

Author: Domingo Balcarcel y Formento, Feliz Venancio Malo, and Antonio Moreno (engraver)

Title: Lagrymas de la Paz

Imprint: 1762

Dimensions (binding): 20.8 cm x 15.6 cm x 2.2 cm

Dimensions (text block): 20.1 cm x 15.1 cm x 1.5 cm

Dimensions (engraving support): 58.0 cm x 41.1 cm

Dimensions (engraving image area): 57.8 cm x 40.8 cm

Collection: Benson Latin American Collection

Examination Date: 4/30/08

Treatment Date: May 2008

Conservator: Sarah Norris

Treatment Objective

The goal of this treatment is to stabilize the volume and accompanying engraving for storage and handling. To achieve this, the text block will be secured to its case. The folded engraving will have tape removed and be flattened and mended for separate flat storage.

Background

This volume is a compilation of death sermons from Mexico, including death sermons for King Ferdinand VI of Spain. (Mexico was a Spanish colony until 1821.) Seven other copies are listed in OCLC in American libraries, such as the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, UC Berkeley, and Stony Brook University. One copy appears in OCLC in Latin America, at the Dibam Biblioteca Nacional de Chile.

Text is in Spanish and Latin, in both prose and verse. The volume was published in Mexico by La Imprenta del Real, y Mas Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso. The last two parts of the volume, with death sermons for King Ferdinand VI, have their own title pages, but appear to have been issued as part of the same volume. The first of these is attributed to Luis Antonio de Torres Tuñón, and the second is attributed to Francisco Antonio Fernandez Vallejo. Both sermons appear to be of Mexican origin.

The large, fold-out engraving depicts an elaborate altar and catafalque. Some OCLC contributors describe the large, fold-out engraving as accompanying the volume's last Ferdinand sermon. Other engravings throughout the volume regularly depict death as a skeleton.

Condition

Book: The text block is printed on medium thick, cream colored, handmade, laid paper. The pages appear to have been printed with intaglio engraved plates in a fluid engraving ink, and again with type and woodcut decorations in a dark black printer's ink. Plate lines are strong throughout. Some browning is evident in the inked areas. The plates and text are misaligned and slightly overlap on several pages. Outer endpapers were previously pasted down to the covers, but this attachment failed long ago. The edges of these pages are wrinkled and folded. Several insect holes drill partially into the textblock. Older inscriptions in iron gall ink appear on the front and back endpapers. Cataloguing inscriptions in graphite appear on what was previously the pastedown.

The text block is sewn mostly two-on, though the first and last three sections (including endmatter) are sewn all along. Sewing wraps around two double cord supports. Each pair of supports is sewn around as one. Thread is cream colored linen,

presumably S-twist. Most sections consist of two folios. Stubbed single and folded leaves are attached to the outer sections of all three parts of the book. Sections are A – M in part one, A – C in part two, and A – C in part three. Each part has its own title page, but the unbroken pattern of the two-on sewing indicates that all three parts were bound together at once. Two section Cs appear in part three; the last is an abbreviated section at the end of the volume. There is no section J in part one.

A stub is tipped into part one between sections B and C. The stub displays a small portion of the edge of an engraving, which appears to have been cut out of the volume. The cut marks do not match the remaining tip of the engraving that currently accompanies the volume. That engraving was removed by tearing and disengaging the adhesive. However, the small remaining portion of the engraving tipped into the volume looks nearly identical to the same portion of the enclosed engraving. This may suggest that the engraving originally bound with the volume was removed at some point in the past, and that another copy of the same engraving was folded into the volume.

Case-to-text attachment was previously established by endbands sewn around alum tawed leather supports, which were threaded through holes punched in the case. Over time, dimensional changes in the alum tawed skin and the parchment have pulled the endbands and the case away from the textblock, leaving the textblock attached to the case by just a few endband threads. The endband thread is the same as that used to sew the textblock.

The case is made of parchment folded over at the head, tail, and foreedges. The parchment is relatively flat on the back cover, but on the front cover it is rippled and splays approximately 1.7 cm away from the text block. Grime appears in a tideline pattern at the front foreedge. Stray marks of black ink and graphite appear on the back cover, along with several spots of an unidentified, stiff accretion. Two pairs of alum tawed leather ties are attached to the case's foreedges. The volume's title is hand-written on the spine in iron gall ink. A later library call number appears in dark black ink at the tail of the spine. Two generations of bookplates are adhered inside the front cover, along with a library sticker that is additionally secured with a piece of pressure sensitive tape.

Engraving: The fold-out intaglio is on a handmade, laid paper support. The paper is beige (2) in color, moderately textured (1), and moderately thick.¹ Black engraving ink was thickly applied over most of the substrate. Plate lines are barely visible at some portions of the image edges, but some of the plate lines have been cut off.

The paper substrate itself remains in good condition. The substrate was folded into nine equally sized panels. A tattered, delaminated edge at the center panel of the engraving's left edge indicates that the engraving was at one time tipped into the binding. Significant abrasion of the medium is visible in the lower left corner and along the right side of the image area. Accretions of grime and adhesive (from pressure sensitive tape) appear in the image area. Significant tears and losses have occurred along all fold lines. One additional 9.5-cm tear radiates from what would have once been the bottom corner of the tip-in (now in the left center panel.) A 4.7-cm tear radiates from what would have been the top corner of the tip-in (also the left center panel.)

Three layers of pressure sensitive tape have been applied extensively over the folds on the verso. The first layer has a 10.8 cm-wide paper carrier, applied with a water-soluble adhesive. The second layer appears in only one strip across the lowest

¹ Lunning, Elizabeth and Roy Perkinson. *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book*. 1996: The Print Council of America.

horizontal fold on the verso. It has a 2.1 cm-wide paper carrier, applied with a water-soluble adhesive. Two layers of this tape are present in the center panel. The last type of tape was applied over all folds in the top half of the verso, as well as over the tip-in area, over the 9.5-cm tear, and over one of the lower folds. This tape has a glassine carrier and a water-soluble adhesive. Much of the glassine tape extends over the top of the first, 10.8 cm-wide tape, but some of it is applied directly to the verso.

A cataloguing annotation and several stray marks in graphite appear on the verso. A red bookseller's stamp also appears on the verso. The ink does not display dye or particulate offset in 20 seconds of contact with damp chromatography paper.

Treatment Proposal

Book:

1. Lightly dry clean front cover.
2. Humidify and flatten endpapers.
3. Humidify and flatten case as possible. Open case attachment holes very slightly.
4. Tone Tyvek to a neutral color.
5. Adhere Tyvek T-shaped lining at head and tail; sew through.
6. Work T arms of Tyvek underneath existing endbands in case.
7. Tip a stub into back of volume to identify new location of engraving.

Engraving:

1. Humidify engraving in Goretex. Remove glassine tape as possible.
2. Spray out and place face down in a bath lightly conditioned with CaOH. Place smooth Hollytex in the bottom of the bath in case it's needed.
3. Remove tape as possible in bath.
4. Lift engraving out of bath with Hollytex on its back, using Hollytex in bottom of bath only if necessary (to avoid blurring image with lost particles.)
5. Dry between felts.
6. Mend with toned tissue.
7. House flat in a folder.

Materials Used

1. Soot sponge
2. Tyvek
3. Liquitex acrylic paints
4. Japanese tissue
5. Precipitated wheat starch paste mixed 1:4 with distilled water, cooked 20 minutes (Colophon)
6. Lascaux
7. 25/3 thread
8. 70# Mohawk

Treatment Steps