



Unidentified artist  
Bolivia  
*Our Lady of Guadalupe of Extremadura*  
Eighteenth century  
Oil on canvas, frame 44 x 37 ½ x 2 5/8 inches.

The Jeronymite friar Diego de Ocaña (c. 1570-1608) left the monastery dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Extremadura, Spain in 1599 for what would be a nine-year journey through Spanish America. Six of those years (1599-1605) were spent in the Andes. His goals were to disseminate devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe and to gather alms to send back for the maintenance of the mother house in Spain. In the process, Ocaña, who had evidently some training as an artist in the scriptorium of the monastery, painted a number of images of Our Lady of Guadalupe based on engravings by Pedro Ángel, who created the frontispiece for the *Historia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* published by Gabriel de Talavera in 1597 (fig. 1). Ocaña recorded making seven images of the Spanish Virgin of Guadalupe during his travels, two of them sold to private patrons, and five of them for communities in Lima, Cuzco and Ica (Peru) and two in Potosí and Sucre (Bolivia).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Jeanette Favrot Peterson, “Through Ocaña’s Eyes: Our Lady of Guadalupe in Sucre, Bolivia,” in Suzanne Stratton-Pruitt, ed., *The Art of Painting in Colonial Bolivia/El arte de la pintura en Bolivia colonial* (Philadelphia, PA: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 2017), pp. 193-316.

The engraving of the image (fig. 1) illustrated a history of the devotion, 300 copies of which Ocaña brought with him from Spain. Ocaña himself followed the composition of the print, as did a number of artists, for several painted copies of it from the period are extant.

Several later paintings of Ocaña's original in Sucre, such one in the Thoma collection, seem to be based on a print that included angels fluttering around the central figures. That print may have been created in the eighteenth century for the dissemination of the devotion. A second painted version, because it is found in the National Museum in La Paz, Bolivia, suggests that paintings following the (as yet unpublished) engraving, may have been created elsewhere in present-day Bolivia, though the cult was centered in Sucre (fig. 2).

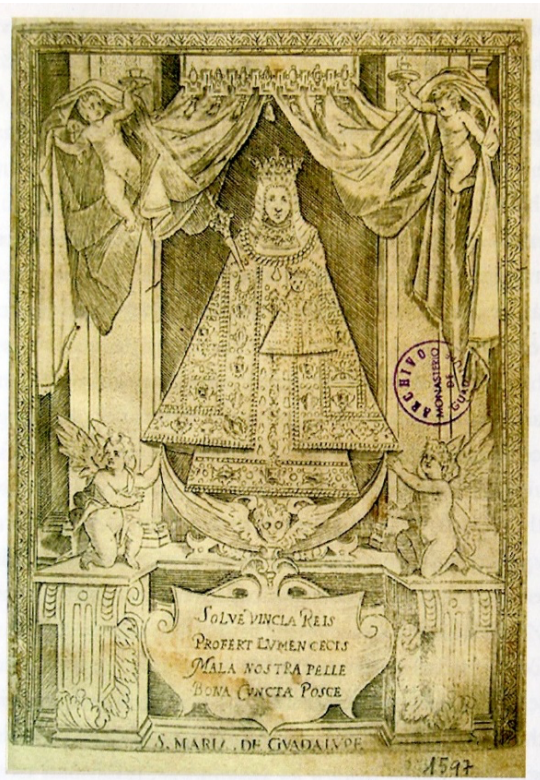


Fig. 1. Attributed to Pedro Ángel, *Our Lady of Guadalupe of Extremadura*, 1597, copper engraving, 7 1/8 x 4 2/3 inches.



Fig. 2. Unidentified Artist. *Our Lady of Guadalupe of Extremadura*. Eighteenth century. Oil on canvas, 21 1/4 x 15 1/4 inches, La Paz, Bolivia: Museo Nacional de Arte. Photo: Antonio Suárez Wiese.



Unidentified artist  
*Our Lady of Guadalupe of Extremadura*  
Probably after 1784  
Polychromed wood carving and oil on silver plates,  
57 x 36 inches

Ocaña's oil-on-canvas painting of 1601 for Sucre was eventually worn out by the weight of donations of jewelry attached to the triangular gown of the Virgin Mary. It was therefore replaced in 1784 by a copy on silver plate better able to bear the weight of those pious gifts (fig. 1) Only the faces and hands of the replica were painted on canvas. In all likelihood, however, the copy closely resembles Ocaña's venerated work, still on view in a chapel adjacent to the Cathedral of Sucre (fig. 3).

The bas-relief carving representing the 1784 copy of Ocaña's original may be unique. We can place the origin of the Thoma bas-relief to an artist working in Sucre, as the details accord so



closely with the 1784 work that replaced Ocaña's original. Mary's garment is decorated with details specific to the actual object, although a particularly elaborate jeweled salamander originally attached to Mary's gown is now seen, multiplied, on the garment of the Christ Child. The faces and Mary's hand holding the scepter are painted in oil on silver plates. The figures peer out from the richly decorated surface, just as they do in the replica (fig. 4).

Despite Ocaña's effort to widely disseminate a devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe of Extremadura, the avocation seems today primarily centered in Bolivia, especially around the image in Sucre that still draws the faithful.

Suzanne Stratton-Pruitt



Fig. 3. 1784 replica in situ. Photo: Antonio Suárez Wiese.



Fig. 4. 1784 replica of Ocaña's painting. Photo: Antonio Suárez Wiese.