

Caylus



JUAN BAUTISTA MAÍNO
(Pastrana, 1581 - Madrid, 1649)

Saint Simon Stock receives the Scapular from the Virgin

Ca. 1611
Oil on canvas
75 × 67 cm

PROVENANCE

Seville, Gonzalo Díaz Molero collection (1929); auctioned at Isbilya, 22 February 2023 (lote 22) as an anonymous work; acquired from that auction by Galería Caylus.

EXHIBITIONS

Seville, Exposición Iberoamericana of 1929, Fine Arts Pavilion, Room 10, cat. 48.

LITERATURE

Seville, 1930, p. 138, no. 48; Harris, 1934-1935, p. 334; Angulo y Pérez, 1969, p. 316, no. 35; Boitani, 1995, no. 52, p. 269; Pérez Sánchez, 1997, p. 124; Ruiz Gómez, 2009a, p. 92, cat. no. 6.

The exhibition which the Museo Nacional del Prado devoted to Juan Bautista Maíno in 2009 marked a new starting point for a study of the career and artistic output of one of the most important but also the most enigmatic painters of the first half of the 17th century in Spain.¹ Maíno, who was born in Pastrana in 1581 and died in Madrid in 1649, trained in Italy like various fellow-Spaniards such as Luis Tristán (with whom he coincided in Rome between 1606 and 1610).² He returned to Spain around 1610, first to Toledo then settled permanently at the court in Madrid in 1616. The most important aspect of Maíno's extensive career is the fact, already noted by Leticia Ruiz, that he always remained an "Italian painter" despite the years spent in his native country.

With regard to the artist's personal life it is striking that despite becoming a father at an early age during his years of training in Rome (where Francisco, the son he had with Ana de Vargas, was born in 1605), in 1613 Maíno was accepted as a monk in the monastery of San Pedro Mártir, the principal Dominican house in Toledo. This was also the location for which he created his greatest works; the *Cuatro Pascuas Altarpiece* [meaning "altarpiece of the four principal festivals of the liturgical calendar"] and the mural paintings in the under-choir and the sanctuary.

Despite the fact that in his *Discursos practicables del nobilísimo arte de la Pintura* (ca. 1675) Jusepe Martínez stated that Maíno "did not produce many works, given that as he did not aspire to possess more than he had, he only cared for his comfort",³ recent publications allow

¹ It was primarily based on the corpus compiled by Angulo and Pérez Sánchez, 1969, pp. 299-325.

² Rodríguez Rebollo, 2020, pp. 251-262.

³ Martínez (ca. 1675) 2006, p. 243.

this opinion to be modified. Since 2009 new works from the artist's years of training in Italy (1605-10) have reappeared, such as *Saint Matthew*, *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist* and *Saint Anthony of Padua*, all in private collections.⁴ Other discoveries from the Madrid period include *Saint James the Greater and Saint Teresa of Ávila, Patron Saints of Castile and León* (1627-28), now in Auckland Castle, County Durham, and *The Virgin of Atocha* (1633-34), recently acquired by the Spanish State for Patrimonio Nacional.⁵

In addition, the exhibition at the Prado has led to the reappearance of other works, the locations of which had remained unknown since they were published by Enriqueta Harris nearly 50 years ago. A paradigmatic case is the copperplate of *Saint John the Baptist* (prior to 1613), acquired by the Museo del Prado in 2017 (P-8277).⁶ The present work is another example; a beautiful, small-scale oil on canvas (75 x 67 cm) which was sold at auction at Isbilya in February 2023 (lot 22) as an anonymous work. The two works can be related in an interesting manner, as will be discussed here.

The present work was published by Angulo and Pérez Sánchez in 1969 on the basis of a black and white photograph, leading those authors to consider it an old copy of a lost original.⁷ At that time it was in Seville in the collection of the banker Gonzalo Díaz Molero. Angulo and Pérez Sánchez identified it as the painting exhibited in the Ibero-American exhibition of 1929 and described in the accompanying catalogue as "No. 48. - Saint Ildephonsus receives the Chasuble. C [canvas]. - Height, 0.75; width, 0.67. Exhibitor: D. Gonzalo Díaz Molero. Seville."⁸

As the catalogue entry indicates, the work was considered at the time to depict the most important iconographic episode in the life of Saint Ildephonsus (607-667), one of the Doctors of the Church and Archbishop of Toledo. That identification has persisted until very recently but certain iconographic details now allow the figure in the scene to be identified as Saint Simon Stock.

⁴ See, respectively, Papi, 2016, pp. 74-76; Aterido, 2016, pp. 68-71 and Willder, 2021, pp. 142-143.

⁵ See, respectively, Ruiz Gómez, 2019, pp. 140-141 and Navarrete Prieto, 2021, pp. 62-70. In addition, *The Visitation* and *The Adoration of the Magi* studied by Quesada, 2022.

⁶ Harris, 1934-1935, pp. 336-337.

⁷ Angulo and Pérez Sánchez, 1969, p. 316, no. 35, pl. 268.

⁸ Seville, 1930, p. 138, no. 48.

Due to considering the work to depict Saint Ildephonsus, the celebrated Toledan prelate, Angulo and Pérez Sánchez related it to the commission that Maíno received in October 1611 from the Chapter of Toledo cathedral: “Painting for the new sacristy. As faithfully recorded / On 20 October it was agreed with Ju^a Bautista Mayno, painter, that he make a painting of the story of Saint Ildephonsus on canvas of one piece that measures thirteen or fourteen feet more or less, valued and paid as faithfully recorded on 21 of that month 400 *reales*.”⁹

The dimensions of the work, measuring almost 4 metres (presumably high, although the document is very ambiguous) would have been larger than El Greco’s *Disrobing of Christ* (285 x 173 cm), painted to preside over the original Gothic sacristy of the cathedral before the renovation of that space which began in 1590. It can thus be suggested that the commission was intended to substitute El Greco’s altarpiece in the new sacristy. Whatever the case, the work has not survived to the present day and while art historians such as Pérez Sedano considered that it was never painted, others such as Enriqueta Harris thought the opposite.¹⁰

Without entering into that debate, which is not the subject of this study, Angulo and Pérez Sánchez considered the present painting to be a possible copy of the original executed for Toledo cathedral (or at least a copy of its preparatory study). Pérez Sedano considered it a preliminary study while more recently Leticia Ruiz recorded both hypotheses. The most interesting detail is the fact that despite only studying the work from an old photograph, Ruiz noticed that the saint was wearing the clothing of a member of a barefoot Order.¹¹ The work’s recent reappearance, and above all its recent restoration which has reinstated its remarkable quality, allow the subject to be correctly identified. In addition, it can now be firmly attributed to Maíno.

The composition is perfectly structured. In an indeterminate celestial space devoid of any architectural reference an elderly man kneels and reverently joins his hands to receive a scapular from the Mother of God, who is attended by an angel. The scene is completed by

⁹ The document, first published by Pérez Sedano, 1914, I, p. 83, is reproduced in Ruiz Gómez, 2009a, p. 223, doc. 32. Also in Harris, 1934-1935, p. 334 and Angulo and Pérez Sánchez, 1969, p. 316, no. 34.

¹⁰ See Pérez Sedano, op. cit., 1914, I, p. 83 and Harris, 1934-1935, p. 334. Pérez Sedano’s opinion should perhaps be considered correct given that Antonio Palomino makes no reference to the painting in his *Museo Pictórico: Palomino (1715-1724)* 1947, p. 869. His opinion was shared by Ceán Bermúdez, 1800, vol. III, p. 275, who in addition to believing that the work was never painted, considered that the commission was a pair to *The Discovery of the Body of Saint Leocadia* by Orrente. On this, see Angulo and Pérez Sánchez, 1972, p. 340, no. 356.

¹¹ Ruiz Gómez, 2009a, p. 92, cat. no. 6.

two further angels, one of them playing a viol. Just below Mary a small, naked putto looks at the viewer while pointing to the principal male figure. He wears the Carmelite habit and has a tonsure. His worn sandals are painted with absolute realism. This figure is thus not Saint Ildephonsus but rather a Carmelite saint, recently identified as Simon Stock,¹² one of the principal figures of that religious Order.

Stock, an English medieval monk (Aylesford, 1165-Bordeaux, 1265 (?)), was elected sixth general of the Carmelites in 1247. On 16 July 1251 he had a vision of the Carmelite Virgin placing a scapular on him. Although a relatively uncommon iconography, the saint and the depicted episode were well known in Spain in the early 17th century thanks to the publication of the *Flos Sanctorum* by the Toledan Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneira. According to that account, the Virgin appeared to Stock at dawn, accompanied by angels “who transformed his cell into Heaven”.¹³ While some significant iconographic details recorded by Ribadeneira are not present, such as Mary’s Carmelite habit or her imperial crown, the figure here can be confirmed as Simon Stock given that in his biography of the saint Ribadeneira refers to a series of monks who also received the scapular, among them the “Toledan Saint Ildephonsus with the chasuble.”¹⁴

A series of conclusions can be drawn from the above information. The painting, which is of small format, was intended for a private client. The composition is based on the iconography of Saint Ildephonsus receiving the chasuble, for which reason the work’s date must be close to the above-mentioned commission for the sacristy of Toledo cathedral of 1611. As such, and regardless of whether the latter was ever executed or not, the two commissions are closely related. Maíno was also known for repeating and reusing some of his most celebrated creations. The most notable example is *The Adoration of the Shepherds* for the *Cuatro Pascuas Altarpiece* (1612-14), from which the canvases on the same subject in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, and the Meadows Museum, Dallas, derive. Another example is the three known versions on copper of *Saint John the Baptist*, which directly derive from a composition by Caravaggio.

¹² <https://arismagazine.com/isbilya-vende-por-algo-mas-de-180-000-euros-un-tapado-de-maino>.

¹³ Ribadeneira, (1599-1601) 1734, vol. II, p. 42.

¹⁴ Idem, p. 42.

In addition, it is evident that Simon Stock's face is a portrait of the monk who commissioned the painting. The specificity of his physical features, such as the hands, the aged face and the tonsure, all indicate this to be the case. The subject would thus be a Toledan Carmelite who probably ordered the painting for private devotional use in his cell and who would have known the composition for the cathedral sacristy. The inclusion of portraits in his works is another characteristic of Maíno who, in addition to those painted *ex profeso* (above all the *Portrait of a Man* in the Museo del Prado), introduced real people into many of his compositions.¹⁵ Examples include the above-mentioned *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the Hermitage and *Saint Dominic of Guzmán* (P-3130) painted for the top level of the *Cuatro Pascuas Altarpiece*.

Maíno worked for the Barefoot Carmelites in Toledo on various occasions. A notable commission is the *Pentecost* in the Museo del Prado (P-3286, 1615-20) which, as Álvarez Lopera proved, was the principal image in the main altarpiece for the conventual church of that Order. Another example is the painting now in the Bowes Museum, County Durham, its subject variously identified as the architect Friar Gaspar de San Martín and more recently as Saint Agabus.¹⁶

The argument for a dating of around 1611 for the present work is reinforced by its formal analysis. The face of the angel on the left placing the scapular on the saint is almost identical to that of Saint John the Baptist in the small copper panels in the Museo del Prado (P-8277), a private collection and Malaga cathedral. All those works date from prior to 1613. In addition, and as Pérez Sánchez noted, there are evident parallels with the two paintings that make up the *Altarpiece of the Trinity* painted for the Conceptionists in Pastrana. That author also drew attention to the similarities with the Virgin's face in *The Annunciation* (1612-20), "with a pointed chin, small mouth and long eyebrows",¹⁷ features later repeated in the Marian versions of *Saint Dominic in Soriano* (ca. 1629) and *The Visitation* in a private collection (1636-37).¹⁸

The same is the case with the position of the legs of the musician angel in the left foreground of *The Trinity* (ca. 1610). This figure is identical, albeit inverted, to the one on the right of the present work. The presence of musician angels is another aspect that connects

¹⁵ See Ruiz Gómez, 2009b.

¹⁶ For all this, see, respectively, Álvarez Lopera 2009, p. 101, no. 81 and Ruiz Gómez, 2009a, p. 165; p. 154, cat. no. 26.

¹⁷ Pérez Sánchez, 1997, p. 124. Reproduced in Ruiz Gómez, 2009a, p. 102.

¹⁸ On the latter, which is related to the principal altarpiece in the conventual church of San Jerónimo in Espeja de San Marcelino (Soria), see Quesada, 2022, pp. 74ff.

these paintings, in addition to *The Virgin of Bethlehem* which belonged to the Mercedarian nuns in Fuentes de Andalucía, and which reached its maximum expression in the mural paintings for the under-choir of Santo Domingo el Antiguo. All of them ultimately derive from Maíno's period of training in Rome where he saw and assimilated Guido Reni's compositions, as Jusepe Martínez noted: "[...] follower and friend that he was of Annibale Carracci and a great companion of our Guido Reni, whose manner of painting he always followed."¹⁹

The recent restoration of the present work has reinstated the delicate colours of the clothing and the flesh tones, which also testify to Maíno's contact with the work of Orazio Gentileschi in Rome. Furthermore, they reveal his physical knowledge of fabrics derived from his family's activities, from the worn habit and above all the saint's sandals to the brilliant iridescence of the gold brocade of the angel on the right, which is very close to that of the fabric worn by the angels and God the Father in the Conceptionist altarpiece in Pastrana and of which the finest expression is the brocade in *The Adoration of the Magi* from the *Cuatro Pascuas Altarpiece*. In addition, this angel's wings are painted with a veritable mosaic of tones that reappear years later (albeit with technical differences due to the medium employed) in the angels who fill the under-choir in San Pedro Mártir.

Finally, attention should be drawn to various details which reveal that this is a work into which Maíno introduced some changes, albeit requiring technical studies to confirm this. The most evident is that of the musician angel at the upper right, the original position of whose face, possibly looking out of the composition, seems to have been modified to its present one. Such changes confirm that the present work is not an old copy of a lost original but rather a painting executed in Toledo by Juan Bautista Maíno around 1611.

Ángel Rodríguez Rebollo

¹⁹ Martínez (ca. 1675), 2006, pp. 242-243. See also Ruiz Gómez, 2009a, pp. 18-19, and Finaldi, 2009, pp. 51-54

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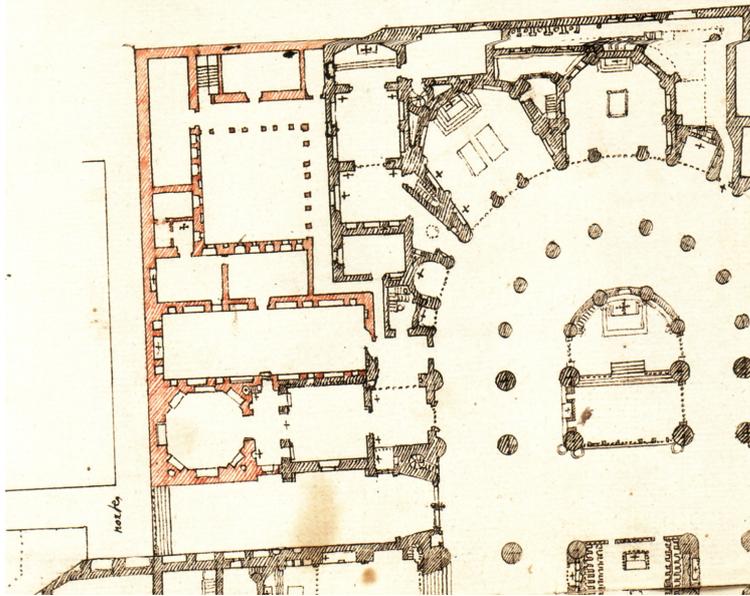
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Ground plan of Toledo cathedral (detail). Highlighted in red are the areas built from 1590, structured by the new Sacristy. ACT, colección de diseños, 198.



Saint Simon Stock receiving the Scapular from the Virgin (detail)



Saint John the Baptist (detail). Museo Nacional del Prado, P-8277



Altarpiece of the Trinity, Conceptionist convent, Pastrana

