

Report conference: *Court Culture Exchanges between the Courts of the Iberian Peninsula and the Habsburg Netherlands (15th-16th centuries)*, (Aranjuez: University Rey Juan Carlos (URJC), University of Silesia and Instituto Moll. Center for Research in Flemish Painting, Madrid, October 25-27, 2023)

The international conference "Court Culture Exchanges between the Courts of the Iberian Peninsula and the Habsburg Netherlands (15th-16th centuries)" was hosted by King Juan Carlos University (URJC) on its Aranjuez campus from 25-27 October 2023. Organized by Ana Diéguez Rodríguez (Instituto Moll), Oskar J. Rojewski (University of Silesia in Katowice-URJC), and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz (URJC), the conference received support and funding from various institutions including the National Centre for Science in Poland and the research network CERMEST. The event began with a formal opening ceremony attended by the Ambassador of Belgium in Spain, Geert Cockx, representatives from URJC, and the organizers.

At the conference, the first panel discussed court structure and ceremonial. José Eloy Hortal Muñoz presented a paper on cultural exchanges between the Habsburg Netherlands and the Iberian Peninsula, revealing that Prince Philip II was influenced by Flemish architecture and incorporated it into royal residences in Castile. Jonathan Dumont's paper (Austrian Academy of Sciences) focused on Maximilian Vilain, lord of Ressegem, and his political ideas in the multicultural context of sixteenth-century Netherlands. Ana Diéguez Rodríguez and África Espíldora García (Instituto Moll) presented on Flemish "Decorative Painters" at the Court of Charles V in the Iberian Peninsula, clarifying the identity of the painters involved and highlighting the challenges faced by Flemish court painters in keeping up with the court's mobility.

The second panel considered relationships between court and city. The first paper by Miguel Ángel Zalama and Jesús F. Pascual Molina (Universidad de Valladolid) explored the relationship between art and power in Spanish Renaissance luxury. It argued for the importance of minor arts and revealed a culture of luxury in the Spanish court. The second paper by Raymond Fagel (Leiden University) focused on Vicente Álvarez's description of Prince Philip's visit to Flanders in 1549-1550. It analyzed Álvarez's descriptions of the court's stay in the Low Countries in connection with his descriptions of Italy and Germany.

The next day opened with a panel on court festivities and rituals. Dagmar Eichberger (University of Heidelberg) presented a paper on the visit of Joanna of Castile to Brussels in 1496, exploring court culture exchanges between the Iberian Peninsula and the Habsburg Netherlands. The lecture discussed Joanna's visit, the grand spectacle that welcomed her, and the significance of the town hall of Brussels. The second paper presented by Inmaculada Rodríguez Moya and Víctor

Mínguez (University Jaume I) discussed emblematic resonances in the triumphal entrances of Charles V, highlighting efforts to build a Christian universal empire and promote the image of the Roman empire. Various arches and symbols were used to convey virtues and depict Charles V as Scipio Africanus or Augustus. The main square also included a fountain of white and red wine and a fire pyramid.

The second panel of the conference discussed ecclesiastical dignitaries between the North and the South. José Juan Pérez Preciado (Museo Nacional del Prado) presented his paper on the Altarpiece of San Ildefonso, which was commissioned in the late fifteenth century but was dismembered in the nineteenth century. The author focused on two panels in the Museo del Prado and explored the commissioning process and challenges in dispersing the panels. The next paper by Alejandro Sáez Olivares (URJC) discussed cultural transfers at the Castilian court, specifically focusing on Diego Ramírez de Villaescusa and his time in Flanders. Villaescusa's artistic patronage helped transfer Flemish artistic elements to Castile, showcasing the influence of different courts and their customs. The last paper by Dorota Gregorowicz (University of Silesia in Katowice) examined the creation, characteristics, and geopolitical functions of the Post-Tridentine Apostolic Nunciature in Flanders during the late sixteenth century. It explored the relationship between the nunciature and the Catholic Monarchy of Philip II Habsburg, as well as the war of independence in the Netherlands and the pontificate of Clement VIII.

The next panel was dedicated to images of power and portraits with a first paper by Oskar J. Rojewski focused on a portrait of Ambassador Francisco de Rojas by Hans Memling. The research provided new insights, suggesting that the portrait may be part of a larger composition and may not be Rojas. The presentation also mentioned that Rojas's diplomatic missions allowed the painter Michael Sittow to arrive in Spain. The second paper, presented by Till-Holger Borchert (Suermondt-Ludwig Museum in Aachen), explored the emergence of state portraiture and imperial representations of the House of Habsburg, focusing on Maximilian I and Emperor Charles V. Maximilian was conscious of staging his imperial identity and drew inspiration from German, Burgundian, and Italian models. Charles V continued to refine the imperial image, emphasizing his role as a perfect hunter in paintings and maintaining strict image control.

The last panel explored the reception of Iberian communities in the Low Countries courts and Flemish communities in Iberian courts. Elena Vázquez Dueñas's paper (Complutense University of Madrid) focused on the Grimón family in the Canary Islands, who owned *The Triptych of Nava and Grimón*. The central panel of the triptych is believed to depict the nativity, but the paper argued that it represents shepherds. The attribution of the triptych is still debated due to differences in the portrayal of Mary and Joseph. Almudena Pérez de Tudela (Patrimonio Nacional) presented the next paper in Spanish on the Flemish artists by the hands of cardinal Granvela at the court of Philippe II. Antonio Perenot Granvela played a significant role in introducing the Renaissance in the Basque Countries, but research is challenging due to scattered documentation throughout Europe. Cordula van Wyhe's paper (University of York) examined realistic statues

of Baby Jesus in Habsburg royal convents during the 17th century. The Descalzas Reales in Madrid houses a significant collection of these statuettes and the author argued for a trans-historical investigation of feminine Habsburg piety by comparing these statuettes with contemporary "reborn" dolls.

The last day was dedicated to a visit of the Aranjuez palace in the morning and a panel on cultural exchange through trade and travel in the afternoon. The first paper, by Mario Damen of the University of Amsterdam, discussed the travels of Jacques de Lalaing to the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages. Lalaing's trip was a chivalric ritual that helped shape a shared chivalric culture across Europe, and he also functioned as a diplomat between different courts. The second paper, by Olivier Kik (Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage in Belgium – KIK-IRPA) focused on the migration of the Cuemans family from Brussels to Castile in the 1440s. The Cuemans family became involved in prestigious architectural and sculptural projects, and their integration into courtly networks led to new commissions and prominence. The final paper, by Eduardo Lamas (KIK-IRPA), discussed the Burgundian sculptor Felipe Bigarny, who worked in the service of Charles V and the Castilian court. Bigarny was ennobled and at the head of a vast workshop, becoming a model of a successful, enterprising artist. Overall, the papers highlighted the significance of cultural exchange through travel and migration, as well as the importance of courtly networks in shaping artistic and cultural developments.

Overall, the conference offered the following key points:

- Cultural exchange between the Iberian Peninsula and the Low Countries had multiple channels.
- The courtly entourage was the most important means of transmitting ideas, objects, iconography, and techniques.
- Cultural transfer could also occur through commercial relationships, travels, or emissaries, but these were connected to courtly networks.
- Comparisons between the Habsburg's Low Countries and the Iberian Peninsula were common in historiographical tradition.
- Cultural exchange through the court enriched local traditions by learning from others' experiences.

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November, 2023

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