

Jason McCloskey and Ignacio López Alemany, eds. *Signs of Power in Habsburg Spain and the New World*.

Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2013. xxii + 246 pp. \$85. ISBN: 978-1-61148-496-0.

Jason McCloskey and Ignacio López Alemany's volume offers a satisfying collection of essays addressing discursive intersections of power and authority and their representations in the early modern Spanish empire. Several of the essays concern the visual arts. Pride of place in the volume might be justifiably awarded to two of the studies in this category, the outstanding contributions of E. C. Graf and

Lucia Binotti. Graf interweaves politics and theology with textual and graphic analysis in an impressively argued tour de force, discerning moral criticism of Philip II's policies in El Greco's early Spanish paintings and in Cervantes's *La Numancia*. Only Graf's contention that recognition of these critiques explained the artists' failures to win royal patronage might fail to convince some readers.

A painter more favored by the Habsburg monarchs was Titian, whose works figure into the essays of Binotti, Anne J. Cruz, and McCloskey. Both Binotti and Cruz address the poesis, the mythological canvases that Titian painted for Philip II. Binotti invokes those visual treatments of Ovid in her virtuoso reading of the *Polifemo* "in the sexual key" (33). She foregrounds what she considers Góngora's Titianesque poetic techniques and their purpose, one shared with the Venetian artist in those famous Ovidian tableaux: the intended aristocratic reader's sensual contemplation of the *Polifemo* as though it were an erotic painting. Cruz, in effective contrast, underscores classical paganism's cultural weight in early modern Spain and positions Titian's myths in relation to Philip's political and moral concerns at that time, including dynastic marriage, sexual excess, and the wielding of royal power. Lastly, McCloskey argues that Lope de Vega utilized ekphrastic strategies to evoke, adapt, and conflate Titian's *Religion Succored by Spain* and *The Glory* in his epic poem *La Dragontea*. Patronage is again significant here: for McCloskey, Lope appropriated Titian's imagery not only to exalt Spain's triumph in the New World, but also to offer himself to Philip III as a new Titian worthy of favor and reward.

Literature and painting likewise meet in López Alemany's essay, which cites divergent reappropriations of the exemplary Roman general Marcus Curtius to illuminate tensions between competing cultural ideals of the courtier and the soldier; the martial prevailed both in texts such as *La Araucana* and *Don Quixote* and in the allegorical frescoes of an admiral's palace. Frederick A. de Armas also engages *Don Quixote* with his erudite reading of the disguised Sansón Carrasco's catalogue of his chivalric alter ego's labors for his beloved Casildea. This grotesque ekphrastic imitation of the labors of Hercules initiates a competition between the two counterfeit knights for that mythological hero's status, which also comments on Philip III's *Pax Hispanica*.

In their respective essays, John Slater and Elvira Vilches explore two additional visual embodiments of royal authority: coats of arms and currency. Slater examines Bishop Palafox's alterations to Philip IV's crest in the cathedral of Puebla, a shift of images from the heraldic to the emblematic and of colonial government from subjection to willing obedience. In turn, Vilches draws upon treatises, chronicles, and literary texts to reflect on how the minting of copper *vellón* coins problematized notions of both money's value and the Crown's trustworthiness as its issuer and guarantor.

Finally, readers seeking possible parallels between past and present might find Ana María G. Laguna's and José A. Cárdenas Bunsen's essays of particular interest. Laguna considers our current historical moment, one polarized by debates over the actions of Chelsea (Bradley) Manning and Julian Assange, particularly apt for a study of Antonio Pérez, his betrayal of Castilian state secrets and denunciation of Philip II in his *Memorial* and *Relaciones*, and early modern conceptualizations of

treason. Perhaps equally resonant is Cárdenas Bunsen's analysis of how just-war doctrine underpins Inca Garcilaso's *Royal Commentaries*: this juridical subtext serves first to legitimize Inca imperial rule, then to delegitimize the Spanish conquest of Peru and even to make a case for restitution.

There is a substantial variety of topics, arguments, and approaches here, while the volume also benefits from its contributors' shared commitment to clarity of presentation. Most important, all of the essays add fresh insights to the ongoing scholarly dialogues surrounding their subjects. Hispanists, especially those interested in the visual arts, will find *Signs of Power* worth investigating.

CHRISTOPHER B. WEIMER  
Oklahoma State University