The Pulpit and the Brush

The Pulpit and the Brush:
Preaching and Painting in Seventeenth-Century Spain

Pablo Pérez d'Ors
Christ Church
University of Oxford

Supervised by
Prof. Jonathan Thacker
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Abstract (300 w.)

The Council of Trent re-examined the traditions of the Catholic Church regarding the role of the visual arts in worship. Equipped with a humanistic mindset steeped in Greco-Roman rhetoric, the leading clergy came to value paintings, first and foremost, for their ability to stir the viewers' emotions, giving rise to a new understanding of religious images. Such a stance, common in early modern Spain, encouraged the employment of images and words as different but compatible instruments that converged to achieve a common goal, making an emotionally arresting impression on the viewer or listener. The Church regarded this strategy as the most effective way of engaging with the laity.

Contemporary printed sermons show how Spanish churchmen developed new styles of preaching based on their understanding of classical rhetoric, which helped them elicit the desired emotional reactions in the context of Catholic liturgy. One such technique, inspired by medieval meditation literature, involved using word painting to summon vivid, emotive images in the mind of the listener. Preachers couched in similar language their references to inner visions and to physical images (chiefly altarpiece paintings but also portable canvases produced from the pulpit unexpectedly), which highlights their perceived equivalence. Such practices became common and shaped the public's visual culture.

The experience of hearing sermons played a decisive role in the development of religious art. Preachers circulated ideas to which only a small educated elite had access, and did so from a position of authority. As part of a congregation, artists and art patrons absorbed this knowledge, which informed their making and dissemination of new iconographies. A comparison of artistic and oratorical examples as well as theoretical literature from the period reveals that painters and preachers employed similar criteria in judging what type of details and ornamentation were pertinent to a specific painting or sermon.

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Abstract (2168 w.)

The present thesis aims to make a contribution to the social history of sacred oratory and religious painting in seventeenth-century Spain. My research stems from the observation that sermons and religious paintings formed a symbiotic unity with one another, which can be better understood through an interdisciplinary study. Such an approach provides a more textured view of the unique set of circumstances that influenced the expectations of artists and their patrons, as well as the public's responses. By focusing on the interface between painting and sacred oratory, the present work explores how the Church understood sacred art and how a particular way of looking, informed by classical rhetoric, conditioned both the making of art and the way in which preachers interpreted art for the laity.

The study of sermons poses some unique challenges, since they are a literary as well as a performative genre and also occupy an awkward no-man's-land between literary and religious studies. Despite its interest and importance, sacred oratory remained a virtually unexplored aspect of Spanish early modern culture for most of the twentieth century, with a few notable exceptions (Mir 1906, Herrero 1942, Alonso 1968). A tentative catalogue (Herrero 1971) and a ground-breaking doctoral thesis in this Faculty (Smith 1978) spurred other studies from the 1980s onwards (Fumaroli 1984, Cerdán 1985 and 1993, Herrero 1996-2001). My understanding of sermons, the circumstances of their preaching and their social relevance is indebted to these works. As the field was slowly mapped out, other scholars began to realise the great potential of sacred oratory in regard to emerging trends in art history (Dávila 1980), which scholars outside of Spain had applied to art of other periods and places (Baxandall 1971). A later work focusing on iconographical matters (Rodríguez 1990) specifically pointed out the decisive roles which Spanish seventeenth-century preachers played both as interpreters of art for their congregations, and as sources of rhetorical and iconographical knowledge for painters. The present thesis follows those directions, as others have also attempted (Ledda 2003, González 1999 and 2015). My research has benefitted from some of their findings, to which I now contribute new case studies to complement their sometimes overly theoretical approaches.

My research is circumscribed to the seventeenth century, a period that can be regarded as the 'Golden Age' of the interface between paintings and sermons; this chronological framework completes a recent work that covers up to 1630 only (González 2015). The primary source of my research is printed sermons, which record the event (or multiple events) of a sermon's actual delivery in the most complete and authoritative way available, as well as reaching a wider audience through their circulation as books or pamphlets. Another two characteristic literary genres from the period, preaching manuals (such as the 1579 *Rhetorica Christiana* by Valadés, or the 1647 book of the same title by

Escardó) as well as artistic literature (chiefly treatises on painting such as the 1633 *Diálogos de la pintura* by Carducho and the *Arte de la pintura* by Pacheco, published in 1649), allow us to put sermons and paintings in context. Although I occasionally refer to sculptures, paintings are the main artistic genre covered in this thesis; besides being cheaper and therefore more prevalent, paintings were given pride of place in the artistic literature of the time.

Several strategies are used in the present work to reconstruct the connections between paintings and sacred oratory. A sermon may shed light on the images that were present at the time of its delivery (Chapter 3), or deepen our understanding of the paintings that were created in response to it (Chapter 4). In other instances, sermons that deal with the same subject-matter as a painting, or employ similar rhetorical techniques, can spark off interesting readings and insights regarding the painting's reception (Chapters 5 and 6).

Catholic Christianity negotiated a difficult balance between disparate and opposing aspects that generated tensions within its own tradition. Its culturally Greco-Roman background favoured the use of images that made the imagined sacred realm present in the everyday world; a literal reading of Christian Scripture, however, stemming from the Jewish tradition, condemned this as idolatry. The present thesis sets out by examining some key aspects in the history of rhetoric, the ancient art of persuasion, and ecclesiastical iconophilia, especially the set of arguments developed to explain why and how the faithful could interact with religious images. Long after it had lost its original civic function, ancient rhetoric became an educational resource whose effects ripple through the centuries in different manifestations, ranging from theories that focused on how religious images impacted the viewer's emotions, to medieval texts written by Franciscans and Poor Clares who deployed rhetorical mechanisms to create arresting mental images of Jesus's Passion.

The two introductory chapters highlight both the continuity with and the departures from tradition introduced by the Council of Trent in response to the sixteenth-century Reformation. The most notable novelty was what I call the rhetorisation of the religious image: the growing interest in the emotional reactions paintings elicited from their viewers came to displace all other considerations, becoming the fulcrum on which the virtue, or otherwise, of images hinged. Though superficially less problematic than religious images, the use of ancient (pagan) rhetoric in the context of Christian preaching came with its own set of problems, which the Catholic Church tackled in a different way than that with which it dealt with images. One characteristic early-modern development was what I term meditation sermons, in which preachers offered to a lay congregation in oral form the equivalent of a visual meditation text in the Franciscan tradition. The currency achieved by meditation sermons by 1600 probably reflects both the preference for what has been called 'directed spirituality' from around 1550, and the appearance of translations and adaptations of Medieval Franciscan texts into the Iberian languages in the earlier part of the sixteenth century.

Rhetorical knowledge, which had informed first the Church's stance regarding images and later the way preachers crafted and delivered their sermons, naturally developed into an interest in referring to physical images from the pulpit, which forms the subject of Chapter 3. Whether suddenly revealing a hidden image or discussing the altarpiece paintings that accompanied parishioners throughout their lives, the use of images became one more technique in the preacher's repertoire. Treatises on preaching discuss such possibilities and teach inexperienced preachers how to exploit them successfully. A particularly challenging aspect of dealing with printed sermons entails distinguishing between meditation sermons, laden with word-painting, and sermons in which the preacher used the same language to refer to actual paintings; in a few cases the text explicitly informs us that a particular painting was present as the sermon was being delivered. The physical context of the sermon's delivery can sometimes be reconstructed by different, paratextual, means. Sermons associated with the *Escuela de Christo*, a closed-membership religious society whose meeting places were decorated uniformly by statute, provide a unique case that has not been studied so far. Preachers approached images in different ways, sometimes giving simple explanations and at others proposing challenging readings against the grain. The present thesis makes a contribution towards a better understanding of the symbiosis formed by painted image and spoken word.

The intimate link between sermons and paintings also favoured the creation of new iconographies, an enticing possibility which, despite having been proposed for quite some time (Rodríguez 1990), nevertheless remained largely unsubstantiated. Chapter 4 deals with images created in response to the experiences of hearing sermons as well as reading printed sermons. Such is the case of three Marian iconographies that appeared or coalesced during the seventeenth century: the *Soledad*, a late sixteenth-century iconography that quickly became the most popular type of image among Spaniards; God the Father painting the Immaculate Conception, and the Passional Immaculate Conception, a hitherto little-known iconography. Creating, or commissioning, a painting of a religious subject based on a sermon bypassed the usual resistance of the religious establishment towards unconventional religious images, since preachers spoke with the authority of the Church, and printed sermons underwent further control before publication). Another case study, dealing with the now dispersed series that decorated the *Capilla del Cristo* at the convent of La Paciencia in Madrid, reveals the most disturbing consequences of the great powers that seventeenth-century Spaniards attributed to religious images. A hitherto unknown sermon by Diego Niseno, entitled *La sed más ilustremente penosa* (1631), popularised a particular interpretation of the events leading to the execution of a group of Portuguese New Christians at an *auto-da-fé*. Niseno's sermon, I argue, provided the basis for the commissioning around 1650 of a series of paintings to record the case, which in turn were later discussed by another preacher. Chapter 4 closes with an examination of an unusual painting, *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* by Velázquez, whose iconography, I believe, reflects contemporary theoretical discussions on preaching and prayer, rather than any one particular sermon or devotional text.

Spanish seventeenth-century preachers and painters were charged with the great responsibility of making the right kind of impression on the listener and viewer.

Discussions of what this result was, and how it was best achieved, abound in contemporary preaching manuals, treatises on painting, and in other literature on art. Chapters 5 and 6 deal with such matters from the point of view of *elocutio*, the part of rhetoric that regulated the use of non-essential ornament, and the related concept of decorum. Chapter 5 approaches these from a more general, theoretical angle. I single out specific features adopted from rhetorical terminology (*perspicuitas* and *amplificatio,* the latter encompassing sub-categories such as *antithesis*, *apostrophe*, *evidentia,* and *exemplum*) that were regarded as proper ornament for religious paintings, discussing examples of each. In Chapter 6, I study examples of disagreements related to *elocutio* that sometimes grew into explosive polemics, first over particular turns of phrase and uses of language by preachers spurred by the now famous *Censura de la Elocuencia* by José de Ormaza (1648). The feud between Ormaza and his detractors centred around the limits of *amplificatio*, and the unsettled question of what constituted a vain excess of ornament detrimental to the sermon. Strikingly similar and equally heated arguments about details in paintings interested artists and connoisseurs, which here I elaborate into opposing concepts of decorum. Each side of the argument held different opinions about such matters as whether a saint's martyrdom should be edifying or moving, if and when it was appropriate to include a little comic relief in a religious scene, and whether or not paintings of the Flagellation should reflect the most up-to-date research on the subject. Besides both framing their ideas in the same rhetorical terminology, discussions of ornament by preachers and painters came so close as to allow some crossover; preachers based their opinions on relevant paintings and, more often, artists quoted preachers as authoritative sources of information. Polemics and changes of opinion are revealing as to forms of competition between artists, as well as the religious and artistic environment in general.

Mirroring the introductory chapters, the epilogue briefly describes the dissolution of the symbiosis between preaching and painting that forms the subject of the present thesis. The arrival of the new Bourbon dynasty in 1700 brought about a gradual change of taste that affected both painting and preaching. Moving the listener or viewer ceased to be the paramount goal of sacred oratory and religious painting, respectively, in favour of plainer and more didactic homiletics, and restrainedly elegant depictions of religious scenes. In addition, reading slowly displaced images as the preferred form of religious experience and instruction. As a result, seventeenth-century art became so foreign to modern religious sensibilities that some ecclesiastical thinkers struggled to understand its complete lack of appeal (Guardini 1900). The rhetorical paradigm of the seventeenth century, however, recently made an unexpected return in Mel Gibson's 2004 blockbuster *The Passion of the Christ*. The film spurred arguments about decorum, in which its enthusiasts and detractors deployed the same arguments as Spanish seventeenth-century preachers and painters discussed in Chapter 6. This, together with the box office success of the film, suggests that early modern sensibilities are, perhaps, not as far removed from our current image-based culture as they seem, which may have surprising and interesting ramifications for museum curators (De Botton and Armstrong 2013).

The push, informed by rhetorical knowledge, towards conflating image and word in seventeenth-century Spain resulted in fascinating and sophisticated cultural products.

My research provides glimpses of the various and often unexpected ways in which preachers explained aspects of religious paintings, taught particular ways of looking at them, and brought them to life. It also allows us to peek into the minds of the artists and understand the decisions that give individual artworks their particular appearance. Together, sermons and paintings shaped the taste and imagination of ordinary seventeenth-century Spaniards. Despite the chasm between their peculiar brand of early modern Catholicism and our current globalized and largely secular worldviews, something in the mixture of image and word still speaks to our ability to be moved.

A mis padres

Preface

In seventeenth-century Spain, excessive popular enthusiasm turned sermons into a public health concern: some thought the average duration of one hour unreasonable for all but the fittest at the height of summer.[1] The same predicament closed down *corrales de comedias* during the hottest months of the year but, unlike plays, sermons could always be enjoyed free of charge. Men and women of the time crowded into churches to listen to sermons, the only part of the liturgy which they heard in their own language rather than Latin, and which was, like theatre, specifically crafted for their sensibility.[2] Churchgoers listened on as the preacher thundered against sin from the pulpit, wept when he described a martyr's last moments in a whisper, and looked intently when he referred to the images in the church. The wealth of Spanish seventeenth-century printed sermons kept in libraries in and outside of Spain indicates their immense popularity. Yet, this genre remains a notoriously unexplored field in comparison to others, as is customarily pointed out by the few who have ventured into this area of research – as early as 1906, M. Mir called sacred oratory 'the largest lacuna in the study of Spanish literature', and in 1993 Cerdán still considered it 'the worst-treated chapter in the history of Spanish literature, especially of the seventeenth century'.[3]

A literary and also a performative genre, sermons provide a fascinating subject of study, since the text in its printed form corresponds to the words spoken during the event,

[1] Hilary D. Smith, *Preaching in the Spanish Golden Age: A Study of Some Preachers of the Reign of Philip III* (Oxford: OUP, 1978), pp. 41–42.
[2] Theatre and sermons have been called 'las dos manifestaciones más populares de la cultura barroca'; Ana Martínez Arancón, *Geografía de la eternidad* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1987), p. 42.
[3] Alonso de Cabrera, *Sermones: con un discurso preliminar de don Miguel Mir*, ed. by M. Mir (Madrid: Bailly-Bailliére, 1906), p. xvii; Francis Cerdán, 'La emergencia del estilo culto en la oratoria sagrada del siglo XVII', *Criticón*, 58 (1993), 61–72 (p. 62).

or multiple events, of its actual delivery. Sermons were the only point of contact between most churchgoers and the world of the thinkers, poets, and mystics of the day, as well as with complex ideas about the images that were present in the church as the preacher spoke. Preachers crafted their sermons with great care to make them lively and engaging, and this often hinged on harnessing visual as well as aural resources. Therefore, the appeal of sermons, and in some cases even their basic meaning, cannot be understood separately from the context in which they were preached – a context consisting of a physical space inhabited by religious images, and also of certain practices (ways of listening, looking, imagining, and reacting) for which churchgoers received continued and regular training throughout their lives.

As I shall try to demonstrate, sermons and religious paintings were often designed to form a symbiotic unity with one another. The present dislocation of that unity, with paintings hanging on museum walls and sermons relegated to dusty neglect, allows us to appreciate Spanish seventeenth-century art in excellent environments that also ensure its preservation. However, we should bear in mind that in their present contexts the original unity is broken and, as a result, we may see paintings better but we understand less of them. My aim when I set off writing this dissertation was to redress this situation. Subsequently, my interest has gained depth through my work as a museum curator, which, despite the absolute disparity with Golden Age preaching in terms of agendas and means, also involves displaying and interpreting works of art for an audience trying to enhance their experience.

We can only scratch the surface of an artwork unless we understand the ways in which its original viewers thought of it, put it to work, and engaged with it. While

traditional art history focused on artists and their works, from the 1980s onwards a new 'social' history of art has emerged, one which endeavours to understand the context and, as Mary Beard has put it, bring viewers back into the picture of art.[4] The value of printed sermons in this regard can hardly be overstated, given the overwhelmingly religious nature of art in seventeenth-century Spain. Sermons often shed light on key art-historical issues: why a particular object looks the way it does, why it was made, and how it was used, received and appreciated by the public. Ignoring sermons, therefore, amounts in some cases to missing the mark altogether as far as Spanish seventeenth-century painting is concerned. Nevertheless, art historians have made little use of this abundant material, perhaps because literary scholars took a long time to break the ground.

Seventeenth-century sermons were generally dismissed as examples of bad taste until M. Herrero García, the father of modern studies in Golden-Age sacred oratory, reclaimed them in his *Sermonario clásico* (1942), highlighting their connection with other literary phenomena of the period.[5] Subsequently, the works of F. Herrero Salgado (1971 and 1996-2001), H. D. Smith (1978), M. Fumaroli (1984), and F. Cerdán (1985) have mapped out the names, contributions, sources and aesthetics of seventeenth-century Spanish preachers.[6] The past thirty years have seen a move towards a better understanding of Golden Age sacred oratory and a fairer assessment of its importance.

[4] Mary Beard, *How Do We Look: The Body, the Divine, and the Question of Civilisation* (New York: Liveright, 2018), p. 32.
[5] Miguel Herrero García, *Sermonario clásico: con un ensayo sobre la oratoria sagrada* (Madrid: Escélicer, 1942).
[6] Herrero García; Smith; Francis Cerdán, 'Historia de la oratoria sagrada española en el Siglo de Oro: introducción, crítica y bibliografía', *Criticón*, 32 (1985), 87–113; Marc Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence: rhétorique et "res literaria" de la renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* (Geneva: Droz, 1984; repr. 2002); Félix Herrero Salgado, *Aportación bibliográfica al estudio de la oratoria sagrada española* (Madrid: CSIC, 1971); *La oratoria sagrada en los siglos XVI y XVII*, 3 vols (Madrid: FUE, 1996–2001).

Catholic art from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also made a late arrival into the artistic canon. Until the mid-twentieth century, scholars wielded the term 'Baroque' to revile art seen as too complicated, excessively ornate, and opposed to the classical aesthetics of the Renaissance. This prejudice took long to dispel. The writings of art historians such S. Sitwell (1924), E. Mâle (1932), E. d'Ors (1944) and D. Mahon (1947) provided connoisseurial, theoretical, and iconographical insights into an art that was, and still is, not immediately accessible.[7] The emerging interest in the Baroque came hand in hand with an awareness of the importance of classical rhetoric for all forms of artistic expression in that period: 'Retorica e Barocco' was the title of a 1954 international conference organised in Venice by G. C. Argan, with contributions by the leading scholars of the field.[8] (This may be seen as a natural outgrowth of the revolution in Renaissance studies in the earlier part of the twentieth century, as scholars realised they could easily apply to the Baroque the insights and methods of art historians such as E. Panofsky.) Later, art historians such as M. Baxandall (1971) and R. Barthes (1978) deepened our understanding of the visual dimensions of rhetoric.[9] Despite these and other

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[7] Sacheverell Sitwell, *Southern Baroque Art: A study of Painting, Architecture and Music in Italy and Spain of the 17th and 18th centuries* (London: G. Richards, 1924); Émile Mâle, *El arte religioso de la Contrarreforma* (Madrid: Encuentro, 2001) [French orig. *L'art réligieux après le concile de Trente: Étude sur l'iconographie de la fin du XVIe, du XVIIe et du XVIIIe siècles en Italie, en France, en Espagne et en Flandre* (Paris: Collin, 1932)]; Eugenio d'Ors, *Lo Barroco* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1944; ed. by A. d'Ors and A. García Navarro, Madrid: Alianza Tecnos, 2002); Denis Mahon, *Studies in Seicento Art and Theory* (London: Warburg Institute, 1947). On the critical fortune of Spanish painting in Britain and France, see Nigel Glendinning, 'Aesthetics and Prejudice: Changing Attitudes to Spanish Art', in *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1920: Studies in Reception*, ed. by N. Glendinning and H. Macartney (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2010), pp. 130–38, and Gary Tintertow, 'Raphael Replaced: The Triumph of Spanish Painting in France', in *Manet/Velázquez: The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, exh. cat. Paris, Musée d'Orsay, and New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003), pp. 3–66.

[8] Giulio Carlo Argan, 'La "rettorica" e l'arte barocca', in *Retorica e barocco: Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Umanistici*, ed. by E. Castelli (Rome: Boca, 1954), pp. 9–14.

[9] Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350 – 1450* (Oxford: OUP, 1971); Roland Barthes, 'Arcimboldo, or Magician and

developments, the connection between Spanish seventeenth-century painting and sacred oratory, the most visible manifestation of rhetoric at the time, has not been made often and specifically enough. Knowledge of classical rhetoric lent preachers a particular way of looking at art to which artists responded, without always understanding it fully.

Studies focusing on this area were very few at the time of inception of my research, and have remained so ever since. The doctoral thesis of M. P. Dávila, *Los sermones y el arte* (1980) is an anthology of excerpts from sermons dealing with matters that may be of interest to art historians.[10] It is still a valuable resource, but the book fails to provide any interpretation of the material it contains. In a seminal essay published in 1990, A. Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos made a general, twofold claim: that the use of images by preachers as visual aids during sermons must have been widespread and that, conversely, artists must have been receptive to their frequent exposure to sermons.[11] Several later studies have attempted to substantiate that claim, including those by G. Ledda (2003), who nevertheless did not consider case studies to assess the practical implications of the ideas she discussed.[12] More recently, after examining the impact of rhetoric and sermons on the work of the sixteenth-century Valencian painter Juan de Juanes (1999), J. L. González García has produced a commendable if dense study (2015) of painting and preaching in Spain between around 1480 and 1630, which focused on theory rather than case studies and disregarded some of the most interesting

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Rhétoriqueur' (1978), in *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1985), pp. 129–48.

[10] María del P. Dávila Fernández, *Los sermones y el arte* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1980).

[11] Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos, 'La literatura ascética y la retórica cristiana reflejados en el arte de la Edad Moderna: el tema de la soledad de la Virgen en la plástica española', *Lecturas de Historia del Arte 2,* ed. by J. M. González de Zárate (Vitoria: Ephialte, 1990), 80–90 (p. 82).

[12] Giuseppina Ledda, *La parola e l'immagine: strategie della persuasione religiosa nella Spagna seicentesca* (Pisa: ETS, 2003).

developments in the later part of the century.[13] The present work draws on the insights of previous research in the field, and tries to open up new approaches to make a contribution to the study of the connections between Golden Age sacred oratory and religious painting.

Chapters 1 and 2 of this dissertation deal with the origins of the theoretical connections that made it possible for religious art and sacred oratory to exist, and to be thought of, in association with each other as parts of a system designed for a devotional purpose. The following chapters show the system in operation, and are a response to Rodríguez's invitation to pursue further research into his hypotheses mentioned above. The different uses that preachers made of paintings are discussed in Chapter 3, and Chapters 4, 5 and 6 look into the application of sermons and rhetorical knowledge by painters in the shaping of new iconographies (seen from the point of view of subject-matter in Chapter 4, and non-essential detail or 'ornament' in Chapters 5 and 6). Finally, the Epilogue mirrors the introductory chapters in presenting an account of how the weakening of the connections with sacred oratory led to the waning of religious art and to a decline in the role of the Catholic Church as a patron of the arts.

I have chosen to focus on paintings (although I make a few references to sculptures) and on printed sermons, since these are more accessible and numerous than manuscripts and received a wider distribution. My study is also restricted geographically to the Iberian realms and chronologically to the seventeenth century, roughly matching the reigns of Philip III, Philip IV, and Charles II. Though necessary for reasons of scope,

[13] Juan L. González García, '*Ut pictura rhetorica*: Juan de Juanes y el retablo de San Esteban de Valencia', *BMP*, 17.35 (1999), 21–56, and *Imágenes sagradas y predicación visual en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Akal, 2015).

these limits are not arbitrary, as I believe they frame the clearest examples of the topic. I have approached the task by putting together an account that is always close to the available historical sources and artefacts, offering some analysis of the causes and effects involved without venturing too far into the realm of theory. I have also tried to present my findings in an accessible way in consideration of the interdisciplinary nature of my research, so that it may be of use to art historians, as well as literary and religious studies scholars. Despite the widening gap between the secular and the religious in early twenty-first century society, my research should be of interest to anyone wishing to gain insights into central aspects of the lives of seventeenth-century Spaniards involving their imagination and creativity, their feelings and beliefs. I have tackled religious phenomena from a respectfully neutral position, dealing with them as cultural products from a philological and art-historical perspective. Future researchers will hopefully find in my work an invitation to explore the virtually inexhaustible field of Spanish Golden Age sermon literature.

Many people and institutions have helped me in many different ways in the long course of my research, making its completion possible. First of all, I am indebted to the Manuel Ventura Figueroa Foundation for a doctoral grant, and to Christ Church for a Hugh Pilkington Scholarship. The idea of my thesis grew out of my immersion in the world of the Spanish Baroque as an undergraduate at Universidad de Navarra, thanks to the eye-opening lectures and guidance of Ricardo Fernández Gracia, who has also been helpful and enthusiastic in later stages of my work. Coming from an art-historical background, I could have had no better guides into the realm of Golden-Age literature than Colin Thompson, my first supervisor who is now retired, and Jonathan Thacker, who

helped me bring my thesis to completion. Miguel Herrero Salgado, the leading scholar of Spanish seventeenth-century sermons, gave me his advice and encouragement, for which I am grateful. I would also like to thank the staff of the Bodleian, Duke Humphrey, Taylorian, and Sackler libraries in Oxford, Janet McMullin at the Christ Church library, and the staff at the British Library in London, the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, and the Frick Art Reference Library in New York. Miguel Herrero y Rodríguez de Miñón kindly granted me access to the collection of early modern printed sermons of his late father, Miguel Herrero García (1895–1961), which has recently been acquired by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. My gratitude also goes to the hospitaller Fr Óscar Jaunsarás and librarian Fr Javier Suárez at the monastery of San Salvador de Leyre, who allowed me to roam at leisure in their library. Many other people have been helpful to me in the course of my research over the last years, in many different ways; to name just a few, Dawson Carr, Peter Cherry, Elisa and Pía d'Ors, María Cruz de Carlos, Richard de Willermin, Simona di Nepi, John Elliott, Gabriele Finaldi, María Concepción García Gaínza, Susan Galassi, Siân Gibby, Helena Gómez de Córdoba, Tom Hardwick, Amaya and Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui, María López-Fanjul, Joaquín Lorda, the late Luisa Medina-Sidonia, Héctor Olán, Alejandra Peña, Ricardo Santiago, Jennifer Sliwka, and Eric Southworth.

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13. Unknown artist (Castilian), *Passional Immaculate Conception*, 17th century (cherubim added later). Oil on canvas, 126 x 88.8 cm. Madrid, private collection (Author's photo)
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15. Diego Velázquez, *Christ on the Cross (Cristo de San Plácido)*, 1632. Oil on canvas, 249 x 170 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado (Source: Wikimedia Commons)
16. Luis de Vargas, *Martirio del brasero del Cristo de la Paciencia*, c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 171 x 296 cm. Setades (Pontevedra), town hall, on deposit from Museo del Prado; destroyed by fire in 1976 (Source: Museo del Prado)
17. Francisco Fernández, *Judíos maltratando un crucifijo*, c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 168 x 294 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado (Source: Museo del Prado)
18. Francisco Camilo, *Profanación de un crucifijo*, c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 207 x 230 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado (Source: Museo del Prado)
19. Francisco Camilo, *Ultrajes al crucifijo*, c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 210 x 230 cm. Vilanova i la Geltrú (Barcelona), Museo Balaguer, on deposit from Museo del Prado (Source: Museo Balaguer)
20. Diego Velázquez, *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation,* c. 1628. Oil on canvas, 165.1 x 206.4 cm. London, National Gallery (Source: The National Gallery, London)
21. Juan Fernández de Navarrete, 'El Mudo', *Christ at the Column*, 1575. Oil on canvas, 371 x 232 cm. El Escorial (Madrid), Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Patrimonio Nacional (Source: Patrimonio Nacional)
22. Juan de Roelas, *Christ Collecting his Vestments*, 1624. Oil on canvas, 211 x 170 cm. Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz), Medina-Sidonia Collection (Source: Archivo Iconográfico FUE)

23. ‘Ploro’, engraving in John Bulwer’s *Chirologia: or the naturall language of the hand* (London, 1644) (Source: Google Books)

24. Antonio Mohedano, *The Virgin and Child with the Guardian Angel*, 1605-10. Oil on canvas, 148 x 114 cm. Antequera (Málaga), Museo de Antequera (©José Manuel Santos Madrid, IAPH)

25. Diego de Valadés, *Allegory of the Christian Orator*, in *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579), p. 10. Engraving (Source: Archive.org)

26. Hieronymus Wierix, *The Guardian Angel*, before 1619. Engraving, 94 x 63 mm. London, British Museum, 1859,0709.3149 (Source: Brisith Museum)

27. Doménikos Theotokópoulos, ‘El Greco’, *The Purification of the Temple*, 1570-71. Oil on panel, 65 x 83 cm. Washington DC, National Gallery of Art (Source: National Gallery of Art)

28. Doménikos Theotokópoulos, ‘El Greco’, *The Purification of the Temple*, 1572-73. Oil on canvas, 118 x 150 cm. Minnesota, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota (Source: The Minneapolis Institute of Arts)

29. Doménikos Theotokópoulos, ‘El Greco’, *The Purification of the Temple*, 1610-14. Oil on canvas, 126 x 98.5 cm. Madrid, Church of San Ginés (Source: Archivo Iconográfico FUE)

30. Juan de Juni, *The Entombment*, c. 1541-45. Polychrome and gilt wood, variable dimensions. Valladolid, Museo Nacional de Escultura (Source: Museo Nacional de Escultura)

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34. Letters Patent of Nobility of Petitioner Captain Domingo Castañeda Velasco, fol. 1^{v}, 1628. Illumination on parchment. New York, The Hispanic Society of America (Source: The Hispanic Society of America)
35. Juan Fernández de Navarrete, 'el Mudo', *The Holy Family with St Joachim and St Anne*, 1575. Oil on canvas, 370 x 232 cm. El Escorial (Madrid), Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Patrimonio Nacional (Source: Patrimonio Nacional)
36. Juan de Roelas, *St Anne Teaching the Virgin to Read*, 1615-16. Oil on canvas, 230 x 170 cm. Seville, Museo de Bellas Artes (Source: Fichero Iconográfico FUE)
37. Juan Sánchez Cotán, *The Last Supper*, 1618. Oil on canvas, 344 x 514 cm. Granada, Cartuja (Source: Fichero Iconográfico FUE)
38. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *The Holy Family with a Little Bird*, c. 1650. Oil on canvas, 144 x 188 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado (Source: Museo del Prado)
39. Juan Fernández de Navarrete, 'El Mudo', *Martyrdom of St James the Great*, 1571. Oil on canvas, 347 x 209 cm. El Escorial (Madrid), Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Patrimonio Nacional (Source: Patrimonio Nacional)

40. Carlo Loth (after Titian), *Martyrdom of St Peter of Verona*, 1691. Oil on canvas, 500 x 306 cm. Venice, Church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

Editorial Criteria and List of Abbreviations

When directly transcribing seventeenth-century texts, I have respected the original spelling, diacritics, and word division; in other instances, I reproduce the text as published in the secondary literature. Abbreviations are expanded in brackets. I have adapted to our current use early-modern typographic conventions such as initial and medial uses of *u* and *v*, as well as the two forms of lower-case letter *s* and the occasional use of grave accents. The original punctuation has been respected, except in cases where it creates ambiguity or obscures the meaning of a sentence.

The dimensions of paintings mentioned in this thesis are given in centimetres, height followed by width. The titles of seventeenth-century Spanish paintings are, with very few exceptions, simple iconographical descriptions, and do not form an integral part of the work of art. For the sake of clarity and consistency, I have referred to paintings by English titles throughout, using Spanish only for specific iconographies particular to Spanish-speaking countries (e.g. the *Soledad*), reflecting current use among art historians. All scriptural quotes in English are from the King James Bible.

The following abbreviations have been used:

#	denotes a number from a catalogue, series, list, or inventory
AEA	*Archivo Español de Arte*
Arte	Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura, de su antigüedad y grandeza*, ed. by B. Bassegoda i Hugás (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001)
BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos
BMP	*Boletín del Museo del Prado*
CDCT	*The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. by J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848)

CEEH	Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica
CSIC	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DHEE	*Diccionario de Historia Eclesiástica de España*
Discorso	Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre e profane* (1582), ed. by P. Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, 3 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1960–62), II (1961), pp. 117–517
FUE	Fundación Universitaria Española
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MS	Manuscript
OC	*Ordinis Carthuensis* (appended to the name of a Carthusian)
OCD	*Ordinis Carmelitarum discalceatorum* (appended to the name of a Discalced Carmelite)
OFM	*Ordinis fratrum minorum* (appended to the name of a Franciscan)
OP	*Ordinis Praedicatorum* (appended to the name of a Dominican)
OSC	*Ordinis Sanctae Clarae* (appended to the name of a Poor Clare)
OUP	Oxford University Press
PG	Patrologia Greca series, ed. by J. P. Migne
PL	Patrologia Latina series, ed. by J. P. Migne
SJ	*Societatis Jesu* (appended to the name of a Jesuit)
TPSO	*Teoría de la pintura del siglo de oro*, ed. by Francisco Calvo Serraller (Madrid: Cátedra, 1981)

Chapter 1

Introduction

> ‘One of the most remarkable and difficult-to-describe qualities of consciousness is visual imagery. How do we create a visual image of our living room? Of a roaring mountain brook? Of an orange? Even more mysterious, how do we manufacture images unconsciously, images which guide our thoughts, giving them power and color and depth? From what store are they fetched?’[1]
>
> Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach* (1979)

The Greek Orthodox monastery of St Catherine in the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, is believed to be the world’s oldest operating Christian monastic community; Egeria’s *Itinerarium*, written around 383, reports a coenobium on the site. The monastery treasures an icon of the Crucifixion (Fig. 1) dated to the second half of the ninth century, a period in which the Latin-Hellenistic culture was still flourishing in the East. The painting’s tiny size, 16.6 by 13.9 centimetres, makes it comfortable to hold in one hand to contemplate from close up, thus revealing an inscription that runs along the four edges of the panel as a fictive frame. The inscription, written almost certainly by the same person who painted the figures, takes the time-honoured form of a classical Greek epigram, only here the message of the couplets is unmistakably Christian:

[1] Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (New York: Basic Books, 1979; repr. 1999), p. 364.

+τις ου κλονειται κ(αι) φοβειται κ(αι) τρεμ(ει)
επι ξυλου σε <νε>κρον ω σωτερ βλεπων
ριγνυτα τον χειτωνα της νεκρωσεως
αφθαρσι<ας> δε τη στολη σκεπ<ασμενον>

Who would not be confounded, be in fear and tremble
Seeing you, O Saviour, dead on the cross;
Who rent the garment of death
And is covered with the robe of incorruption?[2]

This is not a poem about Christ's death, but a poem about a Crucifix, and about a devout Christian's experience of looking at it. Throughout the present thesis, I want to answer some of the questions raised by the combination of image and words in the icon: What is the point of juxtaposing text and image, and how does this union work? How do the words affect our experience of the image, and how does the image colour our reading of the poem? Who was meant to use this image, and how?

In his study of inscriptions on paintings, M. Wallis uses the term 'semantic enclave' to refer to signs of a different kind than those found in the main body of an artwork. By way of analogy, he mentions the fragments written in French and English in *War and Peace*, which in the Russian original look like islets of Latin script surrounded by Cyrillic text.[3] Writing, as Wallis did, across the Iron Curtain in the 1970s, a shade of hostility tinges his comparison of paintings and inscriptions to mutually unintelligible languages, as does the choice of a politically charged simile like 'enclave', suggestive of checkpoints and barbed wire. Because of their fundamental difference, in Wallis's view, a tension arises between images and words when combined. This twentieth-century attitude runs counter to those that prevailed in earlier periods, which enabled the creation

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[2] Kathleen Corrigan, 'Text and Image in an Icon of the Crucifixion at Mount Sinai', in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. by R. Ousterhout and L. Brubaker, Illinois Byzantine Studies 4 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), pp. 45–62 (p. 50).
[3] Mieczysław Wallis, 'Inscriptions in paintings', *Semiotica*, 9.1 (1973), 1–28 (p. 3) [Pol. orig. 'Napisy na obrazach', *Studia Semiotyczne*, 2 (1971), 39–64, trans. by Małgorzata Szubartowska].

of artefacts like the Sinai icon – a smooth amalgam of image and words that couch Christian theology in the language of ancient rhetoric. Only through its hybrid character does the icon realise its potential to communicate, as its maker knew. As I shall try to demonstrate, Spanish seventeenth-century preachers and painters explored this possibility to the full. What that symbiosis is, how it was produced, and how it affected each component is one of the central concerns of this thesis.

In this chapter I shall deal with the ideas that enabled the complex conflations of text and image in the Spanish Golden Age, which ultimately arose from the rift between two different, and sometimes opposite, backgrounds: the Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian worlds. This exploration will take us from ancient rhetoric to the foundations of Christian art, and from medieval texts designed to make the reader shed tears to the rediscovery of Antiquity in the Renaissance. But, to begin at the beginning, the Sinai icon brings us to a foundational tale about art recounted by the Roman writer Pliny the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus, CE 23–79). Pliny reports that the uncertain inventor of linear drawing, 'Philokles of Egypt, or Kleanthes of Corinth and Telephanes of Skyon', his precise identity obscured by the mists of time, combined contour lines 'with inner markings, and from this went on to add the names of the personages they painted'.[4] In similar fashion, Aelian (Claudius Aelianus, CE c. 175–235) wrote that when the art of painting was in its earliest stages, 'animals were so crudely represented that the painters would write an inscription, "this is an ox, this is a horse, this is a tree"'.[5] Both accounts present the conflation of image and word as primitive and ancient, going back to the very

[4] Pliny, *Natural History*, ed. by H. Rackham, LCL, 10 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938–63), IX (1952; repr. 2003), XXXV. 16.
[5] Aelian, *Historical Miscellany (Varia Historia)*, ed. by G. P. Goold, LCL 486 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 320–21.

origin of painting. It is perhaps implied that after such genesis images are incomplete without their missing half, like humans in the myth that Aristophanes recounts in Plato's *Symposium*. An often-quoted line by Plutarch (CE c. 46–c. 120) ascribes to the fifth-century BCE poet Simonides of Cos the topos of the parallel between visual and verbal arts: 'painting is mute poetry, poetry is painting with speech'.[6] Greco-Roman culture regarded words and images as naturally complementary and somehow equivalent, and among its most characteristic images were representations of its various anthropomorphic deities.

In contrast with the Greeks, who enshrined sculptures of their gods embodied in beautiful human forms, Abraham, the first Patriarch, is presented in the Jewish tradition as an idol-smasher, probably the first in history.[7] The Decalogue begins with what Diarmaid MacCulloch has described as 'the longest and most verbose of the commandments', which proscribes unambiguously: 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God […]' (Exodus 20:4-5, repeated in Deuteronomy 5:8-9).[8] Judaism is a text-based religion that, from its earliest inception, defined itself in contradistinction with the idol-worship of its neighbours. In time, this would create difficulties when Christianity spread throughout the Greco-Roman Mediterranean.

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[6] Plutarch, 'Were the Athenians More Famous in War or in Wisdom?', trans. by Frank C. Babbitt, in *Moralia*, LCL, 15 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927–76), IV (1936), 492–528.
[7] A *midrash* in the Babilonian Talmud tells the story of a rebellious young Abraham destroying the idols that his father made and sold; *Bereishit Rabbah* 38:13.
[8] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* (London: Penguin, 2010), p. 443.

Ancient Christianity took shape in the cosmopolitan melting pot of the Roman-dominated East Mediterranean, where local peoples and religions had a long history of struggle, interaction, and fascination with outside influences. The Egyptian cults of Osiris and Ammon were added to the Roman pantheon, while mummy portraits dating from roughly the same period, themselves a foreign novelty that incorporated the painting techniques of Greek artisans, indicate that Egyptians had enthusiastically adopted Roman hairstyles and other fashions.[9] It is only in this context that Christianity could have been conceivable, a religion that has as its central figure a Messiah (heralded by the Jewish prophets) who was the Son of God (like Bacchus), born of a virgin (like Isis), was killed, descended to the netherworld, and rose again to save mankind (like Orpheus), and was encountered thereafter by his initiated followers in sacrificial mystery rites (like those of Mithras or Cybele); these and other narratives had come to form what Miguel Herrero terms a religious *koine*, a lingua franca that made synergies and interactions possible.[10] Foreign texts were adopted and reinterpreted, and the ensuing ideas were put into local plastic and literary forms. But, as we shall see, this diversity carried within it tensions which were difficult to reconcile and would resurface periodically in the following centuries, causing heated polemics regarding images, such as the iconoclastic crises of the eighth century and, of course, the Reformation in the sixteenth.[11]

Christianity spread in a cultural context shared by the three writers who made the remarks on images mentioned above: Aelian the teacher, Plutarch the essayist, and Pliny,

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[9] See Susan Walker, *Ancient Faces: Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000).
[10] See Henk Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion I*: *Ter Unus* (Leiden: Brill, 1990); Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui, *Tradición órfica y cristianismo antiguo* (Madrid: Trotta, 2007), p. 19.
[11] See Joan M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), and Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Smashing Images: The Iconoclastic Controversy (726–843)', in *A History of Christianity*, pp. 442–56.

a polymath with a penchant for the arts. All three were well versed in rhetoric, the ancient discipline governing the most effective use of language. Rhetoric originated in Greece, in the fifth century BCE, as a civic tool, in response to the need of every free Athenian male to speak for himself in the public realm.[12] Aristotle's writings on rhetoric formed the basis for later elaborations by Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero, BCE 106–46) and Quintilian (Marcus Fabius Quintillianus, CE c. 35–c. 100), which became the fundamental sources for later practitioners. The rhetoric familiar to Aelian, Plutarch, and Pliny functioned principally as an educational resource, which allowed it to permeate fields other than civic oratory and made its survival possible when its original function had been superseded. Among the notions inherited from ancient rhetoric, perhaps the most significant (especially following its rediscovery in the Renaissance) were, first, that the creative process starts as an activity of the mind before the idea takes material form; and second, that creation of any sort is a communicative process that is completed when a subject receives the message and responds to it.

Ciceronian oratory divides the art into five parts: invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and action. Invention deals with finding subject-matter; disposition and elocution are concerned with the order of the discourse and its ornamentation, whereas action and memory deal with the delivery of the oration and its preparation, respectively. It is in invention that rhetoric comes closest to the other arts, in that it involves creative thinking prior to the use of any external medium. As Fernando Bouza has argued, from the nineteenth century the dominant trends in epistemology have privileged conceptions

[12] This section is largely based on Evonne Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 44–46, and Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

of thinking as based primarily on language. Ideas are now often seen as closely related to words, with a bias towards written rather than spoken words. In contrast, ancient theories were image-based in that the process of thinking was understood as pictorial rather than verbal.[13] As Mary Carruthers put it:

> The emphasis upon the need for human beings to 'see' their thoughts in their minds as organized schemata of images, or 'pictures', and then to use these for further thinking, is a striking and continuous feature of medieval monastic rhetoric, with significant interest even for our own contemporary understanding of the role of images in thinking.[14]

In ancient rhetoric, the image-like quality of ideas was to be matched by their expression; for example, the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* discusses the technique of *ante oculos*, using words in such a way that the listeners believe that they are seeing what the orator describes, while Quintilian maintained that 'oratory fails of its full effect (…) if its appeal is merely to the hearing and (…) not displayed to the eyes of the mind'.[15] The implications of this claim will become clearer as we see how later authors expanded on it.

Quintilian's mention of 'the full effect' of rhetoric raises the question of what this should be. Early on, the Sophist Gorgias had characterised words as *phármakon*, a drug capable of powerfully affecting the emotions of the listener, and Plato, though uncomfortable with the power of words to manipulate, conceded that rhetoric must have an influence upon the soul. Later, Aristotle wrote in his *Rhetoric* the first comprehensive treatise on the passions, establishing rhetoric's psychological foundations. Aristotle defined the three principal modes of persuasion as *ethos* (the moral characteristics of the

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[13] Fernando Bouza, *Comunicación, conocimiento y memoria en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII* ([Salamanca (?)]: Sociedad Española de Historia del Libro; Sociedad de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas, [1999]), especially pp. 21–22.
[14] Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), p. 3.
[15] Quintilian (Marcus Fabius Quintilianus), *The Orator's Education*, ed. by Donald A. Russell, LCL, 5 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), III, Book VIII. 3. 62.

speaker induce trust), *pathos* (creating a suitable emotional disposition facilitates persuasion) and *logos* (proof by logic). He placed the same emphasis on all three, but later rhetoricians set *pathos* above *logos* (rhetoric as style, or secondary rhetoric) or *logos* above *pathos* (rhetoric as moral argumentation, or primary rhetoric). Cicero defined the three aims of rhetoric as *movere* (to move), *docere* (to teach), and *delectare* (to please).[16] Cicero and Quintilian after him acknowledged the necessity of instruction and delight, but stressed the importance of *movere* over the rest.[17]

Further developing the themes of thinking through images and the powers of words to move, Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, BCE 65–27) put forward in his *Ars poetica* two ideas which were to have particular resonance in the centuries to come: the first, that the orator has to be moved with the same emotion which he tries to arouse in his audience: 'If you want me to weep, you must first feel grief yourself'; the second, that images stir the spectator's emotions more than words, 'What comes through the ear affects the emotions less vividly than what is presented to the faithful eyes'.[18] The connection between images and *movere* was picked up in later treatises on literary aesthetics, like pseudo-Longinus's *On the Sublime*, in which 'narration' is substituted by 'lively representation', and the anonyomus *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, long attributed to Cicero.[19] Quintilian developed this into the concept of *enargeia*, which could be broadly

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[16] Vickers, pp. 35–74.
[17] George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, 2nd rev. edn (Chapel Hill, London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 36, 38; Levy, pp. 44–45; Vickers, pp. 35–78 and 19–20.
[18] 'Si vis me flere, dolendum est / primum ipsi tibi'; 'Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures, / Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus / Et quae sibi ipsi tradit spectator'; Horace*, Epistles Book II and Epistle to the Pisones ('Ars Poetica')*, ed. by N. Rudd (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), ll. 102–03 and 180–82.
[19] Pseudo-Longinus, 'On the Sublime', in *Poetics. English and Greek*, ed. and trans. by W. H. Fyfe and others, LCL 199 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), Ch. 25; María Vieira Mendes, *A oratória barroca de Vieira* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1989), p. 152.

described as word-painting, 'an image of the matters that is, in a way, painted by the words'.[20] He also categorised sub-species of *enargeia* such as *ekphrasis* ('a description of a work of art or architecture, imagined or actual'), *prosopopeia* ('used to describe vivid action, to give vividness to fictive speeches'), or *ethopeia* ('the word-portrait of a person, actual or imaginary'). In Carruthers's words, Quintilian described 'a rhetorical use of images to persuade'.[21]

Such ideas were part of the education that was still imparted across the Roman world in the fourth century, when Christianity became the Empire's dominant religion. From being an ethnocentric Jewish sect, the new faith rapidly came to be adopted by neophytes who were culturally Greco-Roman. The biblical prohibition of images was totally alien to non-Jews and, naturally, was soon forgotten or ignored in the context of a culture which, as we have seen, favoured a conception of the working of the human mind as based on images. The ideas and figures of the emerging Christian religion were expressed in some of the artistic languages of the old culture, giving birth to the first forms of Christian art. Religious images were thus a reality before any coherent theory was proposed regarding their legitimacy and proper use. In the early fourth century, Eusebius of Caesarea records a tradition according to which Jesus himself sent his image to King Abgar V of Edessa; true or not, this story seemed fascinatingly plausible in Eusebius's milieu.[22] When, eventually, Christian images were brought into question with arguments taken from the Hebrew Bible, the ensuing debate was in itself a reflection of its cultural context: unlike the discussions of the contemporary Talmudic rabbis, who

[20] Quintilian, IV. 2. 63.
[21] Carruthers, pp. 130, 133.
[22] *Historia ecclesiastica*, in PG, 20, I. 13. 5–22.

confined their arguments to the limits of their own religious tradition, the early Church Fathers came to the defense of images with notions drawn from Greco-Roman rhetoric, the same ideological background which had promoted the adoption of images in the first place.

Initially, the theologians later known as the Fathers of the Church raised the question of whether the use of religious images is licit in Christian worship. The question arose from a threefold problem: a lack of basis in the Gospels, fear of contravening the biblical prohibition of idolatry, and the association of images (especially sculpture) with paganism – the earlier Fathers were writing when the memory of the pagan persecutions was still fresh, and in a culture full of what they would have characterised as idols. Their arguments provided the basis for the doctrine that regards religious images as licit and beneficial, which, following MacCulloch, I shall term theological iconophilia.[23] Despite the passages in the Hebrew Bible condemning idolatry, iconophiles argued that the use of Christian images was not an idolatrous practice. St Basil the Great (c. 330–379) coined the expression that almost every future text on images would quote or paraphrase: 'imaginis honor refertur ad prototypum', by honouring an image one honours that which the image represents.[24] (Later thinkers explored the implications of the words 'image' and 'prototype', as we shall see.) Further theological argument was provided by St John of Damascus (c. 675–c. 749), who maintained that the reason behind the Jewish prohibition was that before Christ's Incarnation God was not visible, and therefore could not be represented. According to him, after God was made man, and thus visible, the

[23] See MacCulloch, pp. 442 and 445.
[24] *De Spiritu Sancto,* Ch. 18, in PG, 32, col. 149c.

prohibition was superseded.[25]The idea that Christ, the Virgin or the Saints can be adored through physical representations without the faithful committing idolatry seemed to accord with Paul's dictum that God's invisible qualities can be understood by means of the visible reality of creation (Romans 1:20). In one form or another, these ideas recur down the centuries, leaving their trace in the writings of St Nicephorus (c. 758–828), among others.[26]

Hence, the Fathers also proceeded to comment on the virtues of images. A homily of St Basil attests the early presence in Christian thought of what might be termed the devotional argument – that seeing an image may encourage one's faith: 'Brave deeds of war, either depicted with words by eloquent men or in pictures by painters, both have often given strength to many.'[27] Here Basil formulated one of the subsequent pillars of Christian art: the perceived affinity between 'eloquent men' and painters, which arises from the fact that both can prompt a reaction in the faithful Christian. The idea has clear roots in Roman rhetoric: as Plutarch reports Simonides to have done, Basil compares poetry and painting as artistic creations and, like Quintilian, he observes that the reason for their equivalence is the fact that they prompt similar responses. It is no coincidence that such an assertion should appear in a sermon penned by a famous preacher; indeed, Basil lived at the time when Christians began to make ancient rhetoric their own, despite its associations with pagan culture. St Augustine of Hippo (354–430) served as a bridge figure, being both the last of the ancient rhetoricians and the first of the Christians, as

[25] St John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, in PG, 94, col. 1171.
[26] See PG, 94, col. 1170, and St Nicephorus, *Apologeticus pro sacris imaginibus*, in PG, 100, col. 590.
[27] 'Res in bello fortiter gestas, tum eloquentes homines saepe numero, tum pictores exprimunt, illi sermone ornantes, hi tabulas delineantes, et utrique multos ad fortitudinem excitarunt'; St Basil the Great, *Homilia XIX, In sanctis quadraginta martyres*, in PG, 31, cols. 507, 510.

Fumaroli observed.[28] Though rhetoric would occasionally continue to be rejected as extraneous to Christianity, it was pivotal to later attempts to exploit the potential of images, as will be seen in due course.

The best-known arguments in favour of religious images, however, are the ones that commend their usefulness as pedagogical tools. The first expression of this idea is to be found in relation to the veneration of relics (an association that would recur during the Council of Trent, twelve centuries later), in the writings of a contemporary of St Basil, St Gregory of Nyssa (c. 330–c. 395), who put forward in a nutshell what may be called the pedagogical argument. Showing a sensibility ahead of his time, he noted the off-putting appearance of relics, and then pointed out how this might be alleviated by means of a dignified display and a complement of images depicting the story of the relevant martyr, a story that onlookers may understand as if they were reading a book (*tamquam in libro*).[29] Like Basil two centuries earlier, St Gregory the Great (Pope Gregory I, c. 540–604) stressed the difference between reading paintings and adoring them: 'One thing is to adore a painting, and another thing is to learn what one should adore through the content of a painting'.[30] Interestingly, this comes in a letter written to rebuke a bishop who, fearing idolatry, had destroyed images, which introduces us to both the phenomenon of iconoclasm and the suspicion that laypeople engage with Christian images in unorthodox ways, two clerical attitudes that will reappear time and again. Also, like his namesake Gregory of Nyssa, Pope Gregory understood that a sacred *historia* can be transcribed into

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[28] Levy, pp. 45–46. On Augustine, '… on a le plus souvent retenu l'exposé de la "doctrine chrétienne", sans y voir … le dernier des grandes traités de rhétorique latine avant la chute de l'Empire d'Occident'; Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence*, pp. 70–71.

[29] St Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio laudatoria sancti ac magni martyris Theodori*, in PG, 46, cols. 738–39.

[30] 'Aliud est enim picturam adorare, et aliud per picturae historiam quid sit adorandum addiscere'; St Gregory the Great, *Epistolarum libri IX*, in PL, 77, col. 1027.

images, specifically declaring that images are *libri idiotarum,* ‘the books of the illiterate’, subsidiary to texts: ‘paintings belong in churches, so that the illiterate may at least see on the walls what they cannot read in books’.[31] This pedagogical argument was to be paraphrased by many others.[32]

Besides helping those who cannot read, the experience of looking at images can have a powerful effect on the viewer. In another letter to a priest, expressing his approval of a request for images, Pope Gregory also noted that images may encourage moral stamina to persevere in the faith:

> [...] seek Him, whose image you wish to have before your eyes, with all your heart and intention so that, seeing Him each day with your bodily sight, you become experienced in turning to Him inwardly when you look at a picture of Him. [...] I know indeed that you don’t ask for the image of your Saviour in order to adore it as a god, but so that, by remembering the Son of God, your love for Him whose image you wish to see will become strengthened. [...] And the image itself brings the Son of God to memory like writing, gladdening our spirit with the Resurrection or softening it with the Passion.[33]

He argues that looking at images of Christ strengthens the believer’s love for him in preparation for the moment when he may see him face to face. The second part of the text contains the related point that images remind the onlooker of what they represent, an act that is emotionally charged. The idea underpinning this argument is typical of late-antique and medieval conceptions of memory based on ancient rhetoric (especially the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, dating from the 80s BCE), which Carruthers has studied in depth:

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[31] ‘[...] pictura in Ecclesiis adhibetur, ut hi qui litteras nesciunt saltem in parietibus videndo legant quæ legere in codicibus non valent’; St Gregory the Great, *Epistolarum libri IX,* in PL, 77, cols. 1027–28.
[32] See St John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, in PG, 94, col. 1171; Nicephorus, *Apologeticus pro sacris imaginibus,* in PG, 100, col. 755.
[33] ‘[…] illum toto corde, tota intentione quaeris, cujus imaginem prae oculis habere desideras, ut te visio corporalis quotidiana reddat exercitatum, ut dum picturam illius vides, ad illum animo inardescas. […] Scio quidem quod imaginem salvatoris nostri non ideo petis, ut quasi Deum colas, sed ob recordationem filii Dei in ejus amore recalescas, cujus te imaginem videre desideras. […] Et […] ipsa pictura quasi scriptura ad memoriam Filium Dei reducit, animum nostrum aut de resurrectione laetificat, aut de passione demulcet’; St Gregory the Great, *Epistolarum liber IX,* in PL, 77, col. 990.

> [...] memory images are composed of two elements: a ‘likeness’ (*similitudo*) that serves as a cognitive cue or token to the ‘matter’ or *res* being remembered, and *intentio* or the ‘inclination’ or ‘attitude’ we have to the remembered experience, which helps both to classify and to retrieve it. Thus, memories are all images, and they are all and always emotionally ‘colored’. Pre-modern psychologies recognized the emotional basis of remembering, and considered memories to be bodily ‘affects’; the term *affectus* included all kind of emotional reactions.[34]

The distinction, which seems clear to the twenty-first century reader, between being reminded of Christ and being encouraged in the faith, is therefore often erased in medieval texts.

St John of Damascus (c. 675–749), the last of the Fathers I shall discuss here, echoed in his works most of the arguments of his predecessors and further developed Pope Gregory’s ideas about the mnemonic virtue of images. He thought of it both as the way in which the physical presence of an image acts as a reminder of what it represents (*res*), and as the emotional charge attached to the act of remembering (*intentio*):

> Christ’s deeds were recorded in writing to perpetuate memory in order to teach those of us who were not present, so that by hearing and believing we may deserve to be blessed by the Lord. And so, because not everybody is drawn to letters or has time for books, it appeared to the Fathers that those should be put in images, as if they were a brief commentary so that people may see them as clear facts. It often happens, and rightly so, that when we are not thinking of the Passion of the Lord enough, seeing an image of Christ’s crucifixion refreshes our memory of the Passion, and we adore the gist, not the matter, but Him whom the image represents.[35]

The discussion presents images and words as equivalent, and is controlled by the notion of memory. The last sentence describes how images remind the viewer of the Passion, the *res* being the gospel narration and the *intentio* moving him or her to use the visible means of the image, as St Basil termed it, to adore the invisible substance of what is represented.

[34] See Carruthers, p. 14.

[35] ‘[...] ex quo haec omnia [Christ's deeds] gesta sunt, visaque ab hominibus fuere, litteris subinde tum memoriae alendae gratia, tum eorum qui his presentes non fuerunt, edocendorum, mandata sunt; ut qui ea non viderimus, audiendo atque credendo digni simus qui beati a Domino praedicemur. Verum quia non omnes litteras norunt, nec legendis libris vacant, inde Patribus visum est, ut haec in imagines, tamquam in commentarium brevius, velut preclara facinora, referrentur. Saepe sane contingit, ut cum de passione Domini minime cogitamus, conspecta crucifixionis Christi imagine, in salutiferae passionis memoriam revocemur, et cernui, non materiam, sed eum cuius est imago, adoremus [...]’; St John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa,* IV. 16, in PG, 94, col. 1171.

In 787, the second Council of Niacea would give official status to this argument.[36] The text also contains obvious references to Pope Gregory's pedagogical argument, but with the difference that any person, not only the illiterate, may profit from the use of images; this is suggested by the use of the first-person plural in the last sentence of the excerpt. St John of Damascus also mentioned the concept of imitation, in association with memory: 'And likewise, by seeing the remarkable deeds [of saints depicted in images], we are encouraged to be strong and strive for their virtue and imitate it, and praise God'.[37] Here the *intentio* impels onlookers in several directions: it encourages their faith, and incites them to imitate the virtues of the saints and to praise God.

The Middle Ages have not been generally regarded as a period in which ancient rhetoric flourished, although it continued to inform the arts of memory and literary composition.[38] The main area of development occurred in relation to meditation, as part of the approach to anthropology, epistemology, and the theory of literary artistic creation that Carruthers labelled as 'the aesthetics of *mneme*'. The polysemous term 'meditation' is here used to designate the craft of constructing and handling mental images, built in part on the ideas of Pope Gregory and John of Damascus mentioned above. Human memory was believed to operate with mental images which, acting as cues, call up matters with which they have been associated in one's mind. According to Carruthers, the artistic tradition of *mneme* disappeared at the end of the twelfth century, 'not because

[36] The canons decreed that 'Because the more frequently they see them represented in images, the more vividly those who look at them are roused to remember and strive for the originals, and kiss them and give them honorary adoration' ('Quanto enim frequentius per imaginalem formationem videntur, tanto qui has contemplantur, alacrius eriguntur ad primitivorum earum memoriam et desiderum, et his osculum et honorariam adorationem tribuendam'); *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. by Norman P. Tanner, 2 vols (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), I, 135.
[37] 'Itemque per egregia virorum facinora, ad fortitudinem, et virtutis ipsorum aemulationem et imitationem, necnon in Dei laudes excitamur'; St John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, in PG, 94, IV. 16.
[38] 'Remember Heaven: The aesthetics of *mneme*', in Carruthers, pp. 60–115.

[…] some wholly new cognitive practices came into being', but owing to demographic changes affecting the audience for which art had been produced until then.[39] Expanding on this, I shall argue that fundamental aspects of this tradition in fact survived through scholasticism and the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) and his followers, to which I now turn.

It is worth pausing to examine Aquinas's episthemology because, besides providing the framework by which ancient rhetoric was later rediscovered, it dominated the Spanish Golden Age. The concept of a mental image as the object of metaphorical seeing is a key point in his system: in the same way as physical objects are known by the five external senses, mental images or *phantasmata* are known by the three internal senses: *imaginativa*, *cogitativa*, and *memorativa*.[40] These *phantasmata* proceed from sense perceptions, and represent external objects to the mind. Here, Aquinas's theory comes close to the theory of *mneme*. The difference lies in the understanding of the nature of representation in the mind. In the older theory this is perceived as mnemonic, focusing on the function it serves and not on the reason why it does so. Authors in this tradition are interested in the fact that a mental image calls up a *res* and an *intentio*, and see this as a fruit of training in the art of meditation. For Aquinas, the nature of representation is mimetic: a sense image represents an external object to the mind because there is a likeness between the two. For that reason sense images are sometimes referred to as *imagines* or *species* (both meaning 'images'), and *similitudines*

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[39] Carruthers, p. 5.

[40] My understanding of Scholastic aesthetics is based on Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. by H. Bredin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988) [Ital. orig. *Il problema estetico di Tommaso d'Aquino* (Milan: Bompiani, 1982)], and the editors' comments in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Blackfriars edn, 65 vols (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963–68), XII, 167, 190, 192, and 195; XIII, 49–50, 55, 67, and 83.

('likenesses'). These concepts are close enough to be used indistinctly sometimes, but they also have a precise meaning. To understand the relationship between ideas, *phantasmata* and paintings, it is helpful to look into these distinctions in more detail.

Most of Aquinas's discussion of the term *imago* comes in the context of his examination of the relationship between the different persons of the Trinity, and of St Hilary's explanation of how the Son is an image of the Father.[41] He explains that an image is made after, and in likeness of, something else, in terms of shape, colour, and other qualities perceived through sensory experience. The concept of 'image' is in part built on that of likeness, but is more specific: image involves likeness, but includes the idea of being a sort of copy, suggesting intentionality and purpose (like Basil's terms 'imago' and 'prototypum', discussed on p. 10, above). On several occasions Aquinas also studies specifically the process by which ideas become physical forms through the work of an artisan, in relation to the question of ideas in God's mind being exemplary causes of things. From this angle, all creatures are in the divine mind, just as a piece of furniture is in the mind of its maker. In this context the word 'idea' is decisively linked with the concept of form, understood precisely as exemplary cause, so ideas are forms not only inasmuch as they are images, but also according as they are formable, workable: as Eco explains, 'an idea, properly speaking, is a form of something that can be made'.[42]

The same theoretical framework, with its underscoring of the connections between images and ideas, made possible the development in the Late Middle Ages of an important literary tradition regarding visual meditation. Devotional texts were composed in which the word-painting mechanisms of ancient rhetoric aid the reader in picturing

[41] *Summa*, Ia, q. 35, *ad* 2.
[42] Eco, pp. 123 and 167–68.

scenes from the life of Jesus or the saints. This practice serves a penitential objective: to 'arouse feelings of remorse in the penitent that […] move the will to contrition'.[43] In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary for the meditator to collaborate in the process. As we shall see in due course, one of the most interesting characteristics of this practice lies in the fact that it is a mental exercise for which beginners need a form of training. The stages in this process have been described as 'sensible recollection', 'emotional reflection', and 'moral application'.[44] The first step consists in summoning a mental image after reading a text. After this comes the emotional reflection, which entails allowing the details of the image to arouse feelings such as shock, pity, and remorse. Here, the onlooker becomes emotionally involved in the picture, the point being that the whole process should culminate in a strengthening of faith or a resolution to repent.[45]

It can be difficult to differentiate between texts that discuss how the will is affected by physical images and those that deal with the practice of visual meditation. The chief characteristic of the latter lies in the engagement of the practitioner's emotions with the mental image in a purposeful attitude, contemplating the scene as if it were present to his or her bodily eyes with the intention of experiencing the feelings this may arouse. An extraordinarily rich body of meditation literature, traditionally ascribed to the Franciscan Order, began as early as the second half of the thirteenth century with St Bonaventure (Bonaventura di Fidanza, 1221–1274). His *Lignum Vitae* consists of forty-eight meditations on the life of Christ, with special emphasis on the Passion and other

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[43] Denise Despres, *Ghostly Sights* (Norman, OK: Pilgrim, 1989), p. 5.
[44] I use Elizabeth Salter's description of the practice (*Nicholas Love's* Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ, ed. by Elizabeth Salter, Analecta Cartusiana, 10 (Salzburg: Analecta Cartusiana, 1974), p. 158), quoted in Despres, p. 6.
[45] Despres, p. 6.

passages in the Gospels that stress Christ's humanity. Each meditation endeavours to engage the reader in the active process of creating a mental image, with the eventual aim of working a change in his or her life. A paradigmatic example is the passage on Christ's scourging in the *Lignum Vitae*:

> By Pilate's cruel decree, they had him tied up in sight of his mockers, so that with most cruel ropes his flagellators could rend his virginal and very white flesh, inflicting wound upon wound, bruise upon bruise [*plagas plagis, livores livoribus crudeliter infligentes*]. His most precious blood trickled down the sacred sides of this innocent and most loving youth [...] And you, lost man, if you think about the cause of all this madness and pain, how would you not break forth with tears? Here the most innocent lamb, to save you from a fair condemnation, chose to be condemned in an unjust trial. [...] [A]nd you, my wicked and impious soul, neither repay the gratitude of devotion, nor respond with a feeling of compassion![46]

First, Bonaventure evokes a mental image by means of descriptive language that foregrounds in a visual way the physical details of Christ's suffering, which come to the reader as if he or she had been there at the time. The rhetorical technique of contrast makes the scene more striking; for example, the author lingers on the delicateness of Christ's flesh and then on its antithesis, the visual consequences (blood, wounds and bruises) of the cruelty of the torturers. Then, he prompts emotional reflection with a question addressed at the reader in the second person singular ('And you…'; we encountered this mechanism in the Greek couplets of the Sinai icon), to draw out the theological connection between the scene and his or her life. Christ's innocence condemned is contrasted to the reader's deserved damnation, pardoned through Christ's

[46] '[Pilate] crudeliori mandato nudum in conspectu derisorum astare praecepit, ut atrocissimis verteribus virgineam illam et candidissimam carnem flagellatores truculenti divellarent, plagas plagis, livores livoribus crudeliter infligentes. Defluit ille sanguis pretiosissimus per illa sacra latera innocentis et amantissimi iuvenis, nullo prorsus in eo repertu reatu. Et tu, perdite homo, totius confusionis et contritionis huius causa existens, quomodo non in fletum foras erumpis? Ecce, innocentissimus Agnus, ut te a sententia iustae damnationis eriperet, iniusto propter te preelegit iudicio condemnari. […] et tu, anima mea nequam et impia, nec devotionis exsolvis gratitudinem nec compassionis rependis affectum!'; *Lignum Vitae,* in Saint Bonaventure, *Doctoris seraphici* [...] *opera omnia*, 10 vols (Quaracchi: ex typographia collegii Sancti Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), VIII (1891), 77.

redemption, which makes the reader acutely aware of his or her sins and of the need for divine mercy.

This tradition of imaginative and affective meditation became very popular, and left a lasting and characteristic imprint on late medieval piety. A good example of this kind of meditational work is the pseudo-Bede's *De meditatione passionis Christi per septem diei horas,* which, as the title indicates, its author conceived as a series of visual meditations, one for each of the seven liturgical hours. One of the interesting features of this book is that its preface specifically instructs the reader to attain the desired feelings of compunction by imagining him or herself present within the meditation scene.[47] Accordingly, in the meditation for Matins, the author not only uses the mechanisms found in the *Lignum Vitae*, but introduces the reader into the narration, making him or her interact with the other characters in order to create the sense of immediacy appropriate for an effective emotional reflection:

> You would say to John, who was there too: 'Oh John, how is it that our Lord and Master is there, like that?' Think how Peter and John grieved seeing this [...] Some slapped his most peaceful face, others hit his sweet, eloquent mouth with the back of their hands [...] others spat on his pleasant face, others tore hair from his beard [...] What would you do, if you saw this? Would you not throw yourself on your Lord saying, 'Please, don't do so much evil to my Lord! Here I am, do it to me [...]', and on your knees you would hug your Lord and Master, willingly accepting the blows upon yourself.[48]

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[47] 'Necessarium etiam esse, ut aliquando ista cogites in contemplatione tua, ac si praesens tum temporis fuisses, quando passus fuit. Et ita te habeas in dolendo, ac si Dominum tuum coram oculis tuis haberes patientem, et ita ipse Dominus praesens erit, et accipiet tua vota'; Bonaventure, *De meditatione passionis Christi per septem diei horas libellus*, in PL, 94, col. 561.

[48] 'Dices etiam Joanni, qui etiam praesens erat: O Joannes, quomodo stat ibi Dominus et magister noster? Cogita qualiter dolebant Petrus et Joannes haec videntes. [...] Alii dabant palmas in serenissimam faciem ejus, alii manu versa percutiebant dulcissimum et mellifluum os ejus, alii in collum ejus sanctissimum, alii spuebant in faciem ejus benignissimam, alii evellabant sanctissimam barbam ejus […]. Quid ergo tu facies, si haec videris? numquid projiceres te super Dominum tuum, et diceres: Nolite jam, nolite facere tantum malum Domino meo? Ecce me, facite mihi, et Domino meo tantas injurias non progetis. Et tunc amplexareris flexis genibus Dominum tuum, et magistrum tuum, et susciperes libenter super te percussiones'; *De meditatione passionis Christi per septem diei horas libellus*, in PL, 94, col. 561.

This text demonstrates how authors working in the Franciscan tradition attained increasing levels of sophistication, exploring rhetorical techniques to create more compelling, vivid, and emotionally engaging texts for meditation.

As Fleming observed, the wide body of apocryphal literature that circulated under Bonaventure's name gives us a measure of his popularity. The most remarkable of the 'pseudo-Bonaventures' is the *Meditaciones Vitae Christi*, probably written in Tuscany around 1300 by an anonymous Franciscan or Poor Clare (the part dealing with the Passion circulated separately under the title *Meditaciones Passionis Christi*).[49] The *Meditaciones* are, like the pseudo-Bede, originally connected to the liturgy of the hours and intended for a monastic readership. As in other meditation books, the starting-point is a visual and emotional interpretation of the gospels. However, the *Meditaciones* exhibit a freer handling of the imagination to engage the reader's curiosity, for example, through speculation about the early life of the Virgin in meditation number three ('On the life of the Virgin Mary before the incarnation of her son'), or to create new apocryphal dramatic scenes which lend themselves to emotional reflection, as in number seventy-two ('How Jesus predicted his death to his mother'). Scriptural accuracy is subordinated to the aims of visual meditation, as the author himself acknowledges in the most obvious cases. For example, meditation seventy-two begins by stating 'Here we can insert a very beautiful meditation, which is nevertheless not mentioned in Scripture' ('Hic potest interponeri

[49] John V. Fleming, *An Introduction to Franciscan Literature of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977), p. 212; Sarah McNamer, *Meditations on the Life of Christ: The Short Italian Text* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018).

meditacio valde pulchra de qua tamen scriptura non loquitur)', interpreting scriptural silence as an invitation to creativity.[50]

The continuity between the *Meditaciones* and the tradition begun in the *Lignum Vitae* is evident, not only in its genre but also in the language; for example, the expression used to describe the physical details of Christ's sufferings in the meditation on the Flagellation is 'bruise upon bruise, and wound upon wound' ('livor super livorem et fractura super fracturam'), which reveals a close dependence on its source in Bonaventure's *Lignum Vitae* ('plagas plagis, livores livoribus').[51] The book also shows '[...] close and explicit connections with a rich tradition of Cistercian meditative literature of the twelfth century', especially with the works of St Bernard of Clairvaux, whom Fleming calls 'a friar *avant la lettre*'.[52]

The *Meditaciones* epitomisethe type of visual and affective meditation literature that came to be thought of as quintessentially Franciscan. This tradition was to be continued by several fourteenth-century authors, including members of other orders and communities all over Europe. For example, visual meditation and affective piety characterized the spirituality associated with the *devotio moderna*, many features of which can be traced back to the *Meditationes*.[53] There is also a strong connection with the Carthusian order, whose foundational statutes prescribed for its members a life devoted to silence and solitary meditation. The *Vita Christi* by the Carthusian Ludolph of Saxony (1295–1378), another widely read classic of late medieval piety, reveals an influence of

[50] *Iohannis de Caulibus Meditaciones Vite Christi, olim S. Bonaventurae attributae*, ed. by Mary Stallings-Taney, Corpus Christianorum continuatio mediaevalis, 153 (Turnholt: Brepols, 1997), p. 240.
[51] *Meditaciones de Passione Christi, olim S. Bonaventurae attributae*, ed. by Mary J. Stallings (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1965), pp. 106–08; compare with Bonaventure's wording in *Lignum Vitae,* in *Opera omnia*, VIII, p. 77.
[52] See Fleming, pp. 242, 192.
[53] Fleming, p. 247.

the *Meditaciones* '[...] crucial both in conceptual and stylistic terms'; his work, usually referred to in Spanish as 'el Cartujano', was widely circulated and translated.[54]

Besides the application of classical rhetoric to meditation, important developments took place during the Middle Ages regarding the way religious images were understood. Theologians studied the tradition of ecclesiastical iconophilia that they had inherited and, without adding new arguments, arranged the existing corpus into a coherent and easily remembered system, best exemplified by Aquinas:

> The reason for the displaying of images in churches is threefold. First, to teach the illiterate, so that by means of them they may be educated as through books. Second, so that the mystery of the incarnation and the examples of the Saints should be more present in our memory, when they are represented daily to the eyes. Third, to arouse feelings of devotion, which are more easily excited through things seen than through things heard.[55]

This threefold scheme is underpinned by the division of the three faculties of the soul: understanding, memory, and will, as first discussed in St Augustine's treatise *De Trinitate*.[56] Teaching ('instructio') pertains to understanding, and in this category Aquinas places the pedagogical argument. The mention of images in relation to 'sanctorum exempla' is connected to memory, or rather to its cognitive aspects (*res*). None of the emotional aspects of remembering (*intentio*) appear in Aquinas's brief reference to memory; he does not exclude them, but regards them as relating to the will, to which the devotional argument ('ad excitandum devotionis affectum') clearly belongs.

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[54] Fleming, pp. 247–48. Nicholas Love, who translated the *Meditationes* into English in the early fifteenth-century with the title *The Blessed Mirrour of the Lyf of Jhesu Christ*, was also a Carthusian.

[55] 'Fuit autem triplex ratio institutionis imaginum in Ecclesia. Primo ad instructionem rudium, qui eis quasi quibusdam libris edocentur. Secundo ut incarnationis mysterium et sanctorum exempla magis in memoria essent, dum quotidie oculis repræsentantur. Tertio ad excitandum devotionis affectum qui ex visis efficacius incitatur quam ex auditis'; St Thomas Aquinas, *Super Sent.* III. d. 9, q. 1, a. 2, qc. 2, ad 3. For the reception of Aquinas's theory, see Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford: OUP, 1972), p. 41.

[56] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, in PL, 42 (1865), cols 819–1098 (col. 894, X. 12).

Since his arguments are not in themselves original, Aquinas's contribution to the discussion of religious images may appear to lie simply in the characteristically organised manner of its presentation. However, the presentation is, in this case, of consequence. Before Aquinas, authors upheld the use of images by commenting on their virtues, whereas Aquinas thought of images as necessary aids to the human capacity for relating with God. There is a meaningful difference between Gregory's saying that the illiterate can learn through pictures instead of books, and Aquinas's maintaining that pictures remedy the limitations of human understanding. Aquinas's anthropology connects images with the faculties of the soul, therefore highlighting their affinity with the human mind in general rather than seeing them as an occasional didactical aid. Of course, this step and the connections which it opens up may be interpreted as related to Aquinas's conceptualisation of 'idea' as a workable image: ideas are the basic units in the human mind, and they can be exteriorised as physical images which therefore retain a special affinity with the faculties of the mind.

Although intellectually less ambitious than Aquinas, the Franciscan mystic Bonaventure also wrote on the role of religious images in the context of Christian worship. His discussion followed the pattern and order devised by Aquinas, with its same threefold division of the faculties of the soul, and treatment of the arguments under each of these. Like Aquinas, Bonaventure reduced memory to its cognitive aspect. However, Bonaventure's most original and influential contribution came in his discussion of the effect of images on the will:

> Similarly, [images] were introduced because of the dullness of [our] emotions so that those whose devotion is not excited by the deeds that Christ did for us when they perceive them through hearing, may be greatly aroused to devotion when they see the same in figures and paintings as they see things that are present to their bodily eyes [*tanquam praesentia oculis corporeis cernunt*]. Because our emotions are more greatly affected by things seen, than by things heard, as Horatius

noted: 'the emotions are less aroused by what we hear, than by what is presented to the trustworthy eyes'.[57]

Aquinas limited himself to observing that emotions are more effectively aroused by what we see than by what we hear, following the well-known passage in Horace's *Ars poetica*, but Bonaventure stresses the importance of will compared with the other two faculties, discussing it in greater length and introducing new ideas. First, he acknowledges that the public for which images are destined is heterogeneous, composed of individuals of different temperaments; those whose devotion is not excited by words may be in greater need of the assistance of images and obtain more benefits from it than others. This differentiation is subtler than one simply based on literacy, and the author's awareness of the public may be drawn from his experience as a preacher and his knowledge of rhetoric.[58] Besides, Bonaventure's description of looking at images as if the subject were 'present to the bodily eyes' establishes a firm connection with the practice of visual meditation and the pseudo-Bede's advice that the reader should picture a scene in the mind as if he or she were present (see p. 20, above). The rhetorical pedigree of such approaches is evident since both, of course, ultimately derive from the technique of 'ante oculos' discussed by Quintilian and *ad Herennium* (see p. 7, above). This particular way of looking at images, together with Bonaventure's stress on the will, were immensely

[57] 'Introductæ enim fuerunt propter triplicem causam, videlicet propter simplicium ruditatem, propter affectuum tarditatem, et propter memoriæ labilitatem. Propter simplicium ruditatem inventæ sunt ut simplices, qui non possunt scripturas legere, in huiusmodi sculpturis et picturis tanquam in scripturis apertius possint sacramenta nostræ fidei legere. Propter affectuum tarditatem similiter introductæ sunt, videlicet ut homines qui non excitantur ad devotionem in his quæ pro nobis Christus gessit, dum illa aure percipiunt, saltem excitentur, dum eadem in figuris et picturis tanquam præsentia oculis corporeis cernunt. Plus enim excitatur affectus noster per ea quæ videt, quam per ea quæ audit. Unde Horatius: *'Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem, / quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quae / ipsi sibi tradit spectator"*; St Bonaventure, *Expositio in quatuor libros sententiarum*, 4 vols, in *Opera omnia*, III, 203 (III. d. 9, a. 1, q. 2, co. 1).
[58] Bonaventure composed sermons as well as a treatise on preaching; see *Opera Omnia*, IX (1898), p. 8.

influential for later thinkers and writers, painters and preachers, as we shall see in due course.[59]

We have surveyed a long span of time, from Pliny and the birth of painting to the Sinai Crucifixion icon, from Basil's defence of religious art to Bonaventure's receptivity to its emotional impact, and from the jealous God of the first Commandment to the visible sufferings of Christ in late medieval literature. We have seen new attitudes arise from a revision of older texts, and innovations grow on ground fertilised by earlier tradition. Ancient rhetoric inspired many of these developments, providing the vocabulary and the theoretical background to understand the image-like quality of ideas and the mechanisms through which words conjure up images and images stir the emotions. Rhetoric was regarded as the model of *Ars* or art, and categories borrowed from rhetoric were used in understanding what now we should call the processes of creativity, composition, and communication.[60] The concept of 'visual rhetoric' did not make its first appearance until the 1970s, initially in the fields of semiotics and communication in contemporary culture, but the importance of rhetoric within early modern artistic theory was well recognised before then.[61]

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[59] For an example of a preacher quoting Bonaventure's theory of the image in the late fifteenth century, Baxandall, p. 41.

[60] See Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953; repr. 1990), pp. 70 and 72–74; also Carruthers, passim.

[61] Roland Barthes, 'The Rhetoric of the Image', in *Image, Music, Text,* ed. and trans. by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp. 32–51.

Chapter 2

Rhetoric and Images in the Early Modern Period

> ‘Tú me mueves, Señor, muéveme el verte
> clavado en una cruz y escarnecido,
> muéveme el ver tu cuerpo tan herido,
> muévenme tus afrentas, y tu muerte’
>
> From an anonymous 17th-century sonnet.

The Sinai icon of the Crucifixion, discussed at the beginning of the previous chapter, subtly harnessed words in a predominantly painterly medium. The same symbiosis reappears, almost eight hundred years later, as the butt of a well-known joke that found its way into several seventeenth-century literary works.[1] In *Don Quixote* Cervantes introduces Orbaneja, a lazy and unskilled painter from the remote Andalusian town of Úbeda who needs to write on his paintings for the subject-matter to be recognised.[2] The Sevillian painter and writer Francisco Pacheco (1564–1644) made his literary debut in 1605 with a poem built around the same anecdote; he later included an improved version in his influential treatise on painting, *Arte de la pintura*:

> Sacó un conejo pintado
> un pintor mal entendido;
> como no fue conocido,
> estaba desesperado.

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[1] See Maxime Chevalier, *Cuentecillos tradicionales en la España del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Gredos, 1975), G3, pp. 153–56, and Milton A. Buchanan, ‘Short Stories and Anecdotes in Spanish Plays’, *Modern Language Review*, 4.2 (January 1909), 178–84, and 5.1 (January 1910), 78–89 (5.1, p. 78).
[2] Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, ed. by Francisco Rico (Madrid: Alfaguara, 2004), II. 3. 4 and II. 71. 8.

> Mas halló un nuevo consejo
> para consolarse, y fue
> poner de su mano al pie
> de letra grande, conejo.[3]

The difference between the Sinai icon and Orbaneja's daubings lies in the fact that they occupy opposite ends of the cultural spectrum, in respect of both the divide between sacred and profane and between what may be called, for want of better terms, high art and popular culture – crude paintings of animals were sometimes used as tavern signs.[4] But both paintings are also fundamentally similar. Each achieves its goal, one as a devotional object and the other perhaps as an advertisement, by conflating images and words. Only through that mechanism does the object realise its potential to communicate, and thus its purpose. Orbaneja is therefore a good starting place to explore the origins and workings of the symbiosis between images and words in seventeenth-century Spain which, as I shall argue, will help our understanding of religious images in the period.

The earliest studies on the theme of the bad painter treated it as a 'cuentecillo tradicional', as Maxime Chevalier called it; if this were so, it would be one more example of a popular tale being adapted in *culto* literature. Against this view, Javier Portús has argued that the bad painter is in fact an example of the opposite phenomenon: a tale originating in ancient literature (Pliny and Aelian; see p. 3, above), which Golden-Age writers borrowed and reshaped into the folksy tale it was later thought to be.[5] Early modern readers such as Gabriele Paleotti, whom we shall encounter later, regarded Pliny

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[3] Both poems can be found in *Arte*, p. 457.
[4] The 'Taberna del Águila' in Madrid, for example, may have been marked with a sign bearing that image. See José del Corral, *Gentes en el Madrid del XVII: formas de vida en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Sílex, 2008), p. 153.
[5] Javier Portús Pérez, 'Un cuentecillo sobre la mala pintura: Orbaneja', in Miguel Morán Turina and Javier Portús Pérez, *El arte de mirar: La pintura y su público en la España de Velázquez* (Madrid: Istmo, 1997) pp. 117–27 (p. 123).

and Aelian as truthful historians of ancient art.[6] The significant implication is the currency of the belief that, in their earliest, barest form, paintings were a rather unsophisticated amalgam of image and word. Historicity aside, this was well received in the context of Golden-Age Spain, in which the intimate interconnection between images and words was often exploited to its best effect. As an aethiological myth, this narrative was germane to the reality that seventeenth-century Spanish painters encountered when they approached religious images – a reality that had largely been shaped by the Council of Trent (1545–1563).

We should begin the present exploration by studying the decrees of the Council concerning religious images and sacred oratory. In each case, we shall look into how these relate to earlier texts discussed in the previous chapter, and how these ideas were expanded and transformed in the decades immediately following the Council. Particular attention will be paid to the impact that contemporary interest in ancient rhetoric had on these responses to the decrees, and to the enhanced awareness of the ability of images and sermons to affect the emotions. Finally, we shall address the connections between early modern sacred oratory and earlier devotional literature, in order to understand how one of the most typical seventeenth-century genres, the meditation sermon, became widespread as the religious climate of the age grew increasingly distrustful of the use of religious literature by laypeople.

[6] Pacheco likely knew of the anecdote through a quotation from Aelian's text in Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre e profane* (1582), ed. by P. Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, 3 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1960–62), II (1961), pp. 117–517 (bk 2, Ch. 33, 'Delle pitture oscure e difficili da intendersi', pp. 410–11).

TRENT AND THE RHETORISATION OF RELIGIOUS IMAGES

The Council of Trent discussed the status of religious images in the Catholic Church in its twenty-fifth and final session, which convened on December 3 and 4, 1563. The goal was to counter the Protestant view that iconophilia gave rise to superstitious practices, lacked scriptural basis, and constituted idolatry.[7] Beyond a theoretical objection, some Reformers actually encouraged (or at least condoned) iconoclasm. Iconoclastic riots in France and the Low Countries, peaking in the 1560s, terrified the Catholic party into an armour-plated defense of images.[8] Significantly, images were discussed together with a related and equally polemical topic: the roles of the Saints and their relics. However, Protestant criticism also woke the Council up to the need to prevent 'abuses', meaning superstitious or excessive reverence towards images verging on idolatry. Even as the Synod set out to define the limits of orthodoxy in a climate of dissent, the doctrinal position set forth at Trent constituted a reform from within after a thorough examination of traditional theories about images.

Trent brought about what may be described as a rhetorisation of the image: the sacred character of religious paintings and sculptures became identified with, and limited to, the effects that they produced on the viewers. This is not stated in as many words in the decree, and the comprehensive list of authorities may give the reader the impression that no changes or novelties were introduced. Nevertheless, a closer look will reveal a dampening of the non-rhetorical elements present in the tradition and a greater emphasis

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[7] The precise positions of the different Reformers, and their evolution, fall beyond the scope of the present work. For a nuanced analysis, see Hans Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), esp. Ch. 2, 'A Tragedy for Art?', pp. 27–37.
[8] See the editors' introduction to Johannes Molanus (Jan Vermeulen), *Traité des Saintes Images*, ed. by F. Boespflug, O. Christin and B. Tassel (Paris: Cerf, 1996), pp. 11, 13.

on those originating from classical rhetoric. The ensuing change was as noticeable in its consequences as it was inconspicuous on the written page.

The only argument mentioned in the decree that is not directly related to ancient rhetoric is St Basil's dictum that religious images make present to the faithful that which they 're-present', enabling him or her to pay honor (see p. 10, above). This idea is prominently featured in the text: 'the honour which is shown [to images] is referred to the prototypes which those images represent', a quotation which opens up the discussion by asserting the theological legitimacy of images in response to Protestant critiques.[9] However, the argument is presented as following logically from a previous negative statement ('not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, on account of which they are to be worshipped… but because the honour which is shown them is referred to the prototypes'). And the text goes on to illustrate the point with examples of the kind of reverent attitude images should inspire ('… the images we kiss, and before which we uncover the head and prostrate ourselves').[10] The argument takes a self-referential form: images are to be kept and honoured because they encourage viewers to kiss them, remove their hats, and so on, and by so doing they honour the spiritual realities represented in the images.

'Showing honour' may thus be seen as one particular reaction that religious images elicit. The next paragraph of the decree expands on the effects images have on the viewers, described in terms of the latter's 'profit'. In the light of the rest of the text, images were thought to make present individually to each particular viewer that which

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[9] *CDCT*, p. 235.

[10] *CDCT*, pp. 234–35. The original text reads: 'Imagines porro Christi, deiparae Virginis et aliorum sanctorum in templis praesertim habendas et retinendas, eisque debitum honorem et venerationem impertiendam, non quod credatur inesse aliqua in iis divinitas vel virtus'.

they represent, and their sacredness existed only insofar as individual viewers engaged with and responded to them. It was the possibility of this interaction that made an image worthy of reverence; other than that, Catholic orthodoxy as dictated by the Council denies the image any supernatural power or value. Religious images are identified with their role as instruments subservient to an end, and the aesthetic value of the work of art in itself was of little concern, which underlines the prevalence of the mnemonic approach in the early modern period.

While much can be deduced from the brief text of the Council's decree on religious images, its approach is dogmatic and practical. About two-thirds of it is devoted to the regulation of the episcopal responsibility for overseeing the appropriateness of images in the diocese and in preventing 'abuses'. The text does not contain a structured refutation of the Reformers' arguments, nor a general discussion of the history of ecclesiastical iconophilia and the arguments on which it could be based. But both these aspects are fully covered in a series of treatises written later by some of the most important Catholic intellectuals of the time, who had been involved in the Council or at least were conversant with the issues and discussions involved. Among these the most important were *Dialogo degli errori e degli abusi de' pittori* (1564) by Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano; *De picturis et imaginibus sacris* (1570) by Jan Vermeulen, known as Joannes Molanus; *Discorso intorno alle imagine sacre e profane* (1582) by Gabriele Paleotti, and *Tractatio de poesi et pictura ethnica, humana et fabulosa collata cum vera, honesta et sacra* (1595) by Antonio Possevino. These writers reflected on the Tridentine decree on images and established the fundamental arguments that informed the works of

their successors over the following decades; as we shall see, Paleotti was particularly relevant in the Spanish milieu.

A lawyer by training who became a priest late in life, Gabriele Paleotti (1522–1597) played an active part at Trent after witnessing the increasing social, political and religious tensions that had led to the Schmalkaldic wars and to the definitive rupture of the European *Christianitas*. His polyfaceted talents had been nurtured through a good humanistic education, which surely lies behind his insight into rhetoric and art.[11] As Archbishop of Bologna and then Milan, Paleotti became sharply aware of the necessity of reform within the Church, modelling himself upon his friend Carlo Borromeo's idea of the perfect bishop and showing a personal concern for religious education and the fostering of the spiritual life in the diocese. Among his main concerns were preaching and religious images. Regarding the former, he implemented one of the most innovative measures of the Council, which established preaching as a bishop's most important task (*praecipuum munus*). This aimed at correcting several centuries of institutionalised malpractice, in which the secular clergy had almost totally handed over preaching to the mendicant Orders who were not subject to the bishop's authority – a problem that was particularly urgent in Spain at the time.[12] Wishing to improve the standard of preaching and to keep it under episcopal control, Paleotti issued a collection of rules applicable to anyone with license to preach in the diocese.[13] As to religious images, the *Discorso* contains an updated discussion of Christian iconophilia whose scope and purpose differ

[11] See Paolo Prodi, *Il Cardinale Gabriele Paleotti, I*, Uomini e dottrine, 7 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1959), pp. 67–69.
[12] See Paolo Prodi, *Il Cardinale Gabriele Paleotti, II*, Uomini e dottrine, 12 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1967), p. 76. On the situation in Spain, see Smith, pp. 21–22.
[13] Gabriele Paleotti, *Instruttione per tutti quelli che havranno licenza da predicare nelle ville, et altri luoghi della diocesi de Bologna*, 1578. A Latin translation can be found in *Archiepiscopale Bononiensis* (Rome: [n. pub.] 1594), pt 2, pp. 34–57.

from the Tridentine decree although, as Prodi noted, they are parallel products of a shared desire for reform.[14] Perhaps the chief novelty of both resides in regarding the corpus of pre-existent ideas on religious images as normative, and from it they infer rules that can be enacted – an approach which had interesting consequences, discussed in the second part of the present thesis.

At the time of Paleotti's writing his diocese of Milan was administered politically as a Spanish viceroyalty, which provided an easy route for Milanese literature, art and music to flow into Spain.[15] Literature on art flourished in the Iberian realms thanks to writers from the generation after Paleotti, reflecting both an interest in the status of the artist and an awareness of the role of religious art. Chief among these works was Francisco Pacheco's *Arte de la pintura*, which we encountered earlier. The *Arte* was composed during the 1620s, finished in 1638, and published posthumously in 1649 by the Sevillian printer Simón Faxardo, although manuscript copies were probably in circulation before the book's printing.[16] The book's interest derives not so much from Pacheco's personal experience as a painter as from his erudition and his wide circle of intellectual friends, as well as his authority as the Inquisition's *veedor* (overseer) of religious art in Seville. Palomino referred to Pacheco's circle as an 'academia' metaphorically, but the label has stuck owing to the tone of the *Arte*.[17] Pacheco, a well-informed man, knew

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[14] See Prodi, *Gabriele Paleotti, II*, p. 528.
[15] See Navarro Espinach, 'El ducado de Milán y los reinos de España en tiempos de los Sforza (1450–1535)', *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, 27 (2000), 155–82.
[16] There is some dispute over the date of completion of the manuscript of the *Arte*. I follow Bassegoda; other scholars have suggested 1641; see *Arte*, p. 43, and Enrique Valdivieso and Juan Miguel Serrera, *Pintura sevillana del primer tercio del siglo XVII* (Madrid: CSIC; Instituto Diego Velázquez, 1985), p. 20.
[17] See Jonathan Brown, *Images and Ideas in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Painting* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 21–83; Bonaventura Bassegoda, 'La supuesta Academia de Pacheco', in *Arte*, pp. 20–32; Ángel Aterido Fernandez, 'The Culture of Velázquez: Reading, Knowledge, and Social

Paleotti's *Discorso* and quoted from it extensively, becoming pivotal in its reception in Spain; all in all, the *Arte* reflects many of the current issues that preoccupied painters and their patrons.

In the first book of the *Arte*, having dealt with the antiquity of painting, its status as a liberal art, its superiority over sculpture, and the lives of some famous painters, Pacheco proceeds in the tenth and eleventh chapters to discuss 'las diferentes maneras de nobleza que acompañan a la pintura y de la utilidad universal que trae' and 'del fin de la pintura y de las imágines y de su fruto y la autoridad que tienen en la Iglesia católica'. These two chapters are an almost word-by-word translation of parts of the first book of Paleotti's *Discorso*, which suggests that in Spain the Cardinal was still the principal authority in such matters forty years after the book's publication.[18]

Revealing Paleotti's Thomistic background, Chapter 18 of the *Discorso* deals with how sacred images complement the three faculties of the soul: just as God had sent his Son in human form to redeem the human race, so the Holy Spirit inspired the invention of images as a supplement to the defective powers of the human soul in relation to God. In this passage he summarises the comprehensive account of ecclesiastical traditions concerning the use and virtues of religious images that is to follow (here in Pacheco's translation):

> [After Christ's Incarnation, God] quiso usar más copiosamente de todos los medios con que nuestro entendimiento se rindiese, nuestra voluntad se aficionase y nuestra memoria se

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Networks', in *Velázquez's Fables*, ed. by Javier Portús (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2007), pp. 72–93, and Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 16.

[18] Chapter 10 of the *Arte* contains chapters 6–7, 12, and 17–18 of the *Discorso*; chapter 11, chapters 19–21, 25–26, 28, and 30 of the *Discorso*. One might think it strange that Pacheco does not acknowledge his source, mentioning Paleotti's name only four times. This is not a form of plagiarism (in which case Pacheco would not have quoted Paleotti at all), but a consequence of the fact that seventeenth-century concepts of authorship and originality were different from ours; see *Arte*, p. 234, preliminary footnote.

> enriqueciese. Y con los ejemplos maravillosos de sus obras fuesen los hombres enseñados, con su ley de amor aficionados, y con su doctrina evangélica alumbrados.[19]

It is interesting to examine how Paleotti deploys traditional arguments to add a rhetorical emphasis to his discussion of the will. The template of the three faculties of the soul is the same as in the texts of Aquinas and Bonaventure discussed in the previous chapter; in fact, Paleotti acknowledges his use of Bonaventure in a note at the end of this paragraph. Paleotti underlines the structure of his discourse and the connections with the three faculties by expressly using the words *mente* (in place of his more frequent *intelletto*), *volontà*, and *memoria*, and, by referring to the 'tre potenze dell'anima'. Pacheco translated both *mente* and *intelletto* as *entendimiento* instead of the direct equivalents *mente* and *intelecto*, probably in order to simplfy the scheme for the reader.[20]

Paleotti's discussion of the understanding is particularly close to Aquinas and Bonaventure, and is fundamentally a repetition of St Gregory's pedagogical argument. This is how Pacheco reproduces it:

> Ayudando a las tres potencias de nuestra alma (como diximos) y comenzando del entendimiento, quién no ve cómo lo instruyen, y sirven de libros populares, por que el vulgo entienda por la pintura lo que los doctos leen en los sagrados libros, o toma ocasión della para preguntar a los más sabios. Como dice Germano, obispo de Constantinopla, *'las imágenes dan, por lo menos, motivo y causa para preguntar a otros, y hacerlos discurrir'*.[21]

But rather than mentioning St Gregory as an authority, Paleotti brings in Patriarch Germanus (c. 634–c. 733) to present learning as a bilateral process in which the unlettered person takes an active rather than a passive part. In so doing, Paleotti stressed the importance of the viewer's reaction (in this case, intellectual rather than emotional), in consonance with the rhetorized concept of the image proposed at Trent. He also

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[19] *Arte*, pp. 246–47, and *Discorso*, pp. 207–08.
[20] 'Memoria', 'entendimiento', and 'voluntad' are the most usual translations of the terms in Spanish, and were used in the most popular catechisms of the time, such as Jerónimo Martínez de Ripalda, SJ, *Catecismo y exposición breve de la doctrina christiana* (Burgos: [n. pub.], 1591).
[21] *Arte*, p. 247, and *Discorso*, p. 208.

discussed the effects of images on memory, another of the faculties of the soul – again, Pacheco's translation:

> ¿Qué diremos de la memoria? sabiendo que de la que llaman artificiosa está puesta la mayor parte en el uso de las imágenes, y así, no es maravilla que las sagradas, de que hablamos, tanto más la refresquen, como se lee en el referido Concilio [Nicaea II] deste tenor: «para que considerando pintadas las historias antiguas, traigan a la memoria quién fueron aquellos que de veras y con fidelidad sirvieron a Dios Nuestro Señor». Y San Gregorio, para remate de nuestro discurso: *'Trayéndonos a la memoria la pintura (no menos que la escritura) al Hijo de Dios, o alegra nuestra alma con su resurrección, o la mueve y ablanda con su pasión'*.[22]

Here Paleotti introduces a new concept, *memoria artificialis* or artificial memory, borrowed from the terminology of rhetoric, with which he was familiar.[23] The term appears in treatises on rhetoric specifically in reference to mnemonic devices, which use mental images to help the orator memorise a list of items in sequence. This pertains to the cognitive part of memory, as Aquinas and Bonaventure described it; however, the concept of *memoria artificialis* goes beyond the idea of images as exterior pointers to spiritual realities, and draws attention to a certain internal affinity between images and the processes of thought and imagination (see p. 6 above). This notion derives directly from the aesthetics of *mneme*, and in linking images and memory it also establishes a connection with the Franciscan tradition of literature that was designed to assist the process of summoning up such images for meditation.

Bonaventure, Aquinas and Paleotti are almost identical in their approach to understanding and memory, since their discussions closely follow the long-standing pedagogical and mnemonic arguments. But a greater divergence appears when it comes to the will, and Paleotti's approach to this in the *Discorso* deserves a more detailed comment:

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[22] *Arte*, pp. 247–48, and *Discorso*, p. 208.
[23] For Paleotti and rhetoric, see Prodi, *Gabriele Paleotti, I*, p. 60 ff.

> Cuanto a la voluntad, no hay duda que el ver las imágines píamente hechas acrecienta los buenos deseos, hace aborrecer el pecado, y mueve nuestra voluntad y afecto a imitar las vidas de los gloriosos santos que vemos representados (como por exemplos pasados hemos visto): *«La vista de las imágines* (dice el venerable Beda) *suele dar muchas veces gran compunción y devoción a los que las miran, y a aquellos asimesmo que no saben leer, y ser como leción viva de la historia del Señor»*.[24]

Here Paleotti echoes the rhetorized idea of religious images formalized at Trent, and expounds on the effects the image has on the viewer. First, looking at devoutly made images may inspire the viewer to follow the example of the saints represented – essentially, a repetition of the ideas of St John of Damascus (see p. 15 above). But Paleotti discusses a second form of reaction by quoting Bede (c. 672–735).[25] Seventeenth-century readers probably understood the mention of a powerful emotional reaction ('gran compunción y devoción') associated with images as referring to the practice of visual meditation, which developed after Bede's lifetime.

Reflecting a post-Tridentine understanding of images, the effect of paintings on the will was the main preoccupation of Spanish seventeenth-century painters and their ecclesiastical clients, if one is to judge by the evidence of contemporary treatises. For example, out of the twelve chapters of the *Discorso* translated by Pacheco and incorporated into the *Arte*, five are specifically devoted to how images affect the will, and the matter appears, with a greater or lesser degree of prominence, in parts of the remaining seven.[26] Pacheco seems to have been particularly interested in the topic; his chapter 11, 'Del fin de la pintura y de las imágines y de su fruto y de la autoridad que tienen en la Iglesia Católica', contains a translation of Paleotti's chapters 19 (on the purpose of Christian images), 20 (on images' relationship to God, to ourselves, and to our

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[24] *Arte*, p. 247; Discorso, pp. 207–08.
[25] *De Templo Salomonis,* 19. 2, in PL, 91, col. 735.
[26] Chapters 19, 20, 21, 25 and 26.

neighbours), 21 (on the Christian painter's profession and its goal, 'a similitudine degli oratori'), 25 (Christian images stir the emotions of the viewers), 26 (effects caused by devout images), 29 (on scriptural and ecclesiastical warrants for the use of images), and 30 (on the correct way of venerating holy images). Pacheco's omission of chapters 22 to 24 (on the enjoyment Christian images give, and on various aspects related to the instruction of the people) reveals his concern for coherence, since they diverge from his main point, the effect of paintings on the will. This indicates the extent to which the Spanish artistic milieu appropriated the new rhetorized concept of the image as outlined at Trent and developed by Paleotti.

THE SURVIVAL OF *MNEME*

Despite the paramount importance of the Council, not all early-seventeenth-century theories about images derive from the Tridentine decrees. For a better understanding of these views, it will be useful to return to the anecdote at the opening of the present chapter dealing with the bad artist who wrote on his paintings. Medieval and early modern theorists conceived of such inscriptions in terms of memory; for example, a name written on a portrait 'reminds of' the name of the subject. An anonymous seventeenth-century manuscript on painting relates an anecdote in which the viewers of a portrait wonder who the sitter was. When an old servant recognises him as his former employer Philibert of Savoy (1480–1504), he appends a *cartellino* with the name, saying:

> con una espada de pluma
> y un escudo de papel
> haré que el tiempo cruel
> una tilde no consuma

de las proezas de aquél.[27]

This anecdote reveals a purely functional approach: time had rendered a painting inoperative, and written words solve the problem ('memory is restored'); the narrator seems to be content that the strategy works. Theorists of the period approved of this common resource even if it was, strictly speaking, not painterly. Paleotti recommends that painters add inscriptions as a way of ensuring that viewers identify subject-matter easily, except 'quando non sia figura notissima' – as is the case, we may add, of a common animal.[28] Seventeenth-century readers found the Orbaneja anecdote amusing because it subverts the familiar sight of paintings with inscriptions: while it helps the artist achieve his purpose, here the inscription is also a measure of the painting's dismal quality.

The fact that even poor portraits and Orbaneja's botched animals successfully convey a message is central to early-modern conceptions of pictorial creation; as we have seen, this idea has its roots in ancient rhetoric. At the heart of the matter lies the observation that what we would call the creative process starts as an activity of the mind. Only afterwards comes the stage at which the idea is materialised, and the process is completed when the target receives the message and responds to it. Hence, rhetoric underpinned the connection between the language of painting and speech. At the more *culto* end of the spectrum, one of the dogs in Cervantes's *El coloquio de los perros* discusses the virtues of a Jesuit education in a long sentence full of rhetorical tropes, and concludes by saying that the fathers 'les *pintaban* la fealdad y el horror de los vicios y les

[27] Fernando Bouza, 'Por no usarse: sobre uso, circulación y mercado de imágenes políticas en la alta Edad Moderna', in *La historia imaginada: construcciones visuales del pasado en la Edad Moderna*, ed. by J. L. Pales and D. Carrió-Invernizzi (Madrid: CEEH, 2008) pp. 41–64 (p. 50 and n. 35).
[28] *Discorso*, pp. 410–11.

dibujaban la hermosura de las virtudes'; on a more popular level we find, for example, the title of a four-page pamphlet in the Bodleian library refers to it as a text 'en que *se pinta* la fiesta de Toros, que se celebró en la Plaça Mayor de Madrid'.[29] The delivery of a sermon was equated to the actual displaying of a picture: a preacher used the word 'suspensión', hanging, to refer figuratively to another preacher's pronunciation of a descriptive passage (see p. 243 below).

Concepts of image derived from ancient rhetoric and meditation practice on the one hand (see pp. 17 and ff. above), and on the other those presented in the Aristotelian system of Thomas Aquinas (pp. 16 and ff.), sometimes coexisted seamlessly. Scholastics provided a neat conceptual map of the relationships between real objects, mental images, and man-made images: 1) ideas are images, 2) the relationship between an idea-image and the imaged can be described in terms of likeness, and 3) this likeness between the image and the imaged is mirrored in the relationship between an idea and a painting or a sculpture. This conceptual structure underpins most early modern thinking on many topics involving the making and transmitting of ideas, from meditation to preaching, from literary creation to all forms of creative or artistic activity. The rhetoric-based 'aesthetics of *mneme*' petered out, according to Carruthers, in the twelfth century with the crisis of early medieval monasticism, and others have claimed that it was 'inaccesible a una época que vinculaba tan estrechamente la creación artística con la reproducción exacta del

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[29] Quoted in Ángel Valbuena Prat, *La vida española del Siglo de Oro* (Barecelona: Alberto Martín, 1943), p. 81. The words may be modelled on those of the Council of Trent, '… teaching them the things which it is necessary for all to knew unto salvation, and by announcing to them with briefness and plainness of discourse, the vices which they must avoid, and the virtues which they must follow after, that they may escape everlasting punishment, and obtain the glory of heaven'; Session V, Decree on Reformation, Chapter II, 'On preachers of the Word of God, and on Questors of Alms', *CDCT*, p. 27. The pamphlet is *Descripcion hecha a instancia de una señora desta Corte, en que se pinta la fiesta de Toros que se celebró en la Plaça Mayor de Madrid, Jueves 19. de Junio de 1681* ([Madrid]: [n. pub.], 1681).

mundo visible'.[30] In the Spanish Golden Age, however, proofs abound that mnemonic approaches survived alongside Thomistic ideas; for example, in the earliest Spanish dictionary, Sebastián de Covarrubias's *Tesoro de la lengua castellana* (1611).

In the entry for *imagen*, Covarrubias quotes Aquinas on the idea of *similitudo*. Similarly, his definition of *idea* owes much to Aquinas's discussion of the idea as exemplary cause, and includes a reference to artistic activity as a simile: he begins by noting that idea means 'exemplar eterno', then adds that it comes from the Greek *eidô*, to see, 'porque el que ha de hazer alguna cosa imitando el original, modelo o patron, le es forçoso tenerle delante para ir le mirando, y contemplando, como haze el pintor que copia alguna pintura de su original'.[31] Here the notion of *idea* is linked to the process of mimesis, making one thing after another. At the opposite end of the ideological spectrum we find the entry for the verb *representar*: 'hazernos presente alguna cosa con palabras, o figuras que se fixan en la imaginacion'.[32] Representation is a key concept to the aesthetics of both *mneme* and mimesis, which define it in different ways: here, Covarrubias makes no mention of mimesis, the mark of a Thomistic approach to representation as based on likeness. Instead of asking what makes representation possible, he focuses on its subjective effect, the fact that words and images call up a *res* ('hacernos presente alguna cosa'). In doing this, he seems to be stressing the 'cognitive

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[30] Carruthers, p. 5; Portús, 'Un cuentecillo', p. 124.
[31] Sebastián de Covarrubias y Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española* (1611), ed. by I. Arellano and R. Zafra (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra; Madrid: Iberoamericana; Frankfurt: Vervuert, 2006), s.v. *idea*.
[32] Covarrubias, s.v. *representar*.

uses and instrumentality of art' which Carruthers discussed as characteristic of the aesthetics of *mneme*.[33]

A typical mixture of attitudes can be found in other instances, for example where under 'imagen' he deals with religious images in particular:

> comunmente entre fieles catolicos llamamos imagenes las figuras que nos representan a Cristo señor nuestro, a su benditisima madre y virgen santa maria, a sus apostoles, y a los demas santos y los misterios de nuestra fe, en quanto pueden ser imitados y representados para que refresquemos en ellos la memoria.[34]

Although Covarrubias mentions mimesis ('imitados y representados'), he implies that there is more to representation than likeness: images also have a mnemonic function, 'refresh our memory'. Even if mimesis is, of necessity, incomplete (since the 'prototype' cannot be seen by the artist), the image acts to refresh the memory of the viewer.[35] This symbiosis of *mimesis* and *mneme* is sometimes problematic; for example, in the Orbaneja anecdote the poorly-painted rabbit can also be approached from the point of view of the clash between the aesthetics of *mneme* and the aesthetics of *mimesis*. As *mimesis*, the paintings are faulty because the likeness is not good; one might wonder whether they qualify as images at all. But from the rhetorical angle of *mneme*, the subject-matter of the paintings can be identified thanks to the inscriptions, so that the paintings can fulfil their function.

It is true that early modern treatises on painting insist on the imitation of nature as the foundation of the painter's art. For example, in a *Memorial* written in connection with a lawsuit in which he defended painters' exemption from artisans' sales taxes, Juan de

[33] Carruthers, p. 3.
[34] Covarrubias, s.v. *imagen*.
[35] On the limits of mimesis in treatise writers from Alberti onwards, see Marco Ruffini, 'Alberti on the Surface', *California Italian Studies* 2.1 (2011), https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3pd1g732.

Butrón affirms that 'no imitando en todo a la naturaleza, el arte es defectuoso'.[36] But he also relates a revealing anecdote about the status of bad paintings: 'la pintura muchas veces, aun siendo ruda, mueve en algunos devoción'.[37] He refers to the case of an artist who cavalierly tried to make the King forbid mediocre painters from exercising their profession:

> habiendo llevado a Palacio con este fin algunos lienzos, los peores para muestra de su desgracia, y puéstolos en una sala donde el Rey los viese, él dijo con benignidad que se permitiesen sus autores por la inclinación loable del arte, y porque para algunos es suficiente lo mal pintado.[38]

The King's words as reported by Butrón reveal that, even for an extraordinary patron of the arts like Philip III, perfect likeness is not of the essence. It can be a sign of artistic skill for connoisseurs to admire, but a painting can do what it is meant to do (*es suficiente*) without it. The King was supporting a pragmatic, functional understanding of art that is firmly founded in classical rhetoric – a discipline which, as we shall see, was available at the time both as medieval survival and Renaissance revival. Because rhetoric also furnished the theoretical background underpinning much of Spanish seventeenth-century thinking about painting, it is also a useful tool for understanding the connection between painting and sacred oratory.

CONVERGING PATHS: THE MOVE TOWARDS EMOTIONALLY ENGAGING SERMONS

Like religious art, early modern sacred oratory is characterised by an increase in the attention paid to *movere*. Tempting though it is to surmise a unified programme from this

[36] Juan de Butrón, '*Discursos apologéticos, en que se defiende la ingenuidad del arte de la pintura* (1626)', in *TPSO*, pp. 195–99.
[37] On the painters' lawsuit, see Juan Antonio Díez-Monsalve Giménez and Susana Fernández de Miguel, 'Documentos inéditos sobre el famoso pleito de los pintores: el largo camino recorrido por los artistas del siglo XVII para el reconocimiento de su arte como liberal', *AEA*, 330 (April-June 2010), 149–58.
[38] Butrón, p. 363.

parallel evolution, the Council of Trent never proposed such a thing. A more detailed look at the development of early modern attitudes to rhetoric will show how and when the relationship between ancient rhetoric, sacred oratory, and the arts was reshaped at this time.

The Council dealt with preaching in its initial stages, on its fifth session (17 June 1546), amid frenzied concern about the orthodoxy of preachers' doctrine, and charged bishops with the duty of organizing and overseeing preaching in their dioceses so that

> at least on the Lord's days, and solemn feasts… [diocesan clergy] feed the people committed to them, with wholesome words, according to their own capacity, and that of their people; by teaching them the things which it is necessary for all to know unto salvation, and by announcing to them with briefness and plainness of discourse, the vices which they must avoid, and the virtues which they must follow after, that they may escape everlasting punishment, and obtain the glory of heaven.[39]

The Council's approach to preaching is catechetical and pedagogical, based on *docere*; the resulting canon is an attempt to ensure that preachers communicate sound doctrine to their listeners in an accessible way. The text does not mention the listeners' response in any way, nor does it refer to the appeal to their emotions. Sixteen years later, with the Council rushing to its end, the synod dealt with preaching again as it tackled the controversial doctrine of the Mass and its ceremonies (twenty-second session, 17 September 1562). The decree forbids Masses to be said in vernacular languages, and, likewise, orders the clergy 'that they frequently, during the celebration of the Mass, expound… some portion of those things which are read at Mass, and… explain some mystery of this most holy sacrifice, especially on the Lord's days and festivals'.[40] The

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[39] Session 5, rubric 'Decree on Reformation', Ch. 2, 'On Preachers of the Word of God, and on questors of Alms'; *CDCT*, p. 27. On the Council's effort to strengthen preaching in diocesan churches, see p. 33 above.
[40] Session 22, rubric 'Doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Mass', Ch. 8, 'On not celebrating the Mass every where in the vulgar tongue; the mysteries of the Mass to be explained to the people'; *CDCT*, p. 158.

Council made a serious attempt to revitalisereligious education through orthodox preaching, but *movere* was nowhere in their agenda in this respect.

Seen in context, the Council's approach to preaching is in stark contrast with the way in which it dealt with the 'solemn ceremonies of the sacrifice of the Mass' in the same twenty-second session. There, the language employed gives a central place to *movere*:

> … such is the nature of man, that, without external helps, he cannot easily be raised to the meditation of divine things; therefore has holy Mother Church instituted certain rites… [and] ceremonies, such as mystic benedictions, lights, incense, vestments, and many other… whereby both the majesty of so great a sacrifice may be recommended, and the minds of the faithful be excited… to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in this sacrifice.[41]

Similar language occurs in the discussion of images, given to people 'so they may give God thanks for those things [miracles and example of the saints]; may order their own lives and manners in imitation of the saints; and may be excited to adore and love God, and to cultivate piety'.[42] The same could be said about a document drafted on 10 September 1562 concerning sacred music, which was not included in the final text of the canon but is often quoted, erroneously, as forming part of it.[43] The Council endorsed two different rhetorical tactics: one based on *docere* and applying to preaching, and the other on *movere* and governing the use of ceremonial and the visual arts. Both approaches are firmly grounded in the study of ancient rhetoric, which makes the absence of any references to *movere* in the context of preaching the more surprising.

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[41] Session 22, rubric 'Doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass', Ch. 5, 'On the solemn ceremonies of the Sacrament of the Mass'; *CDCT*, p. 156.

[42] Session 25, rubric 'On the invocation, veneration, and relics of saints, and on sacred images'; *CDCT*, p. 235.

[43] '… the entire manner of singing… should be calculated, not to afford vain delight to the ear, but so that the words may be comprehensible to all; and thus may the hearts of the listeners be caught up into the desire for celestial harmonies and contemplation of the joys of the blessed'; *Concilium Tridentinum: Diariorum, actorum, epistolarum, tractatuum, nova collectio*, ed. by Societas *Goerresiana*, 13 vols (Freiburg: Herder, 1901–2001), VIII (1919), p. 927; see also Craig A. Monson, 'The Council of Trent, Revisited', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 55.1 (Spring 2002), 1–37 (pp. 9–10).

While sanctioning approaches to art based on the ongoing absorption of ancient rhetoric, the Church was divided over what might seem to be rhetoric's most obvious use by preachers. This came only after Trent, as a landmark in the process of Christian grappling with the Greco-Roman legacy – a question which, some would argue, is as old as Christianity itself.[44] Before and after Trent, the issue remained a matter of heated debate; the opinion that would eventually prevail regarded rhetoric in instrumental terms, as neutral from a moral point of view, but useful for the transmission of Christian doctrine. However, detractors such as St John of the Cross stressed the divinely inspired character of the preacher's task (preaching was one of the 'gifts of the Spirit' discussed by St Paul in Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11). The truth of the Gospel and the supernatural gift of preaching, they maintained, were incompatible with, and antithetical to, a deceitful craft devised by heathens to make their speech artificially alluring. As Fumaroli, Herrero Salgado, and others have explained, the dispute between these two camps constitutes the principal topic in the history of Spanish sacred oratory in the sixteenth century.[45]

The most decisive stages in the acceptance of sacred oratory took place after Trent in a relatively short period, culminating in the 1570s. Rhetoric was included in the trivium, the medieval university curriculum, but only as an academic discipline; the only known texts were Cicero's *De inventione* and the anonymous *Ad Herennium,* then

[44] See McCulloch, p. 2 and passim.
[45] See A. Sánchez Sánchez, 'La biblioteca del predicador (en el siglo XVI): renovación y continuidad', in *El escrito en el Siglo de Oro: prácticas y representaciones*, ed. by Pedro M. Cátedra, Agustín Redondo and María L. López Vidriero, El libro antiguo español, 5 (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1999) pp. 289–304 (pp. 292–94); Luisa López Grigera, *La retórica española en el Siglo de Oro: teoría y práctica* (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1994), pp. 38–43.

attributed to Cicero. The rediscovery of Cicero's *De oratore* by the early fifteenth century, and later of Quintilian's works, was a watershed moment for the early Renaissance. Ancient rhetoric became a central interest of sixteenth-century humanists, thanks in particular to Erasmus's edition of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* (1528-29). [46] Following this came several important works on rhetoric by Spanish scholars, such as *De ratione dicendi libri duo* (1548) and *De tribus dicendi generibus* (1570) by Alonso García Matamoros, a professor at Alcalá de Henares (d. 1570).[47] Although a priest, García Matamoros approached rhetoric as a scholarly interest and never attempted to apply it to his preaching. It would take a different type of man, a humanist committed to religious revitalisation and reform, to take that step.

Charles Borromeo (1538–1584) was appointed as archbishop of Milan in 1564. At one of the provincial councils held thereafter, the prelate instructed that 'the end of the whole sermon and all its parts is to move the emotions of the audience'. The reason, he argued, is that 'people sin not so much because they ignore the truth, but rather because their emotions are inclined in the wrong direction [*quia male sunt affecti*]'.[48] Almost twenty years had passed since the Tridentine decree on preaching (1546), and now a prominent churchman was departing from the established emphasis on *docere*, by making

[46] See John W. O'Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450–1521* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979), p. 5; Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence*, p. 70.
[47] See González García 2015, pp. 17–24. The first Latin edition of García Matamoros appeared in Lisbon in 1576, and a Spanish translation was published in Madrid in 1585.
[48] 'totius concionis, et singularum partium scopus erit, auditorum animos commovere [...] homines enim, non tam quia verum ignorant, peccant, quam quia male sunt affecti'; quoted in Juan Bautista Escardó, SJ, *Rhetorica Christiana, o idea de los que dessean predicar con espiritu, y fruto de las almas* (Majorca: Herederos de Gabriel Guasp, 1647), fol. 335r. Compare with Valadés, 'Nam et per totam praedicationem, et orationem locus est affectibus. […] [The Christian orator's] praecipuum munus potius in movendis, quam docendis auditorum animis positum est. Cum homines magis pecent affectu corrupto, quàm ignorantia veri'; Diego de Valadés, OFM, *Rhetorica Christiana* (Perugia: [n. pub.], 1579), p. 238.

a clear statement in favour of *movere*. Congregations needed to be persuaded and moved, rather than educated. Similar claims were made by the Spanish Jesuit Francis Borgia (1510–1572), whose posthumous work will be discussed below. Borromeo would be canonised in 1610 and Borgia beatified in 1624, further legitimizing and lending greater authority to their works.

Strongly endorsed by Borromeo, the work that came as close as possible to settling the question was the *Rhetoricae ecclesiasticae libri sex* (1576) by Fray Luis de Granada OP, which successfully reconciled the apostolic dimension of the preacher's task with his use of effective rhetorical techniques. Later, a treatise written in Latin, the *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579) by the Franciscan Diego de Valadés (1533–after 1584), applied ancient rhetoric to the instruction of preachers sent to evangelise the Nahua and other peoples of New Spain.[49] Another important step was the inclusion of rhetoric in the Jesuit's *ratio studiorum*, the most influential and advanced educational curriculum of the time, from the mid-1580s.[50] In these ways, the union between classical rhetoric and the art of preaching finally became accepted.

As Borromeo noted, rhetoric was necessary for affecting the listeners emotionally, rather than intellectually. Later writers, and especially Jesuits, paid increasingly greater attention to the different techniques with which sermons could achieve this goal. The Italian Jesuit Carlo Reggio's *Orator Christianus* (1612), which Fumaroli considers the most substantial book on ecclesiastical rhetoric published to that date, initially set out

[49] On Valadés, see Francisco de la Maza, *Fray Diego Valadés: Escritor y grabador franciscano del siglo XVI* (México DF: Jus, 1945), and Carmen J. Alejos Grau, *Diego Valadés, educador de Nueva España: Ideas pedagógicas de la "Rethorica Christiana" (1579)* (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1994).

[50] See José Rico Verdú, 'Los Jesuitas y la enseñanza de la oratoria en el siglo XVII', in *La retórica española de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: CSIC, 1973), esp. pp. 57–60.

movere, *docere*, and *delectare* as of equal importance, but Reggio reveals his greater interest by dedicating a whole book only to *movere* ('de affectibus movendis', book 7).[51] Later in the century another Jesuit, Juan Bautista Escardó (1581–1652), made the definitive contribution to the field. Escardó outlined the aim of rhetoric more fully in the prologue of his *Rhetorica Christiana* (1647) as the benefit which the listeners draw from each sermon, which entails 'encender en sus coraçones devocion, amor de Dios y de la virtud, y aborrecimiento de vicios'. In order to achieve this, the preacher has to 'arrimar lo que se dize al coraçon de los oyentes … para sacar afectos', relegating *docere* and *delectare* to a distinctly secondary plane.[52] Later, he claims that he follows Reggio in what he calls *modus affectivus*, or 'explicar las divinas letras por via del afecto'.[53] To stir the right *afectos* was thought to be the best way to effect a change in the listeners' behaviour or *obras*, and in bringing salvation to their souls.

The place of *afectos* or emotions is one of the central concerns of seventeenth-century treatises on preaching. The Spanish word *afecto* (from the Latin *affectus*) means a 'passion' or 'movement' of the soul.[54] The term has a passive connotation: the movement does not start from the soul itself, as its reaction to an external stimulus; rather, it is seen as the effect of the action of an exterior force, entering through the senses, upon the soul. For example, Valadés defined it as a 'passion or perturbation of the spirit' (*animi*

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[51] Fumaroli, *L'art de l'éloquence*, p. 186; Carlo Reggio, SJ, *Orator Christianus* (Rome: B. Zannettum, 1612), p. 156.
[52] Escardó, non-paginated section. On Escardó, see Jaime Garau Amengual, 'Apuntes para un estudio de la vida y obra de Juan Bautista Escardó (Palma de Mallorca, 1581–1652)', *Criticón*, 61 (1994), 57–68.
[53] Escardó, fol. 149^{r}.
[54] I have rendered the typically seventeenth-century word *afecto* as *emotion*, which is not entirely satisfactory as it does not convey the implicit belief in the great power of words. In modern Spanish, 'afecto' and 'afectivo' mean 'affection' and 'affective', although perhaps the English noun has more intensity than the Spanish. The verb 'afectar', as in the English 'They were deeply affected by the news of her death', remains closer to the original meaning of *afecto*.

perturbatio atque passio) in reaction to a sermon's subject-matter.[55] It was also believed that the effects would show outwardly with little intervention on the subject's part; Covarrubias remarks on how *afectos* automatically colour the voice and movements of preachers, making their speech more moving in turn.[56]

From a point of view deeply informed by ancient rhetoric, an interest in arousing the congregation's emotions (*mover afectos* or *sacar afectos*) developed into an interest in images, both mental and physical. Rhetoricians established the technique of highly visual description *ad vivum* as the ideal, and discussed at length how to achieve it. Escardó explains, following Quintilian, that the correct method is 'amplificar las cosas, y hacer descripcion dellas ta[n] al vivo, como si las viessemos'.[57] Here Escardó is referring to mental images, but he deals with physical ones too. Another religious writer and preacher who was interested in sight was Juan de Jesús María (1564–1615), the General of the Discalced Carmelites. He wrote of a 'reformed' sense of sight: '[your eyes] have got rid of the vice of curiosity, so that they no more want to see the pleasing things of the world, but only those that can excite to the memory of your most kind presence'.[58] This advice, which perhaps drew some devout readers to curbing their use of sight, may also have encouraged others to use ordinary objects 'of the world' to arouse pious affective

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[55] 'Affectus … est animi perturbatio atque passio, quae rerum qualitatem et naturam sequitur, utpotè moeror, gaudium, misericordia, ira, amor, odium…'; Valadés, p. 238. Note the nouns with passive connotations, like *perturbatio*, and *passio*, and the verb *sequitur*, 'follows', as if with little intervention on the soul's part.

[56] See the entry in Covarrubias's dictionary: '… es passion del anima, que redundando en la voz, la altera y causa en el cuerpo un particular movimiento, con que movemos a compasion y misericordia, a ira, y a vengança, a tristeça y alegria, cosa importante y necessaria en el orador'; Covarrubias, s.v. 'Afecto'. This definition stresses the link between *afectos* and the orator, and reflects on Horace's 'Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi' (p. 8, above).

[57] Escardó, fol. 335v.

[58] '[your eyes] extinxerunt vitium curiositatis, ut iam non libeat eis videre delectabilia mundi, sed ea tantum quae possunt excitare memoriam amabilissimae presentiae tuae'; Juan de Jesús María, OCD, *De Schola Iesu Christi liber* (Cologne: ex officina Birckmanica, 1612), p. 253.

feelings – a manifestation of devotion which seems excessive (if not openly distasteful) to later observers.[59] Statements such as these illustrate how the link between images, sight, and emotions had become a well-established tradition.

As the seventeenth century progressed, rhetorical theory registered a shift from interest in inward emotions to their more visible manifestations, such as tears. Late antique Christian literature provided precedents such as St Maximus of Turin (c. 380–c. 465), who maintained that tears are always the sincerest and most efficacious form of prayer.[60] Some imagined a circular motion between the eyes and the heart ('son los ojos entre los sentidos que sirven al alma por donde entran y salen los afectos'), while others pictured some kind of conduit between them ('los caños que van del corazón a los ojos').[61] Tears were a sign of repentance for one's sins, and therefore a first step in securing God's forgiveness. Trent reaffirmed the importance of repentance and good works (against Protestant emphasis on justification by faith), manifested visually by some popular Spanish iconographies, such as the tears of St Peter or of penitent saints like the Magdalene, St Mary of Egypt or St Jerome, provide a visual manifestation.[62] The spirituality of tears was encouraged by the example of later saints like St Dominic,

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[59] See, for example, the discussion of Ledesma's poetry in Julián Gállego, *Visión y símbolos en la pintura española del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1991) [French orig., *Visión et symboles dans la peinture espagnole du Siècle d'Or* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1968)], pp. 98–100.

[60] 'Las lágrimas, digo yo, son como plegarias calladas, no invocan el perdón, ya lo merecen; no defienden la causa, y a pesar de ello obtienen misericordia; así, la intercesión de las lágrimas es más eficaz que las palabras… las lágrimas jamás son vanas'; Miguel Peinado, *La predicación del Evangelio en los Padres de la Iglesia* (Madrid: BAC, 1992), n. 448.

[61] See Cristóbal Suárez de Figueroa, *Varias noticias importantes a la humana comunicación* (Madrid: Tomas Iunti, 1621), fol. 244^{r}, and Juan de Ávila, *Obras completas*, ed. by L. Sala Balust (Madrid: BAC, 1953), p. 78.

[62] See Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Pintura barroca en España, 1600–1750*, Manuales de arte Cátedra (Madrid: Cátedra, 1992, repr. 1996), p. 45.

famous for shedding tears during the Mass, and St Francis, of whom it is said that after a Crucifix spoke to him he could not supress his tears.[63]

Weeping during church services was considered to be such an effective and genuine response, that it was regarded as a divine gift, 'don de lágrimas'.[64] It is significant that two of the three cases in which, according to Cervantes, it was fitting for a man to cry, were related to repentance and its consequences: 'Por tres cosas es lícito que llore el varón prudente: la una, por haber pecado; la segunda, por alcanzar el perdón [of sin]; la tercera, por estar celoso… las demás lágrimas no dicen bien en rostro grave'.[65] The aim of some later preachers changed from the general 'mover afectos' to the more specific 'sacar lágrimas'. Escardó deals with this in chapter 75 of his *Rhetorica Christiana* (1647), where he gave 'avisos que facilitan la mocion de afectos: especialmente de las lagrimas'.[66] In later works, this concern with drawing tears from the audience became sharper and occupied a more central part in the preacher's programme: for example, one preacher used an agricultural metaphor to express his conviction that the most effective of all methods of preaching is 'quando la palabra Evangelica se siembra acompañada con el riego de Llanto' and another believed that 'para comer con sazon la Eucaristia, son necessarias lagrimas y dolor, y deshazerse', while collections of sermons

[63] On St Dominic, *Readings in Medieval History: The Early Middle Ages, Vol. I*, ed. by Patrick J. Geary, 3rd edn (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003), pp. 486–88; for St Francis, see Bonaventure, *Legenda Minor Sancti Francisci*, in *Opera Omnia*, VIII (1898), pp. 565–79 (p. 565, 1. 4.); James Elkins, 'Weeping, Watching the Madonna weep', in *Pictures and Tears: A History of People Who Have Cried in Front of Paintings* (New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 150–65 (p. 153); *Holy Tears: Weeping in the Religious Imagination*, ed. by Kimberley C. Patton and John S. Hawley (Oxford: OUP, 2005).

[64] See Pierre Adnès, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique: doctrine et histoire*, 17 vols (Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1932–1995), IX (1976), s.v. 'Larmes', cols. 287–303.

[65] Miguel de Cervantes, *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, ed. by J. Casalduero (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1947), II, 5.

[66] Escardó, fols 333ᵛ and ff.

contain many resources aimed at stirring the emotions in such a way.[67] We shall deal with these in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

The preachers' exploration of the ideas of *movere* and the appeal to the *afectos* drew directly on ancient rhetorical sources and, as has been explained above, remained controversial for a long time. Well into the seventeenth century, treatise writers felt obliged to state that their interest in rhetoric did not go beyond the extent to which it was helpful to the preacher, who should strive to be a saintly man, to serve the ultimate, higher end of preaching: the salvation of the souls he was responsible for.[68] The authors of preaching manuals constantly felt the need to defend the legitimacy of their use of pagan sources and ideas, which the Church had been somewhat reluctant to endorse officially. The best example is probably St John of the Cross (1542–1591), who deals with preaching in chapter 45 of the third book of his *Subida del Monte Carmelo* (1578-83). His discussion pitches the preacher's inner spirit and saintly life, the key factors in moving the listener's will, against the oratorical aspects of his sermons, which, by themselves, produce 'maravillosas cosas maravillosamente dichas, que sólo sirven para deleitar el oído, como una música concertada o sonido de campanas' – that is, vanity, because '[p]oco importa oír una música mejor que otra sonar si no me mueve ésta más que aquélla a hacer obras'. A lack of style, rhetorical skill, and theological sophistication are no obstacle, although all these qualities may help a saintly preacher make a greater

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[67] 'Aprobación' by Salvador Carlos Terrona, in Miguel de Meca Bobadilla, *Heraclito christiano llorando vicios y exortando virtudes en doze llanto segun estilo de la venerable congregacion de la escuela de Christo señor nuestro* (Burgos: [n. pub.], 1693), non paginated part. Meca's sermons are significantly called *llantos*; Heraclitus was associated with tears, as he was held to have wept bitterly for the debased habits of his contemporaries. Andrés Semple de Tovar, *Sermones varios de festividades y santos* (Madrid: Iván Sánchez, 1644), p. 318.
[68] Levy, p. 46.

impact.[69] However, the same writers never encountered this problem when they approached the question from a practical angle, that is, when they provided examples of the use of rhetorical techniques found in Christian devotional literature, to which I now pass.

SERMONS AND IMAGES IN CONTEXT

Art historian E. Gombrich (1909–2001) used the term 'the ecology of images' to describe 'adaptations, on the part of the working artists, to the functions assigned to the visual image by a given society'.[70] In other words, artists responded to the circumstances of the environment in which they lived, and it is necessary to be aware of these to understand the emergence of certain practices, styles, and concerns. The same is true in the realm of preaching. Well before the emergence of 'cultural art history' in the 1980s, scholars could not ignore the importance of the spiritual climate of the time regarding Spanish Golden Age culture, given the prevalence of religious themes, clients, and contexts.[71] Ecclesiastical attitudes to rhetoric and religious images did not take shape in a cultural vacuum. The aspects with a clearest connection were the reception of earlier Franciscan

[69] John of the Cross, *Subida al Monte Carmelo*, in *Vida y obras de S. Juan de la Cruz*, ed. by Lucinio del Santísimo Sacramento, OCD (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1960), p. 630 (III. 45. 4 and 5).
[70] Ernst Gombrich, 'Paintings for Altars', in *The Uses of Images: Studies in the Social Function of Art and Visual Communication* (London: Phaidon, 1999), pp. 48–79 [orig. pub. in *Evolution and its Influence*, ed. by Allen Grafen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 107–25], p. 48.
[71] The seminal studies in the field of cultural art history are Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford: OUP, 1972) and, for Spanish art, Gállego, *Visión y símbolos*, and *El pintor: de artesano a artista* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1976).

literature, the attitudes towards meditation current at the time, and the movement towards what has been called 'directed spirituality'.[72]

Some discussions of early modern religious literature assimilate the practice of visual meditation to St Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, especially when critics attempt to establish connections between the visual arts and literary and spiritual trends. Developed by Ignatius over several decades and finally approved and published in 1548, the Exercises are a manual for conducting a month-long personalised retreat directed by a priest. Vivid visual meditation on Jesus's life and Passion is included by means of a technique which Ignatius termed 'composición viendo el lugar'.[73] The *Exercises* enjoyed great popularity, and are undoubtedly one of the most influential books written in the sixteenth century. Thanks to the privileged niche Jesuits occupied in Spanish education, many, if not most, Spanish scholars writing in the twentieth century were acquainted with Ignatian spirituality.[74] They were reminded of the *Exercises* in certain features of early modern devotional literature and art, especially in descriptions that summon up a vivid and engaging mental image, and the use of enhancing strategies that involve the senses or evoke perceptual impressions.[75] Nevertheless, as knowledge of the genesis of the *Exercises* themselves and their context has grown, it seems that in the past they have

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[72] I have taken the phrase from María D. Bravo Arriaga, *El discurso de la espiritualidad dirigida: Antonio Núñez de Miranda, confesor de Sor Juana* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2001).

[73] The *Exercises* were probably first envisioned during Ignatius's retreat at Manresa, in 1522–24; see John W. O'Malley, 'The Spiritual Exercises', in *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 37–50. For an edition of the original text of the *Exercises* in Spanish, see Ignatius Loyola, *Exercicios Spirituales* (Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1962). Many editions of the *Exercises* and Loyola's complete works exist, including *St Ignatius Loyola: Personal Writings*, ed. by Joseph Munitiz and Philip Endean (New York: Penguin, 1996).

[74] See Gerald Brennan, *El laberinto español: antecedentes sociales y políticos de la guerra civil* (Barcelona: Ibérica, 1977), pp. 77 and 80.

[75] See David Lonsdale, *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear: Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000).

often been used as shorthand for certain aspects of early modern culture which, far from being new, had their roots in earlier spiritual and literary traditions.

Similarly, early modern visual meditation literature is often linked to a late medieval Netherlandish lay movement known as the Modern Devotion (*Devotio Moderna*), which favoured an inward, personal piety based on meditation.[76] The Modern Devotion was known in early modern Spain through the works of the Franciscan Hendrik Herp ('Enrique Harpio', c. 1410–1477). A preacher and mystical theologian, Herp served as rector of the Brethren of the Common Life's main house in Delft in the mid-fifteenth century. His *Theologia Mystica* encourages the reader to contemplate Christ's humanity; the book was first printed in Cologne in 1538 and included in the index of forbidden books shortly afterwards, but the revised Roman edition of 1585 became widely known. Herp, however, was a Franciscan, and his interest in meditation must have sprung from his knowledge of Franciscan writers such as the Pseudo-Bonaventure. Modern Devotion expert R. R. Post concluded that 'not everything that was devout in the late Middle Ages formed part of the Modern Devotion', explaining that the groups were essentially conservative both in their spirituality and in their choice of devotional texts.[77] Those who relate the visual and affective aspects of devotional literature or painting directly to the Modern Devotion run the risk of undervaluing the importance of contemporary rhetorical writings, as well as meditation literature. As was the case with the Exercises, the

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[76] For an example of this, see Fernando Checa, *Durero y Cranach: Arte y humanismo en la Alemania del Renacimiento*, exh. cat. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, 9 October 2007 to 6 January 2008 (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid; Fundación Thyssen Bornemisza, 2007), p. 327.
[77] Regnerus R. Post, *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), pp. xi and 317–20.

originality of the Modern Devotion resided in the regulation of a meditation routine for laypeople, rather than in the texts or techniques employed.

The Franciscan tradition of visual meditation remained popular after its own Golden Age (see p. 21 and ff., above), and probably more so after Pope Sixtus V recognised Saint Bonaventure as one of the Doctors of the Church in 1557.[78] New editions and translations of such books as the *Meditaciones* did not cease to appear throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and several late-medieval Franciscan writers added to the corpus with works in poetry and prose in various Iberian languages which lay the foundations for further developments of religious poetry – and, eventually, sermons, as will be shown below. First among them were two *converso* Franciscan writers who lived and worked during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, Fray Íñigo de Mendoza (1424–1508?) and Fray Diego de San Pedro (d. 1506). Mendoza's *Coplas de la Vita Christi* went through three redactions, the final one being published in 1482.[79] This was followed by another two works in the same vein, *La cena del Señor* (1483?) and *Coplas a la Verónica* (1483). Diego de San Pedro, whose biography still remains largely a matter of conjecture, wrote *La Pasión trobada* (c. 1470-80) and *Las Siete Angustias de Nuestra Señora* (before 1491). In both works the author uses highly visual, emotive images such as the Virgin wringing her hands, embracing the Cross and kissing her son's blood spilled on the wood.[80] Another important writer in this group was Isabel de Villena,

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[78] Bull 'Triumphantis Hierusalem', reproduced in Bonaventure's *Opera Omnia*, I (1882), pp. xlv–lii.
[79] Íñigo de Mendoza, *Coplas de la Vita Christi*, ed. by Julio Rodríguez Puértolas (Madrid: Gredos, 1968).
[80] Diego de San Pedro, *Obras completas*, ed. by Dorothy S. Severin and Keith Whinnom (Madrid: Castalia, 1979).

OSC (1430–1490), whose popular *Vita Christi* (1497), written in Valencian, displays a thorough knowledge of similar earlier works.[81]

At the same time vernacular translations of Latin meditation literature began to be produced, which made the original texts available to a wider lay readership. These translations left their mark on the development of religious poetry. The most widely read was the Spanish translation of the *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony (see p. 22, above), known at the time in the Spanish-speaking realms as 'el Cartujano'. The work was translated at the behest of queen Isabella by the Franciscan friar Ambrosio Montesino (1444?–1514), and published in four volumes in Alcalá de Henares between 1502 and 1503. Montesino was a preacher and confessor to the Catholic Monarchs, and he also excelled as a religious poet in his *Coplas sobre diversas devociones y misterios de nuestra santa fe católica* (1485) and *Cancionero de diversas obras de nuevo trovadas* (1508).[82] Montesino, like Fray Íñigo de Mendoza before him, wrote in a clear, plain style that had little in common with that of the *Cancionero* poets and can be directly related to the earlier tradition of Franciscan meditation literature, with which these authors were conversant. Another important contribution was made around the same time by the Carthusian Juan de Padilla (1468–1522), whose *Retablo de la vida de Cristo* (1505) was widely read, to judge by its many editions in the sixteenth century.[83] The very title of the book, 'retablo', implies that the author conceived of his work in visual terms, as a

[81] Isabel de Villena, *Vita Christi*, ed. by J. Almiñana Vallés and J. Costa Catalá, 2 vols (Valencia: Ajuntament de Valencia, 1992); it was reprinted in Valencia (1513) and Barcelona (1527). The book is indebted to the work by Ludolph of Saxony bearing the same title.
[82] Ambrosio Montesino, *Coplas sobre diversas devociones y misterios de nuestra santa fe católica* (1485), ed. by H. Thomas (London: British Museum, 1936), and Ambrosio Montesino, *Cancionero de diversas obras de nuevo trovadas* (Toledo, 1508; facs. edn, Cieza: A. Pérez Gómez, 1950).
[83] Rocío Rodríguez Ferrer, 'Entre el poema y el sermón: el *Retablo de la vida de Cristo*, de Juan de Padilla, El Cartujano', *Taller de Letras*, 45 (2009), 53–66.

succession of images that would form a structure akin to an imaginary altarpiece in the mind of the reader.

Among the writers who continued to develop the same trend was the Franciscan Bernardino de Laredo (1482–1540), the author of *Subida del monte Sión por la vía contemplativa* (Seville, 1535), the second of whose three parts dealt with the 'mysteries' of the lives of Jesus and Mary. The *Subida al monte Sión* set an important precedent for later ascetical works that were conceived of as spiritual guides and contained within them examples of meditations in the Franciscan tradition. One such was written by another Franciscan friar, Francisco de Osuna (1492?–1540?), one of the most widely read sixteenth-century religious writers, who, significantly, was also one of the most famous preachers of his time. His monumental *Abecedario Espiritual,* an encyclopaedic guide to inner life, was published in several volumes over sixteen years; especially important are *Primer Abecedario espiritual* (Seville 1528), dealing with the Passion, and *Sexto Abecedario espiritual* (Medina del Campo 1544), on the Five Wounds. Several collections of his sermons survive, including *Trilogium Evangelicum* (Antwerp, 1536).[84] Osuna was especially influential for the later Carmelite mystics Teresa and John of the Cross – Teresa notes in her spiritual autobiography that her uncle gave her Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario* and, incidentally, she also read 'el Cartujano', that is, *Vita Christi* by Montesino.[85] But of greater interest to the present work is the fact that Osuna may have written the first sermon-meditation, as will be discussed below.

[84] See p. 67, below; see also Melquíades Andrés Martín, 'Introducción general', in Francisco de Osuna, *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual. Estudio histórico y edición crítica*, ed. by M. Andrés, BAC, 303 (Madrid: BAC, 1972), pp. 3–22, and Mary E. Giles, 'Introduction', in *Francisco de Osuna, The Third Spiritual Alphabet*, ed. by M. E. Giles (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), pp. 1–34 (p. 10).
[85] *Libro de su Vida*, Ch. 4 and Ch. 38.

All these works prove that the medieval meditation classics were widely read, paraphrased, and imitated before and around the time when Loyola devised his Exercises; in fact, it is well established that Ignatius himself perused Lodulph's *Vita Christi* as he convalesced in Manresa beteen 1522 and 1523.[86] The case can surely be made for continuity between early modern meditation literature and its Franciscan precedents, rather than emphasising the former's novelty. An important change, however, affected the way visual meditation was practised. Virtually all works of vernacular devotional literature mentioned above were at some point included on the Inquisition's indices of forbidden books, initiated by the Dominican Melchor Cano (1509–1560) and Grand Inquisitor Fernando Valdés (1483–1568) between 1547 and 1566.[87] Scholars have often regarded this period as one of stringent censorship of many works of vernacular spirituality but, even as new forms of control were devised, visual meditation did not disappear.

The move from individual devotional reading to directed spiritual exercise is particularly revealing as regards the religious climate of the Spanish sixteenth century. The novelty of the Ignatian exercises, and perhaps the key to their success, lay in their form rather than in their content. Whereas in a book like the Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditaciones vitae Christi* the author addresses the (presumably ecclesiastic) reader directly with the purpose of engaging him in the creative process of visual meditation, the *Exercicios* are conceived of as guidelines given to a priest, 'el que da los exercicios', for

[86] James Broderick, *Saint Ignatius Loyola: The Pilgrim Years* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1956, repr. 1998), pp. 61–64.

[87] On the state of spiritual literature before, during and after Valdés's tenure, see Melquíades Andrés Martín, 'Corrientes culturales en tiempo de los Reyes Católicos y recepción de Erasmo', in *El erasmismo en España*, ed. by M. Revuelta and C. Morón ([Santander]: Sociedad Menéndez Pelayo, 1986) pp. 73–96.

him to address the exercitant orally and lead his practice. The introduction of a mediating and directing figure was seen as particularly desirable at a time of growing concern with lay religiosity, personal freedom, and the role of the imagination. Meditation was a skill that needed to be learnt and practised properly; it was feared that the person engaged in it without guidance might picture the wrong type of images, or draw from them the wrong spiritual lessons, to which his memory might cling.[88] Given the general obsession with orthodoxy (particularly in regard to the interpretation of scripture), visual meditation came to be considered a powerful but dangerous practice, since it was difficult to control.[89] Hence the figure of *el que da los exercicios* responds to the need to teach meditation to the exercitant, guiding and encouraging him through the process, as well as ensuring that it was properly conducted and produced the right results.

One of the aspects of meditation that preoccupied early modern writers was the problem of letting the imagination wander and not keeping control over a multitude of distracting thoughts. One manual compares this to counting raindrops in a storm, while St John of Ávila recommends to his reader that 'cuando vagare el pensamiento tenerlo con suavidad, y otras veces darle un bofeton como a siervo malo que habla con su señor sin reverencia'.[90] Ignatius solves this problem by requiring a spiritual director to supervise the process. The Ignatian guidelines were meant to provide the exercitant with a directed

[88] See Alastair Hamilton, *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain: The Alumbrados* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), and Melquíades Andrés Martín, 'Alumbrados, erasmistas, "luteranos" y místicos, y su común denominador: el riesgo de una espiritualidad más "intimista"', in *Inquisición española*, ed. by A. Alcalá and others (Barcelona: Aires, 1984), pp. 373–409.
[89] This spirituality was often criticised as 'imaginaciones y vanas contemplaciones' or even 'vanísimas e hispanísimas contemplaciones' by some of the zealously orthodox and the dissenters alike; see Melquíades Andrés Martín, 'Núcleos de propagación del pensamiento eclesiástico', *Edad de Oro*, 8 (1989), 9–25 (p. 18).
[90] See Juan de Jesús María, p. 265, and Juan de Ávila, *Segunda parte de las obras* (Seville: F. Pérez, 1604), fols 228^{v}–29^{r}.

yet tailored religious method, adapted to each individual's strengths. 'El que da los exercicios' was meant to give a brief account of a subject for meditation making sure that the exercitant grasped the essence of the story, but allowing him to pause and meditate in greater depth whenever he found 'alguna cosa que haga un poco más declarar o sentir la historia'.[91] This flexibility was one of the strengths of the *Exercises*, and a decisive factor in their popularity, while the priest's supervision ensured the continuing survival of the *Exercises* during periods of growing intolerance in religious matters (although they did not altogether escape the Inquisition's censorious gaze).[92]

An inconvenient aspect of the *Exercises* was that their customised nature made them time-consuming for the priest who imparted them. However, other alternatives were devised to respond to the same needs and concerns while extending similar benefits to a greater number of people at one time. A fitting context in which to perform exercises in visual meditation was to be found in sermons.

PREDICAR A LOS OJOS: SERMONS AND MEDITATION LITERATURE

Many seventeenth-century Spanish sermons consist of what at first sight seems to be the generic transposition into a sermon of a text for meditation, in the Franciscan tradition of the *Meditaciones vitae Christi*. This made the practice of visual meditation available to a greater number of people, including the illiterate, and helped them to perform it on their own. Perhaps more importantly, this new genre was also a response on the part of

[91] Loyola, 'annotación segunda', p. 10.
[92] Terence O'Reilly, 'Melchor Cano and the Spirituality of St Ignatius Loyola', in *Ignacio de Loyola y su tiempo*, ed. by J. Plazaola (Bilbao: Mensajero, 1992), pp. 369–80.

preachers to the new rhetoric, which established *movere* as the paramount goal of sacred oratory (see pp. 51 and ff. above).

It can be argued that meditation sermons, like funeral sermons, are characteristic enough to be considered as a sub-genre. Three features confer their distinctive character: 1) The preacher seeks to involve the listeners in visual meditation while the sermon is being preached, to arouse an affective response; 2) They are more likely to be preached at specific times of the liturgical year, such as Lent and Maundy Thursday, although they can be found outside these;[93] 3) The preacher imitates, paraphrases or quotes from meditation manuals. The degree of closeness between the original text and the sermon varies, and so does the extent to which the preacher understood the rhetorical principles underlying his model.

It is difficult to put a precise date on the origin of meditation sermons, since this aspect of late medieval preaching has been insufficiently researched, especially for Spain. Clearly they must post-date the main works in the Franciscan tradition of meditational literature, but can be found well before the mid-sixteenth century. A search through St Bonaventure's sermons produces no trace of the familiar resources and techniques of the *Meditaciones vitae Christi*. The main concern of his work on preaching, *De arte concionandi*, is the *divisio* of the theme following the tradition of the scholastic sermon, and even his Maundy Thursday sermon is strikingly cerebral and devoid of pathos; the only passages which could be considered emotive are, for example, this apostrophe to the

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[93] For example, in *sermones de misiones*, which form a specific sub-group. On the usual arrangements for preaching a whole Lenten season as a unit, see Smith, p. 31.

listener: ‘then, consider that when you sin you are the cause of Christ’s wounds’.[94] This statement appeals to the listener’s rationality rather than to his emotions or imagination. It appears that the initiator of the Franciscan tradition would not have thought of a sermon as the time and place for meditation.

In his study of medieval preaching in England, G.R. Owst spoke of a two-way relationship between vernacular devotional literature and sermons, in which the former could both originate from and supply material for the latter.[95] The author quotes from a sermon in which the congregation is encouraged from the pulpit to ‘see Job sitting clad in camel’s hair fasting in the desert, and Peter on the gallows of the cross, […] and James falling upon the sword of Herod’, and concludes that there the preacher is ‘surely arguing in favour of any kind of representation, which will bring them vividly yet reverently before the eyes of unlettered men, whether in pictures and carvings, or… sacred drama’.[96] Owst did not mention another possible way of imaging, that of mental images, although later he remarked on the influence of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* on English passion sermons, crafted to ‘kindle the lurid imagination of the people’. He also mentions a passage of a sermon in John Myrc’s *Festial* in which the preacher complains that many cannot picture the Passion in their minds in any way other than as they have seen it in sculptures or paintings, which suggests that the same preacher had tried to encourage such meditation exercises during a sermon.[97] I have only found one such example in medieval literature in Spanish: an interesting short sermon on the Passion, probably

[94] ‘considera igitur, quod quando peccas, causa es plagarum Christi’; St Bonaventure, ‘Sermo I, feria sexta in Parasceve’, in *Opera omnia*, IX, col. 261.
[95] Gerald R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England: an Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period* (Cambridge: CUP, 1926), p. 279.
[96] Gerald R. Owst, *Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England: a Neglected Chapter in the History of English Letters and of the English People* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961), p. 136.
[97] Owst, *Preaching*, p. 288, and *Literature and the Pulpit*, pp. 507–08 and 146.

written by a Dominican in the fourteenth century, in which elements of the scholastic style of preaching (such as the clear *divisio* of the subject) coexist with moving vivid descriptions, apostrophes, and other rhetorical resources usually found in the Franciscan tradition.[98]

But by the early sixteenth century, the practice of preaching such meditations was well established. John of Ávila (*c*. 1500–1569), in his *Carta a un predicador*, includes works of meditation literature among the reading he recommends:

> Sean muy amigos de la lecion, porque segun la gente está durissima, es le muy provechoso leer libros de Roma[n]ce, libros que son mas acomodados para esto: Passio duorum. Contemptus mundi: los abecedarios Espirituales… los Cartuxanos son muy buenos, opera Bernardi, confessiones de san Agustin.[99]

It is not clear whether he meant that the preacher should use these books for his sermons, or that he should advise the congregation to read them, but in any case the reference to meditational literature in the context of preaching is significant enough. Further on, he recommends visual meditation again, specifying that 'toda esta meditacion se a de hazer, no llevando la imaginacion a partes lexos de si, sino dentro de si'.[100]

To my knowledge, the first examples of a meditation sermon in the early modern period can be found in the works of some of the writers discussed above as continuators of the Franciscan tradition. As a precedent, Pedro M. Cátedra and others have remarked on an unusual feature of Juan de Padilla's *Retablo de la vida de Christo* (1505): when the author reaches the emotional and narrative climax of the book, Jesus's death, he warns the reader that 'Aqui dexa el author el verso, y entra en la prosa en señal de mayor dolor:

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[98] See 'Sermón *in Passione Jhesu Christi*', in *Un sermonario castellano medieval: el ms. 1854 de la Biblioteca de la Universidad de Salamanca*, ed. by Manuel A. Sánchez Sánchez, 2 vols (Salamanca: Biblioteca Universitaria, 1999), II, #48, pp. 647–57.

[99] St Juan de Ávila, 'Carta que escrivio el padre maestro Juan de Avila á un Predicador', in *Primera parte del libro espiritual, sobre el verso Audi, filia, et vide, etc …* (Seville: F. Pérez, 1604), fols 8^{v}–9^{r}.

[100] St Juan de Ávila, fol. 9^{v}.

haciendo una lamentacion por manera de sermon'.[101] The passage that follows, an insertion of prose into the *coplas*, uses the same moving rhetorical resources as the rest of the book. If this passage was certainly not a sermon in the literal sense, the author's observation that it 'reads like a sermon' (*por manera de sermon*) implies that his readers were familiar with sermons dealing with the same subject in the same way. Around thirty years after the publication of the *Retablo*, a collection of sermons by Francisco de Osuna appeared in print (*Trilogium Evangelicum*, Antwerp, 1536), which contains meditations on the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension.[102] Although the book was published in Latin to reach a wider readership, it is likely that Osuna originally composed these sermons as part of his pastoral duties and delivered them in Spanish, the language he used in the rest of his literary output. The contemplative tone and the vivid descriptions are strongly reminiscent of similar passages in the first and third *Abecedarios Espirituales*, which proves that Osuna saw fit to bridge the genre gap between written devotional book and spoken sermon by delivering visual meditations in both genres.

In any case, sermons that include a directed visual meditation were well established and common by the beginning of the seventeenth century, as is evident from their titles. The earliest collection of these may well be *Meditaciones muy devotas sobre algunos pasos y misterios principales de la vida de nuestro Salvador, y señaladamente de su santa Niñez, Pasión, Resurrección y gloriosa Ascensión* (Salamanca, 1579). Its author, Fray Luis de Granada, has been discussed above as an important contributor to sacred rhetoric, and the example certainly caught on. The effect ripples through Félix Herrero

[101] Rodríguez Ferrer 2009, p. 58; Pedro M. Cátedra, *Poesía de pasión en la Edad Media: El "Cancionero" de Pero Gómez de Ferrol* (Salamanca: SEMYR, 2001), p. 313.
[102] See Andrés, *Introducción*, pp. 3–22.

Salgado's index of printed sermons, which began as a catalogue of the Herrero García collection now in the Universidad Complutense's library and remains the best bibliographical tool for Spanish seventeenth-century sermon literature. Several individual sermons and sermon collections contain 'meditación', 'consideración' or even 'exercicio spiritual' in the title; for example, Fray Hernando de Santiago, *Consideraciones sobre los evangelios de los santos* (1603), Fray Pedro de Valderrama, *Exercicios spirituales para todas las festividades de los Sanctos* (1607), or Fray Alonso de Cabrera, *Consideraciones en los Evangelios* (1609).[103] This reality is confirmed on a theoretical level by the advice given by manuals on preaching written around the same time.

Recommendations that the preacher should spend some time meditating with mental images before the sermon can be found in many seventeenth-century treatises on preaching. The main goal of this was to stir the emotions of the preacher himself, following Horace and Quintilian who stated that to move the audience the orator must be moved himself with the same emotion he intends to arouse. Recommendations along these lines can be found in Juan de Jesús María's *Ars concionandi* (1610), and in the *De ratione concionandi* by the Jesuit St Francisco de Borja (1510–1572), published in 1612, in which he quoted from the *Ars poetica* and advised the preacher to 'imagine himself present at Christ's sermons, and then depict them vividly to the listeners [...] Detail the threats, in order to inspire with terror; God's mercies and benefices, to enkindle the love of God'.[104] Later in the century, Escardó wrote similarly in his *Rhetorica Christiana* (1647):

[103] Herrero, *Aportación bibliográfica*.
[104] Juan de Jesús María, OCD, *Ars concionandi compendio scripta* (Cologne: apud Ioannem Crithium, 1610), pp. 18 and 118: 'Si enim serio in seipso eos affectus excitavit, ut Concionatores Apostolici solent,

> para mover a otros el orador se ha de vestir de los mismos afectos que dessea imprimir en los animos de los oyentes; que remedio hay para esso, si los afectos no estan en nuestra mano? […] para moverse a si, y a otros, se han de amplificar las cosas, y hazer descripcion dellas ta[n] al vivo, como si las viessemos, y luego saldran los afectos. […] piense el orador, y *passe por la fantasia las imagines que representan la cosa de que se ha de tratar*; porque mucho mas mueve lo q[ue] vemos co[n] los ojos, q[ue] lo q[ue] oimos [my emphasis].[105]

Here again, the use of *enargeia* by the preacher as a means of stirring emotions is quite explicit; in this case, first as an internal preparation for the sermon, then externally as he addresses the congregation.

A preacher who followed this advice could easily bring into his sermon mental images from the preliminary meditation, still fresh in his mind. If these meditations were carried out with the aid of a text, he might also borrow expressions, images or themes from it, which sometimes makes it possible to identify the book he used. This is certainly the case, for example, in a sermon on the Passion by the Dominican friar Alonso de Cabrera (c. 1549–1598), in which he paints vividly the tearful scene of Jesus foretelling his death to his mother:

> [M]irava el hijo á la madre que estava con el a la mesa. Y acorda[n]dose del cuchillo de dolor que otro dia avia de atravesar su piadoso coraçon, olvidabase de comer y arrassados sus dulcissimos ojos de agua, hablava con ellos lo que callava la lengua: […] y no pudie[n]do sufrir tan rezia experiencia de amor, postrada ante los pies de su hijo amantissimo, le suplica le declare la causa de sus lagrimas, y cual es el dia señalado de su passion. Y no pudiendo el Señor dexar de condescender á su peticio[n], retraydos ambos a un secreto aposento le dixo. Madre dulcissima, vuestra humildad me venciò á venir del cielo á la tierra, y vuestras lagrimas me obligan á cumplir a costa de entrambos, vuestra demanda. Llegado es madre amantissima, el tiempo de mi dolorosa passion. […] Mañana sere escarnecido, abofeteado, escupid<o> y cruelmente açotado, y al fin puesto en la cruz. Estos cabellos que aqui veys, seran muchas vezes sogas, y yo por ellos sere arrastrado y traydo de juez en juez […][106]

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profectò universam pronu[n]tiationem mirificè perficiet'; 'Fingat se presentem sermonibus à Christo habitis, et ad vivum auditoribus exprimat… Observet minas, ad terrorem incutiendum, misericordias verò Dei, et beneficia ad amorem Dei conciliandum…' ; St Francisco de Borja, SJ, *De ratione concionandi libellus* (Cologne: apud Ioannem Crithium, 1612), p. 155.

[105] Escardó, fols 335v–36r.

[106] Fray Alonso de Cabrera, OP, *Libro de consideraciones sobre los evangelios, desde el Domingo de Septuagesima, y todos los domingos y ferias de Quaresma, hasta el Domingo de la Octava de Resurreccion* (Barcelona: Gabriel Graells, 1602), fols 168r–69r. On Cabrera, see Félix Herrero Salgado, *Predicadores dominicos y franciscanos,* La oratoria sagrada en los siglos XVI y XVII, 2 (Madrid: FUE, 1998), pp. 185–260.

The inspiration for this moving but apocryphal scene is probably Meditation 72 of the Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditaciones vite Christi*, discussed in chapter two, entitled 'How Jesus predicted his death to his mother', which begins with the author noting that this 'very beautiful meditation' is not in the Gospels (see p. 22, above).[107] Cabrera expanded on the subject-matter from the *Meditaciones* to increase the power of this emotive scene.

Further evidence suggests that Cabrera used the Pseudo-Bonaventure, for example, in the following passage of the Flagellation:

> Començad (señor) a quitar essas ropas hiladas con las virginales manos de vuestra sacratissima Madre, desnudaos (señor) que en vivos cueros aveys de quedar para vestir la desnudez de mis pecados. Llegan pues aquellos crueles carniceros, y con toda descortesia le quitan sus ropas al redopelo: y dexan desnudo al que viste los cielos de nubes, […] á aquel noble mancebo de treynta y tres años, co[n] ta[n]ta lindeza de cuerpo y proporcion de mie[m]bros hasta entonces nu[n]ca d[e] otro vistos que de la Virge[n] su madre: que solo ver el hombre tan lindo bastava para atar las manos de las fieras bestias […]. Comiençan luego con <fi>ereza inaudita á descargar sobre el sus latigos y disciplinas, ciñen al santo cuerpo de cardenales y verdugos, rasgan los cueros, rebientan la sangre y corren arroyos della, ro[m]pen la carne, surcan el cuerpo, añaden llagas sobre llagas. Abren sus espaldas hasta descubrir sus entrañas: y en poco tiempo no dexan en el figura de hombre, si no de un leproso […] O yunque divina? O espaldas sufridoras de tantas martilladas? O cuerpo blanco como te tiñen de colorado? […].[108]

Elements such as the contrast between Christ's physical and moral beauty and the bestiality and cruelty of his tormentors, or the fact that Christ's sufferings in that scene are directly connected to the preacher's own sins (and by extension, those of the congregation) are reminiscent of another passage of the *Meditaciones*:

> The Lord is stripped of his clothes, bound to a pillar, and scourged most cruelly. He stands naked before all, a comely and modest young man, the fairest that ever was born among all the sons of men; he patiently endures the violent lashes of the brutes, and his aching flesh, most innocent and tender, stainless and beautiful, flower of all flesh and of all human nature, is full of wounds and broken. His kingly blood flows from all the parts of his body, as they repeat wound upon wound and bruise upon bruise… Then was fulfilled what the prophet Isaiah said: we saw him, he said, and there was no beauty in him, and we beheld him as a leper humiliated of God.[109]

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[107] 'Hic potest interponeri meditacio valde pulchra de qua tamen Scriptura non loquitur'; *Meditaciones Vite Christi*, pp. 240–41.

[108] *Meditaciones Vite Christi*, fol. 182v.

[109] 'Spoliatur igitur Dominus; ad columpnam ligatur, durissime flagellatur. Stat nudus coram omnibus, iuvenis elegans et uerecundus, *speciosus forma pre filiis hominum*, suscipit spurcissimorum flagella dura et dolorosa caro illa, innocentissima et tenerima, mundissima et pulcherrima; *flos omnis carnis* et tocius humane nature, repletur liuoribus et fracturis. Fluit undique regius sanguis de omnibus partibus corporis,

Some expressions and themes closely follow the Pseudo-Bonaventure: 'llagas sobre llagas' adapts 'livor super livorem', not found in the Gospels (and based in turn on the wording of the *Lignum Vitae*, as we have seen on p. 22 above).

Cabrera's command of the language of meditation literature may have been the product of direct imitation of old models. However, treatises on rhetoric (both secular and sacred) of the period attest to the interest in understanding and identifying mechanisms such as those used by Cabrera and his contemporaries. Rico Verdú quotes definitions of 'apóstrofe' and 'deprecación' as 'un apartarse de el principal intento por menos tiempo que en la digresion y como sin aver salido de el proposito como es bolviendose *a Dios, a el cielo, a las soledades*' and 'Quando pedimos favor a alguno […] y se refiere no solo a los hombres, mas aun *a las soledades*, a los montes, rios, bosques y dioses' (my emphases) respectively, definitions which not only explain the meaning of the words, but also refer to the contemporary usage of the figures in the pulpit. As to *enargeia*, in addition to general terms for word-painting 'con tanta viveza y expresión que parece que se tenga delante de los ojos' (e.g. *descripción*, *evidencia*, *ficción*, *hipotiposis*, *icon*, *imagen*), there were specific ones used to name visually evoked descriptions of places, actual (*topografía*) or imagined (*topotesia*); people (e.g. *etopeya*, *ficción de persona*, *prosopografía*, *prosopopeya*); actions (*dialogismo, metástasis, pragmatografía, mímesis*), and internal passions (*patopeya*). Juan de Jesús María discussed in detail the technique of *amplificatio* as a way of moving the listeners, as did Diego de Valadés with figures such as *exclamatio*, *apostrophe*, or *icon*, and Juan Bautista Escardó with *admiracion*,

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superadditur, reiteratur et spissatur liuor super liuorem et fractura super fracturam, […] Tunc impletum est quod ait Isaias Propheta: *uidimus*, inquid, *eum, et non erat aspectus, et reputauimus eum quasi leprosum humiliatum a Deo*'; *Meditaciones Vite Christi*, p. 265. Italics original.

asseveracion, *confusion*, *proposito*, *interrogacion*, *reprehension*, *exclamacion*, *optacion*, *peticion*, *obsecracion*, *oblacion*, and *accion de gracias*.[110] As Rico Verdú noted, the Jesuits, who gave rhetoric a prominent place in their *ratio studiorum*, contributed greatly to the Spanish literature of the Golden Age through the teaching of Latin rhetoric, which also benefited the field of sacred oratory.[111]

The existence of such rich and precise vocabulary (sometimes taken from ancient rhetoricians, at others coined anew) is sufficient evidence of interest in understanding the mechanisms of word-painting. Preachers used all these techniques to enliven sermons with a profusion of effects and images, and all aimed at *movere*. The expression *predicar a los ojos* has been discussed by Ledda, who found it in sermons by the Jesuits Jose Antonio Xarque (1657), Tirso González de Santalla (the 1680s), and Miguel Angel Pascual (1698).[112] As she observed, all were Jesuits; nonetheless, she was probably not aware that they were quoting another Jesuit, Antonio Vieyra (1608–1697). The phrase *Predicar a los ojos* appears for the first time in Vieyra's *Sexagesima* sermon (for the second Sunday before Lent, 1655) on the Parable of the Sower, a text preachers often used to reflect on the ministry of the word – especially if there were other preachers in the congregation, as was the case in the Chapel Royal of Lisbon, when this particular sermon was preached. Vieyra expounded his ideas about sacred oratory: 'Sabem, padres prègadores, porque fazem pouco abalo os nossos sermões? Porque não prègamos aos

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[110] 'Lista alfabética de todas las figuras que aparecen en los autores consultados', in Rico; the definition quoted appears s.v. 'hipotiposis'; Juan de Jesús María, *Ars concionandi*, p. 32; Valadés, pp. 256 and ff., 275 and ff.; Escardó, fol. 339r and ff.

[111] 'Los jesuitas y la enseñanza de la retórica en el siglo XVII', in Rico, pp. 56–72.

[112] Giuseppina Ledda, 'Predicar a los ojos', *Edad de Oro*, 8 (1989), 129–42 (pp. 129–30), and *La parola e l'immagine: strategie della persuasione religiosa nella Spagna seicentesca* (Pisa: ETS, 2003), pp. 59–60.

olhos, prègamos só aos ouvidos'.[113] Owing to his problems with the Portuguese Inquisition and also with the superiors of his own Order in Portugal, Vieyra found a more receptive atmosphere in Spain and the complete edition of his sermons appeared in Spanish translation before they were published in Portuguese.[114] Vieyra's turn of phrase accurately describes one of the dominant trends in senventeenth-century sacred oratory. As Ledda comments, *predicar a los ojos* could be adapted to the specific needs of different types of congregation, both ordinary people as well as those from more educated elites.[115]

The most interesting aspect of the development of meditation sermons was perhaps the effect they had on shaping the religious education of the populace at large. Visual meditation was so widespread by the end of the sixteenth century that emotional reflection had become the natural response to religious images. No longer restricted to those who had access to it through personal reading, the currency of visual meditation grew with the introduction of the Ignatian exercises, and even more so as meditational sermons became increasingly common. In this respect, the words of the ecclesiastic Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano (d. 1584) are revealing: 'Qual sarà quello ostinato (eccetto non sia luterano) che, vedendo l'imagine del nostro Signore crocifisso piagato e sanguinolento, non abbia qualche rimorso ne la consienza e non gli venga voglia di onorarla e di farli riverenza?'[116] For good or for ill, indifference was not an option for a public thus encouraged to be affected by images: 'E non vale a dire: "Sono uomini

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[113] Antonio Vieira, SJ, *Sermões*, ed. by G. Alves, 15 vols (Oporto: Lello & Irmão, 1907–1909), III, 244–45.
[114] The first volume, containing the *sermon de sexagesima*, was printed in 1660. Antonio Vieyra, SJ, *Aprovechar deleitando: nueva idea del púlpito christiano-política* (Valencia: [n. pub.], 1660).
[115] Ledda, 'Predicar a los ojos', p. 133.
[116] See Giovanni A. Gilio, *Dialogo… degli errori e degli abusi de' pittori circa l'istorie,* ed. by P. Barocchi, *Trattati d'Arte del Cinquecento*, 3 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1960–62), II (1961), 1–115 (p. 109).

dipinti", perché anco le pitture edificano e scandalezzano.'[117] Gilio's words attest to the extent to which his and his contemporaries' ideas about religious images had moved beyond the traditional notions that images complement the powers of the mind: in his view, their influence has become inescapable.

We have explored several important developments taking place in the overlapping fields of theology, artistic theory, religious literature, and sacred oratory during the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. These were always connected to ancient rhetoric, and brought about new and characteristic ways of thinking about religious images, sacred oratory, meditation, and the connections between them. Images were rhetorized, understood as akin to a language, and one specific function they had became paramount: that they should affect the viewer emotionally. This shift came about by means of a subtle interpretation of pre-existing arguments. A similar evolution took place regarding sacred oratory, which openly embraced ancient rhetoric and came to be regarded primarily as a tool to stir the emotions of the congregation. One of the most effective ways to achieve this goal was, according to ancient rhetoric, the use of visually engaging language that was conducive to the formation of vivid mental images. The same strategy was characteristic of a type of meditation literature that was as specifically Christian as it was deeply rooted in ancient rhetoric. This tradition continued to be cultivated and reshaped in the sixteenth century in such a way that images, meditation, and preaching became inextricably linked to one another.

In the same way as devotional practices conditioned the way of looking at religious images, the sum of a person's experiences of seeing affected his or her way of

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[117] Gilio, p. 78.

carrying out mental prayer. It should be remembered that in a time in which images belonged to the realm of the extraordinary, unlike our own ‘media society’, they made a more lasting impression on the onlookers’ memories. The internal *phantasma* of an actual picture would haunt the viewer long after he ceased to see the object itself. But the power of the presence of the physical image was also known to seventeenth-century preachers, who explored the different ways in which it could be used as a tool to stir the viewers’ emotions.

Chapter 3

Pulpit Images

> ‘Qué es esto, mi Dios, qué es esto?
> Cómo veros es posible
> tan altamente postrado,
> tan baxamente sublime?’
>
> Hortensio Félix Paravicino, from ‘Romance a una agonía con un Cristo’.[1]

On the morning of 10 August, 1644, Madrid’s largest parish church of San Martín opened its doors to celebrate the feast of Saint Lawrence, a significant date for the Spanish Habsburg monarchy. A large canvas representing the Virgin of Montserrat had been loaned to decorate the main altar and, near this, the undisputed focus of attention was another much smaller painting. Placed underneath a lavish golden canopy, this second image was not a religious subject, but a portrait of King Philip IV. More interestingly, the King was portrayed in the least royal manner possible: dressed in plain military clothes, without any symbolic apparatus, and with a humble, almost melancholy demeanour. The crowd facing these unusual sights must have been eager for an explanation. This duly came during the sermon, in which one of the King’s preachers, the Augustinian monk

[1] Hortensio Félix Paravicino, *Obras posthumas, divinas y humanas, de don Félix de Arteaga* (Alcalá: María Fernández, 1650), fol. 11^{r}.

José Láinez (c. 1600?–1667), expertly interwove image and words in one of the most complex ekphrases in early modern Spanish literature.[2]

Addressing the congregation from the pulpit, Láinez explained that Philip IV had just defeated an alliance of French troops and Catalan rebels thanks to the Virgin of Montserrat – a Marian devotion that united all Catalans regardless of their political allegiance. The preacher added that the King had graciously forgiven the Catalan rebels as a father forgives his repentant sons, rather than treating them as traitors and vanquished enemies. With an impressive array of Biblical parallels to support his argument, the preacher provided the congregation with the necessary references to decipher the puzzling juxtaposition of a triumphant Catalan Virgin and a God-like but unheroic, humble King – all, of course, to uphold the public image of the Habsburg monarchy.

This example of an image being discussed by a preacher is unusual in that it involves a secular painting, and a fine portrait at that, painted by none other than Diego Velázquez (1599–1660). But seventeenth-century Spaniards would have been familiar with a common practice usually involving less distinguished, often anonymous works of religious art. In this chapter I shall explore the different ways in which images in a church were made to work from the pulpit and for the pulpit.

[2] About the circumstances of the painting, its public display and the sermon explaining its meaning, see Pablo Pérez d'Ors and Michael Gallagher, 'New information on Velázquez's portrait of Philip IV at Fraga in the Frick Collection, New York', *The Burlington Magazine*, 152.1291 (October 2010), 652–59.

Setting the scene

Sermon-events cannot be dissociated from their physical context, which included the architectural space, the painted and sculpted decoration, and other objects in the church interior. These can fortunately be reconstructed, albeit indirectly. Visual representations of sermons are rare in early modern Spain, owing to a lack of interest in everyday subjects other than the still life. Paintings or engravings were commissioned to record extraordinary religious celebrations only, such as a *liturgia de las cuarenta horas*, an *auto-da-fé* or a monarch's funeral. Representations of the lives of Jesus and the saints sometimes feature scenes of preaching: Jesus preaches at the synagogue, Paul in Athens, and John the Baptist in the wilderness, all in circumstances that call for an ancient or imaginary setting. Similar problems arise with the iconographies of later saints, such as the sermons to the birds and to the fish of Francis of Assisi and Anthony of Padua, respectively, or Francis Xavier preaching to the *indios* of Japan, which involve extraordinary elements. Nothing in these paintings relates to preaching in a typical seventeenth-century church interior.

The few Spanish paintings of the early modern period that do depict a sermon-event are consistent as far as the disposition of preacher and congregation is concerned. The earliest example is a panel attributed to Juan de Borgoña and dated 1519, in which the late-third century martyr Saint Felix is shown preaching in the church of Gerona, standing inside an Italianate marble pulpit on the left (Fig. 2). Women sit by the pulpit on the floor or on low stools that are hidden underneath their clothes, while men stand further down in the nave; segregation by sex was probably the local custom in Gerona. Another panel painted some thirty years later shows a bishop saint preaching from a

wooden pulpit.[3] Men and women listen together with varying degrees of attention, the men standing or sitting on the floor and the women sitting on very low wooden stools, one of which is visible at the bottom right. On the right the painter included two excellent portraits of men clothed in late sixteenth-century styles of dress, who are also listening to the sermon. In Eugenio Lucas's *A Sermon* of 1856 (Madrid, Museo Lázaro Galdiano), male and female figures seem to mix more freely, some sitting or standing, others kneeling as the preacher vehemently shows them a crucifix.[4] Sitting members of the congregation are seated on pieces of portable furniture that were presumably taken into and out of the church. The church pew as we know it did not make its appearance in Spanish churches until the mid-eighteenth century, and did not become common before the end of the nineteenth century.[5] Most nineteenth-century views of Spanish cathedrals and churches, such as the engravings by Pérez de Villaamil published in *España Artística y Monumental* (1842), show church interiors with no pews (Fig. 3). Time seems to have frozen, as far as the congregants' attitudes are concerned, in a beautiful photograph titled *Village Sermon* by José Ortiz Echagüe (1903, Fig. 4), suggesting that the arrangements that were common in the sixteenth century survived well into the twentieth in more remote areas.

A *pragmática* issued by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in 1502 stipulates that churchgoers 'no se paseen ni traten ni negocien' in church during the course of

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[3] Baltasar Grande (attr.), *Bishop Saint Preaching*, 1548–53. Oil on panel, 175 x 96 cm. Carbonero el Mayor (Segovia), parish church; see *Retablo de Carbonero el Mayor: restauración e investigación* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Cultura; Instituto del Patrimonio Histórico Español, 2003), p. 149.
[4] José Manuel Arnáiz, *Eugenio Lucas: su vida y su obra* (Madrid: Montal, 1981), pp. 432–33.
[5] *Thesaurus des objets réligieux: meubles, objets, linges, vêtements et instruments de musique du culte catholique romain*, ed. by Joël Perrin and Sandra Vasco Roca (Paris: Éditions du Patrimoine, 1999), s.v. *Banc*.

masses and sermons, which suggests that such behaviours were not uncommon.[6] While measures were taken to ensure a dignified conduct in church, coinciding with the growing importance of preaching during the sixteenth century, early modern congregations did not always listen to sermons in frozen silence. Before pews became common, churchgoers were able to select a spot (respecting local customs), turn and move in a freer and more spontaneous way. The congregation would gather around the pulpit, as in the images mentioned above; one can safely assume that, when pleased, those attending would crowd in to the pulpit in order to hear every word and see every detail of the preacher's expression and gesticulation.

It is essential to bear in mind the symbolic as well as practical significance of the space in which preaching took place. Two different areas are of specific interest here: the chancel, separated by reason of its sacramental function, and the nave, which was the space for the congregation. A diaphanous ironwork screen often marked the border between chancel and nave, impeding access without obstructing sight. The focal points of the liturgy were the altar and the tabernacle found in the chancel, normally in an elevated area both for visibility and for symbolic emphasis. Most liturgical actions, culminating in the consecration, were directed eastwards along the longitudinal axis of the church, towards the East end of the chancel. There, the eyes of the congregation focused on the altarpiece displaying the most important works of religious art. The pulpit was placed to one side between the chancel and the nave, and from it the preacher reversed the thrust of the service by facing West to address the congregation. This arrangement expressed visually what the preacher was functionally: a mediator between the Latin of the Gospel

[6] *Novísima recopilación de las leyes de España, dividida en XII libros*, 5 vols (Madrid, 1805), I, bk 1, tít. 1, ley 10.

and the everyday language of the congregation, between the sacred space reserved for the Eucharist, the clergy and religious images, and the space occupied by ordinary men and women.

Cathedrals as well as collegiate and monastic churches present a slightly different case, since enclosed choirstalls normally occupied the middle of the nave and prevented the congregation from seeing into the chancel. (This was never the case in churches belonging to the Jesuits, who did not have a choral Liturgy of the Hours.) However, from around the 1560s onwards churches tend to be furnished with either a *retro-coro* behind the altar, facing west, or a *coro alto* perched on a loft above the nave. In some cases, central choirs were moved from their traditional position in consequence of the new emphasis on Eucharistic worship after Trent, which required a greater visual prominence for the altar and the tabernacle.[7] Another architectural change resulting from the same policy was the shortening of the chancel, which allowed the congregation to see the celebrant better and encouraged a greater involvement of the faithful in the liturgy. Either by design or through adaptation, most churches followed this pattern by around 1600, making altarpieces more visible than they had ever been so far.

VISUAL CULTURE

Once congregants could see altarpieces more clearly, their interest in and appreciation of art must have developed accordingly. The visual culture of seventeenth-century Spaniards, their experience in seeing and their ability to interpret what they saw, differs

[7] On the changes in the placement of *coros*, as well as a general discussion of these matters, see Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos, 'Liturgia y configuración del espacio en la arquitectura española y portuguesa a raiz del Concilio de Trento', *Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte*, 3 (1991), 43–52.

from ours in two main ways: the number of images they had access to was far smaller, and a large majority of these were religious images. Most seventeenth-century Spaniards would not have been able, for example, to distinguish a rhinoceros from a hippopotamus, whereas nobody would have confused the Ascension with the Resurrection, St Roch with St Isidro, or the Immaculate Conception with the Assumption; as Gállego states, '[s]e llegaba a distinguir hasta a Justa de Santa Rufina y a San Justo de San Pastor […] El repertorio visual de los analfabetos era enorme'.[8]

Where the meaning of a work of art was obscure, it was normally the painter who was to blame for an equivocal or poorly executed painting, rather than the viewer for not being able to interpret it correctly, as we have seen with Orbaneja, the painter from Úbeda (see p. 27, above). A further example referring to religious art comes in *El donado hablador* (1625-26) by Jerónimo de Alcalá, which features a painter whose Immaculate Conceptions required inscriptions to clarify what each of the symbols was (as was usual in sixteenth-century depictions of the subject).[9]

Charles Borromeo, one of the most influential thinkers of the Counter-Reformation, advised preachers to use the images in a church during sermons. To fulfil and enforce the directives recently issued at Trent, Borromeo summoned a diocesan synod on his appointment as Archbishop of Milan (1564). The proceedings (*Constitutiones*), published in book form to set an example, pay especial attention to preaching (Part I, art. 6, 'De predicatione Verbi Dei') and to religious images (Part I, art.

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[8] Julián Gállego, 'Iconografía: ejercicios de lectura', in *El siglo de oro de la pintura española* (Madrid: Mondadori, 1991), pp. 183–84.

[9] '… á cada cosa ponía su rótulo, diciendo, aquesta es palma, ésta es estrella, y aquel es sol; y con mucha justicia y acierto escrivía, que aun está en litis pendencia, si el ciprés era fuente, ó la Luna era plátano…' Gerónimo de Alcalá Yáñez, *El donado hablador, vida y aventuras de Alonso, mozo de muchos amos* (Madrid: Ruiz, 1804), p. 192.

7, ‘Quae servanda sunt in sacris imaginibus effigendis’, which reflects some of the concerns of the author’s friend and colleague, cardinal Paleotti). But, curiously enough, the precise reference is not found in either place, but in an epigraph forbidding theatrical representations of the Passion or martyrdoms of saints, both outside and inside churches. Borromeo took issue with the indecorous mixture of the comic with the sacred in these popular plays, and therefore discouraged them. He advised instead that preachers should broach subjects such as the Passion in ways that move listeners to pity and tears, a purpose that ‘will be helped by showing them the image of the crucified Saviour’.[10] Here, for the first time, preachers’ interest in *movere* and the emotions is explicitly linked, in a concrete rather than a theoretical way, to the emotive powers of images.

The large printing of the *Constitutiones* (four editions between 1566 and 1567 alone, totalling six thousand copies) sought to communicate Borromeo’s views on church reform more widely outside the diocese to clergy who acknowledged his moral authority, presumably enhanced following his canonisation in 1610. After this initial impulse, the *Constitutiones* were reprinted time after time during the seventeenth century. Borromeo’s ideas, like Paleotti’s (p. 33), quickly travelled from Spanish-ruled Milan to Spain, reaching the ruling elite first – King Philip II was one of the first people to receive a copy – and percolating through to preachers like Juan Bautista Escardó, as we shall see below.[11]

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[10] ‘[the Passion and martyrdoms]… docte et graviter eatenus a concionatoribus exponatur, ut, qui sunt uberes concionum fructus, pietatem et lacrymas commoveat auditoribus. quod adiuvabit proposita crucifixi Salvatoris imago, ceteriq[ue] pii actus externi, quos Ecclesiae probatos esse Episcopus indicabit’; ‘De actionibus et representationibus sacris’, in *Constitutiones et decreta condita in provinciali synodo Mediolanensi* (Venice: [monogram of Aldo Manuccio], 1566), p. 17.

[11] See Wojciech Góralski, *I primi sinodi di San Carlo Borromeo: la riforma tridentina nella provincia ecclesiastica milanese* (Milan: NED, 1989), pp. 98 and 100. In fact, the author’s list of the earliest editions (Milan, quarto, 1566; Milan, octavo, 1566; Venice, 1567, and Brescia, 1567) is incomplete; he does not

Borromeo did not purport to be the first to endorse preaching with the help of paintings, an honour which others claimed for themselves. An engraving in Diego de Valadés's *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579; Fig. 5) shows a Franciscan preacher using a wand to point at a frieze of paintings whilst addressing a congregation of *indios*. The space in which this takes place is ambiguous, but the accompanying text seems to indicate an outdoor esplanade.[12] Earlier, Valadés wrote that Franciscan missionaries in the New World displayed a form of embroidered tapestries or painted cloths (*aulaea*, which can also mean 'theatre sets') depicting the basic tenets of the Christian faith – the Apostolic creed, the Decalogue, the seven deadly sins, the seven works of mercy, and the seven Sacraments – 'for which the authors of this invention deserve eternal praise'. To make his point clearer, he adds that members of his order invented 'this new form of teaching, [and] rightfully claim that honour as ours'.[13]

If we are to give credit to Valadés's assertion, the Friars were the first to develop the technique of preaching through images, presumably before Borromeo discussed it in the 1560s. The text does not say whether the practice started in the New World, or whether missionaries (possibly Spaniards) brought it with them; friars may have developed preaching resources of this kind in a colonial, missionary context first, then adapted it for use in Lenten *misiones* in Spain. Strikingly, *misiones* literature insists on the necessity of evangelising *las indias de acá*, an expression used to design isolated

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mention the 1566 Venice octavo edition, which I consulted; Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence*, p. 137, n. 196, mentions similar publications, such as the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis* (Milan, 1583) and the *Pastorum concionatorumque instructiones* (Cologne, 1587), which Escardó quoted it in his *Rhetorica Christiana*, fol. 335[r].

[12] Valadés, p. 210.

[13] '… symbolum Apostolorum, Decalogus, septem peccata mortalia, … septem opera misericordiae, et septem sacramenta, … Unde aeternam laudent meruerunt huius inventi auctores. Quem honorem quotquot ex D. Francisci societate in novo docendi modo primi desudavimus iure nostro vindicamus'; Valadés, pp. 95–96.

areas in peninsular Spain; hence, of course, Juan de Ávila, 'el apóstol de Andalucía', and Valadés's view that some areas of Spain were not as christianised as his *Indias*.[14] Even if the origin of preaching with images can plausibly be attributed to the Franciscans (not least because of the connection between the Franciscan order and visual meditation), it can only be an attractive hypothesis, in the absence of firmer evidence. At any rate, Valadés's pride reflects the importance of the practice, and his book was known in seventeenth-century Spain.[15]

REAL, OR IMAGINARY?

When reading a typical seventeenth-century meditation sermon, laden with *enargeia* to create a vivid and affecting word-painting for the listeners, the very pictorial qualities of the discourse sometimes give rise to a certain ambiguity, in that one cannot be certain whether or not the preacher referred to actual paintings. Here is an example: 'Levantad los ojos, que yo no me he atrevido hasta ahora a levantarlos, para mirar aquel dilubio de penas en aquella ensangrentada Columna. No veis aquel Señor atadas las manos? Redentor amante y Dios liberalissimo. Vos (Señor) las manos atadas?'.[16] It is hard to know whether the congregation could actually see a sculpture or painting of this common topic, or whether the preacher feigned its presence through apostrophes and *ekphrasis* (see p. 9, above). Does 'levantad los ojos' refer to a work of religious art customarily set in an elevated position, or is it a figure intended to draw the inner eye to an imagined

[14] Valadés, pp. 189–90.
[15] See p. 177, below.
[16] José de Barcia y Zambrana, 'Sermon 84 de accion de Gracias…', in *Despertador Christiano*, 2 vols (Madrid: E. Rodríguez, 1684), II, part 5, p. 405.

scene? (When imagining themselves present, meditation practitioners might picture themselves with eyes downcast as a sign of humility, hence 'levantad los ojos'.)

When the preacher exploited the resources of *ekphrasis* without a work of art present, much of the effect depended on his speaking as if the *phantasma* image (or rather Christ, Mary, or whatever it represented) actually appeared before his eyes, giving rise to ambiguity. Beyond mere representation, both mental and physical images required from the viewer an act of imagination, which endowed them with greater consistency than they actually had: one should react to the image pictured with the inner eye as if it were a regular, physical sight, and approach a work of art as equivalent to a spiritual reality. In either case, words achieved the preacher's purpose of placing himself and his audience within the scene, transporting the congregation to Christ's Flagellation. All in all, such sermons aimed to make images work, regardless of whether the image was physical, displayed to the sight of all, or mental, conjured by the preacher's words in the listeners' minds. The use of mental or physical images produced different kinds of sermons as performance, but this difference is not as evident in the sermons as texts. One cannot help sympathising with a preacher who attempted to establish a vocabulary to approach the issue:

> [P]ara que obre el Entendimiento en obgetos que no tiene presentes, se proponen presentes a los Sentidos, Signos, ò Imagenes significativas de los obgetos. Y assi, como devemos considerar los Christianos, lo que padeciò Christo por nosotros: para que mejor lo consideremos, nos pone la Iglesia a los ojos … varias representaciones o Imagenes de los Misterios. Las imagenes que representan, las vemos y estan presentes. La Pasion representada, ni esta presente, *ni la vemos; sino que la meditamos* [my emphasis].[17]

[17] Fray M. Sánchez del Castellar y Arbustante, *Sacro Enigma en la Santissima imagen del Santo Cristo, de la Parroquia de S. Salvador de la ciudad de Valencia* (Valencia: V. Cabrera, 1679), p. 29; quoted in Ledda 2003, p. 89.

The verbs *ver* and *meditar* indicates the contrast between the two ways of seeing, which are nevertheless close enough as to require an explanation. Other writers use metaphors of sight with ‘the eyes of the mind’ or ‘the eyes of the heart’, which appear on several occasions in the *Meditaciones Vitae Christi*.[18]

Ledda used the excerpt above to illustrate the practice of a preacher pointing to a physical image, unconvincingly, since the text might as well be an example of word-painting.[19] When confronting the same difficulty in a different sermon, Vieira Mendes did not attempt to resolve the ambiguity and concluded that both practices probably coexisted, leaving open the possibility that the same sermon-text could be preached with or without the aid of physical images in different sermon-events.[20] The text alone seldom provides evidence as to whether a preacher referenced images in the church, evidence which may instead be found by considering the sermon together with other extant documentation to reconstruct what images were present at the time of its delivery.

A SPECIAL CASE STUDY: THE SERMONS OF THE ESCUELA DE CHRISTO

Closed membership sodalities, usually reserved for the urban elites, were a typical feature of religious life and indeed of the social fabric in early modern Spain. One such, the *Escuela de Christo* inspired by the spirituality of St Philip Neri, has received little attention despite its presence throughout the Spanish realms.[21] By 1646 an Italian priest,

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[18] *Meditaciones de Passione Christi*, p. 95 (‘oculis cordis’, 2. 14) and p. 111 (‘oculis mentis’, 6. 8).
[19] Ledda, *La parola e l'immagine*, p. 87.
[20] Vieira Mendes, p. 154.
[21] See Francisco Sánchez-Castañer, *Don Juan de Palafox, virrey de Nueva España* (Madrid: FUE, 1988), p. 137. Some *escuelas* survived in Spain – presumably quite changed in character – well into the mid-twentieth century. In countries like Guatemala there are still some, at least nominally, being now sodalities for Easter processions. Sánchez-Castañer began to study the *Escuela*, but he died before he could complete his work.

Juan Bautista Feruzzi, had established the first *Escuela* in Madrid's Hospital de los Italianos, which the cardinal archbishop of Toledo, Baltasar de Moscoso y Sandoval, approved in 1653. Later, Pope Innocent X confirmed its constitutions in the pontifical brief *Ad pastoralem dignitatis fastigium* (10 April 1665), which included a copy of the statutes.[22] Unlike religious orders, the *escuela* lacked a central authority or governing body and consisted of individual cells. More interestingly, the statutes prescribed the decoration of their meeting-places, allowing us to reconstruct the context in which sermons associated with the *Escuela* were preached.

The goal of each *Escuela* was the spiritual profit of its members (who, at most, numbered twenty-four priests and forty-eight laymen), who met every Thursday for directed meditation, a sermon, and an exercise of physical penance led by a director called *obediencia*. Their 'oratorios' (chapels or meeting rooms) were normally located in a room off a church, and Chapter 7 of the constitutions carefully sets out what they should look like. The interior was of a bleak simplicity: the brethren sat on a simple bench that ran around three walls of the room with blinded windows, with a single candelabrum as the only source of light 'to gather the senses'. Before the altar lay two human skulls and two bones, and the small, plain desk of the *Obediencia*, which was like a *vanitas* ensemble of more skulls, the book of the Constitutions, meditation broadsheets, a flask of holy water and aspergillium to sprinkle it, an hourglass, and a bell. One image of the Crucifix and another of the Virgin should decorate the wall behind the altar 'with becoming, clean and modest ornament, without anything curious or rich'; above the stool

[22] 'Ad pastoralem dignitatis fastigium', in *Bullarum, privilegiorum ac diplomatum Romanum Pontificorum amplissima collectio*, 14 vols (Rome: Mainardi, 1739–1762), VI (1762), pp. 54–69. As I have not been able to consult the *Constituciones* in the original Spanish, I quote from the Latin version of the brief.

of the *obediencia* there should be another image of the patron saint, Philip Neri.[23] Paintings would suit the general spirit of severity better than sculptures, which were more expensive and luxurious. In sum, the Constitutions order restrained sensorial perception in a space with few highly symbolic objects present.

The weekly exercises of the *Escuela* started two hours before sunset, with the *obediencia* sprinkling the brethren with holy water and the reciting of the *Confiteor*. Then he read 'a devout consideration' on the previous week's subject of meditation, and there followed half an hour of mental prayer. On finishing this, the brethren lay prostrate on the ground and said the Act of Contrition, which the director was to 'mix with affects and exclamations so as to excite to penitence for sins and to love of God'. Then he briefly introduced 'the matter of a solid and fervid meditation'. Once he had finished, the director asked one of the brethren to exhort the rest to 'lift up the eyes and the heart towards God'. Then he asked each brother whether he had fulfilled all his duties (which included preparing at home for the meditation and doing works of charity, such as visiting the sick at the Hospital de los Italianos); each one confessed his sins and faults, and the director imposed their penitence. After this the light went out, lashes were handed out, and the director recited a summary of the Passion. Scourging started as penitential psalms were sung, and finished when the *obediencia* gave the sign to stop to say some concluding prayers. When they arrived at the phrase 'lumen ad revelationem gentium' in the *Nunc Dimittis*, the candles were lit again, and the brethren genuflected three times

[23] Chapter 8 stipulates that the brethren are to remain in the church kneeling in silence, contemplating the reserved Sacrament before they enter the oratory and the exercises start. 'Ad pastoralem…', p. 56.

before the images of the Crucifix and the Virgin. The whole exercise should last less than two hours.[24]

The plain *oratorios* of the *Escuela*, long since put to other uses, seem to have vanished without trace, and so have the cheap broadsheets printed for their weekly meditations. However, I have found a book of sermons related to the *Escuela*: Miguel de Meca Bobadilla's *Heraclito Christiano* (1693). Meca was in charge of the parish church of San Andrés in Calahorra. The various *Escuelas* in the area must have sprung from the one established by Juan de Palafox (1600–1659), formerly bishop of Puebla de los Ángeles and viceroy of Nueva España. After his return from Puebla, Palafox became a member of the first *Escuela* in Madrid in 1653 and, on being made bishop of Burgo de Osma the following year, he established the society in the church of San Juan de Rabanera, Soria.[25] The fact that Meca quoted the *Vida interior*, Palafox's spiritual autobiography, in the foreword to the *Heraclito christiano* bears witness to the link between Soria and nearby Calahorra.[26]

The title page of *Heraclito christiano* informs readers that the book contains sermons 'segun estilo' of the *Escuela*, which makes their precise relationship to that institution unclear. The presence of such expressions as 'un hermano de esta Escuela' interspersed through the sermons supports a direct connection.[27] Besides this, in one instance the preacher cuts the sermon short 'porque es un instante lo que falta de la arena', a reference to the hourglass on top of the *Obediencia*'s table and his concern not

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[24] '… ut ad Deum oculos et cor erigat'; 'Ad pastoralem…', p. 56.
[25] Sánchez Castañer, pp. 141 and ff.; also Ricardo Fernández Gracia, pp. 34–35, and Elisardo Pardos Bauluz, 'Palafox y la Escuela de Cristo en la iglesia de San Juan de Rabanera de Soria', *Celtiberia*, 43 (1969), 215–29.
[26] Prologue 'al que leyere', in Meca, unpaginated part. The *Vida interior* was first published in 1665 as the fifth volume of Palafox's complete works.
[27] See Meca, pp. 5, 25, 26, and passim.

to exceed the allotted time.[28] The structure of Meca's sermons also fits in that of the exercises of the *Escuela*: as ruled by the constitutions, each sermon finishes with an *acto de contricion*, which always takes the form of an apostrophe of the preacher to the Virgin or the Crucifix. However, in the foreword *al que leyere*, Meca mentions that the bishop of Calahorra recommended him to include no more than one 'plática espiritual' per month, and Meca indeed kept the number of sermons in the book to twelve distributed through the year.[29] Most likely, the sermons in the *Heraclito christiano* were originally delivered at the *Escuela* and subsequently grouped together and published to be preached elsewhere. The attraction of Meca's book may well have resided in offering outsiders a glimpse of the exclusive, closed-doors world of the *Escuela*.

The *Heraclito christiano* includes several meditation sermons that belong to the late-seventeenth-century spirituality of tears (see p. 53, above; Heraclitus was, of course, the 'weeping philosopher', often coupled with cheerful Democritus). Meca's sermons evidence his knowledge of mystical literature and mastery of the various techniques of *movere*, including *enargeia* and the use of visual aids. The best example of these can be found in the third sermon, on the Crucifixion, which Meca starts by arguing that prayer benefits from *phantasia*, the image-making power of the mind; he quotes a claim by the Franciscan preacher St Bernardino da Siena (1340–1444) that the Holy Ghost left the Gospel narratives of the Passion intentionally brief so that Christians would engage with

[28] The use of instruments to measure time during the sermon might have been more general; see bottom right in Fig. 5.
[29] The rather unusual distribution of the twelve *llantos* is as follows: (1) 1st Thursday in Lent; (2) 2nd Thursday in Lent; (3) Easter week; (4) Easter Sunday; (5) 3rd Sunday after Easter; (6) 9th Sunday after Whit Sunday; (7) 10th Sunday after Whit Sunday; (8) 11th week after Whit Sunday; (9) 12th week after Whit Sunday; (10 and 11) 14th week after Whit Sunday; (12) last Sunday after Whit Sunday.

the text creatively and fill it out.[30] Accordingly, Meca introduces an imaginary meditation on the stripping of Jesus which is not present in the Gospels:

> … los verdugos…, viendo que por la multitud de sus llagas, y por la falta de sangre que avia salido de ellas, era grande su flaqueza, y no se podia desnudar de sus sagradas vestiduras, con inhumanidad, mas que de fieras, se las quitaron con violencia y arrebatamiento tan grande, que en la Tunica interior salieron porciones de las llagas, dexando el virginal cuerpo de Jesus no solo desnudo del todo, sino tambien en muchas partes desnudos de su carne sacrosanta los huessos. San Vicente Ferrer contempla este martirio, y dize, que fue mayor que los que Christo nuestro Señor tuvo en la Coluna, y en la coronacion de espinas: *Quando tunica illa spoliatus fuit, renovata fuerunt omnia vulnera, et coronatio*.[31]

Here Meca interpolates a scene taken from a meditational sermon by St Vincent Ferrer (the Latin quotation), and rendered it in a vivid *amplificatio*, making use of the characteristic resources of *enargeia*, by means of a contrast between Jesus's defenceless innocence and the bestiality of his tormentors. In other passages of the same sermon, Meca introduced similar scenes of his own invention, in which he explored a range of picture-making resources aimed at stirring the listener's emotions and reminding them of the connection between their sins and Jesus's sufferings. Particularly striking is his picture of the nailing to the Cross:

> Pusose de espaldas en la Cruz nuestro Divino Maestro, para que le crucificasen: y fue lo mismo que dezirnos su Amor, que echava en olvido nuestras culpas, aunque por ellas le crucificavan: estendiò sobre la Cruz sus soberanos braços, dandonos a entender que hasta morir avian sido liberales con el hombre: un infame Ministro, despues que huvo barrenado el santo Madero de la Cruz, fixò en èl con un clavo la mano siniestra de Christo Señor nuestro. Barbaro, irracional, como clavas una mano, que siempre se ha empleado en beneficios? Divididos los verdugos, unos ligaron con sogas a la Cruz el braço de la mano, que yá estava clavada, otros ansimismo con sogas abraçaron los pies, y diestra de nuestro Redemptor; y tirando a un mismo tiempo con crueldad diabolica, hizieron que llegassen mano, y pies adonde estavan señalados los barrenos: avianlos abierto de industria mas distantes, para que los dolores, y martirio del Señor fuessen mayores, desencasando sus soberanos huessos.[32]

In several other such scenes, original or taken from a variety of sources, the author demonstrates his knowledge of the emotional susceptibilities of the audience, and his

[30] '*Seu, quia Spiritus Sanctus* (dize San Bernardino de Sena) *sic breviter scribi voluit, ut pia consideratio, non expressa per atramentum, meditatione ad meritum remaneret*'; Meca, p. 34.
[31] Meca, p. 35.
[32] Meca, p. 37.

skill both in imagining visions that would stir it and in rendering them in vividly gruesome detail. Through these Meca builds up to his climax, the contemplation of Jesus on the Cross:

> Discipulos amados de Jesus, yá está crucificado vuestro Divino Maestro! *Miradle con los ojos de la alma, para que se deshaga como cera el coraçon.* O mi amado, y lastimado Dueño! O mi Rey! O mi Dios! Vos afrentosamente crucificado entre dos Ladrones, y yo no muero de dolor, siendo la causa mis culpas! Abrebada vuestra dulcissima boca con vinagre y hiel amarga, y la mia asquerosa, buscando regalados manjares y gustosos apetitos! Vos tan desnudo, y yo tan profano y vestido de passiones! … Vos clavadas a esse Leño las manos, y libres las mias, que tantas veces han merecido esse castigo! … Vos penando, y yo pecando! [my emphasis].[33]

By this stage, one can presume that the preacher had achieved his purpose of arousing in the congregation a *grande moción* through apostrophes, first addressed to the listener and then at Christ. But the preacher develops yet further the torments of the dying Jesus, effectively describing how no matter what position he tries to adopt in order to alleviate the pain, the thorns pierce his head and the nails tear his flesh. Meca uses the present tense, as if the scene he pictures were happening as he spoke; in this regard, it is significant that here for the first time he asks the listeners to look. The expression 'mirar con los ojos de la alma' probably does not signify visual meditation, but rather looking at a painting (there had to be an image of the crucifix in the *oratorio*); the use of 'alma' here implies seeing through the physical representation to the spiritual meaning it embodies, and allowing oneself to be moved by it. It is not a coincidence that the first time the preacher asks the congregation to look is also the first time the Christ in his sermon was to be pictured on the Cross, in the same position as in the painting the congregation could see before their eyes.

Since the preacher wished to focus the attention of those present on the crucifix, it would be logical to think that apostrophes to Christ, such as the long one beginning in 'o

[33] Meca, p. 38.

mi amado y lastimado dueño', were actually delivered with the preacher addressing the image. This would probably help the viewers to stop thinking of the object as an artefact, and allow them to consider the image as if it were the actual crucified Christ. The purpose of this exercise is clear from the beginning: to stir the emotions and draw tears of repentance, or, as Meca put it, 'que se deshaga como cera el coraçon'.

Meca made use of the same resource later in the same sermon, for contemplation of the dead body of Jesus:

> … en fin muriò yá nuestro Divino Maestro: *levantemos mas los ojos*, y *miremosle*; *miremos* con ternura sus llagas, que aunque nuestros pecados las abrieron, ellas mismas han de ser nuestro remedio… El amor de este Divino Cadaver, parece que nos dize: todos quantos lloran la llaga de mi pecho, y el rigor de la lança, han de reynar conmigo en mis dominios; y son tan dilatados, que passan mas allá de lo criado. Y para que no duden esta verdad amorosa los hombres, *inclinada la cabeça* les estoy ofreciendo la Corona de mi Reyno: *estendidos mis braços*, y clavados, asseguran mi liberalidad: *escarpiados mis pies*, les estoy esperando: con tantas lenguas, como tengo llagas, les dá vozes mi amor: la puerta de mi costado la tengo tan abierta, para que entren por ella [my emphases].[34]

After asking the listeners to look, the preacher draws out the significance of the wound on Christ's side and other features of the painting: those who weep at the wound will be saved; wounds, outstretched arms, and bowed head are all signs of Christ's love for humankind. The *afectos* which Meca has stirred throughout the sermon now focus on details of the image and converge on a final soteriological point: in spite of humanity's sins causing the sufferings of the Crucifixion, Jesus offers believers through his death the possibility and hope of salvation. This reappears in a condensed form as the preacher addresses the crucifix in the final *acto de contricion*: '… me has de perdonar; pues por perdonarme, y darme el cielo, estás, como adorandote, te miro. Amen'.[35]

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[34] Meca, pp. 45–46 and 47.
[35] Meca, p. 48.

The *Escuela* represents a microcosm of Spanish seventeenth-century spirituality: sermons played an important role and, among them, sermons combining directed meditation with the use of paintings as visual aids, all in order to stir the emotions of the congregation towards penitence. Indeed, the exercises of the *Escuela* proved to be so in tune with the time that Meca likely adopted them for wider use. Some painters joined the *Escuela*, not surprisingly given its popularity; Palomino indicates that such was the case of Juan Niño de Guevara in Málaga, and we know that a Francisco de Carrasquilla, also from Málaga and active in the first half of the eighteenth century, was also a member.[36] The spread of the *Escuela* across the Iberian Peninsula and its associated literature provide interesting topics for future research, which will improve our understanding of its impact on the visual arts; I hope at least to have made a significant contribution.

OTHER SERMONS PREACHED IN FRONT OF IMAGES

In Meca's sermons, the key to the way in which the text relates to an image comes from beyond the text itself, from the regulations of the institution in which the sermons originated. In other exceptional cases, the text references a particular image, or contains a spatial reference. Some printed sermons intended as models for preachers include directions of a type more usual in the texts of plays, such as '(*Bolverase aora al Altar mayor, y dirá*): Señor omnipotente […]' (italicised and between parantheses in the

[36] Palomino, *Museo pictórico*, #494, pp. 667–69; on Carrasquilla, see Sebastián López Segarra, 'Pintores y doradores malagueños: mentalidad, relaciones sociales, religiosidad y nivel cultural (1700–1746)', *Isla de Arriarán*, 23–24 (2004), 161–72 (pp. 162–63).

original).[37] This indicates that the apostrophe was actually addressed to the altarpiece. Annotations of this kind appear in *sermones de misiones*, which may have required particularly emphatic performance to achieve the desired result.[38] Other printed texts include similar specifications, recording circumstances that were considered relevant to the sermon as originally preached; for example, the sermon by Láinez mentions the special display of a portrait of the King by Velázquez (p. 77), and a sermon by Martín Caballero contains a similar marginal note (Fig. 6) indicating that a series of paintings illustrated the same point made by the preacher in the chapel of La Paciencia in Madrid.[39]

In other sermons, the preacher seems to use a painting as a starting-point from which to examine what the image represents, often referring to what we would now call iconographical questions: an image is chosen for the allegories and symbols it contains, and 'its deciphering by the preacher gives rise to the various points of the sermon, or to the whole sermon'.[40] Ledda mentions a sermon on St Jerome by Francisco Guerrero Solano: in the *captatio benevolentiae*, the preacher explains that he overcame his initial diffidence by turning his eyes to a *retrato* of the saint, '[...] y en los misterios de sus Geroglificos [attributes], con que discreta la Iglesia, y advertido el pincel bosquexan su pintura. Hallò cifrado mi oracion Evangelica su assumpto, y mi obligacion el

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[37] Ioseph de Gavarri, *Instrucciones predicables, y morales, no comunes, que deven saber los padres predicadores y confessores principiantes, y en especial los misioneros apostólicos* (Málaga: Ioseph del Espiritu Santo, 1674), fol. 39^{r}, quoted in Ledda, *La parola e l'immagine*, p. 165.

[38] Ledda quotes excerpts from sermons with these kinds of annotations by José de Gavarri, Miguel Ángel Pasqual, *El missionero instruido* (1698), and Tirso González de Santalla (1665–1686), discussed by Elías Reyero, 'El itinerario de todas las missiones', in *Misiones del M.R.P. Tirso González de Santalla* (Santiago de Compostela: Editorial Compostelana, 1913); see Ledda, *La parola e l'immagine,* pp. 161–65.

[39] Martín Caballero de Isla, *Sermon a los desagrauios de la soberana imagen del santo Christo de la Paciencia redimida por el monarca de dos mundos Filipo quarto de las iniurias que en ella executo el ciego Iudaismo* (Madrid: por Diego Diaz, 1659), fol. 6^{v}.

[40] '… la loro decifrazione da parte dell'oratore dà luogo ai vari punti od all'intero sermone'; Ledda, *La parola e l'immagine*, p. 88.

desempeño'.[41] There follows an explanation of the saint's iconographic attributes: 'Registra el retrato […]. Mira un leon […]. Atiende a una piedra […]. Repara en la calavera […]. Advierte como le bosquexan con capelo…'. This preacher jumps out of the page as someone who relished the pleasures of looking at a painting, picking out details, and talking about them to a mesmerized congregation. Arguably, sermons like this one initiated seventeenth-century Spaniards into the often complex world of religious iconography.

A sermon like this one, with at least one mention of a physical image and a string of visual verbs (*mira, atiende, repara*) referring to symbols, is inconceivable in its preached form unless the preacher and the congregation had the relevant painting before their eyes. This is not so clear, when, for example, only one symbol is explained, as happens in several sermons on the Immaculate Conception. The Litany of Loreto, a Marian devotion consisting of antiphonal titles and responses, had popularised a series of symbols that became associated to the Immaculate Conception, ultimately taken from the Song of Songs.[42] For example, a preacher gives an explanation of the attribute of the rose: 'Assi, pues, Maria es *rosa* de Gerico, que se forma con el riego de las aguas santificadas, y entre las flores de tan insignes Patriarcas, la conciben *rosa* en la tierra fertil por las aguas de la gracia expulsiva de la original culpa'; another uses the image of the flower without thorns (perhaps a derivation of the more familiar 'lilium inter spinas' of Song of Songs 2:2): 'Maria Santissima Madre de Dios, aunque es hija de Adan y *zarça*

[41] Francisco Guerrero Solano, *Oracion evangelica al Maximo Doctor de la Iglesia San Geronimo* (Granada: Baltasar Bolivar, 1666), p. 3; *La parola e l'immagine*, p. 88.

[42] The Litany was first recorded in 1558 and officially approved by the Church in 1587; see Angelo de Santi, *Le litanie lauretane: studio storico critico* (Rome: Civiltà cattolica, 1897); on the litany and Immaculist symbology, see Suzanne L. Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), passim.

de la tierra, *no tiene espinas* como todos los demas hijos, porque nace para que el mundo la celebre desde su primer instante…'; the lily is also discussed in another sermon, in which Mary is compared to an '… hermoso *lirio*, geroglifico de la pureza e inmunidad de todo pecado' (my emphases).[43] By the time such sermons were printed, the Immaculate Conception had already become the most popular subject of religious art; this makes it quite likely, if not altogether certain, that the congregation would have been able to see an image of the *Inmaculada* as the symbols were explained, thus making them easier to memorise.[44]

The preacher could thus expound a complex system of symbols, as in paintings of the Immaculate Conception. One of the most interesting characteristics of such representations is that an expert preacher could explore different levels of meaning and, by changing the context for interpretation, make the image mean something else. See, for example, the lamentation over the dead Christ in a Maundy Thursday sermon by Alonso de Cabrera:

> Pues ya cuando baxan el santo cuerpo, y lo ponen en su regaço, allì son las angustias y lamentaciones. Aprietalo en sus braços, haze con ellos un nudo ciego, pone su rostro entre las espinas que en la cabeça quedaron fixadas, y comiença á regar con lagrimas el rostro sangriento y desfigurado. O vida muerta? O lumbre de mis ojos escurecida? O Sol de mi alegria eclipsado? O Rosa del paraiso, cuales han sido las manos que assi os han sobajado y marchitado vuestra hermosura? O Espejo Christiano de mi alma, quien os ha quebrado?[45]

This text has two distinct sections. In the first, the preacher introduces the customary affective, vivid meditation; in the second, from 'O vida muerta?', he addresses the dead Christ from Mary's point of view. Here, the preacher constructs a series of *conceptos*

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[43] Melchor Fuster, *Sermon de la Purissima Concepcion de la Virgen Maria señora nuestra* (Valencia: [n. pub.] 1649), p. 11; Fernando de Ahumada y Ortiz, *Sermon de la Encarnacion del Hijo de Dios y de la nueva Bula* [...] (Seville: Francisco de Lyra, 1663), fol. 4r; Antonio Muñoz Collantes, *Sermon del Mysterio de la Inmaculada Concepcion de Maria Santissima* (Seville: Tomas Lopez de Haro, 1674), p. 22.

[44] On the iconography of the Immaculate Conception, see Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception*.

[45] Fray Alonso de Cabrera, OP, 'Consideraciones de la Soledad de Nuestra Señora', in *Segunda parte de las Consideraciones sobre todos los Evangelios de la Quaresma* (Córdoba: Andrés Barrera, 1601), fol. 184r.

using metaphors based on the attributes of the Immaculate Conception. If Mary is depicted as the 'woman clothed with the sun' (Rev. 12,1) and 'clear as the Sun' (Song of Songs 6:10), Christ's death is to her like an eclipse of the sun that clothes her. Two further symbols, the mystic rose and the spotless mirror, are wilted or broken. The proximity of the terms sun, rose, and mirror in Mary's apostrophe to her dead Son would remind listeners of attributes with which they were familiar. But Cabrera did not have to rely on the imagination of his listeners only, because we know that they had in front of their eyes an image of the Immaculate Conception painted in grisaille when this sermon was preached for the first time in the collegiate church of Osuna.[46] The presence of this image is not explicit in the text, but nevertheless the connection is indicated in other ways: the terms 'sun', 'rose', and 'mirror' are capitalised in order to draw the preacher's attention towards the fact that they belong to a set of Marian attributes which have each suffered dissolution as a result of the death of her Son.

The technique employed by Cabrera probably arose out of necessity: the church in which he first preached this sermon contained an image of the Immaculate Conception, but probably not of the Lamentation. To move his listeners most effectively by the means he had at his disposal, the preacher first exploited the mechanisms of *enargeia* to summon up mental images of the scene, and then, in a moment of dramatic climax, turned to a different physical image as a focus for the *afectos* he had already aroused. Despite the fact that the painting did not show the emotive scene that the listeners were supposed to be picturing in their minds, the preacher probably succeeded in making the congregation look at the painting of Mary's Immaculate Conception through the lens of

[46] See Manuel Rodríguez-Buzón Calle, *La colegiata de Osuna* (Seville: Diputación, 1982), pp. 45, 49 and 62.

the *afectos* aroused in evocation of her dead son. The preacher's assuming of Mary's voice linked sermon and image, and his treatment of her attributes stressed the connection, adapting an old image to the new necessity of engaging the emotions. Further, this sermon also raises a theological point, as it invites the listeners not only to consider Christ's sufferings, but also Mary's, and to think of her role as his mother as the sole reason for her special dignity, symbolised in the representation of the Immaculate Conception by means of her attributes.

Examples like these show that religious paintings as well as mental images were conceived of as a means to an end, rather than receiving attention for themselves. Rather than beauty or complexity, what made sacred oratory and religious art important was their goal, *ganar almas*. Rhetorical theory provided the guidelines on how to use these means, and explained how they worked towards achieving that end by *movere*. This fascination with *movere* gave rise to interest in studying and classifying the different mechanisms of *enargeia*, and in exploring the possibilities of displaying religious images and making them interact with people. As the century advanced, preachers had at their disposal a greater number of sources of information on how to move the audience using such means.

EXTRAORDINARY SIGHTS

Church paintings and sculptures were static objects, set into the architectural background and only moved when carried in a procession or taken down for cleaning or other reasons. Religious images of various kinds occupied similar places in different churches, so that a person entering a sacred space for the first time would know where to expect to

find particular images. Most instances of images that appear where they are not expected in the early modern period, or that seem to move by themselves, belong to literary accounts of miracles or supernatural ecstatic visions. But churchmen aware of the power of the unexpected appearance sometimes used images to great rhetorical effect in order to surprise the viewer. Practices of this type fit into three categories: 1) altarpiece images incorporating a hidden device; 2) mechanisms used for uncovering images in other places, especially unexpected ones, and 3) portable images that could be concealed in the pulpit and produced during a sermon. Each of these provides interesting insights on the dynamics of the display of images and their interaction with the congregation.

It is appropriate to consider the first type of practice as a form of theatricality, since, from a strictly technical point of view, the introduction of sliding mechanisms was related to the development of similar contraptions for the court theatre.[47] The art of stage machinery originated in Italy, and its earliest practitioners in the Spanish kingdoms were Italian.[48] The first Spanish representation to incorporate such novelties was probably *La Gloria de Niquea* by the Count of Villamediana (1582–1622), which received its first performance in the gardens of the royal palace of Aranjuez on 8 April, 1622. The stage mechanisms were probably designed and built by Giulio Cesare Fontana, son of the renowned engineer Domenico Fontana (1543–1607) who famously erected the obelisk at St Peter's square in Rome. Shortly after that King Philip IV summoned Cosimo Lotti, nicknamed in Spain 'el hechicero', to work permanently designing special effects for the

[47] On the idea of theatricality, see Ch. 5. On the development and use of stage machinery in seventeenth-century theatre, see Javier Aparicio Maydeu, *Calderón y la máquina barroca: escenografía, religión y cultura en "El José de las mujeres"* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), p. 85 and passim.
[48] Carmen González Román, 'Escenografías a la italiana en la corte de Felipe II', *Goya*, 331 (2010), 99–109.

stage as well as for gardens and fountains. His first important commission was for Lope de Vega's *La selva sin amor*, performed in 1627. Lotti was in the King's service from 1626 until his death in 1651, when he was followed by another Italian, Baccio del Bianco (d. 1657). Treatises on architecture, mathematics, perspective, and optics explored possibilities and innovations long before they were actually put into practice on the stage. Many of the devices introduced by Lotti were taken from the last book of Guidobaldo del Monte's *Perspectivae libri sex* (Pesaro, 1600); del Monte himself was the master of Niccolà Sabbatini, who wrote the most influential treatise on the subject, *Pratica di fabricar scene e machina ne' teatri* (Pesaro, 1637). Once stage machinery had become an established feature of theatrical performances, a number of Spaniards and Italians took up work in the same field, including some who had trained as painters or altarpiece designers, such as Francisco Rizi, Francisco de Herrera 'el Mozo', and Teodoro Ardemans.[49]

In fact, parallel developments in altarpiece architecture predate the earliest appearance of scenic machinery on Spanish theatre stages. In 1601 the religious reformer and patron of art, *el Patriarca* Juan de Ribera (1532–1611), received a gift of a monumental crucifix containing a relic, and decided to set it up on the pre-existing altarpiece of his foundation, the Colegio del Corpus Christi in Valencia. Two years later, the altarpiece was modified to accommodate the crucifix and a special mechanism was added to enhance the display. The *Last Supper* by Ribalta, commissioned in 1605, was

[49] All of my discussion of stage engineers in Spain is taken from José M. Prieto González, 'Las artes plásticas al servicio de la dramaturgia calderoniana: posibilidades de inversión de los términos anteriores', *Espacio, tiempo y forma*, 7th ser., 13 (2000), 173–219 (pp. 179–83); José M. Ruano de la Haza and John J. Allen, *Los teatros comerciales del siglo XVII y la escenificación de la comedia* (Madrid: Castalia, 1994), pp. 362–71.

hung as a screen to conceal the crucifix. Its frame was fitted on special slots so that on Fridays, as the *Miserere* was sung, the painting slid down to uncover several veils of symbolic colours. An invisible mechanism pulled these veils apart in succession, revealing the crucifix (the idea of the coloured veils was inspired by a similar device in the *transparente* of the main chapel of the Escorial, in which they were used to colour the light). Similar mechanisms operated in three other chapels of the same church, which must have turned visiting the Colegio del Patriarca into a wondrously memorable experience: in one of them a painting of the *Martyrdom of St Mauro* (attributed to Giovanni Baglione) slid down to reveal a coffin containing the saint's relics, and in another a *Holy Burial* by Ribalta screened a statue of the *Immaculate Conception* by the sculptor Gregorio Fernández.[50] But the best known example of this kind of mechanism was installed in the main sacristy of the Escorial in the late 1680s, as part of a project of Eucharistic worship commissioned by king Charles II as recompense for a notorious case of members of the court breaching the right of sanctuary.[51] A *camarín* in the rear wall of the sacristy contained a monstrance displaying a miraculous host. The *camarín* was screened by Claudio Coello's monumental *Adoration of the Holy Host* (Fig. 7), in which the King and his entourage are depicted kneeling reverently in front of the monstrance,

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[50] Fernando Benito, *La arquitectura del Colegio del Patriarca y sus artífices* (Valencia: Federico Doménech, 1981), p. 56; David M. Kowal, *Ribalta y los ribaltescos: la evolución del estilo barroco en Valencia* (Valencia: Diputación provincial, 1985), pp. 235–36; Juan J. Martín González, 'Avance de una tipología del retablo barroco', *Imafronte*, 3–4–5 (1987, 1988, 1989), 111–55 (p. 119).
[51] See Ignacio Ruiz Rodríguez, *Fernando de Valenzuela: Orígenes, ascenso y caída de un duende de la corte del Rey Hechizado* (Madrid: Dyckinson, 2008), pp. 317–19. For the origin of the relic and its use in the time of Charles II, see Edward J. Sullivan, 'Politics and Propaganda in the Sagrada Forma by Claudio Coello', *The Art Bulletin*, 67.2 (June 1985), 243–59 (pp. 251–52).

the very object that was solemnly revealed twice a year, when a system of pulleys caused the canvas to slide down.[52]

Some aspects of the structure and functioning of these mechanisms are closely related to artistic and rhetorical ideas discussed at the time. The fact that the paintings in the Colegio del Patriarca and the sacristy of the Escorial were used to screen three-dimensional objects (sculptures or a monstrance) brings to mind the hierarchy of the arts and the sub-genre of *paragone*, a literary disquisition on the relative merits of the different arts found in contemporary works on artistic theory.[53]

Painting was perceived as more illusionistic, capable of conjuring before one's eyes spaces and figures that do not exist outside the canvas; by contrast, sculptures and other objects occupy space in the same way as the viewer, and therefore were perceived as having a greater sense of reality and immediacy. These associations and contrasts would have grown more powerful with the removal of the painting to reveal the concealed object, a transition perceived as a shift from the feigned world of the flat canvas to the more tangible three-dimensional reality of the object revealed. At the same time, while the painting that screened it remained in place, knowing of the object hidden behind it would enhance the viewers' response to the canvas, adding a further narrative layer in a similar way as artworks known to contain relics or to have been touched to a miraculous image.[54] Finally, being covered for most of the time would have conferred an

[52] Martín, 'Avance de una tipología', pp. 119–20; Sullivan, p. 247.
[53] On *paragone* in seventeenth-century Spain, see Karin Hellwig, 'Theory and Practice: The Fine Arts in Seventeenth-Century Spain', in *El Siglo de Oro: The Age of Velázquez*, ed. by Roberto Contini and María López-Fanjul, exh. cat. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1 July to 30 October, 2016, and Munich, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, 25 November 2016 to 26 March 2017 (Berlin: Gemäldegalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; Munich: Hirmer, 2016), pp. 31–39 (pp. 34–37).
[54] On the practice of touching prints, ribbons, medallions and other objects to a supposedly miraculous image, see Françoise Crémoux, 'Las imágenes de devoción y sus usos: El culto a la Virgen de Guadalupe

exceptional character on the object's unveiling, a sight both greatly anticipated and, paradoxically, akin to an apparition. This would have been enhanced by the mechanical manner in which the painting flitted out, designed to give the viewer the illusion of happening without human intervention.

Some painting frames bear traces of mechanisms for affixing curtains, a simpler technique of concealing and disclosing.[55] Writing around 1628, art collector Giulio Mancini (1558–1630) recommended light silk taffeta in green or red for this purpose, and advised that the curtain be drawn from the bottom up, rather than from one side to the other.[56] Curtains protected varnishes and pigments from the discolouring effects of light, but collectors certainly also used them for rhetorical effect. Poussin's patron Paul Fréart de Chantellou (1609–1694) displayed the second series of *The Seven Sacraments* (1644–1648) in such fashion, unveiling only one picture at a time, which pleased Poussin because 'seeing the seven paintings together would fill the mind too much'.[57] In this case, it seems that the collector's main interest was to control and direct the viewer's attention. In other instances, the point must have been to build up a sense of anticipation that enhanced the moment of unveiling. Proving the currency of the technique in Spain, Covarrubias observes that 'correr la cortina significa algunas vezes hazer demonstracion de algun caso maravilloso [...] como tambien se haze en las tablas de pinturas', and also mentions the highly ritualized etiquette in the *capilla real*, where the *sumiller de cortina*,

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(1500–1750)', in *La imagen religiosa en la monarquía hispánica: Usos y espacios*, ed. by M. C. de Carlos and others (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2008), pp. 61–82 (pp. 73–74).

[55] For an example of this in a Spanish sixteenth-century collection, see Xavier de Salas, 'Un tableau d'Antonello de Messine au Musée du Prado', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 70 (1967), 125–28.

[56] Giulio Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura* (c. 1628), ed. by A. Marucchi, 2 vols (Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1956–57), I (1956), p. 384.

[57] *Correspondance de Nicolas Poussin publiée d'après les originaux*, ed. by Charles Jouanny, Archives de l'Art Français, new ser., 5 (Paris: Société de l'histoire de l'art français, 1911), p. 384.

outranked only by the King's chaplain, was charged with drawing aside the fabric canopy sheltering the King during the consecration.[58]

But unlike the regular drawing of that curtain and the exceptional use of disclosure mechanisms fitted on altarpieces, the greatest power of the technique was that it could utilisethe element of surprise. The covering curtain may have been difficult to discern in a dark church interior, especially if the image was located in a place where it would not have been expected to be found. An image suddenly disclosed in this way would elicit a powerful reaction from the people gathered in that space. For a sermon on the conversion of the Magdalene preached in the church of Zaragoza's Hospital de Nuestra Señora de Gracia, Pedro de Valderrama, OSA (1550–1611) requested the services of an Italian engineer. Next to the pulpit and at the same height, he had a canopy built under which a life-size crucifix and two torches were concealed in the dark church interior. The sermon built up to the exclamation '¡Señor mio Jesucristo, parezca aqui vuestra Majestad y vea este pueblo el estrago que con sus pecados an hecho en su santa persona, tan digna de respeto y veneracion!', at which point the curtain went up and singers and cornet players began to perform from the four corners of the nave. The congregation reacted 'con tal admiración y espanto…, que milagrosamente no murieron muchos allí; y fue de tal manera el alarido de bozes y lamentos pidiendo misericordia, cual no es posible pintarse sin mucha prolixidad'.[59]

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[58] Covarrubias, fol. 166^{v}, s.v. 'cortina'; *Arte*, p. 204 n. 26, and see also Juan J. Contreras López and Bernardo José García García, *La Capilla Real de los Austrias: música y ritual de corte en la Europa moderna* (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2001), pp. 414 and 430.
[59] Francisco de Luque Fajardo, *Razonamiento grave y devoto que hizo el padre M. F. Pedro de Valderrama* (Seville: [n. pub.], 1612), fols 8^{r}–9^{r}.

While the element of surprise was key to the success of the technique above, other examples played on the congregants' curiosity to great rhetorical effect. Churchgoers would eagerly anticipate the eventual display of a veiled image conspicuously placed inside the church. The Inquisition planned such an effect in an operation coordinated across all the Spanish realms to mark the beatification of the inquisitor and martyr Peter Arbués on 17 April, 1664. To promote the new saint's cult, a *carta acordada* (circular letter) instructed all provincial tribunals to commission paintings based on an engraving of the saint enclosed with the letter. These paintings should be set up behind curtains inside the churches where the beatification would be celebrated, and remain covered until the reading of the Papal bull. As the veil was removed and the image censed three times, the instructions call for the officiating priest to fall on his knees and intone the *Te Deum*. Pealing bells, cannon shots and fireworks should also accompany the ceremony, and afterwards, prints of Arbués would be distributed during Mass.[60]

Further evidence proves that practices of this type took place during sermons themselves, allowing the preacher to build up tension until the rhetorical climax of the unveiling of the image. On special occasions, such as Holy Week or Lenten sermons, temporary structures were built inside churches for concealing and then revealing images. The famous Portuguese Jesuit preacher Antonio Vieira (1608–1697), left a detailed account of how an unnamed preacher achieved this, in a sermon delivered in Lisbon's Royal Chapel on Sexagesima Sunday (the second Sunday before Ash Wednesday) of 1655:

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[60] AHN, Inquisición, libro 498, fol. 175^{r}, quoted in María Cruz de Carlos, 'The Martyrdom of St Peter Arbués', in *Sacred Spain: Art and Belief in the Spanish World*, exh. cat. Indianapolis, Indianapolis Museum of Art, 11 October 2009 to 3 January 2010, ed. by R. Kasl (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2009), #55, pp. 286–87.

> (…) Vai um pregador pregando a Paixão, chega ao pretório de Pilatos, conta como a Cristo o fizeram rei de zombaria, diz que tomaram uma púrpura e lha puseram aos ombros; ouve aquilo o auditório muito atento. Diz que teceram uma coroa de espinhos e que lha pregaram na cabeça; ouvem todos com a mesma atenção. Diz mais que lhe ataram as mãos e lhe meteram nelas uma cana por ceptro; continua o mesmo silêncio e a mesma suspensão nos ouvintes. Corre-se neste espaço uma cortina aparece a imagem do Ecce Homo; eis todos prostrados por terra, eis todos a bater no peito eis as lágrimas, eis os gritos, eis os alaridos, eis as bofetadas.[61]

The technique described by Vieira is not the preacher's main concern; he describes it to illustrate the greater effectiveness of certain forms of preaching over others.[62] (He concludes by saying that the appearance of the image reinforced the preacher's message, but was more effective because it was visual rather than verbal.) The context of this anecdote implies that Vieira would have expected his distinguished listeners to be sufficiently familiar with such practices, which suggests that they were not uncommon. Escardó, whose *Rhetorica Christiana* (1647) has been quoted in previous chapters, gives advice about how to deal with a succession of several such 'apparitions'; for example, a preacher may want to produce an Ecce Homo first, then a Crucified Christ or a *Soledad*. In these cases he must make sure to save his voice for the last image presented to the listeners, which would leave the strongest impression on them.[63]

Vieira's description itself takes the form of a rhetorical figure of contrast, and a measure of hyperbolic humour was surely intended. However, it can stand as an account of the kind of behaviour members of a congregation followed in response to the unveiling of an image: people dropped to their knees, beat their chests or cheeks, wept, cried, shouted. Again, Escardó supports Vieira's observations when he advises preachers how to proceed if the congregation cries so loudly that continuing the sermon becomes

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[61] 'Sermão de Sexagesima' (1655), in António Vieira, SJ, *Sermoens do P. Antonio Vieira* […] *primeyra parte* (Lisbon: Joam da Costa, 1679), cols 1–86 (32–33).
[62] See p. 72 for the context.
[63] Escardó, fol. 345r

impossible; he thinks it best to stop speaking and concentrate on actions, such as kissing or embracing the image, using the hands to point out details to the congregation, and weeping.[64]

The moment of drawing aside the curtain has been depicted by several Spanish painters of this period; see for example Zurbarán's *St Bonaventure* and *St Thomas Aquinas before the Crucifix* (Fig. 8) or Valdés Leal's *Allegory of Vanity*.[65] One might assume that the origin of such action was theatrical, but seventeenth-century theatres were not equipped with curtains. Covarrubias mentions the use of curtains in theatre was limited to *tableaux vivants*, 'en cierto genero de representacion muda, donde hazian aparencia de figuras calladas, tenian delante una cortina, y esta la corrian para mostrarlas'; this, in fact, brought the performance closer to the experience of seeing a painting.[66] This contraption, later known as a 'telón de boca', only existed in sophisticated court theatres with artificial lighting, and the curtain went up after the opening *loa* and down only after the end of the final ballet, not between acts, so the audience could see bustling workers changing backdrops.[67] Seventeenth-century painters

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[64] Escardó, fols 344^{r}–^{v}.

[65] On Zurbarán's *St Bonaventure and St Thomas Aquinas before the Crucifix*, see Jeannine Baticle and Yves Bottineau, *Zurbarán*, exh. cat. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 22 September to 13 December, 1987, and Paris, Galleries Nationales du Grand Palais, 14 January to 11 April, 1988 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), pp. 83 and 86; on Valdés Leal's *Allegory of Vanity*, see Julián Gállego, *El cuadro dentro del cuadro* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1978, repr. 1991), p. 169, and *Renaissance to Rococo: Masterpieces from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art*, ed. by Eric E. Zafran (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 102, #32.

[66] Covarrubias, s.v. 'cortina', fol. 166^{v}.

[67] The name 'telón de boca' appears for the first time in the *Diccionario de la lengua castellana, por la Real Academia Española*, 8th edn (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1837), p. 715. On its use in the seventeenth century, see Othón Arroniz, *Teatros y escenarios del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Gredos, 1977), p. 211, and Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos 'Escenario y tramoya en el teatro español del siglo XVII', in *La escenografía del teatro barroco*, ed. by A. Egido (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1989), pp. 33–60 (p. 50).

would thus have associated the opening and closing curtains with court etiquette, religious functions and sermons, rather than with the theatre.

The third type of procedure consisted in producing images from the pulpit during a sermon. These had to be concealed inside the pulpit or the preacher's robes beforehand to achieve the greatest effect. The earliest mention of this practice known to us is in *De sapiente fructuoso* (1580) by the Jesuit humanist and playwright Juan Bonifacio (1538–1606), who dedicates a whole chapter ('De spectaculis concionum') to defend 'extraordinarias conciones' in which 'vel crux, vel mortui hominis caput ostenditur' using ancient precedents.[68] Around fifty years later, Escardó discusses how to do it in some detail in Chapter 76 of his *Rhetorica Christiana*, titled 'Del modo como ha de hacer el predicador en los sermones, en que se sacan en el pulpito imagenes devotas, para mover á lagrimas'. The preacher advises his readers not to use these techniques too often, lest the audience becomes inured to them and they lose their effectiveness. The images used should be of a medium size, so that they can be easily handled and concealed; the congregation should not know what is going to happen, to retain the element of surprise. It is also best to restrict this use of images to special sermons on subjects 'de grande devocion, o mocio[n]', such as the Passion, the Magdalen, and other sermons preached to prostitutes, sermons on mortal sin, on the Four Last Things, and on the forgiveness of enemies. The image should be produced only after the preacher has conveniently prepared the listeners by building up to a rhetorical climax, by means of techniques such as those discussed in the previous chapter: 'tiernos coloquios con Dios, rogando al Señor salga del Sagrario, y les muestre la cara, o sus llagas… también hablará con los oyentes

[68] I could not find the original edition (1580), and instead consulted Juan Bonifacio, *De sapiente fructuoso epistolares libri quinque* (Ingolstadt: Ex officina ederiana apud Andream Angermanum, 1606), p. 411.

preguntándoles si quieren ver a Christo…'. If he produces an image that is covered with a veil, 'le quitará el velo, le besará los pies, le hará un coloquio con ella, mostrarla [sic] al auditorio, y alguna vez al Padre Eterno, y á la Virgen…'.[69] This is a further example of the way in which the same verbal techniques were used for interacting with both mental and physical images.

Three-dimensional crucifixes must have been the objects most often used by preachers in this way; Escardó dedicated a chapter specifically to 'los modos en que se puede sacar en el pulpito la imagen de Christo crucificado'. To illustrate how to accomplish this practice, Escardó includes an example taken from his own preaching. He addressed these words to 'las mujeres perdidas' after producing a crucifix during a Lenten sermon preached in Valencia's church of San Miguel in 1643:

> Mira, pecadora, lo que me cuestas, mira mi cabeça inclinada que te llama para darte paz; mira mis braços abiertos con que te quiero abraçar; con esta cabeça coronada de espinas toco a la puerta de tu coraçón para que me dexes entrar en él, ¿y no quieres abrirme? ¿Más quieres tener dentro de tu coraçón al pecado y al demonio que no a mí? ¿Qué te he hecho? Yo te he criado, yo te he redimido, yo te quiero salvar; ábreme esa puerta. ¡Ay, ay! No me quieren a mí, sino al pecado. … Señor, ¿y eso sufrís, y no mandáis a la tierra que se abra y las trague vivas delante de todos? ¿Al demonio buelven la cara y a vos las espaldas? Bolvedles vos las espaldas y echadles la maldición. (Bolver el Christo de cara al predicador diziendo): -Discedite, maledicti, in ignem aeternum. Íos, malditas, al fuego eterno en compañía de los diablos; y pues os vais obstinadas según la presente justicia, ya no ay perdón para vosotras, sino fuegos eternos y compañía de demonios. Esto os dize Jesucristo, y yo os digo en su nombre … [70]

Many of the techniques Escardó employed in this passage are identical with those discussed in the previous chapters in regard to meditation sermons and the use of stationary images in churches; especially, the apostrophes involving the sense of sight (the anaphoric 'mira') addressed to the listeners/viewers as if the image itself uttered them – in fact, he translates a sentence which Christ naturally said in Latin. Particularly

[69] Escardó, fols 341^{r}–46^{v}; 343^{r}–^{v}; 343^{v} and 344^{r}.
[70] Escardó, Ch. 77, fols 347^{r}–55^{v} and 350^{v}–51^{r}.

noteworthy is the annotation instructing the preacher on how to handle the crucifix to enact the phrase ‘turn your back on them and curse them’.

Some crucifixes of the type most likely to have been used by preachers have survived. Fray Alonso de Cabrera, whom we encountered earlier in his role as preacher at Osuna, commissioned a silver and ivory crucifix from the sculptor Gaspar Núñez Delgado in 1585.[71] Such precious objects were presumed destined for private contemplation, but their size suggests otherwise. A similar crucifix by the same sculptor is now in the Indianapolis Museum of Art; it measures 67.9 cm high by 35.6 wide and 8.3 deep.[72] So large an image would be uncomfortable to hold and observe at arm’s length, and is instead better suited for holding and showing to other people from some distance. This use is corroborated by the fact that the lower part of the cross bears punched decoration down to the bottom and seems never to have been set in any kind of stand, as would have been necessary for display on an altar or on top of a desk. Preachers commissioned such crucifixes in at least two other documented cases.[73] A painting by the French artist Pierre Subleyras (1699–1749; Fig. 9) shows the Spanish mystic Juan de Ávila preaching from a pulpit and showing a crucifix to his listeners, in very much the same way as I believe Alonso de Cabrera would have used Núñez Delgado’s crucifixes. Cheaper and more common flat wooden crosses with a crucified Christ painted on one side must have also lent themselves to this use.[74]

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[71] See *Sermones del P. Fr. Alonso de Cabrera*, ed. by Miguel Mir, Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Predicadores de los siglos XVI y XVII, 1 (Madrid: Bailly-Baillière, 1909), pp. xxix–xxxi, and Celestino López Martínez, *Notas para la Historia del Arte: Desde Jerónimo Hernández hasta Martínez Montañés* (Sevilla: Rodríguez Jiménez, 1929; repr. 1932), pp. 85–86.
[72] See Kasl, #60, pp. 298–99.
[73] López Martínez, p. 228; quoted in Kasl, p. 298.
[74] See, for example, the painted crucifixes made by Pacheco (Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 76–77, #134, lám. 22; p. 78, ##140–42, lám. 52), and the one painted by Carreño for Philip IV discussed in

It cannot always have been easy to transport and conceal inside a pulpit a crucifix large enough to be shown to a congregation in this way, without arousing suspicion. Paintings fitted with another type of mechanism solved this problem. They consisted of a canvas fitted to bars of wood along the top and bottom edges, allowing for it to be rolled vertically. The rolled canvas was held by a metal ring on the top bar, either by hand or using a fixed point of attachment. The two bars could also be kept together by hand, or by a string with a sliding knot so that, upon release, the bottom bar weighted the canvas down causing it to unroll quickly to reveal the image. A royal inventory records the presence of one such canvas in the *Guardajoyas* of the Palacio Real, which Charles V may have kept as a devotional object:

> Ytten. Un lienzo al olio Pinttado un Xpristto Cruzificado desclauado el Vn brazo y el lienzo Se Arrolla en dos medias Cañas de ebano guarneçido Con Vn frajonçillo de Oro y seda de Vara y media de largo forrado en tafettan morado, no se taso por ser deuoçion del señor emperador y de estimaçion.[75]

Not many examples of these rolling pictures survive, since they probably were not made to last and would have deteriorated quickly through normal use. Perrin and Vasco use the nomenclature 'missionary panel' for them, and while mission sermons lent themselves particularly well to this type of display, the presence of one such object in the King's collection shows that portable images of this kind were used in other contexts.[76]

In the example illustrated by Perrin and Vasco, the canvas depicts the Last Judgment (Fig. 10). Literary references suggest that the most usual iconography used in paintings of this type was that of damned souls in Hell. One such was produced from the

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Pilar López Vizcaíno and Ángel M. Carreño, *Juan Carreño de Miranda: Vida y obra* (Oviedo: Cajastur, [2007]), #43, pp. 238–39.

[75] Gloria Fernández Bayton, *Inventarios Reales. Testamentaría del rey Carlos II*, 2 vols (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 1975), I, 225, #187.

[76] Perrin and Vasco, p. 254.

pulpit during a mission sermon preached in Salamanca in 1653 by Jerónimo López, who had arranged for two boys to stand below the pulpit holding torches at the precise moment, to make the image more visible to all and enhance the impression it made. 'Despertó tal moción este triste y espantoso espectáculo, que todos salieron de la iglesia tan temerosos y aprovechados. Y así rogaron que la mostrase otra vez al pueblo, y así lo izo en otro Sermón'.[77] The use of this type of image during sermons lent itself to moving ekphrasis, as can be seen in the following example by José de Barcia y Zambrana: 'Mírale, que viene cargado de cadenas, cercado de serpientes y demonios. ¡Qué pálido! ¡Qué horrible! ¡Qué lleno de gusanos! Leproso, hediondo, asqueroso, llagado, enfermo, angustiado, pavoroso y abominable'.[78] Here the preacher combined the usual apostrophe ('mírale') with a straightforward but effective description of some aspects of the painting. Spoken word and visual image join forces to invite the listener/viewer to reflect on the transience of life, the inevitability of death, and the eternal punishments awaiting the unrepentant sinner.

The use of different techniques involving the display of a previously hidden image arose from an interest in directed viewing, which this chapter has also explored in connection with sermons preached in front of images. All these practices aim at controlling the experience of the viewers and listeners, ultimately to obtain certain emotional responses. A preacher's sudden plea to look at images served the same purpose of 'making see', as the physical act of drawing a curtain, or one artwork moving to reveal another, all of which stress the supremacy of sight in a rhetoricised religious culture.

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[77] Martín de la Naja, *El misionero perfecto: deducido de la vida, virtudes, predicación y missiones del* […] *padre Gerónimo López, de la Compañía de Jesús* (Zaragoza: Pascual Bueno, 1678), p. 299.
[78] José de Barcia y Zambrana, *Compendio de los cinco tomos del despertador cristiano de sermones doctrinales* (Barcelona: Ioseph Llopis, 1687).

Congregants' reactions to artworks thus displayed vindicated contemporary beliefs about the great powers of images. Yet, the rhetorical techniques and language of *enargeia* that accompanied displays of this kind have strikingly similar parallels in the meditation sermons of the previous chapter, preached without physical images. This reveals the perceived similarities between mental images and artworks, and between the painterly craft and the preacher's word-painting, forming a continuum governed by rhetorical ideas across different media.

Chapter 4

Sermons and New Iconographies

> 'I say boldly that ther ben mony thousand of pepull that couth not ymagen in her hert how Crist was don on the rood, but as thai lerne hit by syght of ymages and payntours'.
>
> John Myrc, *Festial*.[1]

In a seminal essay of 1990, the Spanish art historian Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos examined the relationships between ascetic literature, sacred oratory, and the arts. He observed that in the early modern period there must certainly have existed 'una interrelación entre oratoria y arte sagrado, en virtud de la cual el predicador se ayudaba de la imagen […] y el artista de las descripciones que el orador hacía desde el púlpito […]', and sermons 'podían constituir una importante fuente de inspiración'.[2] He further lamented the many obstacles that prevent researchers from peering into this territory, notably the difficulty in accessing sermons and the absence of a history of preaching in Spain. In this chapter I aim to demonstrate that sermons inspired artists and provided both information about their subjects and ways of approaching religious themes. Preaching

[1] John Myrc, *Festial*, ed. by The Early English Texts Society (London: Keegan Paul, 1905), p. 171.
[2] Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos, 'La literatura ascética y la retórica cristiana reflejados en el arte de la Edad Moderna: el tema de la soledad de la Virgen en la plástica española', *Lecturas de Historia del Arte* 2, ed. by J. M. González de Zárate (Vitoria: Ephialte, 1990), 80–90 (p. 82).

was similarly important in the formation of the expectations and tastes of the public, in their double capacity of commissioners and viewers of paintings.

In the 1930s, art historian Erwin Panofsky coined the phrase 'iconographical source', meaning 'literature that supplies the themes and subjects' of works of art.[3] Panofsky's definition will provide the basic framework for this chapter. A purely iconographical approach, however, could result in an oversimplified account in which texts breed images with no consideration given to artists and their social context. To avoid this pitfall we may rely on another great twentieth-century art historian, Ernst Gombrich: artists had to adapt to their patrons' preferences, and to the visual and literary culture of the artwork's intended audience (see p. 55, above). Printed sermons allow us to gauge these conditions, because preachers helped set the tone of the religious environment of early-modern Spain. Combining Panofsky's approach and Gombrich's, I shall study documented cases of paintings made in response to sermons.

As part of the educated elite, clergymen could study theological and literary texts that were inaccessible to the illiterate majority. Among those who could read, few could understand Latin or spare the time to meditate as many of these books required. Preachers selected and interpreted this body of knowledge and, as Fray Tomás Ramón put it, offered it to the laity in pre-digested form like 'madres que mascan primero el manjar y lo convierten en leche'.[4] We shall now consider the mediating role of preachers from the point of view of artistic creation: scholars have identified as iconographical sources texts

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[3] As quoted in Roelof van Straten, *An Introduction to Iconography: Symbols, Allusions and Meaning in the Visual Arts*, Documenting the Image, 1 ([London (?)]: Gordon and Breach, 1994); [Dutch orig., *Inleiding in de Iconografie* (Muiderberg: Coutinho, 1985)], p. 75; for Panofsky's system, see Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: OUP, 1939).

[4] Tomás Ramón, OP, *Cadena de Oro, hecha de cinco eslavones, y por dialogo, para confirmar el christianismo de la Santa Fé católica, y reduzir á ella al que no lo fuere* (Barcelona: Gabriel Graells, 1612), fol. 50^{v}, quoted in Smith, p. 13.

which, in most cases, painters and their clients must have known through sermons rather than in the original versions. Besides, as will be shown below, preaching could impart the authority of the Church to particular interpretations of texts, and therefore to visual representations that incorporated them.

I shall examine images and iconographical types that were stimulated by or based on sermons by studying four different examples. First I will look at the *Soledad*, a Spanish Marian iconography related to the Passion which originated in the late sixteenth century and was subsequently given wide diffusion thanks to the influence of sermons. Second, I shall discuss two variants of the usual iconography of the Immaculate Conception: God the Father painting the Immaculate Conception, and the Passional Immaculate Conception. The former was developed with no visual precedent, relying entirely on sermons as iconographical sources; the latter is an iconographical tradition that has hitherto not been researched and on which nothing has been published. It came about when images of the Virgin were modified to alter their meaning and function according to ideas transmitted through sermons. I shall also try to elucidate the reasons why the *Soledad* became a popular type of image and the passional Immaculate Conception did not, in spite of the many similarities in the purpose, function, and development of the two iconographies. Third, I shall discuss a complete cycle of paintings, formerly in the Capuchin convent of La Paciencia in Madrid, which owes a debt to sermons, both in its commission and in its execution. Finally, I will offer a new interpretation of the enigmatic *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* by Velázquez in the context of the practices discussed in chapters 2 and 3.

SPREADING A NEW ICONOGRAPHY: THE *SOLEDAD*

In his ground-breaking study, Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos discussed the origin of a typically Spanish iconography, the *Soledad de la Virgen*.[5] The Virgin's loneliness after Christ's death and burial comes last in the devotion of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin, which appeared in the late Middle Ages in connection with the new trend of affective meditation (see pp. 21 and ff. above).

Visual interpretations of Mary's suffering abound in the arts. By the fifteenth century, there were found across Europe three different iconographies of the Virgin connected to the Passion narrative following the Crucifixion: the Seven Pains (Mary at the foot of the cross or in a generic landscape, her breast pierced by either seven swords or by one, representing all her seven sorrows); the familiar *Pietà*, known in Spain as the *Virgen de las Angustias* (Mary holding her dead son in her lap); and finally, the burial of Christ.[6] The *Dolorosa*, an image of Mary alone after the Passion, is a sub-type of the *Pietà*. But alongside these we find the typically Spanish iconography of the *Soledad*: a *Dolorosa* dressed in black as a seventeenth-century widow, sometimes holding the crown of thorns or another instrument of the Passion.[7] This iconographic type was developed much later, and may be regarded as a late fruit of the Franciscan tradition of meditation literature – more specifically, of the frequent use which these authors made of Mary's point of view as a means of meditating on the Passion.

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[5] Rodríguez, 'La literatura ascética'.

[6] See Carol M. Schuler, *The Sword of Compassion: Images of the Sorrowing Virgin in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, PhD Diss. Columbia University, 1987.

[7] See Rodríguez, 'La literatura ascética', pp. 82–83, and José Luis Romero Torres, 'La condesa de Ureña y la iconografía de la Virgen de la Soledad de los frailes mínimos', *Cuadernos de los Amigos de los Museos de Osuna*, 14 (2012), 52–62.

Two books published in 1619 and 1640, which Palomino later quoted in his *Parnaso Español* (1724), recount the origin of this new iconography.[8] The main characters involved were an aristocratic widow and her confessor: María de la Cueva, dowager Countess of Ureña and chief lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth de Valois, and the former's confessor, the Mercedarian friar Simón Ruiz. In 1565 Ruiz hired the sculptor and painter Gaspar Becerra (c. 1520–1568) to carve the head and hands of an *imagen de candelero*, the body being a mannequin covered by clothes. The Countess, who had been in mourning for seven years, thought of giving the image the habit of an upper-class widow such as her own and, thus dressed, the image quickly became an object of devotion in its chapel in the church of the Minim friars in Madrid. It remained there until its removal to the cathedral of San Isidro after the passing of the Dissolution Act in 1837. The image was destroyed by fire in 1936.

Rodríguez mentions a number of literary texts as products parallel to images of the *Soledad*, and singles out the Pseudo-Bonaventure, who claimed that after Christ's burial, the Virgin knelt and adored the empty cross before retiring to her house, and that afterwards her cousins put a widow's veil over her face.[9] This would account for the depiction of the Virgin in a widow's habit, a novelty difficult to justify without some sort of textual authority taken from approved meditational or mystical literature. However,

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[8] See Fray Lucas Montoya, *Crónica General de la Orden de los Mínimos* (Madrid: Bernardino de Guzmán, 1619); Fray Antonio Arés, *Discurso del ilustre origen y grandes excelencias de la misteriosa Imagen de nuestra Señora de la Soledad del convento de la Victoria de Madrid* (Madrid: Pedro Tazo, 1640); Antonio Palomino de Castro y Velasco, *Lives of the Eminent Spanish Painters and Sculptors* (1724), ed. and trans. by N. Ayala Mallory (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), #13, pp. 19–21 (1795, #13, pp. 365–67). Palomino names a different commissioner, a Mercedarian Fray Diego de Valbuena.

[9] Rodríguez, 'La literatura ascética', p. 84; Ch. 11, 'Meditacio post completorium': 'Cum autem venerunt ad crucem, ibi genuflexit ipsa et adoravit crucem, dicens: «Hic requievit Filius meus, et hic est preciosissimus sanguis eius»'; 'Apropinquantes ad civitatem, sorores Domine velaverunt eam tanquam viduam, cooperientes quasi totum vultum suum…'; *Meditaciones de Passione Christi*, p. 125.

Rodríguez seems to regard all *Soledades* as copies of the sculpture by Becerra without further consideration of the development of the new iconography.

Becerra's *Soledad* could have simply become one more image dear to popular devotion; its only consequences for painting would have been *naturalezas muertas a lo divino* (depictions or 'portraits' of a popular sculpted image represented in its actual surrounding, sometimes with flowers or other naturalistic elements).[10] The canvas in Granada Cathedral by Alonso Cano is one example of these (Fig. 11); in sculpture, the famous *Virgen de la Paloma* is actually a copy of the face of Becerra's image.[11] However, the *Soledad* evolved away from the original sculpture as a new iconography. Images such as a canvas attributed to Alonso Cano (Fig. 12) conform to the same iconographical type but clearly depart from the model of the image by Becerra. A study of paintings mentioned in private legal documents between 1668 and 1672 shows that by then the *Soledad* had become the most popular domestic image in Madrid, especially with the lower classes: of all paintings appearing in wills, a majority (26.07%) represented the *Soledad*, St Francis came second (22.5%), and the crucifix third (18.21%).[12] How did this come to be? A change in popular taste regarding images, especially one in such a scale, must have been encouraged by the Church, and the most effective form of propagation was through her spokesmen, preachers.

Sermons popularised meditation themes that artists represented visually. As chapter 2 showed, the influential Franciscan preacher Alonso de Cabrera used the

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[10] This genre was hardly ever cultivated outside Spain. See Pérez, *Pintura barroca española*, p. 45, and 'Trampantojos a lo divino', in *Lecturas de Historia del Arte* 3, ed. by J. M. González de Zárate (Vitoria: Ephialte, 1992), pp. 139–55.

[11] On the canvas by Cano, see *El libro de la Catedral de Granada*, 2 vols (Granada: Cabildo Metropolitano, 2005), I, 350; on the Virgen de la Paloma, see Rodríguez, 'La literatura ascética', p. 85.

[12] Jesús Bravo Lozano, 'Pintura y mentalidades en Madrid a finales del XVII', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, 18 (1981), 193–220 (pp. 198, 202, and 216).

Meditationes Vitae Christi as a template for some of his sermons. The first sentence in the following extract is an almost literal translation of the passage of the Pseudo-Bonaventure mentioned above:

> Alli llegan las Marias y le ponen en su cabeça tristes tocas de luto como á huerfana, como á biuda; su divino rostro cubierto. Comiençan á caminar para Jerusalén, despues de averse despedido del sepulcro. Diria la apasionada Señora á los que encontrasse: *O vos omnes qui transitis per viam, attendite, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus* [Lamentations 1:12].[13]

It comes in Cabrera's 'Consideraciones de la Soledad y llanto de la sacratissima Virgen Maria nuestra Señora', a meditation sermon for the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The text must have been widely known; four different editions of his *sermonario* were printed simultaneously in Córdoba, Valladolid, Barcelona, and Zaragoza within the first decade of the century.[14] Other preachers followed along the same lines, either by glossing the same passage of the Pseudo-Bonaventure, or using Cabrera's sermon, as in this slightly later example from a sermon printed in 1604: 'Llegan a la ciudad y como la gente la vio tan lastimada, comienzan a avisar unos a otros la salgan a ver: salen a calles y ventanas, y como la Virgen traía las tocas y manto de viuda teñidos en sangre de su Hijo, los ojos desechos de llorar, aunque con modestia y gravedad [...]'.[15] In this passage, the preacher moderates the emotive tone of the scene with an emphasis on decorum: the Virgin suffered in a dignified way, without excessive display of feeling. Sermons such as the above included information on subject-matter (the Virgin alone) and how to picture it (*con modestia y gravedad*): in rhetorical terms, the sermon contains information as to both *inventio* and *elocutio*. In addition, they

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[13] Cabrera, *Segunda parte*, fols 403^{v}–04^{r}.
[14] See Antonio Palau y Dulcet, *Manual del librero hispano-americano*, 28 vols (Barcelona: the author, 1948–1977), I (1948), s.v. 'Cabrera, Alonso de'.
[15] Maestro Tapia de la Cámara, *Discursos predicables de diversos tratados de la Passión de Christo* ([Alcalá de Henares]: Iuan de Sarria, 1604), tratado tercero, pp. 553–73.

popularised the iconography of the *Soledad* and prepared the way for people to recognise and understand it.

In other examples, preachers show a greater degree of freedom regarding the letter of the Gospel. Allusions to the Virgin's widowhood are repeated later in the same sermon by Cabrera quoted above (the 'Consideraciones de la Soledad'), in a passage dealing with Mary's sorrowful and lonely meditation when she arrived at her house: 'Creo que se llevaria consigo la corona y los clavos: ese seria su libro. Alli lamentaria su biudez y soledad. ¡O Angeles, o hombre, o mundo universo, venid a consolar a la Reina del Cielo, la madre de misericordia, que esta en la mayor amargura que se puede pensar!'.[16] Preachers sometimes added original details of their own invention in meditational sermons, which painters later picked up; this reinforces the hypothesis that artists and commissioners often drew on sermons, heard or read, rather than on remoter literary sources. The passage above is one such example: as Rodríguez pointed out, the image of Mary alone meditating on the crown of thorns or the nails is an original development of Cabrera's, which was subsequently repeated by other preachers and writers of meditation literature.[17] The author also noted that this second excerpt from Cabrera's sermon must have been the iconographical source for a sculpture of the *Soledad* by Pedro de Mena (1628–1688) in the convent of the Discalced Carmelites of Alba de Tormes (Salamanca). This is a bust image of the Virgin shown sitting at a table on which are the crown of thorns and the nails of the Crucifixion, the latter looking

[16] Cabrera, *Segunda parte*, fol. 404r.
[17] Rodríguez, 'La literatura ascética', p. 87, and n. 53; according to Mâle, Fray Juan de Cartagena was the first to introduce this detail in a sermon published in 1612. The same idea was taken up in later works, such as Antonio de Molina, OC, *Exercicios espirituales de las excelencias, provecho y necesidad de la oración mental* (Burgos: [n. pub.], 1615; repr. Madrid: Pedro Marin, 1773), pp. 580–81.

twisted and bent to suggest to the viewer the violent and painful manner of Christ's death.[18] Other such images are found in the Museo de Bellas Artes of Granada and the monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción in Salamanca, all made in the 1670s.[19] It is logical, therefore, to assume that whoever commissioned the sculpture specifically asked Mena to include the details contained in the sermon by Cabrera.

However, *pace* Rodríguez, the sculpture by Mena is not the earliest artistic response to the sermon of the *Soledad* by Cabrera. A sub-type of painted representations of the *Soledad* in which a sorrowful Mary is depicted holding in her hands the crown of thorns or the nails of the Crucifixion includes paintings that can be dated to several decades earlier.[20] Imbued with an intensely emotional feeling that invites the viewer to affective meditation, the format of these strongly lit half-length figures posed against a dark background harks back to sixteenth-century models by Morales, such as his *Pietà* (c. 1560-70) at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid.[21] Such paintings are in turn based on earlier Flemish paintings and engravings, which entered Spain through Seville – for instance, the works of Quentin Massys.[22]

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[18] Rodríguez, 'La literatura ascética', p. 87; for the scultpure by Mena, see Ricardo de Orueta y Duarte, *La vida y la obra de Pedro de Mena y Medrano* (Madrid: CSIC, 1914), pp. 171–73, and Emilio Orozco Díaz, 'Devoción y barroquismo en las Dolorosas de Pedro de Mena', *Goya*, 52 (1963), 235–41.

[19] See *El Árbol de la Vida*, exh. cat. Segovia, Cathedral, May to November 2003 (Segovia: Fundación Las Edades del Hombre, 2003), #6, p. 380, and *Pedro de Mena: III Centenario de su muerte, 1628–1688*, exh. cat. Málaga, Cathedral, April 1988 (Málaga: Junta de Andalucía, 1989), p. 229.

[20] One *Soledad* attributed to Cano dates from 1640–43, and another by Camilo I would date to the 1640s. See *Testigos*, exh. cat. Ávila, Cathedral, 2004 (Ávila: Fundación Las Edades del Hombre, 2004), #62, p. 288, and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Don Antonio de Pereda (1611–1678) y la pintura madrileña de su tiempo*, exh. cat. Madrid, Sala de Exposiciones del Palacio de Bibliotecas y Museos, December 1978 to January 1979 (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1978), Fig. 89.

[21] Jonathan Brown, *Painting in Spain, 1500–1700*, Pelican History of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 45.

[22] See Elisa Bermejo, 'Nueva obra de Metsys en colección privada de Madrid', *AEA*, 66 (1993), 169–73, Fig. 2.

It should always be remembered that printed sermons of this kind exercised an influence well beyond their original audience, being reused or taken as a point of reference on other occasions. They must have encouraged members of the congregation to commission and buy depictions of the new iconography, and painters to become familiar with the subject-matter and explore its expressive possibilities. Once printed, circulated and preached in places far away from the Court, these sermons spread the fame of the *Soledad* in a way that Becerra's sculpture could not. Sermons that included references, no matter how brief, to Mary alone after her son's burial (dressed as a widow, holding instruments of the Passion, or otherwise) created the appropriate conditions in which images of the *Soledad* could proliferate and iconographical variants develop. The relationship between sermon and iconography was not unidirectional: if sermons encouraged the making of new iconographical types, preachers would also refer to them as they increased in popularity.

In addition to facilitating the transmission of ideas, sermons played an important role as sources of authority. As discussed in Chapter 2, the display of artworks depicting new subjects required the bishop's approval. The fact that the idea for an image was taken from a sermon would bestow a greater legitimacy on it than if the new iconography had been devised by the painter or his client independently, unless the client were a prominent member of the religious establishment. The decrees of Trent, adapted and developed regionally by means of synodal constitutions, forbade anyone to preach unless they had been expressly authorised by the bishop or his delegate, as well as by a superior in the case of regular clergy. If a sermon inspiring a new iconography was also printed, its legitimating effect would be doubled since it would have passed through two forms of

control, first that exerted over the person of the preacher himself, and then the required *imprimatur* from the Crown's censor, often in addition to a license from one of the preacher's superiors.[23] Thus, a sermon such as Cabrera's would have cleared the way of any obstacles to painting and displaying images of the *Soledad* – especially in this case, in view of Cabrera's fame and the position he held as King's preacher.

From a rhetorical point of view, the image of the Virgin dressed in mourning habit is a striking and emotive way of presenting her sorrow. One of the reasons that the *Soledad* became so popular as a domestic image, especially with people who owned few paintings, was its versatility: an image of the *Soledad* could be used to meditate on a wide range of subjects, from the Incarnation to the Virgin herself and the Passion. In Catholic theology, Mary's mourning expresses her special role in the Incarnation as mother of the Son and spouse of the Holy Spirit. A people used to expressing their own bereavement by dressing plainly and in black and white would connect naturally with the *Soledad*, depicting as it did an experience shared by any woman who had lost a husband or, more frequently, a child.

TWO IMMACULIST ICONOGRAPHIES BASED ON SERMONS

As is well known, the Immaculate Conception was one of the commonest iconographies in seventeenth-century Spain, long before Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma in 1854.

[23] See Mercedes Agulló y Cobo, *La Inquisición y los libreros españoles en el siglo XVII* (Madrid: CSIC, 1972); Maxime Chevalier, *Lectura y lectores en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Turner, 1976); and Amparo García Cuadrado, 'Aproximación a los criterios legales en materia de imprenta durante la edad moderna en España', *Revista general de información y documentación*, 6.2 (1996), 125–90 (pp. 137–38).

In addition to the usual two forms, the *tota pulchra* and the *mulier amicta sole*,[24] other variants were developed which added innovative elements in order to express new theological concepts and to suit different forms of devotion. These involve a greater departure from the original iconography than the *Soledad*, in that the transformation completely changes the meaning of the image (the effect is similar to that created by preaching a sermon and linking it to an image of a different subject, as discussed in chapter 3).

The relatively rare iconography of God the Father painting the Immaculate Conception has not been studied until the recent work of J.M. Torres.[25] It shows God the Father sitting on clouds and himself painting the *mulier amicta sole* of Revelation – clothed in the sun, crowned with stars, the moon at her feet, and treading on a snake – charmingly assisted by *putti* who hold the canvas and the palette. Only one painting of this type by an anonymous eighteenth-century artist of the Granada school has received scholarly attention, but the iconography was widespread in the Spanish American dominions (where the Immaculate Conception is often depicted as the Virgin of Guadalupe).

Torres consulted M.P. Dávila's anthology of sermons dealing with subjects related to art, and found several examples that he believed to be iconographical precedents for the painting.[26] These prove that from the early seventeenth century onwards, preachers frequently visited the *topos* of God as a painter in connection with the

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[24] For a general discussion of the iconography, see Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception*.
[25] José M. Torres Pérez, 'El Padre Eterno pintando a la Inmaculada Concepción: Una iconografía poco difundida', in *V Simposio Bíblico Español: la Biblia en el Arte y en la Literatura*, ed. by Vicente Balaguer, Vicente Collado and José J. Azanza, 2 vols (Valencia: Fundación Bíblica Española; Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1999), II, 539–51.
[26] Torres, pp. 541–44.

Immaculate Conception of the Virgin. (It is not surprising that God should have been visualized as *painter* in this context more than in others, since the Immaculate Conception had so quickly become one of the most familiar types of Marian image.) To quote one example:

> Tomó Dios el pincel de su divina sabiduría, y lo entró en la concha de su omnipotencia, y no dexó en ella matiz, ni color possible de comunicarse a pura criatura, que en su alma no esculpiesse… halla color para darselo a sus cabellos; para pintarla su cuello, la blancura de marfil, halla matices para dibuxarla de pies a cabeza…[27]

The author of this sermon explores the metaphor of God as a painter down to an almost technical level, mentioning, for example, the practice of using a shell to hold pigments, especially an emulsion known as 'shell gold' that would have come in handy when depicting her as clothed in the sun. The text makes specific mention of the gold of the Ark of the Covenant, and has God painting the Virgin with the same colour.[28]

In the case of God painting the Immaculate Conception we can establish a closer link between specific sermons and paintings, which Torres did not point out. Three of the sermons he mentions, including the one quoted above, were preached in Granada on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of 1615 and published the following year. The eighteenth-century painting discussed by Torres is kept in Albolote, a village on the outskirts of Granada, and is the work of a local artist. That painting and sermons originated in so reduced a geographical context can hardly be a coincidence, although no further evidence has appeared that would allow us to know whether the painting is based

[27] Francisco Soriano, *Sermon predicado en el convento de San Francisco en Granada, en la fiesta de la Inmaculada Concepcion de la Virgen Nuestra Señora* (Granada: Martín Fernández, 1616), fol. B2^{v}; Torres, p. 542; Dávila, p. 126.

[28] On shell gold, see Edwin Johnston, *Writing and Illuminating and Lettering* (London: Pitman, 1977), pp. 149–50, and Rutherford J. Gettens and George L. Stout, *Painting Materials: A Short Encyclopaedia* (New York: Dover, 1942), pp. 115–16.

on earlier examples of the iconography, or whether some of the sermons were available to the anonymous painter in preached or printed form.

Another iconography originating as a painterly response to one or several sermons is what we could name 'Passional Immaculate Conception'. Such images have so far received no scholarly attention. They consist in an Immaculate Conception depicted in the usual way, but with the novelty that Mary is set on a cross (Fig. 13). Like the *Soledad*, this iconographical model originated in Spain, yet it never enjoyed the same diffusion and popularity. All the examples I have been able to examine come from Castile and date from the last third of the seventeenth century. While elucidating the origins of the iconography, it is interesting to study the ways in which the case of the Passional Immaculate Conception compares with that of the *Soledad* discussed above.

It seems that the earliest examples of the iconography were made by manipulating existing pictures, by simply painting in four dark, rectangular blocks running along the edges and corners of the canvas. This leaves uncovered a cross-shaped area of the original lighter background, turning the negative space of the background into the positive form of a life-size cross behind the figure. A late sixteenth-century print by the Flemish engraver Hyeronimus Wierix (1553–1619) represents the same idea of an Immaculate Conception set against a cross, crowned by angels (Fig. 14).[29] However, the lack of painted examples until the 1660s suggests that the print was not known in Spain, and the way in which the earliest paintings of the Passional Immaculate Conception were made out of pre-existing images seems to suggest that the iconography developed independently of the print.

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[29] Marie Mauquoy-Hendrickx, *Les estampes des Wierix conservées au Cabinet des Estampes de la Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier*, 3 vols (Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier, 1978–83), I (1978), #727.

It was usual in seventeenth-century Spain to modify or recycle religious works of art in order to change their meaning or meet new needs. In this category we find such widely popular images as *Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados* and St Anne, two medieval wooden carvings respectively found in the cathedrals of Valencia and Tudela. The former belonged to a confraternity chiefly dedicated to giving decent burial to foundlings, criminals sentenced to death, and inmates who died in the confraternity's lunatic asylum. The image was originally intended to lie flat on top of coffins, but at some point it became an *imagen de vestir*, clothed with only the face and hands left uncovered.[30] The image of St Anne at Tudela originally represented the enthroned Virgin with the Child Jesus sitting on her lap (a type known as *Sedes Sapientiae*). It was subsequently dressed and a third head was added, so that the image now appeared as St Anne with the Virgin in her arms holding the Child Jesus.[31] Such modifications were not rare. However, later examples of the Passional Immaculate Conception were planned from the outset to look as they do, rather than being formed out of a pre-existing image.

The case of the St Anne at Tudela may illustrate some of the reasons for such reworkings. Patrons would sometimes use religious art to compete with one another for distinction; since commissioning and dedicating a new image attracted greater attention than restoring, relocating, or modifying an existing object, the modification of existing images could have been preferred if money was scarce, or if there were doubts as to whether the novelty of the idea might arouse the suspicions of the overseeing religious

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[30] See Andrés de S. Ferri Chulio, *Iconografía popular de la Mare de Déu dels Desamparats* (Valencia: Federico Doménech, 1998), and Emilio M. Aparicio Olmos, *La imagen original de Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados* (Valencia: Diputación, 1968).

[31] The modification may have taken place in the eighteenth century; see *Catálogo Monumental de Navarra*, ed. by María C. García Gaínza, 9 vols (Pamplona: Príncipe de Viana, 1980–1997), I (1980), p. 254.

authorities. The same reasons may also have contributed to the fact that the iconography of the Passional Immaculate Conception never moved beyond a few local workshops of modest pretensions.

On a different level, these practices testify to the fact that religious images were regarded as adaptable, as signifiers whose virtue consisted in meaning, rather than in being, in accordance with the Tridentine conception of religious art as functional, and of its function as primarily communicative. In the case of the Tudela St Anne, the modification fulfils a simple purpose, whereas the change effected on the earliest painting of the Passional Immaculate Conception is more complex and thoroughgoing. The addition of a third character to the 'St Anne' carving forces the viewers to change their interpretation of the image: the Virgin becomes St Anne, and the Child the Virgin. But even if the iconography has changed, the character of the image is more or less the same. It remains an image of the Incarnation and of Mary seen as the throne of the Incarnate Word, to which the incorporation of St Anne simply adds a further temporal and genealogical dimension (and perhaps a reference to Mary's immaculate conception).[32] In contrast, the transformation from an ordinary Immaculate Conception into a Passional one operates on a subtler level: the figure retains its former identity, but is now viewed more explicitly as sharing in Christ's Passion. To explore this idea more clearly, it is necessary to understand the origin of the iconography (its *inventio*), in which sermons played an important part.

As we saw above, some sermons used *amplificatio* to evoke the Passion from Mary's point of view, and a striking new image similarly compared Mary's desolation to

[32] On 'St Anne triplex' as an Immaculist image, see Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception*, pp. 28–34.

that of a widow. In a similar way, this fragment from a Holy Week sermon by Alonso de Cabrera explores Mary's suffering after the Passion in the context of both her immaculate conception and her role as mother:

> Pues ya cuando baxa el santo cuerpo, y lo ponen en su regaço, allì son las angustias y lamentaciones. Aprietalo en sus braços, haze con ellos un nudo ciego, pone su rostro entre las espinas que en la cabeça quedaron fixadas, y comiença á regar con lagrimas el rostro sangriento y desfigurado. O vida muerta? [*sic*] O lumbre de mis ojos escurecida? O Sol de mi alegria eclipsado? O Rosa del paraiso, cuales han sido las manos que assi os han sobajado y marchitado vuestra hermosura? O Espejo Christiano de mi alma, quien os ha quebrado?[33]

Later Cabrera revisits this *topos* when he invites his congregation to imagine the Virgin's solitude: 'Mirad qual quedaria aquella Luna hermosissima eclipsada, por la interposicion de la tierra entre ella y el Sol? Que triste y solo le pareceria el mundo?'.[34] He had already used the same imagery in his Good Friday sermon:

> El Sol se viste de luto y con un general eclipsi escurece toda la tierra. La luna se pone tocas de biuda, y todo el Cielo se cubre… Como se há marchitado la flor de la mañana? Como es eclipsado el Sol del medio dia?[35]

We encountered these passages in Chapter 3, in regard to the rhetorical mechanisms employed and the possible use of physical images by the preacher. What interests us now is the use of Immaculist metaphors, especially evident in the second part of the excerpt when the preacher inserts a series of apostrophes to represent Mary's words to her dead son. These take the form of metaphors that are predicable of Jesus in relation to his mother, accompanied by their antitheses, such as 'Oh, dead life' and 'Oh, darkened light'. The last three of this series of five form a sub-group, since the base terms *sun*, *rose/flower*, and *mirror* are also traditional attributes of the Immaculate Conception: *electa ut sol*, *rosa mystica* (or *lilium inter spinas*), and *speculum iustitiae* (or also *speculum sine macula*), respectively. The coincidence would not have passed unnoticed

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[33] Cabrera, *Segunda parte*, fol. 402^{v}.
[34] Cabrera, *Segunda parte*, fol. 403^{v}.
[35] Cabrera, *Segunda parte*, fols 386^{r}–86^{v}.

to most seventeenth-century Spaniards, who were familiar with the immaculist attributes (see p. 98, above). The capitalisation of these three in the original text, as reproduced above, may have been intended to stress the Immaculist implications. The 'widow's veil' in the metaphor of the moon, also taken from the *pulchra ut luna* of the Litany, is yet another reiteration of the theme which painters expressed visually as the *Soledad*.

Immaculist attributes provide Cabrera with a congruous group of *loci* that can be used effectively to articulate Mary's pain. From a formal point of view, the chain of antithetical *conceptos* makes Mary's speech more emotionally engaging. At the same time, the preacher wished to stress the connection between Mary's attributes and Jesus; on a symbolic level, expressed in the apostrophes, her son's death causes her own attributes to suffer and spoil. Similar considerations must have underlain the modification of images of the Immaculate Conception to imbue them with a passional significance.

Contemplations of the Passion from a Marian perspective have been part of meditation literature from its beginnings and into the early modern period, as readily suggested by the titles of a work attributed to St Bernard, *Liber de Passione Christi et Doloribus Matris eius*, and the Spanish classic *Passio Duorum* (completed in 1519).[36] The scriptural references to the Virgin's presence at the Crucifixion, as well as Jesus's words to her from the cross, lent themselves to rhetorical *amplificatio*, in order to maximise the emotional impact of the scene on the reader. As St Bernard knew, the effect was further intensified by adding to Christ's physical suffering the psychological drama of his mother witnessing it, and his awareness of being watched by her. In the

[36] See Domingo Sánchez-Mesa Martín, 'Los temas de la Pasión en la iconografía de la Virgen: el valor de la imagen como elemento de persuasión', *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía*, 4.7 (1991), 167–85. For the work attributed to St Bernard, see PL, 182, cols. 1134–42.

seventeenth century, this tradition benefited from the cross-fertilisation of theology and meditation literature, as efforts were made to define and defend the Virgin's role as co-redeemer. In her popular *Mystica ciudad de Dios*, María de Ágreda states that God 'la hizo participar de la dignidad de Redentora' in recognition of her participation in the Incarnation and her sufferings during the Passion.[37]

Besides his usual recourse to adopting Mary's point of view, Alonso de Cabrera used contrast, another form of *amplificatio* exploited in Spanish Golden-Age religious literature. See, for example, his account of the Flagellation taken from another sermon on the Passion:

> ¡O cuerpo blanco, como te tiñen de colorado! ¡O Virgen y madre bendita, y como han de lastimaros a vos en el alma estos golpes y llagas que despues vereis en el sagrado cuerpo! La tunica inconsutil que labrastes, Señora, la veo guardada para los sayones; mas la que en vuestras entrañas labro el Espiritu Santo de vuestra sangre purissima, harpada esta y rota por millares de partes.[38]

Here Cabrera's violent and painterly contrast of red blood against white skin prepares listeners for another contrast, of a narrative kind: Christ's tormentors put aside the fabric of his tunic woven by Mary, whereas they tear apart the fabric of his body which the Spirit laboriously wove in Mary's womb. Similar contrastive *topoi* result from juxtaposing the innocence and happiness of Christ's childhood with the cruelty of the Passion, as, for example, with subjects such as the Child Jesus bleeding after a little accident in his father's carpentry workshop, making a crown of thorns, or sleeping on the Cross.[39] The same or similar techniques can be found in the works of many other contemporary writers and preachers, but Cabrera's recurring conflation of Passion

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[37] On this subject, see Mark Miravalle, 'Época de Oro de María Corredentora', in *Con Jesús: La Historia de María Corredentora* (Goleta, CA: Queenship, 2003), pp. 121–37; see also María de Ágreda, *Mystica Ciudad de Dios* (Antwerp: Berdussen, 1696), p. 86b.
[38] Cabrera, *Segunda parte*, fol. 192^{r}–^{v}.
[39] See Mâle, pp. 302–04, and Pérez, *Pintura barroca española*, p. 47.

narrative and tropes based on Immaculist symbols singles him out and may be an original feature of his sermons. The person who conceived the idea of juxtaposing the Immaculate Conception and the cross possibly did so after reading or listening to these sermons.

In many ways, the *Soledad* and the passional Immaculate occupy the same niche. From a rhetorical point of view, both iconographies deal with the Passion adopting a Marian perspective. Visually, both add a novel element onto previously existing iconographies. From an iconographical point of view, the development of both types of image probably owes a debt to two similar sermons by fray Alonso de Cabrera. However, if the history of the *Soledad* is one of popular success, the history of its close relative, the Passional Immaculate Conception, is a tale of failure, since the iconography remained confined to the obscurity of a few provincial locations. To understand the reasons behind this, it is necessary to examine several problems which this iconography raised.

By contrast with the *Soledad*, an iconography alluding to a scene in the Passion narrative, the Passional Immaculate Conception is purely a symbolic image. Even later examples, painted as such from the outset, show Mary's arms in the position in which they would be in a normal Immaculate Conception. The possibility of depicting her arms stretched out would have raised theological problems: it is one thing to contemplate the Passion from Mary's point of view and explore her involvement in Christ's redemptive mission, and quite another to suggest, or to allow people to think, that the Virgin was literally crucified.

The iconography raises a second problem, in this case concerning the readability of the image: the Passional Immaculate Conception could be confused with a pre-existing iconography. Representations of crucified female saints are rare, owing to the strictures

of legibility and decorum. The image of the Crucifix was so powerfully etched onto the visual imagination of Spanish seventeenth-century viewers that they would readily identify images of any crucified body as that of Jesus, unless it had some feature that showed otherwise. Some common iconographies of well-known male saints show them crucified, but in ways which leave no room for confusion with Christ: artists show St Peter and St Andrew crucified upside down and on an X-shaped cross, respectively; closer in time to seventeenth-century observers, the Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries martyred in Japan wear the habits or the characteristic cassocks of their order. The possibility of a crucified female saint raised, on the one hand, questions of decorum: the distinguishing features are precisely those which, according to the ideas of that time, ought not to be exhibited in a church. On the other, an image that is too generic could be misread as a slightly feminine Christ, and would therefore need a clarifying inscription.

Crucified female saints are few and obscure and, as might be expected, the problems raised by their representations probably fascinate feminist art historians more than they ever have interested church authorities.[40] One such is a non-existent saint, invented in the late Middle Ages: St Liberata, also known as Librada (Wilgefortis or Uncumber in English). Legend had it that after becoming a Christian Liberata refused to marry her heathen suitor, prayed to become ugly, and miraculously grew a beard, upon which her furious father, a pagan king of Portugal, had her crucified. In England, women mistreated by their husbands made offerings of oats at two statues of Liberata in Norfolk,

[40] See for example Ilse E. Friesen, *The Female Crucifix: Images of St. Wilgefortis since the Middle Ages* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001).

in return for which she was supposed to 'uncumber' them.[41] Her only surviving image in England is in Henry VII's chapel at Westminster Abbey, where it must have been seen by a succession of unhappily married British female royals.

Although her body is reputedly kept in Sigüenza cathedral, Liberata enjoyed greater popularity in Portugal than in Spain. Two bishops of Tuy, near the Portuguese border, tried to export the cult to Spain: Juan de San Millán made the first attempt in 1564, and Ildefonso Galaz established a feast in her honour in 1688. Still, she remained relatively unknown. The few extant images of St Liberata are puzzling. A painting at Seville cathedral shows her crucified and fully bearded; only the inscription on the bottom of the panel informs the viewer that the subject depicted is not Christ.[42] All paintings of the passional Immaculate Conception that I know of originated in Castilian workshops outside the Court; it seems that they are absent from regions where there was some popular devotion to St Liberata, that is, Portugal, Galicia and Andalusia.[43] From an iconological point of view, the tiny niche in Gombrich's 'artistic ecosystem' could be occupied by either of the two types of images, but not both. In any case, this observation will have to remain a tentative hypothesis owing to the small number of paintings of both iconographies.

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[41] See *The Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture*, ed. by P. and L. Murray (Oxford: OUP, 1996), s.v. 'Wilgefortis'; on St Liberata, see also Diego E. González Chantos y Ullauri, *Santa Librada, virgen y mártir, patrona de la Santa Iglesia, Ciudad y Obispado de Sigüenza, vindicada* (Madrid: Imprenta de la Administración del Real Arbitrio, 1806), and Katrina B. Olds, *Forging the Past: Invented Histories in Counter-Reformation Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), pp. 172–75.

[42] See Enrique Valdivieso, *Catálogo de las pinturas de la Catedral de Sevilla* (Sevilla: Sever-Cuesta, 1978), p. 61, #246, illus. on pl. XLII.

[43] For an example of the iconography of St Liberata in Galicia, see *Galicia no tempo*, ed. by J. M. García Iglesias, exh. cat. Santiago de Compostela, Mosteiro de San Martiño Pinario, 1991 ([Santiago de Compostela]: Xunta de Galicia, [1990]), #160, pp. 296–97.

But the main reason for the failure of the Passional Immaculate Conception was probably its lack of emotional appeal. The idea behind the image could be moving, especially if expressed as skilfully as in Cabrera's sermon, but the image itself is not. The reasons given above made it impossible for the image to be rendered in a naturalistic way; it always look too rigid, hieratic and lifeless. These images may have inspired devout thoughts in some viewers, but preclude any sort of visual recollection and do not encourage emotional reflection. The Passional Immaculate Conception looks more like an emblem or a painted *concepto*; it may have been considered ingenious, but it left the viewer unaffected.

The series in the chapel of the Cristo de la Paciencia

In the summer of 1630, an incident occurred in Madrid that eventually resulted in the building of a convent and the commissioning of a highly unusual series of paintings. The Inquisition opened a process to investigate a family of Portuguese crypto-Jews, which allegedly had whipped and burnt a sculpture of the Crucifix in their house on the Calle de las Infantas. The complex nature of the case makes it necessary to start by introducing the social and political issues involved, before I deal with the case in particular, its treatment by preachers, the paintings it inspired, and possible interpretations.

Cristianos nuevos of Jewish origin had to conform outwardly to the official Christian religion, but their private religious practice varied from Catholic orthodoxy, to forms of syncretism, to crypto-Judaism.[44] They were targeted by the Spanish and

[44] Amilcar Paulo, 'O ritual dos criptojudeus portugueses (algumas reflexões sobre os seus ritos)', in *Jews and Conversos: Studies in Society and the Inquisition*, ed. by Y. Kaplan (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1981), pp. 139–48 (pp. 147–48).

Portuguese Inquisitions and accused of 'Judaizing', especially the large *converso* population of Portugal. Hence, following Philip II's annexation in 1580, Portuguese *conversos* illegally crossed the border in their hundreds or even thousands.[45] The ensuing wave of anti-Semitism, which took on a specific national and class prejudice as it identified Portuguese traders with *judaizantes*, led the internationally-connected higher echelons of *converso* society to curry favour with the Spanish King to lessen the inquisitorial pressure. In 1601, Philip III accepted 200,000 *cruzados* in return for formally granting the Portuguese New Christians permission to migrate, and in 1604, after negotiating a Papal pardon for some forty *judaizantes*, he received more than 1,700,000 *cruzados* for the properties which the Portuguese Inquisition would have seized had they been condemned.[46] The Crown soon came to regard *converso* bankers as an inexhaustible source of cash.

The poor state of Spain's finances led some *arbitristas* to recommend extraordinary measures. In 1619 Martín González de Cellorigo presented a *memorial* to Philip III in which, after arguing that the Spanish Jews could not be blamed for Christ's death as they had arrived in the peninsula long before, he suggested that their return would benefit the Spanish economy.[47] New offers of money were extended to Philip IV in 1621, and the following year Olivares's *Junta General de Reformación* ordered that New Christians whose ancestors had not appeared in an *auto-da-fé* were to be treated as

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[45] David L. Graizbord, *Souls in Dispute: Converso Identities in Iberia and the Jewish Diaspora, 1580–1700* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), p. 21.
[46] Graizbord, pp. 21–22 and passim.
[47] Yosef Kaplan, 'The Travels of Portuguese Jews from Amsterdam to the "Lands of Idolatry" (1644–1724)', in *Jews and Conversos: Studies in Society and the Inquisition*, ed. by Y. Kaplan (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1981), pp. 197–224 (p. 200); see also Michael Alpert, *Crypto-Judaism and the Spanish Inquisition* (London: Palgrave, 2001), p. 42.

limpios de sangre.[48] Again in 1625, with the Treasury threatening bankruptcy because of Olivares's Dutch campaign, Portuguese bankers offered 421,000 escudos; on 26 June 1626, two months before Philip IV accepted the offer, he issued an edict allowing Portuguese *conversos* to leave his realms, followed by a Papal indult of three months for crypto-Jews.[49] But of course, Olivares's adversaries, especially in the Inquisition, criticised him for allowing a community of suspect *judaizantes* to form, almost without disturbance, around the Portuguese bankers in Madrid.[50] It is in this context that the *Cristo de la Paciencia* scandal broke out, which suggests that the detention of some *conversos* two years earlier was cleverly exploited by a sector of the opposition to Olivares.

It has been suggested that damaging Catholic images could have had an educational value among crypto-Jews: rather than constituting a deliberate mockery of the Christian religion, it may have been done to teach children that images had nothing to do with God nor had they any of the powers claimed by their Catholic teachers.[51] In the cultural and religious context of the Spanish seventeenth century, however, the gravity of the crime far surpassed that of a sacrilegious theft or of the destruction of ecclesiastical property. Contemporary observers found this one of the worst possible types of blasphemy, a horrifying offence, and one almost unheard-of; the intensity of this reaction can be perceived in its repercussions both in art and in sermons, as well as in the harsh

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[48] Alpert, pp. 45 and 54–55.
[49] Alpert, pp. 55–56.
[50] On Olivares's involvement with crypto-Jews, and its use by his political enemies, see John H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 11, 301, 556 and 558.
[51] Alpert, p. 183.

sentences passed by the tribunal.[52] A brief look into the mechanisms of this reaction will provide a point of access for the study of a number of intricately interrelated sermons and images.

As we have seen, early modern Spanish thinkers saw religious images as rhetorical instruments and emphasised their ability to stir the emotions of the viewer. By 1630, a majority of the population would have associated religious images with intense experiences of fear, joy, grief, reverence, and repentance, rather than seeing them merely as forms of church decoration. It is not difficult to imagine the shock of contemporary men and women on hearing of an act of desecration committed against a religious image in Madrid. Accounts of iconoclasm in Protestant areas were known, and the narrator's response is always similar; for example, a report of Charles V's German campaigns includes an episode in which the Emperor finds a crucifix that has been shot at in the chest: 'Esta fue una vista para el Emperador tan aborrecible que no pudo disimular la ira que de una cosa tan fea se podia rescibir, y mirando al Cielo dixo: Señor, si vos quereys, poderoso soys para vengar vuestras injurias'.[53] The desecration by a Jewish family in 1630 was all the graver, seeing that it took place not in Protestant Saxony but in the heart of Catholic Spain, and that rather than a single act of iconoclasm it reputedly consisted of several acts which mocked the Passion. Such a blasphemy would have been expected to

[52] See Michel Scholz-Hänsel, 'Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y la Inquisición: amenazas reales y espacios libres en las artes plásticas y la literatura del Siglo de Oro', in *La creatividad femenina en el mundo hispánico: María de Zayas, Isabel Rebeca Correa, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. by M. Bosse, B. Potthast and A. Stoll, 2 vols (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), II, 687–713 (pp. 687–88).
[53] Luis de Ávila y Zuñiga, *Comentario del Ilustre Señor Don Luis de Ávila y Çúñiga Comendador Mayor de Alcantara: de la Guerra de Alemaña hecha de Carlo V maximo Emperador Romano Rey de España en el año de* [1546] *y* [1547] (Venice: [n. pub.], 1548), fol. 79[r].

call for some form of supernatural intervention: it was said that the image miraculously bled and spoke to its torturers.[54]

After a trial of almost two years, the *auto-da-fé* took the form of a civic, religious, and legal ceremony involving the whole court. It was held in the Plaza Mayor on Sunday 4 July 1632. Two days later, a mob pulled down the house where the sacrilege had occurred, and marked the site with a stone column. There followed a series of *fiestas en desagravio*, religious ceremonies held first at the Chapel Royal, then in every convent and confraternity of Madrid. The rationale behind them sprang from the ideas of atonement and expiation in Catholic theology, according to which, in order to atone for a transgression, something had to be offered which the offended party loved as much as or more than he detested the offence.[55] Hence the determination and fervour with which the Court immersed itself in processions, novenas, and expositions of the Sacrament in an outpouring of devotion which Scholz-Hänsel characterised as akin to mass hysteria.[56] Taking over a public initiative, the King and Queen funded the erection of a Capuchin convent on the site where the house had stood, so that a religious community would live there permanently. The Capuchins took possession in 1651, when the building was completed. Teixeira's 1656 map of Madrid presents the church as a small and cheaply built edifice, the convent following to the letter the configuration established by Fray Alberto de la Madre de Dios in his design for Madrid's convent of La Encarnación in the

[54] For a discussion of the incidents, see Juan I. Pulido Serrano, *Injurias a Cristo: Religión, política y antijudaísmo en el siglo XVII* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2002), pp. 123–53.
[55] See *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 48, art. 2.
[56] Scholz-Hänsel, p. 688.

1610s.[57] The shape of the *Capilla del Crucifijo* with a door to the street, built on the precise site of the desecration, is clearly discernible to the left of the patio-narthex on the north side of the church; the crucifix that presided over it was brought from the convent of San Antonio del Prado.[58] Besides, two chapels in other churches were dedicated to atone for the same defiled crucifix, and processions departed from these to the convent of La Paciencia on certain days of the year, concluding with the preaching of a sermon.[59]

The infamous case and the religious frenzy that ensued are well documented through two broadsheets of *relaciones* published after the *auto-da-fé* and, especially, in the book *La nueva Jerusalem* (1709) by Matheo de Anguiano, which testifies to the continuing popular devotion to the Cristo de la Paciencia almost eighty years after the events.[60] But all of these sources leave out an important detail concerning the way in which the case first became the focus of popular interest and outrage through preaching.

Those who have previously studied the case of the scandal of *La Paciencia* have maintained that details of the process were kept secret by the Inquisition and only disclosed, to great surprise and consternation, in early July 1632, shortly before the *auto-da-fé* took place.[61] Evidence proves them wrong: the growing interest in the desecration

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[57] See Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, *El antiguo Madrid* (1861), 2nd edn, 2 vols (Madrid: Oficinas de la Ilustración Española y Americana, 1881), II, 104.
[58] José A. Álvarez y Baena, *Compendio histórico, de las grandezas de la coronada villa de Madrid, corte de la monarquía de España* (Madrid: Antonio de Sancha, 1786; facs. edn, Madrid: Museo Universal, 1985), pp. 160–62.
[59] One occupied a side chapel of the church of San Luis (annexed to the church of San Ginés), and the other the main chapel of the church of San Millán (annexed to that of Saints Justo and Pastor); see Álvarez, *Compendio*, pp. 67–68 and 88–89.
[60] See *Relaciones breves de actos públicos celebrados en Madrid de 1541 a 1650*, ed. by José Simón Díaz (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Madrileños, 1982), pp. 408–10 and 414–34; and Matheo de Anguiano, *La nueva Jerusalem en que la perfidia hebraica reiteró con nuevos ultrajes la passion de Christo Salvador del mundo en su sacrosanta imagen del Crucifixo de la Paciencia en Madrid* (Madrid: Manuel Ruiz de Murga, 1709).
[61] See Pulido, pp. 218–19, 222, and 240, and Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos, 'El *Cristo Crucificado* de Velázquez: Trasfondo histórico-religioso', *AEA*, 77.305 (2004), 4–19, p. 10.

and alleged attendant miracles, and the patronage which all this elicited, owed much to a sermon entitled *La sed mas ilustremente penosa* (1631), which was preached and printed several months before the *auto-da-fé* took place.[62] The friar who delivered the sermon, Diego Niseno (d. 1656), had recently become the abbot of the capital's Basilian convent and was one of Vicente Carducho's intellectual friends, a poet whose 'pluma y lengua de oro' Lope de Vega praised, and a declared enemy of Francisco de Quevedo.[63] As we will see next, the sermon publicised details that confirm that Niseno was privy to the ongoing inquisitorial investigation. Niseno's sermon evidently played an important role in the unfolding of the events, and therefore its political dimension should not be disregarded; it has been suggested that the inquisitorial process may have responded to the interests of the political faction opposing the Count-Duke of Olivares, whose attitude to Jews they considered excessively tolerant.[64] Conveniently for Olivares, the elderly Inquisitor General Antonio Zapata (1550–1635) resigned in 1632 and the post was given to the King's confessor Fray Antonio de Sotomayor, thus effectively placing the Holy Office in the King's (Olivares's) hands.[65] Regardless of whether or not they were part of an

[62] Diego Niseno, *La sed mas ilustremente penosa, la alebosia mas sacrilegamente atroz* [...] (Madrid: Francisco Martínez, 1631). The *censura* by the Trinitarian Damián López de Haro is dated 1 February 1631. The sermon was reprinted quickly, suggesting its great popularity (Barcelona: Sebastián de Cormellas, 1632).
[63] A volume of *Asuntos predicables* published in Madrid by Francisco Martínez in 1630 describes Niseno as a Basilian monk, whereas one year later he is named as Abbot in the title of *La sed más ilustremente penosa.* Niseno contributed a poem to Carducho's 1633 *Diálogos de la pintura*; see Javier Portús Pérez, *Pintura y pensamiento en la España de Lope de Vega* (Madrid: Nerea, 1999), p. 94; Juan L. González García, 'Carducho and Sacred Oratory', in *On Art and Painting: Vicente Carducho and Baroque Spain*, ed. by Jean Andrews, Jeremy Roe and Oliver Noble Wood (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2016), pp. 149–62 (p. 161). Lope de Vega praised Niseno in *El laurel de Apolo* (1630), silva séptima, ll. 175–87. On Niseno and Quevedo, see María J. Tobar Quintanar, 'La huella de Diego Niseno en *El tribunal de la justa venganza*', *Boletín de la Real Academia Española*, 89.101 (January–June 2010), 131–59 (p. 133).
[64] Scholz-Hänsel, pp. 687–88; Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Carreño, Rizi, Herrera y la pintura madrileña de su tiempo*, exh. cat. Madrid, Palacio de Villahermosa, January to March 1986 (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1986), p. 292; Elliott, pp. 11, 301, 556 and 558.
[65] Alpert, p. 50.

elaborate conspiracy against the *valido*, preachers influenced the early reaction to the news and prepared the field for the subsequent commissions.

Unlike slightly later sermons on the same subject, Niseno's *La sed mas ilustremente penosa* contains a brief description of the separate acts of desecration rather than alluding to them generically: [66]

> Conjuróse una vil canalla, juntaronse unos ciegos Iudios, y cogiendo en sus sacrilegas manos, con irrision grande, la figura de un santo Crucifixo, le pusieron una soga al cuello, y despues de averle arrastrado por la tierra, suspendidole del aire, y açotadole cruelmente con espinas, le arrojaron en el fuego, convirtiendole en cenizas, procediendo en esta sacrilega accion en furor tan ciego, que ni les templa la milagrosa sangre que el leño derrama, ni les inmuta [*sic*] las quexas que oyen al crucificado…'[67]

This description matches the series of images painted twenty years later for La Paciencia, and predates any other source that could have provided information on the matter. People readily believed the extraordinary facts presented to them owing to a strong confirmation bias: a story about Jews and a speaking crucifix told by a preacher pitted the highest forms of authority against the ultimate other, and reinforced the listeners' assumptions about the great powers of images. Since a crucifix had been the object of the desecration, religious images took centre stage, as we shall see.

Apart from its possible role as an iconographical source for the series, discussed below, this sermon also contains a number of broader reflections on religious images

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[66] Of the presumably many sermons dealing with the case after the *auto-da-fé*, two were printed in 1633. These two and that by Niseno were published by the same printer, Francisco Martínez, and the seventeenth-century binding of the volume kept at the Biblioteca Nacional suggests that they may have been put together shortly after each was printed. The titles of the sermons in the order in which they are bound are as follows: Fray Hortensio Félix Paravicino, *Jesucristo desagraviado* [...] (Madrid: Francisco Martínez, 1633); Fray Francisco de Soria, *Sermon* [...] *á los desagravios de Christo ofendido en su Imagen* (Madrid: Francisco Martínez, 1633); Fray Diego Niseno, *La sed mas ilustremente penosa, la alebosia mas sacrilegamente atroz, en predicables Asuntos dilataba, i con religiosos afectos ofrecia a Doña Jusepa de Castro i Espinosa, el padre Frai Diego Niseno, abad del monasterio del gran Basilio de Madrid* (Madrid: Francisco Martínez, 1631). The fourth and last sermon in the volume is on a different subject and by a different printer: *Sermon* [...] *á las honras del Ilustrissimo senor don Fr. Juan Lopez, obispo de Monopoli* ... [por] *Fray Francisco de Peralta* (Madrid: [n. pub.], 1633).

[67] Niseno, fol. 5^v.

worth examining. As a preface to his interpretation of the events in Madrid, Niseno embarks on a discussion of the economy of religious images. Typically, he supports his argument with a passage from 2 Kings 18 which he then relates to Christ, but with a new and surprising twist: his Christological readings relate to images rather than to the scriptural figure of Jesus:

> Consolose Absalon faltandole hijos con levantar una estatua, y poniendola su nombre, le parecio le eterniçaba a pesar de los tiempos, de los años, de las edades, y siglos. Demanera, que en sentido de la Escritura la estatua haze vezes de hijo, y suple su falta. Segun esto, bastantemente ha cumplido co[n] lo que ha hecho el Amor del Hijo para ser amor conpetidor con el Eterno Padre; porque si el Padre dio por amor al ho[m]bre un Hijo que tenia para que le maltratassen, açotassen, y quitassen la vida; el Hijo no teniendole, dio su Estatua, entregó su Imagen en manos de unos ciegos Iudios, para que se la arrastrassen, açotassen, y arrojassen en el fuego; y assi los açotes que dieron a la Imagen, suplieron por los que pudieran dar al Hijo.[68]

Just as the Incarnation, in Catholic theology, was the design of the love of God the Father, who sacrificed his Son (his *imago*) for mankind in the Passion, Jesus's love provided his images (his *simulacra*), which would be defiled in the same way as he was tortured. The preacher could have dwelt on the sufferings of the crucifix as he would have done when dealing with the Passion itself, but instead preferred to communicate the enormous gravity of the offence from a more rational, christological point of view. Thus, he presents the desecration almost as a landmark in the history of the relationship between God and man, rather than as an incidental, if serious, offence. The rationale follows the theory that interpreted religious images as 'God made flesh made paint' (see pp. 10 and ff., in relation to the concept of *imago*), and there is also an echo of St Basil's argument *a sensu contrario*: the defiling of a crucifix offends God, just as the honour paid to an image translates as honour paid to God.

[68] Niseno, fols 7^{v} and 8^{r}.

The part of the sermon designed to stir the emotions is brief, but tellingly placed near the end. Niseno contrasts the miraculous and merciful response of the Christ offended in his image to the appalling treatment it and he received – instead of a thunderbolt sent from heaven, the crucifix shed blood because of his love. He concludes with a touch of rhetorical genius:

> Y bien se vé que todo vá de misericordia, pues con la sangre que vierte, junta las vozes que dá. O crueldad nunca imaginada! ô dureza nunca jamas vista! ô fiereza nunca encarecida! ô mas fieros que vosotros mismos! Que tengais un Christo delante de los ojos, que le veais verter sangre, que le oigais articular razones, y que ni la sangre os ablande, ni la vista os mueva, ni las palabras os conviertan: mas crueles sois que las fieras.[69]

The series of exclamations, a commonplace if effective mechanism for stirring the emotions, brilliantly leads to the apostrophe 'ô mas fieros que vosotros mismos', a purposefully obscure phrase that needs some unpacking. It can be understood as directed to the offending iconoclasts (who, of course, were not present when this sermon was delivered), in which case 'vosotros mismos' would allude to the torture of Christ by Jews as related in the Gospels. However, the apostrophe also works, and is more profound and moving, if understood as addressed to the congregation. Thus, 'fieros' would be predicated of all present; Christ died for and was tortured by mankind, not the Jews only. Niseno asked his congregation, as St Bonaventure did in one of his sermons (see p. 65, above), to adopt a diachronic perspective and remember that through one's sins one inflicts wounds on Christ's body.

The next sentence, 'Que tengais un Christo delante de los ojos', continues in a similarly ambiguous vein. Here the preacher has his listeners take the place of the torturers: like the Jews of the Calle de las Infantas, the congregation would see a crucified Christ in front of their eyes (in religious images), see him bleed (physically in the images,

[69] Niseno, fols 8^{v} and 9^{r}.

sacramentally in the Eucharist), and hear him speak to them (through sermons). It would then dawn on the listeners that the invective was double-edged, because as sinners they too were guilty of a type of cruelty like that of the culprits, which moments before they were picturing in all its awfulness. What began as an tirade against 'the other' for a horrible crime, is turned, with all its emotional charge, towards the listener. (It should also be remembered that many in the congregation would be of *converso* origin, perhaps in that neighbourhood more than in other parts of Madrid.[70]) The *auto-da-fé* meted out the retributive justice of that time, according to which the sacrilegious Portuguese Jews needed to be punished; on the other hand, the 'mass hysteria' and the wave of celebrations *en desagravio* came as a general compensation for a general offence. On a spiritual as distinct from legal level, the blame therefore attached to everyone or perhaps, more specifically, to the people of Madrid.

Less nuanced interpretations were, of course, possible, as demonstrated by two poems by Francisco López de Zárate (1580–1658), whom Niseno knew, which focus on the crime and its perpetrators only.[71] Such interpretations make all the more noticeable the striking universality of Niseno's approach, which percolated down to one of the early *relaciones* on the *auto-da-fé*. It is an anonymous *romance* printed on two sheets of paper, titled *Aqui se contiene lo que sucedio en la villa de Madrid en casa de unos Hebreos, con una figura de Christo que açotaron. Como fueron descubiertos, y el castigo que les*

[70] The witness who first testified against the family in 1630 had to be escorted out of the neighbourhood, and was later killed; Pulido, pp. 124–25.

[71] Francisco López de Zárate, *Obras varias* (en Alcalá: por María Fernández, 1651), pp. 159 ('Al crucifixo que vertio sangre, y hablo azotándole unos iudios con un rosal seco, hablando con los reos') and 167–69 ('Al Christo que vertio sangre y hablo azotándole judíos con un rosal seco'). Both Niseno and López de Zárate contributed poems to Carducho's *Diálogos de la Pintura* (1633); see Pablo Pérez d'Ors, Tyler Fisher, and Kathleen Mountjoy, 'Francisco López de Zárate's "Canción real" in Vicencio Carducho's *Diálogos de la pintura*: An Introduction and English Translation', *Hispanic Research Journal*, 8.3 (2007), 233–40; Portús, *Pintura y pensamiento*, p. 94; González García, 'Carducho and Sacred Oratory', p. 161.

dieron (Barcelona: Estevan Libreros, 1632).[72] Instead of striking a celebratory note after describing the burning of the *relajados*, the anonymous author turns to his reader:

> No ay culpa oculta al castigo,
> Ni ofensa sin correccion.
> Que aunque parece que [Cristo] calla,
> Es por nuestra conversion,
> Y porque de su bondad
> Saquemos fruto mayor.
> Que puesta a tantas ofensas
> Como cometiendo estoy,
> No me deshaze con rayos,
> No me mata con rigor.
> Es, porque emplee la vida
> De que me miro deudor
> A su omnipotencia, en obras
> Agradables a su amor,
> Que con sola una palabra
> Vestida de contricion,
> A mas culpas que ay arenas
> Pondre un ultimo borron.
> Que como le coste tanto
> Como muestra su passion,
> Siempre dize que no quiere
> La muerte del pecador.[73]

This poem about the *auto-da-fé*, printed a year after Niseno's sermon, bears testimony to the lasting impression made by the preacher. The crime and punishment of the *conversos* provides everyone with an opportunity to reflect on the Catholic themes of guilt, repentance and personal salvation, rather than being presented as an appalling incident that is not connected to the Christian listener. It was this which prepared the way for further responses, such as the foundation of the convent of La Paciencia and, more specifically, the commissioning of the series of paintings decorating the chapel of the Crucifix, which explore visually the idea of shared guilt and encourage viewers to draw a connection between the Passion, the desecration of 1630, and their own sins, as will be shown below. The paintings are the artworks most closely linked to the case, but by no

[72] Simón, pp. 408–10.
[73] Simón, p. 410.

means the most famous: *The Expoliation* by Francisco Rizi, one of the most ambitious altar paintings produced in Madrid, measuring 527 by 352 cm, was commissioned to decorate the main church of the convent of La Paciencia, and Rodríguez has convincingly suggested that the *Cristo de San Plácido* by Velázquez (Fig. 15), now at the Prado, was commissioned in the wake of the scandal by Jerónimo de Villanueva (1594–1653), one of Olivares's closest collaborators who, having been accused of allying with Portuguese *converso* bankers, felt the need to make a visible protestation of outrage and piety.[74]

Diego Niseno's sermon of 1631 provided a point of reference again when, some twenty years after the *auto-da-fé* took place, a series of paintings was commissioned for the chapel of the Cristo de la Paciencia to commemorate the events. The series had long since been dispersed, but I have been able to locate the paintings themselves and reconstruct their arrangement within the chapel based on written accounts. We know that when it opened in 1651 the chapel was decorated with a narrative series representing different moments of the story, and there was also a large black jasper cartouche with text in golden letters explaining the content of the paintings.[75] Thus, the chapel's decoration was envisoned from the beginning as a conflation of images and words, reinforcing each other's rhetorical powers. According to Anguiano (1709) and Álvarez y Baena (1786), the cartouche was large and hung on the wall to the left of the door that connected the chapel with the main church, on the Epistle (i.e. South) side towards the West end.[76]

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[74] On *The Expoliation* (Prado, P002915), see Pérez, *Carreño, Rizi, Herrera*, pp. 246–47; on Velázquez's *Christ on the Cross*, see Rodríguez, 'El *Cristo Crucificado*'; see also *Velázquez's Fables: Mythology and Sacred History in the Golden Age*, ed. by Javier Portús, exh. cat. "Fábulas de Velázquez: Mitología e Historia Sagrada en el Siglo de Oro", Madrid, Museo del Prado 20 November 2007 to 24 February 2008 (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 2007), #24.

[75] Pulido, p. 327.

[76] I here use terms such as 'West end' conventionally, regardless of the actual orientation of the Capilla del Cristo. See Anguiano, p. 301; Álvarez, *Compendio*, pp. 162–63: '… en la pared de mano izquierda hay una

Anguiano reproduced its text: it consisted of a description of five paintings arranged in narrative sequence, beginning with the preparations and continuing with the actual desecration, the intervening miracle, the destruction of the image, and finally the *auto-da-fé* in which the culprits were punished – the same episodes which Niseno described in his sermon.[77] In a sermon delivered in the chapel of the Crucifix in 1659 and published that same year, Martín Caballero de Isla gives an account of the five paintings in the same order; an unusual annotation in the margin informs the reader that the preacher was referring to the paintings *in situ* around him (see p. 97, above).[78] The coincidence of this account and the text of the cartouche suggests that the paintings were arranged in sequence around the chapel walls, starting nearer the pulpit on the Gospel side and ending on the opposite wall. This arrangement must have been designed to imitate that of the *via crucis*, establishing a visually expressed conceptual parallel which would be further elaborated by preachers, as we shall see.

Despite the cartouche mentioning five, Anguiano noted that there were four paintings in the chapel. He explained this discrepancy by noting that one of the canvases contained two scenes, making five 'pasos' in total, an arrangement which was necessary 'para guardar la symetria de los espacios de las paredes'. However, later the same author states that a fifth canvas, representing the *auto-da-fé*, had not been placed in the chapel owing to space constraints.[79] This suggests that when Anguiano saw the paintings, the

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targeta grande de jaspe negro, y en ella de letras doradas una inscripcion en que se dice la fundacion del Convento, y se explican los cinco cuadros que hay en el resto de la Capilla, que representan los pasos de la Historia referida'. The narration of the events as told by Álvarez illustrates how more and more fictional details and miracles were added to the original version as time passed.

[77] Anguiano, p. 302.

[78] Caballero, fol. 6^{v}.

[79] Anguiano, pp. 300 and 302. Pulido (p. 329) follows Anguiano, whereas Scholz-Hänsel (p. 689) maintains that the fifth painting was never installed.

last one in the series had been removed from its original location. Palomino's *Parnaso español* (1724) corroborates this and provides further information about the hanging scheme: the biographer says that Félix Castelo painted the two scenes of the desecration of the Crucifix hanging on the Gospel side; Andrés de Vargas painted the canvas representing the Crucifix being put on a brazier, which hung 'next to the door at the foot of the chapel, on the Epistle side'; and Francisco Rizi painted one depicting the Crucifix being scourged, which hung 'on the Epistle side'.[80] Palomino does not mention a fifth painting of the *auto-da-fé*. But rather confusingly, in 1786 Álvarez y Baena states that the series consisted of five paintings plus the cartouche, so the missing painting had by then been restored to its original location.

Palomino's account of the series is consistent with the paintings that have survived, although his attributions have been disproved.[81] The Capuchin convent of La Paciencia was dissolved in 1836 as a result of the Mendizábal Dissolution Act, and soon afterwards was pulled down to create what is now the Plaza de Pedro Zerolo.[82] In 1837 the paintings and sculptures were deposited, together with other works of art salvaged from convents in Madrid, Toledo, Ávila and Segovia in the Museo de la Trinidad, which was especially founded for this purpose. An inventory of its paintings made in 1854 lists four canvases that in all likelihood are those from the convent of La Paciencia:

> *607. Jesucristo arrastrado, y escarnecido por unos hereges en primer termino se ve una muger arrodillada en actitud de azotarle de la boca del Cristo sale un letrero figuras mitad del nat^{l} y cuerpo ent^{o}. Autor firma dudosa. R^{do} Alto 1,68 ancho 2,94 p^{r} la luz del marco. F^{do} R^{do} y con moldura Dorada lisa …*

[80] Palomino, *Parnaso español*, #90 (p. 126), #141 (pp. 223–24), and #168 (p. 265).
[81] See Pérez, *Carreño, Rizi, Herrera*, #129, pp. 292–93.
[82] José L. Barrio Moya, 'Cristóbal de Aguilera y el desaparecido convento de los capuchinos de la Paciencia de Cristo de Madrid', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, 18 (1981), 187–91 (p. 191), and Scholz-Hänsel, pp. 688–90.

640. Jesucristo sobre el fuego de un brasero á lo lejos se le ve clavado en una cruz á la Izq^{da} del espectador se ve una muger con toca y trage encarnado con una bela en la mano Izq^{da} fig^{a} de medio nat^{l} y cuerpo entero. F^{do} Andres de Vargas. Rectif^{do} Alto 1,68 ancho 2,93 p^{r} la luz del marco. F^{do} R^{do} con moldura lisa pintada, dorada …

907. Una familia de hereges, maltratando un Crusifijo y poniendole al fuego de una chimenea varias figuras de hombre y muger con manojos de zarzas para azotarle figs menor q^{e} el natural y cuerpo ent^{o}. Firmado Camilo. Rectif^{do} Alto 2,07 ancho 2,30 p^{r} la luz del marco. F^{do} R^{do} con moldura pintada y con filetes dorados …

916. Tabla. Una familia de hereges, azotando un crusifijo he hiriendole con armas, á la D^{ra} del espectador se ve una muger sentada; atando unas zarzas. Figuras menos q^{e} el nat^{l} y cuerpo ent^{o}. Autor Camilo. Rectif^{o} Alto 2,07 ancho 2,30 p^{r} la luz del marco. F^{do} R^{do} Con moldura lisa pintada y con filetes dorados …

It is evident that number 916 is not a panel but a canvas; the entry states that it had been relined (*reentelado*, abbreviated as ‘R^{do}’). The canvas representing the *auto-da-fé* (which was probably kept in the convent but not in the church or the chapel) is missing, suggesting that it had been removed from the series by 1854, probably either during the French occupation, or after the dissolution of the convent in 1836. The other four were transferred to the Prado and some were deposited in different Spanish public collections. Their most recent titles and attributions, dimensions, 1854 inventory numbers, locations, and Prado inventory numbers are as follows:[83]

Fig. 16	*Martirio del brasero del Cristo de la Paciencia*	Andrés de Vargas	171 x 296 cm	607	Destroyed in a fire in 1976. Formerly in the Town Hall of Porriño.	Prado 2925
Fig. 17	*Judíos maltratando un Crucifijo*	Francisco Fernández	168 x 294 cm	640	Prado; in the Town Hall of Setades, between 1904 and 1966.	Prado 3873
Fig. 18	*Profanación de un Crucifijo*	Francisco Camilo	207 x 230 cm	916	Prado; in the Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País of Santiago de Compostela between 1886 and 1972	Prado 3775
Fig. 19	*Ultrajes al Crucifijo*	Francisco Camilo	210 x 230 cm	907	Museo Balaguer, Vilanova i la Geltrú, between 1883 and 1981 and since 1986.	Prado 5107
	Auto de fe	Francisco Rizi	210 x 230 cm (?)		Destroyed, or whereabouts unknown. Removed by 1854.	

[83] Inventory entries and details on the paintings taken from *Museo del Prado: Inventario General de Pinturas. II: El Museo de la Trinidad* (Madrid: Museo del Prado; Espasa-Calpe, 1991), #640, #607, #916, and #909.

Comparing the information provided by Caballero de Isla (1659), Anguiano (1709) and Palomino (1724), it is possible to reconstruct both the original disposition of the paintings in the chapel and the later rehanging as seen by Anguiano in the early eighteenth century. The reconstruction is made easier by the fact that the extant paintings are in two formats, the first oblong and horizontal, roughly 3:5 and 170 x 295 cm (Vargas and Fernández), and the second almost square, 210 x 230 cm (the two canvases by Camilo). The precise location of the now destroyed canvas by Vargas, 'next to the door at the foot of the chapel, on the Epistle side' is known through Palomino. It is likely that the other painting in the same format, by Fernández, was symmetrically placed on the other side of the door; Palomino seems to confirm this when he says that this painting, which he attributes to Castelo, hung on the Gospel side of the chapel. On the opposite wall must have hung the *Scourging of the Crucifix* by Camilo (which Palomino attributes to Rizi), of the same format as the canvas by Fernández opposite. On the same wall hung the large cartouche discussed by Anguiano and Álvarez y Baena. The latter used the expression 'en la pared de mano izquierda',[84] which must mean that the cartouche hung to the left of the door as one entered the chapel coming from the church – otherwise the writer would have described the position relative to the axis of the church (Gospel side and Epistle side) rather than in terms of left and right. All the paintings except that by Camilo hang in narrative sequence arranged anti-clockwise, as described in the cartouche and the sermon by Caballero de Isla. These two earlier documents also mention a canvas depicting the *auto-da-fé*, which is missing in the later sources and does not appear in the inventory of the Museo de la Trinidad. It is likely that the painting of the *auto-da-fé* hung originally

[84] Álvarez, *Compendio*, p. 162.

near the altar on the Epistle side, being the logical conclusion of the series, and the canvas by Camilo that eventually replaced it would have taken its place in the sequence, that is, in the middle of the wall on the Gospel side, roughly opposite the cartouche. This is how the chapel must have appeared from at least the early eighteenth century onwards. The small size of the chapel, together with the wording of the succinct description in Álvarez y Baena's *Compendio histórico* (1786), suggests that the paintings hung in frames directly on the walls instead of being displayed on *retablos*. This arrangement, unusual in Madrid, was often seen in Andalusian churches, and would have been regarded as suitable to the ideal of poverty upheld by the Capuchin order.[85]

The few studies on the series to date maintain that only four pictures hang in the chapel: Pérez Sánchez overlooks the painting by Rizi, and Scholz-Hänsel claims that Camilo contributed one canvas instead of two and that the *auto-da-fé* in the initial plan for the series was actually never painted.[86] The earliest discussion of the paintings, by Anguiano, throws some light on the problem: he does not mention the canvas by Rizi, which suggests that it may have been brought there from a different location at some point after 1709, and he reports that four canvases hang in the chapel representing five *pasos* – the painting by Vargas (Fig. 16) shows two scenes, the crucifix on the brazier in the foreground, and its hacking and burning, in the background.[87] This may account for Anguiano's earlier error when he claimed the series consisted of five paintings.[88]

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[85] On the rarity of paintings hung in frames in Madrid churches, see Antonio Bonet Correa, *Iglesias madrileñas del siglo XVII* (Madrid: CSIC; Instituto Diego Velázquez, 1961), p. 23.
[86] See Pérez, *Carreño, Rizi, Herrera*, p. 292, and Scholz-Hänsel, p. 689.
[87] Anguiano, p. 300.
[88] 'La verdad de todo lo sucedido es como aqui va referida. Esto mismo publican los cinco quadros, que hay dentro de la santa Capilla del Convento'; Anguiano, p. 175.

In his study of the series, Scholz-Hänsel found two problems which he could not explain satisfactorily. First, he commented on the unusual fact that artists specialised in religious painting had to tackle genre paintings ('pinturas de género') for this series; second, that they were required to depict an unedifying scene, a profanation.[89] The label 'genre painting' seems inadequate to describe the paintings at La Paciencia. The distinction between 'genre' and related areas is blurred, for example, in allegorising scenes or *naturaleza muerta a lo divino*. In any case, it is clear from its location, use and function that we should regard the series at La Paciencia as religious painting; it belongs to the same category as a *via crucis* rather than a *bodegón*, which clarifies the second point raised by Scholz-Hänsel, in respect of the unedifying nature of the scene represented. Like the convent itself, the series celebrated Jesus's forbearance (*paciencia*). The purpose of the series was to stir the emotions of the viewers, not merely to illustrate what had happened. This must have been heightened by the change in the arrangement of the paintings inside the chapel, when the logic of the series was broken. The second scheme would have struck the viewer through the accumulation of disturbing images, rather than maintaining a narrative sequence.

The paintings include elements of everyday life only inasmuch as they were necessary for the images to be effective and moving. For example, the brazier in Fig. 16 and the domestic interior of Fig. 19 were meant to convey a sense of immediacy, to stress the fact that the desecration had taken place in Madrid, in 1630. This served a twofold purpose: it made the paintings more believable, and the images and the story more personally relevant for the viewer, processing the case just as the sermon by Niseno had

[89] Scholz-Hänsel, p. 689.

done. This is an example of the way in which verisimilitude functions as a rhetorical mechanism, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Pulido concludes his discussion by saying that the paintings do not show real life characters, but 'imágenes repudiables' representing 'la supuesta naturaleza infame de la herejía y del judaísmo'.[90] This claim is somehow at odds with the unexceptional mood of the paintings. Scholz-Hänsel rightly observed that the figures in the paintings are not caricature Jews, and that men and women are – unusually – represented as equally involved in the action.[91] The canvas by Camilo at Vilanova i la Geltrú, undoubtedly the best of the series, shows a carefully depicted domestic interior; the painter's grasp of space and perspective suggests that he had made himself familiar with the work of Velázquez and his circle.[92] This generic interior could be anyone's house, and the torturers are equally nondescript Spanish men and women of the time, which was surely intended to allow viewers of either sex to identify themselves with the torturers – precisely the idea behind the emotive apostrophe in Niseno's 1631 sermon. The removal of the canvas depicting the *auto-da-fé* also contributed further to lessening the difference between the offenders and the viewers; indeed, we could interpret the re-hanging as a continuation of the strategy initiated in Niseno's sermon.

VELÁZQUEZ ON PRAYER

In the previous three study cases I have discussed the part played by sermons in the development and diffusion of new iconographical types, and in the painting of a

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[90] Pulido, p. 330.
[91] Scholz-Hänsel, p. 689. On the depiction of Jews with bestial or caricaturesque features, see Jeremy Cohen, *Christ Killers: The Jews and the Passion from the Bible to the Big Screen* (New York: OUP, 2007).
[92] Pérez, *Pintura barroca*, p. 302.

decorative programme for a specific chapel. In all three instances it has been shown that the contents of certain sermons and the manner of their reception influenced the commissioning and making of paintings. In this last case I shall use theories on preaching and directed visual meditation (discussed in chapter 2) to put forward a new interpretation of a well-known painting, the National Gallery's *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* by Velázquez, as a visual reflection on these theories. First, I shall look into the iconography of the painting, in order to differentiate it from other similar pictures and to facilitate discussion of its possible sources. Second, I shall look into the theories concerning the visual and written sources of the image to date; and third, I shall propose some original ideas which I hope will improve our understanding of the making, meaning, and function of the picture.

Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation (Fig. 20),[93] by Velázquez, is a puzzle to art historians on many accounts. Although all specialists date the painting to the late 1620s or early 1630s, they still disagree over the precise year.[94] Since its provenance before the nineteenth century has not been established, all attempts at dating it must rely on stylistic and technical evidence only. The picture is one of the artist's few religious paintings (oddly for a Spanish seventeenth-century painter, religious images represent only about 10% of Velázquez's oeuvre). As an object, it speaks to us of a form of devotion that is unfamiliar, emotional yet clearly staged, and its language fascinates the

[93] NG1148; see *Velázquez*, ed. by Dawson W. Carr, exh. cat. London, National Gallery, 18 October 2006 to 21 January 2007 (London: National Gallery, 2006), #16, pp. 148–50.

[94] It must have been painted around the dates of the artist's first trip to Italy, which took place between 1629 and 1631. Valdivieso and Serrera dated it to as late as 1633; Gaya Nuño, 1631 or 1632, whereas Brown and the more recent studies suggest 1628 or 1629; see Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 158; Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *La pintura española fuera de España* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1958), #2840; Jonathan Brown, *Velázquez: Painter and Courtier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 67–68 and n.

more for being at once both eloquent and ambiguous. All these features have attracted and puzzled viewers at least since 1883, when Sir John Savile Lumley, who had bought the painting in 1858, presented it to London's National Gallery. Many theories have been proposed for understanding the picture, including those connecting it with the death of a child –Velázquez's or someone else's – as well as the remark of a woman who took it for a heart-rending scene of a child visiting his captive father in prison.[95] In spite of these attempts, the meaning of the painting remains elusive.

As we have seen in previous chapters, religious art theories in the Spanish Golden Age owe a profound debt to late medieval trends of spirituality, which presented the sufferings of Jesus and their connection with human sins as the main lesson individuals should interiorise through imaginative and affective meditation. As St Teresa observed, the events surrounding the Flagellation, which the painting seems to depict, lent themselves particularly well to such purposes and therefore provided the *locus* for many meditation texts and sermons. Centuries of imaginative exegesis produced many, and often similar, envisionings of extra-canonical scenes on this topic, which Spanish painters and their clients were keen to explore.[96] Murillo, for instance, painted two versions of the flagellated Christ crawling on the ground to collect his vestments, one with Christ alone

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[95] The anecdote appears in Nigel Glendinning, 'Nineteenth-century British envoys in Spain and the taste for Spanish art in England', *The Burlington Magazine*, 103 (1989), 117–26 (p. 126); quoted by Gabriele Finaldi and Xavier Bray, 'Christ after the Flagellation contemplated by the Christian soul', in *The image of Christ*, exh. cat. 'Seeing Salvation', London, the National Gallery, 26 February to 7 May 2000 (London: National Gallery, 2000), pp. 136–37; Beruete and Martín González interpreted the picture as the painter's reaction to the death of his daughter Ignacia, who had been born in 1621 and died in childhood; see Aureliano de Beruete, *Velázquez* (Paris: Methuen, 1898), pp. 63–64, and Juan José Martín González, *Velázquez* (Bilbao: Moretón, 1968), p. 23; see also Karl Justi, *Velázquez y su siglo: revisión y apéndice* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1953) [Germ. orig., *Velazquez und sein Jahrhundert,* 2 vols (Bonn: Cohen, 1888)], I, p. 410.

[96] José C. López Plasencia, 'Literatura mística y piedad contrarreformista: La imagen de Cristo tras la flagelación en el arte español', *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía*, 16.32 (2007), 447–76; Teresa de Jesús, *Libro de la Vida*, in *Obras Completas: nueva revisión del texto original con notas críticas*, 3 vols, ed. by E. de la Madre de Dios and O. del Niño Jesús (Madrid: BAC, 1951–59), I (1951), 670–71 (Ch. 13, 22).

and the other witnessed by angels; Zurbarán painted the flagellated Christ crouching after picking up his clothes, and Cano made drawings and paintings of Christ still bound to the column, sitting on a block of stone, and stooping after picking up his clothes.[97] Velázquez's *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* stands out among these due to its greater complexity.

The possible links between the Velázquez and meditation texts, as well as similar earlier paintings, were comprehensively explored in an article of 1991 by A. Rodríguez.[98] The earliest image he mentions is a *Flagellation* by Juan Fernández de Navarrete 'el Mudo' (1526–1579), painted for the upper cloister of El Escorial (Fig. 21). In this picture, a child, at a distance from the torturers, looks at Christ and crosses his hands over his breast in a gesture signifying compassion. Rodríguez interprets this figure as a personification of the contemplative soul.[99] While this child exemplifies an attitude which the viewer is to imitate or sympathise with, he cannot be interpreted as an allegorical figure and is perhaps best understood as related to the idea of the Christian soul only in

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[97] The paintings are *Christ after the Flagellation* of the Kranner Art Museum, University of Illinois, and the *Christ after the Flagellation, consoled by angels* of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; see Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt, *Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682): Paintings from American Collections*, exh. cat. Kimbell Art Museum, 10 March to 16 June 2002, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 14 June to 6 October 2002 (New York: Abrahams, 2002), #22 and #12, pp. 160 and 134. Moffitt interpreted the two angels in the second Murillo as a soul and its guardian angel; however, it seems clear that both winged characters must be angels; see John F. Moffitt, 'The Meaning of "Christ after the Flagellation" in Siglo de Oro Sevillian Painting', *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch*, 53 (1992), 139–54 (p. 150); for the *Cristo recogiendo sus vestiduras después de la flagelación* by Zurbarán, formerly in the parish church of Jadraque (Guadalajara, Spain) and now in its museum, see *Zurbarán: IV Centenario*, ed. by Enrique Valdivieso, exh. cat. Seville, Museo de Bellas Artes, 8 October to 9 December 1998 (Seville: Junta de Andalucía, 1998), #89, p. 244; see also *Alonso Cano: Dibujos*, ed. by José M. Matilla, Zahira Véliz and Maira Herrero, exh. cat. Madrid, Museo del Prado, 2 April to 24 June 2001 (Madrid: Prado, 2001), #7, #9, #8 and #10; and Harold E. Wethey, *Alonso Cano: Painter, Sculptor, Architect* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), Figs 38 and 134.

[98] Alfonso Rodríguez Gutiérrez de Ceballos, 'Fuentes iconográficas y literarias del cuadro de Velázquez "Cristo y el alma cristiana"', *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía*, 4.8 (1991), 82–90.

[99] Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 83. See also José J. Yarza Luaces, 'Aspectos iconográficos de la pintura de Juan Fernández de Navarrete el Mudo y relaciones con la contrarreforma', *Boletín de la Sociedad de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* [Universidad de Valladolid], 36 (1970), 43–68 (pp. 53–55).

the same way as the torturers are to ideas of sin, cruelty, and so on. The similarity between this child and the soul in the Velázquez painting is that both express compassion by means of the conventional gesture of crossing the hands close to the chest (on which more later). The child would be of relevance to only one aspect of the Velázquez painting, the iconography of El Mudo's being in every other respect different. The connection drawn by Rodríguez does not seem close enough.[100]

The closest precedent to Velázquez's painting is found in a canvas that Philip III commissioned for the prestigious royal convent of La Encarnación in 1616, shortly after its maker, the Sevillian painter-priest Juan de Roelas (c. 1558–1625), arrived at the Court to serve as one of the King's chaplains. The painting shows a flagellated Christ on the floor and, in the top-right corner, an angel and a child. The child is more clearly an allegory of the soul, the character of the picture being less conditioned by the Gospel narrative than is the case in the *Flagellation* by Navarrete. As a further example of the taste for conflating images and words, the painting was shown with a placard (now lost) that contained the inscription '*Alma, duélete de mí, / que tú me pusiste así*' (a statement connected in many ways with the Franciscan tradition discussed in previous chapters).[101] The Duke of Medina-Sidonia commissioned Roelas to make a copy of this painting in 1624 for an altarpiece in a side chapel of the church of the Discalced Mercedarians in

[100] Rodríguez also mentions two sixteenth-century Flemish engravings of the Flagellation featuring a child, which present the same problems as the painting by Navarrete: the first, by Philip Galle, is based on a drawing by Maarten van Heemskerck; the second, by Cornellis Galle, on a drawing made about 1640 by Abraham van Diepenbeck; 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 86.
[101] Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 84; Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 158, #83, Fig. 97; Elías Tormo, 'Visitando lo no visitable: Apéndice a la visita a la clausura de la Encarnación', *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones,* 25.2 (1917), 180–87; Enrique Valdivieso, *Juan de Roelas* (Seville: Diputación Provincial de Sevilla, 1978); María L. Sánchez Hernández, 'La colección de pinturas del Monasterio de la Encarnación', in *Real Monasterio de la Encarnación de Madrid*, ed. by Virginia Tovar Martín, Reales Sitios (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia: Patrimonio Nacional, 2005), pp. 57–78 (p. 76). The painting is mentioned as a precedent for Velázquez's in Gaya, #2840.

Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz), now in the collection of the current duke (Fig. 22). Like the original, this painting incorporates an allusive inscription in a scrollwork cartouche above the figures, reading '*Ave, Rex noster, tu solus nostros es miseratus errores*' (Hail, our King; only you had pity on our mistakes).[102] The inscriptions accompanying both paintings make their purpose clear: they are paintings intended for meditation on the Flagellation.

It is not certain whether Velázquez might have known the painting by Roelas in Madrid after his arrival at Court: as La Encarnación housed a cloistered community, most dependencies of the monastery were inaccessible to visitors, certainly to men, although the painting may then have been kept in the church or in another space outside the *clausura*. But Velázquez could easily have seen the painting at Sanlúcar, or Roelas, who was an acquaintance, may have shown him drawings. The iconography of these two paintings seems to be almost identical to that of the National Gallery *Christ after the Flagellation, contemplated by the Christian soul*, but Velázquez introduces a meaningful variation. In the painting by Roelas, the soul and the angel are accessories and the interaction between this group and the Christ is minimal, whereas Velázquez makes the relationship between Christ, the angel, and the soul-child the main focus of attention. This naturally affects the meaning of the painting as well as its function, as we shall see.

Leaving aside possible visual precedents and turning to written sources, the scene depicted by Velázquez has been said to derive from the revelations of St Bridget of Sweden (c. 1303–1373), a visionary saint whose widely distributed *Revelations* were

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[102] Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 84; Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 142–43, #24, Fig. 126; Valdivieso, *Juan de Roelas*, p. 96, and Enrique Valdivieso, 'Pinturas de Juan de Roelas para el convento de la Merced de Sanlúcar de Barrameda, *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arquitectura* [Universidad de Valladolid], 44 (1978), 293–306 (p. 298).

often quoted as authoritative sources in iconographical matters.[103] St Bridget's writings contain accounts of two separate visions featuring the Flagellation. In the first, the Virgin tells Bridget how she looked on as Christ was so cruelly scourged that his ribs showed through. When the torture ended, someone cut the rope that tied Christ to the column and he put his clothes on, all covered in blood, leaving bloody imprints wherever he stepped.[104] In her other vision, Christ himself recounts to Bridget how his torturers tied the ropes so tightly that his nerves distended, his veins burst, and his joints were dislocated; later, he describes his face, beard, mouth, tongue as grotesquely deformed with clotted blood, his gums numb with bruises.[105] This brief account of the two visions gives an idea of their gruesome *enargeia*, which is perhaps the most striking characteristic of St Bridget's meditations on the Passion, and which are far removed from the restraint of Velázquez's painting and his sparing use of blood (seen also in his *Crucifixion*).

These texts and the National Gallery painting seem to be related only in that Bridget describes actions happening after the Flagellation, within the same temporal framework as that of the picture. The painting represents a moment after the torture has finished, as the presence of the instruments on the floor next to Christ and his blood suggest. The blood in Velázquez, though visible on Christ's wrists, thighs, shoulder, side, and loincloth, has been kept to a minimum; the approach to the body highlights its beauty, not its physical deterioration. A rope still ties Christ's wrists to the column,

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[103] Gaya, #2840; the first to suggest this connection was Franz Scheiner, 'Mathias Grünewald und die Mystik', *Révue de l'Art Chrétien*, 48 (1905), 92–94 and 234–35; he was followed by Kurt Gersternberg, *Diego Velázquez* (Munich; Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1957), pp. 84–86.
[104] Bridget of Sweden, *Revelaciones lib. I*, ed. by C. G. Undhagen (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1977), pp. 266–67.
[105] Bridget of Sweden, *Revelaciones extravagantes*, ed. by L. Hollman (Uppsala: Almquist & Wiksell, 1956), p. 171 (Ch. 51. 11–12).

whereas St Bridget's text has him untied. It is apparent that there is no direct relation between Velázquez and these texts, either in subject-matter or treatment. The figure of the child was sometimes thought to be St Bridget, perhaps just because she was one of the most famous female visionary saints, rather than because of any connection between the painting and the *Revelaciones*.[106]

Many other meditation texts available in the seventeenth century expanded on what happened immediately after the Flagellation; among these, Émile Mâle singled out a passage in the writings of Álvarez de Paz as especially related to the Velázquez painting.[107] A Jesuit since 1578, Diego Álvarez de Paz (1560–1620) was a lecturer on philosophy and a theologian who occupied posts as director in the Society's American provinces between 1584 and his death. His works on prayer were extremely successful; Palau mentions twenty editions dating from between 1611 and 1650.[108] As was customary, the author opens his meditation on the Flagellation with the *topos* of the contrast between Christ's innocence and exposed nakedness and the sinful gaze of his torturers. After a detailed and highly visual account of the different types of instruments used and the number of blows, there follows the scene which Mâle considered to be the iconographical source for Velázquez. Exhausted by the pain and the loss of blood, Jesus falls down when he is untied from the column.

> You were so broken and exhausted […] that you could hardly stand on your feet. The just souls contemplate you crawling on the floor, sweeping the blood with your own body, collecting your vestments scattered here and there. There were many present, many looking at you, many despising you, many not stirred by any mercy towards you, none to help you.[109]

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[106] See Scheiner, pp. 92–94 and 234–35, and Gesternberg, pp. 84–86.
[107] Mâle, p. 248.
[108] See *DHEE*, I, p. 75, s.v. 'Álvarez de Paz'; Palau, I, s.v. 'Álvarez de Paz'.
[109] 'Nam ita eras fractus ac exhaustus […], ut pedibus insistere minimè posses. Contemplantur te animae iustae in pavimento reptantem, sanguinem corpore ipso verrentem, et sparsas vestes hincinde colligentem. Multi aderant qui te respicerent, qui te despicerent, qui nulla erga te misericordia moverentur, nemo tamen

According to Rodríguez, this text comes closest to the painter's interpretation of the scene.[110] However, the points of discrepancy between them are considerable. Velázquez's Christ is still tied to the column, not threatened by any hostile presence nor crawling or collecting anything from the floor, which is not drenched with blood.[111] The only area of iconographic overlap between the painting and the imagery of the meditation above is the mention of the souls (although in the text there are several instead of just one). Perhaps this should be understood as an invitation for the reader to picture the scene in his or her mind, rather than implying the presence of compassionate souls, as is made clear later in the text. Such mentions of the soul are often found in the context of meditation; for example, the *Introduction à la vie dévote* (1619) by St Francis de Sales is addressed to the Christian soul, whom he calls 'Philotea'. Moffitt signalled this as one of the possible sources for the painting, or rather as a work attuned to and deriving from the same type of literature.[112]

In a similar vein, Valdivieso, who believed the paintings by Roelas mentioned above to be clear precedents to the Velázquez, supported the theory that these were inspired by a passage in St Bonaventure's *Lignum Vitae*. The apostrophes ('you, lost man', 'you, my wicked and impious soul') and exhortations to see ('behold') in the text serve a rhetorical purpose, to engage the reader and stir his emotions, rather than

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qui te iuvaret'; Diego Álvarez de Paz, 'Meditatio XIV, de Flagellatione Christi', in *De inquisitione pacis, sive studio orationis libri quinque*, 5 vols (Lyon: apud Horatium Cardon, 1617), III, 717.

[110] Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 88.

[111] Mâle and others after him omitted the last sentence from the paragraph above, causing some confusion; see Moffitt, p. 144.

[112] Moffit, p. 147.

suggesting the presence of a spectator in the scene.[113] In this respect the *Lignum Vitae* may relate to the images, but not as an iconographical source.

One detail in the painting, in which one may see a direct allusion to the most widely-read book in the Franciscan tradition, seems not to have been pointed out so far: perhaps its most dramatic reference to the harshness of the torturers is the blood trickling down the shaft of the column. The meditation on the Flagellation in the Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, observes that 'the column to which He was bound shows the traces of His bleeding'.[114] This is indeed the largest bloodstain in the picture, and reveals in an indirect way the cruelty of the punishment by drawing the viewer's attention to what has just happened. As Pacheco knew, a reputed part of this column was kept in the Vatican; thus, this bloodstain links the painting both to a well-known text and to an existing relic.[115]

As Rodríguez noted, it is virtually impossible to consider all the ascetic works and sermons available to Velázquez that dealt with the moments after the Flagellation.[116] He gives some examples from the early seventeenth-century meditations on the Flagellation, none of which matches the iconography of the painting. Moffitt reaches similar conclusions: the many details in the painting may derive from several texts rather than just one, and the common trait of all these unidentified sources is their dependency on the

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[113] Saint Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey towards God. The Tree of Life. The Life of St Francis*, ed. and trans. by E. Cousins (London: SPCK, 1978), pp. 146–47; Rodríguez does not mention this hypothesis. See Valdivieso, *Juan de Roelas*, pp. 293–306, p. 298; also in Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 143 and 158.

[114] 'Columpna autem, ad quam ligatus fuerat, vestigia cruoris ostendit, sicut in historiis continetur'; *Meditaciones de Passione Christi*, Ch. 4, p. 107.

[115] *Arte*, p. 303. Pacheco knew of this relic through an epistle of St Jerome, rather than through the Pseudo-Bonaventure. Bassegoda thinks that Paleotti and Malonio's *Iesu Christi Crucifixi Stigmata* may have been Pacheco's intermediary source.

[116] Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 88.

Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes*.[117] The possibility, however unlikely, that a single text may be shown to be the iconographical source of the painting is not to be rejected; however, alternative approaches can prove to be more fruitful.

Most interpretations of the painting have shared a similar approach, insofar as they have attempted to elucidate the narrative context of the image rather than considering the picture as an autonomous work of art. I therefore propose a different approach, based on analysing the actions represented in the painting in order to pose a number of questions. These actions are three: the soul's observing and reacting to the sight; the golden ray originating from Christ's head and shining towards the soul's chest; and the angel's encouraging the soul to look. I will discuss each of these and their meanings in some detail.

The only religious book in Velázquez's library was a visual meditation work in the Franciscan tradition, *De la Pasión de Nuestro Señor* by Lucas de Soria.[118] Such texts often focus on the contrast between Christ's beauty (physical and moral) and the brutality of his tormentors, made visible in the physical deterioration of his body. Velázquez shows none of the gruesome signs of the Flagellation which St Bridget, Álvarez de Paz, and other writers dwelt on: the only visible indicators of the torturers' cruelty are the broken bits of birch on the floor, as well as a few traces of blood on Christ's wrist and thigh, on the loincloth, and trickling down the column. Rather, it is clear that the painter's

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[117] Moffitt, p. 145.

[118] Lucas de Soria, *De la Pasión de Nuestro Señor* (Seville: [n. pub.], 1614, repr. 1635). Francisco J. Sánchez Cantón, 'Los libros españoles que poseyó Diego Velázquez', in *Varia Velazqueña*, ed. by A. Gallego y Burín, 2 vols (Madrid: Dirección General de Bellas Artes, 1960), I, 640–48 (p. 642). See also Francisco J. Sánchez Cantón, 'La librería de Velázquez', in *Homenaje ofrecido a Menéndez Pidal: miscelánea de estudios lingüísticos, literarios, e históricos*, 3 vols (Madrid: Hernando, 1925), III, 379–406.

rendering of Christ's body emphasises its beauty, and not its deterioration; concessions to violence are few, and remarkably oblique.

In this regard, one of the first noticeable aspects of the painting is that Christ's back, the part of the anatomy which should bear the severest signs of the scourging, is hidden to the viewer, but is being contemplated by the soul. This technique of revealing by concealing can be traced back to the anecdote of the ancient Greek painter Timanthes, as recorded in Cicero's *De Oratore* and later in Pliny's *Natural History*. Following Cicero, who discussed its rhetorical implications, the anecdote is often recounted in treatises on preaching.[119] Velázquez owned editions of the *Natural History* both in Latin and in Italian translation, and he would have heard the anecdote discussed in Pacheco's circle.[120] Pacheco's version adapts the telling of the story in Ludovico Dolce's *Aretino*:

> […] Timantes, uno de los famosos pintores antiguos, pintó a Efigenia, hija de Agamenón, […] delante del altar donde iba a ser ofrecida en sacrificio a Diana, y habiendo el pintor expresado en los rostros de los circumstantes, diversamente, la imagen del dolor, incierto de poderla mostrar mayor en el semblante del afligido padre, hizo que él mesmo se cubriese con el canto de la vestidura.[121]

The heart-rending expression of Agamemnon's extreme psychological suffering challenged the painter's skill to the limit; therefore by omitting it he avoided disappointing. But the elision is not complete, since Agamemnon's grief is suggested by the very gesture that conceals his face. The fact that Cicero's teaching should have found its way into a painting is one more example of the many theoretical as well as practical

[119] Cicero, *De Oratore*, Ch. 74.

[120] The inventory of Velázquez's possessions after his death shows that he owned three volumes of Pliny, two in Italian ('ystoria natural de Plinio ytaliano') and one in Latin ('Plinio de ystoria natural en Latin'); see Francisco J. Sánchez Cantón, 'Inventario de los bienes que dejaron a su muerte don Diego de Silva Velázquez y su mujer Juana Pacheco', in *Varia Velazqueña*, ed. by Gallego y Burín, II, 391–400, #416, #522, and #552 (pp. 397, 398, and 399). The Latin version is a Basel edition of 1535, and the Italian one is Ludovico Domenichi's translation (1573).

[121] *Arte*, pp. 296 and 535; Ludovico Dolce, *Dialogo della Pittura, intitolato L'Aretino*, ed. by P. Barocchi, *Trattati d'Arte del Cinquecento*, 3 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1979), I, 143–206 (pp. 166–68). For the ultimate origin of the anecdote, see Pliny, pp. 314–15 (bk 35, Ch. 36).

ways in which ancient rhetoric influenced painting. Thus, in the National Gallery canvas, the wounds on Christ's back cannot be seen; instead, Velázquez presents the viewer with the soul's reaction. This is conveyed by the poise of the body, the facial expression, and especially by the clasped hands.

The clasping of the soul's hands is one of the many seemingly conventional gestures that in the early modern period were considered, alongside tears, to be more spontaneous and sincere than words. This was especially so in the context of prayer, across denominational divides; for example, Protestant John Bulwer's *Chirologia* (1644) has it that prayer and piety 'expressed in one of the most significant Dialects of the generall language of the Body, is more vocall and effectuall, then the explications of the Tongue, and more religiously true to the soule'. Bulwer would have classified the gesture of the soul's hands in Velázquez with the Latin name 'Ploro' (Fig. 23). A tradition going as far back as the Greek Fathers interprets the wringing the hands as a sign of grief and sorrow; in Bulwer's time this was given a physiological explanation, according to which sorrow provokes a wringing of the mind and, just as the 'contraction of the spirits of the Braine' results in tears, so the hands are wrung to express this moist motion.[122] Velázquez, who of course would not have known the *Chirologia*, proves in his painting that the tradition on which Bulwer drew was alive in Spain.

By presenting to the viewer the soul's affective reaction rather than showing what prompts it, Velázquez intimates that the atrocity of Christ's wounds defied description – or, in this case, depiction – like Agamemnon's expression of grief in the Timanthes

[122] John Bulwer, *Chirologia: or the Naturall Language of the Hand* (London: Theo. Harper, 1644), pp. 27–28. Bulwer took the last quotation from a medical essay by Francis Bacon. On conventional gestures and rhetoric, see also González García, *Imágenes sagradas y predicación visual*, pp. 172–83.

anecdote. This is in keeping with St Thomas Aquinas's assertion, often quoted in Spanish seventeenth-century treatises on prayer and preaching, that Christ's sufferings during the Passion surpassed those of all mankind together, present, past, and future.[123] Thus, the idea of pain beyond expression makes the rhetorical procedure of Timanthes particularly suitable and relevant in the context of Christ's Passion. Painters and preachers usually described the signs of the Flagellation more directly, whereas Velázquez's hiding of the marks encourages the viewer to complete the scene, to imagine what the soul sees in the painting. This summoning a mental image is the first step in meditation; in succeeding in engaging the viewer in this process, Velázquez effectively makes him or her take the place of the soul. All in all, Velázquez's decision to suggest the wounds instead of showing them is based on rhetorical rather than aesthetic grounds.

I pass to the second action in the painting, the ray descending from Christ's head onto the chest (or the heart, the seat of the will and the emotions) of the soul, which raises a series of questions about the way in which we should approach the picture. How is the figure of the soul meant to see the figure of Christ? Are the figures of Christ, the angel, and the soul meant to have the same consistency, to be perceived as being equally present in the same way?

Christian art presupposes that Christ, 'the Word made flesh', shared the traits of regular human existence. Souls and angels, by contrast, are incorporeal by definition and therefore invisible; the painting can only show their images according to iconographical traditions. The soul in the painting cannot see Christ as such: he can only see him 'with the eyes of the soul', through meditation rather than seeing. The beam connecting

[123] *Summa Theologica,* III. 46. 6.

Christ's head to the soul's heart may hint at a supernatural element in the process: the flagellated Christ is not only a passive object, but the active subject of a 'vision' granted by God's grace, and one which actively communicates with the soul. This goes beyond generic meditation (discursive prayer, achieved by the natural faculties), and becomes infused contemplation (non-discursive prayer, given by supernatural grace acting directly on the soul). Contemporary treatises on prayer often made this distinction, which was first clearly articulated by St John of the Cross.[124] Because of the way in which this ray seems to be a prolongation of the rope tying Christ to the column, it is also a metaphor, but expressed in visual terms rather than verbal: spiritual union binds the soul to Christ, just as the rope bound his body to the column.

Further aspects of the painting are related to contemplation. The figure of the child may be a reference to the attitude of the person who seeks spiritual union with God, consonant with the words of the Gospel: 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall no wise enter therein' (Luke 18: 16-17). To portray the soul as a child conveys the required virtues of meekness, humility, and innocence. Also, the soul does not kneel facing Christ, but facing the plane of the picture. The posture seems to suggest that the child was kneeling to meditate on the scourge on the floor, and only subsequently turned to the right to look at Christ, as if such

[124] The notion appears, for example, in Álvarez de Paz: 'meditatio' is 'disquisitio, qua ex uno pervio ad cognitione[m] alterius minus noti pervenimus' (p. 215), and 'contemplatio' is 'syncera Dei, et rerum divinarum inspectio, discursibus carens; Dei verò ardentissimum amorem, et ineffabilem mentis exultationem inducens' (p. 276). 'Acquired' contemplation is achieved by natural means, and 'infused' contemplation is a grace given by God; see also *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. by F. L. Cross, 3rd edn, rev. by E. A. Livingstone (Oxford: OUP, 2005), s.v. 'Contemplation'; on its development by St John of the Cross, see Colin P. Thompson, *The Poet and the Mystic: A Study of the* Cántico Espiritual *of S. Juan de la Cruz* (Oxford: OUP, 1977), pp. 11 and 15, and *St John of the Cross: Songs in the Night* (London: SPCK, 2002), pp. 138 and 148–49.

contemplation could only occur after a previous meditation. One of the common features of meditation literature of the period is to begin by focusing on a small and secondary object, from which one may proceed to the main subject, as for example, when Cabrera writes that the Virgin took the crown of thorns as ‘her book’ (see p. 124, above). This is also a feature of several poems in José de Valdivielso’s *Romancero Espiritual* (first published in 1612).[125]

Velázquez painted the figures of Christ, the soul, and the angel as physical presences occupying the same continuous, physical space, lit by the same light, coming from the top left, which throws the same sort of shadows onto the same floor. This apparent simplicity belies a greater complexity: the image would be easier to read if the painter had made the figures belong to different levels of reality. It was conventional in seventeenth-century painting to indicate such discontinuities within the picture in terms of space. Narrative breaks were expressed by means of devices such as the background and the foreground, or the window or ‘picture within the picture’ (as in *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary*). Metaphysical discontinuities were indicated in almost all cases by a *rompimiento de gloria*, a conventional outburst of clouds and supernatural light that separates the earthly from the heavenly realms.[126] Velázquez could have painted the figure of Christ on the other side of a *rompimiento*, as is usual in paintings of visions. Or he could have dealt with the soul and the angel in the same way, since they are

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[125] José de Valdivielso, *Romancero Espiritual*, ed. by J. M. Aguirre (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1984); see for example the ‘Romance de un alma a los pies de un crucifixo’, in which the soul looks at Christ’s wounds before addressing him (p. 25), the ‘Romance al clavo de los pies de Iesú Christo nuestro Señor’ (pp. 157–59), or the ‘Romance a la Soledad de nuestra Señora’ (p. 164), in which the Virgin starts to meditate on the Passion by looking at the cross while holding the nails and the crown of thorns in her hands.

[126] For the device of the open window or ‘painting inside the painting’, see Julián Gállego, *El cuadro dentro del cuadro* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1978); for a discussion of the *rompimiento de gloria* as signifying form, see Viktor I. Stoichita, *Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995), Ch. 2.1, and Pérez, *Pintura barroca*, pp. 49–50.

incorporeal and therefore belong to another reality; the painting could thus be interpreted as Christ's regard for the Soul even as he suffered his humiliation. But Velázquez deliberately broke the convention of *rompimiento*, creating an ambiguous image which obstinately and impossibly insists that all the figures have the same consistency and must be seen on the same level.

If the child and the angel are both incorporeal realities and Christ is the object of meditation, then none of the figures represents in an immediate way what it portrays. Velázquez experimented with the consistency of the image by making both parts of the painting read as less real. J. L. Koerner has dealt with such concerns in early modern German painting, and argues a similar case for a picture by Bartolomé Bermejo, *Christ Shows His Crucified Image to the Patriarchs* (c. 1480).[127] Within the picture, the images of the crucifix, Christ, and the Patriarchs cannot have the same consistency or exist on the same level; however, this is not indicated by any conventional means, which renders the whole ambiguous. The pictures by Roelas (Fig. 22) also contain some of this ambiguity, but some sort of break between the figures of Christ and the soul and the angel is suggested by compositional means as well as by the difference in scale. The ambiguity is further diminished by the inscriptions accompanying the pictures: in the painting at La Encarnación, Christ speaks to the Soul (i.e., to a generic viewer), whereas the version in Sanlúcar contains an invocation which the viewer is meant to say on looking at the painting. Roelas's paintings were meant to be used as visual aids for meditation. By contrast, Velázquez's painting capitalises on this type of ambiguity, probably to encourage the viewer to reflect on the nature of images, painted or imagined, in the

[127] Koerner, p. 207.

context of meditation. This leads us onto the third character in the painting, the angel, discussion of which should make Velázquez's purpose more clear.

Angels in general, and this one in particular, are mediators between God and human beings. From a visual point of view, the way in which the angel relates to the soul recalls the iconographic model of the guardian angel, the angel God assigns to watch over each human soul, one of the many early modern developments in the iconography of angels. Contemporary books, such as *Trattato del' angelo custode* (Rome, 1612), by the Jesuit Francesco Albertino de Catanzao, testify to the growing popularity of the devotion in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The iconography originated in France around a century earlier and developed alongside a corresponding devotion, which became associated with the Jesuits.[128] However, Velázquez's angel in *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* is not a straightforward guardian angel. The gesture of his right hand, pointing to Christ, seems to encourage the soul to look, to make contemplation possible. This activity, *ostensio*, is essentially of a rhetorical nature, and is not usually associated with the figure of the guardian angel, who is more commonly represented as the soul's supporter and defender (as in Velázquez's *The Temptation of St Thomas Aquinas*). When guardian angels are shown in the attitude of pointing, it is with the connotation of 'showing the right way to the Soul, rather than of encouraging or making contemplation possible. Nevertheless, there is a possible iconographic precedent for Velázquez's rhetorical angel.

An unusual *Virgin and Child with Guardian Angel* was painted by the Sevillian artist Antonio Mohedano (c. 1563–1626) for the church of St Sebastian in Antequera, and

[128] Mâle, pp. 282–88.

is now in the municipal museum of that town (Fig. 24).[129] Its date of creation, 1605-10, makes it one of the earliest Spanish depictions of the Guardian Angel. At the bottom right, a child gazes up, hands together in a prayerful attitude, at the child Jesus being shown to him by his guardian angel. Instead of gesticulating as in Velázquez's canvas, Mohedano's angel holds the child's body as if he were physically bringing him closer to the heavenly apparition. Its supernatural character is indicated by a conspicuous *rompimiento de gloria* that separates Mary and her son from the angel and the child/soul, while the figures of the angel, Jesus, and Mary are depicted in an idealised style that is at odds with the this-worldliness of the child's appearance. His individual face and carefully observed clothes, black jerkin, collar and cuffs in white lace, present him unequivocally as an early seventeenth-century nobleman, which, together with the *rompimiento*, allows for none of the ambiguity of Velázquez's *Christ and the Christian Soul*. However, the unusual feature of the angel's rhetorical character is similar in both paintings, since Mohedano's angel seems to encourage and enable contemplation. Mohedano was one of the most important painters in the artistic milieu of Seville in the early seventeenth century, when the young Velázquez received his training. He may have seen the *Virgin and Child with the Guardian Angel* in situ, or have heard about it in Pacheco's circle during his apprenticeship; in any case, this painting seems a logical reference in his thinking about angels and visions. But it is only one of several possible sources.

Diego de Valadés's *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579) contains an allegorical engraving with captions and text on the subject of 'the Christian orator' (Fig. 25). The author understands preaching as closely related to meditation, and, more specifically, to

[129] Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 185, #15, pl. 149.

contemplation. The text explains that the preacher sits at his desk with his cheek leaning on his palm, in the restful attitude necessary for inner contemplation – which, he observes, makes for better preachers. Valadés continues that the angelic figure is the preacher's guardian angel, the familiar 'tutor who is always present, like a shepherd to direct our lives'. But he also introduces another, less common characterisation: '[angels] make obscure mysteries clear, and reveal what is hidden' – in the context of the captioned engraving, a likely reference to the *arma Christi* and attributes of martyrdom at the bottom left (which, Valadés explains, should remind the preacher of the transience of this life and the permanence of the life to come), or to the crucifix or the mirror to the right, or God the Father in an outburst of glory at the top-right corner.[130] All of these are in one way or another connected to elements in the National Gallery's *Christ and the Christian Soul*. Many of the hundreds of copies of Valadés's *Rhetorica Christiana* were destined to reach Spain's overseas territories via Seville, where it is plausible that Velázquez knew of the book through Pacheco and his circle of intellectual friends just as Carducho knew it in Madrid.[131]

Two engravings of the *Guardian Angel* by Hyeronimus Wierix could also be related to the angel in the painting. One of them (Fig. 26) shows a child (the Christian soul) with his guardian angel; as the child walks towards the gaping jaws of hell, the angel points upwards encouraging the soul to look at the crowning of the Virgin in a celestial glory. In the second, the angel points to the monogram 'IHS' – again, coaching and enabling contemplation – and four roundels surrounding the scene provide details of

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[130] '… tamquam paedagogus quidam, et pastor ad vitam dirigendam […] docent viam Domini ignorantes, et à recta semita exorbitantes, abdita mysteria pandunt, nobisque abscondita revelant', Valadés, p. 10.
[131] Carducho calls him 'Valdés'; see Vicente Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura* (1633), ed. by F. Calvo Serraller (Madrid: Turner, 1979), fol. 120^{v}.

the angel's activity: 'docet et illuminat' (teaches and illuminates), 'ad bonum inducit' (leads towards the good), 'in agone defendit' (defends at the time of death), and 'in paradisum deducit' (leads to Paradise).[132] The Wierix brothers may have known the engraving of the Guardian Angel in the *Rhetorica Christiana.* The earliest known print by Hyeronimus's brother Anthonius Wierix is dated 1579, the same year in which the *Rhetorica Christiana* was published.[133] This Wierix print of the angel is not dated; however, it is clear that it follows and is either directly or indirectly based on this book illustration. The Louvain Jesuits for whom the Wierix brothers worked were likely to have known the *Rhetorica Christiana* and could have showed them the plate, or suggested an iconography based on their knowledge of it. Be it as it may, both the engraving in *Rhetorica Christiana* and the two Wierix prints may have been among the materials Velázquez knew and reworked in his painting.

Since nothing is known about the early ownership of *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation*, the important question of its function remains obscure. It has been suggested that Velázquez painted it for the private contemplation of a powerful and devout individual, such as the Dominican Fray Antonio de Sotomayor, the King's confessor, who may have commissioned one of the few religious paintings by the artist in the 1630s, *The Temptations of St Thomas Aquinas*.[134] The notion of contemplation is indeed central to the painting, but it is primarily a painting about contemplation, rather than an image designed to encourage the viewer to contemplate. Moffitt interpreted it as

[132] See Mauquoy-Hendrickx, I, pl. 81, #608 and #609.
[133] Mauquoy-Hendrickx, I, p. xiv.
[134] Finaldi and Bray, 'Christ after the Flagellation', p. 136. The attribution of this painting has been challenged in the past; see Jonathan Brown, 'Appendix A: Various Velázquez Problems', in *Velázquez: Painter and Courtier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 270–77 (pp. 271–73).

an Ignatian *composición viendo el lugar* (see p. 56, above).[135] He did not suggest, as I do, that the picture could be interpreted as a painting about composition of place or, in broader terms, about visual meditation. Closer to my reading, Finaldi noted the appropriateness of the title 'The institution of prayer' given to the painting in the nineteenth century, and Brown remarked on the painting's symbolic, rather than narrative, character.[136] Taking this one step further, we could characterise the picture as allegorical rather than devotional. Incidentally, interpreting the painting as an allegory of imaginative prayer turns the quest for a single textual source into a futile exercise.

Seen as allegory, the ambiguous consistency of the figures and the mediating character of the angel (discussed above) become the painting's subject-matter. We may interpret *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* as a reflection on the rhetorical role of images, mental or physical, as instruments deployed in meditational practices, aimed at stirring the practitioner's emotions. Seventeenth-century preachers were fully aware of the possibilities of images as pastoral tools: as we have seen, sermons often took the form of meditations and used the rhetorical mechanisms of *enargeia* (word-painting) so as to engage the listeners in the making of moving mental images. Preachers would also use the physical images that were present in the church interior in a similar way; the *Rhetorica Christiana* of Valadés discussed both procedures, as did other rhetorical treatises of that time (see chapter 3).[137] Velázquez had access to rhetorical ideas on painting through Pacheco, his father-in-law, who had acquired them through the

[135] See Moffitt, p. 151.
[136] Gabriele Finaldi, 'Praying the Passion', in *The Image of Christ*, ed. by G. Finaldi, exh. cat. 'Seeing Salvation', London, the National Gallery, 26 February to 7 May 2000 (London: National Gallery, 2000), pp. 133–35 (p.133); see also Finaldi and Bray, 'Christ after the Flagellation', pp. 136–37, and Brown, *Velázquez*, pp. 67–68.
[137] See Chapters 2 and 3 above; Ledda, *La parola e l'immagine*, pp. 46–47, 86–87, and passim; for the passages in the *Rhetorica Christiana*, see Valadés, pp. 210 and 256 and ff., 275 and ff.

writings of Gabriele Paleotti. The oblique and subtle way in which Velázquez handled blood in *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* may be evidence of his understanding of the Timanthes anecdote, a lesson from ancient painting that Pacheco recounted with his customary erudition. If so, the painting may be taken as one more instance of an early-modern painter measuring himself against the enterprises of the principal figures of ancient painting known through Pliny, as others did by emulating the speed of Nicomachus, the *trompe-l'oeil* effects of Parrhasius, or painting of lightning, flames, and night scenes of Apelles.[138]

The painting also testifies to Velázquez's interest in rhetoric; indeed, the whole painting is a reflection on the moving power of images and of imaging. Such interpretation connects *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation*, an oddity in Velázquez's oeuvre, to a central aspect of the painter's production. From a technical angle, it is a well-established trend in Velázquez studies to approach the master's handling of paint, sometimes deliberately and unevenly sketchy, as a means he used to highlight the materiality of the painting as an object, and thus of eliciting the viewer's reflection on the nature of representation and art itself. In terms of subject-matter, too, some interpretations read works such as *Las Meninas* and *The Fable of Arachne* as reflections on the art of painting.[139] What makes this painting stand out is that such a

[138] See Pliny, pp. 342, 332, and 308 (bk 35, Ch. 36); on rivalry and emulation as motors for artistic creation in early modern Spain, see Tiffany, 'Velázquez's *Bodegones*'.

[139] See José López-Rey, *Velázquez: Painter of Painters*, 2 vols (Cologne: Taschen, 1996), I, 81–83, 137–39, and 147–50; Charles de Tolnay, 'Velázquez's *Las Hilanderas* and *Las Meninas*: An Interpretation', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 35.1 (1949), 21–38; Brown, *Images and Ideas*, pp. 87–110; Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt, 'Velázquez's *Las Meninas*: An Interpretative Primer', in *Velázquez's Las Meninas*, ed. by S. L. Stratton-Pruitt (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), pp. 124–49; Giles Knox, '*Las Meninas*: social and structural perspectives' and '*Las Meninas*: painterly polemics', in *The Late Paintings of Velázquez: Theorizing Painterly Performance*, Visual Culture in Early Modernity (London: Ashgate, 2009; repr. Routledge, 2016), pp. 119–43 and pp. 145–75.

reflection should be set in the context of religious painting. We may rightly wonder if Velázquez would have produced other works as complex and challenging as *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* on a grander scale, had he had a sophisticated churchman as his patron rather than the King.

CONCLUSION

Creativity sometimes thrives when restricted. The limiting aspects of the Tridentine decree on images (forbidding anything curious, new, apocryphal, and so on) could well have resulted in a stagnant period in which zealous churchmen would have impeded every novelty and only time-honoured iconographies would have survived. Paradoxically, as Mâle demonstrated long ago, the opposite was the case. The study of the ways in which preachers, painters and commissioners interacted in the making of the iconographies and individual artworks, discussed in this chapter, highlights the importance of both the authority and diffusion, and the rhetorical function of images. By examining these I hope to have afforded a useful overview of the conditions in which artists created new types of religious images.

One of the key themes of Chapter 2 hinged on the perceived tension between the Church's attempts to spread the practice of visual meditation and her need to control it. Similarly, conflicting priorities weighed on the development of new iconographies in response to sermons, although the cases I studied have revealed a more even balance between the interests and needs of the institutional Church and the individuals involved. The widespread exposure to ideas made available in sermons (the ideal means to divulge sacred knowledge) benefited the Church as it did painters and their clients. Those

attending a sermon would be given access to the content of books that they did not own, and probably could not have afforded or understood. The importance of the role played by sermons in the spread of ideas can hardly be overstated.

Sermons also came with the authority of the preacher and, by extension, that of the Church. This meant that anything heard in a sermon had, at least in theory, the Church's approval as a potential subject for a painting. With respect to the sermon-text, the authority of a printed sermon was double: it had been given the Church's *placet* twice, first in the person of the preacher who originally delivered the sermon, and then in the careful scrutiny which books underwent before publication. The contents of printed sermons reached a larger audience than a single preached sermon ever could: they could be read, and they could also be delivered again as new sermon-events for new congregations. When a preacher chose to repeat a whole printed sermon or part of one, he relied on the authority of the author as well as on that conferred by the printed form. Printed sermons were a useful commodity as far as diffusion and authority are concerned: they were cheaper than books, as well as more accessible and therefore easier to own. Difficult though it may be to argue for close links between individual sermons and images, the impact of preaching on the visual arts was considerable, as the case studies in this chapter indicate.

The first two iconographies studied exemplify the interplay of meditation literature, sermons, and the arts. The sermon that inspired the series at La Paciencia, by contrast, disseminated restricted information about a contemporary event, resulting in a highly unusual commission. Research into this series has revealed how one man's reflections on the function and *raison d'être* of religious images enabled him to elaborate

an original discourse, which he then communicated to an important part of the community. This exceptional series is a powerful example of the receptiveness of congregations to sermons, and of the role played by a sermon in the commissioning and creation of works of art.

The cases studied also demonstrate that, in accordance with contemporary rhetorical and artistic theory, religious images had to fit into a pre-established set of functional criteria, among which *movere* was the most important. An image that appealed to the emotions of the viewers was received with greater enthusiasm than a similar but less moving one. In the case of the series at La Paciencia, the main purpose of Niseno's influential sermon was to stir the emotions of the listeners, and this remained the top priority when the paintings were commissioned and produced several decades later. Even the hanging scheme of the paintings in the chapel seems to have been guided by the idea of *movere*. And if Niseno's thoughts on religious images informed the paintings at La Paciencia, Velázquez's reflections on the same subject found subtle expression in his own allegorical painting, *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation*. In this canvas the painter explored *movere* in connection with meditation, the nature of religious images, and the human response, demonstrating his knowledge of some of the chief rhetorical and artistic ideas of his time. How artists and preachers thought of the moving qualities of sermons and paintings, and how they tried to cultivate them, will form the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5:

Elocutio and Decorum (I): Foundations

> '[...] it is not the pathos of the subject itself that accounts for the funereal mood – I have seen some laughably bad *Pietàs*. No, the atmosphere is achieved by painterly, not illustrative, means. It is with the simplest of colours and grandest of forms that Titian involves the viewer's emotions.'
>
> Eric Hebborn, on Titian's *Pietà*.[1]

Writings about art in seventeenth-century Spain, beginning with Gutiérrez de los Ríos's *Noticia general para la estimacion de las Artes* (1600), often underscore the similarity between painting and rhetoric. Because religious painting sought to persuade, like rhetoric, the connection carried a special weight for this genre. Discussions of paintings often focused on the manner in which the artist treated a subject, which could have a direct impact on the viewer's reaction; such details, comprising what rhetoric terms *elocutio*, similarly preoccupied theorists of sacred oratory. If rhetoric underpinned all arts, *elocutio* provided the language to frame the inexpressible qualities of good art. Like sermons, good and mediocre paintings of the same subject do not differ in essence, but in what may be thought of as ornament.

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[1] Eric Hebborn, *Confessions of a Master Forger: The Updated Biography* (London: Cassell, 1997), p. 178.

Whereas *inventio* deals with the subject-matter itself, *elocutio* is that part of rhetoric concerned with presentation, the way in which subject-matter is rendered. *Inventio* answers the question of *what*, and *elocutio* supplements this by showing *how*. As we have seen, the foundational approaches of rhetoric were adopted as the model for artistic creation in general, as well as pulpit oratory in particular. Spanish seventeenth-century artistic literature capitalised on this connection to support the claim that painting was a liberal art, and, in return, its understanding of painting was marked by a rhetorical theory, based on the distinction between *inventio* and *elocutio*. As early as 1596, Alonso López Pinciano remarked on the equivalence of poetry and painting, noting that both were comprised of plot and meter: for a painting the plot or *fábula* was the figure, whereas the *colores* were the metre.[2] The painter and writer Vicente Carducho, a continuer in Spain of the central Italian tradition of artistic theory, describes *color* or *colorido* as insubstantial decoration for good drawing, useful merely as a vehicle for naturalism and communication of emotion or *afectos*, whereas drawing is the essential skill the artist must master.[3] The Portuguese poet Manuel Gallegos made a similar connection between *afectos* and colour in his *Silva topografica* (1637), when he mentions Velázquez's *Joseph's Bloody Tunic Brought to Jacob*: 'el Patriarca Iacob gime en colores; / y explicando en matizes sus dolores'.[4] Thus, the distinction between meaning and form in a work of art (drawing and colouring, subject and metre, essential and non-

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[2] Alonso López Pinciano, *Philosophia Antigua Poética*, ed. by A. Carballo (Madrid: CSIC, 1953), p. 280.

[3] Carducho, pp. 245–49; see also Gridley McKim-Smith, 'Interpreting Color', in Gridley McKim-Smith, Greta Andersen-Bergdoll and Richard Newman, *Examining Velázquez* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 51–69 (p. 20).

[4] Manuel de Gallegos, *Obras varias al Real Palacio del Buen Retiro* (Madrid: María de Quiñones, 1637), fol. 8[r]; on Gallegos, see Elías Tormo, 'Velázquez, el Salón de Reinos del Buen Retiro, y el Poeta del Palacio y del Pintor: Apéndice tercero (Conclusión)', *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*, 20.1 (1912), 60–63.

essential elements), on which Panofsky capitalised to elaborate his iconographical method as an art-historical approach, is underpinned by the cultural tradition of rhetoric and was already present in the Renaissance.[5]

This chapter focuses on the specifically verbal and painterly mechanisms used as ornament, with the aim of elucidating the ways in which preachers and painters understood them in seventeenth-century Spain. I shall first deal with the ways in which preachers broached the issue, in order later to show similar understandings expressed by painters. Sermons provided painters with a reliable source of information as to details and ornament and, more generally, rhetorical principles that could be applied to numerous situations. How the same principles sometimes entered into conflict, leading preachers as well as painters to disagree, will be the subject of Chapter 6.

As Herrero Salgado pointed out, Spanish Golden-Age theoreticians often identified rhetoric with eloquence, and saw *ornatus* as a synonym of the latter.[6] Accordingly, *elocutio* was the part of Rhetoric that attracted most attention. Ornament is, by definition, superfluous; it is added for aesthetical or other reasons, but it can be dispensed with. The same thought or idea (governed by *inventio*) can be expressed in many ways (belonging to *elocutio*) and still remain fundamentally the same. The rhetorical concept of *ornatus* is central to understanding the ideas of decorum and *elocutio* in both sacred oratory and painting; Covarrubias remarked on this common ground between the two arts in his definition of the word *adornar*:

> Adornar, vale ataviar, enriquecer con joyas, engalanar alguna cosa para que tenga ostentacion, y buen parecer. Los pintores adornan la tabla de una figura con variedad de architectura, arboles,

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[5] McKim-Smith, p. 54.

[6] Félix Herrero Salgado, *La predicación en la Compañía de Jesús,* La oratoria sagrada en los siglos XVI y XVII, 3 (Madrid: FUE, 2001), p. 282.

> rios, montes en los lexos, y nubes, y aves en el ayre. Lo mesmo se dize de la oracion quando se enriquece de figuras, y colores retoricos.[7]

The definition reflects a typical early modern attitude, according to which rhetoric, painting, and poetry are so closely linked that it is inconceivable to discuss the one without broaching the other. Covarrubias comments on *ornatus* in purely aesthetic terms; however, as we shall see, most seventeenth-century writers had re-assessed the relationships between *docere*, *movere*, and *delectare*, and believed that *ornatus* should be used in the service of *movere*, never at its expense.

In this respect, painters paid special attention to the kind of details provided by the preacher as ornament, because they could often be transposed into painting. This information could prove as useful for painters regarding non-essential details in paintings as other aspects of sermons were for the development of new iconographies. In the previous chapter I discussed an example of a meditation sermon on the *Soledad* that included details belonging to *elocutio* rather than *inventio*: the Virgin cried copiously over her dead son, but she did so 'con modestia y gravedad' (see p. 123, above; the reasons for emphasizing Mary's composure during the Passion will be discussed below.) But the best-known example of this occurrence and its reception is the discussion of the shape of the moon under the feet of the Immaculate Conception, in a sermon by the famous court preacher Fray Hortensio Félix Paravicino. The Jesuit Luis del Alcázar (1554–1613) claimed in his commentary on the Apocalypse, published posthumously in Antwerp in 1614, that the relevant text refers to an eclipse and, based on the latest discoveries about these phenomena by Galileo and Copernicus, argued that painters should represent the crescent moon with its ends pointing down, rather than up as was

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[7] Covarrubias, fol. 11^{v}, s.v. *adornar*.

usual.[8] Paravicino echoed this claim in a sermon preached in 1615, probably after being exposed to the discussions on that subject in Pacheco's circle of ecclesiastic intellectuals in Seville.[9] Judging from the treatment of this detail from that time onwards, painters and commissioners took heed of the preacher's iconographical advice. The sermon exposed the congregation to a type of recent scientific knowledge that was otherwise unavailable to them on a number of levels, partly because owning the works of Galileo or Copernicus might have caused a layperson serious trouble with the Inquisition.

Hearing Decorum

Preachers also supplied artists with useful information in other ways. Less explicit inspiration for details could be deduced by painters from a number of features in sermons, most of all, the preacher's use of devices such as *antithesis* or *amplificatio*. By paying careful attention to verbal ornament, painters would be able to deduce the rationale behind its use, which could yield valuable information. Such could also be obtained from another aspect of the *ornatus* of the sermon, the preacher's intonation. When discussing the last part of rhetoric, *actio* (the delivery of the speech), classical handbooks advise against using a monotonous voice, because listeners would lose interest. This idea was developed in Golden-Age Spain into a form of ornament that assisted communication of the meaning and, besides preventing one's listeners from getting bored, was specifically intended to stir their emotions.

[8] Luis del Alcázar, *Vestigatio Arcani Sensus in Apocalypsi* […] (Antwerp: apud Ioannem Keerbergium, 1614), p. 616; Eileen Reeves, *Painting the Heavens: Art and Science in the Age of Galileo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 193.
[9] Reeves, Ch. 5; Kasl, #12.

The practice of codifying different *tonos* or types of intonation to match certain *afectos* and rhetorical figures came to be associated with the Jesuits.[10] The General of the Society, Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615), drew up an *Instructio pro concionatoribus Societatis* on the occasion of their fifth Congregation in 1593-94, to regulate the preaching of Jesuit priests. Section 4 establishes the appointment of 'prefects of Sermons' to ensure that the voice, gestures, and other aspects of the delivery helped preachers attain their goal. Section 5 deals with the *tonos* without explaining what they are, suggesting that the idea was already familiar to the work's readers. Acquaviva prescribes that the 'prefect' should supervise preachers in their rendering of *tonos*, and that they should be given texts for practice. The first Jesuit treatises to discuss *tonos* as such are the *Orator Christianus* (1612) by Carlo Reggio, and the *Rhetoris Christiani partes septem* (1619) by Pablo José de Arriaga. The former was expressly approved by Acquaviva, and exercised considerable influence on later treatises. Reggio discusses *tonos* as a practice peculiar to the Jesuits, and specifies that there are three: low, medium, and high, corresponding to the three *genera* of classical oratory (*genus infimus*, *medius*, *sublime*). It has been suggested that the origin of *tonos* is to be found in the *Ecclesiasticae Rhetoricae sive de ratione concionandi libri sex* (1576) of Fray Luis de Granada, where he writes of different 'géneros de sentencias' in a sermon and the matching 'figura de voz con que cada una de ellas se debe pronunciar'.[11] He dedicates two chapters to providing examples

[10] On the Jesuit *tonos*, see Luis Robledo, 'Los tonos oratorios en la *Rhetorica Christiana* (1647) de Juan Bautista Escardó', in *Música y literatura en la Península Ibérica: 1600–1750*, ed. by M. A. Virgili, G. Vega, C. Caballero (Valladolid: Sociedad 'V Centenario del Tratado de Tordesillas', 1997), pp. 445–57 (pp. 446–50).

[11] Robledo, pp. 449–50; Luis de Granada, *Los seis libros de la Rhetórica Eclesiástica o de la manera de predicar*, 5th edn (Barcelona: en la imprenta de Juan Solís y Bernardo Pla, 1778), p. 486 (VI. 8. 2).

of rhetorical figures (taken from the Bible, to silence objectors to the use of classical rhetoric by the Church) accompanied with notes on the intonation appropriate for each.

The most detailed discussion of *tonos*, however, is in the *Rhetorica Christiana* (1647) of the Jesuit Juan Bautista Escardó. Escardó undoubtedly knew the work of Luis de Granada but did not refer to it, perhaps because of the mutual hostility between the Dominicans and the Jesuits over the Immaculist controversy.[12] When the *Rhetorica Christiana* appeared, Escardó had been a preacher for forty-seven years, as well as having taught rhetoric and being *prefecto de los tonos* at the Jesuit college of Montesión in Palma de Mallorca. His interest and expertise in *movere* and audience response were based on his long experience, and are evident throughout his work. He describes the training the *prefecto* imparts regarding how preachers 'se han de portar, así en regir la voz, mudándola cuando conviene para admirarse, enternecerse, exclamar o reprehender […] segun las reglas de la rhetórica [...]', and he speaks of *tonos* as 'estas admiraciones, esclamaciones, aversiones, apóstrofes o coloquios con Dios y con los oyentes', which are 'las figuras más principales de que consta una como declamación a lo divino que en la Compañia llamamos tonos […]'. He explains that, in addition to the musical sense of the term, the Jesuit *tonos* also mean 'ciertos modos de razonar y ciertas figuras que obligan al orador a mudar de voz y a dar variedad al razonamiento, encaminándolo unas vezes a Dios o a los santos, otras a los oyentes, ya con suavidad de voz, ya con aspereza, ya con otras mudanças'. As Robledo points out, changes in voice modulation and gestures were

[12] Robledo, p. 450.

normally dealt with as *actio*, and the originality of Escardó lies in his treating *tonos* as an additional type of *ornatus*, alongside the traditional figures and techniques of *elocutio*.[13]

Escardó draws up a list of twelve *tonos*, exemplified by short sentences that contain particular rhetorical figures. For example, the second *tono* is appropriate for *ponderación* (asking the congregation to consider the importance of some affirmation), as in the following sentence: 'Es de considerar, carísimos hermanos, la piadosa y liberal benignidad del Salvador'. Sentences in this *tono* 'se han de pronunciar con voz suave y no acelerada, sino despacio y con alguna pausa'. The seventh *tono* concerns *obiurgación*, a rebuke: '¡Oh, adormecidos, oh, sepultados en el sueño del pecado. Oid la voz del profeta Ioel que os diçe: [...] Cantad […] con la trompeta en la iglesia, santificad el ayuno, llamad las gentes, congregad el pueblo!'. The intonation 'requiere un tono de voz sobreagudo, o la voz sublime, alta y áspera'. The eighth *tono* is for exclamations and 'gritos', which the author divides into 'medianos', 'altos', and 'altísimos'. Later, he makes it clearer what he understands by *mudanças* of the voice and links them to varying tones:

> La voz ínfima corresponde a las vozes de la música ut, re. La mediana a las vozes mi, fa. La sublime a las vozes sol, la. Y, así como ellos [los oradores] dizen que en una misma oración, en una parte ha lugar el primer estilo y en otras el 2. y 3., así digo yo que en la primera parte del sermón tendrá lugar la voz ínfima, que sirve para narrar y razonar; en otra la mediana, cuando se ha de ponderar y esclamar; y, cuando se ha de mover en la reprehensión y epílogo, la sublime y alta.[14]

The mention of notes of the musical scale should not be understood literally, but in terms of interval: the *voz mediana* and the *voz sublime* are respectively about a musical fourth and a fifth higher than the *voz ínfima*. This confirms that expressions such as *voz suave*,

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[13] Escardó, fols 52^{v}, 149^{r} and 150^{r}; Robledo, p. 448.
[14] Escardó, fol. 474^{v}.

mediana, *tono sobreagudo*, or *voz áspera* should be interpreted as designating differences of volume, modulation, and pitch simultaneously.

Sermons sounded different, depending on the purposes of the preacher and the type of rhetorical ornament he was using, since verbal and vocal ornamentation were inextricably linked by *tonos*. The relevance of *tonos* to painting lies in the fact that this purely elocutive aspect of preaching functioned as a paradigm of *ornatus*. If rhetoric was, as we have seen, the common point of reference for all the arts and especially of religious painting, then the musical inflections of a preacher's voice would have provided the archetypical example of non-essential ornament. It is significant that Palomino also used a musical comparison, 'la música de la vista', and a language strikingly similar to that of Escardó, when he discussed the progressive gradation of flesh tones from shadow to light: 'vayan bajando, a la manera que lo hace en la música, entonando *la, sol, fa, mi, re*': at least some painters perceived a fundamental similarity between *tonos* and aspects of their own art.[15] Besides being aware of the different forms of verbal ornament, painters attending a sermon would hear this other, vocal, type of *ornatus*, which they understood intuitively since it was more sensorial and less intellectually challenging. This experience equipped painters with a vital knowledge as to the relationship between different subjects and their possible treatments.

Responses to Ornament

The question as to what types of treatments were appropriate for each subject is not as easily answered as it may seem. This was one more aspect of a general religious culture

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[15] Antonio Palomino, *El museo pictórico y escala óptica*, 2 vols (Madrid: Sancha, 1797), II, 58 (V. 5. 2). On musical similes in discussions of colour, see McKim-Smith, p. 61.

shaped by listening to sermons. Since sermon-events were compulsory, oral, authoritative, and free, they were probably the main source of knowledge of the Gospels and the lives of the saints for most seventeenth-century Spaniards. Preachers not only served as translators of the inaccessible Latin of the Vulgate and expositors of its content (and of other literature); they also interpreted the texts and, given their interest in *movere*, encouraged listeners to associate certain moods with certain subjects. These connections are not always obvious. For example, the happy or tender themes of Christ's birth and childhood are often treated in association with the Passion and rendered in such a way as to encourage a thoughtful, sorrowful reaction in the viewer, capitalising on the rhetorical principle of *antithesis* (see p. 217, below). Thus, it is not surprising that Jesuit preachers (Feliciano de Figueroa, Gaspar de Zamora, Juan de Pineda and about a dozen others) figured among the prominent members of Pacheco's circle, which often discussed precisely those issues.[16] Painters too learnt through sermons which *afectos* should be associated with each Gospel subject, as well as with subjects drawn from other sources.

Details mattered since, as Hebborn observed, non-essential ornament distinguishes a painting that makes the viewer scoff from another that moves to tears and lingers in the memory. The Hyeronimite abbot José de Sigüenza (1544–1606) provides an excellent explanation of how details and ornament in paintings condition the viewer's response in his description of the paintings at El Escorial, one of the finest pieces of art criticism in Spanish literature, written around 1600-1605 as part of the author's monumental history of the Hieronymite Order. At the time Sigüenza was serving for the second time as rector of the monastery, to which he had been called some thirty years

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[16] Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugás, 'Observaciones sobre *El Arte de la Pintura* de Francisco Pacheco como tratado de iconografía', *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía*, 2.3 (1989), 185–96 (pp. 191–92 and n. 13).

earlier.[17] Besides organising the library and devising the decorative scheme for its ceilings, Sigüenza was a famous preacher who had delivered the sermon at the dedication ceremony of El Escorial in 1586. It was his knowledge of rhetoric that informed his insights into religious art; for example, when he states that 'los santos se han de pintar de manera que no quiten la gana de rezar en ellos, antes pongan devoción, pues el principal efecto y fin de su pintura ha de ser esta'. In keeping with this theory, he praised the paintings by Juan Fernández de Navarrete, 'El Mudo', in the upper cloister, saying that 'verdaderamente son imágenes de devoción, donde se puede y aun da gana de rezar…'.[18] This begs the question of what exactly gives some paintings the power to elicit 'ganas de rezar'.

By the time Paleotti and Pacheco wrote, three centuries after Aquinas and Bonaventure, the question within the Catholic Church was not whether religious images should or should not be used: the main concern lay in the area of decorum – that is, what made an image acceptable, and what distinguished a merely acceptable image from an excellent one. The books that in the end proved to be the most influential, and of greatest use for painters and their ecclesiastical supervisors and patrons, were those dealing with matters of propriety and decorum in a clear and practical way, as both authors did.

What, then, made for good images? Paleotti qualified the general term 'images' with the phrase *piamente fatte*, which may allude to the inner disposition of the painter throughout the creative process (meaning 'made in a pious mood') or to the quality of the

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[17] On Sigüenza, see Luis Villalba Muñoz, *El padre José de Sigüenza: estudio crítico de su vida literaria y escritos, particularmente de* La Historia del Rey de los Reyes y Señor de los Señores (El Escorial: La Ciudad de Dios, 1916); Francisco J. Campos y Fernández de Sevilla, 'Estudio preliminar', in *José de Sigüenza, Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo,* ed. by A. Weruaga Prieto, 2 vols (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2000), I, 7–43.

[18] José de Sigüenza, 'Tercera parte de la historia de la Orden de San Gerónimo Doctor de la Iglesia (1605)', in *TPSO*, pp. 111–43 (Discursos 17 and 5, pp. 138 and 122).

painting as a finished object ('made in such a way as to move to piety'). Both senses can be admitted, bearing in mind Paleotti's ideal of the 'Christian painter'. The term represents one of the most characteristically early modern commonplaces about painting, and derives from one of the premises of the *Discorso*. Paleotti, like many of his contemporaries, perceived painting as a form of language rather than as an act of creation.[19] Mastering the art of painting means learning a set of rules by which one can communicate a message. The corollary is that painting, as a visual language, can likewise be used to persuade: '[…] sì come ogni libro ordinariamente ha per fine di fare capace colui che legge e persuaderlo a qualche cosa, così si può dire che le pitture vadano anch'elle all'istesso fine con quelli che la mirano […]'.[20] Since images are a highly effective means of persuasion, they can be used for very different purposes with equal success – hence the widespread anxiety about their power to mislead.

In this context, Paleotti makes a meaningful distinction between the ordinary painter and the *pittore cristiano*, who should imprint Christian intention and emotion on to his pictures: '[…] non basta sol esser buon artefice, ma, oltre l'eccellenza dell'arte, … un animo et afetto cristiano, essendo questa qualità inseparabile dalla persona sua, e tale ch'egli è ubligato di mostrarla ovunque fia bisogno'.[21] This suggests the presence of a double criterion for evaluating religious paintings: that of the 'eccellenza dell'arte' and that of the 'animo et afetto cristiano'. A revealing account is found in Carducho's treatise on painting, *Diálogos de la pintura*. One of the interlocutors praises

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[19] See Ambrogio Catarino, *De certa gloria, invocatione et veneratione sanctorum disputationes* (Lyon: apud Matthiam Bonhomme, 1542), pp. 69, 72; Conrado Bruno, *De imaginibus liber* (Mainz: apud S. Victorem, 1548). This is what Barocchi calls 'una accezione pragmatica della pittura'; see Gilio, p. 78 and n. 3.
[20] *Discorso*, p. 147. This part of the *Discorso* was not translated by Pacheco.
[21] *Discorso*, p. 136.

> la suma diligencia con que [German Gothic artists] pintaron sobre tablas unas hermosas, y devotissimas imagenes de nuestra Señora, Angeles, y Virgenes, a quien yo siempre venero, … si bien no están hechas con valiente dibujo y buena proporcio[n].[22]

The Christian painter's inner disposition manifests itself in the rhetorical quality of his output; his paintings stir Christian emotions in those who look at them. The ideal image should commend itself in both artistic and rhetorical terms; in reality, one can figure out how sometimes the tension between images that are *buenas* but not *devotissimas* and vice versa made it difficult to pronounce on them. Carducho personifies a more aestheticist approach to painting among Spanish seventeenth-century theorists. One characteristic way of evaluating a painting was according to how effective it was thought to be as an act of communication. St John of the Cross, although he did not completely disregard the aesthetic values of art, judged them purely by their effects on the will of the onlooker, which is the only criterion that interested him.[23] If this was said in regard to the style of the preacher, his approach to the visual arts was fundamentally the same: in a religious image, the quality of 'devoción' is to be sought over 'la curiosidad de la hechura y su ornato'.[24] The fact that the author used the same standard to evaluate paintings and sacred oratory (see p. 54, above) reveals that rhetoric is the category underlying his judgment.

Similar concerns are to be found in other treatises; Possevino, for example, stresses the importance of the inner disposition of the painter: 'The painter's spirit must have room to feel growing admiration and pangs of pain. If you wish me to weep you

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[22] See Carducho, fol. 20 r.
[23] *Subida*, III. 35. 5 and 6.
[24] '[...] el uso de las imágenes para dos principales fines le ordenó la Iglesia, es a saber: para reverenciar a los santos en ellas, y para mover la voluntad y despertar la devoción por ellas a ellos. Y cuanto sirven de esto, son provechosas, y el uso de ellas es necesario; y por eso, las que más al propio y vivo estén sacadas, y más mueven la voluntad a devoción, se han de escoger, poniendo los ojos en ésta más que en el valor y la curiosidad de la hechura y su ornato'; *Subida*, III. 35. 3, in *Vida y obras*, p. 555.

must weep first, the Poet [Horace] says'.[25] Such ideas are also evident in the part of the *Discorso* that Pacheco translated. Following an apologia for the status of painting as a liberal art, the author adds that its dignity is worthless unless it is ordained to a higher (religious) end: 'Y también aquella nobleza que se ha dicho arriba, si no se acompañan todas de espíritu cristiano y se usa de ellas a gloria de Dios, quedan vanas y sin fruto […]'.[26] The end to which Paleotti refers is that of drawing people towards God, and by stressing its importance he endowed painters with an almost mystical duty:

> A que se llega a otra principal razón, sacada del fin altísimo que se pretende con las cristianas pinturas […], porque siendo todas las acciones propias de aquella virtud, a cuyo fin son ordenadas, y no teniendo otra mira todas las sagradas imágenes […] que unir a los hombres con Dios, que es el fin de la caridad, manifiestamente se sigue que el exercicio de formar imágenes se reducirá a la mesma caridad, y por esto será virtud dignísima y nobilísima.[27]

Paleotti takes this even further, by maintaining that the most important aim of the Christian painter is '[...] por medio del estudio y fatiga desta profesión, estando en gracia, alcanzar la bienaventuranza'. Not only does he raise painting from the status of menial work to a liberal art, he elevates it further, into a transcendental dimension. Similarly, the 'pintor cristiano' assumes tasks that are almost priestly (or, more specifically, characteristic of preachers): '[...] la pintura, que tenía por fin sólo el parecerse a lo imitado, ahora, como acto de virtud, toma nueva y rica sobreveste; y además de asemejarse, se levanta a un fin supremo, mirando a la eterna gloria, y procurando apartar los hombres de los vicios, los induce al verdadero culto de Dios Nuestro Señor'.[28] Carducho also showed his indebtedness to Paleotti in respect of the true end of painting:

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[25] '[N]ecesse est ut in pictoris animo insit unde existat admirationis magnitudo et impetus doloris erumpat. Si vis enim me flere, prius flendum est tibi ipsi, inquit Poeta'; Antonio Possevino, *Tractatio de poesi et pictura ethnica, humana et fabulosa collata cum vera, honesta et sacra* (1595), ed. by P. Barocchi, Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento, 3 vols (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1971–77), II (1962), 3–115 (p. 301).
[26] *Arte*, p. 238; *Discorso*, p. 160.
[27] *Arte*, p. 239; *Discorso*, p. 162.
[28] *Arte*, p. 249; *Discorso*, p. 210.

> Y a quièn se concedio el divino epicteto de Sagrado, despues de la Santa y Sagrada Teologia, sino es á la pintura sagrada? El ilustrisimo cardenal Paleoto en su libro de la reformacion de las Imagenes, dize, que la pintura christiana es un genero de oblacion y sacrificio, y consequentemente mira y tiene por objeto al mismo Dios.[29]

Thus, what Sigüenza meant by the expression 'dar ganas de rezar' means, more broadly, that the viewer transcends the material object while focusing on the image, and elevates his or her thoughts in prayer to the higher reality of the subject of the painting – looking at it 'with the eyes of the soul', or, as Sánchez del Castellar put it, 'meditating the image' (see p. 87, above). An experience such as this would stir the emotions of the viewer, who would feel tenderness, pity, or fear, depending on the character of the image. Thus, the 'mood' of the image is created by the artist's rendering of the subject, rather than by the theme of the painting alone. Had this been put into practice without further consideration, it would have led to absolute subjectivism, as different individuals will react to the same painting in different ways. Images that were deemed 'ugly' or 'artless' by some viewers would elicit in others 'ganas de rezar', and would therefore be deemed perfectly valid as far as they were concerned. As Philip III reportedly observed, 'para algunos es suficiente lo mal pintado'; San John of the Cross, by contrast, railed against artists whose images 'antes quitan la devoción que la añaden'.[30] Of course, some general rules and principles were devised to achieve the desired effect, as we shall see below; however, occasional instances are found of images which, despite contravening them, manage to elicit the desired reaction and are therefore not criticised. These exceptions clearly reveal where the Church's priorities lay.

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[29] Carducho, fol. 35r.

[30] Félix Lope de Vega and others, 'Memorial informatorio por los pintores, en el pleito que tratan con el señor de Su Magestad, en el Real Consejo de Hazienda, sobre la exempción del arte de la pintura (1629)', in *TPSO*, pp. 337–66 (p. 363); *Subida*, III. 38. 2.

In similar contexts, some writers noted that the viewer's reaction is not entirely natural, hinting that it is, at least in part, the product of a certain training. For example, when discussing the famous *Cristo del Perdón,* carved by Manuel Pereyra and polychromed by Francisco Camilo, Palomino says that '*bien considerado*, estremece las carnes de los católicos' (my emphasis).[31] The affirmation commonly found in ekphrastic texts that an image will make the viewer weep for his sins is often qualified by expressions such as 'unless he is a Protestant', or 'unless his heart is made of iron'. Certain treatises, following Paleotti, distinguish between different categories or groups of viewers, according to their knowledge of painting, of theology, and their level of literacy and education. As we have noted already, through regular exposure to sermons, even the less educated among churchgoers would have had the opportunity to became proficient in knowing precisely how to approach religious images, what to expect from this experience, and how to react to them. Nevertheless, no matter how spontaneous or learnt the viewer's reaction was thought to be, it was usually a particular quality of the image, rather than the disposition of the viewer, that was understood to be responsible for the success or failure of the painting in making the viewer react to it in the appropriate way.[32] Good responses to bad quality images, as seen above, were taken as exceptional and often attributed to miraculous intervention. More usually, the ability to produce an emotionally engaging image was seen as a mark of good craftsmanship, as was noted, for example, by Palomino in connection with the famous *Expoliation* by Francisco Rizi (see p. 151,

[31] See Palomino, *Parnaso español*, #138, p. 221; Palomino 1795, II, p. 562.
[32] Compare Sigüenza with John of the Cross: '… algunas [imágenes] tan mal talladas, que quitan la devoción…'; *Subida*, III. 38. 2, p. 283; on John of the Cross and images, see Hans U. von Balthasar, *Estilos Laicales: Dante, Juan de la Cruz, Pascal, Hamann, Solovëv, Hopkins, Péguy*, Gloria: Una estética teológica, 3 (Madrid: Encuentro, 1986), pp. 163–65, and Ilenia Colón Mendoza, *The* Cristos yacentes *of Gregorio Fernández: Polychrome Sculptures of the Supine Christ in Seventeenth-Century Spain*, Visual Culture in Early Modernity (New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 94–96.

above): ‘se reconoce el gran genio y talento de su artifice, por la admirable composicion y armonia de la Historia del Calvario, que mueve á gran ternura y devocion’.[33] The author makes it clear that there is a direct connection between Rizi’s ability as a painter and the reaction prompted by the canvas; the latter functions almost as a proof of the former.

Such reflections led to a more sophisticated approach to defining and assessing the quality of images. Many commentators described the different effects produced by praiseworthy works of art on their viewers, and examples abound of the viewer’s response becoming the most noteworthy feature of the object in a description. A crucifix which inspires devout thoughts in those who look at it is itself called ‘devoto’; for example, the *Cristo del Perdón* discussed above was thought to be ‘tan devoto que estremece con solo mirarle’.[34] The poet José de Valdivielso, chaplain to the Cardenal-Infante Don Fernando, expressed the same idea with witty eloquence: on the screen of Toledo cathedral is a ‘devotísima imagen de Christo nuestro Señor crucificado, que hace los corazones ojos y los ojos lágrimas’.[35] In texts such as these, the need for an appropriate adjective to describe a picture makes the commentator reverse the logical connection between painting and reaction: in reality, the crucifix does not affect the viewer because it is devout; rather, it is called ‘devout’ because the viewer’s reaction to it can be described in that way. The train of thought underpinning such inversions of logic reflects, and is perfectly consistent with, the economy of the displaying of images, in which the viewers’ reaction was given an all-important place.

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[33] Palomino, *Parnaso español*, II, 605, #168.
[34] The crucifix was at the Dominican convent of Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Madrid; Álvarez, *Compendio*, p. 156.
[35] Lope de Vega, p. 348; on tears and their importance in relation to images, see p. 53, above.

Just as the *Cristo del Perdón* was characterised as 'devoto', other paintings described in praiseworthy terms are given different epithets, according to their nature. Iconography evidently plays a part in this – there cannot be a cheerful Crucifixion – but, on a different level, the character or 'feel' of a painting is, as Hebborn observed, the product of the interplay of purely painterly factors such as the composition, the quality and rhythm of the drawing, chromatic tone and value, or the handling of the paint. In the eighth *Diálogo* of his book Carducho gives a list of technical terms, 'nombres y vozes de los pintores' and 'nombres y vozes de la pintura', many of which were used to refer to these most elusive aspects of paintings and painterly styles. The list includes words such as the following:

> [pintor] atentado, seco, crudo, cuerdo, prudente, noble, caprichoso, furioso, floxo, bizarro, [estilo / cuadro] pastoso, tierno, morvido, fresco, vago, aballado, suave, ensolvido, unido, acabado, esfumado, laminado, trabajado, peleteado, seco, crudo, perfilado, duro, penado, cansado, desunido, deslabado, manera suelta, [manera] gallarda.[36]

Some of these terms, such as *pastoso*, still evoke certain characteristics of paintings, whereas *aballado* or *laminado* have become obscure and are more difficult to interpret. The aspects of paintings designated by these *nombres y vozes* range from the strictly physical (*pastoso*) to those verging on iconography (*cuerdo*, *prudente*, *caprichoso*), with a rich indeterminate area in between. Words such as *morvido* or *suave*, for example, may or may not be related to the subject of the painting; they definitely refer to line, form, shape, lighting, colour, and handling. Terms such as *furioso*, *tierno* or *cansado* clearly referred to possible reactions elicited from viewers. But we may be sure that all would have been categorised as belonging to 'ornament', non-essential details which concerned the execution of a painting and were closely related to the viewer's reaction to it.

[36] Carducho, fol. 134^{r}.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE DECORUM

Earlier artistic literature, like the treatises by Alberti, Leonardo, and Palladio, adapted rhetorical decorum to the language of painting. Francisco de Holanda introduced the Renaissance understanding of decorum to the Iberian context in his *Da Pintura Antiga* (published in 1548): 'Pero propiamente lo que yo llamo decoro en la pintura, es que aquella figura o imagen que pintamos si ha de ser triste o agraviada no tenga alrededor de sí jardines pintados, ni cazas, ni otras alegrías, sino antes que parezca que hasta las piedras y los árboles y los animales y los hombres sienten y ayudan más a su tristeza …'.[37] Different paintings are meant to summon different *afectos*, and the function of decorum is to ensure that a painting achieves its desired effect as fully as possible.

Neither Holanda nor his Italian predecessors deal with the specific concerns about nudity and 'virtue', with which decorum would come to be identified.[38] Decorum often worked as a negative force, banishing from paintings anything that was deemed 'indecorous' (inappropriate, obscene), rather than recommending specific qualities as 'decorous'. Into the category of 'inappropriate' falls anything that may hinder the painting from achieving its desired effect, as well as anything that may prompt in the viewer an unwanted and potentially harmful reaction. Other elements were absolutely to be excluded, regardless of the subject, and first among these was the prohibition of anything lascivious or sexually alluring. Decorum appears in Spanish seventeenth-century artistic theory most frequently in the context of such prohibitions, since it proved far easier to define a list of defects to be avoided in religious painting than of features to

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[37] Palma Martínez-Burgos García, 'El decoro: La invención de un concepto y su proyección artística ', *Espacio, tiempo y forma*, 2 (1988), 91–102 (p. 91); Francisco de Holanda, *De la pintura antigua* (1548), trans. by Manuel Denis (1563), ed. by F. J. Sánchez Cantón (Madrid: Ratés, 1921), p. 110 (bk I, Ch. 38).
[38] Martínez-Burgos, p. 91.

be recommended. Hence, art historians have generally considered decorum as a negative constraint, and it is often identified simply with the proscription of nudity.[39]

However, testimonies like that of Francisco de Holanda imply the existence of decorum in a positive sense, according to which an artist can imbue a painting with a gloomy mood, for example, through details such as stones and trees. Where negative decorum eliminates whatever might prevent an image from achieving its end, positive decorum recommends certain characteristics which enable works of art to perform their function more effectively. Although the descriptive categories of positive and negative decorum were not used in seventeenth-century sources, a differentiation of the two categories is hinted at, for example, in the specifications of this contract:

> [hágase] … de manera que provoque todo lo susod[ic]ho a devoción, e puesto en buena razón del arte, haziendo cada figura verdadera demostración del efecto que representa, conforme a lo que de cada santo se lee y se sabe por traslación… Y que la talla de todo el retablo se adorne conforme a la devoción y dedicación de la d[ic]ha yglesia, como la usaron los arquitectos antiguos, que ornaban los edificios según la dedicación de ellos.[40]

The first part deals with positive measures to ensure that the altarpiece will achieve its desired effect, whereas the second part is meant to banish forms of decoration that would be deemed 'obscene', in its etymological sense – in this case, out of place in a church. The word 'devoción' appears twice, each time with a different meaning: the first alludes to the appropriate response of those who see the altarpiece, whereas the second refers to the special dignity that follows from the use and function of the sacred space and, more specifically, to the implications which this has for whatever behaviour, objects, or decoration would be out of place there. A good altarpiece arouses *devoción* in the

[39] See Martínez-Burgos, pp. 92–93.
[40] Taken from a contract signed in 1592 by the Provisor of the Archbishop of Seville and Juan de Oviedo el Mozo, for the main altarpiece of the parish church of Santa María de la Encarnación in Constantina (Seville), reproduced in Celestino López Martínez, *Notas para la Historia del Arte: Desde Jerónimo Hernández hasta Martínez Montañés* (Sevilla: Rodríguez Jiménez, 1929; repr. 1932), p. 72.

viewers, and the *devoción* of a church restricts the types of decoration that can be used on the altarpiece. Sources from the 1560s onwards, for example, specify that the only type of decoration suitable for a church interior is *rameado*, consisting of vegetable *rinceaux* punctuated with medallions.[41]

Features of positive decorum apply to all religious subjects and artistic techniques. For example, characteristics such as 'thoughtful', 'pious', or 'devout' are generally adequate for all religious representations. The features that prompt these reactions, inviting the viewer to concentrate on the subject in order to meditate, or to pray, were never considered indecorous. Certain features became associated with decorum itself, and 'decorous', 'devout' and 'moving' came to be treated as synonyms. For example, a writer remarks that the paintings decorating a chapel were executed 'con tal decencia, que provocan a devocion a todos los que las ven'.[42] Carducho explained this idea in terms of affinity: God and the saints are virtuous and *decentes*; therefore, the more closely an image imitates these qualities, the more it moves the viewer, on account of the greater 'amistad y connexion' that exists between the image and the imaged.[43] Covarrubias gives a helpful definition of the word *decencia*: 'Decente cosa, la conveniente, del nombre Latino decens. Decentemente, con mesura, respeto, y honestidad, lo qual significa la palabra Decencia'.[44] What stirred the emotions of the

[41] See María C. García Gaínza, 'El retablo romanista', *Imafronte*, 3–4–5 (1987–88–89), 85–98 (p. 87 and passim).
[42] Anguiano, p. 241.
[43] '… se supone de quanta eficacia sea la buena pintura, y que el mismo Dios muestra servirse de que sus imagines, y las de su sacratissima Madre, y las de sus Santos sean hechas de suerte, que lo que representan, lo muestran con propiedad, y conveniencia, pues quanto mas la tiene una cosa con otra, tanto mas amistad y connexion tiene con ella (segu[n] dizen los Filosofos), de q[ue] es fuerça seguirse, q[ue] las tales causen mayor devocion, y que mueva[n] los ánimos á los afectos á mayor fervor, amor, y ence[n]didos desseos de obrar en la virtud'; Carducho, fols 125^{r} and 125^{v}.
[44] Covarrubias, fol. 203^{r}.

viewers was not the absence of indecorous elements, but the presence of certain positive features. A closer look at Golden Age artistic literature will reveal many interesting implications of the idea of decorum beyond offending against 'mesura, respeto y honestidad'.

Positive features of decorum can sometimes be inferred *a sensu contrario* from instances of images being qualified as 'indecorous', but appear most clearly in texts in which religious paintings are praised. One illuminating example is Sigüenza's opinion of a canvas of *Christ at the Column* in the upper cloister of the Escorial, by Navarrete (Fig. 21):

> primero en devoción, majestad, piedad, reverencia, es un Cristo a la columna, [...] está muy de frente [...]. El rostro, lleno de tristeza, hermosura y gravedad, que parece imposible juntar todo esto; los brazos le está atando por detrás un verdugo, con el azote en la boca, por desembarazar las manos. Bondad de Dios, y ¡qué de cosas nos hace leer en esta figura si con atención la miramos! Tiene puestos los ojos y el semblante en el suelo, como hombre condenado y lleno de vergüenza, no de su desnudez, sino de la nuestra y de las infinitas maldades que tomó sobre sus hombros y espaldas [...]. Contrapónese a todo esto la fiereza y desenvoltura de los sayones y verdugos [...]. Más duro es que el mármol [...] el que no quebranta su corazón y se derrite en lágrimas y pondera la graveza de sus culpas [...].[45]

Sigüenza first remarks on the outstanding qualities of the painting, which are those of 'devoción', 'majestad', 'piedad', and 'reverencia', another example of the viewer's reaction being used to characterise a painting. In this case, 'majestad' alludes to the viewer's being awed by the image, while 'devoción', 'piedad', and 'reverencia' are three different ways of highlighting the fact that the picture gives the viewer 'ganas de rezar': so much so, that unless his heart is as cold and hard as marble (a typical phrase in meditation literature and sermons), the viewer will react to the sight of this painting by weeping for his sins. Sigüenza comments on specific features which contribute to the

[45] Sigüenza, p. 122; for the painting, see Rosemarie Mulcahy, *Juan Fernández de Navarrete, el Mudo, pintor de Felipe II* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 1999), pp. 39–40.

painting's achieving this effect. First, the frontal position of Christ makes it easy for the viewer to identify the subject of the painting from a distance, as do the placement of the main figure in the centre of the composition and the great size of the canvas (350 by 210 cm.), which may also have contributed to what Sigüenza calls 'majestad'. Next, the beautiful face of Christ is turned downwards, with an air of dignified sadness which made Sigüenza meditate on a theological point: the shame expressed on Christ's face is not caused by his nudity, but by the sins of mankind for which he is suffering, including those of the viewer. By contrast, Christ's cruel torturers go about their business in a way that shows 'fiereza' and 'desenvoltura': in the shadows, a man holds a whip in his mouth in a rough, animalistic way 'por desembarazar las manos' so that he can better tighten the rope tying Christ to the column.

Sigüenza's discussion of the *Flagellation* by Navarrete provides a perfect starting point for discussing the different classes of positive decorum, since it contains examples of almost all of them. They can be grouped in two categories, which may be accurately referred to by means of two rhetorical terms: *perspicuitas* and *amplificatio*.

Perspicuitas

Following Cicero, ancient treatises on rhetoric discuss *perspicuitas* as a quality of style and language that can be broadly translated as 'clarity'. To be effective, the orator has to be understood by his audience; the meaning of his words has to be clear, his argument easy to follow, and his main points lucidly exposed. Although I do not know of any instance of the term itself being used in the context of painting in early modern treatises, the rhetorical concept of *perspicuitas* can be readily found underpinning many aspects of

Spanish Golden-Age artistic theory. That religious paintings should be easily understandable is a prerequisite that follows from their purpose, as was the case with the speeches of classical orators. Hence, for example, commentators disapproved of overly ‘busy’ paintings; compositions should be as clear as possible. Nothing should distract the viewer’s attention from the main subject of the painting, and the point should be as clear as possible to the eye and the mind. Details should always refer back to the main subject; otherwise, they would often be criticised as ‘curious’.

For example, when Sigüenza criticised *St Michael Fighting the Rebel Angels* at the Escorial by Luca Cambiaso (1527–1586), he remarked that the painter ‘apenas quiso poner otro Ángel bueno: todos los otros son demonios, desnudos, en posturas extrañas y para altar feas, poco pías’.[46] It seems that Sigüenza disliked the naked figures as much as the cluttered appearance of the painting: showing far more demons than angels is a mistake on visual grounds, since the viewer’s gaze gets lost in the mass of demons and distracted by their ‘curious’ postures. One has to interrogate the picture to extract its meaning, instead of its being self-evident. Sigüenza’s criticism of the painting is based on two principles: *perspicuitas*, which the painting lacks, and negative decorum, which rejects the use of naked figures and strange positions in a painting that is to hang over an altar.

The ideal of *perspicuitas* also affected how paintings were displayed, and therefore the configuration of the space surrounding them. Changes in Spanish church interior architecture in the last part of the sixteenth and through the seventeenth century

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[46] The painting was initially located on the main altar of the church, and was removed by order of Philip II; Sigüenza, Discurso VII, p. 126; see Carmen García-Frías Checa, ‘Pellegrino Pellegrini, il Tibaldi (1527–1597) y su fortuna escurialense’, in *España y Bolonia: Siete siglos de relaciones artísticas y culturales*, ed. by José L. Colomer and Amadeo Serra (Madrid: CEEH; Fundación Carolina, 2006), pp. 119–35 (p. 130).

(see p. 79, above), reveal an increasing concern with *perspicuitas*. Newer church plans allowed for a better visibility of the altarpiece, and painters' and sculptors' contracts began to include clauses to ensure that the images be easily visible 'desde enmedio de la yglesia'.[47] As the century advanced, the disposition of altarpieces themselves became clearer, favouring simpler designs which focused the attention of the viewer on the main subject instead of letting it wander. The typical designs of the first decades of the century are still indebted to Juan de Herrera's main altarpiece for the church of El Escorial, which, in spite of their *purista* architecture and decoration, are still closely related to late medieval examples in the disposition of the images. Altarpieces of this type contain several levels of paintings and relief sculptures almost equal in size and importance, organised in rows and columns (*pisos* and *calles*). In contrast, the newer type of altarpiece displays one painting only, or one central painting accompanied by a few complementary scenes on a much smaller scale.[48]

Precedents for this trend can be found in late sixteenth-century examples inspired by Palladio's treatise on architecture, which are in turn based on earlier Venetian examples; they consist of a framed central canvas, on top of which is a smaller scene under a pediment.[49] This arrangement is found, for example, in the altarpiece of the Capilla de San José in Toledo Cathedral (1597-8) designed by El Greco, who had lived in

[47] See López Martínez, p. 72.
[48] See Martín González 'Avance de una tipología', pp. 124–26.
[49] One such example is Giovanni Bellini's Pessaro altarpiece; for an excellent study of its design and construction, see Carla Bertorello and Giovanna Martellotti, 'Per una lettura critica dei dati tecnici', in *La pala ricostituita: l'Incoronazione della Vergine e la cimasa vaticana di Giovanni Bellini: indagini e restauri*, exh. cat. Pessaro, Musei Civici, August to November 1988, ed. by M. R. Valazzi (Venice: Cataloghi Marsilio, 1988), pp. 85–97.

Venice.[50] Perhaps inspired by this earlier formula, the typical altarpiece from the middle of the seventeenth century has monumental columns on either side of the painting; an early example is the main altarpiece of Nuestra Señora de la Oliva in Lebrija, Seville (1629), designed by Miguel Cano and his son Alonso, with paintings by Pablo Legot. Later, designers from Madrid developed this idea further and added the curved toppings characteristic of altarpieces dating from the last third of the century, such as those by the Churriguera family; one of the first was the main altarpiece of the church of the Convento de Jesús y María of Valladolid (1658), with paintings by Mateo Cerezo on a structure designed by Sebastián de Benavente.[51]

These changes had many practical repercussions. The newer designs lowered the price of altarpieces, as they reduced the ratio of wood to canvas (the costs of the materials and labour involved in carving and gilding far exceeded those of painting). The large scale of the canvases made them even more of a focal point than their predecessors, and the monumental architecture of the altarpiece around them stressed their importance visually, rather than creating secondary foci of interest. The altarpiece thus became more visually dominant, while the painting at its centre was more immediately distinguishable as soon as one walked into a church.

These architectural developments were not isolated phenomena. Changes in some iconographies may also be put down to a growing interest in visual clarity; for example, around the same time as single-scene altarpieces became the norm, depictions of the

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[50] Martín, 'Avance de una tipología', pp. 122–23; see also *El Greco*, ed. by David Davies and John H. Elliott, exh. cat. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 7 October 2003 to 11 January 2004, and London, the National Gallery, 11 February to 23 May 2004 (London: National Gallery, 2003), p. 160, Fig. 46.

[51] Martín, 'Avance de una tipología', p. 124.

Immaculate Conception conforming to the *tota pulchra* type (in which the Virgin is surrounded by vignettes related to her attributes in the Litany of Loreto) were displaced by the *mulier amicta sole* type (based on the imagery of the book of Revelation) which was more cohesive visually.[52] Similar changes can be detected in the iconographies of the Crucifixion: as Mâle observed, late-medieval and sixteenth-century crucifixions were more ambitious as far as composition was concerned, and included many characters and details such as the good and bad thieves, soldiers, and onlookers.[53] By the seventeenth century, Spanish painters (with very few exceptions) omitted these distracting details to concentrate on the figure of Christ, while the number of secondary figures was reduced to two or three at the most – the Virgin, St John, and Mary Magdalen. But the most common Crucifixion iconography in seventeenth-century Spain is, in fact, that of the Crucifix alone, the simplest and most concentrated of all possible interpretations of the theme.

In some cases, the chronology of an artist's oeuvre provides clear evidence of his interest in developing clearer compositions in line with the pursuit of *perspicuitas*. This is particularly evident in cases in which the same subject was explored several times and at different moments through an artist's career, as with the two canvases of *The Education of the Virgin* by Roelas that will be discussed in the next chapter. Another example can be found in the many versions of *The Purification of the Temple* painted by El Greco, an artist who frequently reworked and copied his own paintings, in the tradition of the Venetian family workshops. According to Whethey, there are four autograph pictures of this subject, the earliest of which may have been painted in Italy in the late 1560s, and the

[52] See Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception*, Ch. 2.
[53] On depictions of the Immaculate Conception and their evolution, see Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception*; Mâle, pp. 254–55.

latest dating from the early 1610s.[54] The same number appeared in the inventory of El Greco's possessions drawn up in 1614, shortly after his death, by his son Jorge Manuel.[55] The paintings listed by Whethey as autographs are now at the National Gallery of Art, Washington (Fig. 27), the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota (Fig. 28), the National Gallery, London, and the parish church of San Ginés, Madrid (Fig. 29); to these should be added the small canvas at the Frick Collection, New York, which is closely related (as a *bozetto* or a *ricordo*) to the paintings in London and Madrid.[56] As El Greco developed his ideas about *The Purification of the Temple*, his pictures became increasingly clear. In all versions, the artist's goal was to convey the dynamic, violent character of the scene by means of line, rhythm, and composition. From his first attempt onwards, El Greco set out to achieve this without compromising the clarity and readability of the painting.

The earliest painting (Washington; Fig. 27) has been dated to between 1567 and 1570, when El Greco was in Venice, or to 1571, after he left for Rome.[57] It is the least readable of all. The composition is unbalanced, with all the figures crammed on the middle and left, whereas on the right an empty, meaningless space recedes into the background. The setting is further complicated by the many levels of the floor and curiously shaped steps, which also create some spatial ambiguities – for example, the rise

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[54] Harold E. Wethey, *El Greco and his School*, 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), I, 21–25.
[55] Francisco de Borja de San Román y Fernández, 'De la vida del Greco: Nueva serie de documentos inéditos', *Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología*, 3.8 (1927), 139–95 and 275–339.
[56] Gabriele Finaldi, 'The Purification of the Temple', in *El Greco*, ed. by Davies and Elliott, pp. 87–95 (pp. 92 and 93); the four paintings are ##6–9.
[57] Davies and Elliott, #6; Jonathan Brown and Richard G. Mann, *Spanish Paintings of the Fifteenth through Nineteenth Centuries*, The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1990), pp. 67–72; Colin Eisler, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: European Schools Excluding Italian* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1977), p. 193.

of the step behind the partridge seems to be equal to that of the one to the right of the standing naked child, but we know that this cannot be because the former step meets the latter at half its rise. Similarly, the balding man on the bottom right of the group cannot be sitting on the edge of the step while resting his left forearm on the handle of the basket of oysters, which is too far back.

The viewer's attention is also distracted by many secondary details, none of which is particularly relevant to the main story, whether taken symbolically or literally. In the foreground, two little rabbits show an unrealistic interest in some oysters; to the left, a partridge walks on the edge of a step, and another bird (perhaps a jay) sits on one of the mouldings of the central archway.[58] The overlapping of the figures is ambiguous in a number of areas, creating some confusion as to the position of the bodies. In the groups of heads at the top on left and right, it is not clear which overlaps which, or where the bodies connected to these heads are. These compositional ambiguities are further increased by the colouring, in that several areas, including Christ's mantle and the area immediately to the left, are painted in an almost uniform blue tone, probably azurite.[59] These islands of pigment create coherent visual units that do not always coincide with the characters' garments. As Gestalt psychology explains, for two-dimensional forms that 'touch' each other to be perceived as overlapping they must be seen as separate from

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[58] It has been suggested by Finaldi that the presence of these non-kosher animals signifies the defilement of the Temple; see Davies and Elliott, p. 88.

[59] For a discussion of El Greco's technique and materials, and a comparison of the other blue pigments which he used, see María del C. Garrido and José M. Cabrera, 'Estudio técnico comparativo de dos Sagradas Familias del Greco', *BMP*, 88 (1982), 93–101 (pp. 93–97), and Ann Massing, 'The examination and restoration of El Greco's *El Espolio*', *The Hamilton Kerr Institute*, 1 (1988), 76–81 (p. 79).

each other and belonging to different planes; these distinctions are not made in the painting, and therefore some passages are rendered difficult to read.[60]

In his later versions, El Greco introduced small changes each time to increase *perspicuitas*. Some of the problems are solved in the second painting, now in Minnesota (Fig. 28). The distracting rabbits and birds have disappeared, and the man leaning on a basket has been integrated coherently into the surrounding space by simplifying the shape of the step on which he sits. The painter has also solved some of the problems with the three central figures (Christ, the man with a raised elbow, and the bearded figure who raises his hands in between them) by unifying and differentiating the tones of the clothing: the robe of the man on Christ's left is now of one colour, where in the Washington version the different hues produce a strangely disjointed effect, while the robe of the bearded figure has been changed to a greyish mauve tone, to set it apart from Christ's mantle. The overlaps of the characters in the background have also been rendered in a clearer way. All these changes improve legibility, and make the figure of Christ more dominant, as Finaldi has observed.[61]

If these two versions of *The Purification of the Temple* were the only ones known to us, it would seem that El Greco's rethinking of the subject only went as far as correcting some faults in composition and perspective. However, the three paintings of the same subject executed after 1600 show that the artist still was not satisfied, and strove after an ideal which was visually and rhetorically more complex than mere 'correctness'. The versions in New York and London mark a further step in the process of clarification:

[60] For a study of the perception of overlap, see Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974; repr. 2004), pp. 120–23.
[61] Davies and Elliott, p. 89.

most of the heads in the background have been eliminated, and so have the different floor levels. The receding space on the right of the composition has been cropped out, placing the figure of Christ at or very near the centre of the canvas. Where in earlier paintings El Greco had failed to fit some of the figures in comfortably, here each figure or group is carefully placed and reserve areas have been planned ahead. The Madrid picture (Fig. 29) represents the culmination of the process: the figure of Christ is given greater prominence by the steeple-like structure behind him, which would occupy the place reserved in a church for the Tabernacle, and introduces a fresh Christological and sacramental dimension to the story. A new figure has also been added on the far left, similar in scale and pose to that on the far right, but reversed, both of whom are bending towards the centre of the picture. This technique of framing the scene with figures in parenthesis balances the composition and helps to redirect the gaze of the viewer to the figure of Christ in the centre.[62]

The subject of *The Purification of the Temple* clearly fascinated El Greco. The fact that the pictures were in his studio at his death seems to indicate that he explored it as a personal exercise, without having received commissions or expecting to sell the paintings. There are several studio versions of the same subject, which also suggests that the paintings may have functioned as *ricordi* and given to assistants as examples to study and copy.[63] All this makes it legitimate to interpret El Greco's paintings of *The*

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[62] The device is often found in classical art, especially in Roman sepulchre reliefs, and also in later works of art, such as Van der Weyden's *Deposition* (Prado), formerly in the King's collection. Around the same time as this version was painted, Poussin and other Roman painters experimented with the same mechanism.

[63] On the problems around El Greco's *modelli* and *ricordi*, see Jonathan Brown, 'El Greco: An Introduction to His Life, Art, and Thought', in *El Greco: Themes and Variations,* ed. by Jonathan Brown and Susan G. Galassi, exh. cat. New York, The Frick Collection, 15 May to 29 July 2001 (New York: The Frick Collection, 2001), pp. 9–29 (pp. 24–25).

Purification of the Temple as his own experiment in *perspicuitas*, an enlightening example of the repercussions of an abstract rhetorical idea on the physical making of the paintings and therefore on the way they appeared to their viewers. It cannot be a coincidence that around the same time a new type of sermon, the *sermón de un solo tema*, gained ground on the more traditional homiletic and polythematic styles of preaching.[64] Preachers as well as artists working for the Church responded to the requirements of the rhetorical idea of *perspicuitas*: clarity and absence of distracting sidelines.

AMPLIFICATIO

The rhetorical category corresponding to the second group of features, *amplificatio*, has already been discussed in the previous chapters referring to speech-enlivening mechanisms. As the term suggests, this is achieved by adding ornamentation in the form of vivid life-like details that are not strictly necessary. Though not essential, these details are not superfluous since they refer back to the main subject and contribute to enabling the viewer to experience the overall effect intended by the painting, like the 'sad' stones, trees and animals in Francisco de Holanda's *Da Pintura Antiga*. Life-likeness was seen as an elocutive quality; its purpose, like that of the poetical *ante oculos*, was to engage the emotions; and it was achieved by means of detail. Discussions about decorum often revolved around seemingly unimportant points of ornament; as Paleotti put it, the quality of 'proprietà' in a painting was concerned with its circumstances and accidents.[65] Some of the word-painting techniques recommended in rhetorical treatises are easily adaptable

[64] See Smith, pp. 46–52, and Herrero, *La predicación de la Compañía de Jesús*, p. 188.
[65] *Discorso*, p. 169 (bk 2, Ch. 25).

to the visual arts, and especially to painting. Four of them will be discussed here: *antithesis*, *apostrophe*, *evidentia*, and *exemplum*.

One such example is *antithesis*, a procedure frequently used in meditations or sermons on the Passion, in which Christ's goodness, innocence and love are highlighted by setting them against the evilness, cruelty and base character of his torturers. In a text discussed above (p. 206), Sigüenza knowingly chose the word 'contrapónese' to comment on this rhetorical dimension in the painting by El Mudo, in his contrast between Christ's stance and the 'fiereza y desenvoltura' of the torturers. It is the same rhetorical mechanism used in paintings that conflate two very different aspects of Christ's life, his childhood and the Passion. It can be found, for example, in scenes of St Joseph's workshop in which Christ has pricked his finger with a thorn and two sticks on the floor casually assume the shape of the Cross, as well as in paintings of the child Jesus asleep on a Cross, carrying it, or playing with toys which are miniature *arma Christi*.[66] The iconographies of Christ as a child were popularised by the Jesuits from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. Among the most popular works executed for them is the series of twenty engravings by the Wierix brothers entitled 'Cor Iesu Amanti Sacrum' (1590-1600). Such representations, in which serious theological concepts are embodied in forms that might now seem sentimental, found favour especially with female religious Orders, and continued to be cultivated well into the nineteenth century.[67]

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[66] See Mâle, pp. 302–04, and Pérez, *Pintura barroca*, p. 47; according to Sánchez Cantón, this trend was inaugurated by Luis de Morales in the 1560s; see Francisco J. Sánchez Cantón, *Nacimiento e infancia de Cristo*, Los grandes temas del arte cristiano en España, Serie Cristológica, 1 (Madrid: BAC, 1948), pp. 173–74.

[67] See Emilia Montaner López, '"Piadosas significaciones" en la devoción postridentina', *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía*, 2.4 (1989), 36–42.

Another rhetorical mechanism related to *amplificatio* frequently used in sermons, and also adapted to images, is *apostrophe*.[68] Preachers punctuated their sermons by addressing their listeners in the second person in passages of particular emotional intensity, or by speaking to them as if from the image they were contemplating. Painters achieved the same rhetorical device by including figures that look out of the picture at the viewer. The effect is both disturbing, and engaging: the viewer does not expect the painting to look back at them, since they know that, no matter how life-like they are, the figures and actions represented are unreal. A figure returning the gaze of the viewer subverts the usual relationship between people and paintings, the line that separates the real world from that of the picture, the natural from the artificial, life from art.[69] For a moment, it is as if the *poesía muda* might begin to speak; it is not surprising that Orozco interpreted these 'speaker' figures as a product of the influence of theatre.[70] One such figure is the child in the *Flagellation* by El Mudo, discussed above (Fig. 21). But perhaps the best-known example is a sculpture, Juan de Juni's *Entombment* group (Fig. 30), in which a male figure (Joseph of Arimathea?) addresses the viewer while holding a thorn.[71] The viewer is supposed to read from this gesture the painful detail that the thorn had become lodged in Christ's head.

Clergy in charge of the commissioning of paintings were aware of the emotive potential of such figures. The stance and facial features given to them are often such as to give the viewer the impression of impending speech. This, in return, would encourage the

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[68] On apostrophes in sermons, see pp. 86–97.
[69] Wylie Sypher, *Four Stages of the Renaissance Style: Transformations in Art and Literature, 1400–1700* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), pp. 143 ff.
[70] Emilio Orozco Díaz, *El teatro y la teatralidad del barroco* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1969), pp. 41–42.
[71] Juan José Martín González, *Juan de Juni, vida y obra*, Arte de España (Madrid: Patronato Nacional de Museos, 1974), pp. 142–58.

viewer to imagine what the figure would say, and thereby to engage in a form of affective mental prayer. There is evidence that some images where commissioned with this function in mind; the most famous of them is the *Cristo de la Clemencia*, a polychrome wood crucifix by Juan Martínez Montañés (1568–1649), commissioned for the Cathedral of Seville by canon Mateo Vázquez de Leca in 1603 (Fig. 31). The contract specified that

> el Cristo ha de estar vivo, antes de haber expirado, con la cabeza inclinada sobre el lado derecho, como *mirando* a cualquier persona que estuviese orando al pie de él, como que está el mismo Cristo *hablándole* y como quejándose de que aquello que padece es por el que está orando, y así ha de tener los ojos y rostro, con alguna severidad y los ojos del todo abiertos.[72]

These details were intended explicitly to encourage interaction between the viewer and the image: the viewer was to pray as if the image was addressing him or her, and to imagine what it would say. The contract goes as far as to specify the content of the desired response. To put it in rhetorical terms, it asks the artist to use the device of *apostrophe* to make the image more emotionally engaging, and to elicit the appropriate response from the person praying at its feet.

Preachers exploited this feature of some images when they spoke on their behalf, as has been seen, and experience of this type of sermons would have created in the listeners certain expectations as to what the image might say. Churchgoers would have been familiar with stories about images miraculously speaking to a saint or a devout person rapt in prayer or meditation before them. The protagonists of these stories, which sermons helped to popularise, ranged from St Francis and St Bonaventure in the Middle Ages, to the two greatest Spanish Carmelite mystics, Teresa de Ávila and John of the

[72] Quoted by Beatrice G. Proske, *Juan Martínez Montañés, Sevillan Sculptor* (New York: Hispanic Society of America, 1967), p. 40; see also Stoichita, pp. 69–70.

Cross.[73] San Juan's dialogue with an image of Christ in Segovia was witnessed by a companion friar who subsequently wrote an account of the episode, and a print by Diego de Astor gives visual interpretation to this text (Fig. 32).[74] The setting is easily recognisable as a church interior; the saint is shown kneeling in front of the altar of a side chapel, decorated with a painting of Christ carrying the cross in half-length. Aside from the *cartellino* containing Christ's words, nothing in the print suggests that anything extraordinary is happening. The cross-hatching on the figure of Christ indicates that it is actually two-dimensional, a painting, illuminated by the two candles on the altar. Christ does not come to life, nor does a *rompimiento de gloria* indicate that that area of the print is the content of a supernatural vision. Knowledge of this narrative must have affected the expectations of viewers when approaching religious images, as well as the intentions of painters who made them and preachers who coaxed viewers' emotional involvement with them.

However, the principal mechanism used in painting with respect to *amplificatio* was *evidentia*. This involves furnishing the image with a number of life-like details aimed at making it more emotionally engaging, so that the viewer is readier to 'believe' and respond to the image with which he is presented. The central place of *evidentia* is clear, for example, in the writings of John of the Cross, which focused almost solely on the viewer's response in typical post-Tridentine fashion. Despite regarding the outward

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[73] St Francis prayed in the church of St Damiano, where 'the painted image of Christ crucified moved its lips and addressed him'; see Tommaso Da Celano, *The Lives of Saint Francis of Assisi by Brother Thomas of Celano*, ed. and trans. by A. G. Ferrers Howell (London: Methuen, 1908), p. 154 (*Vita Secunda*, Ch. 6. 10).

[74] Francisco de Yepes, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 12738, fol. 613 ff.; see Crisógono de Jesús Sacramentado, 'Vida de San Juan de la Cruz', in *Vida y obras de San Juan de la Cruz* (Madrid: BAC, 1955), pp. 402–03, and Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink, *Tiempo y vida de San Juan de la Cruz* (Madrid: BAC, 1992), pp. 800–01.

aspect of religious images as vanity, and individuals' preferences for certain types of images as foibles, he singled out one stylistic feature that he saw as directly correlated to an image's success: 'las que más al propio y vivo están sacadas' (those that are most lifelike) generally make the greatest impact on the viewer's devotion, and therefore are to be preferred.[75]

As with *apostrophe*, the function of *evidentia* was to blur the line separating the world of the painting from that of the spectator; as Juan de Jáuregui wrote in his *Diálogo*, paintings coax the human eye into seeing bodies that breathe and feel instead of the flat surface of the canvas.[76] A life-like appearance is convincing, as it encourages the viewer to approach the painting with a feeling of immediacy. The claim made by Jáuregui, that paintings can be so skilfully made that they trick the viewers into taking for real the bodies and objects depicted, is, of course, a time-honoured commonplace. The idea stretches back to several well-known anecdotes from Pliny the Elder's *Historia Naturalis* such as that of Zeuxis, who painted a bunch of grapes with such skill that the birds flew up to them, or Parrhasius, whose accomplished trompe-l'oeil curtain deceived Zeuxis.[77] The same language and comparisons were used in discussions of religious art; for example, Palomino comments on a picture of a crucifix by Juan Sánchez Cotán that it was done 'con tal propiedad en la perspectiva, que se ha visto repetidas veces, querer los pajaros sentarse en los clavos'.[78] Such hyperbolic statements underlined the rhetorical powers of successful paintings, in exactly the same way as successful use of *enargeia* in

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[75] *Subida*, III. 35. 3.
[76] 'Yo [la Pintura], con vigor diferente, / convenzo la vista humana, / que juzga al verme presente / ser cuerpo que espira y siente / lo que es superficie llana'; Juan de Jáuregui, 'Diálogo entre la Naturaleza y las dos artes, Pintura y Escultura (1618)', in *TPSO*, pp. 147–56 (p. 153).
[77] On illusionistic painting, see Pliny, pp. 307–43 (bk 35, Ch. 36); the anecdotes of Zeuxis and Parrhasius appear on pp. 309–11.
[78] Palomino, *Parnaso español*, #60, p. 432.

sermons was said to summon images in front of the eyes of the listeners. In spite of the results never quite living up to the paradigms of Pliny and Quintilian, *evidentia* was a central element in making paintings and speeches more convincing.

Seventeenth-century Spaniards were also trained to look at art in terms of the reality it represented (see p. 87, above). As far as the viewer's experience is concerned, a painting that is lifelike reduces the distance between the image and the imaged, and highlights the connection between the two. For example, a somewhat sycophantic courtier wrote about the reverence he experienced on seeing a very lifelike portrait of Philip IV by Velázquez: '… al verle me infundió respeto y provocó a dignissima veneración y reverencia, porque no le faltaba más que la voz, porque tenía mucha alma en carne viva'.[79] A similar reaction was interpreted visually in one of the paintings that decorated the *Salón de Reinos* at the Buen Retiro, the *Recovery of Bahía* by Juan Bautista Maíno.[80] In the background, the vanquished enemies kneel to a portrait of the King as they would if the sovereign himself had made an appearance. These reactions are clearly similar to those described elsewhere in relation to religious images, referred to as 'retratos' in inventories and in other contexts. Verisimilitude, or at least the inclusion of some life-like details, was seen as a valuable asset to elicit the desired response from readers and viewers alike.

In previous chapters *evidentia* has been dealt with under *enargeia*, that is, from the point of view of written or spoken words concerning the circumstances of how, where, and when a sermon took place with the intention of creating a strongly visual

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[79] Lázaro Díaz del Valle, 'Origen e yllustración del nobilíssimo y real arte de la pintura (1656)', in *TPSO*, pp. 459–78 (p. 468).
[80] Prado, P000885; see Leticia Ruiz Gómez, *Juan Bautista Maíno, 1581–1649*, exh. cat. Madrid, Museo del Prado, 20 October 2009 to 17 January 2010 (Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado, 2009), pp. 180–92, #34.

response in the reader or listener. This rhetorical principle can easily be applied to painting in the same way. Paleotti drew up a list of the possible circumstances which artists use to enliven a painting, and focused on how these can compromise the decorum of a painting (for example, if the hermit St John the Baptist were depicted as richly dressed). The list was clearly inspired by those in rhetorical treatises under the figures of description; it includes terms such as 'quantità', 'postura', 'luoghi', 'azzione', 'tempo', 'abiti'.[81]

Among the array of techniques related to *evidentia*, gestures and facial expressions were considered an especially useful resource for what theorists called 'pintura de los afectos' – where *afecto* meant both the figures' emotions and their visible manifestation, which should affect the viewer's own affective response.[82] Documents and works of art demonstrate that gestures and *afectos* were a matter of interest already in the last decades of the sixteenth century, as has been shown (see p. 204, above). The downcast gaze of the Christ in Navarrete's *Flagellation* (Fig. 21), discussed by Sigüenza, caused the writer to reflect on its meaning and brought him thoughts full of 'devoción, piedad, y reverencia'. Juan de Juanes (c. 1523–1579), a contemporary of Navarrete working in Valencia, developed a highly gesticulative style which has recently been interpreted in the light of contemporary rhetorical theory.[83] Experiments in the depiction of *afectos* by Spanish painters were often encouraged through direct or indirect study of Italian paintings – this was certainly the case with Juanes, who, though he probably never left Spain, conscientiously studied the works of Sebastiano del Piombo available to him

[81] *Discorso*, bk 2, Ch. 25, esp. pp. 360–64.
[82] Carducho, fols 139r–42r.
[83] See Juan L. González García, '*Ut pictura rhetorica*: Juan de Juanes y el retablo de San Esteban de Valencia', *BMP*, 17.35 (1999), 21–56 (p. 28).

in Valencia. One generation later, an interest in expression of *afectos* characterised the Bolognese and Roman followers of the Carraccis and in particular Ludovico Carracci (1555–1619), of whom the young Velázquez had direct experience in his first trip to Italy, as demonstrated in *Joseph's Bloody Coat Brought to Jacob* (1629-30).[84] But well before this, Gutiérrez de los Ríos (1600) commented on this aspect of painting: he refers to 'demostrar todo género de afectos de ira, misericordia, temor, o amor, y passarlos en los oyentes, para poder persuadir e inclinarlos a lo que se dize' as one of the two main ways in which painting emulates rhetoric, the other being the multiplicity of styles of diction.[85]

The concept of *amplificatio*, to which the expression of *afectos* belongs, is crucial in order to understand the aesthetics of Spanish seventeenth-century religious painting, and it needs to be grasped in its interplay with *perspicuitas*. As we have seen, one of the underlying assumptions behind *perspicuitas* was that unnecessary detail distracts the viewer, whereas the inclusion of relevant details enhances one's experience of a painting. Lifelike details (*evidentia*) were not to be introduced indiscriminately, as most Spanish religious paintings from the seventeenth-century will confirm; different parts of the canvas are treated with varying degrees of detail. The rationale for what is distracting and what is desirable comes from the religious discourse that the painting expresses visually.

The famous *Cristo de San Plácido* by Velázquez, mentioned above (c. 1632; Fig. 15), provides a good case for study. The crucifix is set very close to the picture plane, and

[84] See José L. Colomer, 'Roma 1630: *La túnica de José* y el estudio de las "pasiones"', *Reales Sitios*, 36.141 (1999), 39–49; see also *Velázquez*, ed. by Dawson W. Carr, exh. cat. London, National Gallery, 18 October 2006 to 21 January 2007 (London: National Gallery, 2006), #17, pp. 152–53; see also Salvador Salort Pons, *Velázquez en Italia* (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico, 2002), pp. 44–50.
[85] Gaspar Gutiérrez de los Ríos, 'Noticia general para la estimación de las artes (1600)', in *TPSO*, pp. 61–84 (p. 79).

against a dark background of deep, almost black green that seems to have some liquid transparency to it; this formula was chosen for reasons related to *perspicuitas*. It is clear to the naked eye that some areas of the body and the Cross are rendered in greater detail than others; for example, great care has been placed in describing the hands and feet (especially the nails), the wound on the side, the crown of thorns, and the blood trickling down the body and the wood of the cross. By contrast, other areas such as the thighs, legs, and arms are left almost blank, as are the chest and trunk. The navel is revealingly written in with greater emphasis than, for example, the nipples, and the horizontal beam of the cross has been filled in with more detail than the vertical one, for reasons which will be explained presently.

Velázquez prioritised some areas over the rest of the canvas through a different application of the paint, as disclosed by radiography and infrared reflectography. Technical observation suggests that he painted the shape of the cross over the background.[86] The horizontal beam is more fluorescent than the vertical, suggesting that it was painted as a separate layer with a higher content of lead white to add body and visibility. A further layer with still more lead white locks in the general form of the body; over this, the hands and feet, the details of which were later slightly reworked by the painter, are laid on with yet thicker paint. The upper layers of the painting correspond to the highlights on the loincloth, the nails, and the crown of thorns, executed in thick *impasto* with a high content of lead white. A progression can be detected from the more

[86] Radiography reveals the technique of the painter, from the support, ground, and preparation, to the latest modifications. Infrared reflectography is useful when the thinness of the paint layers makes them undetectable in radiograph: the infrared light is reflected by the different layers of colour according to their permeability, revealing the structure of the painting. My observations are based on the technical study of the painting in María del C. Garrido Pérez, *Velázquez: Técnica y evolución* (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 1992), pp. 279–87.

generic lower layers, which contain more calcite and less lead white, to the higher contents in lead white in the upper layers, corresponding to increasingly specific details. Technical examination allows us, as it were, to see *amplificatio* taking form in front of our eyes, through the medium of paint.

Velázquez treated blood in a completely different way, using an organic pigment, red lake, thinly diluted in oil to produce a liquid, semi-transparent glaze. He applied this over the dry layers below, making the oily paint dribble down the canvas to leave a trail that perfectly describes the appearance as well as the behaviour of blood. This innovative technique may have been inspired through observation of the polychromy of the sculptures of Gregorio Fernández (1576–1636), such as his supine dead Christs. Fernández used a glaze-like transparent paint containing resin to simulate the blood and water that flowed from the wound in Christ's side, allowing it to trickle and pool in a way that looks natural.[87] Velázquez may have seen three such sculptures in Madrid's churches of the Capuchins of El Pardo, the Benedictine nuns of San Plácido, and the royal foundation of La Encarnación.

There is a fundamental similarity between these features of the painting and the *loci* of meditation writings and sermons: the narrator, painter, or preacher pauses at relevant moments to furnish his description with details that indicate a point on which the reader, viewer, or listener should meditate. The difference, of course, is that sermons and meditation texts allow for these details to be explained, whereas paintings do not. In the

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[87] On the polychromy of Gregorio Fernández's sculptures, see Rosemarie Mulcahy, 'Images of Power and Salvation', in *El Greco to Velázquez: Art during the Reign of Philip III*, ed. by S. Schroth and R. Baer, exh. cat. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 20 April to 27 July, 2008, and Duke University, Nasher Museum of Art, 21 August to 9 November, 2008 (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, 2008) pp. 123–45 (pp. 133–34). Incidentally, ultra-violet fluorescence shows that there was more blood on Velázquez's *Dead Christ* than can be seen now: some of it was covered up by the painter himself, and some drops on the body were eliminated in the course of an old restoration.

case of paintings viewed without the aid of spoken explanations from a preacher, it was left to the viewer to observe these elements and make the relevant connections – a task with which he or she would be familiar after listening to ekphrastic sermons. Thus, the horizontal beam of the Cross, its width, and Christ's outstretched arms and hands would have been commented on as figures signifying the universality of salvation; the navel refers to the mystery of the Incarnation; the crown of thorns, nails and wounds, all classic meditation *loci*, to Christ's kingship and to his sufferings on the Cross. The impeccably white loincloth wrapping the body, as well as the blood dripping down from the feet and seemingly out of the painting down to the place where an altar would be located, were no doubt intended to complete the meditation by introducing a Eucharistic perspective.

It is not a coincidence that in Velázquez's *Cristo de San Plácido*, as in many other examples, ornament in the form of life-like detail was applied according to the same principles that operate in the case of meditational texts and sermons. In addition to *evidentia*, these details could also be understood as introducing elements of *antithesis*: the roughness of the wood of the horizontal beam is set in contrast to the smoothness of the skin, and the softness of the flesh in the hands and feet seems to yield to the hardness of the nails – all of which are, again, well-worn meditation *loci*. Details corresponding to meditation *loci* within the Passion cycle could also be taken out of their context to be contemplated separately, thereby creating new iconographies: for example, the Passion can be envisioned by means of a series of paintings in which each of the ubiquitous *arma*

Christi is presented to the viewer by an angel, an innovative procedure appropriate for prayerful, imaginative contemplation.[88]

The fourth and last type of painterly techniques related to *amplificatio* involves figures which can be linked to the rhetorical device of *exemplum*, typically understood as an illustration of a point in the shape of a brief anecdote containing a positive or negative moral. The subject-matter of many paintings was intended to provide the viewer with models of conduct to imitate, as is particularly true in the case of depictions of the saints: the post-Tridentine church presented details of their lives through paintings, sermons, and books as immediate examples of Christian virtues and good works. The Church especially favoured iconographies of the saints known for their charity; for example, the almsgiving of St Thomas of Villanueva (popularly known as 'el santo de la bolsa'), or St Martin dividing his cloak with a poor man.[89]

Other paintings include secondary figures that function as examples as to how to approach the painting itself. Such figures can be found in the several *Pietàs* painted by Jusepe de Ribera, like the one at the Certosa di San Martino, Naples, dated 1637 (Fig. 33).[90] On the far left, a weeping angel delicately holds Christ's left foot and kisses the wound. The viewers could extrapolate this gesture of adoration and take it as an example of how to approach Christ's body in the Eucharist. But also, more directly, the angel in

[88] For examples of such series in Madrid (by Mateo Gallardo, 1628–1667) and Seville (by a follower of Murillo), see Diego Angulo and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Pintura madrileña del segundo tercio del siglo XVII,* Historia de la Pintura Española (Madrid: CSIC; Instituto Diego Velázquez, 1983), p. 67, ##1–7, pl. 66–69, and Enrique Valdivieso, *Catálogo de las pinturas de la Catedral de Sevilla* (Sevilla: Sever-Cuesta, 1978).

[89] See Mâle, pp. 84–92.

[90] Elisabeth Du Gué Trapier, *Ribera* (New York: [Hispanic Society of America], 1952), pp. 150, 153, 162, and 270; see also Clovis Whitfield and Jane Martineau eds., *Painting in Naples 1606–1705: From Caravaggio to Giordano*, exh. cat. London, Royal Academy of Arts, 2 October to 12 December 1982 (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1982), #122.

the picture exemplifies the reverential attitude with which one should approach images of the dead Christ, including that in Ribera's *Pietà* itself. Several versions of the painting exist, one of which was at the Escorial, and the painter popularised the composition by means of an engraving.[91] Seventeenth-century Spaniards were encouraged to kiss religious images (prints, paintings, and sculptures), especially of the Crucifix, as a way of showing 'reverence to the prototype' (see. p. 10 above), a practice which survived well into the twentieth century. Like the angel in Ribera's *Pietà*, paintings of the Deposition or the Lamentation often include characters who adore the wounds on Christ's hands, the Crown of Thorns, or the nails, or look at the dead body and react with gestures that indicate compassion – like the child in Velázquez's *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation*, discussed in the previous chapter (Fig. 20).

Figures of this type, such as those found in the *Pietà* (1627) by the Sevillian painter Juan de Uceda, are coherent with the scene depicted.[92] Other depictions of religious subjects, however, include one or several figures incongruously dressed in seventeenth-century fashion, which usually memorialise individuals linked to the commissioning of the painting and by their nature establish a connection between the realms of the painting and the viewer. These donor figures, which are often represented gazing on the main scene in an attitude of adoration, perform the function of a user's manual to the painting.[93] The family portraits that often adorn the first page of *ejecutorias*

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[91] See Nicola Spinosa, *Ribera* (Naples: Electa, 2003), #A47 (London, National Gallery, c. 1620), #A57 (Paris, Louvre), #A127 (Madrid, Thyssen-Bornemisza), #A189 (Naples, Certosa di San Martino). Two workshop copies are now in the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid; see Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, 'A propósito de algunos Entierros de Cristo de Ribera', in *Miscel·lània en homenatge a Joan Ainaud de Lasarte*, 2 vols (Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya; Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1998–99), II (1999), 89–100.
[92] Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 222, #71, pl. 164.
[93] See, for example, *La Virgen y el Niño con el Ángel de la guarda* by Antonio Mohedano (Fig. 24).

(letters patent of nobility) provide a fascinating case of study. For example, in the *ejecutoria* of Captain Domingo Castañeda Velasco, kept in the Hispanic Society of America (Fig. 34), the petitioner is portrayed together with his wife and four children, all kneeling with their hands clasped before an altarpiece, which displays statues of the Immaculate Conception, Saint Dominic, and Saint Catherine of Siena. Illuminated *ejecutorias* such as this one proved a family's noble status for posterity, and the illustration functioned as a record of the appearance as much as of the piety of a distinguished ancestor, who through his kneeling portrait taught devotion to his descendants.

TWO MISNOMERS

Since its re-evaluation in the nineteenth century, Spanish Golden-Age painting has been characterised as 'realistic'.[94] More recent scholarship has challenged from different directions what Pérez Sánchez called 'el mito del realismo español', a myth based on a limited and biased understanding.[95] The older, literal readings of many Golden-Age paintings overlooked the symbolic meanings and allusions that the artists intended viewers to decipher.[96] For example, paintings that are now universally accepted as depicting mythological scenes, such as Velázquez's *The Spinners* (that is, *The Fable of*

[94] See, for example, Max J. Friedländer and Enrique Lafuente Ferrari, *El realismo en la pintura del siglo XVII: Países Bajos y España* (Barcelona: Labor, 1935), esp. section 3 ('El Realismo español y la salvación del individuo', pp. 61–64). The authors' elaboration of the concept of realism is not purely aesthetical, as it is seen as an expression of a contemporary religious preoccupation with the individual and individual salvation. An overview of the history of the appreciation of Spanish painting abroad can be found in Gerald Reitlinger, *The Economics of Taste: the Rise and Fall of Picture Prices, 1760–1960*, 3 vols (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1961), I, 52–56 and 132–36.
[95] Pérez, *Pintura barroca*, p. 10.
[96] See 'La pintura programática: visualización de conjuntos y de tipos simbólicos establecidos', and 'Interpretación simbólica del objeto real', in Gállego, *Visión y símbolos*, pp. 153–87 and 188–232.

Arachne), were once interpreted as everyday-life subjects. As Pérez Sánchez concluded, researchers overlooked the fact that the everyday mood of religious painting in the first half of the century responded to the requirements of the Church and is also found, with local variants, in other Catholic countries.[97] That particular painterly style or idiom in religious painting ('tono realista y cotidiano') responded to the requirements of the rhetorical programme of the Church (i.e., *perspicuitas* and *evidentia*). The idea of decorum was its practical formulation.

When the painter and theoretician Jusepe Martínez (1600–1682), probably writing in the 1670s, set himself the task of probing what perfection means in a painting, every aesthetical aspect of his strikingly succinct definition is grounded on a rhetorical, elocutive principle:

> [S]e ha de ver en [la pintura] un lleno majestuoso y un claro y oscuro relevante que no ofenda á la vista; que las figuras principales muestren la gravedad, respeto y decencia, y que hagan su oficio sin que se ponga duda en lo que significan; que se conozca estar las figuras apartadas unas de otras, que tengan el sitio conveniente para distinción segun el grado con que están puestas, que aunque haya multitud, no se embaracen unas a otras; que en arte y colorido sea igual todo junto…[98]

Imitation of nature, which is perhaps the closest term to our 'realism' available to Martínez, does not occur in this definition. His outlook was functional, not aesthetical: his aim was not trueness to life, but figures that 'work' ('hagan su oficio') as part of a painted discourse. The notion of *perspicuitas* is central to his ideal, and the rhetorical foundation of his standpoint means that he can discuss in the same breath disparate aspects such as *chiaroscuro*, decorum, and compositional clarity. Twentieth-century appreciation of seventeenth-century painting stressed the importance of everyday, gritty

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[97] Pérez 1996, pp. 10–11.

[98] Jusepe Martínez, *Discursos practicables del nobilísimo arte de la pintura* [(1673–75)] (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel Tello, 1866), Tratado 19, p. 69.

features which Golden-Age painters and theoreticians did not consider central; the question of 'imitation of nature' was often discussed, but always within the broader theoretical framework of rhetoric, decorum, and *evidentia*.

The use of the modern term 'realism' in connection with Golden-Age painting implies an attitude and a set of values that are alien to the thought of Martínez or any other contemporary writer. For the more extreme proponents of this trend, every aspect of a Spanish seventeenth-century painting must be based on reality; thus, one scholar built a model of the room represented in *Las Meninas* to find out where the King and Queen stood, and another observed rigor mortis on a corpse set on a cross to offer a scientific explanation of Spanish Baroque crucifixes.[99] Instead of interpreting *perspicuitas* and *evidentia* as related to rhetoric, earlier scholarship approached them in stylistic, cultural, or psychological terms, and thus failed to grasp the purpose for which paintings were made. Unlike nineteenth-century Realism, the naturalism of Spanish Golden-Age paintings is not indiscriminate: within one painting, some passages may be rendered in closely observed detail, whereas others are barely sketched in. The rationale behind this is that details should relate to the main subject and contribute to prompting the desired reaction. Meditation and meditation sermons, as we have seen, would acquaint painters with the 'points' that had special significance and therefore required highlighting, in the same way as the use of rhetorical techniques by preachers (such as *antithesis*, *apostrophe*,

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[99] For the model and earlier discussions of *Las Meninas* within the realist paradigm, see 'On the Meaning of Las Meninas', in Brown, *Images and Ideas*, pp. 87–110 (pp. 88 and 89); see also Ramiro de Moya, 'El trazado regulador y la perspectiva en *Las Meninas*', *Arquitectura*, 3 (1961), 3–12. On the experiments with a corpse, see Juan Delgado Roig, *Los signos de la muerte en los crucificados de Sevilla* (1951), ed. by F. García de la Concha Delgado (Dos Hermanas: Castillejo, 2000).

evidentia, and *exemplum*) made painters aware of visual resources that would constitute proper ornaments.

Another misleading label that crops up frequently in the literature is the interpretation of Spanish Baroque art in terms of theatricality. The basic tenet of this thesis, advanced by Orozco, is that a 'sentido teatral' pervades all artistic forms and cultural and social manifestations of the period.[100] Like the upholders of the theory of 'Spanish realism', Orozco was influenced by post-Hegelian Idealism in his characterisation of the Baroque as an intellectual abstraction and as the most perfect realisation of 'lo español' (Spanishness, or the Spanish 'national character'). In this regard, the author comes across as a child of his time, and the same may be true of his characterisation of the Baroque: scholars of his generation often saw seventeenth-century art through the prism of the archaizing *barroco castizo* of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, which they may have perceived rightfully as redolent of the theatrical *Nacionalcatolicismo* of their youth. Orozco's analyses appear deliberately partial, as, even when discussing theatre, he only took into account aspects that 'responden a su expresividad y sentido desbordante', discounting whatever did not fit his theory.[101]

In Orozco's view, all forms of artistic expression (theatre, poetry, painting, sculpture, even sacred oratory) operated on the same level and were deployed in what he terms a 'colectivismo estético', in ways which made them all resemble theatre

[100] Orozco, *Teatro*, p. 11; other authors use similar expressions; see for example Alfonso Pérez Sánchez, 'El concepto del Barroco hoy', in *Ondare*, 19 (2000), 15–23 (pp. 20 and 21), regarding the arts in the second half of the seventeenth century. More recently, an attempt has been made to understand Spanish Golden-Age portraiture in terms of theatricality: Laura R. Bass, *The Drama of the Portrait: Theater and Visual Culture in Early Modern Spain* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).
[101] Orozco, *Teatro*, p. 12.

('teatralización de las artes').[102] The conflation of images and words in sermons is explained in the same way, as a theatralisation of sacred oratory.[103] However, the features which Orozco relates to theatre can in fact be better interpreted as consequences of a pervasive interest in rhetoric: his 'sentido desbordante comunicativo' corresponds to the idea that arts are akin to languages; 'el espectador como término', to artistic means used to communicate a message to an audience, and 'la emoción desbordante comunicativa', to the interest in *movere*.[104] Seventeenth-century sources do not liken such features with theatre even in cases in which the similarity is striking, such as when preachers delivered their sermons in the form of dialogue, playing the different roles: the theoretician Pablo The Jesuit José de Arriaga warned preachers to remember 'que es orador sagrado y no poeta'.[105] In the same way as 'realism' can be seen as a misinterpretation of certain types of *evidentia*, 'theatricality' is a disingenuous reading of *exemplum*, *apostrophe*, and the representation of *afectos* in the visual arts. For seventeenth-century observers the paradigm was rhetoric, not theatre.

Rhetorical knowledge, we may conclude, allowed preachers and painters to understand how their treatment of details affects the all-important outcome of their pastoral and artistic pursuits. From their position of authority, preachers educated artists as to how to make paintings more engaging and therefore more effective; they did so by discussing particular details, as well as by the example of the way they themselves dealt with similar issues. In some cases, this information could be understood from the tone,

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[102] Orozco, *Teatro*, p. 121.
[103] Orozco, *Teatro*, p. 145; the author had discussed this in depth in an earlier article: see Emilio Orozco Díaz, 'La literatura religiosa y el barroco: En torno al estilo de nuestros escritores místicos y ascéticos', *Revista de la Universidad de Madrid*, 11.42–43 (1962), 132–62.
[104] Orozco, *Teatro*, pp. 126, 40, and 145.
[105] Pablo José de Arriaga, *Rhetoris christiani partes septem* (Lyon: Sumptibus Horatij Cardon, 1619), pp. 211–12.

volume and general effect of the preacher's voice. The impact of rhetorical theories on painters resulted in some specific features which have come to be associated with the style of Spanish seventeenth-century paintings: monumental clarity, violent contrasts, lifelike details, and the presence of figures that address the viewer or exemplify how to approach the image itself.

Chapter 6:

Elocutio and Decorum (II): Polemics

> He considerado que los Sermones andan con los tiempos y trages: lo que se estimava ayer, se desprecia oy.[1]
>
> Fray Andrés de Llamazares, OFM (1688)

On 18 October, 1623, the convent of the Trinitarian Order in Madrid celebrated the feast of St Luke, the patron saint of painters and of the Academia de San Lucas in particular, a group similar to Pacheco's circle of friends in Seville.[2] To mark this special occasion, the preacher was none other than Hortensio Félix Paravicino (1580–1633), chief among the King's preachers, and a distinguished public personality. A learned man of letters, Paravicino had carved out for himself a reputation as a master of *conceptista* style and was also a self-declared art lover; he counted among his friends the leading painters and writers of the time, including El Greco, as well as declared mutual enemies Luis de Góngora and Félix Lope de Vega. The painters congregating in the church knew they could expect a dazzling display of erudition, artistic knowledge, and rhetorical flourishes.

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[1] Fray Andrés de Llamazares, *Instrucción de Predicadores* (Burgos: Herederos de Juan Viar, 1688), p. 18; quoted in Herrero, *Predicadores dominicos y franciscanos*, p. 553.

[2] The Madrid *Academia* is less well known than Pacheco's circle (which Palomino only figuratively called an *Academia*), although it must have been more formal; see Javier Portús Pérez, 'Fray Hortensio Paravicino: la Academia de San Lucas, las pinturas lascivas y el arte de mirar', *Espacio, tiempo y forma*, 7th ser., 9 (1996), 77–105 (pp. 88–89).

Near the end of the sermon, having extolled St Luke's virtues as evangelist and painter, Paravicino expressed his wish for 'la puntualidad debida en las pinturas sagradas', which he valued over *gracia* and *valentía* (beauty and painterly bravura), and provided a few examples based on Luke's Gospel. Painters should not depict the newborn Jesus naked in Nativity scenes, as Mary would surely have clothed him on a cold December night and the shepherds had been told to expect him 'wrapped in swaddling clothes' (Luke 2:12), nor should the Magi adore him in the manger, since Joseph and Mary would have brought him home by then. Likewise, Paravicino found no reason for depicting Mary Magdalen crawling on the floor, since Luke wrote that she stood (7:38). 'Por no reñir con los que amo tanto, lo dejo aquí', concluded the preacher, probably leaving a mystified audience as he descended from the pulpit.[3] All of Paravicino's remarks came from a close reading of Luke's Gospel, yet they contravened the iconographical conventions with which the average person would have been familiar, and which painters learnt as part of their training. As the preacher himself admitted, he intended to draw attention to issues that artists traditionally neglected ('aunque no quadre a las atenciones del arte tanto'), revealing a new sensibility and set of preoccupations.

Lively discussions, if not heated polemic, arose at the time around questions such as what constituted proper ornament, and when and how it should be used: the distinction between decent and hollow ornament seems to have been a controversial one among preachers as well as painters. One such polemic occurred after a Jesuit priest, José de Ormaza, published his *Censura de la Elocuencia* (1648). After learning that his fellow

[3] Hortensio Félix Paravicino y Arteaga, 'Oración evangélica en la festividad del glorioso evangelista San Lucas, solemnidad de la Academia de los pintores, en nuestra casa de Madrid a dieciocho de octubre, año de 1623', in *Oraciones evangélicas* (Madrid: imprenta del Reyno, 1640), fols 183^{r}–86^{v} (fol. 186^{v}).

Jesuit and senior Valentín de Céspedes (1595–1668) was himself preparing a treatise on rhetoric with the same title, Ormaza, who held a deep personal antipathy towards Céspedes, beat him to it and published his book under the pseudonym Gonzalo Pérez de Ledesma. Ormaza maintains that 'El modo en que hoy se predica es el mayor contrario a la Elocuencia' (the title of the fifth chapter of the *Censura*) and criticises the type of preaching used by most of his contemporaries, aiming his tirades at Céspedes and Baltasar Gracián in particular.[4] The *Censura* is, as Herrero Salgado characterised it, a personal and unusual book 'escrito en tono agresivo e intencionalmente polémico' which quickly caused a great deal of controversy.[5] Within a year of its release, Ambrosio de Bondía published the *Triunfo de la Verdad sobre la censura de la Elocuencia* (1649). Shortly afterwards, Céspedes wrote his own scathingly satirical response, *Trece por docena*, under the pseudonym of Juan de la Encina. The sharp humour of *Trece por docena* reveals Céspedes's humanistic and academic pedigree: his maternal grandfather was the rhetorician Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, 'El Brocense', and he received an early and thorough education from his father, a professor at Salamanca.[6] In spite of many requests for the book to be published, including that of the archbishop of Burgos, Céspedes preferred not to do so; however, the manuscript circulated widely and must have been copied many times.[7]

If, as Covarrubias's definition of *adornar* suggests, painting and preaching were seen as sharing a common theory of ornament (see p. 187, above), a study of the *Censura*

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[4] Francis Cerdan and José Enrique Laplana Gil, 'Introducción', in Valentín de Céspedes, *Trece por docena*, ed. by F. Cerdán and J. E. Laplana Gil (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1998), pp. 7–73 (pp. 8, 23, and 50).
[5] Herrero, *La oratoria sagrada*, p. 237, quoted in Cerdan and Laplana, p. 24.
[6] See Cerdan and Laplana, pp. 10 and 11.
[7] Cerdan and Laplana, p. 10.

and its ensuing polemic will throw some light on the elusive ideas about decorum current in that time. The last part of the book contains a sermon on the Annunciation by the pseudonymous 'Pérez de Ledesma', intended as a model of eloquence and enabling Ormaza to lavish praise on himself. In the following passage, the preacher expands on the scriptural symbol of the rod (conflating elements taken from Isaiah 11 and Song of Songs 3) and applies it to Mary's assumption into heaven:

> El cedro más altivo que pretende ser columna del firmamento, encumbrando tanto sus hojas que las confunde con las estrellas la vista, aseguró a tanta altura firmeza en las raíces con que baja a unirse al centro de la tierra. Cuando más favorecido de influencias trepa al cielo produciendo una selva en cada rama, más reconocido a la tierra la abraza con más apretados nudos…[8]

The text is laden with rhetorical *ornatus* in the form of conceits, metaphors, hyperboles, hyperbatons, parallelisms, and so on, revealing its author's knowledge of the sermons of Paravicino and of *culterano* and *conceptista* writers from the earlier part of the century.[9] In a note in the margin, the author acknowledged and defended his handling of *ornatus* in this passage:

> Quando, para la explicación de algún lugar [i.e. a quotation from Scripture], viene nacida una destas florecillas, en que no se gastan más ojas que las que pide la aplicación viva, son amenidad digna de cualquiera gravedad, como se ve en los Santos, que en tales ocasiones asean las comparaciones y pintan con vizarrías; y en estas exornaciones cabe más ingenio que en las ampliaciones comunes.[10]

The purpose of the author was to criticise the corrupt style of his contemporaries, and to propose models of true eloquence. As the preacher noted, the solution to the problem of tackling *ornatus* was to strike a balance between 'amenidad' and 'gravedad' (decorum by a different name). By 'gravedad' Ormaza meant the *gravitas* that was required of a

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[8] José de Ormaza, 'Sermón en la Assumpción de María Señora', in José de Ormaza, SJ (alias Gonzalo Pérez de Ledesma), *Censura de la Elocuencia (Zaragoza, 1648)*, ed. by G. Ledda and V. Stagno (Madrid: El Crotalón, 1985), pp. 183–206 (p. 195).

[9] Cerdan argued that features of *culteranismo* and *conceptismo* coexisted in sacred oratory more than in other genres; see Cerdan and Laplana, p. 20.

[10] Ormaza, p. 195.

preacher on account of the dignity of his ministry, the subject of the sermon, and the space in which it was delivered. 'Amenidad', on the other hand, refers to the ornament with which a preacher can embellish his sermon, to make it more interesting or engaging to his congregation of hearers. (It is worth noting that Ormaza also uses the rhetorical term 'ampliación', i.e. *amplificatio*, whose significance to preachers and painters was explained in the previous chapter.)

Experience was probably the only way for preachers to manage the responses of different congregations to more or less ornate styles. The type and amount of ornament that was appropriate in each case also depended on the subject of the sermon. Ormaza seems to have thought that when explaining a Latin quotation from Scripture, the florid style which he used in the passage above was always suitable ('amenidad digna de cualquiera gravedad') rather than limiting it only or specifically to sermons on the Assumption, a joyful feast. Céspedes disagreed, and exposed Ormaza's hypocrisy in tolerating inflated style provided it was Ormaza's own:

> Contempla, amigo letor, las mismas exageraciones que, cuando [Ormaza] no las miraba como suyas, cómo las llamó furor loco y indignas de la mansedumbre de la prosa, puestas en su pluma, ya le enamoran tanto que son florecitas amenísimas, aplicaciones vivas, ornato grave y de tanta mansedumbre que no sacan las uñas para arañar la prosa.[11]

It seems that, although the general rules were clear, it was an open question as to whether individual writers or preachers had complied with them or not. Preachers had different sensibilities, and were generally prone to thinking that their own work was beyond reprehension.

A point on which all writers seem to have agreed is that when a vain preacher overindulges in 'galas oratorias', the congregation is not moved and therefore the sermon

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[11] Céspedes, p. 254 (XI. 24).

becomes a fruitless travesty of what it should be. The epigram accompanying an emblem in Hernando de Soto's *Emblemas moralizadas* (1599) compared a useless sermon to a counterfeit coin: 'Aunque quede satisfecho / Qualquiera grande Orador, / Su oracion no es de valor / Si no ha sido de provecho. / A la vil, falsa moneda / La comparo, y assimilo, / Pues de su elegante estilo / No mas del gusto nos queda'.[12] Around the same time, this idea had led writers like John of the Cross to a distrust or even a downright rejection of rhetoric as misleading, vain, and superfluous (see p. 54, above). Those who supported these views believed that, when it came to preaching the Gospel, worldly human eloquence created an obstacle between the preacher and his listeners, rather than helping in any way. But even if the great majority of preachers did not reject eloquence, they were concerned about *provecho*. The parts of a sermon that were meant to move the audience were subject to special scrutiny to determine whether the *ornatus* was decorous and helped to achieve the aim. Such is the case with descriptions, an area in which sermons were perceived as particularly akin to paintings, and which therefore are useful for exploring both oratorial and painterly decorum.

The second part of the *Censura de la elocuencia* opens with an anthology of six descriptions, which Ormaza calls a 'galería de pinturas' making clear the nature of his pursuit and his connection to Philostratus's *Imagines*.[13] These are given as examples of 'notación', 'efición' and 'narración', techniques which had been discussed theoretically in the previous chapters and which were deemed to be particularly effective to *mover afectos*. For his last description, 'pintura de la triunfante Ascensión', the preacher pulled out all the stops to match the glorious, joyful tone of the feast. He concluded

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[12] Hernando de Soto, *Emblemas Moralizadas* [(1559)], ed. by C. Bravo (Madrid: FUE, 1983), fol. 97r.
[13] Ormaza, pp. 157–67.

congratulating himself: '¿Quién no ve, después de la suspensión desta pintura, abierta la puerta para persuadir el amor de lo eterno, y despreciar la tierra?'. His words, he concludes, 'disponen para que halle, tras ellas, lugar la moción', explicitly connecting *amplificatio* to *movere*.[14] Céspedes, however, referred to this same description in disparagingly ironic terms: '¡Qué briosa! ¡Qué brillante! ¡Qué iluminada! ¡Aparece ya centelleando la pintura de la triunfante Ascensión! [...] Hay mucho de aquello de verterse los Ángeles, como si fueran búcaros de agua de jazmines o vidros de limonada de nieve [...]'.[15] Ormaza's description is, in fact, *briosa*, *brillante* and *iluminada*, as the preacher intended; however, it may be argued that the abundance of verbal ornament obscures the point of the sermon without engaging the emotions in any way which preachers could have deemed profitable. Hence Céspedes disapproved of it as sterile.

VISUAL ORNAMENT

Both painters and preachers knew that the same subject often admitted of several different treatments. As the previous chapter has shown in respect of iconography, painters relied on sermons more than preachers on paintings, because of the authority that was associated with the ministry of the pulpit. The same was true of *elocutio*, as has been seen in connection with the examples of Pacheco's use of sermons. Less frequently, preachers used paintings to justify details in their sermons, as Céspedes does in *Trece por docena* when he criticises Ormaza's excessively youthful description of the Virgin at the time of her death:

[14] Ormaza, p. 167.
[15] Céspedes, p. 328 (XIII. 4. 76).

> Y el uso común de la Iglesia en las pinturas que para sus altares y retablos santísimamente admite, así lo tiene establecido, pues vemos que cuando se pinta la Virgen en las bodas de Caná, en el descendimiento de la cruz, y al tiempo de su santísimo tránsito, no la pintan moza de veinte años … sino mujer mayor, aunque con rostro de sumo señorío y agrado.[16]

Céspedes appealed to the Church's pictorial tradition to support his claim that once again Ormaza had used the wrong type of *ornatus*. Texts such as this, in which the ideas of decorum and response are discussed from the point of view of preachers and painters at the same time, prove how the attitudes of both were interconnected and provide a good example of some of the problems which painters and preachers encountered in maintaining decorum: pictorial as well as literary conventions presented old age in opposition to beauty, and often exploited it for comical and grotesque effect.[17] Depicting the dead Virgin as a young woman would be contrary to historical truth and therefore misleading; depicting her as ugly or decrepit would be indecorous, and would fail to elicit the desired response. Céspedes offers two solutions to the problem. First, he states that in scenes of the Dormition the Virgin must still be depicted as beautiful despite her age. Second, and consistent with his rhetorical outlook, he emphasises the importance of the viewers' response by asking the reader to imagine the reactions of those who saw the dead Virgin, and stating that these should be the same for those who see the painting: her demeanour should be *gravísimo*, *dulce*, *venerable*, *hermoso*; she should also be *aficionada* (liked-likeable) to all, and inspire *profunda reverencia*.

Discussions of *elocutio* make it clear that the type of reaction prompted by the painting had to fall within a range of emotions prescribed by the subject depicted. Thus, it is fitting for paintings of the Virgin and Child and the Nativity to be 'tender' or 'happy',

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[16] Céspedes, p. 307 (XIII. 1. 39).
[17] See Lucian Boia, *Forever Young: A Cultural History of Longevity*, trans. by Trista Selous (London: Reaktion Books, 2004) [orig. French *Pour vivre deux cent ans* (Paris: Press Éditions, 1998)].

in the same way as subjects connected with the Passion are 'sad', and elicit feelings of awe or pity. Some characteristics, especially those at the more cheerful end of the scale, were appropriate only for paintings of the Nativity or the Holy Family; a painting of the Last Supper, for example, would be indecorous if it made the viewer laugh, whereas Sigüenza, perhaps an exception, found laughter a valid reaction for at least some religious paintings: speaking about a *Holy Family with Saints Joachim and Anne* by El Mudo (Fig. 35), he says that the painter 'quiso jugar un poco y regocijar la vista: pintó una perdiz que parece ha de volar si llegamos a cogerla, salvo que se le ve que es mansa. También un perrillo y un gato que riñen sobre un hueso, tan aferruzados [frowning with anger] y propios, que dan gana de reír …'.[18] In certain contexts, it seems, 'ganas de reír' were seen to be compatible with 'ganas de rezar' and, as the example shows, these considerations had an impact on the elocutive aspects of paintings – in this case, on a non-essential detail.[19]

That piety had multiple facets was generally accepted; for example, Carducho's description of the allegorical figure personifying Devotion leaves it up to the painter to depict her as engaged in 'otras acciones segun el afecto del devoto, que puede ó rogar, ó ofrecer, triste, alegre, o admirado, que *todo cabe en la devozion*' (my italics).[20] However, it must be remembered that although *The Holy Family with Saints Joachim and Anne* was admired and remained in its original setting, when Navarrete was hired again shortly afterwards to paint the altarpieces of the basilica, his contract specified that 'en las dichas

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[18] Sigüenza, p. 121.
[19] See José J. Yarza Luaces, 'Guardar gravedad y decoro no impide jugar un poco y regocijar la vista', in *Navarrete, el Mudo, pintor de Felipe II: Seguidores y Copistas*, ed. by Francisco Fernández Pardo, exh. cat. Zaragoza, Centro de Esposiciones y Congresos and Museo Camón Aznar, 14 June to 16 July 1995 (Zaragoza: Ibercaja, 1995), pp. 193–218.
[20] Carducho, fol. 142^{r}.

pinturas no ponga gato, ni perro, ni otra figura que sea deshonesta, sino que todos sean santos y que provoquen a devoción'.[21] Some observers found the picture objectionable, although no one could conceivably have regarded a piece of marginalia such as this as potentially dangerous. If anything, the merriment it caused was appropriate for the cheerful subject of the Nativity; late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century *villancicos* and *jácaras* can give one an idea of the level of innocent jocularity that was not considered inappropriate in Christmas celebrations in diocesan or monastic churches, and even more so in private chapels – *pace* St John of the Cross.[22] However, some perceived the painting as 'deshonesta': because such a 'curious' detail could become a focus of attention in its own right, and distract the viewer from the main subject. In such cases, it was decorum, a purely rhetorical concept, which governed the approval or condemnation of such details, rather than their potential dangerousness in theological terms.

A specific example can be found in a painting by the Sevillian Juan de Roelas (c. 1558–1625). A cat and dog are included in *St Anne Teaching the Virgin to Read* (c. 1610-15), which he painted for the convent of the Mercedarians of Seville and which is now in the Museo de Bellas Artes (Fig. 36).[23] The animals help to create a domestic scene which is reminiscent of that achieved by Navarrete in some of his paintings.[24] Pacheco criticised

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[21] Yarza, 'Guardar gravedad', p. 195.

[22] Geoffrey Baker, 'The "Ethnic Villancico" and Racial Politics in 17th-Century Mexico', in *Devotional Music in the Iberian World, 1450–1800: The Villancico and Related Genres*, ed. by Tess Knighton and Álvaro Torrente (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 399–408; 'Theological Context: the Tropes of Christmas', in Andrew A. Casher, *Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700*, PhD. Diss. University of Chicago, June 2015, pp. 179–204; Glenn Swindon Martínez, 'Fiesta y parodia en los villancicos de negro del siglo XVII', *Anuario de Lecturas* [Universidad Autónoma de México], 42–43 (2004–2005), 285–304. John of the Cross probably referred to such celebrations in *Subida*, III. 38. 2 and 3, when he criticised 'cosas ridículas e indevotas para incitar a risa la gente, con que más se distraen' and 'cosas que agraden más a la gente que la muevan a devoción'.

[23] Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 127 and 151 (#57), pl. 129.

[24] Pérez Sánchez credits Diego Angulo for this remark, but I have not been able to locate the source; see Pérez, *Pintura barroca*, p. 164.

the picture in one of the *Adiciones a algunas imágenes*, titled 'Pintura de Santa Ana dando lección a nuestra Señora'. According to Pacheco, Roelas was 'diestro en el colorido, aunque falto en el decoro'; among the reasons for the criticism may have been that Roelas added, next to St Anne, '… un bufete con algunas colaciones del natural y, debaxo, un gatito y perrillo; junto a la Virgen está una canastilla de labor con otros juguetes…'. His judgement is negative, although he concedes that 'es verdad que ha parecido a algunos doctos no haber fundamento bastante para reprehender semejante pintura'.[25] Personal animosity against Roelas (Bassegoda calls it 'sorda competencia') seems to have been the ultimate motive of Pacheco's criticism.[26] Criticising failings in decorum in paintings may have been used, like denunciations of books or people to the Inquisition, as a strategy of self-promotion or against one's enemies, but the subsequent success of the iconography suggests that an accusation, even if it came from no less than the Inquisition's *veedor y calificador de pinturas*, did not necessarily entail trouble, much less condemnation.

The iconography of St Anne teaching the Virgin to read was widely represented in Sevillian and Andalusian painting of the seventeenth century, despite Pacheco's criticisms.[27] However, Roelas changed his mind when he painted the same subject again for another Mercedarian convent, in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, about a decade after his first version.[28] Gone is the baroque drapery at the top left-hand corner, which added dynamism to the composition, as well as the angelic choir, the *bufete* with the still-life

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[25] *Arte*, p. 583.
[26] *Arte*, pp. 213-14, footnote, and 560, footnote.
[27] The iconography, developed in the Middle Ages, is also present in French painting as well as in the work of Rubens and Murillo. See Mâle, pp. 326–27, and pp. 329–30 for variants in which the Virgin learns embroidery.
[28] Medina-Sidonia collection, painted for the church of the Mercedarians, Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz). Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 144 (#28), pl. 122.

foodstuffs on top, and the cat and dog, while the dress of the Virgin and the matronly St Anne have been simplified. Rather than repeating the experiment attempted in the earlier version, in the second, Roelas adopted an austere and outdated idiom reminiscent of that of the Escorial painters. Whether this was his own decision or the result of pressure from his patrons cannot be ascertained, but the change may have been a response to Pacheco's criticism. Nevertheless, details such as the dog and the cat in Roelas's earlier painting remained popular among Andalusian painters: for example, the 1618 *Last Supper* painted by Juan Sánchez Cotán for the Granadan Charterhouse in which he lived (Fig. 37), includes a similar superfluous animal fight – significantly, in a painting of a serious subject with clear sacramental implications, and in a monastic setting. In Madrid, other artists included the motif, perhaps in response to the *Supper at Emmaus* by Titian kept in the Escorial, from which Navarrete must have got the idea.[29]

In Seville, the works of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682) brought these experiments in domestic anecdote to their culmination. Building on the experiences of Roelas and Zurbarán, and perhaps also inspired by his study of Renaissance masters through prints, Murillo produced a group of paintings during the 1650s that have been called 'religious genre pieces'. The earliest is probably the *Holy Family with a Little Bird*

[29] For Sánchez Cotán's *Last Supper* (1618), see Enrique Pareja López, *El arte de la reconquista cristiana*, Histora del arte en Andalucía (Sevilla: Gever, 1998), pl. 194. The motif is of Venetian origin; for example, a cat and dog almost identical to Navarrete's fight under the table in Titian's *Supper at Emmaus* (Louvre, 1533–34). The Escorial version of a Last Supper by Titian, sent to Philip II in 1564, showed a similar motif before it suffered damage and was cropped; in its original state it would have looked like the painting now in the Duke of Alba's collection; see Hans Tietze, *Titian: The Paintings and Drawings* (London: Phaidon, 1950), and *El Escorial como museo: La decoración pictórica mueble en el monasterio de El Escorial desde Diego Velázquez hasta Fréderic Quilliet (1808)* (Barcelona: Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Memoria Artium, 2002), p. 363; see also Filippo Pedrocco, *Titian: The Complete Paintings* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 271, #233. Navarrete studied Titian's paintings first-hand during his stay in Italy, and his appropriation of the master's study was so thorough that early sources have him a student of Titian's in Venice, a claim which modern scholarship has dispelled.

(c. 1650), now in the Prado (Fig. 38).[30] The scene is set in a modest domestic interior, probably St Joseph's workshop in Nazareth. To the left, the Virgin spins wool, and in the centre of the composition St Joseph and the child Jesus play with a white puppy. The attention of the animal is fixed on Jesus and the enticing little bird he holds in his hand; the child is both the centre of the composition, and the focus of the gaze of his parents and the dog. As with the previous examples, the detail is not essential but, rather than constituting an isolated and self-contained motif, as with the animal fight in the painting at the Escorial, Murillo's dog cannot be understood in separation from its context. If the viewer chose to focus his attention on it, the dog would deflect attention towards the figure at which it is looking, the main focus of the painting.[31] This is crucial for understanding its place in the context of the narrative structure of the painting, an aspect of decorum that observers like Sigüenza and Pacheco had found problematic in other instances.

CONFLICTING ASPECTS OF DECORUM

Céspedes's discussion of the Dormition of the Virgin (see p. 243, above) makes it clear that decorum in both preaching and painting, rather than being a homogenous and

[30] For 'religious genre pieces', see Marianne Haraszti-Takács, *Murillo* ([Budapest]: Corvina Kiadó, 1977), p. 9; for the *Holy Family with a Little Bird*, see Diego Angulo Íñiguez, *Murillo: Su vida, su arte, su obra*, 3 vols (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1981), II, 175, and Marqués de Lozoya, '¿Un precedente de "La Sagrada Familia del Pajarito"?', *AEA*, 40.157 (1967), p. 83.

[31] A similar puppy can be found in Murillo's *Birth of St John the Baptist* (c. 1670) in the Norton Simon Museum; see Angulo 1981, II, 271, #336, and Enrique Valdivieso, *Murillo: Catálogo razonado de pinturas* (Madrid: El Viso, 2010), p. 507, #344. The best-known example of a perfectly integrated puppy is Velázquez's *Joseph Bloody Coat Brought to Jacob*, which I have not discussed here because it is a history, rather than religious, painting. The life-like depiction of the dog's stance, with an arched back and the forepaws extended in front, helps the telling of the story as much as the gestures of the human figures do: the dog is shown reacting to the entrance of Jacob's brothers with such hostility as almost to suggest that it can see through the brothers' ploy.

univocal concept, encompassed different aspects as an overarching category. One part of decorum was concerned with the extrinsic limits imposed by the context on the possible range of motifs and expression. This 'negative' decorum proscribed whatever was not fit to be said or displayed in a church. 'Positive' decorum, on the other hand, recommended certain forms of treating a subject to make the sermon or painting more effective, as we have seen in Chapter 5. But both notions were subject to interpretation, and different applications of the same ideas gave rise to interesting conflicts. In the case above, Céspedes denounced the sermon by Ormaza on the grounds that it contained forms of *amplificatio* that went against what the Church held as historical truth. Clashes of the same type could and did happen in the realm of religious painting.

Writers on painting and sacred oratory generally agreed that where Scripture provides details these must be followed, which nevertheless leaves room for significant disagreements where it does not. For those painters and theoreticians I shall call 'rhetorically minded', it was sufficient for the appropriate response to be elicited from the viewer. For others more 'historically minded', other considerations were at least as important: viewers must also see or picture the details of the image as they happened; otherwise, the process would be tainted by the incorporation of false elements. According to the rhetorical view, a man-made image should be equivalent to what it represented in the sense that it should elicit a similar response (see p. 244, above), whereas those who advocated the historical viewpoint conceived of images as reconstructions with the maximum possible accuracy. The former view conceded greater importance to the image whilst acknowledging its mediating character, whereas the latter, perhaps more naively, implied a belief in the thoroughness and reliability of the sources available, which would

make it possible for painters and writers to piece together accurate and authoritative reconstructions of events such as the Nativity or the Crucifixion.

If preachers engaged in heated arguments over what constituted decent ornament, the same was true in the realm of painting. Around 1619, for example, a feud divided Seville’s intellectual and artistic elite over the exact wording of the title of the Cross.[32] After painting a crucifix, Pacheco invited his learned friends to state their opinions about it, probably because he hoped for their approval of his depiction of Christ fixed to the Cross with four nails, instead of the traditional three, as a more learned and historically correct option. Instead, Fernando Afán de Ribera, the third Duke of Alcalá, questioned the accuracy of the inscription on the title of the Cross, which led to a heated exchange of letters and tracts. The inscription in Pacheco’s crucifix had been suggested by the Jesuit scholar Luis del Alcázar and approved by the poet Fernando de Rioja; the first line was in the Syriac dialect of Aramaic (the everyday language in Judea in 1 CE) rather than Hebrew, and the three lines started with the demonstratives ‘זה’, ‘ουτος εστι’, ‘hic est’. Alcalá’s argument, based on Scripture and on a description of the relic kept at Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (Rome), was that the first line should be in Hebrew, and that no demonstratives should be included.[33] This disagreement, concerning a small point which may seem pedantic to us, took on personal, social, and political overtones to such an extent that Pacheco had to maintain a diplomatic silence in his *Arte* on a subject which

[32] See Bonaventura Bassegoda, ‘Francisco Pacheco, escritor y polemista’, in *Arte*, pp. 11–20 (pp. 18–20).
[33] The inscription in Pacheco’s crucifix reads ‘זה ישוע נוצריא מלכא דיהודיה/ ουτος εστι Ιησους ναζωραιος ο βασιλευς των ιουδαιων / Hic est Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum’; according to Alcalá, it should read ‘ ישוע נוצרי מלך יהודים / Ιησους ναζωραιος ο βασιλευς ιουδαιων / Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum’; see Fernando Afán de Ribera Enríquez, *Del título de la Cruz de Christo Señor Nuestro* ([Seville]: [n.p.], 1619). For Pacheco’s crucifixes and their inscriptions, see Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, #135 and #136, p. 77, pl. 32 and 33. As to the *titulus* at Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, according to legend it was brought from Jerusalem by St Helen. It is likely to be a medieval forgery or a copy; see Francesco Bella and Carlo Codazzi, ‘14C Dating of the Titulus Crucis’, *Radiocarbon*, 44.3 (2002), 685–89.

would normally have interested him. Juan Andrés Rizi, the author of another treatise on painting writing in the early 1660s, discussed the debate, which suggests that the issue remained interesting and more or less controversial for a long time.[34]

Discussions of this type had an impact on artist's decisions. For example, many images of the Immaculate Conception painted after 1614 show the corners of the moon pointing down. If these implicitly indicate that painters and their clients were receptive to such details in sermons, Pacheco's *Arte de la Pintura* proves it in a more explicit form. In Chapter XV of the last part of the book, the *Adiciones a algunas imágines*, Pacheco replied to a letter from the poet Francisco de Rioja about the iconographical detail of the number of the nails used in Christ's crucifixion. Pacheco's letter perfectly illustrates the working of the different parts of the artistic ecosystem: to support his choice of depicting the crucifix with four nails, Pacheco names a number of authorities (many of them mystics and visionaries approved by the Church, including St Bridget of Sweden), and concludes by quoting from a sermon by his Sevillian contemporary and friend, the Jesuit Juan de Pineda.[35] At the heart of the quotation lies another, from St Bonaventure's *Legenda Minor Sancti Francisci*, describing the stigmatisation of St Francis, which Pineda may have known through Pedro de Ribadeneyra's popular *Flos Sanctorum*.[36] According to Bonaventure, four nails seemed to appear in saint Francis's stigmata, and to Pineda, this suggested that Christ was similarly nailed to the Cross. This provides an

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[34] Fray Juan A. Ricci, *La Pintura Sabia* (1660-62), ed. by F. Marías and F. Pereda, 2 vols (Madrid: Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, 2003), I, 178. See *Arte*, p. 18, and p. 713, introductory n.
[35] *Arte*, p. 721 and notes 3 and 4. The quote from the Jesuit's sermon is taken from Juan de Pineda, *Sermón que predicó* [...] *en el dia i celebridad de las Llagas del Seraphico P. S. Francisco en su insigne convento de Sevilla a 17 de setiembre de 1615* (Seville: Francisco de Lyra, 1615), fols 8^{r}–^{v}.
[36] For the original, see St Bonaventure, *Legenda Minor Sancti Francisci*, in *Opera Omnia*, VIII (1898), pp. 565–79 (part 6, pp. 585–87). See also Pedro de Ribadeneyra, *Flos Sanctorum* (Cologne: apud Ioannem Kinckium, 1630), p. 488 (St Francis, 4 October).

example of how information was taken from approved books by scholarly priests, who interpreted it, and how this information was later transmitted through sermons. In doing so, preachers added the weight of their own authority, associated with the ministry of the word, to that of their own secondary sources of information.

Pacheco's scholarly approach and personal connections may be the exception rather than the rule, but any painter hearing or reading Pineda's sermon would have been able to access the same ideas and apply them when depicting the relevant scene. Many sermons contained information that would have been useful to painters in a similar way: Pacheco quotes sermons by Sevillian Jesuits Juan de Pineda, Álvaro Arias, and others to support particular choices of details, such as his observations about the proper garments for St John the Baptist, or his insistence that the baby Jesus should always be portrayed as decently covered, and not naked.[37] Preachers discussed these and other details, such as the shape of the crescent moon, in terms of personal preference for one particular type of representation over others, whereas Pacheco and other treatise writers quoted their opinions as authorities and may have invested them with more theological significance than their authors had.

Controversies among artists and art writers are illuminating as to the aims and priorities of painters and their clients. My next case illustrates this well, since it consists of two discussions written by the same person, dealing with two paintings that hung near each other and depicted similar subjects. In the first of these, Sigüenza praises another canvas by El Mudo, *The Martyrdom of St James the Great* (Fig. 39), and places particular emphasis on its moving contrasts and its verisimilitude:

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[37] *Arte*, pp. 663, 589 (and n.), and 608.

> Está el verdugo fiero y muy airoso, extraño rostro y parece del natural [...] la actitud y movimiento es, cuando pasa el cuchillo por la garganta del Apóstol, con tanta propiedad y naturaleza, que jurarán los que le vieren que comienza ya a expirar: los ojos como vueltos, el color perdido, mudado el rostro, que pone compasión en las almas como si se viera el caso, y hace venir las lágrimas a los ojos.[38]

He analyses the painting in rhetorical terms: the *evidentia* achieved by Navarrete is such ('tanta propiedad y naturaleza') that it gives viewers the impression that the scene is actually taking place in front of their eyes ('como si se viera el caso'). The hyperbole conveys that the painting includes engaging, convincing features, and consequently elicits an emotional response in the viewer ('pone compasión en las almas [...] y hace venir las lágrimas a los ojos'). A similar painting, Titian's *The Death of St Peter Martyr* (known to us through a later copy by Carlo Loth, c. 1691; Fig. 40), was appraised by Pietro Aretino in terms which reveal a greater literary skill than Sigüenza's but a similar artistic sensitivity conditioned by rhetoric:

> … the eyes of sight and the lights of the intellect fastened on that work, you understood all the living terrors of death and all the true sorrows of life in the brow and in the flesh of him who has fallen to the ground, marvelling at the coldness and the lividness that appear in the tip of his nose and in the extremities of his body; and not being able to restrain your voice, you let loose a cry, when in the contemplation of the companion who flees, you discerned in his appearance the whiteness of cowardice and the pallor of fear… .[39]

In these ekhphrases, Sigüenza and Aretino single out the details in the paintings and describe how they responded to them emotionally, as one may safely assume the painters intended. Texts such as these make a direct connection between *amplificatio* in a painting and its effectiveness.

However, sometimes *amplificatio* can clash with other requirements of decorum. Discussing a copy of the painting Aretino admired, Sigüenza criticises

[38] Sigüenza, p. 120 (Discurso 5).
[39] Pietro Aretino, *Lettere sull'arte*, ed. and trans. by E. Camesasca, 3 vols (Milan: Edizioni del Milione, 1957–60), I (1957), p. 73; quoted in Norman E. Land, *The Viewer as Poet: The Renaissance Response to Art* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), p. 136.

> una intolerable falta en el decoro, porque parece que el santo se excusaba, y aun escudaba por no morir, y junto con eso está muy descompuesto, y así dijo uno de los prudentes y doctos predicadores de nuestros tiempos que si San Pedro, mártir, había muerto de aquella manera, que no había muerto como santo.[40]

In comparison to El Mudo's painting, Titian's is probably more emotionally engaging, thanks to its clever use of *antithesis* and *evidentia*. The strength and violence of the assassin are set in contrast to St Peter's defencelessness, and the futile resistance of the victim is both moving and convincing. But Sigüenza found fault with it: along with the emotions it arouses, the viewer may assume that the saint desperately tried to save his life until the last moment, instead of facing slaughter with the meekness and resignation of a true martyr. This, Sigüenza concludes, 'quita las ganas de rezar'. In a significant detail, he attributes this opinion to the specialist authority of an unnamed preacher, 'uno de los prudentes y doctos predicadores de nuestros tiempos', a man who by his profession was in a privileged position to understand how paintings work and to judge the finer points of decorum. The painting, the preacher argued, elicits the correct response from the viewer, but in a way which could be tainted by spiritual error. The main aim of religious art, *movere*, was not to be achieved at any cost, and circumstances weighing against it (in this case, a tradition of the Church regarding martyrs' deaths) were a frequent bone of contention.

Similar concerns were often raised at the time about a popular subject, Mary's attitude at Calvary. The Marian perspective of the Passion, around which special iconographies were developed (see Ch. 4), was explored for its emotional potential. Late medieval painters used *amplificatio* to enhance pictures of the Crucifixion or the

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[40] Sigüenza, p. 134 (Discurso 17); the original by Titian, painted around 1526–30 for the Dominican church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, was destroyed by fire in 1867; see Stefano Zuffi, *Tiziano* (Milan: Mondadori, 2008), pp. 142–43.

Deposition in which the Virgin is shown swooning, her sufferings almost equal to those of her crucified son. Such a painting is the famous *Deposition* (c. 1450) by Roger van der Weyden (c. 1400–1464), now in the Prado, brought to Spain by Charles V and hung in the Escorial at the order of Philip II. This type of representation attracted criticism because it contravened the Gospel text, which states that Mary 'stabat' (was standing) by the Cross (John 19: 25-26). From this single word, it was deduced that to depict her as fainting, or losing her composure and exhibiting manifold signs of grief, ran counter to the truth; indeed, in some instances the ecclesiastical authorities went as far as to remove her tears from statues and paintings for the sake of an accurate interpretation of John's narrative, according to which the word 'stabat' indicates Mary's fortitude as well as her physical stance.[41] At the same time, other commentators praised the 'piety' of such representations on the grounds that they aroused devout thoughts and emotions. Sigüenza commented on the 'mucho primor y devoción' of van der Weyden's *Deposition*, and added that 'si no era de esta manera y haciendo este agravio [loss of composure and decorum] … no se podía significar el dolor, tristeza, y vivo sentimiento de madre…'.[42] Besides showing certain flexibility, Sigüenza here focuses sympathetically on the predicament of painters who could not make better, more effective paintings of the Crucifixion and the Deposition without contravening the biblical account. Such limitations may have contributed to the success of other iconographies such as the *Soledad*, in which the lack of scriptural basis allowed artists and commissioners much freer rein for emotive *amplificatio*.

[41] See Mâle, pp. 21–23 and 255.
[42] Sigüenza, p. 138 (Discurso 17).

What the limits of decorum were, and to what extent emotive *amplificatio* should be used by artists in the absence of, in addition to, or even in contradiction of what was regarded as authoritative historical evidence, were disputed questions among seventeenth-century theorists of art. The 'artistic ecosystem' of the time was, as may be expected, affected by this debate, and its repercussions on the different schools are readily detectable. The iconographies developed around the Gospel narrative of the Flagellation afford a good opportunity to gauge the effects of this debate, and will shed further light on Velázquez's *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation,* discussed in the previous chapter.

Pacheco painted a *Christ Collecting his Vestments after the Flagellation* in 1609. The picture has not survived, but Pacheco included a description in a letter dated 13 October 1609, addressed to a Don Fernando de Córdoba, who had commissioned the painting. The artist appended this letter, one of the documents contained in the Biblioteca Nacional manuscript *Tratados de erudición de varios autores año 1631*, to the second chapter of Book II of his *Arte de la Pintura*.[43] In it, Pacheco boasts to his client of the scrupulous erudition that has guided his choices concerning several aspects of the painting, such as the amount of blood on Christ's body, the types of whips and scourges used in the Flagellation (shown on the floor), and the kind of column to which Christ is bound.[44]

Commenting on his choice in portraying the blood, Pacheco criticises two extremes: that of the 'grandes pintores', who are too sparing when painting the effects of

[43] Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS 1713; see Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 84, and *Arte*, n. on p. 291, and pp. 299–306.
[44] *Arte*, pp. 301–04.

the Flagellation on Christ's body lest they spoil a beautiful human figure ('por no encubrir la perfección que tanto les cuesta', in the words of a man for whom artistry was acquired through indefatigable work), and on the other hand that of the 'indoctos', painters who cover their Christs in blood and wounds in order to dissimulate their lack of ability for painting an acceptable male nude. As a compromise, Pacheco recommends painting some blood and wounds, and to put them in places where they do not jeopardise the overall beauty of the figure, such as the shadowed areas and Christ's back. His approach to this question is principally aesthetic, although he characteristically finds a theological argument to support his decision, which he maintains is 'no sin buena consideración, pues [la espalda] es la parte donde consideran los santos [i.e. literary tradition, especially mystics] que cayeron la mayor parte de los azotes'.[45] According to Rodríguez, Velázquez followed Pacheco's prescriptions in *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation* (Fig. 20),[46] although on the grounds of historical verisimilitude Pacheco would probably have not approved of a Christ that is too bloodless and spotlessly beautiful.

The four types of instruments depicted in his painting were, according to Pacheco, taken from *Iesu Christi Crucifixi Stigmata Sacra Sindone Impressa* (1606), an authoritative study co-authored by Daniele Mallonio and Paleotti's nephew Alfonso.[47] This book contains a study of historical sources and writings of mystics and visionaries on Christ's sufferings in the Passion, which the authors relate to the physical evidence

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[45] *Arte*, p. 301.
[46] Rodríguez, 'Fuentes iconográficas', p. 85.
[47] Alfonso Paleotti and Daniele Mallonio, *Iesu Christi Crucifixi Stigmata Sacrae Sindoni Impressa* (Venice: [n. pub.], 1606); Alfonso Paleotti should not be confused with his uncle, the famous writer on images Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti.

that was available to them (the Shroud of Turin). The aim of the work was to provide the reader with a reconstruction of the Flagellation, which some regarded as essential material for private devotion and meditation, as well as for the visual arts. Pacheco's use of this book enabled him to show his familiarity with recent scholarly developments, and confirms that his outlook is fundamentally that of the 'historically minded' painter.

As to the form of column to which Christ is tied, two options were possible in Pacheco's time: the more usual tall column, kept in the Basilica of the Anastasis in Jerusalem, or a short baluster topped by an iron ring. The model for the latter was kept in the Roman basilica of Santa Prassede, and was said to have been brought there from Jerusalem by Cardinal Giovanni Colonna in the thirteenth century.[48] Among late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century painters and theorists, those who leaned towards the historical in their understanding of decorum supported the depiction of this baluster as the column of the Flagellation, probably encouraged by its mention in the book by Malonio and Paleotti.[49] But in his *Christ after the Flagellation*, Pacheco depicted a tall column, the choice he defended in his letter to Fernando de Córdoba, while also arguing on aesthetical grounds that the top part of the column may be cropped out for compositional reasons. However, Pacheco's views on the matter may have been more complex and not always consistent.

In the 1609 letter Pacheco admits that he had painted the baluster in an earlier work, although at the time of writing he had thought better of it and now advocated the tall column, for which he offered several authoritative arguments. Pacheco, like Mallonio

[48] See Mâle, p. 247. The second column was in the Basilica of the Anastasis, in Jerusalem; see Anna Benvenuti, 'Le reliquie di Cristo', in *La Santa Croce di Lucca: Il Volto Santo: Storia, tradizioni, immagini,* ed. by M. Zingoni (Lucca: Commune di Lucca, 2003), pp. 107–14 (p. 111).
[49] Paleotti and Mallonio, p. 64.

and Paleotti, had to face the fact that there were two 'relics', not one; he concluded, following them, that the Santa Prassede baluster must be 'donde estuvo el señor atado en la casa de Caifás… toda aquella noche de sus mayores escarnios y afrentas', not the one to which he was bound during the Flagellation.[50] It is therefore surprising to find another *Flagellation* by Pacheco, painted around 1630 for the altarpiece of the Convento de la Pasión in Seville (now in the Museo de Bellas Artes), showing Christ tied to the Santa Prassede baluster.[51] This variant dominates in the Sevillian milieu and its offshoot, Córdoba, in representations of the Flagellation in all its phases, as well as in paintings of saints' visions featuring the Flagellation.[52]

These shifts and inconsistencies may have as much to do with competition and self-promotion as decorum. Pacheco was hoping for an appointment at the Court, and the only way for him to achieve this was to play the card of the *pintor culto*, since his artistic credentials alone may not have sufficed and his style could have seemed provincial and outdated in the capital. He informed the celebrated painter Carducho, whom he did not know to be a writer, about his work on the *Arte*, probably in order to establish contact with the most successful court painter of his generation, and also to make himself known at the Court as a painter-scholar. Pacheco entertained the hope of attaining, in his words, 'la gloria de ser el primero' to publish a sizeable and scholarly treatise on painting in

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[50] *Arte*, p. 304; Paleotti and Mallonio, p. 64.
[51] Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 49–51, #21, Fig. 29.
[52] See examples in Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 74 (#126), 331 (#58, ill. 241), 51 (#21, ill. 49), 365 (#151, ill. 261), and 74 (#125, ill. 53), for Seville; for Córdoba, see María Á. Raya Raya, *Catálogo de las pinturas de la catedral de Córdoba* (Córdoba: Monte de Piedad y Caja de Ahorros de Córdoba, 1988), p. 62, #148. Some Andalusian artists were still using the baluster well into the 1650s; see examples by Murillo in the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando and the National Museum of Romania, Bucarest: Zahira Véliz, *Alonso Cano (1601–1667): Dibujos: Catálogo razonado* (Santander: Fundación Botín, 2011), p. 182, Figs. 11.1 and 11.2; Harold E. Whethey, *Alonso Cano: Painter, Sculptor, Architect* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 116, #9.

Spanish, and resented the fact that Carducho's work was published before his own.[53] As much as he understood iconographical niceties, Pacheco was aware of opportunities for his own advancement.

Similar concerns may have preoccupied the young Velázquez. Around 1630, when he painted *Christ and the Christian Soul after the Flagellation*, Carducho, a *Pintor del Rey*, was developing theories on decorum which contradicted those of Pacheco. These appeared in his *Diálogos de la Pintura* (1633), whose publication had irked Pacheco. The relevant passage is found in book VII, 'De las diferencias, y modos de pintar los sucessos, e historias sagradas con la decencia que se deve'. Carducho specifically devoted a whole section, marked by a marginal caption, to the question of 'Si se deven pintar las historias como sucedio el hecho en todo rigor, ó no'.[54] He gives a few examples of problematic cases, such as whether it is correct to depict the Last Supper or the Conversion of the Magdalene with characters sitting on chairs or benches, since it was known that they would have used *triclinia*. The question occupies the same territory as Pacheco's interest in period accuracy regarding dress and objects; in fact, the example of the *triclinia* could have been purposefully chosen to show Pacheco's approach taken to the extreme.[55] Unlike Pacheco's, Carducho's prestige was founded on his merits as a

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[53] See the letter from Pacheco to the painter Diego Valentín Díaz, 31 May 1634; José Martí y Monsó, 'Dos cartas de Francisco Pacheco', in *Estudios histórico-artísticos relativos principalmente a Valladolid* (Valladolid, Madrid: Leonardo Miñón, 1898–1901), pp. 37–39 (p. 38); quoted in *Arte*, p. 421, n. 1; on Pacheco's reaction to Carducho's publication, see also *Arte*, p. 44, n. 86. According to Bassegoda, the *Arte* could have been finished in 1638; Pacheco's claim in the letter that the book was finished by 1634 is not true. The *licencia* to publish it was issued in 1641; Pacheco died in 1644, and the book was finally published in 1649. See Bonaventura Bassegoda, 'Historia de un texto: del manuscrito al impreso', in *Arte*, pp. 43–46 (p. 43).

[54] Carducho, fol. 112^{v}.

[55] I do not know of any Spanish seventeenth-century example of a *Last Supper* with characters reclining in the Roman fashion, but such a scene was painted by Poussin as the *Eucharist* in his series of the Sacraments painted in Rome for Cassiano dal Pozzo. Even if it were possible, Carducho's comment suggests that in the Spanish context the idea would have sounded rather ridiculous.

painter rather than as an intellectual, although the *Diálogos* are at least as important a work of artistic theory as the *Arte*.

Carducho introduces a distinction between the essence of the mystery ('hecho sustancial y misterioso') and incidental detail ('modo ó circunstancias'), and proposes that as long as the former remains unchanged, the latter can and must be adapted by the painter in order to present the scene in as moving a way as possible: 'se deve y puede arbitrar el modo de pintar un caso, como no mude la esse[n]cia principal del hecho [...] mayormente para mejor conseguir el fin que se pretende, que es ayudar á mover la devozion, reverencia, respeto, y piedad [...]'. Carducho goes as far as to say that a completely accurate or archaeological rendering of a scene would miss the point; it would alienate viewers, who therefore would not be moved by it, and it is better not to depart from familiar conventions, 'el modo que mas fuere conocido de todos los que le han de ver y venerar'.[56] The baluster variant may or may not be truer to the facts, but seen from the point of view of iconographical traditions, it was a local peculiarity of relatively recent introduction.

Pacheco's writings reveal a deep concern with such details as the choice of one type of column over the other; in the same letter of 1609, he states squarely that decorum is concerned with the accuracy of period detail in clothes and objects.[57] His changes of opinion reveal how his priorities shifted. The low baluster in the *Flagellation* of 1631 is consistent with Pacheco's view of decorum, as well as with his desire to be perceived as a learned painter; the tall column in Velázquez's *Christ and the Christian Soul after the*

[56] Carducho, fols 113^{r} and 114^{r}.
[57] 'Lo primero, cuanto al tiempo, se debe guardar el uso de la antigüedad dél en los trajes y en las cosas'; *Arte*, p. 300.

Flagellation, painted around the same time, may give us a measure of Velázquez's will to assert himself as a painter who has broken free from the mannerisms of his Sevillian training and can be eloquent and even learned in his own understated way. The artistic milieu of Madrid and the Court, in which Carducho was the leading figure as Pacheco was in Seville, upheld a different scale of values; painters of that school almost never depicted the baluster at all, and preferred the older variant with the column.[58] What was a mark of learning in Seville may therefore have been regarded in Madrid as provincial, pedantic, or ill-informed. The only other surviving *Flagellation* by Pacheco is signed and dated 1638, after the publication of Carducho's *Diálogos*; it is a painting of poor quality, and in it Pacheco reverted to the tall column.[59] This final shift signals his realisation that artistic ideas different from his own had carried the day.

CONCLUSION

Spanish seventeenth-century preachers, theoretical writers and painters of religious images come across as constantly fixated on the appropriateness of detail and ornament, such as the correct amount of blood on a Crucifix, the shape of the column of the Flagellation or the appearance of the Virgin when she died. In the field of the visual arts, art historians have traditionally explained this on the basis of the church's ongoing campaign to establish and defend Catholic orthodoxy at a time when religious images

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[58] See Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, pp. 158 (#371 and #372) and 113 (#22, ill. 65); see also Angulo and Pérez 1983, pp. 28 (#54, ill. 3) and 249 (#7, ill. 242). It must be noted that in this regard sculpture was a different matter, as the short baluster was used by sculptors working in Madrid – perhaps for practical reasons, especially in processional sculpture; see, for example, the *Flagellated Christ* made by Gregorio Fernández around 1615 for the convent of the Carmelite nuns in Valladolid; *Gregorio Fernández, 1576–1636*, exh. cat. Madrid, Sala de Exposiciones de la Fundación Santander Central Hispano, November 1999 to January 2000 (Madrid: Fundación Santander Central Hispano, 1999), p. 116.

[59] Valdivieso and Serrera, *Pintura sevillana*, p. 74, #125, ill. 53.

were both a bone of contention and a powerful weapon. Certain details in images were thought capable of exciting inappropriate or erroneous responses from viewers, so paintings, and especially those meant to be displayed in public places of worship, were subject to a process of strict control in which seemingly unimportant details were also scrutinised. This explanation is valid, and accounts for much of what we have termed 'negative decorum', but it is only one aspect of a bigger picture.

Even if judgements about any one sermon or painting were a matter of personal taste and opinion, the examples above show that the same rhetorical concepts of *elocutio* and *ornatus* underpinned both sacred oratory and religious painting. In painting, as we have seen, even if rhetorical terminology is not always directly used in the sources, the idea of decorum regulated the required balance between 'amenidad' or 'regocijar la vista' on the one hand, and 'gravedad' on the other.[60] Just as with sermons, the main elements of a painting would have been dictated by the more or less precise specifications of the subject, but anecdotal details (such as the pet fight in the canvas by Navarrete, or the 'florecillas' in the sermon by Ormaza) would have been at the discretion of the painter or preacher. These ornamental passages could have a considerable influence on the overall reaction of the viewers or listeners, and it was the responsibility of the painter or the preacher to judge whether these would enhance or compromise the desired effect of the painting or sermon. A miscalculation could be fatal for the career of both, a risk which the preacher could take more lightly than the painter since his livelihood did not depend as heavily on his reputation and subsequent commissions.

[60] Palomino, in *El museo pictórico y escala óptica* (1715–1724), is the first to use rhetorical terms, such as 'metáfora visual', when dealing with *elocutio* (vol. II, pp. 242, 287, 291 and 320).

An interdisciplinary approach to decorum in a religious context, as proposed in this chapter, shows the importance of several factors that have been neglected in traditional art-historical interpretations. First, the need for decorum established conditions that affected the creative process. Its impact on the commissioning and making of paintings was more significant than censorship and operated once the work was finished. Second, decorum was not always a filter or a restrictive force. The role played by positive decorum was probably more important than its negative aspect. Third, decorum informed the learned viewer's taste and provided a framework for the discussion and appreciation of paintings, independently and beyond the activities of the artist and the censor. All these observations are as valid of sermons as they are of paintings: the interest in decorum as it affected ornament and detail was one more manifestation of the rhetorical foundations of both religious painting and sacred oratory.

From a theoretical point of view, elocutive aspects of religious painting and preaching were inspired by the same concepts, such as *perspicuitas*, *antithesis* and *evidentia.* This parallel can be used as a key for interpreting early modern Spanish religious art, because Golden Age commentators were already discussing art in this fashion. When theoreticians wrote about ornament, in painting or in preaching alike, the same rhetorical terms and ideas were employed and sometimes they specifically linked the two, as we have seen. When the appropriateness of ornament in a particular sermon or religious painting was discussed, the questions and answers show the same approach. Rhetoric provided the taxonomy and theoretical background for discussing them. In more concrete terms, the stylistic shift towards naturalism in the first decades of the century responded to a rhetorical, rather than purely artistic, programme. The question of how to

create the greatest effect on the viewer is a rhetorical one, even when the medium of expression is painting rather than words; its solutions are likewise drawn from the language of rhetoric.

Authors such as Białostocki, Bertelli, Rensselaer and Blunt in the mid-twentieth century concluded that the term 'decorum' had a multifaceted, overarching meaning, and expanded it to include ideas such as dignity, decency, or appropriateness. Some critics have suggested that the earlier, 'aesthetic' idea of decorum, derived from classical rhetoric and applied to the adaptation of paintings to their function, was superseded in the late sixteenth century by a 'moral' understanding of the term, which emphasised decency and prohibited the nude human figure.[61] In fact, the older rhetorical theory was never abandoned. Rather than signalling a rejection of classical ideas, the growing prejudices against unclothed figures reflected a deepening of the understanding of the purpose of religious images, which was arrived at by applying rhetorical theory to images and taking it to its logical conclusion.

[61] Martínez-Burgos, pp. 91–93.

Epilogue

A Paradigm Shift

The territory charted in the present work, the practices and ideas which linked preaching and painting through a common rhetorical framework for the purpose of serving the Catholic Church in Spain, is unfamiliar now because it no longer exists. Even in countries with a predominantly Catholic cultural heritage, preaching and worship have changed so much in the last two hundred years that the traces of post-Tridentine religiosity are few. Religious images tend nowadays to be regarded merely as part of the decoration of churches, or, in some areas, as objects to pray at and take out in procession, in such a way that the less sophisticated practices, viewed at times with distrust by the Church, are seemingly the ones that have survived.[1] The seventeenth-century images present in some churches reflect an alien sensibility, and preachers no longer try to engage congregations in any sort of interaction with them. The techniques used in the Spanish Golden Age for bringing religious art alive have long been obsolete; reinvoking Gombrich's idea of 'artistic ecology' (see p. 55, above), all that remains are the fossils kept in libraries. This came about as the importance of *movere* decreased in sacred oratory as well as in art.

[1] See Susan Verdi Webster, 'Shameless Beauty and Worldly Splendor: On the Spanish Practice of Adoring the Virgin', in *The Miraculous Image in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), pp. 249–71.

From the early eighteenth century there arose across Europe, as Sermain put it, 'a shared distrust with regard to oratorical techniques, the same longing for evangelical simplicity, the same reduction of religious eloquence to the natural expression of a preacher's pious emotions.'[2] In rhetorical terms, this can be characterised as a change from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century paradigm, based on *movere* (p. 30 and ff.), to a new style of preaching which emphasised *docere* and valued homiletical simplicity and closeness to the text of the Gospel. It has been suggested that some preachers turned to purer, less ornamented models of preaching, while others might even have sought to imitate the objective, concise style of contemporary scientific writing.[3] The best-selling novel *Historia del famoso predicador Fray Gerundio de Campazas, alias Zotes* (1758), by the Jesuit José Francisco de Isla (1703–1781), lampoons in four hundred pages the character, taste, and rhetorical tricks of old-school preachers; many of the examples provided by Isla for comical effect were actually taken from real life, and have been identified.[4] In spite of being at once forbidden by the Inquisition and decried by conservative members of the religious Orders, the book achieved an instant success, becoming second only to *Don Quijote* in popularity.[5] *Fray Gerundio*, the most important novel in eighteenth-century Spain, constitutes a landmark in the change of taste towards language and rhetoric.

[2] Jean-Paul Sermain, 'Le code du bon goût (1725–1750)', in *Histoire de la rhétorique dans l'Europe moderne 1450–1950*, ed. by M. Fumaroli (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), pp. 879–943 (p. 888); quoted in English trans. in Rebecca Haidt, *Seduction and Sacrilege: Rhetorical Power in* Fray Gerundio de Campazas (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 2002), p. 20.
[3] Haidt, pp. 20–21.
[4] José Jurado, 'Fray Gerundio y la oratoria sagrada barroca', *Edad de Oro*, 8 (1989), 96–105 (pp. 102–03).
[5] Jurado, p. 104.

As Haidt pointed out in her study of *Fray Gerundio*, the eponymous character's approach to rhetoric shares with the Rococo aesthetics a treatment of 'ornamental motif as an end in itself', an attitude which finds an echo in the preacher's fondness for eyeglasses, handkerchiefs, and other forms of personal adornment.[6] Ornament has ceased to serve the important purpose of 'sacar afectos', and has been turned into a cheap, frivolous amusement, which helps to explain the reaction against it. Decades before publishing his *Fray Gerundio*, Isla was active as a preacher and criticised the perceived excesses of his old-fashioned colleagues: in 1735 he contended that 'mucho más séquito tiene el predicador que predica, que el que representa', in stark contrast with, for example, Vieyra's call to 'predicar aos olhos' in the previous century (see p. 72, above).[7] A widely-circulated pastoral letter of the bishop of Salamanca, published in several locations in 1764, criticised the use by preachers of 'la inutil hermosura de pinturas, descripciones, paradoxas y discursos extraordinarios, [...] pronunciacion, gesto, y acciones theatrales, en lugar de mies Evangelica'.[8] Where Golden-Age preachers set as their goal to engage the listener's imagination and emotions through *amplificatio* and other rhetorical devices, their eighteenth-century counterparts advocated a plainer, more didactic and natural approach.

This new taste in preaching reached Spain at the turn of the eighteenth century, with the accession of Philip V (1683–1746), the first Bourbon king. The new monarch introduced French uses and fashions to the court in many areas, from etiquette and dress

[6] Haidt, pp. 47–48.
[7] 'Discurso y doctrina sobre el mal modo de oir la palabra de Dios' (1735), mentioned in Haidt, p. 49.
[8] Felipe Bertran, *Carta pastoral* [...] *a los predicadores de su diócesis* (Salamanca: Oficina de la Santa Cruz; Tarragona: Joseph Barber, 1764), p. 17.

to portraiture, sacred music, and spirituality.[9] The gradual adaptation of Spanish preachers to the new style can be traced, for example, in the increasing number of translations of French sermonaries into Spanish, as well as in the presence of French books in the most important ecclesiastical libraries of the time; indeed, it was Isla who undertook the colossal task of translating the *Año Cristiano*, by the Jesuit Jean Croiset (1656–1738).[10] At the Cistercian monastery of Leyre in Navarra, a large but provincial monastic library, the works of the prolific Croiset and Joseph Chevassu (1674–1752), translated from the French, clearly outnumber eighteenth-century sermons by Spaniards. At the same time, the publication of Spanish sermons went into decline. While the more reactionary clergy lamented the demise of the glorious days of the Habsburgs and looked back to the past in search of spiritual nourishment, the *ilustrados* had their eyes firmly set across the Pyrenees.[11]

At the same time, the Church's interest in, and use of, religious images was waning, in part as a reaction against popular excesses and superstition. A move away from the visual and the emotive in favour of the verbal and the intellectual was encouraged by sectors within the Church like the Jansenists, who, in opposition to the Jesuits, criticised religious images and other 'uneducated' forms of religious expression. In his *Instructions théologiques et morales* (1708), the Jansenist Pierre Nicole discussed religious images in terms that, in Nigel Aston's interpretation, implied that they 'can

[9] For a survey of these changes in taste, see Yves Bottineau, *El arte cortesano en la España de Felipe V (1700–1746)* (Madrid: FUE, 1986), and Pérez 1996, pp. 403–04.
[10] The work was originally published in Lyon between 1712 and 1720, with the title *Exercises de pieté pour tous les jours de l'année*; see de Isla, p. 12.
[11] On the changes in taste affecting sacred oratory, see Herrero, *Predicadores dominicos y franciscanos*, pp. 283–87.

never convey the doctrines of Christianity as well as the written text'.[12] Although in Spain explicit criticisms of religious images did not, to my knowledge, appear in print, they must have circulated since vehement warnings against the dangers of Jansenism can be found.[13] New attitudes regarding preaching were accompanied by cultural changes affecting images. By the middle of the eighteenth century the literacy rate and social mobility in Catholic countries were higher than ever, and men and women shifted from the visual to the verbal, and from public to more inward forms of devotion.[14] As Aston has noted, this phenomenon is, paradoxically, a consequence of the success of the cultural programme of the Counter Reformation, which had among its aims the improvement of the education of the masses.[15] The social order that gave primacy to the Catholic Church as an artistic patron entered a state of crisis during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Artists began to earn their living from a market in which a secular, urban middle class had taken the place previously occupied by the Church, which in turn stuck to the style that would later be described as *castizo*, meaning that it adhered to older Spanish models and was free from any foreign influence. Some artists working in the early eighteenth century, such as Alonso Miguel de Tobar (1678–1752) and Bernardo Lorente (1680–1759), developed a kind of stylistic schizophrenia, painting fashionable

[12] Quoted and translated in Nigel Aston, *Art and Religion in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (London: Reaktion, 2009), p. 61; the translation is an exaggeration of the original, 'Ce [religious images] sont les libres des ignorans, qui leur représentent les mystères, et qui suppléent en quelque sorte aux libres à leur égard'; Pierre Nicole, *Intructions theologiques et morales* (Paris: André Chevalier, 1706), p. 328.
[13] See also Maria G. Tomsich, *El Jansenismo en España: estudio sobre ideas religiosas en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 1972).
[14] See Richard L. Kagan, 'Primary Education: The Teaching of Literacy', in *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 9–23 (esp. pp. 22–23); and Jacques Soubeyroux, 'La alfabetización en la España del siglo XVIII', *Historia de la Educación: Revista Interuniversitaria*, 14–15 (1995–96), 199–233.
[15] Aston, pp. 59 and 249.

portraits that hark back to French models, and religious subjects in a style outdated by about fifty years.[16]

Just as a new generation of preachers launched harsh attacks against the perceived excesses of sacred oratory, so painters and connoisseurs criticised the religious art of their time – the death throes of the Baroque. The Mercedarian theorist Juan Interián de Ayala (1656–1730), an advocate for clarity, decorum and simple good taste in religious art, wrote in his *Pictor Christianus Eruditus* (1730) that ignorant artists should not be allowed to paint religious subjects, and attacked their practice of creating images for the mass market.[17] The paintings in question were likely to have been crude, old-fashioned, and made to appeal to the taste and piety of the lower and lower-middle classes. Later in the century another priest, Antonio Ponz (1725–1792) was explicitly critical of art in the *castizo* Baroque tradition throughout his monumental *Viage de España* (1772-1792), a survey of Spain's artistic heritage. In his opinion, most Spanish art had been in poor taste since the reign of Philip III. Ponz criticises everything that is characteristic of Spanish seventeenth-century art, down to the materials (wood for altarpieces) and techniques (gilding), and considers that Spanish artists and patrons should adopt contemporary French and Italian tastes.[18] He also suggests that permanent pulpits, 'como de brocal de pozo', are ridiculous and should be removed and substituted with portable ones, which

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[16] Pérez, *Pintura barroca*, pp. 428–29; Fernando Quiles García, 'Tocado por la gracia de Murillo: el pintor cortesano Alonso Miguel de Tobar', *Reales Sitios*, 153 (2002), 4–44, and *Bernardo Germán Lorente y la pintura sevillana de su tiempo* (Madrid: Fernando Villaverde, 2006).
[17] Juan Interián de Ayala, *Pictor Christianus Eruditus, sive de erroribus* (Madrid: convento de la Merced, 1730); Spanish trans., *El pintor cristiano y erudito, o tratado de los errores que suelen cometerse frecuentemente en pintar y esculpir las Imágenes sagradas*, 2 vols (Madrid: Ioachin Ibarra, 1782), I, 11.
[18] See, for example, Antonio Ponz, *Viage de España*, 18 vols (Madrid: Joachin Ibarra, 1772–94), VII (1787), pp. 67–71 (Carta Segunda, paragraphs 2–5).

are less obtrusive.[19] There was enough momentum for seventeenth-century styles and forms to survive, but, without the rhetorical ideas and practices that had once accompanied them, they became superficial, devoid of meaning. If in the seventeenth century the Church had been the motor for artistic innovation, from the early nineteenth century onwards it barely struggled to keep up with the changes imposed from without. What began as a change of style in preaching and sacred art brought about, in the long run, a deeper crisis: a crisis affecting the status of religious images themselves.

One of the earliest to detect the breach between contemporary artists and the Church in the twentieth century was Cardinal Romano Guardini (1885–1968), an Italian theologian and philosopher whose writings influenced Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. In *Image of Worship, Image of Devotion*, originally published in German in 1900, Guardini reassessed the evolution of religious art from a functional and aesthetical point of view.[20] According to Guardini, the differences between Christian art from the early Middle Ages and later periods should not be understood in stylistic terms alone; rather, the chasm between a Romanesque *Pantocrator* and Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin* means that they belong to two different theological categories. The first type of image, Guardini argues, is an image of worship (*Kultbild*), which embodies God's objective being and majesty and becomes an instrument in the economy of salvation; the second is an image of devotion (*Andachtsbild*), which expresses an individual's inner life and responds to a community's religiosity and artistic sensitivity. The former is transcendent and somehow outside time, while the latter expresses immanence and subjective

[19] Ponz, V (1782), p. xiv.
[20] Romano Guardini, *Imagen de culto e imagen de devoción*, trans. by J. M. Valverde (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1960) [Germ. orig. *Kultbild und Andachtsbild* (Würzburg: Werkbund, 1900)].

inwardness. Images of devotion are made to appeal to the taste of a specific period and culture and will therefore either become outdated or irrelevant (this seems to be Guardini's main concern), whereas images of worship forever retain their otherworldly majesty.[21]

It is clear that Guardini's premise was based on a somewhat suspicious attitude to post-medieval art, perhaps under the indirect influence of figures such as Pugin, Ruskin, or Viollet-le-Duc. But he elaborates on this at a theological level, going far beyond aesthetics or cultural history. He questioned the rhetorical nature of the religious image, which had been firmly established by the beginning of the seventeenth century and provided the base for all the practices and connections between sermons and paintings discussed in the previous chapters. Religious images made to affect a particular type of viewer of a particular sensitivity in a particular way are always images of devotion, whereas Guardini is more interested in images of worship. According to him, an image of worship such as a crucifix makes present the imaged to the beholder in a way that is neither 'being Christ' nor 'representing Christ', but somewhere in between.[22] The 'sanctity' or 'virtue' of a worship image, to put it in sixteenth-century terms, is emphatically not in the viewer's reaction to it; in this regard, Guardini ran counter to the ideas about images that had been canonised at Trent ('imagen de devoción' is exactly the phrase used by Sigüenza for paintings 'donde se puede y aun da gana de rezar'; see p. 206, above).

As an alternative to images of devotion, which become stale and useless with time, Guardini suggested a return to images of worship. Catholics became increasingly

[21] Guardini, pp. 15, 18–20.
[22] Guardini, p. 21.

more appreciative of the timeless beauty of Orthodox icons in the second half of the twentieth century, coinciding with the influx of refugees from Soviet Russia into Western Europe and the publication of influential studies on Eastern Orthodox art.[23] Some contemporary artists have sought inspiration in these traditions, one of the best-known examples being the painter and Neocathecumenal leader Francisco 'Kiko' Argüello (b. 1939), who was in charge for the controversial frescoes and stained-glass windows in Madrid's Catedral de la Almudena (2004).[24]

The twentieth-century Catholic Church struggled to engage with the art of its time. An Apostolic Letter of 1987 by John Paul II hints at how contemporary art fails to serve the Church, without successfully explaining how this service could be achieved:

> Art for art's sake, which only refers to the author without establishing a relationship with the divine world, does not have its place in the Christian concept of the icon. No matter what style is adopted, all sacred art must express the faith and hope of the Church… The artist must be conscious of fulfilling a mission of service to the Church.[25]

This text starts from the implicit premise that the Church has relinquished control and influence over artistic production. The question is how the Church should behave as one more client in the art market, choosing what may be of interest and ignoring what may not. The criteria are problematic. First, self-referential art, which does not establish 'a relationship with the divine world', is not of interest to the Church. But most of contemporary art is self-referential, or it is the consumer's responsibility to establish whatever associations he or she may feel pertinent. Second, John Paul II measures

[23] For example, Paul Evdomikov, *L'art de l'icone: théologie de la beauté* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1972).

[24] A. Astorga and R. M. Echeverría, 'La Real Academia de Bellas Artes "deplora" las pinturas de la Almudena, obra de Kiko Argüello', *ABC*, 26 May 2004, https://www.abc.es/cultura/abci-real-academia-bellas-artes-deplora-pinturas-almudena-obra-kiko-arguello-200405260300-9621695334774_noticia.html (retrieved 25 July 2019).

[25] 'The veneration of Holy Images', in *Duodecimum Saeculum* (1987); quoted and translated in Hamilton R. Armstrong, 'The Transmission of Faith through Art', *Communio* 28 (Summer 2001), 386–97 (p. 392).

contemporary art against the concept of *icon* rather than the more generic *image*, perhaps in reference to Guardini's *Kultbild*, but then claims that the style of the work of art is irrelevant as long as it expresses the faith and hope of the Church. And third, the last criterion is the inner disposition of the artist, who must be conscious of fulfilling a service for the Church. But it is not clear what such service might consist of: the artist may or may not have striven to establish a relationship with 'the divine world', but the functionality of the artwork and the viewer's response are never mentioned. In sum, in the twentieth century the pendulum has swung to the opposite position from that expressed at Trent: a system in which the intentions of the artist, rather than the reaction of the viewer, have come to justify the use of an image.

Perhaps not satisfied with his 1987 document, John Paul II expanded and refined his message in a *Letter to Artists* (1999), which focuses on the idea of artistic beauty as a reflection of a divine attribute and claims that art can be used as a means to access spirituality.[26] By way of explanation, John Paul II gives an overview of what he envisions as the marriage of artistic beauty and the beauty of the Gospel beginning with 'The origins' in late antiquity, followed by 'The middle ages', and, tellingly, stopping with the art of Michelangelo at the end of the section titled 'Humanism and the Renaissance' – a scheme reminiscent of Vasari's *Vite* (1550), and perhaps influenced by nineteenth- and twentieth-century prejudices against the Baroque. The document is silent about painting between the Sixtine Chapel and the late twentieth century, the same period Guardini found out of touch with contemporary sensibilities. In the next sections, the Pope reassures the reader that the Church 'has not ceased to nurture great appreciation for the

[26] Last paragraph of section 6 ('A fruitful alliance between the Gospel and art'). Available online at http://thesacredarts.org/letter2.html (consulted 20 March 2011).

value of art as such', and 'is especially concerned for the dialogue with art and is keen that in our own time there be a new alliance with artists'.[27] But, again, such an alliance is difficult to imagine, since there seems to be very little common ground between the interests, needs, and languages of the twenty-first century Church and those of twenty-first century artists. Interestingly, the documents relevant to the present discussion during the long pontificate of John Paul II took the form of informal open letters addressed to the artists, rather than having a more official character. This could be interpreted as a recognition of artistic freedom, but more probably reflects the difficulty of the present situation, in which the Catholic Church tries to raise awareness of its interests from the periphery of the art world instead of being at its centre.

However isolated, some instances of Catholic cultural products in the field of the visual arts stand out as exceptions to the rule. The film *The Passion of the Christ*, directed by Mel Gibson, was first screened on Ash Wednesday (25 February) of 2004, and is especially interesting because of the heated reactions that it triggered. Gibson has never stated whether he knew of the second *Letter to Artists*, written five years before the release, but the film can be seen as a fitting, if unexpected, response to the pontiff's call for dialogue with artists.

As the title suggests, *The Passion of the Christ* is a recreation of the last twelve hours of Jesus's life. The aim of the film was to bring the spectators into the story as if they were witnessing the historical Passion, which is achieved by means of period-accurate settings and costumes, dialogue in Aramaic, Hebrew and Latin, and, above all, scenes in which Jesus' torture and death are pictured in gruesome detail. In its use of the

[27] Second and third paragraphs of section 10 ('Towards a renewed dialogue').

rhetorical devices of *evidentia* and *antithesis* aimed at stirring the viewer's emotions (for example in the flashbacks to Jesus' childhood), the film's strategies hark back to a long corpus of ascetical and mystical literature influenced by ancient rhetoric. In fact, Gibson and his co-screenwriter have explained that they relied on *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (1833), by Clemens Brentano, based on the visions of the German nun Anne Catherine Emmerich, and also consulted other works including Sor María de Ágreda's *Mística Ciudad de Dios*.[28] Although this was by no means the first film to portray the life of Jesus, it is probably the only one to have done so in a way that so closely translates to the new medium of cinema the rhetorical and devotional sensitivities of the medieval and early modern tradition of visual meditation. Despite the ideological and cultural chasm between these and twenty-first century audiences, the film was a great success with Catholics as well as Christians of other denominations, becoming the highest-grossing non-English language film to date.[29]

Gibson's *The Passion* had its detractors, too. Even before its release, concerns were raised by the Anti-Defamation League about the potential anti-Semitism of the film.[30] But this was far from being the only criticism levelled at it. Besides the many reviewers who found the violence disturbing, a few voices raised objections on the grounds that Gibson had chosen to depict dramatic details for which there is no scriptural

[28] Peter J. Boyer, 'The Jesus War', *The New Yorker,* 15 September 2003.
[29] Statistics obtained from http://www.boxofficemojo.com/alltime/world/ (accessed 20 July 2019).
[30] See the press release of the Anti-Defamation League, 'ADL Statement on Mel Gibson's The Passion', 24 June 2003, and Abraham H. Foxman and Robert G. Sugarman, 'Passion Relies On Theme Of Anti-Semitism', 25 January 2004, https://www.adl.org/news/op-ed/passion-relies-on-theme-of-anti-semitism [orig. pub. in *Palm Beach Post*].

basis – a criticism which is, paradoxically, at least as old-fashioned as the film itself.[31] In his defence, Gibson replied as Carducho would have to Pacheco: ‘I think that my first duty is to be as faithful as possible in telling the story so that it doesn’t contradict the Scriptures. Now, so long as it didn’t do that, I felt that I had a pretty wide berth for artistic interpretation, and to fill in some of the spaces with logic, with imagination, with various other readings’.[32] The new medium of cinema perfectly materialises the old dream of conflating word and image, and serves an agenda that would not have been out of place in seventeenth-century Spain: interestingly, the film prompted a dialogue that would have been as relevant then.

Although the success or failure of any future attempts is unpredictable, the box office record of Gibson’s *The Passion* suggests that there may be an audience for such cultural products, which, far from having to be controlled and heavily subsidized by ecclesiastical authorities, can be independent and, in fact, commercially profitable. Our society seems to be increasingly turning their attention to audiovisual media and away from reading, reversing the process that took place in the eighteenth century; some have pointed out that if Catholicism is to thrive in this environment, it will have to engage with this new reality.[33] This observation is also valuable to museum curators who want to

[31] See Mark Goodacre, ‘The Power of The Passion: Reacting and Over-reacting to Gibson’s Artistic Vision’, in *Jesus and Mel Gibson’s The Passion of the Christ: The Film, the Gospels, and the Claims of History*, ed. by K. E. Corley and R. L. Webb (New York; London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 28–45.
[32] David Neff and Jane Johnson Struck, ‘Dude, That Was Graphic: Mel Gibson talks about The Passion of the Christ’, *Christianity Today,* 23 February 2004, available online at http://web.archive.org/web/20080709100026/http://www.christianitytoday.com/movies/interviews/melgibson.html (consulted 20 July 2019).
[33] Stefan van Calster, ‘La liturgia como lugar privilegiado para la transmisión de la Fe’, *Communio*, 28.4 (2001), 397–406 (pp. 400–02).

exploit the moving aspects of paintings, rather than present them in dry art-historical terms.[34]

Irrespective of the future, and in spite of the long period of decline and crisis, the world of early modern sacred oratory has left a deep and decisive mark in Western culture. The sixteenth-century debate regarding the use of ancient rhetoric by the Catholic Church was resolved in favour of its acceptance and, in hindsight, appears to have been a necessary consequence of early Renaissance Humanism. Had the Church not embraced it, the presence of Ciceronean rhetoric in post-medieval European culture would have decreased, rather than increased. But, as things were, an environment was provided for the preservation of rhetoric and, beyond that, for its creative influence on literature, music, and the visual arts, painting in particular.

From an art-historical point of view, the theory and practice discussed in the present work was of enormous significance for the ways in which seventeenth-century religious paintings were thought about, looked at, and engaged with, and this in return conditioned the goals and expectations of painters and their clients. Sermons provided a bridge between the visual world of religious images and the imaginative piety of meditation, which they made available to the general lay public. Because of their privileged position as the main locus for communication between the institutional Church and the people, sermons were taken as points of reference for what was appropriate and desirable in religious images. Their content provided artists and their patrons with ideas for the development of new iconographies within the limits of orthodoxy, while their form gave them indications as to how to maximisethe effect of images.

[34] Such an observation has been made in Alain De Botton and John Armstrong, *Art as Therapy* (London: Phaidon, 2013).

More generally, we may conclude that sermons and religious images were decisive in the process of shaping the taste of the people to whom they were addressed, especially when the two were used in conjunction and worked as an illustration or a commentary for each other. Both sermons and religious paintings were cultural products accessible to all, and therefore provided a glimpse of the *culto* universe for those who otherwise would not have had any exposure to it. Besides, the synergy of sermons and paintings transmitted a series of implicit value judgements regarding decorum and style: what treatments are suitable for certain subjects, what types of ornament are fitting, what is elegant, what is emotionally affecting and why. Without this, the face, heart, and spirit of Western culture would have been quite different. The conflation of images and words that characterised seventeenth-century preaching was the result of a series of creative experiments that kept alive the legacy of ancient rhetoric and brought to a climax the programme expressed in a nutshell in the Sinai icon with which we began. Though it has long since lost its currency, the interrelationship of these artistic phenomena has contributed to shape what men and women regard as moving in our own time.

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