Conflicting Words: The Peace Treaty of Münster (1648) and the Political Culture of the Dutch Republic and the Spanish Monarchy. Laura Manzano Baena. Avisos de Flandes 13. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2011. 282 pp. €39.50.

Conflicting Words examines the political culture European pamphleteers created during the decade preceding the Peace of Münster. The author analyzes the reasons for the drafting of such a treaty, the provisions of which contradicted the political foundations of both the Spanish monarchy and the Dutch Republic. The book is divided into five main

chapters: rebellion, tyranny, authority, sovereignty, and religious coexistence. Appraising political culture and religious affiliations through the words of prominent early modern thinkers, Baena is interested in the creation of public discourse.

While the author claims to be concerned with representation through the works of premodern intellectuals, she is really engaging in the fashioning of a public sphere, one capable of reacting against and critiquing its monarchs in times of dissatisfaction. Arguing for a comparison in political attitudes, her sources suggest that she is really exploring elite cultural production. Most of the material is published primary sources. This top-down approach aims at analyzing the intellectual reaction to political currents, creating what the author calls a "political culture." The writing is fluid but the descriptions are lengthy and the introduction acts as a distraction from the rest of the book, which is cogent and well developed. Baena tends to use equivocal language, such as the terms *politics* and *political*, sometimes meaning public, monarchical, ruling, or noncultural. The author, however, needs to be commended for her capacity to scrutinize political thinkers in the main European languages, and for presenting an event with far-reaching repercussions on the European Continent.

Chapter 1, "Rebels," examines the political writing against Spain as challenges to the state and to natural and divine law. In this sense, religion was a fundamental aspect in the writing of pamphleteers. Theories of resistance against the Spanish dynasty were developed through a religious character, as "religion was among the fundamental elements motivating the revolt and resistance against Philip II" (40). Treated as rebellion against the king, those who harbored a new religion really rebelled against the monarchy. Rebellion and heresy were treated as one and the same, taking the example of Spanish theorists who advertised such a view. This chapter is the best crafted of all in the questions it raises. For instance, Baena contrasts the way the Spanish monarchy granted forgiveness to Catalonia's and Portugal's revolts but afforded negotiation to the Dutch Republic. Her rationale is that the Spanish monarchy decided to do so "in order to concentrate forces on fewer war fronts" (63). As such, she calls the Portuguese and Catalan revolts "the roads to Munster" (99) because negotiations were preferred over rebellion, which was considered a godless behavior.

Chapter 2, "Tyrants," follows the same model, examining the way that "Spanish authors emphasized respect for the law as a defining mark of the monarchy" (75). This chapter can be summarized by the following quotation: "tyrants are those who base their right on violence; rebels those who base their justice on swords" (75). Re-creating the need for justice through the respect of the law by the monarchy, the analysis concentrates on elite culture writing in England, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, and Italy, where all writers emphasized the covenant between rulers and subjects. These writings led the Dutch to focus on their right to resist given the nature of the Spanish tyranny, later on labeled the Black Legend, especially during the tenure of the Duke of Alba. The Spanish monarchy violated the principles of government and alienated Dutch territorial privileges. Baena concludes by proposing that Spanish tyranny actually justified the existence of the Dutch Republic, while both tyranny and rebellion were expressions of the political culture of the time.

Chapter 4 discusses the concept of sovereignty, a central tenet of kingship, achieved by the Dutch Republic in 1581. Chapter 5 peruses religious coexistence, arguing that religious freedom was the hardest concession for Philip II. The Dutch Republic, on the other hand, did not push for religious uniformity, even though, as the author shows, Dutch thinkers felt that religious unity would preserve civic concord. For instance, Archduchess Isabella was advised to "dissimulate" (224) her religious affiliations. So Baena undermines ideological clichés when contending that neither Dutch nor Spaniards were religiously tolerant.

This is a well-researched book but hard to follow. The author does not offer a close reading of the pamphleteers, thereby making this work a piece of intellectual history; she concentrates on the historical narrative, providing myriad details. I recommend this work for scholars interested in early modern European politics and international relations.

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