

BOOK NOTE

Lexikon of the Hispanic Baroque: Transatlantic Exchange and Transformation. Edited by Evonne Levy and Kenneth Mills. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014. Pp. vii, 352. Illustrations, Index. \$75.00 cloth.

This book is a unique reference tool and will be essential reading for students of what the editors provocatively designate as the “Hispanic Baroque” for years to come. Designed to emphasize transatlantic links as well as local redefinitions in the religious histories and cultural practices of Spain and the Americas, the book is arranged thematically. Chronologically, it extends from the late fifteenth into the eighteenth century (p. 1). The book is organized into 43 categories, arranged alphabetically, from “Afterlife” to “Supernatural,” with separate entries for each category devoted to Spain and Spanish America. The author of each entry is a distinguished researcher, which permits the reader to enjoy 86 distillations of state-of-the-art scholarship; these are followed by suggestions for further reading. The scholars are of several generations and work in several disciplines, ranging across the humanities and social sciences.

Lexikon of the Hispanic Baroque, although substantial enough to be of use for advanced researchers, is written in such accessible prose that selections could be usefully incorporated into undergraduate survey courses on colonial Latin American and early modern Spanish history. The book provides both detailed information and scholarly references for a diverse array of cultural practices and artifacts on both sides of the Atlantic, and at the same time sets forth an argument pertinent to theoretical debates over the concept of the “Baroque.” According to editors Levy and Mills:

A far-flung and enduring imperial frame is part of what makes the Hispanic Baroque distinct from other “Baroques.” Accordingly, we want to compel a deepening dialogue between scholars of Spain and Spanish America, to counter an often artificial isolation of scholars working in these two fields, a fissure that some iterations of postcolonial studies and unproductive disciplinary gatekeeping, among other things, have tended to exacerbate. Another aim is to disrupt whenever possible assumptions about “Spain” as a stable, knowable, fixed center or precedent, in contrast to a transforming “Spanish America” (p. 3).

The editors succeed in compiling a volume that makes a coherent and persuasive argument about the Spanish and Spanish American Baroque, while also providing a thorough introduction to the scholarship of leading researchers. The translation of

many works from Spanish into English is a bonus that will help scholars internationalize course offerings in the United States.

A brief review does not provide adequate space for a fair summary of such an array of authors and interpretations. My personal favorites include but are not limited to Carlos Eire and Stephanie Merrim's discussions of imperial centers; Jesús Escobar and Richard Kagan's examinations of the city, and Stephen Rupp and Sarah Beckjord's analysis of love. Other entries range from "afterlife" and "animal" through church, clergy, convent, food, inquisition, labor, mission, music, prayer, language, library, living image, miscegenation, music, rebellion, saintliness, self-fashioning, ship, sin, sodomy, and the supernatural. Each entry can be read as a vignette revealing a facet of social practice "within a far-flung and enduring imperial frame." Taken collectively, they provide an extraordinary introduction to the cultural history of the Iberian world in early modern times.

Haverford College
Haverford, Pennsylvania

JAMES KRIPPNER