



**Artistic Commerce and Confrontation in the Early Modern
Portuguese and Spanish Empires**

06. - 07.12.2012, Kunsthistorisches Institut der Universität Zürich

Abstracts

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Prof Dr. Luisa Elena Alcalá, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Shaping Hispanic Taste: the Jesuits as Global Agents Connecting Europe and America

The study of artistic exchange between Europe and Spanish America has primarily focused on the official art market by which mostly Iberian works were sold in the primary ports of Spanish America. Such studies have sustained that importation of European works lead to direct artistic influence, thus adopting the center-periphery model which is today challenged by ideas about transatlantic geography and shared identities in the Spanish monarchy.

My paper focuses on a different kind of art circuit which I believe was tremendously important in quantity and consequence: the role of Jesuit proctors (*procuradores*). During their regular trips to Rome to attend the Society's congregations, these Jesuit travelers went on veritable shopping sprees, purchasing Roman copper paintings, Neapolitan sculpture, and Bohemian decorative arts to take back to the viceroyalties where they would either gift or sell them. This documentation has been little explored in terms of what it tells us about the Jesuit network as well as artistic taste on both sides of the Atlantic within the heterogeneous territories of the Spanish empire. Because these same objects circulated in Europe as well, one has to consider whether they meant and signaled slightly different things to these varied audiences. The value of this documentation thus lies on its non-official character; on the way it maps artistic taste and circulation globally; and on the extent to which it constitutes a window onto Hispanic material culture and identity.



Dr. Mari-Tere Álvarez, J. Paul Getty Museum

He Who Controls the *Palo de Brasil* Controls the World

On June 8, 1501, leading an expedition on behalf of the Spanish crown, Juan Alonso de Ojeda discovered off the coast of Venezuela a rich new world source for the cherished medieval pigment, the tropical hardwood *palo de Brasil*, also known as *palo de tinto*; And so began the Spanish obsession with this lucrative dye producing wood.

Using the tropical hardwood *palo de Brasil* (*palo de tinto*) as a case study, this paper will examine the role played by this „prima materia“ as an impetus in the European race to explore new lands, as well as its availability as a pigment and dye to artists and merchants of the period.

Only available on the European continent in rather limited supplies, Venetians controlled its import into Europe from the East, and by 1321, the pigment red lake resulting from *palo de Brasil* could be found in every painter and illuminators palette across Europe.

Later Portugal would take the lead in trade domination of this pigment with the large-scale organization, harvest, and transatlantic trade of Brazil's „New World“ red, *palo de Brasil*. Not wanting to be dependent on Portuguese trade, in 1503 Queen Isabella of Spain (+1504) enacted a series of laws prohibiting Spain and her territories from purchasing any of this Portuguese *palo de Brasil*. Consequently by the 16th century, being able to control the global trade market of this natural commodity *palo de Brasil* (*palo de Tinto*) from the Americas not only symbolized power and strength but more importantly navigational control of the globe. Thus, the Spanish themselves set out on their own exploration for Brazilwood along the Venezuelan coast and Yucatan Peninsula.

This paper will take us beyond the art object to investigate the availability, use, and technique of this *materia prima*, thus moving into the realm of trade and economics. By looking at the trade networks of *palo de Brasil*, we expand our research to encompass a more „geographically integrated“ art history. Thus, this paper moves beyond the visible surface to the seemingly invisible: the material, in this case *palo de Brasil*, that comprises the work and the respective global trade networks generated by the use of this material.



Dr. Christina M. Anderson, University of Oxford

The Portuguese Empire through Flemish Eyes:

The Indian Gem Trade and the Jeweller-Merchant Karel Helman

While the presence of Portuguese *feitorias* in the Flemish cities of Bruges and Antwerp during the late medieval and early modern periods is well-known, the extent to which the Flemish, in turn, participated in, and at times even promoted, the development of the Portuguese empire remains relatively unknown.

After a brief overview of the ways in which Flemish merchants engaged with art within the context of the Portuguese empire, such as their use of paintings to pay for sugar on the island of Madeira in the early sixteenth century and the friendship of Jacques de Coutre, a diamond merchant who lived in Goa, with a Dutch artist at the court in Bijapur in the seventeenth century, this paper will focus on Karel Helman. A Flemish jeweller and merchant, Helman traded with Goa from his base in Venice in the late sixteenth century. Nevertheless, he was not a typical Venetian merchant, as the inclusion of Indian items in his art collection suggests. Through analysing the way he organised his trade with Goa, I will argue that it was his connections with Portugal, and the location of family members throughout the Portuguese empire, which formed the basis of his success as a Venetian jeweller-merchant.

This paper will draw on research from my current project: *The Age of Flemish Enterprise (1450-1650): The Southern Netherlandish Merchant Diaspora and Early Modern Globalisation*.



Dr. Hannah Baader, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut

Goa. Die Stadt und die Transformationen des Raumes

Placido Francesco Ramponi, einer der beiden Bildhauer, die im Auftrag des Florentiner Großherzogs Cosimo III. nach Goa geschickt wurden, beschreibt die Stadt, in der er nach einem Aufenthalt in Lissabon und nach einer langen Schiffsreise 1698 ankommen sollte, mit einem gewissen Erstaunen als Stadt ohne Mauern. Gleichwohl wird er jenes Tor wahrgenommen haben, das die Portugiesische Vizekönige rund hundert Jahre früher, 1597 als Markierung eines der rituellen Einzugswege in die Stadt hatten errichten lassen.

Ehemals den Palast der Vizekönige flankierend, liegt es dem Fluss zugewandt. Es markierte damit eine der Schwellen, die die Stadt und ihre Bedeutung als politisches, religiöses und ökonomisches Zentrum räumlich vermittelten. Der Arco dos Vices Reis war durch eine Figur des ersten portugiesischen Vizekönigs und Seefahrers Vasco da Gama geschmückt. Schon wenige Jahre nach seiner Entstehung wurde die Statue zerstört und ersetzt durch die Figur einer heiligen Katharina von Alexandria, die über Muhammad triumphiert. Der Arco dos Vices Reis ist nur einer sehr unterschiedlicher Goesischer Schwellenräume: die auf einer Halbinsel gelegene Stadt selbst markiert eine Schwelle im ökonomischen, politischen und ökonomischen Machtgefüge von Kulturen, zwischen portugiesische mit spanischen, römische Interessensphären, die mit einer hinduistischen Bevölkerung und muslimischen Händlern zusammentreffen.



Prof Dr. Clara Bargellini, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de San Martín

Coins and miracles: how engraving arrived in New Spain and what it meant

The historiography of the print in Spanish and Portuguese America is rather thin, and has been guided in large part by the notion that colonial prints constitute “popular” imagery. This paper will re-examine this notion, which has colored so much of what has been written about Latin American art, by focusing on recent discoveries about the first engraver known to have worked in New Spain. Samuel Stradanus, as he has come down to us, arrived in Veracruz in 1603. His surviving works, though counting only ten engravings, demonstrate considerable experience with maps, typography, and different types of pictorial composition, forged in both northern and southern Europe. Nor did his travels cease in New Spain. The career of this one individual, as we now can reconstruct it, not only spans different parts of two continents. It also gives insights into questions of technological transfers, economic history and individual motivations of different actors. Finally, it also sheds light on the functions of visual narrative in New Spain.



Prof. Dr. Maria Berbara, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro

Visual Constructions of the Portuguese Empire

The expansion of the Lusitanian Empire in the late 15th century and early 16th century - combined with other important historical events in the field of transportation, communication and printing - was a key element in a new age of globalization. This period - during which Lisbon became one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Europe - saw the construction of a transoceanic web characterised by constant commercial, cultural, artistic and social interaction between Europeans and non-Europeans. Images and discourses related to the Portuguese Empire and expansion during the Early Modern Period were often permeated by millenarian implications, colonial conquests being understood as the fulfilment of biblical prophecies. In the following centuries, these views would undergo important transformations, but essentially they would survive well into the 19th century, when Rio de Janeiro was chosen as the new capital of the Lusitanian Empire. Visual constructions of the Portuguese Empire could go back to arcane formal values and nationalistic traditions, or they could make use of classical idioms; they could incorporate (geographical) otherness in order to fabricate a universal image of the nation, or, just on the contrary, they could prefer traditional, local, aesthetic solutions. This paper will deal with the - sometimes contrasting - views of imperial Portugal in Italy, Portugal and the New World - particularly Brazil - in three key moments: the reign of Dom Manuel I; 1640, when, after the end of the Spanish annexation, new images and discourses on the Portuguese Empire begun to take shape, and 1808, when the Portuguese court landed in Rio de Janeiro.



Prof. Dr. Charlene Villaseñor Black, University of California, Los Angeles

Enconchados and Iridescence: Materials, Meaning, and Trade

Enconchado paintings, hybrid artworks that combine oil painting with mother-of-pearl inlay, were produced in some numbers in colonial New Spain in the 17th and 18th centuries by such eminent artists as Miguel González and others. Recent research has focused on the Asian origins of the technique and floral motifs found on the *enconchado* frames. Scientific analysis has clarified how the works were constructed, combining oil painting and shell mosaic with a shiny layer of lacquer. Many questions still remain unanswered, however. Thus, this paper examines *enconchados* depicting religious subjects, with a particular focus on images that selectively incorporate the mosaic technique, thereby excluding works that are chiefly shell or nacre. How and why did artists choose to employ iridescent fragments in these scenes and where in the compositions were they placed? Did this strategic use of shimmering pieces inflect the meaning of religious images? In addition, this paper will address important questions related to the materiality of *enconchados*. Do all *enconchado* paintings employ the same type of shell, or can different types be identified? Where did these materials come from, and what trade routes brought them? While most *enconchados* were produced in Mexico, my scope is broadened by examining their export to Europe. Finally, I address the links between *enconchados* and other artworks that privilege iridescence, notably, featherworks and *tornesol* fabrics produced throughout the Americas and Europe. How was this fascination with shifting, ephemeral reflections and glowing, iridescent colors linked to new interests in natural science such as heliotropism?



Prof. Dr. Cécile Fromont, University of Chicago

Dancing for the King of Congo from Early Modern Central Africa to Colonial Brazil

In elaborate ritual martial dances called Sangamentos, the people of the early modern Central African Kingdom of Kongo celebrated the power and legitimacy of their king. During the ceremonies, nobles proudly displayed the attributes of their might and legitimacy while vassals humbly demonstrated their allegiance to the political and religious powers of a realm that had willingly converted to Catholicism at the turn of the sixteenth century. Written descriptions and watercolor illustrations of the dances outline how the noble participants brought together local and foreign regalia to showcase the novel, cross-cultural ideas of power, legitimacy, and history that emerged from their self-motivated conversion to Christianity and independent participation in the commercial, political, and religious networks of the Atlantic world.

Across the Atlantic, during the same period, enslaved men and women of African descent staged in Brazil ceremonies called Congadas, during which they elected and celebrated the leaders of their Catholic brotherhoods, to whom they bestowed the title of king and queen of Congo. Such ceremonies were recorded in writing as well as in a set of images composed in Rio de Janeiro in the 1780s.

In this paper, I use my past research on the Kingdom of Kongo to explore how the Central African ceremonies formed a significant precedent to the Brazilian performances. The Congadas might have been considered as emulations of European carnivalesque pump, but I argue in this piece from my next book project that they were in fact reformulations in a colonial context of the religious and political message articulated in the sangamentos. Drawing from the Kongo tradition, Brazilians of African descent asserted their identity and enacted their social cohesion as a group, in defiance of the institution of slavery.

Eventually, Sangamentos and Congadas demonstrate the Kongo people's ability in two radically different historical circumstances to face dramatic changes and to use foreign elements, imposed or freely welcomed, as emblems of self-definition.



Prof. Dr. Christine Göttler, University of Bern

Antwerp, the Portuguese Merchants, and the Oriental Indies

In his *Descrittione di tutti I Paesi Bassi* of 1567 the Florentine merchant Lodovico Guicciardini lists among the causes of Antwerp's "great wealth" Vasco da Gama's finding of a direct sea route to Calicut on the west coast of India by circumnavigating the Cape of Good Hope. Indeed, the Portuguese crown's subsequent decision to move its main staple market for spices to Antwerp drove the city's spectacular rise. In Guicciardini's account, the many foreign merchants who flocked to Antwerp to profit from Portugal's lucrative trade in spices transformed the urban center into a "world city" where new goods, new merchandise, and new information were circulated and exchanged. In turn, the flow of commodities from European and overseas markets, along with the competition among highly specialized artists and craftsmen, affected Antwerp's visual and material culture, making the city into a center of new forms of knowledge and expertise. In 1577 the Calvinist city fathers described Antwerp as "not only the first and principal commercial city of all Europe, but also the source, origin, and storehouse of all goods, riches and merchandise, and a refuge and nurse of all arts, sciences, nations and virtues."

Proceeding from these observations my paper explores how Antwerp's world of virtues and exotic goods was displayed and reinforced, both in public and private spaces and in the visual arts. In the form of short case studies, some iconographies and visual images are introduced here that reference the idea of Antwerp as a *stapel-huys* (storehouse) where "exotic commodities" brought back from all parts of the world were accumulated, traded, and collected.



Prof. Dr. Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, Centro de História de Além-Mar, Lisbon and Switzerland

Shopping in the Renaissance – Merchants as Cultural Mediators in Spain, Portugal and their Overseas Empires

Royal collectors in the sixteenth century, especially members of the Wittelsbach and Habsburg houses, who assembled spectacular curiosity collections, were privileged consumers. Through family ties and far-flung trade networks established by German merchant communities based in Augsburg, Nuremberg and Regensburg, these Renaissance shoppers were able to tap into a global market for luxury goods and exotica exported to Portugal and Spain. But how did royal collectors in Central Europe buy the rarities and magnificent objects showcased in their *Kunstkammern*? How were these courts linked in the late Renaissance with marketplaces in Africa, Asia and the New World? How did these royals become such sophisticated international consumers?

This paper will take a closer look at the role intermediaries played in the formation and development of notable Renaissance collections north of the Alps, in particular, the Munich *Kunstammer* of Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria (1528-1579). By 1579, Albrecht had acquired over 3500 items for his treasury and curiosity cabinet, which were distributed and displayed in rooms, formerly located above the ducal stables of the Munich *Residenz*. Some spaces were expansive, over 30 meters in length, with objects set upon tables or placed in display cases. In 1565, Samuel Quiccheberg (1529-1567) wrote the first museological treatise, *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi*, which provided a guideline for the arrangement of Albrecht V's encyclopaedic collection, by which objects were systematically organized according to their materials and manufacture. During the 1560s, Albrecht expanded his *Kunstammer*, receiving select objects gifted him by Habsburg relatives at the Lisbon, Madrid and Vienna courts, or by resorting to Fugger agents based in Portugal and Spain to help him in his search for strange and unusual things.

Merchant-dealers assisted Albrecht V in his search. Nathaniel Jung, a Fugger factor from Augsburg, who resided in Lisbon for years, supplied Albrecht with goods imported from Portuguese Asia and Brasil. Anthonio Meyting, also from Augsburg, carved out a career at the Spanish court, becoming the Bavarian Duke's most trusted servant. Meyting was a cultivated man who spoke a number of languages. He represented a new breed of Renaissance merchants in the late sixteenth century, who specialized as highly-educated art agents, diplomats, entrepreneurs and financiers. For over thirty-five years, Meyting was a dedicated intermediary for his Bavarian patron, shopping for



the best exotica he could send back to Munich. Meyting's intervention cannot be underestimated and recently discovered archival documentation charts his international career. Because of Meyting, his discerning eye and his impeccable taste, the Munich Residenz still houses today notable exotica and Kunstkammer pieces which once belonged to Albrecht V.



Prof. Dr. Margit Kern, University of Hamburg

**Translation Processes in the Art of the Early Modern Age:
“The Mass of Saint Gregory”, a Feather Mosaic from 1539**

The feather mosaic “The Mass of Saint Gregory”, dated from 1539 and now in the collection at Auch, has always been of particular interest to researchers due to its unique materiality and its accentuated position as one of the earliest documents of the mission in New Spain. The great significance of this work is moreover documented by the accompanying inscription: the Latin words say that the precious featherwork was created for Pope Paul III in the famous studios of San José de los Naturales, under the direction of Fray Pedro de Gante.

One motif in this representation of a St. Gregory’s Mass has always puzzled scholars: to the right of the suffering figure of the Savior, there lie three pineapples on the rim of the stone sarcophagus. Gerhard Wolf (2007) has judged the pineapples as “a reference to the *discovery* itself,” and as a deliberate reference to the “*americanità*“ of the feather painting. Thus, the feather mosaic can be seen as a model case for the development of transcultural visual languages in the art of the 16th century.



Dr. Urte Krass, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Visualizing the Transfer of Political Power:

The Performative Use of a Statue of Saint Francis Xavier in late 17th-century Goa

The Jesuit Church Bom Jesus in Goa houses a life-size silver statue of St. Francis Xavier made in 1670 by local Indian-Christian goldsmiths. The image stood in front of the saint's impressive shrine until 1977 when it was moved to a nearby windowsill. In 1683, when the Maratha Sambhaji attacked Goa, the Portuguese viceroy laid his emperor's staff into the saint's coffin. By doing so, he symbolically conferred the colony's custody to the "Apostle of the East" and established a custom. His successor placed his staff directly in the hand of the statue. Although this practice is described in 17th-century documents, it is astonishing that it has not yet been discovered as a fruitful topic to deal with (apart from one article of 1935).

This particular staging of the transfer of power to an image raises first and foremost the question of possible forerunners in Portugal and/or in India for this practice. Earlier European examples for the political interaction with pictures are soon at hand, the most important and decisive one for our case being probably the coronation of a statue of Nossa Senhora da Conceição in Vila Viçosa in 1640 by the new king João IV.

I would, however, suggest to also take Indian "living images" into account as another source for the described interaction with Francis Xavier's silver statue. For centuries, Hindu priests had interacted with statues of Shiva or pictures of other Gods that were objects of worship (puja) and appeared to their viewers as living beings. The center of a Hindu icon's identity and value lay „in the divine presence that was invoked into it through ritual procedures and came to animate it“ – as Richard H. Davis states in his fundamental survey on the „Lives of Indian Images“. This conference offers the great opportunity to reconstruct the visual and ritual context for Francis Xavier's silver statue. This object should be examined from different angles; the history of the political use of pictures, the European and Indian traditions of "Bildmagie" and acting images and furthermore, the specifics of Indo-Portuguese art production can all provide a framework for analysis. A case study such as this can surely shed new light on the amalgamation of two different "image worlds" in 17th-century Goa.



Prof. Dr. Peter Mark, Wesleyan University, Humboldt-Universität, IGK Arbeit und Lebenslauf in globalgeschichtlicher Perspektive

An art of trans-cultural communication:

The iconography of 16th- and 17th-century Luso-African salt cellars

My paper focuses on the ivory salt cellars from 16th and 17th century Sierra Leone. Comparison with contemporary Portuguese narratives from ‘Guiné do Cabo Verde’ and with the history of European collections demonstrates that these works were all created by "Sapes" artists in the period ca. 1550 to 1650. Portuguese written sources (especially Father Manuel Alvares, who lived in Sierra Leone [d. 1617], and the *Tratado Breve* of André Alvares de Almada (1594), enable us to “read” these art works in a manner that approaches the terms probably intended by the artists themselves.

In Sierra Leone, Luso-African traders, “lançados,” served both as commercial brokers, and as cultural intermediaries. They would have transmitted orders from the European customer to the artist. But how did the works’ meaning evolve, as the order moved from Europe to Africa and as the finished object then moved from producer to middleman to European consumer? In other words, how did European and African merchants and artists communicate across cultural frontiers? My presentation elucidates that process.

The ivories are images of royal authority, as expressed in local cultural terms from the Guinea Coast. These images can only be understood in terms of local culture. The Luso-African middlemen were ordering luxury objects for European nobility. The local ‘Sapes’ artists provided images of secular and spiritual power as they understood such power from their own societies. These Luso-African ivories, objects created in West Africa for export to Europe, are in fact, images whose iconography embodies intercultural dialogue.



Dr. Pedro Moura Carvalho, Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore

Exporting exotic works of art into Japan, around 1600: The *fumi-e*

Among the consequences of the arrival in 1543 of Europeans on Japanese shores was the introduction of new religious beliefs as well as material goods. Besides bringing Christianity, the Portuguese introduced in a country until then practically closed to the outside world, animals and plants from various continents, paintings and furnishings, musical instruments, vocabulary and culinary techniques, guns and gunpowder. Such transference of ideas, exotic goods and technology changed Japan's history and is still felt today. More important to us was the introduction in Japan of works of art from Portugal, Spain, Flanders, the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia and China. Namban screens suggest that Asian textiles, lacquered furniture, porcelain, etc. arrived in considerable quantities. Documentary sources also indicate that rarer objects from Europe, such as "state chairs", clocks, and a panoply of religious artifacts, namely altarpieces, organs, and reliquaries, were also exported.

This paper will focus on the circulation of exotic works of art in Japan and how the missionaries of the Society of Jesus made use of images to convey their message. The specific case of how relatively common Renaissance and Baroque metal plaques illustrating scenes of the Passion of Christ, such as the Crucifixion and the Pietà, were transformed into *fumi-e* deserves particular attention. Following the first edicts against Christianity in the 17th century the plaques were employed by the Japanese authorities to identify Catholics – by compelling suspected Christians to walk on the sacred religious images – and to persecute them. Later, Japanese copies of European plaques were produced. *Fumi-e* are powerful reminders of the methods employed by the Inquisition in other parts of the world, and show how devotional objects can be easily become instruments of intolerance.



Prof. Dr. Markus Neuwirth, Universität Innsbruck

The Good Shepherd of Goa. New Approaches

Ivory carved small sculptures of The Good Shephard, mainly produced in Goa at the end of the 16th and during the 17th Century, represent a very specific group of artpieces in the portuguese expansion. A tiny boy with closed eyes on a rocky hill stays in the center and combines several iconografic attributes which obviously tend to evoke an ambiguous interpretation. This might be provoked by the usage by missionaries during voyages especially by the Augustinian (attribute heart) or the Jesuite orders. The later focused on the children's conversion. The position on the hill traces back to the Old Testament in which David is described as a good Shephard. The child is wrapped in a pelt traditionally as St. John means alluding the baptism. And finally the figure represents Jesus Christ *menino* as Good Shephard. Obviously the objects served to explain the way from the Jewish origins (many Jesuits in India were New-Christians, so the inner mission was an important theme), the baptism and then the Christian aim of redemption. So it is very logical that the Tree of Jesse which sticks behind the hill means the symbol of Messianism (and Sebastianism in Portugal). Several parts of the objects can be displaced or changed, they are movable and could get different meanings.

The paper deals with the ivories as material, the missionary function, the widespread dispersion e.g. Latin America and the iconographic network. New emphasis lies on the double of even threefold meaning of certain figures as a pragmatic concentration.



Prof Dr. Luís de Moura Sobral, Université de Montréal

Vanitas in the Tropics. Manuel da Costa Ataíde (1762-1830) and the End of a Pictorial Genre

On the ceiling above the entrance of the São Francisco Church of the Third Order, in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil, Manuel da Costa Ataíde (1762-1830) painted what can be considered, if need be, the last *Vanitas* painting of the Baroque Period. Ataíde isolated a motif he had already used on the ceiling of the Franciscan Church of Mariana, and transforms it in a monumental *Memento Mori*, which announces the Marian decoration of the ceiling. The paper will investigate the textual and visual sources used directly or indirectly by the Brazilian artist, and will try to understand the painting in comparison with similar works, within the cultural tradition of both Europe and the Americas.



Dr. Astrid Windus, University of Hamburg

“Y yo, con buen celo y ánimo, tomé los pinceles del oleo..:”

**Diego de Ocaña and the implementation of the cult of the Virgin de Guadalupe
in the Province of Charcas (1600-1601)**

In 1601 in the city of Chuquisaca or La Plata (today's Sucre, Bolivia), the Hieronymite monk Fray Diego de Ocaña, who was travelling throughout South America to promote the cult of Guadalupe in the New World, painted an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe which became one of the most adored and venerated religious images of Bolivia and South America. The paper examines Ocañas account “Viaje por el Nuevo Mundo: De Guadalupe a Potosí, 1599-1601”, which contains valuable information about the strategies used by the Christian authorities, and, in this case, by a traveling artist, to implement systematically certain elements and figures of the catholic religion (the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe, originated in Guadalupe, Spain), as well as their visual representations (paintings instead of a sculpture), in the new cultural and natural environments of the Americas. Ocaña explains his motivations to create new images of the virgin in many places of South America, as well as his proceedings in implementing and supporting the cult by fiestas and theatre plays. Therefore, he gives an important contribution for the better understanding of the multi- and intermedial dimensions of religious communication in a colonial contact-zone. While in many cases, research on Latin American colonial art suffers from the lack of the artist's perspective and of any information about the contexts of creation, Ocaña's text reveals, with regard to his paintings of the Virgin of Guadalupe, new perspectives on the mechanisms of divulgation and control of ideas and images, of prototypes and copies.