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STILL LIFE IN 17TH-CENTURY SEVILLE PAINTING

Still life representations showing various man-made objects such as dishes, weapons, books, candles, kitchen utensils, musical instruments, cards, but also food items such as fruit, vegetables, bread, sweets, eggs, fish and animals, as well as flowers and human skulls, are referred to in Spanish as the *bodegón*.¹ Originally, the term had a much broader meaning and included so-called *kitchen scenes*, which were of particular interest to young Diego Velázquez, today considered a part of genre painting. Man-made objects were rarely the main theme of Spanish *bodegones*. If they appeared, they usually accompanied other natural products. Although this genre of painting never developed especially in Seville, it did enjoy a certain popularity there. This was due to both typical aesthetic feelings and the experience of Black Death. The resulting hunger, lack of food and meagre harvests provoked the creation of unusually “appetizing” still lifes, which were supposed to compensate for the acute food shortages. The plague and the spreading death toll moreover inspired the creation of superb still lifes that emphasized the futility of human life. There were also still lifes referring to specific liturgical periods, e.g. Christmas or Lent, particular seasons and months, taking

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¹ On the meaning of the term see: Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros. De 1600 a Goya*, exh. cat., Madrid, Museo del Prado 1983–1984 (Madrid, 1983), 18–19; Francisco CALVO SERRALLER, “El festín visual. Una introducción a la historia del bodegón,” in *El Bodegón*, ed. Noemí Sobregués (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, Círculo de Lectores, 2000), 15–31; Joan Ramón TRIADÓ, “Bodegones y pintura de bodegón,” in *El Bodegón*, 33–48; see Victor I. STOICHITA, *Ustanowienie obrazu. Metamalarstwo u progu ery nowoczesnej*, transl. Katarzyna Thiel-Jańczuk (Gdańsk: Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2011), 29–45.

into account climate changes and products specific to the given period. Sometimes the *bodegones* were allegories of the senses.²

The earliest interest in studies on Spanish still lifes was spawned by the first monograph show held according to the concept of Julio Cavestano in Madrid in 1935 by the Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte. Due to the Spanish civil war, the catalogue of the exhibition, titled *Floreros y bodegones en la pintura española*, came out only in 1940.³ Nearly fifty years later Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez held a similar exhibition in the Museo del Prado in Madrid. The show, *Pintura española de bodegones y floreros. De 1600 a Goya*, was accompanied by an excellent catalogue.⁴ This very show gave rise to a great interest in Spanish still lifes, which inspired many scholars, not only Iberian, but also North American and British, to undertake studies on the subject. They have resulted in several excellent exhibitions and superb studies. Already in 1985, thanks to the efforts of William B. Jordan the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, held an excellent exhibition titled *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age 1600–1650*.⁵ Ten years later a similar show was opened in the National Gallery in London, titled *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*.⁶ That very year the Museo del Prado held another show called *La belleza de lo real. Floreros y bodegones españoles en el Museo del Prado 1600–1800*.⁷ Francisco Calvo Serrallero's efforts led to the organisation of two other shows. The first one, *El bodegón español. De Zurbarán a Picasso*, was organised by the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao in 1999,⁸ while the other one, *Flores españolas del Siglo de Oro. La pintura de flores en la España del siglo XVII*, in the Museo del Prado in late 2002 and early 2003.⁹

² See Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón en la España del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Edilupa Ediciones, 2002), 81–82; Ira OPPERMAN, *Das spanische Stillleben im 17. Jahrhundert. Vom fensterlosen Raum zur lichtdurchfluteten Landschaft* (Berlin: Reimer, 2007), 209–237.

³ Julio CAVESTANY, *Floreros y bodegones en la pintura española* (Madrid: Palacio de la Biblioteca Nacional, 1936–1940).

⁴ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*.

⁵ William B. JORDAN, *Spanish Still Life in the Golden Age 1600–1650*, exh. cat., Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum 1985 (Fort Worth, 1985).

⁶ William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life from Velázquez to Goya*, exh. cat., London, National Gallery 1995 (London, 1995).

⁷ *La belleza de lo real. Floreros y bodegones españoles en el Museo del Prado 1600–1800*, exh. cat., Madrid, Museo del Prado 1995 (Madrid, 1995).

⁸ *El bodegón español. De Zurbarán a Picasso*, exh. cat., Bilbao, Museo de Bellas Artes 1999–2000 (Bilbao, 1999).

⁹ Francisco CALVO SERRALLER, *Flores españolas del Siglo de Oro. La pintura de flores en la España del siglo XVII*, exh. cat., Madrid, Museo del Prado 2002–2003 (Madrid, Fundación Amigos del Museo del Prado, 2002).

The most significant study dedicated to Spanish still life is Peter Cherry's *Arte y naturaleza. El bodegón español en el Siglo de Oro*, published in Spanish in 1999.¹⁰ Studies devoted to the analysis of this genre of painting include some major texts, such as Ramón Torres Martín's *La naturaleza muerta en la pintura española* from 1971,¹¹ a collection of essays titled *El Bodegón* from 2000¹²; Felix Scheffler's *Das spanische Stilleben des 17. Jahrhundert. Theorie, Genese und Entfaltung einer neuen Bildgattung* from 2000¹³; an eminent study by Enrique Valdivieso on vanity still lifes – *Vanidades y desengaños en la pintura española del Siglo de Oro* from 2002¹⁴; a small book by Ángel Aterido, *El bodegón en la España del Siglo de Oro* from 2002; Ira Oppermann's *Das spanische Stilleben im 17. Jahrhundert. Vom fensterlosen Raum zur lichtdurchfluteten Landschaft* from 2007, and finally Rafael Romero Asenjo's *El bodegón español en el siglo XVII: desvelando su naturaleza oculta* from 2009.¹⁵

In his *El arte de la pintura*, completed in 1638, Francisco Pacheco came up with a classification of painting genres in a hierarchy that started with the most mundane and finished with the most refined ones. According to the author, the most trivial genre was a representation of flowers, then fruit, followed by landscape and animals, and topped by the portrait. In the writings of Italian theorists, on which he was based, the pinnacle of the painting genre were historical presentations with both religious and secular themes. As Peter Cherry emphasized, according to a 1628 contract, six reals were paid in Spain for an image of fruit, nine for the representation of flowers and sixteen for the images of saints. Pacheco's classification was repeated in the book *El Museo pictórico* by Antonio Palomino, who saw the authors creators of still lifes as copyists. Palomino's merit was the definite identification of

¹⁰ Transl. Ivars Barzdevics (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico: Doce Calles, 1999).

¹¹ Ramón TORRES MARTÍN, *La naturaleza muerta en la pintura española* (Barcelona: Seix y Barral, 1971).

¹² *El Bodegón*, ed. Noemí Sobregués (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, Círculo de Lectores, 2000).

¹³ Felix SCHEFFLER, *Das spanische Stilleben des 17. Jahrhundert. Theorie, Genese und Entfaltung einer neuen Bildgattung* (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 2000).

¹⁴ Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Vanidades y desengaños en la pintura española del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico, 2002).

¹⁵ Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón español en el siglo XVII: desvelando su naturaleza oculta* (Madrid: I & R, 2009).

the term *bodegón* with still lifes, with the exception of kitchen scenes previously included in it.¹⁶

The treatise *El arte de la pintura* is the first written source which refers to still lifes in Spanish painting. Its author, Francisco Pacheco, himself a still life painter, mentioned three names of artists who were especially active in this field: Blas de Prado and his disciple Juan Sánchez Cotán who worked in the city of Toledo as well as Juan van der Hamen, active in Madrid. Pacheco added that depictions of flowers by Juan van der Hamen “are blissful,” while the *bodegones* by Velázquez are, to his mind, “a veritable imitation of reality.” The origins of this genre can be traced back to the tradition of decorative painting of grotesque character, whose particular development was connected with the discovery of the *Domus Aurea* at the beginning of the 16th century. Although Pacheco did not see his decorations in Italy, he knew them thanks to his friend, Pablo de Céspedes (1538–1608), who lived in Rome and created such works. In Andalusia, this genre of painting appeared mainly as an element of ceiling decoration and consisted mainly of flowers and fruits. The first works of this kind were done by Julio de Aquiles and Alexander Mayner ca. 1535 in the palace of Charles V in Alhambra, Granada.¹⁷

Unlike the Court, the environment in Seville was essentially dominated by religious paintings, which is why artists who wanted to find a job created mostly works representing themes related to the tenets of the faith. This helped to halt the development of secular painting in Seville, especially *bodegones* and landscapes, until the 1620s. Although these genres were not particularly appreciated in the 17th c. in Andalusia, the artists were keen to include still lifes in their works concerning other themes, especially religious ones. This was done by Pacheco himself, who in 1616 painted a work titled *Angels Serving Christ*, where he showed a laid table with some outstanding still lifes depicted there.¹⁸

¹⁶ Francisco PACHECO, *El arte de la pintura* [Sevilla 1649], ed. Bonaventura Bassegoda i Hugas, ed.2 (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001), 503–533; Antonio PALOMINO, *Vidas [El museo pictórico y escala óptica, 1715-1724]* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1986), 155–156; Francisco CALVO SERRALLER, *La teoría de la pintura en el Siglo de Oro*, ed. 2 (Madrid: Cátedra, 1991), 617–622; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 48–49; Felix Scheffler, *Das spanische Stilleben*, 78–108, 115–145; Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón*, 11–12.

¹⁷ Francisco PACHECO, *El arte*, 511–512; Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 21–23.

¹⁸ Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Francisco Pacheco (1564-1644)* (Sevilla: Caja San Fernando, 1990), 26–27; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 55.

The first Andalusian *bodegones* from the early 17th c. were more modest than those painted in Flanders or Italy and did not exhibit premium workmanship. Most often they were created spontaneously, without orders and commissions; they were sold in art studios mainly to a less demanding clientele. They played mainly a decorative role, embellishing dining rooms, verandas and summer residences. Oftentimes, the paintings made up series of six or even twelve items. They were usually hung in less exposed places, above doors and windows, which is why they were often painted on narrow canvases.¹⁹ The *bodegones* from Seville were moreover often exported to the American continent, where they stressed a nostalgia for the homeland.²⁰

The origins of still lifes painting in Seville remain unknown to this day. The first work of this kind, signed and dated, is the *bodegón* with a basket of oranges from 1633, by Francisco de Zurbarán. However, the genre had been known before. One of the first still life painters in Spain was Pablo de Céspedes, an artist from Cordoba, an erudite and a friend of Pacheco's. He was the master of one of the earliest *bodegón* painters from Andalusia, Antonio Mohedano, to whom the decoration of the ceiling in the *Galeria del Prelado* of the palace of the archbishops of Seville is attributed. Made ca. 1604 on commission from Cardinal Fernando Niño de Guevara, the work, with extensive iconography, is exquisitely decorative and combines elements of grotesque as well as floral and animal decorations in a naturalist manner.²¹

The collection of the Duke de Alcalá in Seville after 1620 contained a series of fourteen *bodegones* painted prior to 1610 by Antonio Mohedano. The genre was practiced moreover by Blas de Ledesma from Granada; his works were of lesser quality, as proved by his most famous painting *Basket of Cherries and Lilies* from the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. Records refer moreover to works representatives of this genre, today unknown, painted in the 1620s by Francisco López Caro. There are extant records concerning still lifes from 1627 by a Cordoba-based painter Juan de Zambrano, who settled down in Seville only in 1634.²²

¹⁹ Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 49, 53–55.

²⁰ See Duncan KINKEAD, "Artistic Trade between Sevilla and the New World in the Mid-Seventeenth Century," *Boletín de Investigaciones Históricas e Estéticas* 25 (1983): 73–101.

²¹ Francisco PACHECO, *El arte*, 511; Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 70, 80–82; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 28–30; Felix SCHEFFLER, *Das spanische Stilleben*, 180–192; Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón*, 24–25; Andrzej WITKO, "'Ptasie przesłanie.' O malowidłach na stropie w głównym salonie pałacu arcybiskupów sewilskich," in: *Studia nad Sztuką Renesansu i Baroku*, vol. XII, ed. Irena Rolska (Lublin: TN KUL, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II, 2015), 23–40.

²² Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 71, 78; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 30, 130–131; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 161.

Francisco de Zurbarán, a pre-eminent artist of Spanish Baroque, although specialising mainly in religious painting, often used still life as one of the numerous elements of his extensive compositions.²³ Born in 1598 in Fuente de Cantos in a merchant's family, probably with Basque roots, at the age of 16 entered the workshop of painter Pedro Díez de Villanueva in Seville. He left the workshop in 1617 and left for Llerena, where he established his own studio. In 1626 he returned to Seville in connection with a large contract for paintings for the Dominican Monastery of San Pablo. He painted the famous *Crucifixion* (Chicago, Art Institute), revealing his strong indebtedness to Caravaggio's painting. This commission was soon followed by others, from the Trinitarian, Franciscan and Mercedarian orders. In 1629, the artist settled permanently in the capital of Andalusia at the invitation of the city council. Within a short time he became one of the most popular painters in Seville, commissioned to make many works for churches and monasteries. The artist's fame even reached the royal court, from where he received a commission for paintings in the Buen Retiro Palace from King Philip IV, who soon appointed him his court painter. The artist's journey to Madrid in 1634 was to take place thanks to the intercession of Velázquez, a contemporary of Zurbarán's, who studied at that time in Seville. As an increasingly popular artist, Zurbarán took orders from different parts of Andalusia and Extremadura, as evidenced by two important collections of canvases from the monastery of the Order of St. Jerome in Guadalupe and the charterhouse in Jerez. He also often sent his works to America. In 1658 he moved to Madrid, hoping to become the painter *de cámara*. There, he maintained lively contact with Velázquez and was his witness during a trial when he applied for admission to the elite Order of St. James. However, he died as early as 1664.²⁴

While Zurbarán created few still lifes, they were mostly made out of an artistic impulse or on commission, but those that he painted are among the most interesting in this genre, in the whole Spanish painting of the 17th century. As Aterido emphasized, the objects shown by Zurbarán transcend the order of reality in their meaning, taking on a new dimension. Although they seemingly show ordinary inanimate objects or products specific to Mediterranean culture, most often presented on simple wooden tables, they are not only naturalistic works, but also contemplative paintings with unusual

²³ Trinidad de ANTONIO, "Zurbarán y la pintura de bodegones," in *El Bodegón*, 259–272.

²⁴ Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Historia de la pintura sevillana. Siglos XIII al XX*, ed. 3 (Sevilla: Guadalquivir, 2002), 173–194.

aesthetic values. Most of his known autonomous still lifes repeat motifs found in large compositions.²⁵

Bodegón with a Basket of Oranges (ill. 1) is a canvas, where the painter presented life-size props. Lowering the point of view, he made the presented objects acquire the features of monumentality, which is difficult to find when looking at the table from above. The central orange basket is flanked by two metal plates of different sizes. Rather than encourage consumption, these objects seem to persuade the viewer to contemplate them, as if this was their principal message. Faithfulness to detail in this work is astounding. This applies to both the basket and the orange flower twig. Zurbarán uses a dark background, which perfectly highlights the items depicted and demonstrates the ability to vary the lighting. In this case, it seems that both oranges and lemons are half bathed in the light and half in the shade.²⁶

These objects, although placed on the table, are more like liturgical objects dedicated to God and placed on the altar. Other researchers even suggested that in Zurbarán's still-life, the flowers and fruits of oranges and water in a cup are to represent Mary's chastity and motherhood, while the roses depict the virtue of love. Indeed, especially in his first works, Zurbarán often showed still lifes which were supposed to emphasize the depth of the symbolic meaning of the whole representation, which referred mainly to religious painting.²⁷

This arguably best-known *bodegón* made by him, signed and dated 1633, invokes an identical plate, cup and rose from a small canvas from ca. 1630, housed in the National Gallery in London, earlier depicted on the 1625 canvas *Healing of Bl. Reginald of Orleans* from the Seville Church of St. Mary Magdalene and in the *Education of Mary*, from the Abelló collection. In both the paintings the vessels stressed the virtues of chastity and charity.²⁸

²⁵ Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 249; Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón*, 44. Peter Cherry implies that most likely Zurbarán was familiar with the famous still lifes painted since 1603 by the Carthusian monk from Granada, Sánchez Cotán (1560–1627).

²⁶ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 75–76; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 249–251; IDEM, “The Golden Age of Still Life Painting in Spain and Italy,” in: *In the Presence of Things. Four Centuries of European Still life Painting*, vol. I: 17th–18th Centuries, exh. cat., Calouste Gulbenkian Museum 2010 (Lisbon, 2010), 93.

²⁷ William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 102–103; Julián GÁLLEGO, *Visión y símbolos en la pintura española del Siglo de Oro*, ed. 4 (Madrid: Cátedra, 1996), 202; Jeannine BATICLE, “Zurbarán: panorama de su vida y de su obra,” in *Zurbarán...*, exh. cat., Madrid, Museo del Prado 1988 (Madrid, 1988), 85–106.

²⁸ Odile DELENDA, “La familia de la Virgen,” in: *Zurbarán...*, exh. cat., Madrid, Museo del Prado 1988 (Madrid, 1988), 361–362; William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 20;

Still Life with Four Vessels (ill. 2) from the Museo del Prado from ca. 1650 and a nearly identical version of the work from the Museu d'Art de Catalunya in Barcelona showcases a subject within the *bodegones* genre, relatively rare in Spanish painting. Although similar objects had already appeared in Velázquez's works, the focus on the dishes themselves, with no accompanying foodstuffs, is unique. These clay and silver objects, household items used for water in every Andalusian house of the time, emphasize their aesthetic value, but at the same time may also indicate the importance of water in Spanish culture. The artist showed such different life-size objects made of various materials and through the composition he forced the viewer to focus on their form. The light makes the canvas almost sculptural in character; the strong contrast between light and shadow differentiates the individual elements of the vessels displayed. These works are characterized by the simplicity of composition and material of the objects, as well as, paradoxically, by modest means of expression, which emphasizes the virtuosity of the master. These inconspicuous everyday objects are by no means simplistic or trivial.²⁹

Unique for Zurbarán is moreover his multiple depictions of the Lamb, e.g. from the Museo del Prado (ill. 3), from ca. 1631. The work shows a life-size lamb, on a stone ledge, bound and prepared for a sacrificial offering. This image stresses the symbolism of the still life in seventeenth-century Spanish painting. The rendition of the wool and hide indicates that the artist had to create with a real animal in front of him. The theme of the bound animal, undoubtedly referring to the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for the salvation of the world, is confirmed in other works by Zurbarán. One of them, signed and dated 1639, presents a tied lamb without horns, with a halo and a legend reminiscent of the words of the prophet Isaiah (Is 53: 7) *Tanquam agnus* (like a Lamb).³⁰

Peter CHERRY, *Francisco de Zurbarán. Taza de agua y una rosa sobre bandeja de plata*, in Francisco CALVO SERRALLER, *Flores españolas*, 114–115. Another *bodegón* by Zurbarán with a basketful of apples and peaches, comes from the 1630s. Still lifes, ascribed deep symbolism to, especially those which did not stimulate e.g. the sense of taste, in the oeuvre of e.g. Zurbarán, are called *bodegones de cuaresma*. See Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón*, 56.

²⁹ The vessel on the right-hand side can be also found in the *Annunciation* from the March collection, dated after 1650. Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 86; Mercedes ORIHUELA, "Bodegón de cacharros...", in *La belleza de lo real*, 76–77; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 252; Ira OPPERMAN, *Das spanische Stilleben*, 43–45. The serious and modest *bodegones* by Zurbarán differ significantly from the still lifes of the Madrid School, depicting lavish tableware, and shimmering metal and glassware, present e.g. in the oeuvre of Juan Bautista de Espinosa.

³⁰ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Agnus Dei*, in: *Zurbarán*, exh. cat., Madrid, Museo del Prado 1988 (Madrid, 1988), 435–437; Mercedes ORIHUELA, "Agnus Dei," in *La belleza de lo*

Juan de Zurbarán's oeuvre known today indicates that despite the young age he was one of the most innovative and imaginative authors of still lifes in seventeenth-century Spanish painting. Born in 1620 in Llerena, he most probably arrived in Seville with his father Francisco in 1629. There he was an apprentice in his father's workshop and in time became his assistant and collaborator. We do not know of any of his works depicting a human figure, but he became famous as an outstanding painter of still lifes, which he began to make very early, as they bear the dates of origin from 1639. A scion of a wealthy family, he received an excellent education and even learned court dance and poetry writing. In August 1641 he married Mariana de Quadros, a daughter of a *Real Audiencia* advocate in Seville, whose dowry amounted to 50,000 reals. It was one of the most lucrative marriages among young Seville-based artists of that time. Juan soon began to lead a life full of splendour and glamour, squandering his wife's fortune. He named his son Francisco Máximo. In 1642 he published a sonnet as an introduction to the *Discursos sobre el arte de danzado* by Juan de Esquivel. He died prematurely in 1649, having contracted the plague. Juan de Zurbarán was probably active in Seville for ten years. He predominantly painted *bodegones*, but also religious scenes which, regrettably, have not survived. These lost works included e.g. two paintings depicting miracles of Our Lady of the Rosary for the Dominican brotherhood under this very name from Carmona, for which he signed a contract in 1644.³¹

His earliest still life is *Plate with Grapes* (ill. 4), signed and dated 1639. This kind of representation was very fashionable at court, as Francisco de Zurbarán personally discovered during his trip to Madrid in 1634. The work was made on a small piece of copper, referring to the popular still lifes painted at the royal court. Juan presented three different types of grapes, life-size, in order to bring out a variety of light effects. Three different colours also allowed the artist to gradate the intensity of light, which gave the effect of a pseudo-perspective. The yellow grapes on the left-hand side are closest to the light, so they have an extremely intense colour, the red fruits in the middle have an intermediate tone, and the black grapes in the furthest position seem to be sinking in the shade.³²

real, 78–79; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 254. The same lamb in an identical pose was depicted by Zurbarán in 1638 in *Adoration of the Shepherds* from the Jerez charterhouse, today at the Museum Grenoble.

³¹ César PÉMAN, "Juan de Zurbarán," *Archivo Español de Arte* 31 (1958): 193–211; William B. JORDAN, *Spanish Still Life*, 222–224; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 255, 547–549.

³² Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 77; William B. JORDAN, *Spanish Still*

Another early work by Juan de Zurbarán is *Plate with Fruit and Goldfinch*. The small painting shows an abundance of fruit with a magnificent open pomegranate in the centre, adorned with flowers. The depiction is accompanied by a multitude of details; on the fruit one can see a wasp, and on the flowers – a butterfly. The motif of a goldfinch eating fruit refers to the painting by an ancient painter, Zeuxis of Heraclea, who painted grapes so realistically that the birds wanted to peck at them. However, Juan leaves no doubt as to who is the master in presenting still lifes, because in his painting the bird enjoys the grapes and eats them with taste.³³

The young Juan was undoubtedly inspired by the still lifes his father was painting, especially *Basket with Oranges*, thanks to which attention to detail and tenebrous lighting were adopted by the young artist. Traces of this lesson are evident in many of his works, such as e.g. *Plate with Quince, Plums and Figs* and *Pears in a Porcelain Bowl*. However, Juan's still lifes seek more intense light effects and use strong shadow to eliminate light streaks. The compositions are dynamic and feature dramatic light that evokes the still lifes from the Naples School.³⁴

Juan de Zurbarán painted moreover two still lifes showing fruit in large baskets: *Basket with Apples*, *Plate with Pomegranates and Flowers* and *Basket with Apples and Quinces*, works of formalized composition, reminiscent of Francisco's works, in particular his 1633 *bodegón*. This reference is evident also in the use of symmetry and a nearly identically painted basket in the works of the father and the son.³⁵

However, Juan sought his own style in his still lifes; his abrupt brushstrokes make up a rich composition, so much different from the ascetic works of his father. Juan's works, far more sensual, impress the viewer with

Life, 224–225; William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 106; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 255; María Margarita CUYÁS, “Bodegón con plato de uvas,” in *El bodegón español. De Zurbarán*, 164–165.

³³ William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 106–107; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 256.

³⁴ No wonder that the still-life with fruit and artichoke from Mänttä in Finland was for a long time considered to be a work of Neapolitan painting. See William B. JORDAN, *Spanish Still Life*, 230–231; William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 108–109; María Margarita CUYÁS, “Bodegón con plato de membrillos, uvas, higos y ciruelas,” in: *El bodegón español. De Zurbarán*, 168–169; Peter CHERRY, *Juan de Zurbarán. Peras en un cuenco de porcelana*, in: Francisco CALVO SERRALLER, *Flores españolas*, 115–116.

³⁵ William B. JORDAN, *Spanish Still Life*, 231, 233–234; María Margarita CUYÁS, “Bodegón con cesto de manzanas, membrillos y granadas,” in *El bodegón español. De Zurbarán*, 166–167; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 185.

the beauty of detail, especially in the rendition of flowers. The artist can be regarded then as an extremely creative and imaginative author of still lifes, with a clear idea of the genre, liberated from his father's impact. Especially innovative is the signed 1640 *Still Life with Jugs Chocolate Cups* (ill. 5). Still, in its basic features it corresponds to the mainstream representations of this genre because Juan introduces many modern solutions in it. Unlike his father, he does not maintain symmetry faithfully, but gathers objects according to his own intuition, in the spirit of the then fashionable naturalistic Italian still lifes, which he must have known. He copes well with the perspective representation of individual objects, using an unusual interplay of light. And so, even an inverted cup casts its shadow over a clay jug on the one hand, while on the other hand it is reflected, full of colours, in a metal jug. In this work, Juan resorted to showing objects that serve the pleasure of drinking chocolate, thus referring to sensual delight. Mexican cups are also full of charm, contrasting with the modest clay dishes typical of Francisco's still lifes. This work must have aroused great interest, as several of its imitations have survived.³⁶

An artist connected with the Seville Academy of Painting was Pedro de Medina Valbuena. Born ca. 1620, he died in abject poverty in 1691 in the capital of Andalusia. We still know very little about this painter; a contemporary of Juan de Zurbarán, he most likely made exclusively *bodegones*. His still life signed and dated 1645 is the *Still Life with Apples, Nuts and Sugar Cane*. He painted dimly lit objects, delicately modelled, against a blurry background, as testified by two still lifes with figs and apples from the Lázaro Galdiano collection in Madrid. In turn, the magnificent *Still Life with Apples, Pears, Quince and Grapes* in the Naseiro collection is a very naturalist rendition of decaying fruit; most recently this work has been presented in a scholarly text by Rafael Romero Asenjo. Valbuena's *bodegones* were highly appreciated in Seville. In a collection in the capital of Andalusia there were as many as two pairs of still lifes with fruit, fish, and seafood, and six paintings with birds. Probably this group included two still lifes with fish and seafood, signed and dated in 1685, recently put up for sale, as well as a signed painting with oranges, seafood and bread from the same group, preserved in the Naseiro collection (ill. 6).³⁷

³⁶ Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 256–259.

³⁷ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 78; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 259–260; Ira OPPERMAN, *Das spanische Stillleben*, 48; Rafael ROMERO ASEÑO, *El bodegón*, 223–231.

Still lifes with hunting motifs were made by Francisco Barranco, active in Seville between 1630 and 1650. He had a special gift of rendering details such as feathers, leather, metal or glass. His brushstrokes were energetic and vivid; he preferred to use foggy and fuzzy effects in the background. Interestingly, many of his works were made not on canvas, but on oak panels, imported from the Netherlands, which was quite rare among the Seville painters of the time. Some of the motifs used by him, such as plates with oysters or live rabbits, were characteristic precisely of the works of Dutch artists. Perhaps the painter himself was of Flemish origin, and the name, which is not common on the Iberian Peninsula, may be a hispanized form.³⁸

Four of his signed still lifes come from 1647, possibly parts of a single series. One of his works, in the Apelles Collection in London, showing a vessel with chocolate and dead birds, may be a reference to Juan de Zurbarán's similar canvas. Another one is *Still Life with Birds and Rabbit* (ill. 7) from Juan Abelló's Madrid collection, an exquisite innovative work of a few grounds, reminiscent of Flemish models. His painting evoke Pedro de Medina's style. Both artists made use of such motifs, rare in Spain, as seafood. More recently the artist's oeuvre has been extended by a still life with a ram's head and eggplant, which during its conservation revealed the artist's signature. The work, held in the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, demonstrates a clear impact of Diego Velázquez's art.³⁹

A resident of Seville since 1628, Pedro de Camprobín y Passano became chiefly specialised in still lifes, especially flowers. Born in Almagro in 1605, he studied arts in Toledo in Luis Tristán's studio. Active in Toledo and occasionally in Madrid, he finally settled down in Seville. There he married María de Encalada, with whom he had four children. In 1630 he passed his master's exam. A founding member of the Painting Academy in 1660, a member of the Sacramental Brotherhood del Sagrario. He died in 1674 in Seville.⁴⁰

This artist specialised in still lifes, which he painted already when staying in Toledo. There he encountered works by Alejandro de Loarte, and in Madrid with those by Juan van der Hamen. Camprobín imparted a new form to Zurbarán's aesthetics, then dominant in Seville, enhancing it with elegance

³⁸ Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 261–262; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 191.

³⁹ Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 261–262; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 190–201; Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón*, 74–75.

⁴⁰ Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 262–263. On the life of Pedro de Camprobín y Passano see *ibid.*, 551–553; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 201–221.

and glamour and introducing elements used by Flemish *bodegón* painters from the 1st tercio of the 17th c. His still lifes are very refined and use a delicate and subtle colour palette. The first works on this subject were quite modest, with a poor composition, showing symmetrically distributed objects on the table. In the last phase of his work, his *bodegones* gained dynamism, in line with the then Baroque aesthetics, showing objects on different planes and opening the background of representations with the help of windows and balconies, through which architecture could be additionally contemplated.⁴¹

His earliest works known to us are dated ca. 1650 and depict fruit and dead birds. According to Peter Cherry, the works were made within a short time of the devastating plague epidemic of 1649. The disease decimated the population of Seville and killed the most talented *bodegón* painter Juan de Zurbarán. Due to the then widespread shortage of food, still lifes turned out to be particularly attractive for the Seville customers. Later on, the artist also made a series of extremely decorative, luxurious *bodegones*, showing tableware, reminiscent of the Italian works of Evaristo Baschenis and Bartolomeo Bettera. In these works of Camprobín, apart from food, there are also musical instruments and flowers, while in the background there are views of towns and cities and hanging draperies.⁴²

The works of Camprobín, a native of Castile, indicate clear influences with the local Andalusian tradition, especially Zurbarán's still lifes. In his *Basket of Flowers*, a property of Duke de Ibarra from Seville, Camprobín depicted also a cup and rose from Zurbarán's famous *Basket of Oranges* from 1633. In turn, a pair of still lifes with basketfuls of oranges and lemons resembles Zurbarán's *Basket of Apples and Peaches*. Many of Camprobín's paintings refer to Juan de Zurbarán's style, so much so that not infrequently the works by the latter were earlier linked to Camprobín, e.g. the famous *Plate with Fruit and Goldfinch* and *Pears in a Porcelain Bowl*. The former work features a butterfly, a recurrent element of Camprobín's painting oeuvre. Painted on a panel, the *Bowl of Fruit* (ill. 8) from 1656 was one of a pair of still lifes with fruit, with visible strong Flemish influences. In the 1650s, Camprobín's style became more mature, even if the artist continued to select a narrow group of topics, showing first of all food items, flowers and objects of arts and crafts.⁴³

⁴¹ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 77–78; Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Historia de la pintura*, 199–200.

⁴² Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 262–264; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 210–215.

⁴³ William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 110–114; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 264–265.

Camprobín was predominantly the first Seville painter of flowers (ill. 9), and he monopolised this area in the latter half of the 17th c. The artist developed two principal types of renditions of flowers: in baskets and jugs. Since the works had special decorative value, they were often hung above doors and windows. Therefore the painter made use of a lowered optic centre.⁴⁴ He painted a multitude of works of this kind, no doubt being based not only on studies of nature, presenting very ginger flower bouquets, highlighting the whiteness of roses or guelder rose. Some of his floral compositions are even eccentric from the point of view of botany.⁴⁵ Probably the numerous jugs and backgrounds of the paintings were based on drawings. A series of twelve floral representations was to be located in the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows in the Church of St. Paul in Seville, which indicates the great recognition of the artist in this genre. In some of his works Camprobín combined traditional Andalusian still lifes motifs with floral representations, which was common in Madrid, e.g. in the works of Juan van der Hamen or Juan de Arellano.⁴⁶

Andrés Pérez was an artist creating still lifes in the last years of the 17th c. and in the early 18th c. He was born in Seville w 1660, although some shift his date of birth until as late as 1669. He died in 1727. A son of Seville-based painter Francisco Pérez de Pineda, who taught him painting in Murillo's stylistic canons. A highly acclaimed painter of flowers, his oeuvre includes e.g. two canvases from the Seville Museo de Bellas Artes, originally attributed to Lucas Valdés and Matías Arteada: *Abraham and Melchizedek and David and Ahimelech*, as well as the *Last Judgement*, from the early 18th c., signed and dated, from the same museum. This archaic work is based on a 16th-century print by Jean Cousin.⁴⁷

His exceptional skill is evident in a few religious works with large floral sections. These are: *St. Anne and Joachim and Mary* from the Museo de Bellas Artes in Cordoba, where human figures are set within flowery twigs, and *Baby Jesus Sleeping on the Cross* and *Suffering Baby Jesus*, both from private collections in Seville. The works, full of Baroque glamour, bring to mind paintings by Juan de Arellano and Bartolomé Pérez. A few isolated paintings of flowers in vases have survived (ill. 10), proof of the evolution

⁴⁴ Peter CHERRY, "Pedro de Camprobín. Florero con lirios, rosas y mariposas," in Francisco CALVO SERRALLER, *Flores españolas*, 131–133.

⁴⁵ Idem, *Arte y naturaleza*, 266.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 265–267.

⁴⁷ Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 247.

of the artist's style. Dated as late 17th and early 18th centuries, they show a harmonious composition and faithfulness to detail, which indicates that they were patterned on natural models.⁴⁸

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, too, demonstrated a keen skill in depicting still lifes, including them in both religious painting and portraits. Murillo was born in the last days of December 1617 as the youngest of fourteen children in a family of a hairdresser Gaspar Esteban and Maria Pérez Murillo, a sister of the painter Antón Pérez. He was baptised in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Seville on 1 January 1618. His father died when he was merely nine; a few months later his mother died, too. He was then taken care of by his elder sister Ana and her husband, a hairdresser himself, Juan Agustín Lagares. At the age of fifteen Bartolomé Esteban decided to leave for America to seek an easier life, following in the footsteps of his eldest brother and one sister. There is no proof that he made the trip and most likely he was only toying with the idea. The young artist, using the surname of his maternal grandmother, ca. 1633 joined the studio of Juan del Castillo, married to Antón Pérez's daughter. He was an apprentice to the master for around five years. Actually, we still do not have detailed information on Murillo's artistic formation and life until the moment he was a recognised and renowned painter. Most likely still in the autumn of 1642 he made his first trip to Madrid, where he met Diego Velázquez and got familiar with his art. We know that in 1658 he revisited Madrid and got familiar with royal collections. His merits include the setting up in 1660 of the Academy of Painting in Seville. In 1665 he became a member of the elite brotherhood La Santa Caridad in the capital of Andalusia, which on the one hand enhanced his charitable imagination and on the other hand inspired him to paint a series of works which were part of the exquisite iconography by Miguel Mañara. He died on 3 April 1682 and was buried in the parish church of the Seville district of Santa Cruz.⁴⁹

Records indicate that the artist painted many still lifes with flowers and fruit. Some were listed posthumously in his atelier, some were also in the collection of Don Justino de Neve, yet have not been identified to date. Many of his compositions, both secular and religious, depict excellent still lifes, such as basketfuls of fruit (ill. 11), plates and jugs.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ibid., 247–251.

⁴⁹ Diego ANGULO ÍÑIGUEZ, *Murillo: su vida, su arte, su obra*, vol. I–III (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1981); Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Historia de la pintura*, 211–231.

⁵⁰ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 100–101; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 162.

The name of the Flemish painter Cornelio Schut, active in Seville, has been linked to the still life genre for a few years only. Earlier, the artist was tied exclusively with religious and mythological themes and portraits. Born in Antwerp in 1629, he was a son of a Flemish engineer working in Seville in the service of Philip IV. He most probably studied painting in Flanders, according to Palomino in the studio of his uncle, of the same given name and surname. The earliest historical records show that he passed a master's exam in 1654. In Seville he developed his art in the circle of painters imitating Murillo's style. He was an active member of the Academy of Painting since its establishment in 1660; he was twice elected its president (1670 and 1674). He died in Seville in 1685 and was buried in the parish of the Most Holy Saviour.⁵¹ A pair of his works from 1665 show dead birds (ill. 12), painted in Murillo's manner. The artist chose, however, an innovative composition pattern, where he skilfully demonstrated specific details, including the birds' plumage and excellent anatomy, which shows that he patterned himself on models. Interestingly, the works were made on one piece of canvas, which previously featured a completed image of Mary Immaculate.⁵²

In the latter half of the 17th c. another type of *bodegones*, called *Desengaños de la vida*, was popular in Seville. As a result of the abundant death toll of Black Death and numerous armed conflicts, a current emerged, showing in a graphic form the short and fragile nature of human life, the futility of wealth and worldly honours in the face of death. Still lifes of this type, most often accompanied by man-made objects of everyday use and entertainment, encouraged reflection on the meaning and value of human life. These were actually illustrative sermons of a moralising nature, referring to the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes and its message *Vanitas, vanitatum, et omnia vanitas* (Eccl 1–2). The carefree and sometimes sumptuous Seville *bodegones* found a new artistic and ideological perspective.⁵³

However, this subject matter was already present in Spanish art, especially in Castilian painting. One of the most important artists of this genre was Antonio de Pereda, who ca. 1634 painted for Almirante de Castilla the famous *Desengaños de la vida* (today in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna), considered to be a model rendition. It imprinted a number of motifs which, underlining the symbolic dimension of the work, became indispensa-

⁵¹ Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Historia de la pintura*, 285.

⁵² Ramón TORRES MARTÍN, *La naturaleza muerta*, 64; Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 102; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 241–245.

⁵³ Julián GÁLLEGO, *Visión y símbolos*, 204–210; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 43–47.

ble in such works: books standing for knowledge, an hourglass representing time, weapons symbolic of war glory, jewels and coins indicative of wealth, cards depicting luck, portraits of women standing for beauty, and a turret clock representing moderation. The most important element of these representations, however, were the skulls, a sign of death and penance, which were at the same time a reference to the first man, Adam, and thus a reference to the sin of Paradise, which brought about death.⁵⁴

The most eminent representative of the type of *bodegones* in Seville painting was Juan de Valdés Leal.⁵⁵ Born in the capital of Andalusia in 1622 to Fernando Nisa and Antonia Valdés, upon receipt of the master's title ca. 1640 he left for Cordoba. There he married in 1647 and began a splendid career, which was soon interrupted, most likely due to the Black Death epidemic in 1649. In 1650 he was again active in Seville, as testified by an extensive series of paintings for the Monastery of St. Claire in Carmona. Having completing the series, however, he returned to Cordoba, where in 1655 he received a substantial commission from the Carmelite order for a series of paintings for the retable of the high altar. In 1656 he settled down in Seville. Ever since, until his death, apart from occasional short trips he rarely left his hometown and was intensively active there. In 1660 he was one of the co-founders of the Seville Academy of Painting, of which he became president in time. The year 1664 was to be a breakthrough year in his career. According to Palomino, at that time, the artist stayed at the royal court, got to know the rich collections of monarchs and established numerous contacts with other painters. Since then, he also often took up other activities than painting in the studio, most often gilding retables and making polychromies, earning a decent living for himself and his family. In 1667 he became a member of the elite brotherhood La Santa Caridad in Seville, for which he produced several works, including the famous *hieroglyphs of the ultimate things*, painted in 1672, which sealed his worldwide renown. After 1680 his health deteriorated, yet the artist continued work on decorating the churches of La Santa Caridad, de los Venerables and the monastery Church of San Clemente. Juan de Valdés Leal died in October 1690. Traditionally, he was shown as an irritable, violent and proud person, which is however not borne out by written records. Similarly, he was allegedly involved in necrophilia and displayed an excessive interest in death, which was connected with his

⁵⁴ Ángel ATERIDO, *El bodegón*, 114–115.

⁵⁵ See Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Juan de Valdés Leal* (Sevilla: Guadalquivir, 1988).

famous paintings of the ultimate things from the Church of La Santa Caridad, made after a carefully-devised iconography by Miguel Mañara.⁵⁶

In his *Allegory of Vanitas* (ill. 13), signed and dated in 1660 (now at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford), Valdés Leal depicted a plethora of attributes related to authority, wealth and knowledge. We can find here numerous publications related to art, architecture, perspective and anatomy. The open book in the foreground is the famous 1633 *Diálogos de la pintura* by Vicente Carducho,⁵⁷ an emblem stressing the greatness of painting, which is still insignificant in the face of the futility of this world. Valdés Leal signed this illustration of *Tabula rasa*. Another book is *De la diferencia entre lo temporal y eterno y crisol de desengaños* by the Jesuit Juan Eusebio Nieremberg from 1640, an analysis of precisely the same subject of the vanity of human life. Apart from numerous attributes of ecclesiastical and secular power, there is a skull in a laurel wreath, a clock and even a smoking candle, jewels, money, cards, a miniature, and roses. A sad angel blows out soap bubbles. The culmination of this message is the figure of an angel addressing the viewer directly, unveiling a painting with the representation of the Last Judgment and pointing with his finger at Christ the Judge.⁵⁸

The full message of the *Vanitas* can be found in two *hieroglyphs of death* by Juan de Valdés Leal from *La Caridad* in Seville. Here, instead of a skull, death with a coffin, a scythe and a shroud appears, and decomposing bodies are presented.⁵⁹ The first painting illustrates a sudden appearance of death, *In ictu oculi* (ill. 14). Death treads over the earthly globe and puts out a candle with its right arm; above the candle there is the motto indicated in the title. At a marble grave, draped in exquisite white and pinkish-red cloth, there is a suit of armour and a sabre, spectre, pontifical cross, crosier, mitre, cardinal's hat, tiara, imperial and royal crown, order of the Golden Fleece and numerous religious, scientific and historical books. We can identify the fol-

⁵⁶ Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Historia de la pintura*, 263–283.

⁵⁷ Vicente CARDUCHO, *Diálogos de la pintura*, [Madrid 1633], ed. Francisco Calvo Serraller (Madrid: Turner D.L., 1979).

⁵⁸ Alfonso Emilio PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, *Pintura española*, 101; William B. JORDAN, Peter CHERRY, *Spanish Still Life*, 115–117; Peter CHERRY, *Arte y naturaleza*, 47; Enrique VALDIVIESO, “Alegoría de la vanidad,” in *El bodegón español. De Zurbarán*, 178–179. The *Allegory of Vanitas* is referenced by the *Allegory of Salvation* from 1660, from the York City Art Gallery, even if the latter is not strictly a still life.

⁵⁹ See Andrzej WITKO, “Program ikonograficzny sewilskiej świątyni La Caridad,” in *Kultura artystyczna siedemnastowiecznej Sewilli a don Miguel Mañara i jego dzieło* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo AA, 2010), 201–256.

lowing book titles: León de Castro's commentary on Isiah, Suárez's *Comentarios a Santo Tomás*, Pliny's *Naturalis historiae*, Prudencio de Sandoval's *Historia de la vida y hechos del Emperador Carlos V*. The great open book shows an illustration highlighting the brevity of earthly triumph. The print, by Theodoor van Thulden after a Rubens drawing, is published in Gevar-tius's *Pompa introitus honori serenissimi principis Ferdinandi Austriaci hispaniarum infantis*, published in 1641. The print represented a triumphant arch erected in honour of cardinal-infante Fernando after his entry into Antwerp after the Battle of Nördlingen.⁶⁰

The other canvas, *Finis gloriae mundi*, shows a crypt to which the flight of stairs visible in the background leads; the background features also an owl and a bat. Inside this interior there are several open decaying coffins: in the foreground is visible the decomposing body of the bishop, eaten by vermin, next to it lies a coffin with the corpse of the Knight Calatrava, buried in a religious garb, in the background there is a coffin in the shadow, with an extensively decomposing body and numerous bones and skulls, which intensify the macabre content of the representation. In the upper part of the painting Christ's hand appears and holds a weighing scale with two dishes. The balance of the dishes is strengthened by the following expressions *Ni más* (neither more), *Ni menos* (nor less), which indicates that all people irrespective of their background can be saved or condemned, depending on whether they choose the path of sin or virtue. On the left-hand dish of the scale there is the legend *Ni más* along with animals, symbolic of the seven deadly sins which can lead a soul to condemnation. These are: a peacock as a symbol of pride, a bat on a heart – a symbol of envy, a dog – of wrath, a pig – immoderation, a goat – of avarice, an ape – of unchastity, a sloth – of sloth. On the right-hand dish of the scale there is the inscription *Ni menos* and symbols of prayer, asceticism and charity: prayer books – one of them bears the inscription *Salt. de David* – David's Psalter, whips, scourge, chain, hairpiece, a spiked cross, loaves of bread, and above all of them a burning heart with Christ's monogram.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Alejandro GUICHOT Y SIERRA, *Los famosos jeroglíficos de la muerte de Juan de Valdés Leal de 1672. Análisis de sus alegorías* (Sevilla: Imp. de Álvarez y Rodríguez, 1930), 42–52; Elizabeth DU GUÉ TRAPIER, *Valdés Leal Spanish Baroque Painter* (New York: Hispanic Society of America, 1960), 57–58; Jonathan BROWN, "Hieroglyphs of Death and Salvation. The Decoration of the Church of the Hermandad de la Caridad," *Art Bulletin* 52 (1970): 270; Enrique VALDIVIESO, Juan Miguel SERRERA, *El Hospital de la Caridad de Sevilla* (Sevilla: Sever Cuesta, 1980), 46–47, 67–68.

⁶¹ Jonathan BROWN, "Hieroglyphs of Death," 270–271; Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Vanidades y desengaños*, 110–114.

An extremely intriguing work dedicated to this theme was also painted by Juan de Valdés Leal's son Lucas. He was born in 1661 in Seville. He apprenticed in his father's studio, at the same time devoting himself to humanistic studies. From his earliest years he studied painting and engraving. We know his oldest engravings, which he made at the age of eleven. In 1681 he married and later became the main figure in his father's studio. After his father's death, he became one of the most popular Seville painters, fulfilling numerous orders until 1719, when he left his hometown for Cadiz. There he became professor of mathematics at the maritime college. He died in Cadiz in 1725.⁶²

Influenced by the above works by Juan de Valdés Leal, his son painted a signed canvas titled *Vanitas* (ill. 15). Romero Asenjo dates it as painted in the 1670s, yet it seems that the stylistic features of the work indicate its later origin, of at least a decade. This is the only known work of the artist in this genre, extremely interesting due to the composition of the still life. It shows the strong influence of *In ictu oculi*. Lucas presented, in accordance with the convention, various attributes of power and eminence, referring to both the secular and ecclesiastical state: the royal crown, the order of the Golden Fleece, the papal tiara, the bishop's mitre, liturgical robes, armour, books, and the globe. Above them, on the table there was a skull topped with laurels, a candle going out and a turret clock. From among the seemingly haphazardly strewn objects emerges a painting with the representation of the Last Judgment.⁶³

Although still life did not enjoy special recognition as a genre of painting in Seville in the 17th century, it accompanied numerous scenes of a religious or secular nature. With time, it even gained an autonomous status and a certain popularity, resulting rather from decorative premises. It was due to the representation of various man-made objects, but also tasty food products and beautiful, colourful flowers. A characteristic feature of Seville painting was also the use of the language of symbolism in still lifes, especially in the religious context, e.g. in Zurbarán's works. Historical circumstances, i.e. the spreading hunger and plague, gave the still life a new function. Namely, it was supposed to satisfy the longing for the lost abundance of life, evoking its sumptuous and tasteful elements. The toll of the Black Death, however,

⁶² Enrique VALDIVIESO, *Historia de la pintura*, 291–303; Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 233.

⁶³ Rafael ROMERO ASENJO, *El bodegón*, 233–238.

also inspired the creation of works emphasizing the shortness and futility of human life, with clearly didactic and moralistic overtones.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Still Life with a Basket of Oranges*, oil on canvas, 1633, Pasadena, The Norton Simon Foundations, a photo from the author's collection.
2. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Still Life with Four Vessels*, oil on canvas, ca. 1650, Madrid, Museo del Prado, a photo from the author's collection.
3. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Lamb*, oil on canvas, ca. 1631, Madrid, Museo del Prado, a photo from the author's collection.
4. Juan de Zurbarán, *Plate with Grapes*, oil on copper, 1639, Bordeaux, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.
5. Juan de Zurbarán, *Still Life with Chocolate Service*, oil on canvas, 1640, Kiev, Museum of Western and Oriental Art, a photo from the author's collection.
6. Pedro de Medina Valbuena, *Still Life with Seafood, Oranges and Bread*, oil on canvas, 1685, Naseiro collection, a photo from the author's collection.
7. Francisco Barranco, *Still Life with Birds and Rabbit*, oil on panel, 1647, Madrid, Juan Abelló collection, a photo from the author's collection.
8. Pedro de Camprobín y Passano, *Fruit Bowl*, oil on panel, 1656, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.
9. Pedro de Camprobín y Passano, *Flowers in a Vase*, oil on canvas, 1666, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.
10. Andrés Pérez, *Vase with Flowers*, oil on canvas, 17th/18th c., Madrid, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.
11. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *Girls with Fruit*, fragment, oil on canvas, 1670–1680, Munich, Alte Pinakothek, a photo from the author's collection.
12. Cornelio Schut, *Still Life with Birds and Rabbit*, oil on canvas, 1665, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.
13. Juan de Valdés Leal, *Allegory of Vanitas*, oil on canvas, 1660, Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, a photo from the author's collection.
14. Juan de Valdés Leal, *In ictu oculi*, oil on canvas, 1672, Seville, La Caridad Church, a photo from the author's collection.
15. Lucas Valdés, *Vanitas*, oil on canvas, 1670–1679, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.

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STILL LIFE IN 17TH-CENTURY SEVILLE PAINTING

Summary

Although still nature did not enjoy a lot of prestige as a genre of painting in 17th-century Seville, it still accompanied many scenes that had a religious or secular character. With time, it even gained an autonomous status and some popularity, resulting rather from decorative reasons. It was to be ensured by presenting various objects made by man, but also appetizing articles of food and beautiful, colourful flowers. It was in this convention that, among others, works by Francisco de Zurbarán and his son Juan, Francisco Barranco or Pedro de Campobón y Passano were painted. A feature typical of Seville painting was also the use of the language of symbols in still lifes, especially in a religious context, as Zurbarán's paintings. Historical circumstances connected with the spreading famine and the plague gave the still life a new function. It was to satisfy the longing for the lost wealth of life, showing tasteful and beautiful still lifes, like those in the works by Pedro de Medina Valbuena, Cornelio Schut and Andrés Pérez. The toll of the Black Death also inspired artists. However, they painted works emphasizing the briefness and futility of human life, didactic and moralizing, which culminated in the paintings by Juan de Valdés Leal and his son Lucas.

Key words: still nature; painting; Seville; Baroque.

Translated by Marcin Turski



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1. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Still Life with a Basket of Oranges*, oil on canvas, 1633, Pasadena, The Norton Simon Foundations, a photo from the author's collection.



2. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Still Life with Four Vessels*, oil on canvas, ca. 1650, Madrid, Museo del Prado, a photo from the author's collection.



3. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Lamb*, oil on canvas, ca. 1631, Madrid, Museo del Prado, a photo from the author's collection.



4. Juan de Zurbarán, *Plate with Grapes*, oil on copper, 1639, Bordeaux, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.



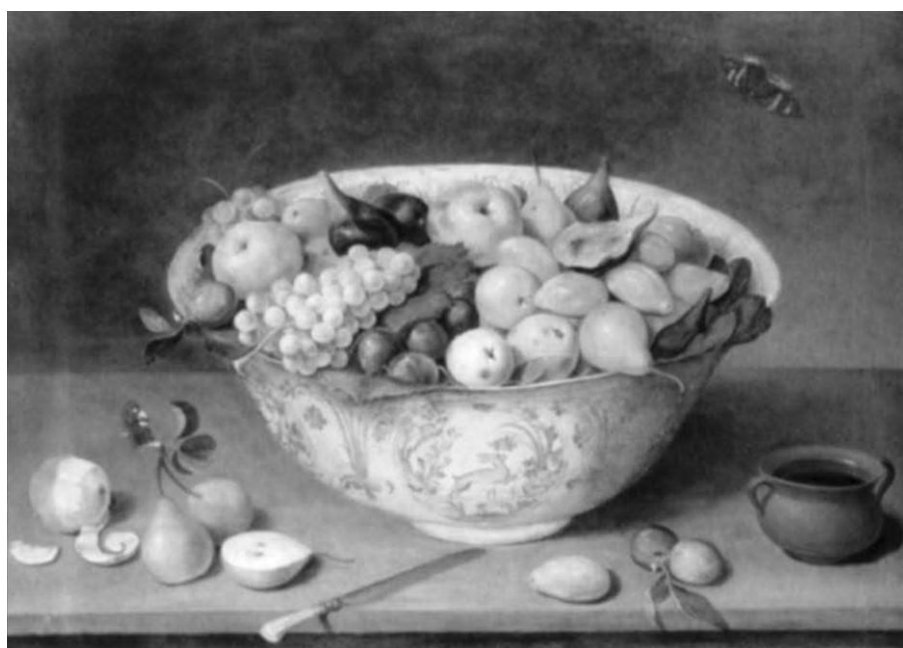
5. Juan de Zurbarán, *Still Life with Chocolate Service*, oil on canvas, 1640, Kiev, Museum of Western and Oriental Art, a photo from the author's collection.



6. Pedro de Medina Valbuena, *Still Life with Seafood, Oranges and Bread*, oil on canvas, 1685, Naseiro collection, a photo from the author's collection.



7. Francisco Barranco, *Still Life with Birds and Rabbit*, oil on panel, 1647, Madrid, Juan Abelló collection, a photo from the author's collection.



8. Pedro de Camprobín y Passano, *Fruit Bowl*, oil on panel, 1656, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.



9. Pedro de Campobín y Passano, *Flowers in a Vase*, oil on canvas, 1666, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.



10. Andrés Pérez, *Vase with Flowers*, oil on canvas, 17th/18th c., Madrid, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.



11. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *Girls with Fruit*, fragment, oil on canvas, 1670–1680, Munich, Alte Pinakothek, a photo from the author's collection.



12. Cornelio Schut, *Still Life with Birds and Rabbit*, oil on canvas, 1665, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.



13. Juan de Valdés Leal, *Allegory of Vanitas*, oil on canvas, 1660, Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, a photo from the author's collection.



14. Juan de Valdés Leal, *In ictu oculi*, oil on canvas, 1672, Seville, La Caridad Church, a photo from the author's collection.



15. Lucas Valdés, *Vanitas*, oil on canvas, 1670–1679, private collection, a photo from the author's collection.