

resort to trickery. This decidedly anti-Machiavellian model of royal supremacy had to be articulated through subtle mechanisms of dissimulation that revolved around an effective use of the visual, as much in the monarch's presence as in his absence. Although there already exist important studies on this phenomenon like Robert Bireley's *The Counter-Reformation Prince: Anti-Machiavellianism or Catholic Statecraft in Early Modern Europe* (1990) and Jon R. Snyder's *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (2009), little has been done in relation to Habsburg Spain. Many of these preoccupations, this book reminds us, were already felt decades earlier and fully explored in the fictional realm. The veils of these imagined worlds allow Avilés to focus on the playful aspects of subjectivity, exploring what he calls the "games of self-fashioning" (203) that made these texts so pleasurable to read and yet so useful as indispensable tools of the early modern survival kit. If the pages on Cervantes and Antonio de Guevara are an excellent *puesta al día* of the current debates on the topic, the ones devoted to *El Abencerraje*, which reject an Orientalist view of the Muslim enemy, seem to engage more directly with recent scholarly work published in the anglophone world. All in all, the book accomplishes what it set out to do, constituting an excellent resource not only for scholars well versed on these questions, but for students as well.

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*San Nicolás de Tolentino*. Lope de Vega.

Ed. Roy Norton. Teatro del Siglo do Oro: Ediciones críticas 208. Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2016. xxii + 344 pp. €78.

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This first-ever critical edition of *San Nicolás de Tolentino* (ca. 1614) is a welcome addition to our knowledge of Lope's little-known hagiographic drama. Roy Norton divides the volume into two parts: an extensive introduction and the play text. Preceded by a preface, the introduction is 164 pages and consists of a substantial and well-researched study, which is followed by a brief description of the play (including a detailed summary of its plot and a thorough overview of all its actions), notes on the work's textual history, the editorial criteria applied, and a bibliography.

The solidly erudite study, which provides both contextual material and analysis of the play, has six sections. The first gives a comprehensive account of the veneration of Saint Nicholas of Tolentine (ca. 1246–1305), the Augustinians' first saint in Spain. It explores the possible factors that might have prompted Lope to compose the play, including patronages and the saint's impressive record of miracles as great potential for the exploitation of theatrical *tramoyas*. Section 2 argues that while Lope most likely had relied on González de Critana's *Vida y milagros de san Nicolás de Tolentino* (1612) as the main source of his play, he also allowed himself a good dose of poetic license in order to meet the expectations of his audience in the *corrales*. Such manipulation of ha-

geographic records evinces how the law of supply and demand as well as creativity contributed to the writing of Lope's *comedia*. Sections 3, 4, and 5 constitute a uniquely valuable feature of this edition. The third and the fourth examine the manners in which Spain's religious idiosyncrasy influenced Lope's treatment of the two main characters (Nicholas the saint and Ruperto the *gracioso*). Asserting that Lope was a conscious entertainer as well as an innovative artist, Norton shows how Lope transforms hagiography into a *comedia de santos* by manipulating sources and interweaving them with a worldly characterization of the saint and fictional comic material. Lope's devotional aesthetic, as Norton explains, was intended to inspire by humanizing the otherworldly character of his saintly hero as well as creating a fictional *gracioso* character, Ruperto, a "humbler" model for those who struggle to be good (87). Also of special interest is the study of Lope's dramatization of the supernatural in the fifth section. Norton therein shows that Lope avails himself of supernatural characters and episodes as an effectual "artificial dramatic device" (103) in order to make visible "what is going on in the mind of a character" (104). He also insists that Lope's deployment of such elements is consistent with the post-Tridentine orthodox Catholic belief. The sixth and final section on versification asserts that Lope's use of polymetry was "intended to reinforce the spectator's sense of the drama's structural and tonal development in a manner similar to the incidental music used today in films" (123).

The text of the play, which follows the editio princeps published in Lope's *Parte XXIV* (Zaragoza, 1641), has been carefully annotated and critically edited. Spelling and punctuation of the text have been modernized, "except where alterations would affect the pronunciation" (141). The abundant footnotes draw on an array of primary documents to elucidate the text, purvey the interpretation of such references, point out lexical anomalies, explain the Latin expressions by providing translations and indicating sources, and comment on obscure places. They also indicate the variants from the other four previous reprints (1894, 1955, 1965, and 1984). The edition concludes with a collation of the variants among the extant five versions, plus an index of characters, places, key words, and works.

While the notes are cogent and useful, their scrupulous attention to detail and meticulous research, which lead to lengthy citations of sources and excessively long observations, are distracting. Such a minor issue, however, does not diminish Norton's valuable contribution. With his study and edition of *San Nicolás de Tolentino*, Norton has made a major milestone in our research on Lope's saints' plays. Specialists and advanced students of *comedias de santos* both will profit much from this trustworthy, informative, and useful edition.

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