

WOMEN AND TRADE IN THE INDIES

This month, the General Archive of the Indies highlights the story of two women who were involved in trade in the city of Seville between the 16th and 17th centuries. Although there were women who played a leading role in shipping to the Americas, they have often been overlooked in general trade studies.

Thanks to the documentation preserved in the General Archive of the Indies, we know that many of them played a leading role in their respective family business. Two women linked to trade with America stand out, specifically in the field of printing and the marketing of books. They are: Brígida Maldonado and Ana Vernegali. The former, who came from a family of printers, kept the family business after she was widowed. The second, who worked as a loader for the Casa de la Contratación (House of Trade), became the owner of half a ship¹.

These two cases serve to exemplify the silenced, but not to say inactive, role of women in the social, cultural and commercial spheres of the past.

Want to learn more?



¹ Vessel registry: "Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria" ("Our Lady of Candelaria"), 1603. Facsimile. AGI,CONTRATACION,1142,N.10