
The Global System of the Arts at the End of the Nineteenth Century and the Commissioning of a Sepulchral Monument in Santiago, Chile

Fernando Guzmán

Introduction

In 1887, Monsignor Mariano Casanova, archbishop of Santiago, Chile, gave impetus to the project of constructing a sepulchral monument destined for the Catedral de Santiago (Santiago Cathedral) to honor the memory of his late predecessor in the government of the archdiocese, Monsignor Rafael Valentín Valdivieso (1804–78). Funding difficulties and the complexity of the decisions to be made delayed the development of the work, which was completed in 1898 (fig. 1).¹ The abundance of documentation in the Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de Santiago (Historical Archive of the Archbishopric of Santiago) related to the commission of the monument illuminates key mechanisms of the global system of the arts in the last decades of the nineteenth century. This essay considers the nature of the artistic choices that were made, paying special attention to the selection of materials, authors, and stylistic solutions. At the same time, the essay unveils the logic of the iconographic program of the monument, reflecting on the historical implications of its ultimate configuration.

Without a doubt, Valdivieso's tomb is part of a broader process. During the nineteenth century, the Chilean art scene underwent significant changes. Some of the circumstances driving the renewal were the founding of Chile's Academia de Pintura (Academy of Painting) in 1849, the arrival of foreign artists and architects to Santiago of Chile, and the importation of European paintings and sculptures.² During the inauguration of the Academia de Pintura, its first director, Neapolitan painter Alessandro Ciccarelli, expressed his clear intention to bring Chilean art to the international stage.³ At the same time, churches began to dispense with their Baroque ornamentation and acquire contemporary religious art. From 1857 on, Archbishop Valdivieso instigated a profound transformation of the cathedral in Santiago.⁴ The original altarpieces, sculptures, and colonial paintings were replaced by marble altars and works commissioned from Italian, French, or Chilean artists trained at the



FIG. 1. — Emilio Doyère (French, 1847–1918), architect. Sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, 1898, marble, bronze, stained glass, and mosaic, 820 × 723 × 185 cm. Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 27 July 2024.

Academia.⁵ The erection of the funerary monument can be viewed in this broader trajectory of change and incorporation into the global arts arena.

In January 1887 Casanova became archbishop of the diocese of Santiago. That same year he published a circular in which he proposed the construction of a new tomb for the remains of Monsignor Valdivieso, defining the characteristics it should have.⁶ The urgency of the initiative indicates that this was an aspiration that had germinated in his mind long before his consecration. “The posthumous glorification of great men is a duty of gratitude and a powerful stimulus for posterity,” the circular states, especially when “they have consecrated a life sown with virtues to the service of the Church and of souls.”⁷ The text notes the existence of previous initiatives aimed at the same end that

did not prosper due to the difficulties imposed by the war with Peru and Bolivia and, later, the cholera epidemic that began in 1886.⁸

The circular anticipates the objections that some might raise, such as the high cost or the inappropriateness of the exaggerated tenor of the homage. Reminding the current generation of ecclesiastical authorities of their duty to glorify great men of the church and present the lives of those figures to society as an example for new generations, the text points out, “It is not necessary to have merited being raised to the honor of the altars for the Church to decree their posthumous glorification.”⁹ Casanova gives an example of the tombs of the noncanonized pontiffs preserved in the Eternal City. In this way, he justifies the work and anticipates possible objections to dedicating resources to the project of honoring the archbishop in this way by interposing an authoritative argument.¹⁰

The text of the circular instructs that a “monumental sepulchre should be erected to keep the ashes of our illustrious predecessor in a dignified manner.”¹¹ In other words, Casanova was thinking of the impact of the work’s characteristics on its observers. At the same time, the circular contextualizes such a monument’s materiality: “Public monuments perpetuate in bronze or marble the memory of those who have exalted the people.”¹² Reference to these materials was commonplace in the nineteenth century; however, in the context of the circular, it can be understood as the expression of a precise will: The tomb of Archbishop Valdivieso was to be erected in marble and bronze, as indeed it was. A preferred location was also established: the last arch of the north aisle. But Casanova’s guidelines were not restricted to monumentality, materiality, and location. There seems to have been a certain artistic and architectural program from the outset, ideas that made it possible for Casanova to commission preliminary designs, referred to in the circular as “various plans that we have received from Rome.”¹³ These plans have not been preserved, but they must have been drawn up in accordance with Casanova’s instructions.

For review, all of Casanova’s instructions were given to a board, of which José Ramón Astorga, a priest who was a member of Santiago Cathedral’s Ecclesiastical Chapter and general vicar of the archdiocese, was appointed president.¹⁴ Astorga had participated in the opposition to Casanova’s nomination as archbishop. After the death of Valdivieso in 1878, the liberal government appointed Francisco de Paula Taforó as archbishop. The state of Chile was considered heir to the royal patronage of the Spanish monarchy, a legal status that allowed it, among other things, to appoint bishops. Almost all the priests close to the late Archbishop Valdivieso considered Taforó to be ignorant of theology, impious, and a friend of the liberals. In light of the negative reports coming from Chile, the Holy See never ratified him. After eight years of the seat’s vacancy and acute tensions, the government appointed the priest Mariano Casanova as the new archbishop, an appointment that was ratified by the Holy See. Nevertheless, Astorga and other priests considered the new archbishop to be unreliable.¹⁵ In this light, the construction of a monumental tomb for Valdivieso, along with the appointment of Astorga to the presidency of the board that directed the works, can be interpreted as a

gesture by Casanova aimed at rebuilding trust and closing a bitter chapter in the history of the Catholic Church in Chile.

The file of the extant documentation on the sepulchral monument cataloged in the Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de Santiago reveals a long silence of nearly six years between the circular's publication in 1887 and the first plans, dated 1893.¹⁶ It is very likely that this time was spent collecting funds, a process about which no written record is preserved. What is certain is that from 1893 onward, resources were available and steps were taken to commission the design and execution of the monument.

Progress of the Project and the Iconographic Program

The first plans for the new tomb as well as a document with technical instructions were commissioned from Eduardo Isenring, a German architect based in Chile.¹⁷ Both documents were intended to establish general guidelines on the basis of which more detailed proposals from other architects and artists would be requested (fig. 2). The plan legends and the text of the instructions were written in French, thus facilitating the search for European architects or artists to direct the work. The first design by Isenring differs greatly from what was ultimately executed, but it seems to contain a number of decisions that had an impact on the final work. First, he proposed to use the entire space of one of the chapels in the side aisles. Then, from an iconographic point of view, he introduced the idea of representing the allegories of Knowledge and Religion, and the sculpture of a lion—a funerary symbol with a long tradition—was incorporated. Other features of this first proposal were not carried out, such as the representations of the praying archbishop and the angel offering a laurel branch, or the particularly invasive idea of opening up the wall to build an apse to house the ensemble.

For the sculptures of Religion and Wisdom, the instructions state: “In the center, the archbishop in a praying attitude is accompanied by his virtues: on the left, religion, and on the right, human knowledge.”¹⁸ The aim was to represent the virtues that those who commissioned the monument wanted to emphasize as belonging to the deceased. Casanova, in his first pastoral letter, published in 1887, highlights the legacy of Archbishop Valdivieso. He refers to “his firm and wise hand,” as well as his authority, exercised from “the ascendancy of character and the superiority of knowledge.”¹⁹ But, as well as highlighting the attributes of the late archbishop, the completed sculptures seem to embody one of Monsignor Casanova's policies. In the same document he outlines a program to articulate human knowledge and religion, one of the premises of which is that “science is light and all light leads us to God.”²⁰ To this he adds the desire that all human progress “should be matured by the sun of faith.”²¹ The dialogue between science and religion was a central concern of the government of Casanova, the main manifestation of which was the foundation, in 1888, of the Universidad Católica de Chile (Catholic University). This harmony between human and divine knowledge was expressed in the iconographic program of the chapel of the archbishop's palace, whose works were under the direct supervision of Casanova. The paintings, created during



FIG. 2. — Eduardo Isenring (German, active in Chile, life dates unknown). Plan for “Monument sepulchral de Monseigneur l’archeveque D. Raphael Valentín Valdivieso,” 1893. Santiago, Chile, Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de Santiago. Image courtesy of the Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de Santiago.

the last decade of the nineteenth century, depict, among other themes, the figures of Science, Literature, Art, Religion, and Faith.²²

Input from a Chilean Painter and Diplomat via Paris

The next items in the archival file are the letters and correspondence between Astorga and Chilean politician, diplomat, and painter, Ramón Subercaseaux. Subercaseaux was living in Paris at the time, a circumstance that, together with his interest in artistic matters, made him the right person to take on the task of finding the artist for the sepulchral monument.²³ The letters refer to practical issues and contain interesting observations about the way in which such a commission was handled as well as reflections on its architectural and sculptural activity.²⁴

One of the issues raised in the correspondence is that of the direction of the work. For Astorga, whose views in this area were influenced by the archbishop's opinions, the overall conception and coordination of the work was to be entrusted to an architect. In one of the first letters he wrote to Subercaseaux, he pointed out that it would be desirable not to make any changes to Isenring's plan, given that "it is a very great advantage if the architect who drew up the plan is the one who carries out the work."²⁵ Astorga implied that what was expected of the European workshops was the manufacture of the components according to the specifications sent from Chile. Subercaseaux, on the other hand, held that "the sculptural part is so important that the artist who undertakes it cannot be forced to adhere rigorously to the lines specified."²⁶ He further proposed that the general conception of the monument be given to sculptor Justin-Chrysostome Sanson: "In the event of his [Sanson's] proposal being accepted, the detailed plans would be drawn, in agreement with him, by M. Nenot," a French architect.²⁷ As such, the Chilean diplomat conceived that the work should be designed and executed by a sculptor. As was customary in the nineteenth century, architectural works were subordinate to sculptural ones.²⁸ Astorga's stance could likely be explained by the usual practice of commissioning an architect for altars. In a letter at the end of 1893, Astorga pointed out to Subercaseaux that the French sculptor ultimately hired would not be "obliged to submit to the lines drawn on the plan," recognizing a degree of freedom but not acquiescing that the sculptor could undertake the direction of the creation of the the monument.²⁹

A second aspect discussed in their epistolary exchange is the decision about where in Europe the monument should be produced. Both agreed that in order to ensure good-quality marble work it was necessary to commission the work in Paris. While Astorga points out, "At present better works in marble are done in France than in Italy," Subercaseaux adds that the execution of the works in Paris would not imply an increase in costs, since "what is cheap in Italy is the cheap stuff."³⁰ Both considered that Italy had lost its status as a supplier of high-quality artistic works, including marble work. Astorga complemented the conversation on this matter by adding that the possibility of the cathedral undergoing a complete artistic renovation, which would indeed happen a few years later, was an additional reason for not commissioning "a shoddy work sent to Switzerland or Italy."³¹ However, Sanson himself recommended to Subercaseaux that the architectural part be executed in the city of Carrara in order to reduce costs.³²

A final interesting point is Astorga's concern about the resemblance that the sculpture of Archbishop Valdivieso should bear to his real appearance—a particularly sensitive matter considering that many of those who knew him could judge how well the sculpture resembled the man. In a letter sent to Subercaseaux in August 1893, Astorga gave an account of the precautions he had taken to resolve this point. "In addition to the photographs I can send, I have a plaster death mask of Sr. Valdivieso's face taken from his corpse shortly after his death and which is exactly as we knew it. The only defect is that his eyes are closed."³³ It was common practice during the second half of the nineteenth century to give photographs to painters or sculptors who were to

make a portrait of the deceased. The making of death masks, for its part, had gained particular popularity during the nineteenth century as another means, complementary to photography, of remembering the departed.³⁴ In this case, those in charge of the monument showed a special concern for preserving Valdivieso's likeness.

At the end of 1893 it seemed clear that the decision would be to award the commission for the sepulchral monument to the sculptor Sanson and the architect Henri-Paul Nenot. However, in January 1894, Isenring and Chilean sculptor Virginio Arias proposed to take charge of the work, for which they would make a sketch that would later be used to commission its execution in Paris. The work was attractive to both of them as a project with available funding and a very high profile. Isenring's long association with the initiative, together with Arias's prestige, supported the reception of the proposal.³⁵ Arias had won prizes at the Paris salons and had carried out outstanding projects in Chile.³⁶ Astorga immediately wrote to Subercaseaux, informing him of the offer that the two had made. The board, faced with equivalent offers, preferred "the sculptor Arias for two reasons: 1, because he is Chilean and it is natural that he should wish to be accredited in his country, doing work of merit; 2, because, according to what he has discussed with me, he accepts to be paid here in Chilean currency."³⁷ Payment in local currency made it possible to avoid exchange-rate losses. Subercaseaux endorsed the board's decision, believing that "the choice of the sculptor Arias was the right one, as he is undoubtedly a talented artist," expressing, however, his annoyance at the inappropriateness of the change: "What I regret is that they didn't decide this earlier, so as to save the artists from doing useless work."³⁸ In the end, the negotiations with Arias were not successful for financial reasons, as Astorga explains in a letter of June 1895.³⁹ During that year, the exchange rate became favorable to the Chilean currency, and the decision was made to give a final push to the project. Astorga insists to Subercaseaux that he should trust in Isenring's judgment to direct the work, and announces the sending of a bill of exchange in his name for the sum of seventy thousand francs. Subercaseaux's response to the board's insistence is not preserved in the archive, but subsequent events seem to indicate that Subercaseaux did not continue to collaborate on the monument. The circumstances likely reflect local tensions about how to promote artistic development in Chile.⁴⁰

The Final Contract

In April 1896 the junta sent Casanova a plan of the sepulchral monument drawn up by Emilio Doyère, a French architect living in Chile. In the letter attached to the designs, the junta stated that it would "gladly see this monument executed in accordance with the said plan."⁴¹ There is no record of the reasons why Isenring was removed from the project, even though he had been involved in its development for years. Doyère, for his part, collaborated in various works of the archbishopric and was in close contact with Casanova. Among other responsibilities, he oversaw the interior ornamentation of the *Basílica del Salvador*.⁴² On 11 May 1896 a contract was signed between Doyère and the

Arzobispado de Santiago (Archbishopric of Santiago) to regulate the execution of the sepulchral monument.⁴³ Although the plans for the monument are not preserved, it is clear that the contract refers to the sepulcher that was actually built. The work involved the coordination of specialists in marble, sculpture, stained glass, and mosaics.

Doyère had trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and had participated in the restoration of the Cathédrale Sainte-Marie de Bayonne (Bayonne Cathedral) in France.⁴⁴ He arrived in Chile in 1890, joining the Escuela de Arquitectura (School of Architecture) at the Universidad de Chile.⁴⁵ The French architect's project for the sepulchral monument retained some of the elements designed by Isenring, such as the large round arch enclosing the monument, the representation of the lion, and the presence of the sculptures of *Faith* and *Science*. However, the architectural concept and the sculptural proposal were significantly different. Doyère's imprint can be seen in four decisive features. The first is the removal of the apse, an intervention that would have involved knocking down part of the stone wall. He then structured the work around a large round arch containing a second arch with the main iconography and two niches to contain the complementary sculptures of *Faith* and *Science* (see fig. 1). This solution forms a simulated building that frames and contains the repertoire of images, subordinating the various elements to the architecture. A third feature is the use of different techniques and materials, transforming the work through the presence of marble, bronze, stained glass, and mosaic into a veritable showcase of visual languages. The monument can be seen as a letter of introduction to the ornamentalist architect Doyère. It should be noted that he was also interested in taking charge of the general transformation of the cathedral, a job that was finally entrusted to Ignazio Cemonesi.

Doyère's input is also reflected in the chromatic richness obtained by the incorporation of stained glass and mosaic, as well as by the use of marble of different colors and veins. Nineteenth-century funerary monuments were usually made of white or gray marble.⁴⁶ However, examples of chromaticism can be found in the funerary field, in some French episcopal tombs of the nineteenth century, through both the use of different marbles and the incorporation of other elements, such as bronze applications. Some examples are the tombs of the archbishops of Paris Jean-Baptiste du Belloy and Hyacinthe-Louis de Quélen, the former erected in 1818 by Louis-Pierre Deseine and the latter in 1852 by Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume.⁴⁷

The Splendor of the Marbles

The choice of marble, described in detail in the contract, merits a close look.⁴⁸ The great arch and the pilasters supporting it are made of breccia marble in their centers and Rosso Levanto (often marketed at the time as Polcevera) marble at their edges, with large rosettes of green and ocher marbles spaced within. The inner arch is done in paonazzo marble, and the niches in veined Carrara. The three sculptures are in white Carrara, while the coffin is in portoro. The base of the monument is in flowered bardiglio, with black marble from Belgium used for the inscriptions and portoro for the



FIG. 3. — Detail of the marble of the outer arch of the sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, 1898. Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 12 December 2025.

base molding (fig. 3). This is an extensive repertoire that adds color and grandeur to the work. The diversity of marble links the tomb to the most prestigious monuments of Roman antiquity as well as to the wealth of materials of the Heavenly Jerusalem as described in the Revelation of Saint John.⁴⁹ It is quite likely that the desire to produce a lavish work stemmed from Doyère. All the marbles had to be transported from Europe to Chile, and some of them, such as portoro and Polcevera, were scarce and expensive. The appreciation of marble had begun to take root in Chile during the eighteenth century with the new production of ecclesiastical furniture in high-quality imitation marble.⁵⁰ During the nineteenth century, the import of marble elements for churches gradually increased.⁵¹ In this trajectory, the marble splendor achieved with the funerary monument can be seen as the crowning achievement of a long sequence of events.

The management of the marbles was entrusted to the Sociedad Juan Ceppi y Hermano (Juan Ceppi and Brother) (fig. 4). In the last decades of the nineteenth century, Juan Ceppi y Hermano's marble factory had a workshop in Santiago, about two hundred hired workers, and a network of contacts in Italy that afforded it a privileged position in the production and sale of the material in Chile. The company was the continuation of a workshop initially set up by Benedetto Rossetti, the uncle of the Ceppi brothers, in Santiago in the middle of the century.⁵² Importing companies such as Juan Ceppi y

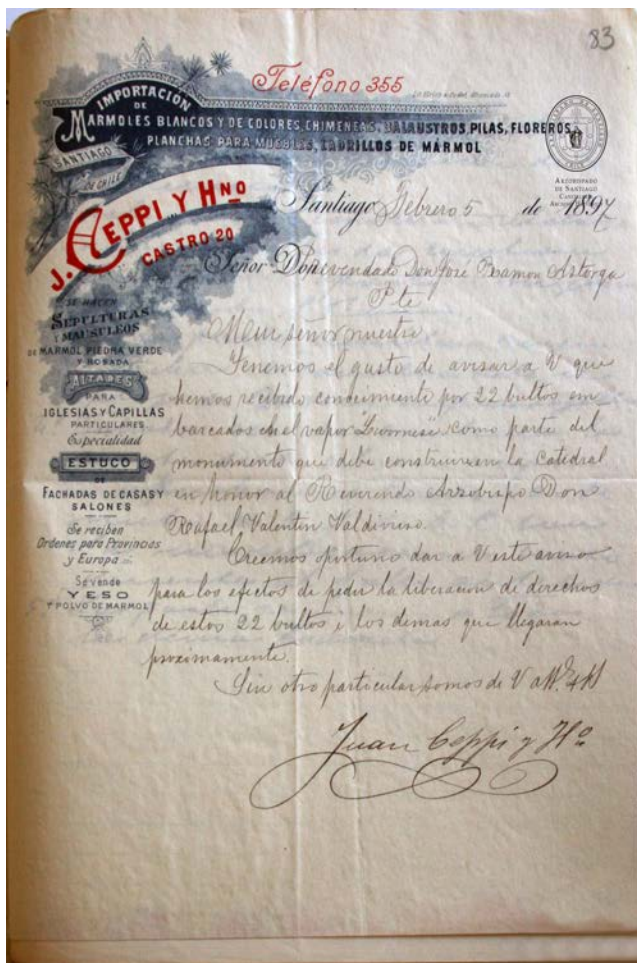


FIG. 4. — Invoice from Juan Ceppi y Hermano, 5 February 1897. Santiago, Chile, Archivo del Arzobispado de Santiago. Image courtesy of the Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de Santiago.

Hermano prospered due to the scarce and intermittent extraction of marble locally. The Ceppi marble factory, represented by Giacomo Ceppi, appeared at the signing of the contract on 11 May with the Arzobispado.⁵³ In practice, Doyère and the Ceppi company were jointly responsible for the correct execution of the works. The marble company not only executed a central part of the funerary monument but also provided its financial guarantee and its networks to manage the elements that would be commissioned from other workshops, such as the stained glass, the mosaics, and the sculptural works.

Enrico Butti's Sculptures

One of the aspects on which Juan Ceppi y Hermano had a decisive influence was the decision to entrust Enrico Butti with the sculptural works. Butti was born in 1847 in the Lombard town of Viggiù, known for its stone quarries. He was a student and, later, teacher at the Accademia di Brera (Brera Academy) in Milan. His work of 1887,

Il Minatore (The miner), a plaster project for a sepulchral monument in Montevideo, Uruguay, cast in bronze a few years later and exhibited at the Paris Exposition Universelle, solidified the fame of the Lombard sculptor.⁵⁴ The contract for the tomb of Valdivieso mentions as one of Butti's masterpieces the *Cristo crocifisso* (Christ crucified), completed in 1894, the plaster model for which is kept in the Musei Civici Viggiutesi in Lombardy and the two bronze versions in the Cimitero Vecchio di Viggiù (Old Cemetery of Viggiù) and the Cimitero Monumentale di Milano (Monumental Cemetery of Milan). In light of these works, the choice of Butti seems quite natural, as he was a sculptor who was well known at the end of the nineteenth century and who had specialized in funerary works. In addition, the Ceppi family's home village, Morbio Superiore in Switzerland, is just over twelve kilometers from Viggiù and less than sixty kilometers from Milan. The elder brother, Pietro, had moved to Chile in 1896, the same year of the contract's signing.⁵⁵ It seems reasonable that the Ceppi Rossettis maintained links with Viggiù and Milan, and the mention in the contract of the *Cristo crocifisso* shows that someone in Chile was closely following the sculptor's career. This connection with the Italian art scene was already preceded by important milestones, such as the arrival of the Neapolitan painter Ciccarelli in 1848 and the acquisition of Roman religious paintings and sculptures for churches in Santiago since the mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁶ The commission awarded to Butti was not an isolated event.

In the completed sculptures, *Science* and *Faith* are represented by standing female figures looking and pointing upward. *Science* holds an open book faced outward in her hand at waist level, while *Faith* carries, at the same height, a closed book showing a chalice and a host on its cover (figs. 5, 6). At the center of the monument, the archbishop is shown wearing an alb and a pluvial cloak as well as the miter and crosier, the distinctive signs of his episcopal status (fig. 7). His recumbent posture, common in many funerary sculptures, eloquently expresses that he has reached eternal rest. Below him, a reclining bronze lion gazes at the viewer who stops in front of the monument (fig. 8). The lion has a long tradition in the iconography of death, but in this case seems to embody the virtue of fortitude.⁵⁷ The decisiveness with which Valdivieso confronted tensions with the state and the internal ecclesiastical crises during his episcopacy would have made him worthy of this symbolic relationship with the lion. It is worth mentioning that during the nineteenth century, the figure of the lion was rejected in Latin America due to its symbolic link with Spain.⁵⁸ However, a decade after Valdivieso's tomb was completed, two public monuments bearing the image of the lion were erected to mark the centenary of Chilean independence.⁵⁹ There is no evidence that this iconography in the tomb caused any controversy; therefore, it is likely that the lion was interpreted as a funerary and symbolic reference.



FIG. 5. — Enrico Butti (Italian, 1847–1932). *Science*, ca. 1895, Carrara marble, 220 × 90 × 55 cm. From the sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral, 1898. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 27 July 2024.



FIG. 6. — Enrico Butti (Italian, 1847–1932). *Faith* (detail), ca. 1895, Carrara marble, 220 × 55 × 60 cm. From the sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral, 1898. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 27 July 2024.



FIG. 7. — Enrico Butti (Italian, 1847–1932). *Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso Recumbent* (detail), ca. 1895, Carrara marble, 120 × 55 × 87 cm. From the sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral, 1898. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 27 July 2024.



FIG. 8. — Enrico Butti (Italian, 1847–1932). *Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso Recumbent with Lion Below*, ca. 1895, Carrara marble, 120 × 55 × 87 cm. From the sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral, 1898. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 12 December 2025.



FIG. 9. — Detail of mosaic drapery by an unknown Florentine workshop behind Enrico Butti's marble sculpture of recumbent Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, ca. 1895. Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 12 December 2025.

The Florentine Mosaics

Another of the decisions recorded in the contract was to cover the panels of the back, sides, and ceilings of the monument with mosaics. The contract specifies that the plans contain the chosen ornamental forms, which will be executed “by giving them the appropriate colors on a gold background.”⁶⁰ The contract stipulates that the mosaics are to be made “in the House of Florence where they are specialists in this branch of art.”⁶¹ It is difficult to know if this refers to a specific workshop or whether it is just a generic reference to ensure that the work was made by Florentine craftspeople. The *Opificio delle Pietre Dure*, a grand ducal workshop for inlaid stonework founded by the Medici family in the sixteenth century, was a state institution of recognized prestige that could have been approached for the work. However, it is important to note that during the second half of the nineteenth century, numerous private mosaic workshops were newly established in Florence, some of them with sales branches in London, Paris, or New York. What is certain is that Doyère, with the intermediation of the Ceppi family, selected the specialists who would produce these ornamental panels in a city where the art of mosaic was flourishing at the time.⁶² The shapes and colors provided by the mosaics emphasize the architectural forms of the monument and highlight the sculptures, particularly the recumbent archbishop, whose white marble figure contrasts with the red, blue, and gold mosaic materials that were inlaid to simulate fine drapery (fig. 9).

The Symbolic and Aesthetic Keys of the Stained-Glass Window

At the center of the monument's colorful marbles and mosaics is the stained-glass window. The incorporation of stained glass in funerary buildings was a common practice; an early case in Chile can be found in the mausoleum of Francisco Garín in the Cementerio General (General Cemetery) of Santiago, whose stained-glass windows were made in Paris in 1871.⁶³ The contract for the tomb of Valdivieso specifies that the stained glass was to be made in the "workshops of Mayer in Munich" based on a design exclusively for this work.⁶⁴ Shortly before work began on the sepulchral monument, the Iglesia de San Pedro de Alcántara (Church of San Pedro de Alcántara) on Mac Iver street, built by Doyère between 1890 and 1896, received a set of stained-glass windows from the workshops founded by Joseph Gabriel Mayer (1808–83).⁶⁵ The French architect had experience with incorporating this type of element into an architectural project as well as the corresponding contacts with the Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt (Mayer's Court Art Institute, or Franz Mayer Company). The choice of the German workshops was not coincidental; the Bavarian house had begun producing stained glass and mosaics in 1847, and by the end of the century, it enjoyed solid prestige and sold work globally.⁶⁶ From a stylistic point of view, most of the leading stained-glass artists of the second half of the nineteenth century were academically trained, so they conceived their work in glass as monumental paintings.⁶⁷

The sketch for the stained glass of the tomb monument of Valdivieso is preserved in the archives of the Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt in Munich.⁶⁸ The sketch shows the pictorial concept of the work, onto which is added the grid that would have allowed the image to be transferred from paper to glass (fig. 10). This project must have been directed by Franz Borgias Mayer (1848–1926), the founder's son, who had received his training in England. Most of the stained-glass windows produced in Germany during the last quarter of the nineteenth century are linked to the aesthetics of the Nazarenes, an early nineteenth-century group of German Romantic painters who emphasized Christian themes and medieval styles; the works of the Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt were no exception.⁶⁹ The stained-glass window made for Santiago Cathedral shares the pictorial eclecticism of this group of artists. The saturation of its colors, the play of light and shadow, and the majestic character of the figure of Christ echo the postulates of the Nazarenes.⁷⁰

The stained-glass window made in Munich contains a central depiction of Christ in Majesty surrounded by angels (fig. 11). He is giving a blessing with his right hand; in the other, he is holding a book in which alpha and omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, are inscribed. Above his head is the figure of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. At the foot of the theophany are Saint Peter's Basilica and Bernini's Colonnade in stained glass. This monumental, translucent image is meant to be read in relation to the recumbent figure of the archbishop below it (see fig. 8). The ecclesiological message is clear: The vertical axis links Valdivieso to the pope, and the pope to Christ. The image alludes to Valdivieso's time as archbishop, during which historical circumstances and his own convictions led him to emphasize the link with Rome.⁷¹ At the same time, this



FIG. 10. — Workshop of the Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt (German). Sketch for the stained-glass window of the sepulchral monument for Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, ca. 1895, watercolor on paper, 13,5 × 27,5. Photograph courtesy Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt, Munich. Image may not be used in any form without the written consent of Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt GmbH/Mayer of Munich. The photograph is protected by copyright, and commercial use for reconstructions or restorations of historic windows is not permitted without the prior written consent of the rights holders.

iconography is in harmony with the views of Casanova expressed in the pastoral letter that he published on the day of his consecration.⁷²



FIG. 11. — Workshop of the Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt (German). *The Holy Spirit and Christ over Saint Peter's Basilica*, ca. 1895, stained glass, 400 × 202 cm. From the sepulchral monument for the late Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso, Santiago, Chile, Santiago Cathedral, 1898. Photograph by Ulises Nilo, 27 July 2024.

Valdivieso's Burial and the Reception of the Monument

While work on the monument was in progress, a committee was appointed to exhume the remains of Archbishop Valdivieso. On 23 July 1897 the coffin was removed from the side altar dedicated to Saint John the Evangelist in Santiago Cathedral and placed in one of the rooms off the courtyard. The metal coffin was immediately opened so that the committee could examine its contents. The minutes from that gathering record the state of the archbishop's remains upon inspection: "His features, although disfigured by death and time, proved to be the remains of the Most Illustrious Prelate."⁷³ The coffin remained in this provisional location for ten months, until the inauguration of the monument and the transfer of the remains on 23 May 1898.

In 1904 conservative politician Rafael Errázuriz Urmeneta published an article in the *Revista católica* (Catholic journal) titled "Monumento sepulcral del Ilmo. Y Rmo. Sr. Valdivieso" (Tomb of the Illustrious and Most Reverend Mr. Valdivieso). The text was part of a dossier to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the late archbishop. Errázuriz Urmeneta provided historical background for the mausoleum and offered aesthetic judgments on its final presentation. He is emphatic in highlighting

the excellence of the marble, the Florentine mosaics, and the Bavarian stained glass as well as the sculptures.

Toward the end of his article, Errázuriz points out that it is an ensemble “in which sculpture and architecture compete in rich profusion, or rather, combine in pleasant harmony, bringing out each other’s beauty.”⁷⁴ Delicately, he expresses concern about a certain excess in the combination of elements, noting that, in the monument, “more than the art itself, the dazzling effect of its materials” predominates.⁷⁵ For Errázuriz, the quality of the execution is exquisite, but the result is too heterogeneous and saturated. He goes on to explain that the configuration of the sepulcher departs from classical moderation due to the taste of its authors, citing the interest of the commissioners in “erecting a monument that would stand out above all for its luxury, brilliance and richness.”⁷⁶ His analysis goes on to emphasize the architectural rather than sculptural character of the ensemble, endorsing the same tension between sculpture and architecture disclosed by the correspondence between Subercaseaux and Astorga. As a result of the monument’s architecture, it is impossible to appreciate the quality of the recumbent archbishop’s sculptural representation due to the height at which it was placed. Errázuriz’s text ends with a brief testimony about his personal contact with Valdivieso. Of his character and way of life, Errázuriz emphasizes his extreme sobriety, in the last lines highlighting the evident contrast between “such a splendid burial” and the “extraordinary humility of his character and soul,”⁷⁷ evoking for his reader the inconsistency between the buried man and his mausoleum.

Final Considerations

A first argument emerges clearly from the reflection on this documentation, which is that the tomb of Archbishop Valdivieso was a means used by his successor to solve ecclesiastical problems and to emphasize his own doctrinal views. It allowed Casanova to rebuild trust with the priests close to the late prelate who were suspicious of his arrival at the helm of the diocese. The monument itself contained two central elements of Casanova’s discourse: on the one hand, the harmony between rational knowledge and religious faith; on the other, the need for the local Catholic Church to cultivate a strong link with Rome.

Another dimension that emerges from the analysis of the documentation on the tomb’s conception is the consistency of the discussion about the processes of artistic creation and the nature of aesthetic quality. A significant throughline is the difficulty in establishing whether architecture should be subordinate to sculpture or vice versa. This difficulty is reflected in the tenor and content of the correspondence around various monument designs. Other themes that arise are artistic freedom, the expected character of a funerary monument, and the need for sumptuous materials.

Finally, the process described above shows the global reach of the commission. The available documentation reveals that those involved in Chile perceived Europe as an artistic emporium in which it was possible to choose from a wide repertoire of technical

specialities from every region of the continent. At the same time, the commissioners considered the participation of architects and sculptors who were active in Chile to be necessary for the viability of the project. In this way, the sepulchral monument could be a work in which local skills and the choice talents of Europe were brought together to honor the late archbishop.

Fernando Guzmán is professor of Chilean art at the Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Santiago, Chile.

Notes

This work is a result of the Agencia Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo (ANID) Fondecyt 1230525 research project. Unless otherwise noted, translations from the Spanish and the French are by the present author.

1. Rodolfo Vergara Antúnez, *Vida i obras del ilustrísimo y reverendísimo señor doctor don Rafael Valentín Valdivieso*, vol. 2 (Imprenta Nacional, 1906), 339; Víctor Barahona, "Las tumbas de la Catedral de Santiago de Chile," *Boletín de la Academia Chilena de la Historia* 12, no. 32 (1945): 69–78; and Alejandro Huneeus, *La catedral de la arquidiócesis de Santiago de Chile: Sus principales objetos sagrados y recuerdos* (Imprenta San José, 1968), 12.

2. Marcela Drien, "Júzguese por las copias: El conocimiento y circulación de la pintura europea en Chile," *Imagem: Revista de História da Arte* 1, no. 1 (2022): 361–80; Marcela Drien and Katherine Vyhmeister, "The 1875 Palacio de la Exposición in Santiago: A Cosmopolitan Arena for Positioning the Nation," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 43, no. 1 (2021): 97–116; Juan Manuel Martínez, "Francisco Javier Mandiola y la construcción de relato visual en el sistema de las artes en Chile," in *Monvoisin en América*, ed. Gloria Cortés and Jaime Cuevas (Subdirección de Patrimonio, 2023), 56; Fernando Guzmán et al., "Roma y la renovación de la imagen y el espacio sacro en Chile durante el siglo XIX," *Historia* 54, no. 2 (2021): 585–617; and Amari Peliowski, "Arquitectura, civilización y barbarie: Brunet Debaines como comentador social a mediados del siglo XIX en Chile," *Revista* 180, no. 42 (2018): 76–87.

3. Josefina de la Maza, "Sobre la fundación de la Academia de Pintura, estudio introductorio," in *La inauguración de la Academia* (Ediciones Universidad Alberto Hurtado, 2013), 11–12.

4. María Angélica del Piano, "Dos arzobispos creativos que perduran en la historia," in *Iconografía, identidad nacional y cambio de siglo (XIX–XX)*, ed. Gloria Cortés et al. (Ril, 2003), 63–75.

5. Fernando Guzmán, *De la madera al mármol: Arte religioso en Chile, siglos XVIII y XIX* (Silvana, 2023), 79–99.

6. On the role of public sculptures in nation building in Chile, see Gloria Cortés, "Monumento al roto . . . piojento: La construcción oligárquica de la identidad nacional en Chile," *Arbor: Ciencia, pensamiento y cultura* 185, no. 740 (2009): 1231–41; Pedro Zamorano, "Escultura en Hispanoamérica durante el siglo XIX: El caso chileno," *Archivo Español de Arte* 84, no. 333 (2011): 25–40; and Liisa Flora Voionmaa Tanner, *Escultura pública: Del monumento conmemorativo a la escultura urbana; Santiago 1792–2004*, vol. 1 (Ocho Libros, 2004), 128–55.

7. Mariano Casanova, *Circular sobre la necesidad de erijir en la Iglesia Metropolitana un monumento sepulcral en honor del Illmo. I Rmo. Señor Dr. D. Rafael Valentín Valdivieso* (Santiago, 1887), 4. Translations from this source are by Fernando Guzmán and Sylvia Glover.

8. Enrique Laval, "El cólera en Chile (1886–1888)," *Revista chilena de infectología* 20 (2003): 86–88.

9. Casanova, *Circular sobre la necesidad de erijir* [. . .] *un monumento sepulcral*, 5.

10. Casanova had seen the tombs during a trip to Europe when he was a priest in his early thirties. Julio Retamal Avila, *Monseñor Mariano Casanova Casanova 1886–1908, tercer arzobispo de Santiago* (Editorial Salesiana, 1981), 12.

11. Casanova, *Circular sobre la necesidad de erijir* [. . .] *un monumento sepulcral*, 6.

12. Casanova, *Circular sobre la necesidad de erijir* [. . .] *un monumento sepulcral*, 4.

13. Casanova, *Circular sobre la necesidad de erijir* [. . .] *un monumento sepulcral*, 7.

14. Ignacio Ducasse, *Servidores del Evangelio: Los obispos de Chile 1561–2007* (Conferencia Episcopal de Chile, 2008), 90–91.

15. Crescente Errázuriz, *Algo de lo que he visto* (Editorial Nascimento, 1934), 371–81.

16. Santiago, Chile, Archivo Histórico Arzobispado de Santiago (AHAS), Monseñor Valdivieso, Monumento sepulcral, 1887–1899, legajo 59, expediente 28. Hereafter Monumento sepulcral. All AHAS documents cited below are part of this archival file; most of the documents are numbered.

17. “Instructions pour la demande d’adjudication du monument, Santiago du Chili, Août 1893,” 7–12, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral. See also Carlos Silva Vildósola, *Retratos y recuerdos* (Editorial Zig-Zag, 1936), 108.

18. “Instructions pour la demande,” 11.

19. Mariano Casanova, *Pastoral del Illmo. Y Rvmo. Señor arzobispo don Mariano Casanova en el día de su consagración episcopal* (Santiago, 1887) 4, 5.

20. Casanova, *Pastoral* [. . .] *en el día de su consagración episcopal*, 10.

21. Casanova, *Pastoral* [. . .] *en el día de su consagración episcopal*, 11.

22. Macarena Ibarra, “Palacio arzobispal: El edificio, el conjunto y la ciudad,” in *Ofrenda y gracia: Proyecto de conservación y restauración capilla sede arzobispal*, ed. Cecilia Beas and Elena Losón (Arzobispado de Santiago, 2013), 43; and Daniela Lara, “Análisis iconográfico de las imágenes,” in Beas and Losón, *Ofrenda y gracia*, 73–84.

23. Ramón Subercaseaux, *Memorias de 50 años* (Imprenta y Litografía Barcelona, 1908), 433–531.

24. For reflection on art in Chile, see Pedro Zamorano et al., “Jose Miguel Blanco: Escritos de bellas artes,” *Alpha*, no. 37 (2012): 149–62.

25. José Ramón Astorga, letter to Ramón Subercaseaux, 10 August 1893, 15, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

26. Subercaseaux, letter to Astorga, 14 September 1893, 17, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

27. Subercaseaux, letter to Astorga, 28 September 1893, 19v, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

28. Rodrigo Gutiérrez Viñuales, *Monumento conmemorativo y espacio público en Iberoamérica* (Cátedra, 2004), 36–66; and María José Redondo Cantera, “Aproximación a la escultura funeraria española del siglo XIX,” in *El arte del siglo XIX: II Congreso Nacional de Historia del Arte*, vol. 1 (Comité Español de Historia del Arte, 1978), 121–24.

29. Astorga, letter to Subercaseaux, 13 November 1893, 22v, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

30. Astorga, letter to Subercaseaux, 10 August 1893, 15v, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral; and Subercaseaux, letter to Astorga, 14 September 1893, 18, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

31. Subercaseaux, letter to Astorga, 28 September 1893, 20, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

32. Subercaseaux, letter to Astorga, 28 September 1893, 19, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

33. Astorga, letter to Subercaseaux, 10 August 1893, 15v, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

34. Gorka López, “Una genealogía de la máscara mortuoria: Tiempo, imagen, presencia” (PhD. diss., Universidad de Barcelona, 2016), 237–50.

35. Zamorano, “Escultura en Hispanoamérica durante el siglo XIX,” 32–33.

36. Enrique Solanich, *Escultura en Chile: Otra mirada para su estudio* (Ril, 2017), 31–32.

37. Astorga, letter to Subercaseaux, 26 January 1894, 26v, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

38. Subercaseaux, letter to Astorga, 25 March 1894, 28, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

39. Astorga, official letter to Subercaseaux, 28 June 1895, 33, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

40. Josefina de la Maza, “Por un arte nacional: Pintura y esfera pública en el siglo XIX chileno,” in *Ciencia-Mundo: Orden republicano, arte y nación en América*, ed. Rafael Sagredo (Editorial Universitaria, 2010), 304–6; and Josefina de la Maza and Sandra Accatino, “De espacios marginales y obras en tránsito: Una lectura de interior del Louvre de Alfredo Valenzuela Puelma,” *Intus-Legere Historia* 16, no. 2 (2021): 393–96.

41. Junta, official letter to Mariano Casanova, 14 April 1896, 39, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

42. Emilio Doyère, letter to Mariano Casanova, undated (probably mid 1890), AHAS, Fondo de Gobierno, vol 164.

43. “Contrato de construcción,” 11 May 1896, AHAS, Monumento sepulcral.

44. Mirtha Pallares, “La arquitectura religiosa en Santiago de Chile 1850–1950: Razones de las reminiscencias góticas” (PhD. diss., Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, 2015), 136.

45. María Paz Valenzuela, “La enseñanza de la arquitectura en Chile,” *Revista de arquitectura* 20, no. 29 (2014): 54–55.

46. Giovanna Capitelli, *Mecenatismo pontificio e borbónico alla vigilia dell’Unità* (Viviana, 2011), 50–51, 80–81.

47. Michael Camille, *The Gargoyles of Notre-Dame: Medievalism and the Monsters of Modernity* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), 53–56; Isabelle Saint Martin, *Art chrétien/Art sacré: Regards du catholicism sur l'art; France, XIXe–XXe siècle* (Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014), 73; Michael Preston Worley, *Pierre Julien: Sculptor to Queen Marie-Antoinette* (iUniverse, 2021), 124; Anne Marie de Lapparent, *Louis-Pierre Deseine* (CTHS, 2013); and Ronit Milano, *The Portrait Bust and French Cultural Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (Brill, 2015), 154, 175–78.
48. “Contrato de construcción,” 66–67.
49. Fabio Barry, *Painting in Stone: Architecture and the Poetics of Marble from Antiquity to the Enlightenment* (Yale University Press, 2020), 289–301.
50. Guzmán, *De la madera al mármol*, 21–57.
51. Guzmán, *De la madera al mármol*, 79–99.
52. Enrique Ceppi de Lecco Lazo, *Cuatro constructores suizos en Chile: Los hermanos Ceppi Rossetti (1852–1942)* (pub. by author, 2021), 73–90.
53. “Contrato de construcción,” 70v.
54. Cristina Casero, “Viggiù terra di scultori: Enrico Butti e altre personalità di rilievo nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento,” in *Storia dell'arte a Varese e nel suo territorio*, ed. Maria Luisa Gatti Perer, vol. 2 (Insubria University Press, 2011), 387. The later marble version, dated 1910, is in the tomb of Juan Nicola in the Cementerio Central (Central Cemetery) of Montevideo. A bronze copy is kept in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Milano. The original plaster model is kept in the Musei Civici Viggiutesi in Viggiù, Italy.
55. Ceppi de Lecco Lazo, *Cuatro constructores suizos en Chile*, 68.
56. Capitelli, *Mecenatismo pontificio e borbónico*, 158–74.
57. Francisco de Asís García García, “El león,” *Revista digital de iconografía medieval* 1, no. 2 (2009): 36.
58. Ramón Gutiérrez and Rodrigo Gutiérrez Viñuales, *América y España, imágenes para una historia: Independencias e identidad (1805–1925)* (Fundació MAPFRE, 2006), 15, 98–99.
59. Voionmaa Tanner, *Escultura pública*, 154–55.
60. “Contrato de construcción,” 66v.
61. “Contrato de construcción,” 66v.
62. Fabio Bertelli and Federica Galora, “I privati produttori di mosaico fiorentino nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento e i loro rapporti con l'Opificio delle Pietre Dure,” *OPD Restauro*, no. 18 (2006): 320–36.
63. Patricio Díaz Silva, *Vitrales en Santiago de Chile: Obras conservadas en iglesias y edificios civiles* (Ocho Libros, 2007), 40.
64. “Contrato de construcción,” 68.
65. Mirtha Pallarés Torres, *Templos católicos neogóticos* (Editorial Universitaria, 2018), 120–23; and Díaz Silva, *Vitrales en Santiago de Chile*, 140–47.
66. Bernhard Graf, “History,” in *Franz Mayer of Munich: Architecture, Glass, Art*, ed. Gabriel Mayer (Hirmer, 2013), 8–12; and Jasmine M. Allen, “Stained Glassworlds: Stained Glass at the International Exhibitions 1851–1900” (PhD diss., York University, 2013), 159.
67. Allen, *Stained Glassworlds*, 75.
68. Andrea Nilo and Elizabeth Stephens, “Puesta en valor del Monumento Sepulcral Monseñor Rafael Valentín Valdivieso,” in *XX Encuentro Iberoamericano de Valorización y Gestión de Cementerios Patrimoniales*, ed. Francisco José Rodríguez Marín (Universidad de Málaga, 2019), 19. Much of the historical documentation of the Mayer'sche Hofkunstanstalt in Munich was destroyed during the Second World War. This particular sketch is preserved in *Skizzenbuch II* within the institution's archival collection.
69. Shirley Ann Brown, “The Influence of German Religious Stained Glass in Canada 1880–1941,” *RACAR* 21, nos. 1–2 (1994): 23.
70. Similar characteristics can be seen in the paintings *Die klugen und die törichten Jungfrauen* (The parable of the wise and foolish virgins; 1813–16) by Peter von Cornelius and *Der Ostermorgen* (Easter morning; 1818) by Johann Frederick Overbeck.
71. Sol Serrano, *¿Qué hacer con Dios en la República? Política y secularización en Chile (1845–1885)* (Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008), 192–99.
72. Casanova, *Pastoral* [...] *en el día de su consagración episcopal*, 9.
73. “Traslación de los restos del señor arzobispo Valdivieso,” *Boletín Eclesiástico*, no. 13 (1895–97): 771.
74. Rafael Errázuriz Urmeneta, “Monumento sepulcral del Ilmo. Y Rmo. Sr. Valdivieso,” *Revista católica* 7, no. 79 (1904): 457.
75. Errázuriz Urmeneta, “Monumento sepulcral,” 457.
76. Errázuriz Urmeneta, “Monumento sepulcral,” 458.
77. Errázuriz Urmeneta, “Monumento sepulcral,” 461.