Drawing for Painting, Architecture and Sculpture: Altarpiece Designs by Francisco Rizi

El papel del dibujo para pintura, arquitectura y escultura: diseños para retablos de Francisco Rizi

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Abstract: This paper studies a number of architectural drawings by Francisco Rizi in the context of his activity as a draughtsman for altarpiece projects. Particular attention is paid to a drawing in the National Galleries of Scotland that features the design of an altarpiece project and which is identified here as a preparatory work for the construction of the Mostoles altarpiece around 1654-60. The present work is also the first study of this altarpiece, destroyed in 1936 but is known from various sources. It suggests its attribution to the collaboration of the royal architects Pedro de la Torre and Francisco Bautista. As a basis for both hypotheses, it contextualises both the Edinburgh drawing and the altarpiece and proposes a chronology for both based on both archival documentation and formal analysis.

Key words: Drawing; Design; Altarpiece, Francisco Rizi; Pedro de la Torre; Francisco Bautista; Juan de Ocaña; 17th century; Barroc; Madrid, Móstoles.

Resumen: Este trabajo estudia un conjunto de dibujos arquitectónicos de Francisco Rizi en el contexto de su actividad como dibujante de proyectos de retablos. Se presta particular atención a un dibujo conservado en las National Galleries of Scotland que contiene el diseño de un proyecto de retablo y que se identifica aquí como un trabajo preparatorio para la construcción del retablo de Móstoles hacia 1654-60. El presente trabajo es también el primer estudio de este retablo, destruido en 1936, pero conocido por diversas fuentes. Se sugiere su atribución a la colaboración de los arquitectos reales, Pedro de la Torre y Francisco Bautista. Como base de ambas hipótesis, se contextualiza tanto el dibujo de Edimburgo como el retablo y se propone una cronología para ambos basada tanto en documentación de archivo como en análisis formales.

Palabras clave: Dibujos; bocetos; retablo; Francisco Rizi; Pedro de la Torre; Francisco Bautista; Juan de Ocaña; siglo XVII; Barroco; Madrid, Móstoles.

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Las tres artes juntas dan el complemento de la
perfección a las obras, como se ve en los retablos
antiguos.

Antonio Palomino

Siendo la Arquitectura, Pintura y Estatuaria, tres
hermanas tan unidas, (como Micael Angel las definió con
los tres círculos unidos entre sí), puede ser la una
paragón de la otra.

José Benito de Churriguera

At some point in his career, on one of his journeys to the city of Toledo, the painter, theoretician and biographer Antonio Palomino (1655-1726) visited the church of the Capuchin Fathers, located next to the Alcazar. There he may have had the opportunity to go down into the crypt whit the cave where the martyr Saint Leocadia was imprisoned and died during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. But what is certain is that he had the opportunity to admire the main altarpiece of the church, with a large painting by Francisco Rizi (1614-85), in a retable whose format was close to the *pala* or Italian-type altarpiece, completed with two small paintings in the *predella*. Later, when Palomino was writing the painter's life, the memory of this painting and its altarpiece led him to reflect with nostalgia on the evolution of the retables and the place of painting in it:

> For in those days, it was the painters who designed retables, so they included some paintings, whereas now it is the joiners who design them, so they entirely in wood, without considering the destructive fires that have taken place in recent years (for once a mountain of dry wood has accidentally caught on fire, there is no human power that can put it out) and that the three arts together contribute to complete the perfection of a work, as one can see in the retables of old[2].

In his treaty published in Madrid in 1633, the painter Vicente Carducho (1572-1638) also dealt with the relation between the three arts, highlighting that painting and sculpture never "look so good as when they join hands and concur with their value and beauty in the altarpieces of the churches"[3].

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[2] Antonio Palomino, *Lives of the eminent painters and sculptors*, ed. Nina Ayala Mallory, (Cambridge: University Press, 1987), p. 265.
[3] Translation of the author: "y lo cierto es que [Pintura y Escultura] nunca lucen tanto la una ni la otra, como cuando juntas se dan las manos, y concurren con su valentía y hermosura, en los retablos de las Iglesias". Vicente Carducho, *Diálogos de la pintura*, ed. V. Cruzada Villaamil, (Madrid, 1865), p. 136. On

Palomino, who probably wrote his text recalling the fire at the church of Santa Cruz in Madrid in 1683, or the one in San Felipe el Real in 1718[4], also refers to a new trend towards sculptural altarpieces that dominated the renovation of altars throughout Europe during the first third of the 18th century, a good example of which is the rapid replacement from 1720 of the main altarpiece in the church of Calatravas in Madrid, shortly after the construction of the previous one in 1681, with a large *pala*[5].

Previously, for much of the 17th century, painting had managed to establish a certain precedence over sculpture in the construction of a significant number of the new altarpieces that were made in the major centres of production in Spain. Despite what has been stated, this is not a phenomenon restricted to the Madrid area and its hinterland; the pattern is also noticeable in two important centres such as Valladolid[6] and Seville[7]. Without prejudice to other possible causes, two explanations are proposed here for the relative pre-eminence of painting in a large number of the altarpieces built during this period. On the one hand, the triumph at this time of the Italian-style *pala* and the Iberian-style altarpiece with its multiple registers gave painting an unprecedented place of honour on the altars of churches and chapels. On the other, it may also have been due to the growing involvement of painters, during the same period, on the elaboration of highly finished drawings featuring designs for altarpieces and their architecture and ornamentation.

the book by Carducho, see the bibliography gathered in: Jean Andrews *et al*., *On Art and Painting: Vicente Carducho and Baroque Spain,* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2016).

[4] Antonio Ponz, *Viage a España*, vol. 5 (Madrid: Joaquín Ibarra, 1782), pp. 267-268.

[5] Antonio Bonet Correa, "Los retablos de la iglesia de las Calatravas de Madrid: José de Churriguera y Juan de Villanueva, padre", *Archivo español de arte*, 137, (1962), p. 26.

[6] Without attempting to be exhaustive, mention may be made in Valladolid of the altarpieces of the convents of San Agustín (from 1606), San Diego (1604), Santa Catalina (1608), Nuestar Señora de Belén (1614), the Descalzas Reales (*c*. 1610), Portacoeli (*c*. 1612), the Basilios (from 1613), San Francisco (*c*. 1622), San Pablo (1626-28), Capuchin Fathers (1639), Jesús y Maria (1603, 1658), San Bartolomé (1657), Trinitarias Calzadas (*c*. 1658), as well as the altarpieces in the chapels of Nuestra Señora del Pozo (1644-45) and Cristo de la Luz (1621), the college of Niñas Huérfanas (1606), the sacristy of the college of the Jesuits (*c*. 1660), the Hospital of La Resurrección (1605) and the parish churches of San Benito el Viejo (1629), San Andrés (1634), Santiago (*c*. 1630-40) and La Magdalena (1691). Among the bibliographical references on these altarpieces, mention may be made to: Jesús Urrea, "Acotaciones a Gregorio Fernández y su entorno artístico", *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología,* 46, (1980), pp. 381, 387, 632; María Antonia Fernández del Hoyo, *Patrimonio perdido: conventos desaparecidos de Valladolid,* (Valladolid: alcaldía de Valladolid, 1998), pp. 69, 255-256, 259, 433, 632-634; Natalia Martínez de Pisón, *Descalzas Reales: el legado de la Toscana,* (Valladolid: Fundación del Patrimonio Histórico de Castilla y León, 2007); Jesús Urrea & Enrique Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca vallisoletana,* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 2017), pp. 198, 206, 212-214, 292, 296, 308; Jesús Urrea & Enrique Valdivieso, *Rescatar el pasado: retablos vallisoletanos perdidos, alterados o desplazados,* (Valladolid: Ediciones Universidad de Valladolid, 2022), pp. 80-81, 86-87, 88-91, 92-93, 112-117, 128-129, 134-135, 154-157, 172-173, 174-175, 176-177, 188-189, 210-211.

[7] In Seville, among many others, mention may be made of the altarpieces of the parish churches of San Esteban (1629-35), Santa Catalina (1624) and San Isidoro (1613), the chapels of San Andrés de los Flamencos (*c*. 1615), in Santo Tomás, and the chapels of Santiago (1609), San Antonio (1656) and San Francisco (1657) in the cathedral; the altarpieces of the professed house of the Jesuits, the colleges San Hermenegildo (1619), San Basilio (1638), San Gregorio (1608) and Santo Tomás de Aquino (1631), and the convents the Discalced Mercedarian monks (1636), San Agustín (*c*. 1670s), Montesión (1630s) and the Capuchin Fathers (1665-66), as well as side altarpieces in the convents of San Alberto (1633; *c*. 1635), Santa Paula (1635-38), San José and Santa Isabel (*c*. 1635). Without attempting to be exhaustive, mention may be made of the following references: José María Carrascal Muñoz, "La Merced Descalza de Sevilla: noticias sobre su historia y las pinturas de Francisco Zurbarán", *Goya*, 247- 248, (1995), p. 122; Enrique Valdivieso, *Pintura barroca sevillana,* (Sevilla: Guadalquivir, 2003), pp. 208, 223, 232, 246, 259, 293, 323, 450; Enrique Valdivieso, "Propuesta de restitución visual de los retablos colaterales de la iglesia de San José, de la Merced descalza de Sevilla", *Boletín de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de la Purísima Concepción,* 57, (2022), pp. 57-59.

Their expert drawing skills were required for the execution of final versions of plans and designs conceived to be submitted to commissioners, even if they were by no means the only practitioners of the drawing[8].

When in 1614 the architect Juan Gómez de Mora signed the design with the altarpiece he had conceived for the church of the Royal Monastery of Guadalupe, he did so on a sheet drawn by Eugenio Cajés (one of the painters who made the paintings for the altarpiece)[9]. Although his involvement in the execution of the drawing with the architect's design is not recorded in the notarial sources, the artist's style is perceptible in the execution of the models for the sculptures made with red wash[10].

In the Iberian Peninsula, altarpieces were since the end of fifteenth-century enormous *machines* of golden wood, polychrome sculptures and/or paintings; their high cost, and the fact that they are the result of collaboration between different artists and craftsmen meant that their construction had to be carefully planned.

Painters, whose skill and inventiveness as draughtsmen often surpassed that of most architects of the period, were very often the authors of drawings with the latter altarpiece designs; their contribution involved the production of highly finished drawings in which the designs conceived by the architects were presented for the appreciation of the patrons, completed with models for the paintings and the sculptures[11].

Following the thinking of Vasari (1511-1574) and Lomazzo (1538-1592), Carducho states in his feigned dialogues between master and pupil that the three major arts are daughters of the same father, namely drawing[12], while in another he asserts that painting and sculpture 'are one and the same thing,

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[8] "Sculpture also makes use of Painting for its convenience when drawing on paper, in the way that Painters do*" (translation of the autor: "también se vale la Escultura de la Pintura asimismo por su comodidad cuando dibuja sobre papel, por el modo que hacen los Pintores"). Carducho, *Diálogos*, p. 136. On the role of painters as draughtsmen at the service of architects and sculptors: Eduardo Lamas-Delgado, "Partnership between painters and sculptors in 17th-century Spain: on model drawings by Francisco Rizi for an altarpiece of the Expectant Virgin", *RIHA Journal,* 63, (2013), (on web: https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/rihajournal/article/view/69806; https://doi.org/10.11588/riha.2013.0.69806; consulted: 3 December, 2024); Eduardo Lamas-Delgado, "Del dibujo al relieve: los modelos para escultura en los diseños para retablos y otros proyectos decorativos del pintor Francisco Rizi (1614-1685)", in *Copia e invención: modelos, réplicas, series y citas en la escultura europea,* (Valladolid: Museo Nacional de Escultura, 2013), pp. 151-160.

[9] Eugenio Cajés and Juan Gómez de Mora, *The altarpiece of the church of the Royal Monastery of Guadalupe*, 1614, (pen and brown ink, brush and red ink, washes in brown and red over incised lines, 635 x 346 mm), Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, (DIB/16/34/2). On an illustration of the drawing: (on web: http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000020282; consulted: 3 December, 2024).

[10] Mark P. McDonald, *Renaissance to Goya: prints and drawings from Spain,* (London: British Museum-CEEH, 2012), pp. 84-86.

[11] On general considerations on design drawings for altarpieces: Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, "L'architecture baroque espagnole vue à travers le débat entre peintres et architectes", *Revue de l'art,* 70, (1985); Fernando Marías, "De retablero a retablista", in *Retablos de la comunidad de Madrid: siglos XV a XVII*, ed*.* A. Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, (Madrid: Dirección General de Patrimonio Cultural, 2002); McDonald, *Renaissance to Goya*, pp. 28-30; Beatriz Blasco Esquivias, *Arquitectos y tracistas: el triunfo del Barroco en la corte de los Austrias,* (Madrid: CEEH, 2013), pp. 157-330.

[12] Carducho, *Diálogos*, p. 174. On Vasari's and Lomazzo's art theories, see the bibliography gathered in Jean-Louis Déotte, "Alberti, Vasari, Leonardo, from disegno as drawing to disegno as projective milieu", *Appareil*, 2009, pp. 1-11 (On web: https://doi.org/10.4000/appareil.604; consulted: 3 December 2024); *Lomazzo's aesthetic principles reflected in the art of his time*, eds. Lucia Tantardini & Rebecca Norris, (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

in such a way that I consider them as two bodies with the same soul, which is drawing'[13].

For Carducho, the real tension was probably not between the *paragone* of painting and sculpture, but between the learned artist (painter, sculptor or architect) – who conscientiously prepares his/her works via drawings and the perfect command of perspective – and the *practice artist*, who would only copy from nature or other works without preparation[14]. At least in the context of construction of altarpieces, triumphal arches and festive decors, the learned artist (*doctus artifex*), with his/her mastery of drawing, theory and abstract modes, would maintain his/her superiority over *practical* painters and sculptors, assemblers and other artists[15].

The painter Francisco Rizi, the most prominent of Carducho's disciples, belongs to this category of learned artists. It was certainly his master, as well as his brother the benedict friar Andrés Ricci, who instilled in him the conception of the *doctus pictor*[16]. He grows up in the circle of Italian artists working at Madrid and El Escorial, founder of the ephemeral Academy for drawing to which last sessions he may have assisted to[17]. Be that as it may, Rizi's activity as a draughtsman becomes better known little by little; his *œuvre* identified until now demonstrate that he was one of the greatest draughtsmen of his time in the Iberian Peninsula[18]. Palomino, his first biographer, who referred to the abundance of his drawings and sketches, also documented his activity as an architect[19]. And indeed, his surviving drawings reveal his inventiveness and versatility as a master of Baroque form and designer of decorative settings[20]. His complex and elaborate drawings for architectural designs are fruitful for considering the characteristics of architecture, painting and sculpture. When drawing them, Rizi must certainly have been prompted to consider the links between the three. On his architectural drawings, the delicate use of wash brilliantly renders an effect of three-dimensionality, or roundness, so precise that it could have illustrated the debate about *paragone*, whose basic tenets were known by Rizi from the period he spent in Carducho's atelier and with his elder brother the painter and art theorist Juan Andrés Ricci. In creating altarpieces or triumphal arches embracing canvases, reliefs and statues, he was as much in the domain of the architect as that of the sculptor, but with the skill and spirit of an inventive

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[13] Translation of the autor: "Son tan una que yo las considero como dos cuerpos y un alma que es el dibujo": Carducho, *Diálogos*, p. 210.

[14] On the theory of *paragone* in Carducho, see: Karin Hellwig, "The Paragone between Painting and sculpture", in *On Art and Painting: Vicente Carducho and Baroque Spain*, eds. Jean Andrews, (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2016).

[15] Marías, "De retablero a retablista".

[16] On the painter and theoretician Juan Andrés Ricci, see: David García López, *Arte y pensamiento en el barroco: fray Juan Andrés Ricci de Guevara: 1600-1681,* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 2010).

[17] On the Academy of Drawing in Madrid, see the bibliography gathered in: García López, *Arte y pensamiento*, pp. 42-46.

[18] Rizi's role as a draughtsman is highlighted in: *The Spanish manner: drawings from Ribera to Goya*, exhib. cat., (New York: The Frick Collection and Scala Publishers, 2010), pp. 104-106; McDonald, *Renaissance to Goya*, pp. 94-100; *I segni nel tempo: dibujos españoles de los Uffizi*, exh. cat., (London: British Museum-CEEH, 2016), pp. 203-224.

[19] Palomino, *Lives*, p. 267.

[20] Lamas, "Partnership"; Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve".

and talented draughtsman. His preserved drawings on this field are a demonstration of his mastery of the medium[21].

1. A Design for an Altarpiece in The National Galleries of Scotland

The National Galleries of Scotland hold the largest and most ambitious architectural design drawn by Rizi for an altarpiece, at least among those that have been preserved complete[22] (Fig. 1a). Mentioned for the first time as work by Rizi in 1986[23], the drawing was sold in Paris in 1991[24], and then purchased by the Museum[25].

This highly finished drawing presents a project (*traza*) for a monumental altarpiece that showcases his talent as an architecture draughtman. It is meticulously executed following the pencil and compass contours made for the architectural elements. Almost no alterations were carried out, indicating that there were probably many studies and sketches for particular elements of the whole design. Eight joined sheets of paper comprise the drawing support, which reveals some degradation at the bottom; a vertical fold in the middle shows that it has been preserved folded.

The relief effect of the carved elements, such as the garlands and the fleuron, is particularly accomplished. The play of light and shadow created by the grey wash methodically throws sections into relief, as well as highlighting elements of the architectural structure. Rizi has represented the statues as figures that appear to extend beyond the confines of their niches. His drawing creates the illusion of relief, reinforced by the delicate modelling rendered by the grey wash and the precision of the contours. The outlined character of the drawings for the paintings contrast with the parts with sculptural and architectural designs, in order to emphasise their two-dimensional character. Only the parts of the drawing that represent paintings and sculptures are not covered with a grey wash, but with a red wash (for the former) and a brown wash (for the latter). This additionally endows the whole drawing with a polychrome result that makes it particularly attractive.

The drawing by Rizi bore attribution to Sebastián Herrera Barnuevo (1619-

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[21] On Rizi's production of drawings for architects and sculptors: Lamas, "Partnership"; Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve"; Teresa Zapata, *La corte de Felipe IV se viste de fiesta: la entrada de Mariana de Austria: 1649,* (Valencia: Universitat de València, 2016), pp. 311-315; Eduardo Lamas-Delgado, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi (1614-1685): relations sociales et production artistique à la Cour d'Espagne, suivi d'un catalogue raisonné,* PhD thesis, Université libre de Bruxelles, (Brussels, 2019), vol. 2, (cat. D33-D47).
[22] On this drawing: Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve", p. 156; Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, (cat. D47).
[23] The drawing by Rizi was then in a private collection in Florence: Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Historia del dibujo en España: de la Edad Media a Goya,* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1986), pp. 242-244.
[24] *Dessins espagnols: maîtres des XVIème et XVIIème siècles*, exhib. cat., (Paris: RMN, 1991), p. 162.
[25] Thimothy Clifford, *Designs of desire: architectural and ornament prints and drawings: 1500-1850,* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1999), p. 174, no. 73.

Fig. 1a. Francisco Rizi & Pedro de la Torre (here attributed), *Design for the Mostoles altarpiece, c.* 1654, (pen and brown ink, with brown, red and blue wash). Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland, (inv. nº D5142) © National Gallery of Scotland.
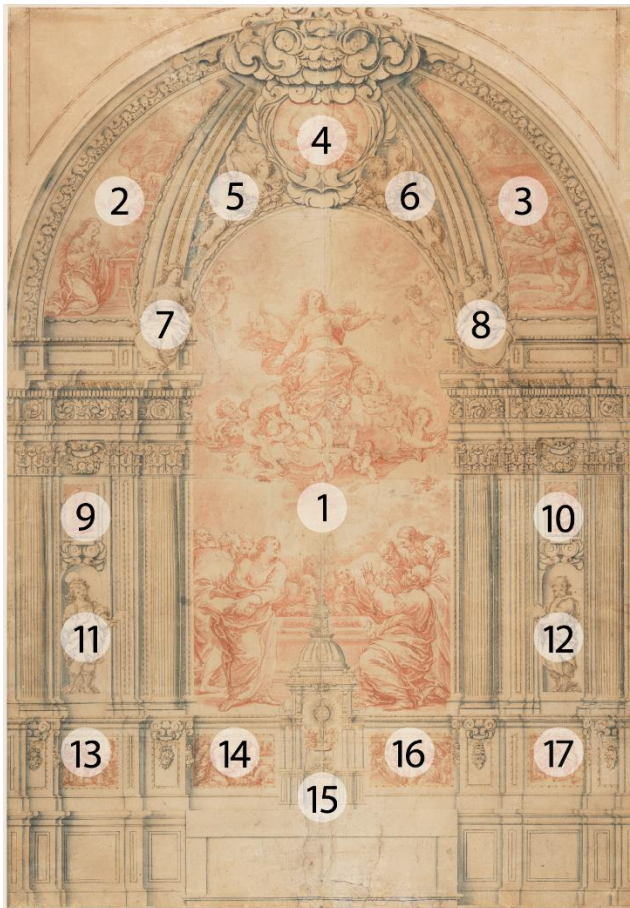
Fig. 1b. Francisco Rizi & Pedro de la Torre (here attributed), Scheme, *Design for the Mostoles altarpiece.* Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland © Eduardo Lamas.

1671), a talented follower of Alonso Cano (1601-67) whose architectural drawings exhibited a very similar quality of execution and use of washes[26]. Indeed, Rizi used the grey wash to create architectural volume in a very comparable way to Cano and Barnuevo.

The altarpiece on the Edinburgh design is divided into three principal narrative registers: the body, the base or *predella* and the attic. As usual, the organisation of these parts is symmetrical. The altarpiece's body consists of three vertical registers called posts (*calles*). The principal focus is on the central post, which is wider and higher than the others and is dominated by a large painting depicting the subject to which the altarpiece is dedicated: *The Assumption of the Virgin* (Fig. 1b, no. 1). At the bottom, the *predella* is decorated with four small paintings in horizontal format, two at each side of the tabernacle, which represent four episodes from the Virgin's life: The *Visitation* (Fig. 1b, no. 13), the *Adoration of Kings* (Fig. 1b, no. 14), the *Presentation of Jesus in the Temple* (Fig. 1b, no. 16), the *Flight into Egypt* (Fig. 1b, no. 17). The tabernacle's door is decorated with a representation of the *Mystic Lamb* (Fig. 1b, no. 15).

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[26] Peter Führing, *Desing into art: drawings for architecture and ornament: the Lodewijk Houthakker collection,* (London: P. Wilson Publishers, 1989), vol. 1, pp. 246-248, no. 281; *The Spanish manner*, p. 44

In the altarpiece body, the monumental painting of the *Assumption of the Virgin* occupies one third of the drawing surface. The painting goes beyond the limit of the register, formed by the classical entablature supported by Corinthian columns. At each side, between the columns, posts are divided into two sections. At the bottom, there are two niches hosting two statues of children (Fig. 1b, no. 11, 12); their attributes and Roman clothes let identify them as *S. Justus and Pastor*, two local saints venerated in Castile since late Antiquity[27]. The two brother martyrs were killed in 304 during the emperor Diocletian persecutions in Alcalá de Henares, a short distance from Madrid. From 1568 onwards, their cult spread again, notably in so-called New Castile, when their relics were transferred back to Alcalá, the place of their patronage[28]. The small paintings situated over the niches for the statues represent their martyrdom by beheading (Fig. 1b, no. 9, 10).

An arc, crowned by a plump fleuron, composes the attic register, which is divided into three sections or compartments arranged in triangular formation. In the middle, the bottom half of the compartment receives the semicircular top of the central painting from the lower register. The rest of the compartment is occupied by a round painting or *tondo* where Rizi has figured *God the Father with the Holy Ghost* (Fig. 1b, no. 4), flanked by two statues of angels holding up garlands (Fig. 1b, no. 5, 6). Two seated statues representing the Christian virtues of *Hope* (Fig. 1b, no. 8) and *Faith* (Fig. 1b, no. 7) flank this group. The other two sections are formed by two big format paintings that adopt the curved shape of the arc at each side. They represent two other episodes of the life of the Virgin: The *Annunciation* (Fig. 1b, no. 2), and the *Adoration of the shepherds* (Fig. 1b, no. 3).

2. The Mostoles Altarpiece

The remarkable size of the altarpiece of the Edinburgh design, the theme of the main painting dedicated to the *Assumption* and the presence of the tabernacle show that it was intended for the high altar of a church, a church certainly dedicated to the Virgin Mary. These clues lead us to propose a connection between the drawing and the parish church of Móstoles in the former archbishopric of Toledo, whose main altarpiece, now disappeared, contained the only painting representing the Assumption that has been attributed to Rizi[29]. The altarpiece of this church also featured a series of paintings whose themes are equally consistent with the others in the drawing. Unfortunately destroyed in 1936, the Mostoles altarpiece is only known from rough descriptions[30], the oldest and most comprehensive being that given by the historian Antonio Ponz (1725-92):

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[27] Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve", pp. 156, 160.
[28] Lola González, "Los santos mártires Justo y Pastor: transmisión y praxis cultural en España en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI (1568)", *El Criticón*, 102, (2008), pp. 55-67.
[29] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 106, (cat. D47); pp. 110-111, (cat. M5-8).
[30] On an anthology of quotations from descriptions of the altarpiece: Eduardo Lamas, "Fuentes primarias y secundarias relativas al Retablo de Móstoles", *Rasguños*, (on web: https://rasgunos.hypotheses.org/2954; consulted: 01 September 2024).

Fig. 2a. José Rúa, Fotograph, *The Mostoles Altarpiece*. Destroyed, formerly in Mostoles, parish church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción. © Ocaña Prados y José Rúa, 1908.

The parish church is worth seeing for its beautiful altarpiece composed of four columns of the Corinthian order with a large painting of the *Assumption* in its middle, and with other paintings spread in it. They represent the *Glory of the Holy Trinity with angels*, the *Annunciation*, and the *Presentation of the Lord*, works by Francisco Rici[31].

While the painting of the *Assumption* in the centre of the disappeared altarpiece at Mostoles matches the Edinburgh design (Fig. 1b, no. 1), of the other three paintings mentioned only the *Annunciation* does (Fig. 1b, no. 2); the *Presentation of the Lord* seems to have replaced the *Adoration of the Shepherds* (Fig. 1b, no. 3), and the *Trinity with angels* replaces the tondo with *God the Father* (Fig. 1b, no. 4) framed by two sculptural angels (Fig. 1b, no. 5, 6). However, the four Corinthian columns of the Mostoles altarpiece seem to match those of the design[32]. Subsequent descriptions confirm the

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[31] Translation of the autor. Antonio Ponz, *Viage a España*, vol. 7, (Madrid: Joaquín Ibarra, 1778), p. 4.

[32] The rest of its architectural composition of Mostoles altarpiece must have been as classical as in the Edinburgh drawing, which explains why the neoclassical Ponz, who detested later Baroque architecture, defines it as *beautiful*. On Ponz's position on late Baroque architecture: Dora Nicolás Gómez, "La literatura artística del siglo XVIII: para el estudio de la arquitectura y del ornato debido del templo cristiano", in *En torno al Barroco: miradas multiples,* ed. C. de la Peña Velasco, (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2007), p. 188.
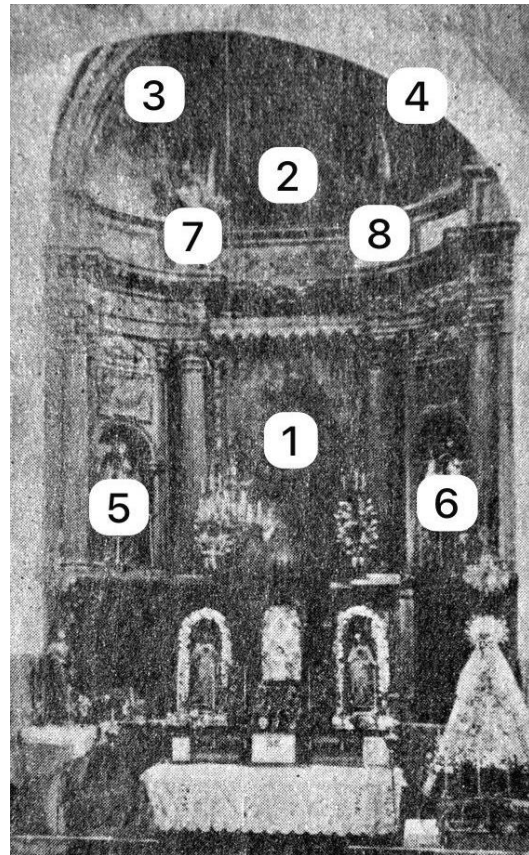
Fig. 2b. Scheme *The Mostoles Altarpiece*. Destroyed. Mostoles, parish church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción. © Eduardo Lamas.

themes of the paintings recorded by Ponz, from Ceán's dictionary of artists[33] to the monumental catalogue of the Province of Madrid by Rodríguez Marín, commissioned by the Spanish government in 1907[34].

A last description of the Mostoles altarpiece by a local author has so far gone unnoticed by specialists. Its text is accompanied by a photograph (Fig. 2a) that confirms the Edinburgh design is a model for the Mostoles altarpiece and that more or less important changes were introduced between the execution of the former and the completion of the latter. The description is part of a history of the town of Mostoles by the local erudite Juan Ocaña Prados (1850-1928) published in 1908 with photographs by José Rua[35]. In his description, Ocaña states that he is ignorant of the author of the paintings, but gives the same identification for the themes of the paintings (Fig. 2b, no. 2, 3, 4) and sculptures (Fig. 2b, no. 5, 6, 7, 8) mentioned by Ponz, with the exception of the *Presentation of the Lord*, which he identifies as an *Adoration of the Shepherds* (Fig. 2b, no. 4) coinciding with what appears in the Edinburgh project (Fig. 1b, no. 3).

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[33] Juan A. Ceán Bermúdez, *Diccionario de los más ilustres profesores de las bellas artes de España*, vol. 4 (Madrid: Viuda de Ibarra, Hijos y Compañía, 1800), p. 210.
[34] Francisco Rodríguez Marín, [*Inventario artístico de la Provincia de Madrid*], ms., (Madrid, Biblioteca Tomás Navarro Tomás, RESC/1187); Lamas, "Fuentes", Mención 4.
[35] Juan Ocaña Prados, *Apuntes para la historia de la Villa de Móstoles,* (Móstoles, 1908), pp. 18-19; Lamas, "Fuentes", Mención 3.

The illustration of Rúa's photograph published in 1908 let identify, with some difficulty, the essential lines of the Edinburgh architecture design, albeit with some important changes. The essential elements of the structure (the curved plane, the three bodies, the three vertical registers or *calles*) and of the elements (the four Corinthian columns, the entablature with its frieze of volutes, the niches for the sculptures) have been maintained. Finally, the only important change, in reality, is the abandonment of the development of the central register, which in the drawing, circular at the top, went into the attic, interrupting the entablature. In the Mostoles Altarpiece, the central register is closed off by the latter, so that the final painting depicting the *Assumption* became smaller and squarer in format Fig. 2b, no. 1). The statues of the theological virtues (Fig. 1b, no. 7, 8) are replaced with others depicting *St Peter and St Paul*, visible in the 1908 photograph (Fig. 2b, no. 7, 8). The same is true of the sculptures in the design drawn by Rizi, which depict the child martyrs *Justus and Pastor* (Fig. 1b, no. 11, 12) and the theological virtues (Fig. 1b, no. 7, 8)[36]. They have been replaced by the statues representing the *Saints Anthony and Francis of Assisi* mentioned by Ponz[37] (Fig. 2b, no. 5, 6).

3. The Altarpiece Chronology

The similarities between the descriptions of the missing Mostoles Altarpiece and the Edinburgh drawing are sufficiently numerous and relevant to identify the latter as a design proposal for the former[38]. In addition to the clues given so far, there are two further indications. Firstly, there is no record of Rizi producing any other altarpiece painting representing the *Assomption of Mary*[39]. Secondly, the Mostoles Altarpiece has a similar chronology to that proposed for the drawing on the basis of the stylistic analysis: an uncertain date in the 1650s.

The rare and exceptional presence of this preserved drawing with design for the Mostoles altarpiece (Fig. 1a, 2a) makes this work and its creative and construction process are particularly well documented in the context of this type of work in Golden Age Spain. However, neither the contracts for the altarpiece nor its gilding and paintings have yet been located in the notarial archives. For the time being, only a letter of payment from the sculptor and architect Juan de Ocaña is known to exist[40]. On 1 June 1658, Ocaña received a payment of 400 *reales* for a design (*traza*) he had made for the Mostoles Altarpiece. We will come back to this point later.

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[36] Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve", p. 156.
[37] Lamas, "Fuentes", doc. 1.
[38] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, pp. 106-107, (cat. D47).
[39] A smaller painting of this subject was painted by Rizi for the attic of Orgaz Altarpiece. Juan Nicolau Castro, "El desaparecido retablo de la parroquial de la villa de Orgaz y sus pinturas de Francisco Rizi", in *In sapientia libertas: escritos en homenaje al profesor Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez,* (Madrid-Sevilla: Editorial Focus-Abengoa, 2007), p. 472; Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 20, (cat. P47).
[40] Antonio J. Díaz Hernández, "El retablo mayor de la iglesia del Hospital de San Juan Bautista de Toledo, obra barroca del madrileño Juan de Ocaña (1657), no de los Theotocopuli", *Anales toledanos,* (2007), p. 141. See also: Lamas, "Fuentes", doc. 2.

Fig. 3. Pedro de la Torre & Francisco Bautista, *The Orgaz Altarpiece*. Destroyed, formerly in Orgaz, parish church of Santo Tomás. © Eduardo Lamas.

Recent research undertaken in the archives shows that in the summer of 1651 renovation work was carried out on the apse of the parish church of Mostoles[41]; the parish book of 1655-89 records a series of expenses for the dismantling of the previous altarpiece and the construction of a masonry base for the new one, at an imprecise date from 1655 onwards[42]. In addition, it is registered that in 1653 the parish church accepted a donation of 4,000 *reales* 'to help with the altarpiece to be made for the high altar'[43], and in June 1658 the aforementioned payment to Juan de Ocaña for a design for the new altarpiece is recorded[44].

The drawings of paintings in the Edinburgh design for the Mostoles Altarpiece, carefully enhanced with a red wash, also comfort the dating in the years 1650s. Particularly astonishing is the central painting that represents the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the presence of the apostles assembled around her grave (Fig. 1a). It is comparable to the *Virgin Coronation* that Rizi painted in 1655 for the parish church altarpiece in Fuente el Saz[45]. Indeed,

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[41] Toledo, Archivo Diocesano, caj. Ma 20, exp. 6., On a trascription of this document, see: Lamas, "Fuentes", doc. 1.

[42] María Pilar Corella, *Arquitectura religiosa de los siglos XVII y XVIII en la Provincia de Madrid: estudio y documentación del Partido judicial de Getafe,* (Madrid: CSIC-Instituto de Estudios Madrileños, 1979), p. 89; Lamas, "Fuentes", doc. 3.

[43] Translation of the autor: "para ayuda del retablo que se ha de hacer para el altar mayor". Lamas, "Fuentes", docs. 4, 5, 6.

[44] Díaz Hernández, "El retablo mayor", p. 141; Lamas, "Fuentes", doc. 2.

[45] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 16, (cat. P29).

Fig. 4. Pedro de la Torre, *Altarpiece*. Pinto, parish church of Santo Domingo de Silos © photo: Wikipedia. Public domain.

the Virgin figure is very similar, the only changes concerning the arm and leg positions, the latter being inverted. But the Edinburgh design seems partially to have been inspired by the print made by Schelte A. Bolswert (1586-1659) after Rubens in 1630-45, not least the main lines of the composition[46]. The cherub hiding his head behind his arm under the Virgin has clearly been borrowed from the print. The group of apostles also presents some similarities with the print: the figures who close the group at each side are the same, as is the kneeling apostle, located on the right instead of the left. The shape formed by the clouds surrounded by cherubs is also reminiscent of the print, even if they have been joined by three graceful figures of angels that let flowers fall on the grave.

The paintings representing the *Annunciation* and the *Adoration of the shepherds*, on the top register of the Edinburgh design, are very close in their composition to those by Rizi of the same subjects in the altarpieces of the cathedral of Plasencia, from 1654[47], and of the parish church in Fuente el Saz, from 1655-57. In the *predella*, the *Adoration of Kings* and the *Presentation of Jesus in the Temple* are also related to other paintings dating 1651-55, as are those of the same subject from the *predella* of the altarpiece from Jerónimo de la Torre's chapel in Madrid[48]. As for the *Flight into Egypt*, it

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[46] Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert, after Peter Paul Rubens, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1630-1645, (engraving, 627 x 440 mm), London, British Museum, (inv. R,3.107). (On web; https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_R-3-107; consulted 3 December 2024)
[47] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 14, (cat. P24-P25).
[48] On a illustration of these paintings: Francisco Rizi, *Adoration of Kings*, (oil on canvas, 54 x 57 cm), Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado, (inv. No. P1129), (on web: https://www.museodelprado.es/coleccion/obra-de-arte/adoracion-de-los-reyes-magos/2292e6ec-11bb-4d19-aeed-ac5c3121fbe6; consulted: 3 December 2024);

repeats (with a different format) the composition of the painting by Rizi now in the Archbishop palace in Madrid, which has been dated around 1650-55[49]. However, a French private collection owns a painting attributed to Rizi that seems directly related to the Edinburgh design[50]. Its small format coheres with the common dimensions of paintings located in altarpiece *predellas*. Moreover, the composition is virtually the same, even if it is larger in the painting, in which the landscape can afford to expand. The palm with cherubs, on the left in the drawing, has been developed and moved to the right in the painting, and replaced with old tree. The position of the Child, on her mother's lap, has also changed, as well as that of the Virgin, who rides the donkey on the other side. The animal presents a more marked foreshortening, but its position is virtually identical, as well as that of S. Joseph. Nevertheless, the technique in the painting is too sketched to consider it the final work. Rather, it must be interpreted as a sketch intended to be used by the assistants who certainly worked with Rizi to tackle such a commission.

4. The Architect Pedro de la Torre

The chronological range provided by the archival documentation and by the stylistic analysis of Rizi's drawing corresponds to the chronology suggested by the architecture and ornamentation of the altarpiece. These present the characteristics of the work carried out during the 1640s and 1650s by Pedro de la Torre (*c.* 1596-1677), who was appointed architect to the King, and his collaborators[51].

Further, it should be noted that for this same period there is documentary evidence of a close collaboration between Rizi and the architect. Indeed, the painter was associated with many of his projects and those of the De la Torre family business: the triumphal arches for the *joyeuse entrée* of Queen Mariana in Madrid in 1649[52], the altarpiece of the Royal Church of Santiago in the same city (1648-58)[53], the projects for the *Ochavo* and the throne-baldachin of the Sagrario in Toledo cathedral (1653)[54], the altarpiece in Fuente el Saz (1654-55)[55], the altarpiece for the private chapel of Jerónimo

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Francisco Rizi, *Presentation of Jesus in the Temple*, (oil on canvas, 54 x 57 cm), Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado, (inv. No. P1130). (On web: https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-adoration-of-the-magi/2292e6ec-11bb-4d19-aeed-ac5c3121fbe6; consulted: 3 December 2024).

[49] *La pittura madrilena del secolo XVII*, exh. cat., (Roma: Carte Segrete, 1991), p. 120, no. 33; Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 6, (cat. P8).

[50] Eduardo Lamas-Delgado, "Francisco Rizi, *Fuite en Egypte*", in *Varia: peintures et dessins de Soreda à Balthus*, exh. cat. (Lyon, 2014).

[51] On Pedro de la Torre's style, see the bibliography gathered in: Virginia Martín Tovar, *Arquitectos madrileños de la segunda mitad del siglo XVII,* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Madrileños, 1975), pp. 183-199; Mercedes Agulló, "Pedro, José, Francisco y Jusepe de la Torre, arquitectos de retablos", *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños,* 37, (1997); Juan M. Cruz Yábar, "Pedro de la Torre y Francisco Bautista: presencia del retablo madrileño en Castilla y León", *De Arte*, 13, (2014), pp. 94-109 . On the appointment as royal architect, see: Martín Tovar, *Arquitectos*, p. 185.

[52] Zapata, *La corte de Felipe IV*, p. 311, 315.

[53] Juan M. Cruz Yábar, "Los retablos de la parroquia de Santiago de Madrid, Pedro de la Torre, Sebastián de Benavente y Alonso Cano", *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, 45, (2005), pp. 155-178.

[54] Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve", p. 155; Eduardo Lamas, "Estudio para pedestal de escultura con *putti*", in *I segni nel tempo: dibujos españoles de los Uffizi*, exh. cat., (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2016), pp. 221-222.

[55] Lamas, "Partnership", para. 12.

Fig. 5. *Ucles Altarpiece* (detail of the attic). Ucles, Seminary (formerly Royal Monastery of Santiago). © photo Eduardo Lamas.

de la Torre in Madrid (1651-55)[56], the altarpiece for the Confraternity of Our-Lady of the Expectation (1652-56)[57], and the main one for the parish church of Vallecas (1669-70)[58], among others. In their projects together, it was very common for Rizi to participate in the material execution of the drawing with the design that the architect presented to the commissioners, both when it was a question of including models for paintings and when it was a question of statues and carved ornaments.

The Edinburgh design has some of the characteristics introduced by Pedro de la Torre in his altarpieces. The central vertical register is oversized with respect to the Iberian type altarpiece of the early 17th century, divided into registers of equal or similar dimensions. In addition, and inspired by the model of the Italian-style *pala*, the register of the central painting by Rizi (Fig. 1a) is raised above the sides, overhanging the architrave and entering the upper register of the altarpiece's attic. A very similar arrangement was introduced in 1654-55 by José de la Torre, Pedro's nephew and close collaborator, in the Fuente el Saz altarpiece for another of Rizi's paintings[59].

[56] Juan M. Cruz Yábar, "Los cuadros de Ribera de don Jerónimo de la Torre y su capilla funeraria en el convento de los Ángeles de Madrid", *Goya*, 349, (2014), pp. 290-307.
[57] Lamas, "Partnership".
[58] Antonio J. Díaz Fernández, "El retablo mayor de la parroquial de Vallecas (Madrid): una arquitectura desaparecida de Pedro y Francisco de la Torre (1672)", *Espacio, tiempo y forma*, 17, (2004), pp. 149-172.
[59] Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos *et al.* (ed.), *Retablos de la comunidad de Madrid: siglos XV a XVII,* (Madrid: dirección General de Patrimonio Cultural, 2002), pp. 208-09. On an illustration of the altarpiece, see: Lamas, "Partnership", fig. 8.

Fig. 6. Francisco Rizi, *Angels making music and angels bearing the Arma Christi*, 1673, inscription: "Rizi Hispaniae Regis P... / Ft. Año ...", oil on canvas, location unknown. Fotografía, Archivo Moreno (inv. no. 20087_B_P.) Madrid, Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural Español © IPCE, Archivo Moreno.

Once again, the solution was applied by Pedro de la Torre for Rizi's painting in the Vallecas altarpiece[60].

In 1658, the architect Juan de Ocaña was paid for a design for the Mostoles altarpiece, a design that could be identified with the one preserved in Edinburgh (Fig. 1), in which case he could be considered a co-author. However, caution is advised. It has been documented that the contractor of an altarpiece, mentioned in the contracts, is not necessarily the author (or the only author) of the design presented to the client (or even the drawing that presents it)[61]. More often than not, the contractor is the person legally responsible for the company of artists who are associated (formally or informally) for the execution of the altarpiece. Thus, Ocaña could have been involved in Mostoles as the head (or the agent) of a company established for the construction of the altarpiece, or he could be the author of a design not selected by the commissioners, but for which he was paid. Our hypothesis here is that he may have acted as the agent of a company led by Pedro de la Torre, whose style is evident in both the altarpiece and the design.

De la Torre is documented as the author of designs to be realised by other architects, designs made on his own or in association with the architect Francisco Bautista (1594-1679)[62]. An example of this is the altarpiece for the

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[60] On an illustration of this altarpiece destroyed in 1936, see: Díaz Fernández, "El retablo mayor", figs. 1, 2.

[61] On this point, see: Lamas, "Partnership".

[62] On Pedro de la Torre's business strategies and on his associations with Bautista, see the bibliography gathered in: Cruz Yábar, "Pedro de la Torre".

Fig. 7. Francisco Rizi, *Design for attic of an altarpiece*, (pen and grey and brown ink, with grey and brown wash, 231 x 389 mm), Madrid, Casa de la Moneda (inv. no. 328). © Casa de la Moneda.

church of the town of Orgaz, contracted in 1656 by the architect Juan García de San Pedro, who was also in charge of its material execution, but acting as the agent for a company set up by the architects Pedro de la Torre and Francisco Bautista, the authors of the design and associated managers of the project[63]. In fact, the architectural design of the first two sections of the Orgaz altarpiece takes up the lines of those of the Mostoles altarpiece and the Edinburgh design, although adapted here to the flat wall of the chancel of the Orgaz church (Fig. 3). These analogies allow the hypothesis to be put forward that both architects also designed the Mostoles altarpiece.

The architect and sculptor Juan de Ocaña was active in Madrid in the mid-17th century. He was the grandfather of the renowned architect and sculptor José Benito Churriguera (1665-1725), born of the marriage between his daughter and his business partner José Churriguera the Elder (d. 1682). The two formed a company that contracted the altarpiece for the parish church of Santa Cruz in Madrid in 1665, another parish church of the Archbishopric of Toledo, subcontracting the sculptures to Juan Sánchez Barba and the paintings to Claudio Coello[64]. Rizi, in whose workshop Coello was still working as a journeyman, offered him to deliver the paintings under his own name, in order to obtain a higher return thanks to his prestige[65]. Was Rizi perhaps involved in the company, perhaps as the executor of the drawing with the

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[63] On the Orgaz altarpiece, see: Nicolau Castro, "El desaparecido", p. 471.
[64] María Luisa Caturla, "Iglesias madrileñas desaparecidas: el retablo mayor de la antigua parroquia de Santa Cruz", *Arte español*, 18, (1950).
[65] According to the testimony of the biographer: Palomino, *Lives*, p. 302. See also: Ismael Gutiérrez Pastor, "Francisco Rizi y Claudio Coello: a propósito de la anécdota de Palomino sobre el retablo de la parroquia de Santa Cruz de Madrid", *Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid*, 4, (1992), p. 231.

design of the altarpiece? This is very likely, as it has been documented that Rizi was involved in similar conditions in other projects, without appearing in the documentation of the notary's office.

In addition to the Mostoles altarpiece, it is possible that Rizi and Ocaña also coincided on other projects. There is documentary evidence that Ocaña collaborated with the architect Juan de Lobera, signing both in October 1659, the contract for the main altarpiece of the church of San Andrés in Madrid[66]. Lobera, Ocaña and Rizi were involved in the 1660s in the ornamentation of the Royal Chapel of San Isidro in Madrid, in which Pedro de la Torre also took part[67]. In the 1670s, Rizi and Lobera collaborated on at least three other projects[68].

While many contemporary altarpieces were to be placed on the flat wall of the chancel or sanctuary of Baroque churches and chapels, the Mostoles Altarpiece was conceived for the curved, quarter-sphere-covered space of the apse at medieval parish church[69]. On the Edinburgh design it can be observed how the shadows painted by Rizi in grey wash underline both the curved structure of the plan and the quarter-sphere form in the upper body or attic (Fig. 1).

However, this curved structure created to fit the apse of the medieval church of Mostoles was by no means an exception. Similar solutions were applied in the 17th century for the renovation of the altarpieces of parish churches in the villages and small towns of Madrid's hinterland, churches which, built at the end of the Gothic period, had a curved or a polygonal apse. The architect Pedro de la Torre was probably the creator of this new typology which, crowned by a quarter-sphere structure with curved canvases, covered either the vaults of the choir[70]. Known by some authors as shell altarpiece (*retablo cascarón*) and developed in Madrid and its hinterland during this period, it may have been introduced for the first time by De la Torre on the altarpiece for the parish church of Pinto, a village located a short distance away from Mostoles[71] (Fig. 4). Commissioned in 1637 and completed in 1655,

[66] Harold Wethey, "Sebastián Herrera Barnuevo", *Anales del Instituto de Arte americano e Ideas Estéticas,* 11, (1948), doc. 12; Esteban A. Cotillo Torrejón, "La Real Capilla de San Isidro: biografía documentada histórico-artística hasta 1670", *Cuadernos de arte e iconografía,* 49-50, (2016), pp. 375-388. On a possible alternative design for the altarpiece of San Andrés in Madrid: Eduardo Lamas-Delgado, "Sebastián Muñoz, Ruiz de la Iglesia y Francisco Rizi: un nuevo ejemplo de la circulación de modelos en la pintura de la segunda mitad del siglo XVII en Madrid", *Archivo español de arte,* 344, (2013), p. 361.

[67] On the Royal Chapel of San Isidro: Juan M. Cruz Yábar, "La capilla madrileña de San Isidro y sus proyectos previos", *Anales de Historia del Arte*, 25, (2015), pp. 163-187; Cotillo Torrejón, "La Real Capilla", pp. 339, 416.

[68] Lobera and Rizi worked together during the 1670s at the monasteries of Santiago in Ucles, San José in Avila and La Encarnación in Alba de Tormes. Eduardo Lamas-Delgado, "La obra de Francisco Rizi 'arrinconado' (1669-1677): creación artística y lazos sociales bajo la regencia de Mariana de Austria", in *Carlos II y el arte de su tiempo,* (Madrid: Fundación Universitria Española, 2013), pp. 527-528; Juan M. Cruz Yábar, *El arquitecto Sebastián de Benavente (1619-1689) y el retablo cortesano de su época,* Ph-D, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, (Madrid: 2013), pp. 884-886, doc. 223.

[69] Lamas, "Fuentes".

[70] A different solution to the same question is the structure of the altarpiece in the parish church in Fuente el Saz, made by José de la Torre and Francisco Rizi in 1655. Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, *Retablos*, pp. 208-209.

[71] On an essay for a typology of 17th century altarpieces in Spain: Juan J. Martín González, *El retablo barroco en España* (Madrid: Alpuerto, 1993).

Fig. 8. Jusepe de Ribera, *Immaculate Conception*, oil on canvas, Destroyed Fotografía, Archivo Moreno (inv. no. 35980_B_P). Madrid, Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural Español © IPCE, Archivo Moreno.

the altarpiece was executed in association with the sculptor Francisco González de Vargas and a large number of other artists[72]. For the attic in Pinto, Pedro de la Torre created the solution that is applied again on the Edinburgh design and at the Mostoles altarpiece, with three curved registers for paintings. Both the altarpiece in the parish church of La Calzada de Oropesa (1676-80), with curved paintings by Claudio Coello[73], and the altarpiece in the church of the Monastery of Ucles (1673-77) with curved paintings by Rizi[74] (Fig. 5), bear witness to the success of this formula in the following decades of the century.

5. An Alternative Closure to the Quarter-Sphere (*retablo cascarón*)

The five paintings by Rizi at the attic of the Ucles altarpiece are elongated curved canvases (Fig. 5), with a format similar to those in the Edinburgh

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[72] Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, *Retablos*, p. 254-255.

[73] On illustrations of La Calzada altarpiece, see: Edward J. Sullivan, *Baroque painting in Madrid: the contribution of Claudio Coello, with a catalogue raisonné of his works,* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), p. 179; Juan Nicolau de Castro, "El retablo mayor de la parroquial de Calzada de Oropesa (Toledo) y sus lienzos de Claudio Coello", *Boletín del Seminario de Arte y Arqueología*, 54, (1988), pp. 442-450.

[74] On illustrations of the Ucles altarpiece: Sonia Jiménez Hortelano, "La construcción del retablo mayor del Real Monasterio de Santiago de Uclés y sus artífices", *Archivo español de arte*, 364, (2018), pp. 381-394.

design[75] (Fig. 1b, no. 2-3). They depict angels musicians on their lower part, and cherubs holding the *Arma Christi* on their upper part, with the exception of the central canvas, which is almost completely lost; it frames a niche containing a sculptural Calvary. These paintings are undoubtedly related to a sketch by Rizi which is identified as a preparatory work for the attic of the Ucles altarpiece[76] (Fig. 6). They literally take up the figures from the foreground of the sketch, as well as those of the little angels on either side of the cross holding the *Arma Christi*. The sketch features the *Adoration of the Holy Cross* by a multitude of angels and cherubs on three levels arranged on two different planes, in a composition that may have been suggested by the print by Cornelis Schut depicting angels making music adoring the Holy Trinity after the composition by Rubens for the set of tapestries for the Descalzas Reales in Madrid[77].

The sketch by Rizi could have been envisaged as an alternative solution for the attic of the Ucles altarpiece, a solution that would later have been discarded, with the composition being divided into the five canvases that cover the quarter sphere of the top of the altarpiece. According to this hypothesis, the solution that was finally rejected would have consisted in the option of placing a single large canvas at the top of the altarpiece; possibly a flat canvas covering the curved space under the closing arch of the retable (Fig. 5).

The Casa de la Moneda in Madrid holds a drawing by Rizi with a design for the attic of an altarpiece (Fig. 7), a design that presents a solution very similar to the one that would have been discarded in Ucles, according to our hypothesis[78]. The design features a large painting in the centre, flanked on either side by two beams of pilasters in front of which are seated statues representing *St. Paul and Peter*. As in the sketch by Rizi, the painting in the drawing depicts only a group of angels and cherubs arranged symmetrically around a central axis, depicted in an attitude of adoration. It should be noted that the composition as a whole is directly derived from the painting of the *Immaculate Conception* by José de Ribera on the main altarpiece of the church of Santa Isabel la Real in Madrid[79] (Fig. 8).

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[75] These paintings by Rizi, which until now have remained unpublished, were thought to be modern ones made after the partial destruction of the altarpiece in 1936. The four bigger have been heavily restored, with retouches on the upper part, probably due to damage caused by the fire, while the central canvas is almost completely lost. On these paintings: Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 66, (cat. P151-P155).

[76] On the paintings in Ucles and their link with the sketch: Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 66, (cat. P156). On the sketch, see also: Gutiérrez Pastor, "Francisco Rizi y Claudio Coello", p. 236.

[77] Nora De Poorter, *Corpus Rubenianum: 2: The Eucharist Series,* (London: Harvey Miller-Heyden & Son, 1978), vol. 1, p. 266, no. 2b, p. 270, no. 3b; Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer & Karel Gerard Boon, *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings and woodcuts: ca. 1450-1700: 26: François Schillemans to J. Seuler,* (Amsterdam, 1982), no. 108. (On web: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1891-0414-695; consulted: 3 December 2024).

[78] Reyes Durán González-Meneses, *Catálogo de los dibujos de los siglos XVI y XVII de la colección del Museo de la Casa de la Moneda,* (Madrid: Ministerio de hacienda. Servicio de Publicaciones, 1980), p. 53, n° 63; Lamas, "Del dibujo al relieve", p. 156.

[79] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 104, (cat. D44). On this painting: Nicola Spinosa, *Ribera: la obra completa,* (Madrid: Fundación Arte Hispánico, 2008), p. 468, (cat. A339).

Fig. 9. Choir of the parish church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Mósteles, 1936-1938. Photograph. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España (GC-CAJA/61/5/3).

Furthermore, some of the elements present in the design in La Moneda seem to suggest a possible connection with the Mostoles altarpiece. Therefore, the presence of the sculptures representing Saints Paul and Peter on the cornice suggests a possible link with that altarpiece (Fig. 2b, no. 7, 8); indeed, the composition of the statue of St Paul, on the right in the drawing, seems to have been retained in the sculpture at Mostoles (Fig. 2b, no. 7). The lower edge of La Moneda drawing also features the upper part of a frame similar to the one at the top of the canvas of the *Assumption* on the Mostoles Altarpiece (Fig. 2b, no. 1). Also, the painting is consistent with what might be the composition of the upper part of a canvas dedicated to the *Assumption* of the Virgin; a group of angels and seraphim drop petals of flowers and shake their incense burners to welcome the Virgin as she rises to heaven, and hence prolonging the narrative of the central painting of the altarpiece. Finally, the shadows marked by the grey wash in the parts representing the back of the attic in the drawing of La Moneda (behind the painting and behind the beams of pilasters) are consistent with the existence of a curved structure closing the top of the altarpiece. In addition, the architecture and ornamentation of the attic of the altarpiece in the design are characteristic of the creations of Pedro de la Torre and Francisco Bautista.

According to this hypothesis, the drawing of La Moneda (Fig. 7), the function of which was hitherto unknown, would reflect a stage in the creative process of the Mostoles altarpiece. The drawing presents elements absent from the Edinburgh design but finally adopted in the final altarpiece: the statues of Saint Paul and Peter; the rectangular format to the main register with the paintings representing the Assumption; the solution of topping its

Fig. 10. Detail, Choir of the parish church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Mósteles. BNE, GC-CAJA/61/5/1. © BNE.

frame with a frame in the auricular style (Fig. 2a). This ornamentation is also visible on the entablature drawn at the lower edge of the drawing at La Moneda, which has been cut out.

Following this hypothesis, the company created for the construction of the Mostoles altarpiece would have made at least two alternative proposals for it (Figs. 1a and 7); for the final result it was decided to adopt elements coming from both of them.

6. The Destruction of the Mostoles Altarpiece

In April 1931, the Second Republic was proclaimed in Spain. The following month, violent anti-clerical and anti-monarchist unrest broke out in Madrid and spread to other cities across the country[80]. The "burning of convents" was the name given to this wave of anti-clerical violence against Catholic Church buildings and institutions during which a large number of historic buildings and works of art were destroyed[81]. On 18 July 1936, a coup d'état led to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. A socialist and anti-clerical revolution broke out in many of the zones loyal to the Republic, leading to numerous episodes of looting and destruction of churches during the first months of the conflict. This was the case in the small town of Mostoles, where

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[80] Julio de la Cueva Merino, "El anticlericalismo en la Segunda República y la Guerra Civil", in *El anticlericalismo español contemporáneo,* eds. Emilio La Parra López & Manuel Suárez Cortina, (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1998), pp. 211-301.
[81] Manuel Según Alonso, "El anticlericalismo de la cerilla y la gasolina: la quema de conventos de mayo de 1931 en Madrid", *Alcores,* 16, (2013), pp. 181-203.

Fig. 11. Francisco Rizi, *Design for an altarpiece dedicated to Saint Anthony*, (pen and brown ink, with brown and grey wash, 328 x 225 mm), Madrid, private collection. © Eduardo Lamas.

the parish church was looted and religious images and liturgical objects were torn down and burnt[82].

The Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid hosts the photo archive holdings of the State Delegation for Press and Propaganda, which had collected data on abuses committed against artistic heritage[83]. This collection includes two photographs taken between 1936 and 1939 showing fragments of the Mostoles altarpiece that survived its destruction, but which have gone unnoticed by specialists in Golden Age art[84]. These are two views of the choir of the church, showing that the attic of the altarpiece had remained in place (Figs. 9, 10). These photographs reveal that, as in the case of the Ucles altarpiece, the three paintings by Rizi on the attic were not destroyed during

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[82] David García del Hoyo, "Móstoles en la Guerra Civil y en la inmediata posguerra", in *Actas: Jornadas de Memoria Histórica de la Comunidad de Madrid,* (Madrid: Asociación Comisión de la Verdad, 2022), p. 31.
[83] Isabel Ortega García & Gerardo F. Kurtz Schaefer (ed.), *150 años de fotografía en la Biblioteca Nacional: guía-inventario de los fondos fotográficos de la Biblioteca Nacional,* (Madrid: El Viso, 1989), pp. 266-293.
[84] Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, (GC-CAJA/61/5/3) and (GC-CAJA/61/5/1). Ortega & Kurtz, *150 años*, p. 277.

Fig. 12. Francisco Rizi, *Design for an altarpiece with a painting representing The rest on the Flight into Egypt*, (pen and brown ink, with brown and grey wash, 211 x 203 mm), Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (inv. D006006) © Museo del Prado

the war, contrary to what was hitherto assumed[85]. The second photograph (Fig. 10) clearly shows the canvas depicting the Trinity, at the central register of the attic (Fig. 2a, no. 2).

7. Two other Drawings by Rizi with Altarpieces Designs

A drawing by Rizi showing the elevation of an altarpiece dedicated to the franciscan *Saint Anthony of Padua* is held in a private collection in Madrid[86] (Fig. 15). The design was most probably made, once again, in collaboration with one of the companies created by the architect Pedro de la Torre, a regular collaborator of Rizi in these tasks. Works produced by De la Torre's

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[85] All three are currently unaccounted for. They are not in the church or in one of the outbuildings. Communication to the author from the parish of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción in Móstoles.
[86] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 105, (cat. D46). First mentioned by Wethey as the work of an anonymous artist active in Seville, the drawing was later attributed to Rizi by Pérez Sánchez. Harold E. Wethey, "Alonso Cano's drawings", *The Art Bulletin*, 34, (1952), p. 233; Pérez Sánchez, *Historia del dibujo*, p. 244. The drawing has recently been attributed, with little foundation, to Alonso Cano. Zahira Véliz, *Alonso Cano (1601-1667): dibujos: catálogo razonado,* (Santander: Fundación Marcelino Botín, 2011), p. 438, (cat. n° 98).

Fig. 13. Sebastián de Benavente (attributed), *Altarpiece dedicated to Saint Anthony,* Madrid, convent of Corpus Christi (photo: IPCE, Archivo Moreno,) Fotografía, Archivo Moreno (inv. no. 36039_B .). Madrid, Instituto de Patrimonio Cultural Español © IPCE, Archivo Moreno.

workshop are very similar in style to the one in the drawing. The garlands of fruit, the foliage decorating the architrave, the cartouches in auricular style crowning the two panels in the central register (*calle*) and the consoles supporting the two columns are all typical of Pedro de la Torre's production. As in the Edinburgh drawing, this project for an altarpiece features small *modelli* for paintings executed in Rizi's characteristic style and technique for this type of work, with expert handling of the wash in a colour different from that used for the architectural parts. These small paintings depict *Saint John the Baptist*, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, *Saint Francis of Assisi* and *A Holy Bishop*. The upper part of the altarpiece shows a copy of the Roman icon depicting *Our Lady of the Popolo*, of which there were many others in Madrid, while the door of the tabernacle features an *Ecce Homo*. On the other hand, the painting of *Saint Anthony*'s composition, somehow archaic for the period, could represent a pre-existing painting that was commissioned to be incorporated into the altarpiece.

The Museo del Prado's design for the attic of an altarpiece with a painting representing The Rest in the Flight into Egypt is another drawing by Rizi that could be related to the painter's collaboration with the companies set up by Pedro de la Torre[87] (Fig. 16). On both drawings, as on the Edinburg design, the outlined character of the drawings for the paintings contrasts with the flatness of architectural designs, in order to emphasize their two-dimensional nature.

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[87] Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 2, p. 105, (cat. D45).

Fig. 14. Francisco Rizi, Frescoes decoration for the *camarin* of Our Lady of the Sagrario, Toledo cathedral. © Jaime Moraleda.

The drawing in a private collection (Fig. 11) is a design for an altarpiece of smaller size than the aforementioned examples, probably a side altar of a church or maybe for a small chapel. The altarpiece typology presents analogies with to altarpieces made for this kind of destinations. On one hand, the altarpiece dedicated to Saint Anthony at on one of the side altars of the convent church of Corpus Christi in Madrid, which was the property of the silk merchant Marcos de Montaña and has been recently attributed to the architect Sebastián de Benavente (1619-89)[88] (Fig. 13). On the other hand, the altarpiece of Saint Anthony, also attributed to Benavente, in the chapel of the knight Antonio de Ugarte, in the church of San Salvador in Leganes[89].

When the drawing representing the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (Fig. 12) entered the Prado collection in 1993, it was surprisingly suggested that it might be related to the frescoes designed by Rizi for the *camarin* of Our Lady of the Sagrario in Toledo Cathedral[90] (Fig. 14). However, these frescoes use the ornamental language of the illusionistic *quadrattura* from Bologna, with a perspective *di sotto in su*, and bear no relation to this drawing. The ornamental motifs of the design and the predominance of the straight line correspond to the style of the altarpieces designed at the Spanish court. It is therefore to one of these artistic enterprises that this drawing should be linked. It is interesting to compare this project for the attic of an altarpiece with the upper part of the altarpiece project designed by the architect Sebastián de Benavente for the altarpiece in the Royal Chapel of San Diego

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[88] On illustrations and references for this altarpiece: Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, *Retablos*, p. 231; Cruz Yábar, *El arquitecto Sebastián de Benavente*, pp. 406-407, (cat. no. 72).
[89] On illustrations and references for this altarpiece: Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, *Retablos*, p. 292; Corella, *Arquitectura religiosa*, p. 81; Cruz Yábar, *El arquitecto Sebastián de Benavente*, p. 408-409, (cat. nº 73).
[90] *Un mecenas póstumo: el legado Villaescusa*, exh. cat., (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 1993), p. 103.

in Alcalá de Henares, design featured in a drawing by Alonso Cano[91] (Fig. 15). As noted above, the involvement of the draughtsmen in the construction process of the altarpieces, as draftsmen of the designs, is not usually reflected in the archival documentation. In the context of Rizi's own production, this has been demonstrated in the case of the altarpiece of the Fraternity of Ave María in Madrid.

The drawings by Rizi featuring architectural designs analysed on this paper illustrate the artist's talent and creativity as an incarnation of the learned artist, the *doctor artifex*, celebrated by his master Carducho and the Italian artistic theory[92]. On these drawings, designs for painting, architecture and sculpture are all three rendered by the draughtsman through a scientific, studious and highly finished drawing. For Carducho, this is what concluded the debate about the *paragone* of arts, and what Rizi must have learned in his workshop and in the cultural and artistic circles associated (closely or remotely) with the Academy in Madrid: superiority of the arts is awarded not to painting, nor to sculpture, nor to architecture, but to drawing; and, consequently, to the artist-draughtsman who becomes a designer (or at least the one who executes drawings presenting the designs of others)[93]. Certainly, designs by Rizi were not conceived as an example of Carducho's arguments, but they must be understood within the context of his precepts. His drawings featuring designs for altarpieces and triumphal arches represent clear illustrations of the brotherhood of painting, sculpture and architecture through drawing, as interpreted by Carducho and contemporary artistic literature in general: "Drawing [...], whether in pen, pencil, or other material, [...] is inseparable from good and scientific Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, in such a way that these three Arts cannot be good without this erudite and sensible drawing"[94].

But drawings by Rizi, like those by Cajés[95] and Cano (Fig. 15) mentioned above, also illustrate another aspect of artistic production during this period in the Iberian Peninsula that has been rather overlooked by scholars: the collaboration between draughtsmen and architects. The laters, in order to increase their chances of obtaining commissions, would have relied on the collaboration of artists with a particular skill in drawing. In a letter to the painter and architect Teodoro Ardemans (1661-1726), Churriguera states that these artists were rather scarce: "Few are found with the skill of drawing

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[91] The author interprets this drawing as the fruit of an informal collaboration (not mentioned in the notarial documentation) between Benavente, the author of the design, and Cano, who put his skills as a draughtsman at his service. On author interpretations for the authorship of this drawing: Véliz, *Alonso Cano*, pp. 492-497, (no. 120); Cruz Yábar, *El arquitecto Sebastián de Benavente*, pp. 289-407, (no. 21); *Visions and nightmares: four centuries of Spanish drawings,* exh. cat., (New York, 2014), p. 8.
[92] Zahira Véliz, "Carducho and the Eloquence of Drawing", in Jean Andrews *et al.*, *On Art and Painting: Vicente Carducho and Baroque Spain,* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2016), pp. 241-269.
[93] On the formation of Rizi in the environment of the Academy and its members: Lamas, *Le peintre Francisco Rizi*, vol. 1, pp. 30-31.
[94] Translation of the autor: "Es el dibujo […], de pluma, lápiz, o de otra materia, […] inseparable de la buena y científica Pintura, Escultura y Arquitectura: tanto que es incompatible ser buena ninguna de estas tres Artes, sin este prudente y docto dibujo". Carducho, *Diálogos*, p. 174.
[95] As in note 9.

Fig. 15. Alonso Cano & Sebastián de Benavente, *San Diego de Alcalá Altarpiece*, detail, 1657-58, (pen and brown ink and wash on laid paper, 1,176 x 629 mm), New York, The Morgan Library and Museum (inv. 1986.46). © Morgan Library and Museum.

for the perfect execution of sculpture and ornaments, and the intelligence of mathematics to provide and adjust more parts with all the good taste for their placement"[96].

The drawings by Rizi gathered in this paper feature designs attributable to the architect Pedro de la Torre, while those by Cajés and Cano feature designs by Juan Gómez de Mora and Sebastián de Benavente, whose involvement is supported by archival documentation. Grounds for the involvement of the three painters is provided by the drawings themselves, which, as noted above, bear a style and a way of execution characteristic of each of them. Both elements offer clues that suggest the possibility of an informal collaboration, absent from notarial documentation. However, in the current state of knowledge, there is no way of settling the question and hypotheses are therefore preferred. At best, a consensus may be reached around the question, but it will always remain within the realm of possibility. As Friedrich Nietzsche argued, it is not doubt but certainty that drives one mad. And doubt is, after all, the motor of knowledge[97].

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[96] Translation of the autor: "Son pocos los que se hallan con la destreza del dibuxar para la perfecta execución de la escultura y ornatos, y la inteligencia de las matemáticas para proporcionar y ajustar mas partes con todo el buen gusto para la colocación de ellas". Letter dated Saltillo, 23 May 1721. Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Órdenes Militares, MPD 25. For a transcription of this document: Bonet, "Los retablos", p. 46.

[97] The author would like to thank the different colleagues who contributed to this study through their discussions, readings and reviews, in particular Manuel García-Luque, Juan M. Cruz-Yábar, Géraldine

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