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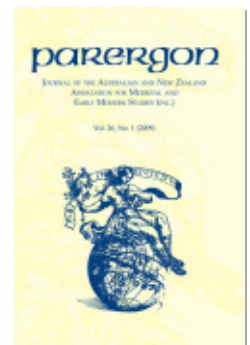
*Material and Symbolic Circulation between Spain and England,
1554-1604 (review)*

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Cruz, Anne J., ed., *Material and Symbolic Circulation between Spain and England, 1554-1604* (Transculturalisms, 1400-1700), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008; hardback; pp. xxvii, 176; 9 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754662150.

This remarkably comprehensive collection, edited by Anne J. Cruz, focuses on the crucial 50 years of relations between England and France, beginning with the marriage of Mary Tudor and Philip II in 1554 and ending with the death of Elizabeth I in 1603.

The first of three parts addresses ‘the physical and representative connections across the channel’ (p. xix) in that period, including trade alliances against France, royal marriages, and religious conflict and its effects in each country. William D. Phillips, Jr contributes a retrospective discussion of trade relations since the thirteenth century addressed in terms of the countries’ location in ‘Atlantic Europe’. Magdalena de Pazzis Pi Corrales, in turn, examines the complex, drawn-out process which transformed traditional allies against France into warring enemies. While it is hardly groundbreaking to stress ‘the key and decisive role’ played by ‘their religious opposition’ in the eventual ‘showdown between the two monarchies’ (p. 13), de Pazzis Pi Corrales shows why and how this conflict was deferred for decades – despite mutual aggravations – due to Phillip’s crucial support for Elizabeth’s succession in preference to that of French-allied Mary Stuart.

Elizabeth Wright details the paradox that Francis Drake’s fame was, in a sense, a Spanish fabrication: the result of ‘exaggeration of his efficacy’, used to ‘cover for shoddy defence systems’ and to gain ‘greater crown subsidies’ (p. 29). Remarkably, accounts by witnesses, prisoners and diplomats culminated in Drake’s lionization in a Spanish epic poem, Lope de Vega’s *La dragontea*, which Wright incisively interprets as a cautionary work for the future Phillip III, to whom the work was dedicated (pp. 34-8).

Anne J. Cruz’s own chapter deals with the process of ‘symbolic warfare’ in response to acts of desecration committed during Drake’s raid on Cadiz in 1587. Cruz focuses on the politico-religious deployment of desecrated religious statuary, both in the immediate aftermath when a damaged statue of the Virgin was granted to the English Jesuit College in Valladolid (p. 49) and in the commissioning and deployment, as late as the 1670s, of paintings on the subject (pp. 50-1).

The highlight of Part II, 'Circulating Fictions of the Other', is arguably Barbara Fuchs' essay on the English 'Orientalizing' of 'Iberia' in such plays as Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. Fuchs discusses the 'English conflation of Spain and the world of Islam ... part of a sustained orientalizing discourse', even more intriguing for being deployed against a Western-European country, the better to 'emphasize the alterity of England's most powerful enemy' (pp. 63-8). But, in her denouement, Fuchs also notes the cultural fascination exercised by that other, so influential were Spanish literary models in England (pp. 68-70).

María Cristina Quintero discusses Antonio Coello's 1633 play, *El conde de Sex* ('The Count of Essex'), unusual for portraying Elizabeth. Quintero stresses the noteworthy portrayal of a queen – albeit a long-dead, foreign one – in an eroticized role (pp. 77-9). Indeed, as Quintero argues, Coello's *embodiment* of the queen in key scenes requiring a scantily-clad actress, constituted a playful, witty manipulation of the discourse of the monarch's two bodies, which the historical Elizabeth had famously exploited (pp. 81-5).

Part II concludes with Frederick A. de Armas' discussion of two of Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares*, *La gitanilla* ('The Little Gypsy Girl') and *La española inglesa* ('The English Spanish-Woman'), shown to be linked to contemporaneous interest in purportedly momentous astrological phenomena which occurred between the death of Elizabeth I (1603) and the birth of the future Philip IV (1605). As de Armas shows, the novellas' defining assertion of seemingly magical possibilities of harmony and tolerance, are, fascinatingly, analogous with the spirit of 'wish-fulfilment' with which James' envoys to the Spanish court – engaged, at that time, in negotiations to end the protracted war between the two nations – reportedly displayed 'a very Catholic behavior' in the course of their mission (p. 95).

Part III, 'Wars of Discourse, Discourses of War', commences with a discussion of Pietro Martire, Richard Eden and Richard Hakluyt; David Boruchoff observes that the Renaissance promise of 'freedom to make one's way' was accompanied by 'trepidation wrought by the disintegration of the medieval world-system' and of 'the certainties of classical and Scholastic *auctoritas*' (p. 103). Boruchoff would locate desire for such lost *auctoritas* in the moral idealism of the discourse of discovery, whereby the work of Eden and Hakluyt, 'despite its importance as an instrument of national pride and propaganda in Tudor England, aspired to more lofty ideals and objectives that ... transcend political and sectarian differences' (p. 103). The providential

character which Hakluyt ascribed the successes of empire – namely, his assurance that Spain’s waning glory manifested her loss of divine favour, as England’s star rose – is the subject of Boruchoff’s warning against the modern temptation to see it as mere ‘lip service to spiritual ideals’ (p. 120).

Carla Rahn Phillips, in turn, discusses rival accounts of the actions of Drake and Raleigh in the 1580s and ‘90s. In examining Henry Savile’s translation and virulent refutation of the original Spanish account of Drake’s last, fatal mission in the Americas – where following military failure Drake himself succumbed to dysentery – Phillips contrasts the ‘clear, dry Spanish prose’ of ‘official communications’ (p. 127), in which Avellaneda, a Spanish admiral, had written his account, with the ‘intemperate’ language and ‘emotional invective’ to which Henry Savile, and his endorser, Thomas Baskerville, resorted in *A Libell of Spanish Lies* (1596), marked by a desire to ‘vilify Spain and Spaniards’ (pp. 128-9, 133). Phillips’ coda is a sobering observation that, ‘once invoked’, xenophobic pronouncements, ‘take on a life of their own’, such animosities surviving, decades later, as an obstacle to reconciliation (p. 134).

In the final essay, Bernardo J. García García examines the voices advising the abandonment of large-scale military action, which gradually gained the ear of the Spanish crown. Alamos de Barrientos is singled out as a leading thinker who had considerable influence upon the young Philip III; he advocated defensive naval measures, the establishment of maritime taxes, and the disruption of foreign trade as ways to target England’s economic resources – even recommending privateering, in imitation of the English (pp. 138-43). However, as García García illustrates, the catalyst for peace negotiations would not be political discourse but the material circumstances of warfare and the death of Elizabeth. Thus, it was the dismal failure of the 1601 Spanish landing at Kinsale in aid of an Irish Catholic uprising, and their defeat by the English over the following year, that led to Philip III’s peace negotiations with England and, indeed, for Philip’s open ‘support’ for the pro-peace ‘James’ accession to the English throne’ (pp. 146-8).

Taken as a whole, the ten essays in this well-documented and fascinating collection make it very worthwhile for historians and literary scholars of Early Modern Spain and England.

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