Between 1650 and 1750, Franciscan Capuchin missionaries created elaborate illustrated manuscripts drawing from their apostolic work in the African kingdom of Kongo and the nascent Portuguese colony of Angola. At once practical guides to the missions, natural history handbooks, and proto-ethnographic records, these visual documents bring to light how knowledge about nature, culture, and faith emerged and grew in these cross-cultural environments. More than a one-sided record of European views on central Africa, the Capuchin illustrated manuscripts derived from and bore witness to the context of their creation in a region shaped by the generative interaction between local epistemologies, Christian missionary thought, and the profound material impact of Atlantic trade networks.