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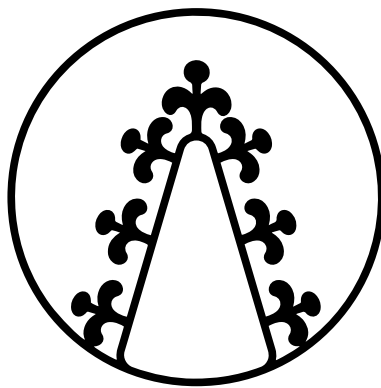


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Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma

Via di Ripetta, 222 • 00186 Roma (RM)
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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the impact of Federico Zuccari's theory of drawing proposed in his book *L'idea de' Pittori, Scultori et Architetti* (Torino 1607) on Vicente Carducho's *Diálogos de la Pintura: Su Difesa, Origine, Esse[n]cia, Definizione, Modos y Diferencias* (Madrid 1634), one of the few books on painting written in 17th-century Spain. Furthermore, this study shows how historiography has overlooked the theoretical side of drawing in Early Modern Period Spain.

In questo articolo si analizza l'impatto della teoria del disegno proposta da Federico Zuccari nel suo libro L'idea de' pittori, scultori et architetti (Torino 1607) sui Diálogos de la pintura: su difesa, origine, esse[n]cia, definizione, modos y diferencias (Madrid 1634) del pittore e trattatista fiorentino Vicente Carducho, uno dei pochi libri sulla pittura scritti nella Spagna del Seicento. Inoltre, questo studio mostra come la storiografia abbia trascurato l'aspetto teorico del disegno nella Spagna della prima età moderna.

En este artículo se analiza el impacto de la teoría del dibujo de Federico Zuccari propuesta en su libro L'idea de' pittori, scultori et architetti (Torino 1607) en los Diálogos de la pintura: su difesa, origine, esse[n]cia, definición, modos y diferencias (Madrid 1634) del pintor y tratadista florentino Vicente Carducho, uno de los pocos libros centrados en la disciplina de la pintura publicados en el siglo XVII en España. Además, este estudio muestra cómo la historiografía ha pasado por alto el aspecto teórico del dibujo en la España de la Edad Moderna.

KEYWORDS Federico Zuccari • *L'idea de' Pittori, Scultori et Architetti* • Vicente Carducho • *Diálogos de la Pintura* • Drawing • Painting • Art Theory • Art Treatise • Historiography • Florence • Madrid • Medici • Habsburg • Italy • Spain

PAROLE CHIAVE Federico Zuccari • *L'idea de' pittori, scultori et architetti* • Vicente Carducho • *Diálogos de la pintura* • disegno • pittura • teoria dell'arte • trattato d'arte • Firenze • Madrid • Medici • Asburgo • Italia • Spagna

PALABRAS CLAVE Federico Zuccari • *L'idea de' pittori, scultori et architetti* • Vicente Carducho • *Diálogos de la pintura* • dibujo • pintura • teoría del arte • tratado de arte • Florencia • Madrid • Médici • Habsburgo • Italia • España

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PEER-REVIEW

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«Dibujo [...] que es la perfección del arte»: Vicente Carducho and the Zuccaresque Drawing Theory

✦ **Mario Zamora Pérez**

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid



In reviewing the historiography of drawing in early modern Spain, two main phases can be distinguished, both following a consistent line of research¹. The first emerged during the 1970s and 1980s, when Diego Angulo and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez undertook the essential task of cataloguing the drawings produced in Spain between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries, organizing them by chronology and regional school². The second phase, which developed during the 2010s, is associated with the work of Benito Navarrete Prieto, himself a student of Pérez Sánchez, through the volumes he directed and his participation in international research projects³.

As for the main trend within this line of research, it has focused on the study of drawing in its purely practical and material dimension, encompassing several areas: connoisseurship and cataloguing, technical aspects, collecting practices, and functionality⁴. Even in the creative process of artists, attention has been directed mainly to this practical dimension. In this regard, *Historia del dibujo en España: de la Edad Media a Goya*, published by Pérez Sánchez in 1986, remains a fundamental reference today⁵. Yet the practical uses and functions of drawing remain insufficiently explored beyond studies of attribution, comparisons with final works (paintings, sculptures, prints, etc.), or analyses of their “influence” on other artists⁶.

As for the international context, scholarly interest in Spanish drawing has been, for the most part, a relatively recent phenomenon. In 2010, Jonathan Brown offered an overview of the limited number of studies that had addressed Spanish drawings held in American collections, highlighting as a pioneering work the study conducted by Gridley McKim Smith at the University of Kansas Museum of Art⁷. Nevertheless, Brown’s perspective still suffers from the traditional nationalist clichés often projected onto Spanish drawing, as he seeks to define essential characteristics that set it apart from the artistic production of other regions⁸.

On the other hand, Mark McDonald stands out as an internationally innovative researcher in the study of Spanish prints and drawings, challenging established notions of a *national art* and aiming instead to reconstruct the history of Spanish graphic art through early modern sources. Yet he also shows little interest in the intellectual dimension of drawing during this period, maintaining that such a notion did not exist in Spain until the eighteenth century with the foundation of the Academia de San Fernando⁹.

Thus, the theoretical dimension of drawing, and the way in which artists in Spain understood it, have received little scholarly attention. This has led to a considerable gap between the knowledge of drawing theory and its practice, if not to

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the editorial team of *L’IDEA* for giving me the opportunity to publish this work. I am also deeply thankful to Patricia Manzano, Elena Mazzola, and the anonymous reviewers of the draft, whose valuable comments have significantly improved the results of this study.

¹ Prior to these periods, which will be discussed below, it is worth highlighting the studies on drawing in Spain by Francisco Javier SÁNCHEZ CANTÓN 1930 and 1968.

² ANGULO, PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1988, carried out similar work in relation to painting. For a more detailed overview of Pérez Sánchez’s research on Spanish drawing, see NAVARRETE PRIETO 2015.

³ NAVARRETE PRIETO 2006; *SEGNI NEL TEMPO* 2016; *DISEGNI SPAGNOLI E ITALIANI DEL CINQUECENTO* 2020. Participated in *SPAGNA E ITALIA IN DIALOGO* 2018.

⁴ NAVARRETE PRIETO 2025, pp. 1-6.

⁵ PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986. Only recently has a study been carried out in France that examines the history of drawing in sixteenth-century Spain, addressing both practical and theoretical aspects, cfr. BOUBLI 2015.

⁶ We place the term in quotation marks because it is a concept widely used in the discipline, yet one we consider open to question, in light of the studies initiated by the art historian Michael BAXANDALL (1985).

⁷ MCKIM SMITH 1974.

⁸ *SPANISH MANNER* 2010.

⁹ McDONALD 2012. Zahira Véliz has also examined Carducho’s theory and practice of drawing, although her interpretation requires some nuance. She argues that in Carducho’s work there is a clear separation between his theory—derived from Zuccari, since, according to her, the *Vadesí* is based solely on nature and the works of Antiquity—and his practice, which follows Vasari’s principles, according to which drawing originates from memory and imagination, a model established at the Florentine Accademia del Disegno. As we shall see, however, Zuccari’s theory, in addition to nature, also encompasses these internal faculties, developing them even more fully than Vasari: VÉLIZ 2016, pp. 241-269 and 2019, pp. 295-312.

a historical paradox. The reasons for this historiographical phenomenon include both a lack of interest among historians in analyzing theory and the persistent nationalist construction of Spanish art, and a series of arguments advanced in the aforementioned studies that have continued to shape current research approaches¹⁰. Vicente Carducho thus emerges as a historically and historiographically significant figure¹¹, one who challenges inherited assumptions and proposes a complementary path to previous scholarship—one that opens up new perspectives.

Historiographical Paradoxes of Drawing Theory in Spain: Vicente Carducho as a Paradigmatic Case

Before addressing the specific case of Carducho, it is valuable to outline the broader context of how drawing was regarded during this period, to understand the reasons for the current debate. To this end, we return to the foundation of these studies in Spain: Pérez Sánchez's book. In the first section after the introduction, *The Theoretical Appreciation of Drawing in Spain*¹², he states that¹³:

Even though Pacheco, Carducho, Juan Rizi, and Palomino all demonstrate—as we shall see—an awareness of Italian theoretical treatises and frequently refer to them when defining and assessing drawing in conceptual terms, it may nevertheless be necessary to acknowledge that the overall value of drawing within the creative process of Spanish artists never attained the importance it held for artists in Italy and, by the later seventeenth century, in France.

This passage describes a context in which a clear and insurmountable gap existed between the theory articulated by a handful of treatise writers and the general practice of drawing. From this perspective, Spanish artists simply copied the Italians without truly understanding or engaging with them, showing little interest in cultivating the theoretical dimension—even when authoring treatises on the subject—or in applying this theory to their own work; instead, they largely acted on intuition¹⁴. In other words, they created drawings impulsively, using them primarily as a means to achieve the final product, whether painting, sculpture, architectural structure, tapestry, or other forms.

As a result, technical and material processes were passed from master to pupil in the workshops as a purely manual craft. This resulted in a lack of significant formal differences between

the work of different generations of artisans. Deprived of an intellectual component, pupils simply imitated their masters and did not develop an individual artistic style through intellectual growth, reading, or visual culture—nor did they engage in self-reflection, as was attributed to artists in Italy¹⁵.

If this accurately reflected the reality of seventeenth-century Spain, the limited instances of speculation and writing on painting not only had minimal impact on the development of the discipline but also exposed a lack of consistency among theorists, particularly between the ideas they borrowed from the Italians and their own practice. In this regard, the references of Carducho, Pacheco, and Palomino—the three leading writers on artistic theory in Spain during this period—were the works of the late sixteenth-century Italian Mannerists: Vasari, Lomazzo, Armenini, and Zuccari¹⁶. For this author, the four Mannerist artists formulated a purely mental theory rooted in Platonism, in which the significance of art resided entirely in the artist's mind, disregarding the senses and the natural world.

Faced with this, one might ask: how could artists who based their own theories on these Italian models—where mental conception was central—fail to consider that same aspect and instead devote themselves simply to copying their masters? Here lies one of the major paradoxes in the historiography of early modern Spanish art¹⁷: the defense of adopting artistic models from Italy to Spain—specifically, in terms of the theoretical dimension of drawing—whose principles were regarded as the foundation for the renewal of art in the Iberian peninsula. Nevertheless, at the same time, the practice of drawing was considered merely a utilitarian tool, rooted in the workshop tradition and guided by natural instinct, reproducing the peculiarities and temperament of its makers or simply copying the Italians.

In attempting to address these paradoxes, Carducho emerges as an ideal case study, since he was both a Zuccaresque theorist and one of the most prolific artists of seventeenth-century Spain. Among the limited monographic catalogues devoted to the graphic work of early modern Spanish artists, Vicente Carducho was the subject of a study published in 2015¹⁸. Once again, this research focuses on the practical aspect of drawing, following the approach established by Pérez-Sánchez. Consequently, the theoretical aspect continues in the vein of Pérez Sánchez, referring readers to the critical edition of Carducho's *Diálogos de la pintura* (Madrid

¹⁰ Only recently has this aspect begun to be explored in greater depth, see RIELLO-MARÍAS 2022.

¹¹ On Vicente Carducho and his context, see VOLK 1977 and ZAMORA 2025.

¹² PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986, pp. 15-39.

¹³ «Aun cuando tanto Pacheco como Carducho, Juan Rizi o Palomino, demuestran—como veremos—conocer los tratados teóricos del mundo italiano y recurren a ellos con frecuencia al definir y valorar el dibujo en términos conceptuales, quizá sea preciso aceptar que el valor general del dibujo dentro del proceso creador de los artistas españoles no tuvo nunca la importancia que le concedieron los artistas de Italia y, ya avanzado el siglo XVII, los de Francia», cfr. PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986, p. 15.

¹⁴ The book presents a brief overview of the theory of drawing in Europe, focused mainly on Italy, where a development in the theoretical conception of drawing is traced—from its practical beginnings in the fifteenth century to the mid-sixteenth century, when Vasari articulated his theories grounded in an Aristotelian-Thomist framework. This was followed by the emergence of *extreme Mannerism*, which transformed drawing—together with the other arts, as it was considered their very foundation—according to the Platonic philosophical model, whose foremost exponent was Federico Zuccari. Subsequently, an effort was made to balance this idealist theoretical abstraction with the physical realm of Nature, cfr. PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986, pp. 19-27. Before the publication of this book, there were already studies that examined Italian artistic literature and allowed for greater precision in the general theoretical framework of drawing, such as the works of Paola Barocchi (*SCRITTI D'ARTE DEL CINQUECENTO 1971-1978*).

¹⁵ Moreover, these theories are connected with what was considered inherent to the Spanish character among early modern artists, since this lack of interest in speculative drawing was thought to have a natural component. In this way, these artists created by impulse and were interested only in the chromatic aspect of painting because of its sensuous quality and its association with the mimetic apprehension of reality. See PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986, pp. 16-18, and NAVARRETE PRIETO 2006. For an analysis and deconstruction of the nationalist historiography on Spanish art, see RIELLO 2022, pp. 411-442.

¹⁶ PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986, pp. 19-36.

¹⁷ RIELLO 2022, pp. 411-442.

¹⁸ PASCUAL CHENEL, RODRÍGUEZ REBOLLO 2015. Following the same line, PASCUAL CHENEL 2018, pp. 224-231, 2019, pp. 281-293, and 2024, pp. 89-110.

1634), edited by Francisco Calvo Serraller in 1979. In this edition, Carducho's debt to Federico Zuccari is acknowledged, particularly regarding the theoretical and intellectual framework of the arts articulated through drawing, yet without an exhaustive analysis¹⁹. Within this scholarly tradition, the theoretical component primarily consists of classifying drawings according to their degree of completion and their function in relation to the final product, namely painting – *schizzi* or first ideas, *modelli* or second thoughts, and copies²⁰.

If Calvo Serraller's thesis on the theoretical dimension of Carducho has remained the most influential to date²¹, what exactly does it propose, and why does it warrant reconsideration? Calvo Serraller repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the Florentine artist's debt to Federico Zuccari²². However, in his analysis, this inheritance of the conceptual artistic approach becomes diluted among several authors—Alberti²³, Vasari²⁴, Lomazzo²⁵, and Zuccari. Moreover, he does not fully grasp the system or the principles proposed by the Vadesí, as his interpretation lacks a comprehensive analysis of Zuccari's artistic framework and instead derives from Panofsky's study²⁶, who likewise did not examine Zuccari's conceptual structure in its entirety²⁷.

In this sense, both authors downplay the role of the natural world and focus instead on the internal design—on the idea as an autonomous entity, originating from and dependent upon God. This leads to a predominance of Platonic theories within the broader Thomistic conception, to the detriment of the Aristotelian component²⁸. However, as we shall see, in the thought of both Zuccari and, consequently, Carducho, the observation of the natural world, the interdependence between the external and the internal, and the scientific knowledge acquired through cognitive sedimentation are all fundamental²⁹.

Finally, faced with the difficulty of reconciling Zuccari's theoretical model—understood through Panofsky's interpretation—with the principles set out in the *Diálogos*, Calvo Serraller characterizes Carducho as reactionary and ambiguous. Yet, in reality, Carducho was adopting the most innovative ideas produced in Italy at the time, albeit adapted to his own purposes³⁰.

Federico Zuccari in Vicente Carducho and his *Diálogos de la pintura*

The impact of Zuccari's theory of drawing in Spain has yet to be fully examined³¹. Preceding Carducho, several artists shared certain ideas with Zuccari, including El Greco, Pablo de Céspedes³², and several contributors who defended of painting as a liberal art within the *Memoriales Informatorios* (1629), during the legal dispute against the Treasury prosecutor who sought to impose a tax on painting – particularly Juan de Jáuregui and Juan Rodríguez de León Pinelo³³. Nevertheless, it was Vicente Carducho who most thoroughly comprehended, adapted, and developed Zuccari's model in the Spain of his time³⁴.

Vicente Carducho's knowledge of Federico Zuccari's artistic theories was likely acquired through multiple channels. The first was through his brother Bartolomé, who had partly been trained under Zuccari himself and conveyed to Vicente the notions he had learned in Italy within the family workshop. It should be recalled that both Bartolomé and Vicente—the latter being around eight years old—traveled with Zuccari to Spain to work on the Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, and that the Carducho brothers remained in Madrid for the rest of their lives³⁵. Second, Zuccari's book was well known to Vicente Carducho, as evidenced by the presence of a copy in his posthumous inventory³⁶ and by the pervasive influence of Zuccari's theory throughout the *Diálogos de la pintura*.

¹⁹ PASCUAL CHENEL, RODRÍGUEZ REBOLLO 2015, p. 33, and PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ 1986, pp. 29-30.

²⁰ PASCUAL CHENEL, RODRÍGUEZ REBOLLO 2015, pp. 33-35. Moreover, although it is stated that the study is based on Zuccari, this entire section is instead linked to the writings of Vasari and Armenini. Therefore, it represents rather a synthesis between the views put forward by Pérez Sánchez and those of Zahira Véliz.

²¹ CARDUCHO/CALVO SERRALLER 1979. Zahira Véliz largely follows this interpretation, as noted above. It should also be mentioned that hers remains the only comprehensive study of Carducho's book until *ON ART AND PAINTING* 2016.

²² CARDUCHO/CALVO SERRALLER 1979, pp. XV, XXVI, XLI, LIII, LV, LXXI, LXXXIV, LXXXVI-LXXXVII, XCIII-XCIV and in the notes to the text listed in the name index, among which, for the purposes of this study, we highlight those corresponding to dialogues three to five (pp. 149-257).

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. XCI, XCVII and CVII.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. XXIX and LXXI-LXXIV.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. LXXXIV, LXXVI.

²⁶ PANOFSKY 2013, pp. 88-110.

²⁷ Calvo Serraller quickly notes that, for Carducho, nature represents the starting point of the cognitive and creative process, whereas for Zuccari it holds no real significance, since it is reworked through the internal design, resulting in a total transformation devoid of any relation to the external world. In no case, he argues, is there a complete interdependence between the painter's external and internal processes: CARDUCHO/CALVO SERRALLER 1979, p. XCII.

²⁸ Later refuted by MORALEJO ORTEGA 2008, pp. 285-286, CARANNANTE 2024, pp. 239-250 (and recently PERICOLO 2025, pp. 151-178) who have highlighted the primacy of Aristotelian thought in Zuccari.

²⁹ Calvo Serraller also understands that Carducho's criticism of the previous excessive adherence to the sciences – such as mathematics – in relation to painting implies that, for the Florentine, the discipline of painting breaks away from the traditional art-science dichotomy: CARDUCHO/CALVO SERRALLER 1979, p. XCVIII. Nevertheless, for Carducho, painting is a science, since it possesses its own rules while also drawing upon auxiliary disciplines—mathematics, geometry, optics, and others. This is evident not only in his writing, but also in the print that closes the eighth dialogue, which illustrates this idea.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. XXIX and CVIII respectively.

³¹ In his *Museo Pictórico y Escala Óptica*, Antonio PALOMINO 1715 (pp. 20, 29 and 166), as the epitome of the Habsburg pictorial tradition of the seventeenth century, refers on several occasions to the relevance of Zuccari's theory.

³² On El Greco's artistic theory, see the studies by Fernando Marías, Agustín Bustamante, and José Riello, MARÍAS, RIELLO 2021 with preceding bibliography. For Pablo de Céspedes, see RUBIO LAPAZ 1993 and RUBIO LAPAZ, MORENO CUADRADO 1998.

³³ SÁNCHEZ JIMÉNEZ, SÁEZ 2018.

³⁴ Vicente Carducho stands as the representative case of this artistic theory in Spain, owing to his writings – *Diálogos de la pintura*, *Discurso sobre la mayor dificultad del dibujo si en el hacer o perfeccionar*, and the *Memorial entregado por los pintores a Felipe III*, attributed to Carducho (though not yet definitively), composed to urge the king's protection of the Madrid Academy of San Lucas. For the *Discurso*, see MARTÍNEZ RIPOLL 1978, pp. 83-91; the original document is held at the Biblioteca Nacional de España, MSS. 19639, fols. 77r-79r. For the academic *Memorial*, see CALVO SERRALLER 1991, pp. 157-177; the original document is preserved in Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MSS. 2350, fols. 272-281.

³⁵ On Zuccari's trip to Spain, see MORALEJO ORTEGA 2016, pp. 205-221, and BOLZONI 2020, pp. 21-47; as well as previous bibliography.

³⁶ Carducho's inventory of possessions was published by CATURLA 1968-1969, pp. 145-221. *L'idea* is listed in the inventory and was acquired by the Protonotary of Aragon, Jerónimo de Villanueva, by order of the Count-Duke of Olivares, for the education of Prince Baltasar Carlos, see ZAMORA PÉREZ 2022, pp. 100-101.

The theory developed by Federico Zuccari in his treatise *L'idea*³⁷ on the framework of the human cognitive-scientific system of drawing («disegno») combines with its practical application to the artistic disciplines mediated by drawing, particularly painting, regarded as the highest of the arts³⁸. Within the human being reside both the *soul* («alma») and *drawing* as divine, though limited, substances – yet superior to nature. Zuccari also refers to the internal drawing as the “spark” of the divinity («scintilla della divinità»); it is embedded within the human soul and serves as the matrix of the intellect and of the soul itself. Drawing is the cause of all thought, speculation, and operation; that is, it moves and guides the human being in knowing, reflection, and practice. Nothing can be learned, understood, created, or produced without drawing, for it is both the beginning and the end of every speculative and practical science. The understanding of a thing through drawing allows the intellect to produce its concept – not the specific thing itself with its particularities, but rather the universal essence common to all its versions.

The human process begins with the experience of the world – both of natural and artificial things – through the external senses, complemented by reading, and concludes with the material execution of the work after the internal speculative process³⁹. The eye perceives both the material form of the object – whatever it may be that one wishes to know – and its substantial, immaterial form, which contains the information necessary for understanding it. From the eye, this information passes to the internal senses: common sense (the first filter), fantasy/imagination (which creates unreal things by combining parts of natural ones – e.g., a river of gold), the cogitative faculty (which carries out deeper reflections on what has been received, generating new things from them

and depositing them in memory), and memory itself⁴⁰. The agent intellect⁴¹ gathers the information from these internal senses and transmits it to the intellect. It is then deposited in the speculative intellect as a more complex repository. In the specific case of the artificial arts, in their internal form, Zuccari categorizes them within the intellectual practical and artificial drawing – the father of all the practical sciences: painting, sculpture, architecture, agriculture, textiles, the military arts, and so forth. The intellect creates an internal image derived from the concept, and the artist completes the process when, with his hands, he materializes that image on a physical support, producing an exemplary and accidental ideal form⁴². Thus, external drawing is a reflection of internal drawing. Moreover, throughout this entire process and across the artist's life, he is guided by the reflective virtue of reason and the faculty of *judgment*, which are responsible for selecting what should be drawn from the natural world, from what is created, and from what is operated both internally and externally. *Reason*, *judgment*, and *intellect* are gradually refined through contemplative experience, reading, and continual practice.

On the basis of this complex Zuccaresque system, Carducho develops his own, explaining it in the fourth and fifth *Diálogos* (on painting and drawing respectively). The Florentine employs the same definitions of *painting*⁴³, *drawing*⁴⁴, and *science*⁴⁵, as well as the same terminology—Hispanicized into *fantasía* (fantasy | imagination), *intelecto* / *entendimiento* (intellect | understanding)⁴⁶, *memoria* (memory), *alma* (soul)⁴⁷, *idea*⁴⁸, *especulación* (speculation), *concepto* (concept), etc.⁴⁹. He draws from *L'idea* several central themes: the internal and external division within the artist's creative process⁵⁰; the conception of the arts as fundamentally intellectual sciences despite their manual

37 The most comprehensive study of this book is MORALEJO ORTEGA 2008, although its impact has been limited as it remains unpublished. The publications by Moralejo Ortega on this subject – some of them related to the Carducho brothers – include MORALEJO ORTEGA 2001, 2002, 2004a, 2004b e 2015.

38 Painting is both the daughter and the mother of drawing, since it is born from the inner reflection of the practical and artificial intellectual drawing (daughter), and also perfects and beautifies drawing through the use of color (mother). Figuratively, Zuccari expressed his theory of drawing in two allegorical compositions: one on the ceiling of his Roman palace, and the other, the *Porta Virtutis*, created in response to the calumnies directed against him by the Bolognese painters and by the papal scalco Paolo Ghiselli, which led him, together with some of his pupils, to trial and eventual expulsion from the Papal States for several years, see MACARENA MORALEJO 2008, pp. 429-439, and CAVAZZINI 2020.

39 Zuccari does not theorize about the knowledge granted directly by God through infused science or internal visions. Although he believed in its existence, he explains that this represents another type of cognitive path, one that falls exclusively within the domain of theologians: ZUCCARI 1607, I, pp. 33-34.

40 For Zuccari, these faculties are located in the head, behind the eyes, arranged one after another. The common sense («sensus communis») and the cogitative faculty function as filters that process what is received – the common sense through the external senses, and the cogitative faculty through fantasy or imagination – while fantasy/imagination and memory serve as repositories, cfr. ZUCCARI 1607, I, pp. 26-27. For an analysis of the senses in Zuccari, cfr. PFISTERER 1993, pp. 237-268.

41 The intellect, in addition to being a repository of the substantial forms of things, concepts, and ideas, functions as the active intellect when it acts upon other faculties, and as the speculative or cognitive intellect when it reflects upon what has been apprehended.

42 Zuccari assigns three parts to external drawing: the *body* (the external form, the rules, measurements, and proportions of the image), the *spirit* (the liveliness, gesture, and expressiveness of the figures, so that they appear alive and convey emotion through their gestures and faces), and the *soul* (higher qualities such as grace, beauty, elegance, and magnificence in the garments and demeanour—not to be confused with the previously mentioned *soul*). It is termed “accidental” because the human being cannot eliminate the accidents inherent to matter, although he is capable of idealizing them.

43 “Painting is that which artfully imitates Nature, for through its ingenious artifice we see and understand all that Nature herself teaches and demonstrates to us with the same truth—forms, bodies, affections, and events”, cfr. CARDUCHO 1634, fols. 38v-39r. His own definition is preceded by those of Dürer, Zuccari, Leon Battista Alberti, and Lomazzo. Immediately afterwards, Carducho defines «pintura obrada» (“executed painting”) as “the likeness and portrayal of all that is visible, as it presents itself to our sight, composed upon a surface by means of lines and colours” (*Ibid.*, fol. 39v). In doing so, he establishes a distinction between general painting—internal and external—and practical painting, in the same way that Zuccari distinguishes between internal and external drawing. Moreover, the cognitive process defined by Zuccari through drawing is fully developed by Carducho in the fourth dialogue, dedicated to painting. He provides a brief summary of it in CARDUCHO 1634, fols. 51r-v.

44 *Ibid.*, fols. 74v-76v.

45 Add next the definition of *art* as well: “Science is the knowledge of a thing through the cause by which it exists; which is the same as knowing and possessing, with certain knowledge and with reason, the quality of the thing one professes. And Art is an operative habit that possesses and follows the right reason and order of things that can be made”, *ibid.*, fol. 33v.

46 Carducho translates Zuccari's *intellecto* as *intelecto* or *entendimiento*.

47 CARDUCHO 1634, fol. 33v. At times, as on the cited folio, he refers to the soul by the synonym *ánima*.

48 Carducho is not as prolific in his use of the word *idea* as Zuccari, but he does introduce it in his text on certain occasions, *ibid.*, fols. 1v, 5r, 6r, 76r, 96r.

49 With the first paragraph of his book, Carducho is clearly adopting Zuccari's model and terminology, emphasizing the human pursuit of knowledge through reason and understanding, which forms ideas and concepts, whose speculations are then demonstrated to others through the various practical disciplines, *ibid.*, fol. 1r-v.

50 In fact, for the explanation of internal painting and drawing, Carducho refers the reader to Zuccari's book (CARDUCHO 1634, fols. 74r-v). He also adopts from Vadesi the simile of internal drawing as the sun, a source of light that gives life to the entire cognitive, speculative, and practical system (*Ibid.*, fols. 51r-52v and 74r-76v).

and material dimension⁵¹; the imitation of nature as the ultimate goal of painting—and even its superiority, due to its capacity for creative invention and the representation of God and celestial beings⁵²; the preeminence of painting over other sister disciplines and its independence and autonomy from them⁵³; the critique of artists who disregard the speculative component, such as “painters from nature”⁵⁴; and finally, the defense of artistic freedom against rigid rules, advocating trust in the judgment of the eye so as not to constrain human wit and intelligence⁵⁵.

One of the main innovations of the *Diálogos* regarding *L’idea* is that the Florentine develops this conceptual model within the discipline of painting without neglecting drawing. In fact, Carducho argues that it has a central role as the basis and foundation of all the arts⁵⁶. In addition to the internal and external dual nature of painting, Carducho subdivides practice into three types according to the artist’s level of training. The lowest level is “practical painting”⁵⁷, in which the painter merely copies the works of others and has no merit, since no speculative exercise is applied. The second level is “regular or preceptive practical painting”, in which the artist possesses knowledge of precepts and rules and has exercised his hands, but is unaware of the causes and principles of things; he lacks science⁵⁸. Finally, there is regular and “scientific practical painting”, in which the artist, besides knowing the precepts and rules of things, also understands their causes and speculates “by forming ideas with reason and science in memory and imagination [fantasy], which, when continued, becomes a learned habit in it, from which the hands copy until they master it”⁵⁹. The key advantage of the regular and scientific practical painter over the previous type is that he produces new inventions—caprices—thanks to his talent, the complete knowledge acquired, and the internal reflection on all these aspects⁶⁰.

Following this division, Carducho explains that there are four ways of working: with learned understanding and hands little accustomed to practice (theory without practice); with unlearned understanding and hands accustomed to practice (practice without theory); with unlearned understanding and hands unaccustomed to practice; and, finally, with learned understanding and hands accustomed to practice (“the perfect painter”)⁶¹.

Additionally, complementary to the textual discourse, the Florentine included several printed images in his *Diálogos*⁶².

All of them are highly conceptual and, as in the text, bear the unmistakable imprint of Zuccari. In the etching that closes the first dialogue, *Ratione et labore, non voluptate et otio* (Fig. 1), Carducho depicts a young painter drawing while seated on a stack of books, accompanied by various elements such as sculptures, measuring instruments, terrestrial and celestial globes, and geometric tools, alluding to the prior study of the precepts of the basic disciplines for the painter. In the background, other figures—some zoomorphized—are shown indulging in the pleasures and vices of life, in contrast to the model exemplified by the young and diligent painter.

Two elements are particularly noteworthy. On the one hand, the personification of the allegory of Temperance⁶³, holding a bridle, represents one of the essential virtues of the painter according to Zuccari⁶⁴. On a personal level, this virtue allows calmness of mind and the moderation of the senses, ensuring that the painter is not led astray by life’s vices and remains dedicated to constant study and work. On the other hand, in an artistic sense, study and theoretical knowledge temper and correct the flaws of natural fury and vigor, the errors inherent in pure practical exercise⁶⁵.

The second element is the celestial ray of light that falls from the upper right corner onto the head of the artist. As repeatedly noted in Zuccari’s *L’idea*, this does not imply that every time the artist produces something it is thanks to a momentary divine spark; rather, it represents the internal drawing, that permanent vital faculty that God instilled in the human being and that is fundamental to any human process, guided by reason.

Thus, this internal drawing constantly urges the artist to seek knowledge in the natural world and in scientific study, in order to speculate on what has been learned and to produce—here, through drawing—what has been conceived and imagined in the mind. Consequently, this ray of light serves as the visible representation for the viewer of the internal Drawing located in the mind of each human being. It should be added that, in focusing on and adapting the Zuccaresque discourse to painting, Carducho employs the concept of the *centella de la Pintura* (“spark of painting”), referring to an innate drive to cultivate painting, analogous to the original impulse of the internal Drawing in all human actions⁶⁶.

Similarly, in relation to drawing and painting in artistic creation, particularly when the artist is already instructed and experienced—*docto*—there is the final etching of the *Diálogos*,

51 CARDUCHO 1634, fol. 34r-v.

52 *Ibid.*, fol. 38v-39r (this purpose appears in his own definition of painting, fols. 54v and 56r). It is also worth noting the print at the end of the fourth dialogue, where the personifications of Painting and Poetry appear as disciplines that imitate nature (fol. 64r).

53 *Ibid.*, fol. 102r-v.

54 *Ibid.*, fol. 54v-56r.

55 *Ibid.*, fol. 53r y 69v-70v.

56 *Ibid.*, fols. 74r-76v.

57 This corresponds to “practical drawing”, *ibid.*, fol. 74v.

58 This corresponds to “irregular practical drawing”, *ibid.*, fol. 74v.

59 *Ibid.*, fol. 39v. He also refers to it as “learned painting” (*docta pintura*), *ibid.*, fol. 43v). This corresponds to “regular and scientific practical drawing” (*ibid.*, fol. 74v). It is worth recalling here Véliz’s theory regarding Carducho’s drawing practice, which she directly relates to Vasari’s mental drawing; however, as we can see, it is in fact derived from Zuccari.

60 Carducho replicates this tripartite division of painting in drawing, *ibid.*, fols. 74v-75r.

61 *Ibid.*, fol. 51r; on the perfect painter, *ibid.*, fols. 57r-59r.

62 These prints have attracted little interest from researchers; the main studies are KUBLER 1965, pp. 439-445; WÁZBINSKI 1990, pp. 435-448, and PORTÚS 2015.

63 KUBLER 1965, pp. 440-441.

64 ZUCCARI 1607, I, pp. 45-46, 68 and 71.

65 ZUCCARI 1607, I, p. 16 and CARDUCHO 1634, fols. 90v-91r.

66 CARDUCHO 1634, fols. 159v-160r.

potentia ad actum tamquam tabula rasa (Fig. 2). The meaning of the image is explained in a brief quatrain. It represents the unlimited creative capacity of the learned artist, who, through intelligence and ingenuity, is capable of performing all manner of complex reflections, creating concepts, and configuring them as mental images, still in a state of potentiality—immaterial. The painter, through his skilful brush, honed by natural talent and extensive practice, reproduces on the support the image produced in his mind. The learned artist, as a being who has acquired extensive knowledge through study, possesses greater fecundity and is more substantial in the creation of his inventions. Thanks to the concepts created and reproduced in painting, the artist attains lasting fame, standing out in the course of history. For this reason, a laurel crown surrounds the panel or canvas.

For this image, Carducho draws inspiration from a small etching, *Hinc omnia* (Fig. 3), which Zuccari included in *L'Idée*, specifically in the final poem at the beginning of book one, written by the *Sonnachioso Academico Insensato*⁶⁷. Moreover, in that text, Zuccari explained that without internal drawing, the human being would be like a *tabula rasa*, lacking all initiative and reflective and practical capacity⁶⁸.

Mirroring the narrative of the text, the correlation of the prints in the *Diálogos* represents the development of the artist from youth until achieving the status of a perfect painter⁶⁹. However, it also seems that Carducho establishes a connection between the first print of the young artist drawing and the *tabula rasa*. It is as if the boy were observing that empty support, awaiting to receive the invention conceived through the infinite capacity and progress of the artist's mind. In this way, beginning and end—each mirroring the other—are joined in a closed and perfect circular continuum.

The impact of Zuccari's theory on Carducho could be exemplified in his famous sentence “to draw, to speculate, and to draw more”⁷⁰, in which the term *draw* acquires different meanings. The first refers to the exercise of copying from nature and the works of other artists in order to acquire knowledge for reflection: speculation. The second refers to the conclusion of the process: the material product, the reflection of the new invention, originating from the internal ideation of the concept. In addition to all this, it should be noted that Carducho also wrote about his own concerns, such as the history of the arts⁷¹, the defense of painting in comparison with sculpture⁷², or a theory of the image⁷³, among others. Some of these writings were motivated by the lack of certain basic notions in Spanish artistic

literature, with the aim of establishing them as principles and developing the arts according to these proposed premises.

Towards a Reconsideration of Drawing in Early Modern Spain

The theoretical discourse on art in Spain during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was relatively limited when compared to that of Italy⁷⁴. Nevertheless, several artists regarded their craft as an intellectual endeavor, though their interpretations of this idea differed considerably. Among these were Fernando Yáñez de la Almedina, Alonso Berruguete, Gaspar Becerra, Diego de Siloé, Juan Bautista de Toledo, El Greco, Francisco Pacheco, and Pablo de Céspedes.

As shown, Carducho positions himself conceptually as a follower of Zuccari, both through his writings and his images. It should be emphasized, however, that the Florentine's example neither reflects the broader artistic environment in Spain at the time nor indicates a general turn toward the speculative study of painting. However, partly thanks to Carducho's mediation, an emerging interest can be observed in conceiving the visual arts as liberal disciplines⁷⁵. This is particularly evident in the field of drawing, where from the mid-seventeenth century onward, one finds a higher degree of cultivation and theoretical awareness among younger generations of artists than in the earlier decades.

At the same time, these developments expose the historiographical paradoxes surrounding the arts of this period. The alignment between theory and practice achieved by certain artists challenges long-held assumptions that described Spanish painters merely as artisans driven by instinct, talent, or imitation. Drawing, therefore, must no longer be viewed solely as a workshop tool but should be reconsidered on a case-by-case basis for its deeper conceptual and intellectual underpinnings⁷⁶. ✚

⁶⁷ ZUCCARI 1607, I, p. 10.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, I, p. 48.

⁶⁹ For lack of space, I cannot further develop here the relationship between Carducho's images and theory with Zuccari. However, one must also consider the images created by Vadesi concerning painting or the painter as an artist—*Calunnia, Pittore della Vera Intelligenza con il Lamento della Pittura, Porta Virtutis*, or the paintings in his Roman palace, among others—which the Florentine must have known in order to develop his own conception. For these images by Zuccari, cfr. GIFFI 2023.

⁷⁰ «Dibujar, especular y más dibujar», cfr. CARDUCHO 1634, fols. 2r, 3r, 22v, 52v y 91r.

⁷¹ The first two dialogues are largely devoted to the history of painting and the arts in antiquity and their revival in the early modern period.

⁷² CARDUCHO 1634.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, fols. 112v-120v.

⁷⁴ The main studies that address the artistic literature of Spain during this period in a general manner are MARÍAS 1989, CALVO SERRALLER 1991 and SACAR DE LA SOMBRA LUMBRE 2012.

⁷⁵ The impact of the *Diálogos* on the course of the early modern period has yet to be fully considered, but there are some partial studies that allow us to glimpse how the book resonated in the intellectual development of painting after its publication, see CACHO CASAL 2016, pp. 105-115, and PORTÚS 2016.

⁷⁶ The case of Zuccari can be taken as an example, cfr. GIFFI 2023. Or, in the painting of this period, see MARÍAS 2021, pp. 83-91.



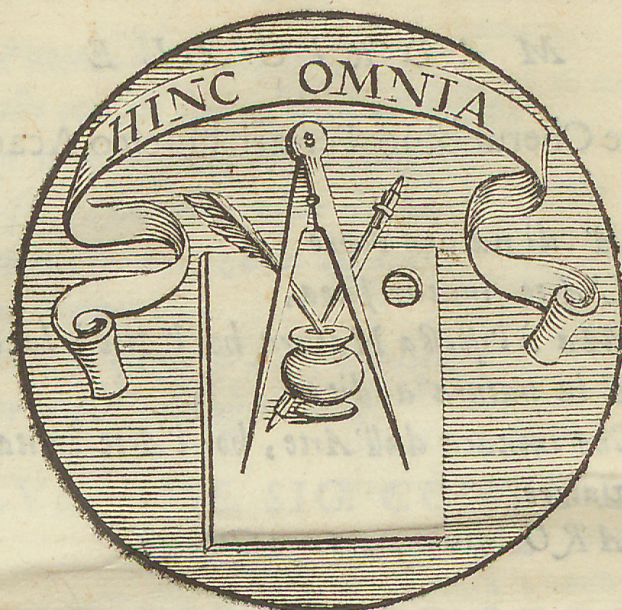
Fig. 1 Vicente Carducho and Francisco Fernández, *Ratione et labore, non voluptate et otio*, 1634, etching, Inv. 171.1 C17.
© New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 2 Vicente Carducho and Francisco Martínez, *Potentia ad actum tamquam tabula rasa*, 1634, etching, Inv. 171.1 C17. © New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

10

Del Sonnachioso Academico Infensato.



Da vn sol diuino, e vn solo human concetto
Tutto deriua, & è tutto perfetto.



HORMANDO il Sommo Dio l'humil Natura,
Per farla à se di se degno soggetto,
L'Anima in quella infuse, e l'intelletto
Capace di raggion d'alta ventura.

E di donarle i sensi hebbe ancor cura
Vscieri, e porte d'ogni diuo oggetto,
E quel primiero ancor alto concetto,
Che è del tutto la norma, e la misura.
Chisia la norma poscia, è quel Rettore
Raggio diuino nell'humana sede
Qual vna imago del diuin Fattore.
Mente, che il tutto scorge, e'l tutto affina,
Tu di Dio quasi passo, e quasi piede,
Vago Disegno, scintilla diuina.

Fig. 3 Federico Zuccari, *Hinc omnia*, 1607, engraving, Inv. 16.h.l.25.
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