“Golden Compasses” on the Shores of Lake Titicaca: The Appropriation of European Visual Culture and the Patronage of Art by an Indigenous Cacique in the Colonial Andes

Author(s) Okada, Hiroshige

Citation 大阪大学大学院文学研究科紀要. 51 P.87–P.111

Issue Date 2011-03-31

Text Version publisher

URL https://doi.org/10.18910/10414

DOI 10.18910/10414
“Golden Compasses” on the Shores of Lake Titicaca:
The Appropriation of European Visual Culture and the Patronage of Art by an Indigenous Cacique in the Colonial Andes*

Hiroshige OKADA

The Plantin-Moretnus, or Officina Plantiniana, one of the most influential and well-known European printing offices, was founded at the Flemish commercial center Antwerp during the sixteenth century, and stayed in business until the nineteenth century. This old printing office is conserved nowadays as a museum, and a finely designed emblem carved on the top of its main portal still shows the ideal of the publisher to the visitors (fig. 1-a, b). This emblem commonly called the “golden compasses” was the trademark of this printing office. The inscription in the emblem, which reads “Labore et Constantia”, is the motto of the founder Christophe Plantin.

*This paper was prepared for a talk given at the Hispanic Institute, Columbia University, New York, on April 19, 2010. I would like to thank Prof. Carlos J. Alonso, the director of the Institute, and especially, my friend Prof. Alessandra Russo for coordinating the lecture.

Interestingly, or rather curiously, the trademark of this European printing office appears on the wall of the choir loft in the colonial church of Carabuco, a small indigenous town located on the northeastern shores of Lake Titicaca in Andean highlands (plate 1). The church is well known for its marvelous pictorial decoration that consists of mural paintings covering the major space of both the nave and the baptistery, as well as a series of four large canvases in the nave. The choir loft mural, on which the emblem is painted, is one of the main focuses of the pictorial decoration of this church. The choir loft installed above the doorway entrance, naturally, occupies a notable location when we look back on the entrance from the nave. Then, why was the trademark of a printing office at Antwerp reproduced in such a prominent manner as part of the pictorial decoration of a colonial church on the shores of Lake Titicaca?

Thanks to José de Mesa and Teresa Gisbert’s research on the church’s documents, we now know relatively well about the historical circumstances that produced the pictorial decoration of the church of Carabuco. In addition, the Viceministerio de Cultura of Bolivia recently issued a series of reports mainly concerning the technical aspects of the murals and canvases of Carabuco. Among the Andean rural churches, Carabuco church has been relatively well studied. However, These past research efforts have not shed sufficient light on the uniqueness in the iconographical aspect of this pictorial decoration. In fact, no one has recognized the curious and riddling fact that the mural painting of the choir loft reproduces the emblem of the Flemish press. Furthermore, the scope of this problem is not only restricted to a simple iconographical study, either. In my view, there was a complex historical process of intercultural negotiations, which produced the seemingly sudden apparition of the emblem of the “golden compasses” in an Andean indigenous community. I do not think that it was a capricious invention of the local parish.

As we will examine, the pictorial decoration now conserved in the church is, in fact, not the product of a single party but rather an amalgam of two different stages: the first by a resident priest in the mid-seventeenth century, and the second by a local cacique toward the end of the eighteenth century. The emblem of the “golden compasses” is one of the main decorative motifs executed at the church during the eighteenth century. The pictorial decoration of the church of Carabuco consists of two different layers that belonged to two patrons who lived during different periods and had quite different cultural backgrounds.

In the last chapter of this essay, I would like to show the reason why the emblem of the
“Golden Compasses” on the Shores of Lake Titicaca (OKADA)
plate 2. "Baptism of cacique Fernando Siñani", Baptistery, Church of Carabuco
(copyright: Daniel Giannoni)

plate 3. "Baptism of a King (Roman Emperor Constantine the Great)", Baptistery, Church of Carabuco
(copyright: Daniel Giannoni)
“golden compasses” appeared in the church of an Andean indigenous community. But before that, we have to trace the whole process of forming this pictorial amalgam. By surveying its somewhat contradictive process, we will be able to understand more profoundly the riddling pictorial program in Carabuco church as a unique result of long and intricate intercultural negotiations.

Large Canvases in the Nave

The foundation of the church of Carabuco dates back possibly to the end of the sixteenth century when the pre-Hispanic indigenous settlement was converted to the reducción under viceroy Francisco de Toledo’s rule (fig. 2). Though we do not know much about the early history of the church, it is probable that the legendary discovery of the famous “cross of Carabuco” created an opportunity to found the church.\(^3\) The cross of Carabuco, now enshrined in the main altarpiece of the church, is believed to be a relic of an Apostle who visited the pre-Columbian Andes. It was discovered after the Conquest and performed many miracles, according to historical sources such as the chronicle published in the early seventeenth century by Augustinian friar Juan Ramos Gavilán.\(^4\) The first stage of the decoration of the church clearly reflects the missionary objectives from this early period after the Conquest.

The decoration of the first stage consists of the four large canvases in the nave and a mural painting of ornamental motifs that surrounds those canvases (fig. 3). It was José de Arellano, the parish priest of Carabuco, who directed the decoration. The dedicatory inscription in one of the canvases reads that he commissioned the works in 1669.
to José López de los Ríos, a local painter who worked in the Lake Titicaca area, and that he also ordered the construction of the choir loft equipped with an organ.\(^5\)

The four canvases represent the *Postrimerías*, or the “Four Last Things”, specifically, “The Last Judgment”, “Purgatory”, “Glory in Heaven”, and “Hell” (fig. 4-7). These subjects were very popular iconography for the Andean colonial churches because the missionaries thought that the image of the world after death was very effective for the conversion of the indigenous population. Jesuit friar Antonio de Vega, in fact, says as such on the mural painting of this subject matter executed at the end of the sixteenth century in the now lost open chapel for the indigenous in Cuzco:

“Aquí, finalmente, ganan los indios muchas gracias e indulgencias y se catequizan, por...

---

\(^5\) According to the document, the choir loft was equipped with an organ.
los ciegos y por los nuestros, los indios que vienen de lejos, a confesarse y a aprender la Doctrina Cristiana y ha habido notables mudanzas y conversiones de indios con la consideración del juicio y gloria, y penas de los condenados, que está todo pintado en las paredes de esta capilla, y particularmente, con las penas y castigos que en el infierno tienen los vicios y pecados de los indios, que están allí bien dibujados, por sus especies y diferencias; porque los indios se mueven mucho por pinturas y muchas veces más que con muchos sermones...” (Vega 1948 [c.1600]: 43)

The mural painting of the church of Andahuaylillas (fig. 8), one of the earliest extant works of this kind, demonstrates clearly this idea of the missionaries. The somewhat medieval motif of Leviathan that opens its large mouth should have especially been an impressive image for the newly converted Christians in the Andes. In fact, indigenous chronicler Guaman Poma de Ayala also reproduces in his famous early
seventeenth century manuscripts the image of Leviathan, when he talks about Hell (fig. 9: Guaman Poma de Ayala 1980: 882-883).

In the “Hell” scene of the Carabuco canvases as well, the monstrous figure of Leviathan is represented in a somewhat exaggerated manner (fig. 7). But what are more interesting in this painting are the small framed-scenes in the upper part of the canvas, among which the idolatrous practices by the indigenous and the confessions made by them are seen (fig. 10). These images contrasted with the vision of Hell remind us immediately of the warning of Antonio de Vega cited above.6 Furthermore, the physiognomy of the priest who receives the confessions of the indigenous is apparently that of José de Arellano, the parish priest of Carabuco who commissioned the paintings, as is seen in his portrait inserted in the canvas of the “Glory in Heaven” (fig. 6; Lower right). The missionary intention conveyed in this series of canvases is obvious—the patron priest should, as mentioned by the Jesuit friar, make his indigenous parish consider “the Judgment” and “the Glory”, and should also demonstrate to them “the pains and the punishments that the vicious and the sinful among the indios suffer in Hell (las penas y castigos que en el infierno tienen los vicios y pecados de los indios)".

The four canvases of the Postrimerías of Carabuco church contain another series of small framed-scenes. In total thirty tondo-like circular frames are arranged at the bottom of each canvas. The thirteen scenes represent the legendary activities of Christ’s Apostle who visited the pre-Columbian Andes. The remaining seventeen scenes depict the discovery of the cross after the Conquest and the scenes of various miracles that this “cross of Carabuco” performed. Then, why these scenes were included in the canvases?

As I have mentioned, Ramos Gavilán, an early seventeenth-century Augustinian friar, left a detailed description about the discovery of this relic. This friar was one of the leading missionaries of the period, who was involved ardently in the campaign of
extirpating idolatry in the Andes. From 1618 to 1620, he stayed in an Augustinian convent newly founded in Copacabana, a prominent holy place with a long history from the pre-Columbian period that was converted into a pilgrimage site for the Virgin Mary after the Conquest. Ramos Gavilán’s description about the cross of Carabuco forms the first part of his chronicle, which details the history of devotion to the Virgin of Copacabana. Apparently, for the Augustinian friar, the discovery of the miraculous cross left by an Apostle must have been a preparatio evangelica that had promised the victory of Christianity in the Andes, which was thereafter demonstrated by the increasing devotion to the Virgin. The reason why the scenes concerning the miraculous cross were included in the canvases of the Postrimerías may be understood by the same logic. For the priest in Carabuco, these scenes were great evidence for the promised success of propaganda. Simultaneously, the holy legend might be also a device to reorganize the memories of Andean antiquity conceived in the mind of the indigenous people. The future world after death and the holy legend in the far past: the vivid vision of those two invisible realms was the true subject matter that the priest of the indigenous community intended to represent in those four canvases. This intent to penetrate into the mind of the converted parish in order to consolidate their faith characterizes the first stage of the pictorial decoration in Carabuco church during the mid-seventeenth century.

Then, how did the indigenous community respond to this? Facing such intent from the Church, did they stay simply passive audiences? Perhaps no. In a series of pictorial decorations executed during the process to restore the deteriorated church in the late-eighteenth century, the indigenous leader began an ambitious attempt to make use of European iconographical resources for his own sake. Now, let us examine the second stage of the decoration of the church of Carabuco executed under the patronage of the local cacique Agustín Siñani.

The Mural of the New Baptistery and Cacique Agustín Siñani

According to the Libro de fábrica of the church of Carabuco, the walls of a part of the nave near the facade and the choir loft collapsed in 1763. At that time, the baptistery adjacent to this part of the nave was also destroyed. The church is constructed by adobe bricks, which are not long-lasting materials. In the face of this accident, the parish priest Juan José Turjillo ordered the community to restore the collapsed parts. Cacique Agustín
Siñani assumed a leadership role for this task. The *Libro de fábrica* accounts that he rebuilt the choir loft and provided “fifteen thousand adobe bricks” in order to reconstruct the tower of the church adjacent to the facade (Mesa and Gisbert 1977: 291, 300 [n.22]). The description in this document is not especially detailed, but the collapse of the church would have been serious enough for the tower to also need full restoration. The reconstruction of the baptistery began in 1766 or 1768. According to the *Libro de fábrica*, the work of construction was thanks to “the labor and sweat of the good indios of this community and the devoted, noble, and efficient personal assistance of cacique don Agustín Siñani ([...se debe al] trabajo y sudor de los buenos indios a todo este común y a la devota noble eficaz asistencia personal de su cacique D. Agustín Siñani)” (Mesa and Gisbert 1977: 291, 300 [n.23]). The newly constructed baptistery was fully covered with mural paintings (fig. 11). Though the document does not mention the mural paintings, the circumstances strongly suggest that the cacique should have taken the initiative for the decoration of the baptistery as well. Unfortunately, however, cacique Agustín met sudden death; he was killed in 1781 in the large indigenous uprising as one of the privileged elites who supported the viceregal rule (Paredes 1968: 27-29). Therefore, the execution of the major part of the pictorial decoration of the baptistery should possibly date between 1766/68 and the year of his sudden death. As for the painter, we do not know anything; but the generally unsophisticated style of the murals suggests that he/she was a modest, local painter.

In any case, the pictorial decoration of the baptistery is worth special attention because the murals possibly executed under the intervention of the patron cacique could show some evident contrast with the pictorial propaganda already exhibited in the same church by the parish priest of the seventeenth century. In fact, the decoration of the baptistery is key to understanding the fundamental idea of the whole pictorial program executed in the late eighteenth century, which also includes the “golden compasses” of the choir loft. Then, what kind of message do these murals in the baptistery convey?

Surrounded by the ornamental motifs that cover the major part of the walls are three
narrative scenes located on the walls of the baptistery. On the wall in front of the door from the nave, we see the “Baptism of Christ” (fig. 12). The baptism is represented by colorful scenery with tropical-looking birds in the trees. On the right side wall is the baptism of an indigenous noble in uncu, the traditional dress of the Inca era, with tocapus ornaments (plate 2). A priest is pouring the holy water on the head of the kneeling indigenous. On the facing left wall, we see another scene of the baptism (plate 3). In this case, the baptism is of a king by a Pope with a triple tiara. Two persons that resemble friars are waiting behind the king with a font of holy water, a white cloth, and a candle in their hands. Obviously, these three baptism scenes are selected in accordance with the function of this space. Then, who are the baptized figures occupying the two facing scenes on the lateral walls of this baptistery? And, what do these scenes mean?

Let us first examine the baptism of the indigenous noble. There are not enough elements in this rather simple composition to be able to suppose who he is, but we can understand this figure as a typical example of the portraiture of indigenous nobles in the colonial era. The baptized indigenous in the picture wears the Incan dress uncu with tocapus, while his maskapaycha, an Incan tiara of feathers, is placed on the cushion before him. His costume, thus, basically follows Inca tradition. However, it is important to point out that some ornamental details show apparent European influence. The pads of mascaron motif on the shoulders and knees derive from European antique armor, and the solar-shaped medallion on the breast that resembles the face is apparently based on popular

Such a hybrid costume is seen frequently in the portraits of colonial Inca nobles and their ancestors painted in large part in eighteenth-century Cuzco. The portrait of Alonso Chiguan Inga (fig. 13), the ancestor of the patron of the painting, Marcos Chiguan Topa, is an example of similar costume to the baptized indigenous noble in Carabuco murals. An important detail in this portrait is the cross he holds in his hand; such a portrait was commissioned, in many cases, in order to memorize the conversion of the patron’s ancestor. The inscription in the painting reads: “Don Alonso Chiguan Inga, great-grandson of Cápac Lloque Yupangui Inga, the third monarch and natural lord of these realms. He received first the holy water of the baptism, as he was gentile at the moment of the Conquest...”

The eclectic character of the costume demonstrates the prestige of the indigenous noble who converted to the Christian faith, while showing ostentatiously his traditional status. In fact, the figures of indigenous nobles in similar costume are also seen in the famous series of paintings of Corpus Christi in Cuzco (fig. 14). The indigenous nobles that lead the procession in this important Christian feast use their costume to signify both their old lineage from the period before the Conquest and their current role as representatives of the Christian Church acquired in the colonial society.

The costume of the baptized indigenous in the Carabuco murals obviously reflects this formal dress code of the indigenous nobles during the colonial era. Who is he? Gisbert and Mesa think that he is Fernando Siñani, the first Christian cacique of Carabuco (Gisbert
and Mesa 1997: 57-58; Gisbert 2002: 88). The name Fernando appears also in the above-mentioned chronicle by Ramos Gavilán about the discovery of the miraculous cross of Carabuco (Ramos Gavilán 1988: 70). In any case, it is quite natural to think that this indigenous noble baptized in adulthood should have been the first Christian ancestor who was originally a gentile. This scene, thus, must have coincided with the custom among indigenous elites in Cuzco to commission portraits of their ancestors, who were first baptized after the Conquest. The true point, however, is not the simple question of who was portrayed, but the fact that the patron of the murals who ordered this scene was well aware of the iconographical symbols of the dress. This fact will again confirm the observation concerning the cacique Agustín’s deep involvement with the decoration of the new baptistery; the cacique, who provided, according to the Libro de fablica, “the devoted, noble, and efficient personal assistance (la devota noble eficaz asistencia personal)” to the reconstruction of the baptistery, must have intended to exhibit through this decoration the image of his own family as “buenos católicos”, or good Catholics, in the public space of the parish church.

Then, what does the scene in front of this baptism of Fernando represent? (plate 3) Gisbert and Mesa considered this scene as the “Walk to Canossa”, the famous encounter in the castle of Canossa where Pope Gregory VII received the humiliation of Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV after the conflict over the investiture process of the clergy (Gisbert and Mesa 1997: 58). However, no concrete reasoning for this argument has been provided, and as we have suggested above, from the iconographical point of view it seems more plausible to think that this scene also represents the baptism. In fact, the two figures behind the king, whom Gisbert and Mesa regarded as Agustín Siñani and his wife, who were commemorated as the donors of this decoration, rather seem to be monks. One of them holds a font that corresponds to that in the hand of the priest who is baptizing cacique Fernando in the counterpart scene. In addition, there is another more interesting coincidence in the composition: the crown on the cushion (fig. 15). This motif is obviously contrasted with the maskapaycha on a cushion beside the baptized cacique (fig. 16). All these details clearly show the intended coincidence of the two images as a pair, and, more to the point, it suggests that this second baptism in adulthood, just like the former, is also the baptism of a gentile lord, much like cacique Fernando. Then, who is this gentile king baptized directly by the hand of a pope?

The most plausible identification is Roman Emperor Constantine the Great. An
important example of this iconography is seen in a tapestry designed by Peter Paul Rubens (fig. 17). In this work, Pope Sylvester I is giving the holy water from his own hand to the head of the emperor, while the emperor's crown is placed on a cushion next to him. In the story of the baptism of Constantine the Great, this was an important episode; it is said that the emperor took off his crown by his own hand in order to show his humility toward the pope. This characteristic detail allows us to distinguish the subject.

It is known that the print reproduction of the Rubens' composition by Nicola Henri Tardue was circulated in the eighteenth century (Held 1980: I. 79). Perhaps, one of those prints would have arrived at Carabuco, and Agustín, the patron who was obviously involved in the iconographic culture, might have used it as a source for the mural decoration of his new baptistery. If so, then naturally, the scene of the baptism of cacique...
Fernando would have been designed based on this iconographical source. Particularly, the detail of the maskapaycha on the cushion is quite convincing; and simultaneously, the pairing the two baptism scenes in such an elaborated manner suggests that there might be another meaning intended by the indigenous patron in his decoration program.

The baptism of Roman emperor Constantine the Great was an especially significant event that symbolized the historical transition from the pagan Antiquity to the Christian Middle Ages. The murals in the baptistery of Carabuco church were intended to glorify the Andean conversion to Christianity as a historical event that paralleled what happened in European Antiquity. In fact, the comparison between the Inca Empire and the Roman Empire was widely recognized by the indigenous elites in the colonial era. Los comentarios reales by Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, who was the son of a Spanish conquistador and an Incan princess, is an eminent example. In this well-known chronicle, the author called Cuzco “another Rome (otra Roma)”, and compared Greeks and Romans as “ancient gentiles (antiguos gentiles)” while the Incan indigenous were termed “new gentiles (nuevos gentiles)” (Garcilaso de la Vega 1960: II. 3, 123, 218).

Los comentarios reales was read widely in the colonial society since its publication in the early seventeenth century. It is also known that this chronicle by an Incan descendant attracted the special attention of the indigenous elites in the late eighteenth century, the period when the decoration of the baptistery was executed. This extra attention was due to the circulation of the prediction of the return of Inca (Flores Galindo 1988: 198). Agustín Siñani, patron of the decoration of the baptistery, would have shared such an idea that the Andean conversion had a counterpart in European history. It is this historical view that makes it possible to understand the pictorial program of the baptistery. In this sense, the baptistery murals can also be regarded as an indigenous cacique’s response to the rather stereotyped evangelical message given by the seventeenth-century priest Arellano in the monumental canvases of the nave; as we have observed, those paintings condemned overtly the pagan practices of Andean people. In conclusion, the indigenous patron was able to glorify Andean Christianity by making use of the occasion to renovate the church of his community. Simultaneously, it was also a great chance for him to celebrate the prestige of his family as good Christians. In spite of the somewhat primitive appearance of the painting, the iconographic program of the baptistery is highly sophisticated as such.

Ironically enough, however, the history of the conversion of Andean people to the religion brought by those who conquered them was something that they had difficulty
representing without a European point of view, concretely, the comparison with both European history and European imagery. In other words, the indigenous elites, who were deeply involved in the church decoration, accepted and internalized the cultural framework that the rulers provided. Such asymmetrical relations between the rulers and the subordinated are a fact that we cannot escape when discussing colonial art. And it was out of such tense asymmetrical relations that the image of the “golden compasses” emerged. Now let us get back to the problem of that riddling image of the choir loft.

"Golden Compasses": Appropriation of European Visual Culture

The choir loft of Carabuco church (plate 1) was made originally during the decorative work initiated by priest Arellano in the mid-seventeenth century. According to the Libro de fábrica of the church, a master called Diego de Rosas renovated it in 1718 (Mesa and Gisbert 1977: 291-292). But again, this part of the church seems to have been rebuilt after the deterioration of 1763; the Libro de fábrica tells about the restoration executed under the support of cacique Agustín Siñani (Mesa and Gisbert 1977: 291-292, n.25). Though unfortunately the document does not mention the mural paintings, technical research carried out by the Veceministerio de Cultura of Bolivia in 1998 revealed that the wall of the choir loft formed a part of the rebuilt structure that included the baptistery adjacent to the space just under the choir loft. This means that the murals also belonged to the works executed after 1763, that is, under the direction of cacique Agustín just like the baptistery murals (Viceministerio de Cultura, Bolivia 1998: 50). The wall of the choir loft is approximately three meters high, and has a trapezoidal shape. The
scenes of St. George slaying the dragon (fig. 18) and Archangel Michael vanquishing the
dragon (fig. 19) are depicted on both sides of the lower part respectively. The image of the
“golden compasses” is represented in the center of the wall just above the doorway to the
balcony of the façade.

Gisbert and Mesa identified the two figures on the both sides of the compasses as
Hercules and Apollo. They insisted that this image represented a narrative scene of the
antique mythology, more precisely, the episode in which Hercules consulted Apollo as to
whether he should kill his brother Eurystheus, king of Mycenae, while the compasses
motif was interpreted as a symbol that alluded to the “center of the world” where Apollo

On the other hand, Gisbert and Mesa pointed out an important fact that the image itself
derived from a print of the Plantin-Moretus Press. They did not notice, however, the more
important fact that this image was the trademark of this famous printing office and
represented the motto of the founder, “Labore et Constantia”.

The trademark of the Plantin-Moretus Press has some variations. The type in Carabuco
in which two figures flank both side of the compasses is based on the composition
designed by Peter Paul Rubens, friend of the third owner of the press Balthasar I (fig.
20). One of those two figures is Hercules as Gisbert and Mesa say, but he appears here
as the personification of “Labore”, a word seen in the motto of the founder of the press, which is inscribed in this emblem. The figure of Hercules is not an element of some narrative scene. As for his counterpart, the feminine-like figure is not Apollo but “Constantia”, another personification of the motto.

The direct source of the trademark in this mural seems to be the colophon of the missal published by the Plantin-Moretus Press in 1737 (fig. 21). A copy of this missal is still conserved in the library of Seminario de San Jerónimo, La Paz, which received the books from the library of the cathedral of La Paz that had jurisdiction over the church of Carabuco during the eighteenth century. The mural painting of the choir loft reproduces almost all the details of Plantin’s trademark from this missal.

The essential problem would be, however, not to track back simply the source of the image but rather to ask why the trademark of a printing office was used in the decoration of the church. In fact, what sort of meaning could the trademark of a printing office in Antwerp have in the church of an indigenous town on the shores of Lake Titicaca?

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) ordered the revision of the liturgical texts: missals, breviaries, books of hours, etc. Phillip II of Spain hoped to maintain some passages and appendices specific to his kingdom (Voet 1992: 64-65). The petition was accepted, and it required the large-scale printing of all those liturgical books particular to Spain and its overseas colonies. It was the Plantin-Moretus Press that exclusively undertook this large printing demand as the “press of the king (prototypo-graphus regius)”. Christophe Plantin, the founder of the press, had obtained this title in 1570 thanks to his contribution to the publication of the famous Biblia polyglotta, which was supported by Phillip II. The Plantin-Moretus Press maintained this exclusive right in Spain until 1877, and in the Latin American colonies until their independence. Therefore, all the liturgical books used in those territories, including the Andes, were all the publications of the king’s press in Antwerp. In other words, we could assume that the emblem of the “golden compasses”, which usually decorated the front pages or the colophons of liturgical books, would have functioned as a privileged symbol that attested to the orthodoxy of the text. The almost literal reproduction of that trademark down to its details including the motto of the founder would have been understood as such in this context. In fact, a phrase like “Labore et Constantia” itself would not have made any sense to the parishioners in the Andean indigenous town. The trademark must have been accepted in the Andean colonial society as a habitual symbol of religious orthodoxy.
Such a view about this decoration of the choir loft is supported by the above-mentioned two scenes on the both sides of the trademark of the press: “St. George slaying the dragon” and “Archangel Michael vanquishing the dragon”. As is well known, the dragon is a symbol of heresy or the antichrist, and George was the saint who conquered the heretics of Cappadocia. As for the other scene, the “Archangel vanquishing the dragon” is derived from the text of the Apocalypse [12:7]: "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back". This dragon was the “ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan” [12:9]. Both of these scenes represent battles against heretics or the antichrist, and would have been easily interpreted as a metaphor for the extirpation of the old religions in the Andes.

In conclusion, the choir loft mural painting shows, as a whole, the victory of orthodoxy symbolized in such an unusual manner by the trademark of the Plantin-Moretus Press. Simultaneously, this message conclusively conforms to the subject matter of the murals in the new baptistery that glorify the conversion of pagans. As I have mentioned above, we do not have any incontestable documentary reference concerning the author of the choir loft murals, but this coincidence will strongly support our supposition that it should have been directed by none other cacique Agustín Siñani. We should pay particular attention to the tactics of the author of this iconographic program to introduce such an image that apparently belongs to the peripheral part of the visual culture in the metropole, and appropriate it in his own context. These tactics can be understood as acts of the colonial indigenous elites who had to construct their own culture in such a manner of bricolage, while negotiating with the prevailing dominant culture of their conquerors.

The “golden compasses” of Carabuco is not a simple image that illustrates some narrative text. It was an image of the power and authority that orthodox books from the metropole conveyed. In spite of its European origin, this image gained new meaning and function through the process of intercultural negotiations between the dominator and the subordinated, or those who ruled and pastored and those who were converted. It was used in a manner that its intended proprietary would not have imagined. We are seeing here a striking example of what we can call “colonial vision".
Conclusion

Led by the riddling image of the "golden compasses" that seemed to have suddenly appeared in an indigenous Andean community, we have surveyed the pictorial decoration of the church of Carabuco. What we have discovered in the course of our discussion about this pictorial program is the dynamism of the intercultural negotiations in an Andean indigenous community. On the one hand, we have a seventeenth century pastor who intended to influence the minds of the indigenous through the representation of the future world of death, or through the reorganization of history through the holy legend; and on the other hand we have an eighteenth century indigenous elite who hoped to glorify the conversion of the Andean indigenous and his own family. The pictorial decoration of the church of Carabuco forms a historically layered whole constructed by cultural others who had quite different standpoints.

However, the relations between the dominators, who provided the cultural resources almost unilaterally, and the subordinated, who had to live within the framework of those cultural resources, were inevitably asymmetrical. The indigenous elites like Agustín Siñani, therefore, constructed their own realm of representations in a *bricolage*-like manner, cutting out some elements of the dominant culture and appropriating them in another context for their own aims. These ironic acts that seem both tactical and painful produced a singular realm of visual representations that can be called "colonial vision". The pictorial decoration in the church of Carabuco located on the shores of Lake Titicaca was an outstanding, and also especially valuable example that records and conserves as a visual testimony the whole process of such singular historical process in the colonial Andes.

Notes


3) For the early history of the church of Carabuco, see Paredes 1968: 19-20.

4) Ramos Gavilán 1988 [1621]: 53-84 [libro I. Cap.VII-XI]. Some other chroniclers such as Antonio de
la Clancha, Guaman Poma de Ayala, and Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti also refer to the cross of Carabuco. See Abercrombie 1998: 206-212.

5) The inscription is seen on the canvas of "Purgatory": "El Año de 1669 Por el mes de Noviembre Entro aser cura en este pueblo el Br. Joseph de Arellano, quien con deboto selo adorno la Capilla Mayor hizo el coro y compro el organo, y estos quatro quadros Por mano de Joseph Lopez de los Rios maestro Pintor que los acabo el año de 1684 que fue Promovido el dicho cura a la Mayor de chucuyto por el Ylmo. Señor Doctor Don Juan queipo Llano de Valdes Obispo de la ciudad de la Paz mi Señor del Consejo de su Mgd. que Dios que..."

6) Gabriela Siracusano recently pointed out that an inspection by a visitador was carried out in Carabuco in 1683, and suggested that this fact might explain the specific context why those framed scenes of "fiestas" and "borracheras" were inserted in the canvas (Gabriela Siracusano 2008, Siracusano 2009). I thank Prof. Siracusano for kindly informing me of her recent research.

7) For the idea of the "preparatio evangelica" in the colonial Andes, see MacCormack 1984: 46.

8) Mesa and Gisbert cite the transcription of the Libro de fábrica of Carabuco church: Mesa and Gisbert 1977: 291-294, 300. When I carried out my research at Archivo del arzobispado, La Paz, in July 2005, the folios of the years 1718-1769 were not found in the Libro de fábrica of Carabuco church (Only the folios of the years 1634-1717 and 1770-1785 survive). I owe all the transcription of the Libro de fábrica to Mesa and Gisbert.

9) In their book of 1977, Mesa and Gisbert, citing the Libro de fábrica, remark that this reconstruction started in "1766". But in their later publications, they mention that it was "1768" (Mesa and Gisbert 1997: 57-58; Gisbert 2003: 89). As I have mentioned in note 7, the folios of the years 1718-1769 of the Libro de fábrica have disappeared, so it is difficult to confirm the exact year now.

10) Gisbert 2003: 88. In the mural painting of the presbytery, there is an inscription of "1785", which seems to indicate the year of completion of the whole decoration. However, the following discussion that demonstrates the deep involvement of the cacique in this decoration will affirm the supposition of Gisbert that the major part of the murals should have been completed before Agustín’s death.

11) "Don Alonso Chiguan Inga Visnato de Cápac Lloque Yupanqui Inga tercer Monarca y Señor Natural que fue destos Reynos, este fue el primero q. res (ibido el) Agua del Santo Bautismo siendo Gentil en la Conquista..." For this portrait, see the entry by Luis Eduardo Wuffarden in New York 2004: 319-321.

12) For the detailed discussion of this series of paintings, see Dean 1999.

14) For the variations of the emblem of the “golden compasses”, see Judson and Van de Velde 1977: I, 305-306.


Works cited:


Paredes, M. Rigoberto. 1968. Los Siñani. La Paz: Ediciones ISLA.


La Paz: Viceministerio de Cultura.


Photo Sources  Figs. 4-6, 10: Viceministerio de Cultura, Bolivia 2003, 2005; Fig.9: The Royal Library, Copenhagen, Website; Fig.13: New York 2004; Fig.14: Dean 1999; Fig.17: Held 1980; Fig. 20: Judson and Van de Velde 1977.
“Golden Compasses” on the Shores of Lake Titicaca:
The Appropriation of European Visual Culture and the Patronage of Art
by an Indigenous Cacique in the Colonial Andes

Hiroshige OKADA

Summery:

A riddling emblematic image of compasses flanked by two apparently mythological figures is painted on the wall of the choir loft in the church of Carabuco, a pueblo de indios on the shores of Lake Titicaca in the Andean Highlands. This is, in fact, the trademark of the Plantin-Moretus Press, a famous publishing office founded at Antwerp in the sixteenth century. Why, however, was the trademark of a European printing office represented in an important part of the pictorial decoration of the church in an Andean indigenous community?

The major part of the well-known mural painting of this church was executed at the end of the eighteenth century under the patronage of the influential indigenous cacique of the community. In the mural painting of the baptistery of the church, the baptism of this cacique’s first Christian ancestor, who converted just after the Conquest, is depicted in front of its paired image that represents the baptism of Constantine the Great, the first Christian Roman emperor of the Antiquity. This deliberately prepared pictorial program shows the ideals of the indigenous patron who must have intended to demonstrate the prestige of his own lineage as good Christian. The curious decoration of the choir loft with the trademark of the Plantin-Moretus Press, the “publisher of the king of Spain” which had a monopoly on the market of religious books in Spanish America during the Colonial period, will be interpreted as a result of the tactful appropriation of an European-origin imagery by the indigenous elites who began to create their own visual culture in the matured colonial society; in fact, the trade mark of the prestigious press was used here as a kind of symbol that signified religious orthodoxy. The historical process of such intercultural negotiations through pictorial imagery shown in the whole decoration program in the church of Carabuco will be discussed in detail in this essay.