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## FORUM: Art in World History

# History from Things: Indigenous Objects and Colonial Latin America

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Of all the themes that thread through histories of colonial Latin America, two are inescapable: absence and resistance. The first of these, absence, surfaces in the earliest chronicles. Christopher Columbus wrote of thousands of Taíno people pouring onto the beaches of Santo Domingo to greet him; two generations later, in 1552, Bartolomé de Las Casas would decry the Spaniards who acted "like ravaging beasts, killing, terrorizing, afflicting, torturing and destroying the native peoples...to such a degree that this Island of Hispaniola, once so populous (having a population that I estimated to be more than three millions), now has a population of barely two hundred persons."<sup>1</sup> Over time, and as late as the 1960s, the history of indigenous objects—tracing the visible marks of native presence—came to echo this demographic history. For instance, George Kubler, one of the first art historians to bring a trans-Atlantic lens to indigenous creations of the Americas, described the survival of indigenous motifs into the colonial period (ca. 1520-1820) as "so few and scattered that their assembling requires an enormous expenditure for minimum yield, like a search for the fragments of a deep-lying shipwreck."<sup>2</sup> Kubler's appraisal of "the wreck of pre-Columbian civilization," published in 1961, was both caustic and oddly catalytic. In the half-century since he wrote, historical narratives about the Americas have changed dramatically. Instead of focusing on wrecked civilizations, art historians, anthropologists, and historians increasingly look at transformed cultures, drawing knowledge of indigenous creations into their research and teaching. Today, no serious history of Latin America treats the role of its indigenous peoples as marginal, and while this essay focuses on colonial Latin America, this "indigenous turn" is to be found in histories across continents.

Even so, narratives about indigenous absence color primary sources, not only in descriptions of demographic collapse, like that in Santo Domingo, but also because many colonial narrators were largely indifferent to, or unable to understand, the complexity of indigenous presence, particularly after the sixteenth century, when interest in indigenous peoples with the aim of creating a new kind of Christian society had waned. Modern historians have countered, in part, by exploring acts of resistance as evidence of indigenous historical agency, first in studies of outright violent rebellion (the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, Tupac Amaru rebellion of 1780), and later in studies of the subtle ways indigenous peoples consciously and unconsciously resisted cultural domination. The presence of indigenous people can also be traced through their voices, which have increasingly become available through transcription and translation of indigenous language texts into Spanish or English, revealing the immense creativity of indigenous writers as they penned works that ranged from standardized land records and wills to narrative histories.<sup>3</sup> A relative latecomer to the discussion of indigenous agency and presence, especially in the field of history, are colonial objects—be they works

consciously created as high art or those crafted for daily use by indigenous people. A partial reason for this lag is disciplinary, with texts rather than objects being the usual focus of historical interpretation. This trend is changing: in recent years, objects have surfaced with greater insistence in history-writing. In *Vermeer's Hat*, for instance, Timothy Brook shows how canonical artworks and the objects they depict can prompt historical narratives that span the globe, and Leora Auslander has made an eloquent case for the role of material culture in the writing of history—points to which we will return at the end of this essay.<sup>4</sup>

But we would maintain that historian's resistance to the object goes deeper; the question of *how* to integrate objects is still a bedeviling one because objects are difficult; while we know that objects embody and reveal many kinds of indigenous agency, being "the only tokens of history continually available to our senses,"<sup>5</sup> they make uneasy companions to textual sources. Auslander underscores their tantalizing allure in colonial contexts, pointing out that "material culture plays a particularly explicit role in negotiations and struggle between ruler and ruled in colonial contexts. Colonial administrations demonstrate their understandings of the nature of the relationship (current and future) of metropole and colony in how they mark difference through the style of everyday life. In parallel, indigenous peoples stake out positions through their compliance with, or refusal of, such aesthetic boundaries."<sup>6</sup> This said, even for the art historian, the identification of such aesthetic boundaries, which are to be detected in the visible features of a work, is not always a beginning point for interpretation. In our work on colonial objects, we find that many do not offer easily readable visible evidence of resistance or assimilation, refusal or compliance. Yet the objects are there. Obdurate in their presence, they are a burr in history's side.

For instance, an often-reproduced page from the hand-painted manuscript today known as the Huejotzingo Codex is the earliest known image of the Virgin Mary created by a native painter in the Americas (figure 1) and is now in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.<sup>7</sup>

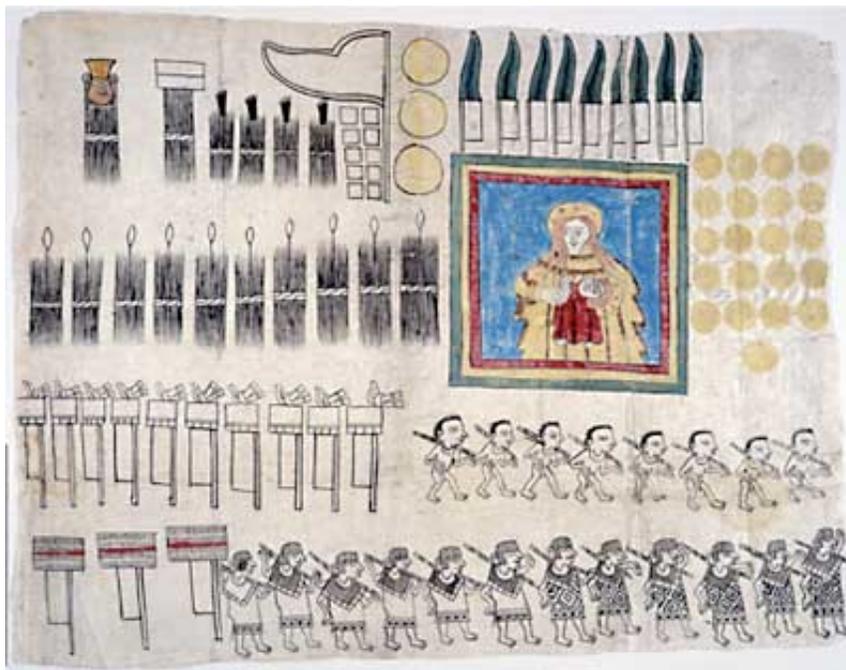


Figure 1: Unknown artists, Huejotzingo Codex, ca. 1531, Courtesy Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

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Set against a vivid blue background, itself framed in hues of red and gold and green, the Virgin appears dressed in golden robes, holding the Christ Child in her arms. The scene would seem to be a straightforward representation of "how Christian" indigenous people had become by 1531, just a few short years after the Spanish conquest of Mexico and the first major missionizing efforts of Franciscan, Dominican and Augustinian friars. The style of the page, which combines a Europeanized image of the Virgin and hints of perspectival space along with indigenous figures and a horror vacui composition, could be seen as either compliant or resistant, depending where (and how) one looks. Yet as recent art historical research has shown, this image of the Virgin is not what quite what she appears (e.g., a devotional painting). The manuscript actually depicts a banner made of gold and feathers—a technique for which central Mexican craftsmen were admired by both indigenous people and Europeans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and both groups eagerly patronized such works.<sup>8</sup> This banner was not intended for use in worship, instead it was to be carried into war by the Spanish conquistador and crown official Nuño de Guzmán. And the manuscript itself, of which this is one page of many, was enlisted as evidence when another conquistador, Hernán Cortés, took his archrival Guzmán to court for infringing on his own right to the tribute of Huejotzingo. As is the case with so many indigenous objects and images, the painting engages major historical events (indigenous conquest, conversion to Christianity, Cortés's battle for political control), but it does not simply describe them. Moreover, the painting does not cast indigenous peoples (in this case, the Nahua of Central Mexico) into obvious roles, for people in Huejotzingo were neither passive nor explicitly resistant to demands of Spanish rule.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the Codex Huejotzingo tells us something of how objects can open an interpretive nexus onto indigenous roles in events; it also reveals the incompleteness of the text-based historical narratives we rely upon to represent these events.

This essay argues, then, for the necessity of objects as annoying burrs. The stakes are evident. The critical philosophy of history has been deeply preoccupied with relations between events and narrative, and this relationship is now fundamental to the teaching of history.<sup>10</sup> Yet images and objects, as tangible tokens of historical moments, complicate the narrative production of history. This is because objects from the past—which are among the most common and durable remnants of the desires, innovations and gestures of daily life—cannot be "read" in the same way as written texts. Objects and artworks may well be excellent and important historical sources, but how does one know how to read a painting or a cathedral or even a coin?

Rather than approach this query philosophically, we enlist the lens of methodology, asking how objects and images can contribute to the study of world history. What kinds of "presence" do they offer to understandings of the colonial past, especially when they refuse to neatly follow major historical narratives (i.e., "demographic collapse," "The Black Legend," "The Spiritual Conquest")? Trained as art historians, we are particularly interested in both the roles played by images and objects at the time of their creation and first use, and, as things that endure to the present day, how they carry physical evidence of their interaction with the world. Certainly since Kubler wrote the essay cited above, modern understandings of what constitutes indigenous "presence" have widened immensely. Kubler addressed the survival of artistic "motifs"—relying upon visual imagery to cue and mark the existence of Amerindian cultural traditions. Yet the visual world reveals only certain kinds of cultural practices. The great cathedral of Cuzco, Peru, like so many churches in Spain's colonies in the Americas, was built primarily by indigenous laborers and craftsmen, even though the "look" and

style of the church is European (figure 2).<sup>11</sup>



Figure 2: Francisco Becerra, Bartolomé Carrión and Francisco Domínguez de Chávez y Arellano (architects), Cathedral, Cuzco, Perú, ca. 1655. Photograph courtesy of the authors.

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One point the cathedral makes clear, then, is that indigenous history is not necessarily immediately present in the visual register. So where is it to be found in the object? Recently, the (invisible) indigenous presence has been brought forward through a conceptual shift, one that has colored colonial histories of Latin America and, increasingly, those of other parts of the world. The turn towards materiality—that is, the study of the material world, the social, cultural and economic meanings of materials chosen and used in the fashioning of objects, and the implications of those choices—enables us to think beyond "indigenous" visual motifs as the main, or sole marker of presence. Indeed, in the case of the Andes, new scholarship has revealed various and complex meanings of stone itself for indigenous residents of colonial Peru, like those who worked on the Cathedral.<sup>12</sup>

In what follows, our argument is not only that the real, physical and material presence of indigenous objects can be a corrective for the earlier absence of indigenous people from historical narratives, either on the page or in the classroom. Instead, as our examination of the examples below will show, objects—particularly those that have been hemmed in by discourses about indigenous "absence" or "resistance"—allow (indeed, invite) important questions and interpretive strategies to emerge. As a first step, then, we propose introducing the ideas of "circulation" and "materiality" as competitive paradigms alongside absence/resistance, which, in turn, can offer a new critical vantage onto those discourses. Since we deal not only with historical narratives, but also objects and images

in our practice, we have found that the paradigm of circulation, conjoined with an attentiveness to materiality, has proved remarkably productive in research and the classroom. From this pairing, questions of colonial history shift from how an object "stands for" or illustrates absence (or resistance) to how an object forged meaning in the multiple settings through which it once traveled. Below, we discuss examples of images and objects created in, or about colonial Latin America.<sup>13</sup> These works have been chosen in part because of the ways they have circulated through the past and into the present: like comets plunging through the layers of firmament, they entered the lives of different and widely dispersed constellations of social actors in the early modern world. They traverse established and familiar historical narratives of the early modern period, sometimes with disruptive force, and their paths create surprising connections among them. While we focus on Latin America, we suggest that in other parts of the world, the consideration of indigenous images and objects, their materiality and circulation, can challenge and complicate paradigms of absence and resistance, paradigms that, *mutatis mutandis*, have exerted their pull on histories as disparate as those of ancient Rome and modern India.

## Objects of First Contact

The demographic collapse that Las Casas wrote about sets the stage for an understanding of the virtual extermination of entire populations, like the Taíno in the Caribbean. Once a flourishing culture, with large communities under the leadership of chieftans (called caciques) and a priestly caste, it was decimated by slavery and smallpox. Historians looking at surviving texts or for evidence of indigenous patterns of daily life in the first decades after the "European encounter" in the Americas, however, will find relatively little in Hispaniola. Taíno history would seem to be rendered mute, the sad tale registered—and caused—largely by Spanish outsiders. Do objects tell the same story? They would seem to, in that in museums with Taíno collections, the wealth of pre-Hispanic works contrasts with the absence of postconquest ones. While a few postconquest Taíno works do exist, their singularity seems to point, like the fingers of a painted hand on a signboard, to the narrative of extinction. Although it seems that these few survivors only serve to underscore the historical narrative of colonial absence, we wish to suggest this is not the only possibility.

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Figure 3: Zemi, front and back views, ca. 1510-15. Museo Nazionale Preistorico ed Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini," Rome, Italy. Used with permission.

This zemi is one of the most elaborate of the works created by Taíno craftsmen on the cusp of 16<sup>th</sup> century (figure 3, front/back).<sup>14</sup> Ironically, its makers were misidentified for much of its history and it was securely identified as Taíno only in the 20th century.<sup>15</sup> It is among the earliest post-contact works fashioned by a native artisan to be sent across the Atlantic that is known today and one of very few surviving Taíno beaded objects. The now-precious object offers visual and physical testimony to the excellence of Taíno craft workers and their sophisticated eye for patterns—traditions that were, largely, wiped out with the Spanish settlement of Hispaniola. This is one, perhaps quite obvious lesson the object offers world history. Zemís were common in the pre-Hispanic period (most examples known today are stone).<sup>16</sup> Beginning with Columbus, European chroniclers described them, reporting that they acted as oracles, reliquaries, and embodiments of ancestral spirits. Given the scarcity of Taíno materials, we do not know if this zemi was one of several hundred created, or one of only a few. Since only a few beaded objects from the same period and place are known in museum collections, there's no large sample to support much of a broad argument. Even so, exceptional case studies occupy pride of place in many world histories—we need only think of Ibn Battuta or Mateo Ricci. The unusual example, in other words, might speak volumes about past practices and ideas that have left only a few, but compellingly poignant traces.

A focus on materiality and circulation, rather than iconography (i.e., the imagery depicted) or long-lost spiritual beliefs, renders this object into far more than an index of extinction. First, its materials. The face of this zemi is rhinoceros horn, brought to the Caribbean from Africa (and likely, with Africans) by Europeans. Other materials reveal how fundamental trade and exchange were to the creation of this ancestral figure: the earrings are mirrors of Venetian glass and the blue-green glass beads were also European imports. Some beads, however, were carefully cut from Caribbean shells and woven into the complex geometric pattern that winds around the base of the object and

covers its back. In fact, the integration of materials, some from afar, some local, suggests that curiosity about and embrace of, rather than resistance to, or anxiety about, foreign introductions marked the Taíno response to European contact. Indeed, many of the materials used for this zemi (including conch shell, cotton, local gold and wood) have a long pre-Hispanic history, implying this object may date to the post-conquest period but it drew upon long-standing models.<sup>17</sup> Such a strategy, of "inventive incorporation," is known from many moments of encounter in the Americas, even those marked by colonial violence.<sup>18</sup>

While the elaborate, exquisite craftsmanship of this particular object was hardly unimportant to those who commissioned and used this zemi in the past, no texts exist to help us establish the name of the patron, the maker(s) or their intentions in creating the work.<sup>19</sup> Yet a description of the object itself is not the only interpretive option here, as a focus on circulation, with examples drawn from other contexts, shows. In the late 14<sup>th</sup>-early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Taíno lived in a hierarchical society and elaborate works like this one were the province of the elite. Since high-status individuals had access to prized trade goods, we can surmise the same of the European and African goods directly incorporated into, and indirectly inspiring, this piece; it is likely, then, that the figure was commissioned (if not also owned) by a cacique who had dealings with the Spanish conquerors and settlers of Hispaniola. When we look across the world, the Taíno zemi is hardly singular in being an elite indigenous object that was open to—perhaps even actively sought—foreign materials but invested them with local meanings; one needs only to turn to a *wunderkammer* to find examples of such elite objects created for the indigenes of Europe.<sup>20</sup> It may be one of only a few surviving Taíno objects, but the zemi opens onto an interpretive model that extends well beyond that of loss and extinction. It suggests points of comparison and contrast with other moments of contact between indigenous people and foreigners.<sup>21</sup> This perspective, then, aligns with thinking about transculturation.<sup>22</sup> In spite of its rarity, the zemi can be useful in the context of world history for thinking about histories of cross-cultural innovation.

It is impossible to know with certainty the attitudes of the Taíno people who commissioned and made this zemi had towards Europeans and Africans, the foreigners who came to their shores; nor can we know whether in commissioning an object that tied one to the world of the ancestors, the patron was responding to the calamitous epidemics all around. Consequently, the resistance paradigm—emphasizing as it does the dichotomy between indigenous and European peoples—seems unproductive here. Rather, thinking of circulation allows us to see continuity and invention along axes that were not strictly the result of European contact. From what is known of the Taíno, combinations of different materials (including shell, gold and colored stones) and the absorption of diverse elements to create new forms seem to have been cultural practices well before the arrival of Spaniards.<sup>23</sup> Living on the Caribbean Sea allowed the Taíno access to products and goods from both Central and South America. In fact, the patterns along the middle of the zemi (its torso) might have been adopted from Saladoid designs created across the Amazon basin and in the Caribbean. Setting the zemi next to Amazon pottery designs reveals connections and correspondences.<sup>24</sup> In embodying patterns of exchange and contact among cultures that pre-dated European entry into the Caribbean, the zemi suggests possibilities for studying indigenous histories of trade that were not dependent upon or involved with Europeans. This may seem a simple point, but histories of Europeans and colonization in the Americas, in part because they have a fuller documentary record, have tended to obscure histories of indigenous interaction, interactions that were themselves complex, fraught and interesting. The circulation theme also opens onto the trans-Atlantic world of early modernity. Because the zemi was created soon after contact with Europeans, it is possible to understand the work within the context of the increasingly "global" world in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Surely the zemi reveals how particular trade items passed across the Atlantic and became incorporated into indigenous objects in the Americas. Since this object was then sent back to Europe (we do not know if it was made and offered as a gift or was "taken" as booty),<sup>25</sup> the object could also be integrated into narratives of mobility that characterized the early modern trans-Atlantic world.<sup>26</sup> When set alongside other exceptional objects from moments of first contact, the zemi suggests both how fluid were the passages—of people, objects, and ideas—across and around oceans and seas and also how particular their integration was into preexisting systems; it also speaks so forcefully of the ways in which traditions could be transformed, not exterminated, by colonial contact. While the zemi may be exceptional, it reminds us that responses to foreigners are rarely unique in world history, nor are they "all the same." While there is much we do not know about this zemi (or the Taíno), this singular object renders the Caribbean conditions of early encounter ever more poignant: for its beads and shells and mirrors trace very small yet potent gestures of cross-cultural exchange and negotiation. Thus, it is the distinctiveness and specificity of objects that helps to illuminate nuances of exchange and negotiation with people and things, nuances that cannot always be gleaned from words set upon paper.

## Images of Colonial Violence

Within the larger framework of colonial histories of Latin America, pathogens now share space with Spanish brutality as the cause for the disappearance of indigenous peoples. In the early modern period, however, it was visual "evidence" of Spanish cruelties that traveled widely, in no small part through the imagery created and published by Theodor de Bry.<sup>27</sup> Figure 4 shows a page from the 1598 publication of Bartolomé de Las Casas' *Spanish Tyrannies and Cruelties perpetrated in the West Indies*, which includes a series of de Bry engravings. This particular volume represents just one version of the Las Casas critique to circulate through Europe.<sup>28</sup> In contrast to the zemi, the printed image seen here existed in multiples and it featured depictions about indigenous people, not works created by them.

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Figure 4: Cannibalism in the New World, Spanish Tyrannies and Cruelties perpetrated in the West Indies. 1598. Theodor de Bry. Image courtesy Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

The book itself is a small object, measuring ca. 20 x 15 cm (ca. 8 x 6 inches). In spite of its scale, the inset image is startling in its descriptive fury. The location, we know from the accompanying text, is the kingdom of Guatemala, a Spanish administrative district covering most of Central America, including both Atlantic and Pacific coasts. While the correspondence between text and image does not match detail for detail, the two work in tandem. In the background we see ships, which resonate with the prose that condemns the Spanish for forcing indigenous men to build and labor on such vessels, and often sail far from home where they starve to death upon open seas. Towards the middle of the scene, native men, with their nearly nude and heavily muscled bodies, bear a heavy canon upon their backs. Spaniards, fully dressed, urge them onward with clubs ready to strike. This, the text explains, is another cruelty levied by Spaniards upon native people. In the foreground of the image an indigenous man struggles under an anchor that seems to weigh hundreds of pounds. Its curve across his body and in between his legs lends the scene a sexual charge and hints at other, un-pictured modes of rapacious cruelty. Yet the most vicious, and, for many viewers of the past (and the present) the most alluring part of the image may well be the indigenous people—overseen by Spaniards—butchering, grilling and consuming human bodies. The cooking takes place on the right side of the scene; off to the other side, two native women offer Spanish men beads in exchange for human body parts, trading trinkets for tasty morsels of flesh. The cannibal butcher

shop, as this scene has been called, has been interpreted by many.<sup>29</sup> It is, in fact, one of de Bry's most famous engravings. We introduce it here because, on one hand, it is the kind of image that seems "easy to read," and its interpretation is aided by the accompanying Las Casas text, written for the specific purpose of achieving "legal protection for the Indians from abuses like those it documents."<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the prose accompanying this image reports that the Spanish refused to feed the indigenous people they pressed into service; instead, they were allowed to eat the flesh of recently captured prisoners, an atrocity to be monitored by the Spanish themselves. Thus, as the text would have us expect, the ills of colonization leap from the image, reminding us how potent the descriptive power of an image can be.

Given the wide circulation of this image, and our customary reliance in reading image through an accompanying text, it bears mentioning that in the early modern period, the image was not bound by the written word, nor did it circulate just in the literate world of readers. In this case, prints of this scene were hung in the windows of book dealers and republished and repurposed time and again. Without the taming narrative, the image is even more intense, as well as perplexing: who is civilized here, who barbaric? We see indigenous cannibals, but also Spanish excess. In some versions, it was not only indigenous people who partook of the feast of human flesh, but sometimes Spaniards as well.<sup>31</sup> The prints release no party from the charge of cruelty.

As many before us have pointed out, the relative inexpensiveness and the reproducibility of prints made them a favorite weapon in political and religious battles throughout early modern Europe and the Americas. De Bry, himself, was a master of re-working and re-using images. His impulse to repeat and republish was surely driven by commercial desire, but also by anti-Catholic, anti-Spanish ideologies. This, too, is part of the meaning of his work. It is also why de Bry's role in promoting the "Black Legend"—critiques of Spanish imperial ambitions in the Americas, developed and stoked in the 16th and 17th centuries by Protestants across Europe and in North America—is often singled out as central. Ricardo García Cárcel, for instance, has argued that de Bry's seventeen images, published alongside the Las Casas *Breve relación*, but often circulating on their own, contributed more to the development of the Black Legend than any text written about the New World.<sup>32</sup>

From this, we sense the range of effects "circulation" could produce, from the physical movement of a singular object or its component materials (as we saw in the zemi). In the case of the cannibal butcher shop print, the wide scale and serendipitous circulation—passersby of bookshop windows as well as buyers—proved instrumental in the development of colonial and imperial ideologies. That the scene is not literally "true" is, of course, one point, but not the only one. Extreme its imagery and widespread in its reach, the de Bry print allows us to make another point emphatically: while the scene depicted by an image (its iconography) always matters, the "after life" of an image—the uses and ends that it serves over time beyond the original moment of production and consumption—also, and sometimes more profoundly, illuminates the workings of history. For the British and North American colonists, for instance, the Black Legend imagery taught them who they were not, and thus, who they were and what they and their colonial endeavors could become. A recent volume entitled *Re-reading the Black Legend* takes an even more global perspective, linking Europe's dark encounter with the Americas to its other primary site of anxiety and expansion, the people and empires of the East. In it, Walter Mignolo, for example, argues that the Black Legend represents—indeed, in no small part defines—the conjunction of Renaissance discourses of race and emerging forms of capitalism, the lasting traces of which are still visible today. Whether or not we agree with Mignolo, the implications of his claim are not easy to dismiss. For he suggests the Black Legend and its legacies are not incidental to world history. Moreover, and because of this, we are not finished with the Black Legend: for interpreters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there remains much to digest and resolve about its shaping of the past, its work on the present.

The meaning of an image often rests, in no small part, upon the other images we know, and the same was true for earlier viewers. In the case of the de Bry print, it circulated in a world where other prints often carried religious imagery, and its early readers' encounters with other printed works, ones with a spiritual veracity, helped buttress the claim to authority of the illustrated image. For some, the image would have resonated with scenes of the violent martyrdom of Catholic saints; for others, the martyrdom of Protestant sympathizers. Religious suffering and Spanish brutality thus shaded into each other. De Bry's imagery also engaged descriptions and concepts of cannibalism born in European imaginaries and publications about "other places," including Africa and the Americas; while it is impossible to know whether people in the Kingdom of Guatemala ever ate each other, the trope has become one of "exceptional power."<sup>33</sup> Knowledge of actual practices and ethnographic veracity (to use a modern phrase) often proved no match for ideas fixed through the repetition of long-standing tropes about savagery. Circulation, then, also produces meaning associatively, not only through the direct passing of an image (or object) from one setting to another.

The material form of this print, though, is hardly incidental. As a piece of paper, this object is fragile. When bound into a book, it gains stability—both as an object, protected by other pages and perhaps a binding, and as a work to be interpreted, framed by words and preceded and followed by other images. To read an image such as this in a 16th-century book would have been an intimate experience. We only need remember the pages of the *Las Casas* volume were about the size of a half-sheet of standard computer paper. We have reproduced some of its binding to help imagine a reader holding the book, thumbing its pages, lingering over some images but not others. The print medium, as a mode of mechanical reproduction, enhanced the availability of books and images in Western Europe and the Americas (across the whole of the early modern period). Even so, book ownership was for people of means. To own a print, however, was a less significant investment. Freed from books, prints could be pinned upon walls, pasted upon doors, hung in windows, handed from person to person. This mobility meant their meanings were ever more negotiable, ever less fixed by words or authorial intentions. If de Bry's imagery helps us to understand how fraught were the notions of, and approaches to colonial violence in the early modern period, its materials—the printed sheet—also call attention to how open the meanings of an image could be. The circulation, and attendant lack of fixity, are primary reasons prints such as the cannibal butcher shop were so persuasive in the construction of indigenous history in Latin America. The imagery suggests that annihilation and resistance were both viable outcomes to conquest and colonization, yet as we have seen, the political force and potency of an image does not reside simply in what has been printed on the page.

## The Current of Silver

Across the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, in Europe and Asia, silver was the material that made Spanish America famous and Spain rich. In traditional narratives of world history, silver figures in accounts of early modern globalization, and the trading empires of Europe and Asia. There is good reason for this. Silver from the Americas fueled wars fought by Spain, enriched Chinese merchants, sustained consumption in places as diverse as Manila and Flanders, and played no small role in the development of new monetary systems.<sup>34</sup> As Anne McCants has noted, American silver, as metallic commodity, "greased the wheels" of the entire global trade machine."<sup>35</sup>

While silver circulated as both coin and bar, we know it largely as the former, particularly the pieces of eight (*real de a ocho* or eight-real coin) that were common currency.



Figure 5: Eight-real coin, Mexico City, 1806. [Image in the public domain]

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Consider the coin in Figure 5, minted in 1806, following a pattern of coinage created from the 1770s through 1825, under the reigns of Carlos IV and Ferdinand VII.<sup>36</sup> On one side is the portrait of the Spanish monarch, with name and year (Carolus IIII Dei Gratia 1806 [Charles IV by the grace of God]), and on the other side the text continues (...Hispan[iarum] et Ind[iarum] Rex mo 8K T.H. [king of Spain and the Indies, [from the mint of] Mexico, [worth] 8 reales]. Here we see the coat-of-arms of the Spanish monarchs, with the shield of Castile and Leon at center, flanked by the Pillars of Hercules, and crown at top. The coin would seem to be an emblem of the emergent global economy under an imperial regime—mints across the Indies, the part of Spain's empire where the silver was mined, used standardized molds, so that the reales minted in Potosí looked almost identical to those of Mexico City. The mark of a particular mint (M with a superimposed o for Mexico City), which gave a geographic fixity to the coin's creation, was set into the coin's reverse or "tails" side. In this example, it trails in the text "King of Spain and the Indies," and is in visual competition with the swirling banners on the left pillar; these broader geographic referents to the larger Spanish overseas empire and to the mouth of the Mediterranean subsume the particular geographic referent. The bold profile portrait of Charles IV on the obverse, itself originally drawn from the model of Roman coinage, gives embodiment to the "universal monarchy" of the Spanish kings, whose global aspirations were made possible by the valuable metal of the coin. Because of coins like these, the fabulous wealth extracted from the mines of Zacatecas (in present-day Mexico) and Potosí (present-day Bolivia) were known the world over: Spanish American pesos are known that have Chinese stamps, a physical mark of their travel across the Pacific Ocean. Also registering the fame of American silver is an image of Potosi from the *Tari-i Hind-i garbî veyâ Hadîs-i nev*, "The History of the West Indies," a manuscript created in Ottoman Turkey in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>37</sup>

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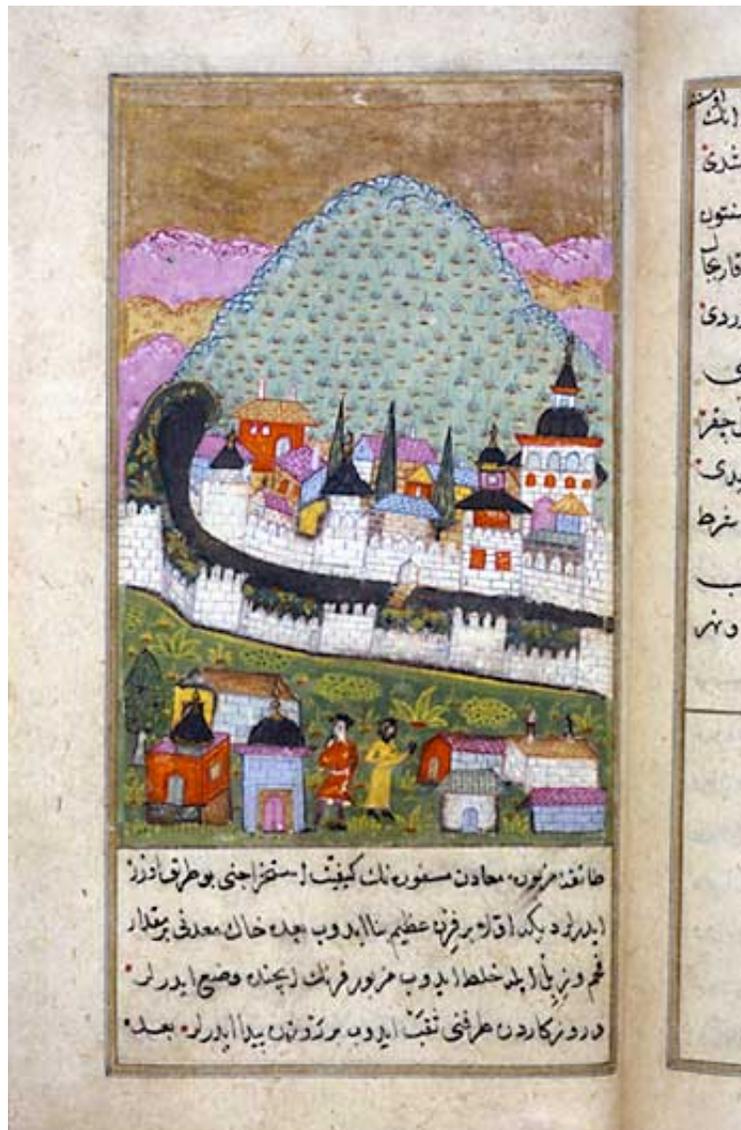


Figure 6: View of Potosí, *Tarih-i Hind-i garbi veyahü Hadis-i nev*, late 16th-early 17th c. The Edward E. Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago, USA.

In this, the site of the mines, Cerro Rico, dominates the background of the image, and a canal, part of the water management system for working silver, slices through the center of the painting. The clustering of buildings at the base of Cerro Rico, in the painting's foreground, mirrors the actual layout of the city (although the buildings themselves do not). The text beneath the painting, however, says nothing about the city or the setting of the scene. Instead it explains methods for extracting silver ore. Within the context of the Ottoman manuscript, then, the painting of Potosí functions as an image of desire, inviting contemplation of the geographic origins of silver, and, by implication, the wealth that silver could bestow upon those who could control it.

But beside this narrative of a globalizing economy, with knowledge (and interest) travelling along the same routes as currency, the narrative of absence is also to be found. Because for indigenous peoples in Potosí, like those figuring among the ethnically diverse pair of figures drawn in the *Tari-i*

*Hind-i garbî*, silver, made into coins like the one above, was lethal. The brutal conditions of the mines and the use of mercury in the refining process led to early deaths for many indigenous workers, particularly those in the forced labor drafts (called *mit'a*) that sucked available labor from highland cities and towns and transformed the Andean economy, and aided in the decimation of the native population.

But these discourses of global commodity and indigenous absence obscure what people, human actors on the ground, did with silver coin, these tokens of history perhaps our only source for understanding the range of meaning silver had. So let us flip this coin, as it were, from one of its sides—that of global commerce—and examine its other face, that of local circulation. For instance, most people in colonial Latin America would have contemplated silver not as coin, but in the ecclesiastic objects made for churches, from candlesticks, patens and monstrances. The image below shows a silver *anda* from Manila, the seat of Spanish American power in the Philippines and an important entrepôt in the colonial period. From Manila, American silver shipped in on the galleons was traded for Asian goods. But in this work, the silver has slipped out of the global marketplace, into the workplace of a local smith, and has been hammered into thin sheets to cover the wooden framework of the wheeled *anda*. In the form of the *anda*, silver would enter another vital circulatory network, serving as a base for the cult statue of a saint or other holy figure, which was drawn through streets in the festivals of faith that bound urban communities, thus taking on clear and deep associations with Christian worship and ecclesiastical authority. The additions that were made to this *anda* over time reveal its ongoing and important life within this community.

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Figure 7: Unknown artist, Anda, wood, silver, glass, iron and brass. Late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century (with additions over time). San Agustin Museum, Manila. [Photograph courtesy of the authors]

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Even coins themselves were not just money, they were objects with real lives, and a visual inspection of the American Numismatic Society's online database reveals patterns of use in coins that began their lives looking largely identical. While very few people—be they indigenous or otherwise—walked the streets of Mexico City or Cuzco with pockets full of coinage, we can see coins were touched, clipped, handled and rubbed (<http://numismatics.org/>).<sup>38</sup> Pierced coins were strung of threads or chains to be worn; Navajo smiths in the American southwest made coin into necklaces and concha ornaments in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the Mapuche in southern Chile fashioned elaborate pendants from which rows of silver disks were hung, activating the sonic possibilities of the metal. Thus the daily use of silver—circulating on many sensory levels—and attendant values, were not only bound to purchasing power.

One of the most striking examples that registers the meaning of such "local currency" in Spanish America comes from California, once the northern part of New Spain, made around 1822 (figure 8).

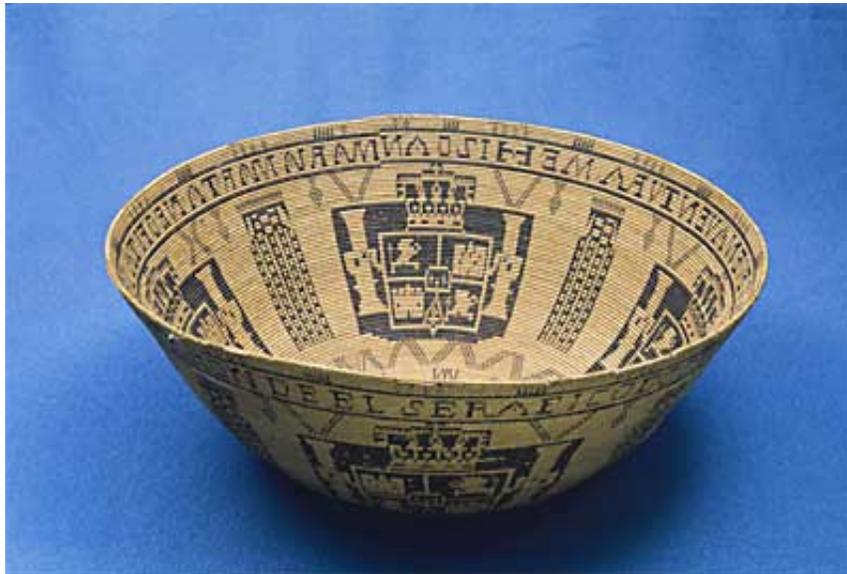


Figure 8: María Marta, Presentation basket, ca. 1822. Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, Berkeley, California, USA.

The coin has been transformed into a basket by a Chumash woman and the symbols from the coat-of-arms of the Spanish crown, along with geometric motifs, are woven into its side, but not the portrait of the King, whose hold over Spanish America was recently undone by the independence of Mexico.<sup>39</sup> Most interesting is the circular text of the basket's top ring, which echoes that of a coin's circular text naming Spain's reigning king, his status (*dei gracia*), year, and place of production. Here, María Marta, one of the few indigenous women in colonial Latin America known to have signed a work of art, has set her name.<sup>40</sup> The entire text reads: "María Marta, neofita de la mision de el Serafico Doctor San Buenaventura me hizo an... (María Marta, neophyte in the mission of the Seraphic doctor [in] San Buenaventura made me in the year...)." <sup>41</sup> In it we encounter a maker's name, status, and place of production. It is evident that many of these identifiers were the byproduct of the evangelization efforts that went hand-in-hand with Spain's colonial enterprise: San Buenaventura was a Franciscan mission, María Marta was a baptismal name, "neofita" was her status within a church-determined hierarchy at whose head sat the "Doctor."

In Alta California, the earliest Chumash missions were established in 1772, with San Buenaventura, the last of the missions founded by Junípero Serra, dating from a few years later (1782). "Neofite" Chumash like María Marta may have originally been drawn into San Buenaventura because of the example of a charismatic chief, or because it allowed an escape from enforced social hierarchies within traditional Chumash villages, or simply because the missions offered more stable food supplies, holding, at this period, enormous herds of cattle.<sup>42</sup> One report from the mission made in 1815, less than a decade before the basket was woven, notes that the noon meal "consists of pozole of ground corn, wheat peas, and other vegetables. Every week they receive their share of fresh beef in ample abundance."<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, once baptized and inside the mission, the Chumash were not allowed to leave; their daily lives were subject to Franciscan rules for social behavior and

religious practice, and their labor was to be given freely at the service of the mission and its friars. As Steven Hackel has described it, "In the missions, Indians entered a distorting world, where, regardless of age, they were treated as juveniles: in the eyes of the Catholic Church, they were "spiritual children"; before the Spanish state and its laws, they were minors."<sup>44</sup> We sense that mission life could be both difficult and familiar from the petition of 1825, in which most of the Chumash men at San Buenaventura appealed to the Mexican government for their freedom.<sup>45</sup>

In the early 1820s, however, when María Marta wove her basket, the circulation of coinage triggered a process of sequential translations: a literate person, perhaps the seraphic doctor himself, may have transcribed the letters for the craftswoman, perhaps even providing the coin which was used for design motifs; the artisan translating the diverse elements into basketry fibers (local *junco*, for which the Chumash have developed their own taxonomy) and a local idiom of Chumash weaving technique. The long and well-documented history of Chumash basketry demonstrates how baskets like these were in turn drawing on specific botanical knowledge, culled through generations of interaction with the dry coastal California environment.<sup>46</sup> María Marta's creation was one of several "silver baskets" produced on the Chumash missions that survive—a point confirmed by the shallow tray made by Juana Basilia Sitmelelene (now part of the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian).<sup>47</sup> At one level, this type of work, which can be understood as a translation from medium to medium, is well known through the history of art; the Codex Huejotzingo, for instance, includes a painting of a featherwork banner. At the same time, the model of the coin and its legend along with the commission to make a basket provided Maria Marta with a place and an occasion to expand, perhaps unwittingly, the range by which coins signified. Instead of belonging to a global circulatory network, the coin's imagery is anchored into a specific time, place, and creator, whose woven name is inseparable from the basket itself.

Like the silver coin that inspired it, Maria Marta's basket was launched into circulation, as it was probably presented by the Franciscans as a gift for a visiting official, perhaps one representing the newly declared empire of Mexico, or a local military commander, the recipient of another such gift basket. At the time the basket was made, missions were the economic engines of the region, but the wars of Independence made their relations with metropolitan centers uncertain. That its recipient may have been Mexican is suggested by its purchase in Mexico City by Zelia Nuttall in the early 20th century, before bringing it back to California.<sup>48</sup> In this context, we see Maria Marta's possible awareness and appropriation of this international and official language of currency, a currency that, it should be noted, was increasingly scarce due to the war for Independence. But it is not just an imperial imagination being manifest through the subaltern here. Even before the arrival of Spaniards, the Chumash had developed vibrant regional trade networks, using shell beads as currency, and baskets may have been among the items traded among indigenous groups and settlements; after the missions were introduced and settled, baskets were collected by Spanish explorers and also sent to Mexico City as gifts.<sup>49</sup> Thus, artisans like María Marta were part of diverse networks of circulation that operated within both indigenous and "imperial" zones, in both cases, calling upon them to imagine a recipient that existed beyond the horizon of their local experience. It's notable that the text also grants an identity to the basket itself ("*me hizo/ made me*"), as if to anticipate the autonomous existence, far outside of the walls of the mission that held María Marta, that it would come to have. Within the mission system, it was the imagery of the silver coin that María Marta, and other artisans who made gift baskets at Franciscan missions, used to provide the grammar of their own response.

The objects in this brief essay, which were made at different moments in the history of Spain's colonial enterprise, suggest much about the mobility of things, and of their meaning. When set side by side, the trans-Atlantic ties of the *zemi* and the trans-hemispheric connections that gave rise to

María Marta's basket help us understand the reach and range of imperial ambition in the Americas in the early modern period; the juxtaposition also offers insight into the equivalent range of indigenous responses within this context of colonial expansion. We have read each object separately, however, to suggest how as "tokens of history continually available to the senses," things—be they works of art or not—can offer interpretive spaces from which to reconsider discourses of indigenous absence and resistance. In emphasizing networks of circulation and the connotative meanings of materials of such objects, we've tried to suggest approaches to history that push beyond traditional questions of aesthetic effect so often linked to the study of art; we have also sought to suggest ways that the interpretation of things might be carried into histories beyond Latin America.

In her essay, "Beyond Words," Auslander argues that historians should include material culture within our range of canonical sources because people use things differently than words, and because such usages are not fully translatable into words.<sup>50</sup> With this, we would agree. This is one reason why our footnotes point to so many visual referents online, sources that make it ever more possible for visual experiences (and, by proxy, the experiences of materials) to enter our accounts of the past. At the same time, we wish to end by emphasizing how the history of things, and especially objects produced under conditions of colonial enterprise, can expand our notions of exchange and encounter. For us, images and objects are more than prompts for the writing of history, illustrations of events in the past, or even correctives to the biases of texts. They can, of course, be all of these things. It is the circulation of objects and their very particular material presences, though, that for us provide the connective trace between past experiences and present actuality and in following that trace, that comet's path, we think afresh about the actual work of history and its narrative possibilities, not only as what happened in times gone by.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*, trans. Herma Briffault (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 29.

<sup>2</sup> The 1961 essay is reprinted as George Kubler, "On the Colonial Extinction of the Motifs of Precolumbian Art," *Studies in Ancient American and European Art: The Collected Essays of George Kubler*, Thomas Reese, ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1985), 66-74.

<sup>3</sup> Studies based on transcriptions of native language documents are many; for a selection: Frank Salomon and Geroge L. Urioste, trans. and eds., *The Huarochirí manuscript: a testament of ancient and colonial Andean Religion* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991); James Lockhart, *We People Here: Nahuatl Accounts of the Conquest of Mexico* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993); Luis Reyes García, Eustaquio Celestino Solís and Armando Valencia Ríos, *Documentos nahuas de*

*la Ciudad de México del siglo XVI* (Mexico City: Archivo General de la Nación, 1996); Susan Kellogg and Matthew Restall, eds. *Dead Giveaways: Indigenous Testaments of Colonial Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1998); Luis Reyes García, ed. and trans., *¿Cómo te confundes? ¿Acaso no somos conquistados? Anales de Juan Bautista* (Mexico City: Biblioteca Lorenzo Boturini, Insigne y Nacional Basílica de Guadalupe, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2001); Gérald Taylor, *Sermones y ejemplos: antología bilingüe castellano-quechua, siglo XVII* (Lima: Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos and Lluvia Editores, 2002); Matthew Restall, Lisa Sousa and Kevin Terraciano, eds. *Mesoamerican Voices: native-language writings from colonial Mexico, Yucatan and Guatemala* (Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005); and Nicole Delia Legnani, trans. *Titu cusi: a 16<sup>th</sup> century account of the conquest* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008) and Leora Auslander, "Beyond Words," *American Historical Review* 10: 4 (2007), accessible at the History Cooperative: <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/110.4/auslander.html>.

<sup>5</sup> George Kubler, *The Shape of Time* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Auslander, "Beyond Words," 15.

<sup>7</sup> A brief description, with links to all 8 images, appears in the online exhibit, "World Treasures of the Library of Congress: "Beginnings, Rule of Law" [<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/world/rule.html>] and, as well, "1492: An Ongoing Voyage" [<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/eurocla.html>]. For larger images, see link to Huejotzingo Codex in "Early Americas," [<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/newsevents/events/earlyamericas/>]. For discussion of the Codex in the context of World History teaching, see Sharon Cohen, "Huejotzinco Codez of 1531" in *World History Sources* [<http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/d/231/whm.html>]. For a conservation report and further bibliography, Sylvia Rodgers Albro and Thomas C. Albro II, "The Examination and Conservation Treatment of the Library of Congress Harkness 1531 Huejotzingo Codex," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 29, no. 2 (Autumn, 1990): 97-115, published in JAIC online: [<http://cool.conservation-us.org/coolaic/jaic/articles/jaic29-02-001.html>].

<sup>8</sup> For an example of indigenous featherwork from the 16<sup>th</sup> century that focuses on religious imagery, see [http://www.smith.edu/vistas/vistas\\_web/gallery/detail/christ-pantocrator\\_det.htm](http://www.smith.edu/vistas/vistas_web/gallery/detail/christ-pantocrator_det.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Today, the manuscript includes eight native paintings, created by different painters on indigenous paper, and 79 folios written in Spanish. See Tom Cummins, "The Madonna and the Horse: Becoming Colonial in New Spain and Peru," in *Native Artists and Patrons in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Emily Umberger and Tom Cummins (Tucson, University of Arizona, 1995), 52-83; Elizabeth Boone, "Pictorial Documents and Visual Thinking in Postconquest Mexico," *Native Traditions in the Postconquest World* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), 149-200.

<sup>10</sup> Among scholars of colonial Latin America, Inga Clendinnen has been a particularly eloquent voice on this theme. See, for instance, Inga Clendinnen "Fierce and Unnatural Cruelty": Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico," in *New World Encounters*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1993), 12-47; Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1515-1570* (Cambridge, Cambridge University press, 2003). On the critical philosophy of history, see Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. K. Blamey and

D. Pellauer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> Carolyn S. Dean and Dana Leibsohn, "Hybridity and its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America," *Colonial Latin American Research Review*.12.1 (2003): 5-35.

<sup>12</sup> See, for instance, Carolyn S. Dean, *A Culture of Stone: Inka Perspectives on Rock* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2010), or her essay, "The Inka Married the Earth: Integrated Outcrops and the Making of Place." *Art Bulletin* vol., 89, No. 3 (Sept., 2007), 502-518.

<sup>13</sup> See Dana Leibsohn and Barbara E. Mundy, *Vistas: Visual Culture in Spanish America, Cultura visual en Hispanoamérica, 1520-1820* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010) and online sample at [http://www.smith.edu/vistas/vistas\\_web/gallery/gallery\\_main.htm](http://www.smith.edu/vistas/vistas_web/gallery/gallery_main.htm).

<sup>14</sup> The figure likely dates from the period 1500-1520, before the large scale decimation of the Taíno.

<sup>15</sup> Many objects sent to Europe from the Americas were misidentified across the early modern period and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Often, they were considered "Chinese," or "Indian" or given a generic "Asian" label. The Taíno zemi, which is today in the Museo nazionale preistorico etnografico Luigi Pigorini in Rome, was registered as an idol from the Indies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, before it arrived at the Museum, but later on was listed as an object of African origins. See Bernardo Vega, "Un Cinturón Tejido y una Careta de Madera de Santo Domingo en el Período de Transculturation," *Boletín del Museo del Hombre Dominicano*, 3 (1973): 199-226; Marco Biscione, "Lo Zemi del Museo Pigorini: problemi di interpretazione," *Gli Indios di Hispaniola e la Prima Colonizzazione Europea in America* (Florence, Institute Geografico Militare, 1991, 77-83); Dicey Taylor, Marco Biscione and Peter G. Roe, "The Beaded Zemi in the Pigorini Museum," in *Taíno: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture from the Caribbean*, ed. Fatima Bercht (New York, Monacelli Press and Museo del Barrio, 1998), 158-169.

<sup>16</sup> See the online collection at Museo del Barrio: <http://www.elmuseo.org/>

<sup>17</sup> This a point reinforced by the iconography, which may evoke a cacique in ceremonial dress or Taíno shamanic dualism. Taylor, Biscione and Roe, "The Beaded Zemi," 163-169.

<sup>18</sup> See, for instance, Ida Altman, "The Contact of Cultures in America" in *1492, An Ongoing Voyage*, ed. John Hebert (Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, 1996), 110-129 and James Axtell, "At the Water's Edge: Trading in the 16<sup>th</sup> century," in *Natives and Newcomers* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001), 79-103, or the online exhibition, "Exploring the Early Americas," at <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/earlyamericas/>. For a model from northern North America, see "Northwest Coast Indian History and Culture" from the Anchorage Museum [http://www.anchoragemuseum.org/galleries/alaska\\_gallery/NW\\_indian.aspx](http://www.anchoragemuseum.org/galleries/alaska_gallery/NW_indian.aspx)].

<sup>19</sup> In art history, questions about who commissioned a work and why have been central since the discipline was founded in the sixteenth century; unfortunately these queries are not often addressed for indigenous objects created in the colonial Americas because so few names of specific patrons and artists have survived.

<sup>20</sup> For other examples of such foreign/local exchanges, see Leibsohn and Mundy, *Vistas: Visual Culture in Spanish America*, particularly the discussion of the "Decorative Sculpture with Olmec Mask, ca. 1720, from the Bayerische Verwaltung der staatlichen Schlösser, Gärten und Seen,

Munich, Germany," which offers a counterpoint.

<sup>21</sup> A good example is Suzanne Blier, "Imaging Otherness in Ivory: African Portrayals of the Portuguese ca. 1492," *Art Bulletin* 75, no. 3 (September 1993): 375-96.

<sup>22</sup> The transculturation theme, in regards to this figure, has been raised by several scholars, including Biscione, "Lo Zemi del Museo Pigorini" and Taylor, Biscione and Roe, "The Beaded Zemi."

<sup>23</sup> Taylor, Biscione and Roe, "The Beaded Zemi," 162.

<sup>24</sup> See related example in "Explore" from the British Museum [[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online\\_tours/americas/unknown\\_amazon/funeral\\_urn.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online_tours/americas/unknown_amazon/funeral_urn.aspx)].

<sup>25</sup> The full collection history of the zemi is not known, although it (along with a similar beaded belt) seems to have been associated with Habsburg collections in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. With other indigenous objects from Mesoamerica, it was later held in Italy in the Cospi collection and ultimately transferred to the Museo nazionale preistorico etnografico Luigi Pigorini (Bernardo Vega, "Un cinturón tejido y una careta de madera de Santo Domingo, del periodo de transculturación taino-española," *Boletín del Museo del Hombre Dominicano* 3 (1973), 199-226 and Biscione, "Lo Zemi del Museo Pigorini").

<sup>26</sup> Histories of collecting, especially of indigenous American objects by Europeans, are also relevant in this context. See, for instance, Edward Sullivan, *The Language of Objects in the Art of the Americas* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007); Byron Hamann, "Interventions: The Mirrors of Las Meninas: Cochineal, Silver and Clay," *Art Bulletin* 92 (1/2, March-June 2010), 6-35; and Daniela Bleichmar and Peter Mancall, eds. *Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

<sup>27</sup> In addition to the works cited below, on the Las Casas imagery, see Bernadette Bucher, *Icon and Conquest: A Structural Analysis of the Illustrations of de Bry's Great Voyages*, trans. B. M. Gulati (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1981) and Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage: the New World and Techniques of Civilization* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2008) for a range of approaches to de Bry imagery. For De Bry's images of Amerindians of the contemporary United States, see "Picturing the New World: The Hand-Colored De Bry Engravings of 1590" by University Libraries, University of North Carolina [<http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/debry/>], and "Early Images of Virginia Indians" from the Virginia Historical Society [<http://www.vahistorical.org/cole/debry.htm>]. The Library of Congress has digitized and put online many of the de Bry volumes, albeit with minimal commentary, in "Kraus Collection of Sir Francis Drake; Grands Voyages," Library of Congress [[http://international.loc.gov/service/rbc/rbdk/d031/inanalytics\\_america.html](http://international.loc.gov/service/rbc/rbdk/d031/inanalytics_america.html)].

<sup>28</sup> Versions of this work were published both before this one, and well after, in many European languages, including Spanish, French, Latin, German and English.

<sup>29</sup> See, for instance, Tom Conley, "De Bry's Las Casas," in *Amerindian Images and the Legacy of Columbus*, eds. René Jara and Nicholas Spadaccini (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 103-131 and E. Shaskan Bumás, "The Cannibal Butcher Shop: Protestant Uses of Las Casas's *Brevísima relación* in Europe and the American Colonies," *Early American Literature* 35 (2000): 107-136.

<sup>30</sup> Bumás, "The Cannibal Butcher Shop," 115.

<sup>31</sup> For a particularly interesting discussion of the English, Protestant appropriation of the de Bry scene, see Bumás, "The Cannibal Butcher Shop," who describes both de Bry images as advertisements and the transformation of indigenous actors into Spaniards.

<sup>32</sup> Ricardo García Cárcel, *La leyenda negra, historia y opinion* (Madrid, Alianza Universidad, 1992), 227. In recent years, there has been a turn in the scholarship of the Black Legend. We read less about pure binaries and Protestant propaganda; we also read less about Spanish needs to set the record straight. Instead, we are encouraged to see images such as these as tropes and pieces of a larger puzzle, in which colonial endeavors in the Americas were defined in relation to each other. See, for instance, Margaret Greer, Walter Mignolo and Maureen Quilligan, eds. *Re-reading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007).

<sup>33</sup> This phrasing we draw from Peter Hulme, whose discussion of the discursive power of cannibalism is one we have found helpful. See, "Introduction: the Cannibal Scene," in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, eds. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iverson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-38, 4.

<sup>34</sup> See, for instance, Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez, who argue the point in the context of early modern globalization: "Born with a 'Silver Spoon': The Origin of World Trade in 1571," *Journal of World History* 6, 2 (1995): 201-21 or Timothy Brook, "Weighing Silver," In *Vermeer's Hat* (New York, 2009), 152-184.

<sup>35</sup> Anne McCants, "Exotic Goods, Popular Consumption, and the Standard of Living: Thinking about Globalization in the Early Modern World," *Journal of World History* 18, 4 (2007): 433-463, 438.

<sup>36</sup> This arrangement appeared on one side of the coins, the other bore the bust of the Spanish king. See, for instance, the silver 8 real coin of King Charles IV, from 1806.  
[[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Carlos\\_IV\\_Coin.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Carlos_IV_Coin.jpg)].

<sup>37</sup> The *Tarih-i Hind-i garbi veyahü Hadis-i nev* is known today as the "first major work in Ottoman Turkish about the Spanish exploration and conquest of the New World," Giancarlo Castale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 160. Useful descriptions of the manuscript appear in *Tarih-i Hind-i garbi, veyahü Hadis-i nev: a History of the Discovery of America* (Istanbul: Historical Research Foundation, Istanbul Research Center, 1987) and Thomas Goodrich, *The Ottoman Turks and the New World: a study of the Tarih-i Hind-i garbi and sixteenth-century Ottoman Americana* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1990).

<sup>38</sup> Patterns of wear and handling are revealed by a search of the American Numismatic Society's collections database for Latin American coins, online [<http://numismatics.org/>].

<sup>39</sup> See Lillian Smith, "Three Inscribed Chumash Baskets with Designs from Spanish Colonial Coins," *American Indian Art Magazine* (Summer 1982): 62-68.

<sup>40</sup> Signed indigenous works from colonial Spanish America are rare, and even more uncommon are works in which the names of female artisans are registered. There are, however, several examples of

Chumash baskets in which the names of the makers are woven into the basketry, rendering the identity of the weaver explicit. See for instance, Smith, but also Travis Hudson and Thomas C. Blackburn, *The material culture of the Chumash interaction sphere*, vol. 2 (Santa Barbara: Ballena Press, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 1983), Fig. 153-8, p. 282, 285.

<sup>41</sup> Zelia Nuttall gives a slightly different translation of the inscription of the Maria Marta basket, instead attributing it to Ana Marta. See her essay, "Two Remarkable California Baskets," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 2, 4 (1924): 341-343.

<sup>42</sup> Steven Hackel notes that, "In electing to move, Indians made choices for themselves and their families." *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 74. See also, Robert L. Hoover, "Spanish-Native Interaction and Acculturation in the Missions," *Columbian Consequences: Archeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands West*, vol. 1, ed. David Hurst Thomas (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 395-406; John R. Johnson, "The Chumash and the Missions," *Columbian Consequences: Archeological and Historical Perspectives on the Spanish Borderlands West*, vol. 1, ed. David Hurst Thomas (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 365-375.

<sup>43</sup> Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., *As The Padres Saw Them: California Indian Life and Customs as Reported by The Franciscan Missionaries, 1813-1815* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library, 1976), 86.

<sup>44</sup> Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 3. On conditions at the Chumash missions, including discussion of religious and labor expectations, as well overt and subtle acts of resistance, see Hackel but also James Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2004).

<sup>45</sup> Hackel, *Children of Coyote*, 377.

<sup>46</sup> Janice Timbrook, *Chumash Ethnobotany* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 2007), esp. 97-108. It remains unclear whether María Marta would have herself been literate. Schooling for indigenous women at the Franciscan missions in Alta California was often less extensive than that of men.

<sup>47</sup> See description of the basket at "A Century of Collecting..." at the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology in Berkeley [[http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/exhibitions/cent/gallery1\\_3\\_9.html](http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/exhibitions/cent/gallery1_3_9.html)], and National Museum of the American Indian, "Collections Search," (<http://www.nmai.si.edu/searchcollections/item.aspx?irn=245117&catids=1&cultxt=Chumash&src=1-1>). Other examples created by other women at Chumash missions and in different forms, are known from the Lowe Museum of Anthropology and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. See Smith, "Three Inscribed Chumash Baskets." While some have even more elaborate inscriptions, allowing scholars to date the baskets to the years particular governors held office in California, all draw upon the same elements of Spanish coins.

<sup>48</sup> In fact, the collection history of the María Marta basket further speaks to the idea of circulation, for it was owned in Mexico and later found its way into an antique dealer's shop, where it was purchased by the illustrious scholar of the Americas, Zelia Nuttall, who intended it as a gift for her longtime friend, Phoebe Hearst. Today the basket is in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology in Berkeley. (Smith, "Three Inscribed Chumash Baskets," 67).

[49](#) Lesley Byrd Simpson, ed. *The Letters of José Señan, O.F.M., Mission San Buenaventura 1796-1823* (John Howell Books, San Francisco: 1962). Cited in Smith, "Three Inscribed Chumash Baskets," 64 and, on beads and trade, see Anthony P. Graesch, "Specialized Bead Making among Island Chumash Households," *Foundations of Chumash Complexity, Perspectives in California Archeology*, ed. Jeanne E. Arnold (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archeology, University of California, 2004), 133-171.

[50](#) Auslander, "Beyond Words," 53.

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