

*Copies of Flemish Masters in the Hispanic World. Flandes by Substitution*, Eduardo Lamas and David García Cueto (eds.) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 298 pages (ISBN: 978-2-503-58025-8)

The publication supported by the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA) in Belgium and the research project funded by the Spanish ministry of universities represents the proceedings of a conference held in KIK-IRPA in 2017. The extraordinary edition with colorful reproductions of artworks offers fourteen chapters with studies on the artistic relationship between the Hispanic World and Flanders in the Early Modern Time.

First of all, the publication deals with an innovative topic for Art History: circulation of copies between territories mentioned above, even if researching connections between those lands was recently undertaken by other publications.<sup>1</sup> In contrast with other conference proceedings, this volume offers an excellent introduction that put in context the symphonia of essays in the complex theme of cultural transfers. The vast bibliography cited and analyzed by editors explains the global state of the art with its research questions for future investigations. With fourteen essays, both editors humbly and consciously affirm that their work is only a step to understand better the history of the artistic relationship between the Hispanic World and Flanders. Their asset is not to pretend to build a closed discourse or the definitive monograph on an issue that needs to be analyzed from different points of view but to draw a valuable preliminary study on the subject.

The first two chapters, one by Jessica Weiss and one by Nicola Jennings addresses the last years of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth century regarding the workshop of Juan de Flandes. Both studies explain his links with Flemish Art and remark the significance of the painter to the Peninsular market. The first essay analyses the Miraflores Altarpiece with its copy and importance for the Trastamara visual culture. Unfortunately, the study does not mention all panels from the John the Baptists Altarpiece (p. 30) nor the possible intervention in this artwork of Michel Sittow's, indicated in 2018 by Matthias Weniger.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the author explains how copying the artwork from the funeral chapel was a relevant part of the legacy of Isabella of Castile (or the Catholic). The second essay addresses the impact of Ghent manuscripts on the

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<sup>1</sup> *Netherlandish Art and Luxury Goods in Renaissance Spain*, eds. D. van Heesch, R. Janssen, J. Van der Stock, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> M. Weniger, "Michel Sittow, a la luz del retablo de los Luna", in *Retórica artística en el tardogótico castellano la capilla fúnebre de Álvaro de Luna en contexto*, eds. Olga Pérez Monzón, Matilde Miquel Juan, María Martín Gil, (Madrid: Sílex, 2018), pp. 497-500.

iconography that Juan de Flandes applied to the *Polyptych of Isabella the Catholic*.<sup>3</sup> The analysis of the preserved panels pointed out several books that could be linked with the apprenticeship of Juan de Flandes (pp. 51-53), and leaves a complete resumé of English bibliography on his artistic production.

The third study by Miquel Àngel Herrero-Cortell and Isidre Puig Sanchis defines the formal and technical characteristics of the Spanish origin copies of 'Ecce Homo' iconography by Bout's workshop. The authors map all the known versions of this panel from the Iberian Peninsula and emphasize the features of those devotional images, concluding that 'not all the works that came from Flanders to Spain were of high quality' (p. 72).

An essay by José Juan Pérez Preciado about Jan Gossaert's *Deesis* copy from the Ghent Altarpiece defines when the painter could visit Van Eyck's work to make a copy of the God, Holy Virgin and St. John Baptist's portraits. The research examines documents transcribed and published in 1930 by Zarco Cuevas (p. 82), analyzes the panel's stay in the El Escorial and reveals the existence of lateral panels that completed the artwork. The way in which the author reasoned about the history of Gossaert's *Deesis* opens many new research questions to answer in future studies.

The fifth essay, an example of teamwork between Laura Alba, Lorne Campbell, Hélène Dubois and José Juan Pérez Preciado unifies technical and historical studies and compare copies of Flemish primitives by Michiel Coxcie for Philip II. Gathering together different research methods and conclusions from their previous studies, the authors remark the role of Mary of Hungary as a possible commissioner of multiple excellent copies that were sent to the Spanish court (p. 98).

Astrid Harth studying three Titian's paintings from the collection of Charles V in Yuste analyzes their significance as sacred images. The author remarks that those compositions are strongly linked with the Byzantine's icons and the Flemish iconography of Man of Sorrows and Mater Dolorosa. The author clarifies the structure of the altarpiece formed by Titian's and Coxcie's artworks that the emperor had in Yuste (p. 108).

The seventh study by Almudena Pérez de Tudela analyzes the portrait of Philip II after the battle of Saint Quentin with its multiple versions by Antonio Moro and his followers. In addition, this research explains the circumstances of the commission of all the effigies from the same model. The author describes how relevant was the portrait as a part of Habsburgs portrait's galleries and how follower painters adapted Moro's composition to create the image of power.

Marie Grappasonni studies Marcelus Cofferman's biography and the presence of his artworks in the Spanish market. She remarks the most relevant copies of compositions of Flemish masters that came out from Coffermans' workshop and arrived in the Iberian Peninsula, among them models of Annunciation, Immaculate Conception, Deposition of Christ and Holy Family.

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<sup>3</sup> Even if the study uses term *Retablo*, I consider more appropriate the term *Polyptych*, as explained by Miguel Àngel Zalama. M. A. Zalama, "La infructuosa venta en almoneda de las pinturas de Isabel la Católica", *BSAA arte*, LXXIV, 2008, pp. 59-62.

The following study by Macarena Moralejo Ortega studies the spreading of Federico Zuccari's composition from the Church of Annunziata in Rome. The author reveals the Renaissance roots of the design and the relevancy of its iconological meaning (pp. 150-153). This research clarifies to the reader the different mediums (drawings, sketches, engravings) used across the Early Modern Time to emulate original compositions.

An essay by Ana Diéguez-Rodríguez narrates the story of Michel Coxcie's *Crucifixion* from Alseberg (p. 164) and its success in Flanders (according to Van Mander). The author gathers the Ollero Butler information, who identified it in the Cathedral of Valladolid. She suggests the lack of impact of this composition on the documented *Calvary* painted by Hendrick de Clerck for the Church of Saint-Josseten-Noode in Brussels. Despite the allusion to the Coxcie's *Crucifixion* made by the providers of this church, when they requested the support of the Archduchess to finish the altarpiece, saying that the De Clerck's composition was a copy from the Coxcie's at Alseberg.

A chapter by Ángel Rodríguez Rebollo presents a hypothesis on the interior decoration of the prince's apartments in the Alcázar in Madrid in the XVIIth century. He suggests that the prince's apartment was the scenography for the most relevant painting of Velazquez, *Las Meninas*, where he reproduced copies of Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo after Rubens originals (p. 184).

The following study by the editor David García Cueto analyzes copies after Rubens in the collection of Patrimonio Nacional in Spain. He points out that the fascination of Rubens' art in the Spanish Monarchy did not end in the XVIIth century but formed part of the visual legacy of the Kingdom (p. 199). In addition to the well-known copyist Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo, the author identifies many other anonymous copyists of Ruben's compositions who worked in the Escorial.

The essay by Manuel García Luque conducts a research on copies after Rubens and Van Dyck in Granada. His study explains the journey of models to Southern Spain and the artistic activity of Alonso Cano. In addition to the study, the author prepared two interesting appendixes that collect information on the copies indicating possible patrons and ways of reception (pp. 220-230), helpful work for future research.

The final essay by the other editor of the book, Eduardo Lamas, studies Miguel Manrique's career, a Rubens disciple, globetrotter, active in Genova and Malaga. The author uses the term 'interpretative copy' (p. 235) to highlight the importance of the painter's invention while reproducing Rubens composition. Moreover, this research reveals how the act of copying was not only a commercial practice for artists in the Early Modern Time, but a spreading channel of visual culture across the world.

This publication may help academics with copies in any historical period since the volume coordinates different profiles, approaches, and methods. As mentioned before, artists and paintings are analyzed in detail. Those case studies have the pivotal skill to open research questions about the practice of reproducing


masterpieces in the past. All the authors confirm that Art History does not need to focus only on great masters' artworks because copies are essential documents of their cultural impact on society.

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