo firmaron
en este rego. = Testigos Joseph de Escovar y Anto. ga.____

  franco. de Zurbaran
  Juan manuel de dueñas

  Joan de Valverde
  Joseph de escovar

  anto. garcia
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Fig. 1.1: Francisco de Zurbarán. St. Lucy. Oil on Canvas
The National Gallery of Art, Washington D. C. c. 1636.
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