

Baker-Bates, Piers, and Miles **Pattenden**, eds, *The Spanish Presence in Sixteenth-Century Italy: Images of Iberia* (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700), Farnham, Ashgate, 2015; hardback; pp. xiv, 278; 18 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9781472441492.

The historical image of Spanish hegemony on the Italian Peninsula from the second quarter of the sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth has, as the editors of this volume note, tended to be ‘surprisingly monochrome’ (p. 229). Scholars have clothed it in a language that emphasises Spanish dominance and Italian subordination, and focuses on the actions and agency of the conquerors over the conquered. Even the recent, revisionist works by historians, such as Thomas Dandeleit and Michael Levin, have still operated within this essentially binary understanding of identity. The editors and contributors to this volume seek to overturn this paradigm to reveal, instead, a variegated and richly textured experience. They do so, in the first instance, by rejecting the basic categories of ‘Spanish’ and ‘Italian’ as fixed, national constructs. In their place, the editors suggest that scholars need to focus on ‘the cultural and political continuums ... in which all historical actors were accustomed to move’ (p. 230).

In practice, this overturning amounts generally to emphasising the meanings that Italians gave to the Spanish presence and the ways in which Italians accommodated, resisted, or otherwise engaged with their Iberian conquerors. However, three of the contributors – Clare Copeland, Elena Calvillo, and Jorge Fernández-Santos Ortiz-Iribas – offer analyses that are particularly revealing of the complex, multiple layers of identity at play in the experience of Spanish hegemony.

Copeland demonstrates how the canonisation of five Iberian-born saints on 12 March 1622 did not constitute a triumph of ‘the spiritual glory of

Spain' (p. 116), as the Habsburg monarchy claimed, and promoted, only one of the newly canonised saints (Isidore of Madrid), while pan-European religious orders claimed the others. Calvillo examines the ways in which two artists who were neither Spanish nor Italian (the Croatian Giulio Clovio and the Portuguese Francisco de Holanda) translated the Roman *maniera* into a style acceptable to the court in Madrid by combining it with the Habsburgs' preferred northern naturalism. In the process, they became cultural mediators between Italy and Iberia. Finally, Ortiz-Iribas argues that the marquis del Carpio, Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán, ambassador to Rome and then viceroy in Naples in the late seventeenth century, achieved popularity and made significant political reforms by following neither Spanish nor Italian models but instead by pursuing the French standards of Louis XIV and Jean-Baptiste Colbert.

The essays in this collection have their origins in a conference held at Oxford University in 2012. Such origins lend it an overall coherence and sense of purpose that edited collections can sometimes lack. The contributions are arranged into three thematic sections (addressing political, religious, and artistic interactions) and a brief Introduction by Simon Ditchfield provides some perceptive observations on the nature of the relationship between Spaniards and Italians in light of the cumulative impression of the contributions. While the standard of all the essays is high, two deserve particular mention: those by Miles Pattenden and by Robert Gaston and Andrea Gáldy. Pattenden argues that the apparent Spanish domination of sixteenth-century Rome was, in fact, undermined by Philip II's 'counterproductive policies' (p. 66) that disincentivised his clients and pensioners from identifying themselves as stakeholders in Habsburg rule. Gaston and Gáldy offer a persuasive reading of the tomb of Pedro de Toledo, viceroy of Naples in the mid-sixteenth century, as a fundamentally Spanish artwork, despite its superficial Italian classicism.

The uniform standard and overall coherence of the volume make it an important contribution to the growing revival of scholarly interest in the Spanish presence in Italy and in the Mediterranean as a unifying rather than dividing space during the early modern period. Indeed, in many ways, the volume offers Spanish Italy and the western Mediterranean the type of perspective and approach that has come to dominate recent research into the eastern Mediterranean and exchanges between the Venetian and Ottoman empires in the work of scholars such as Molly Greene, Eric Dursteler, and Natalie Rothman. Such an approach emphasises the fluidity of identities in the early modern Mediterranean, the permeability of political, cultural, and even religious boundaries, and the ways that categories such as 'Italian' and 'Spanish' were continually negotiated and transformed through encounters and exchanges. The editors candidly admit that the volume does not offer a coherent, new paradigm for understanding the experience of the Spanish

presence in Italy. They instead conclude by offering a series of questions and an invitation to further research and an ongoing conversation: an invitation that, hopefully, other scholars will take up.

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