Harald E. Braun and Jesús Pérez-Magallón, eds.

The Transatlantic Hispanic Baroque: Complex Identities in the Atlantic World.

Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate, 2014. Pp. vi + 315. Hb, £80.

Harald E. Braun and Jesús Pérez-Magallón have sought to highlight an early modern baroque culture that comprised a plurality of discourses and practices in order to bring to light a very dynamic and extensive transatlantic Hispanic cultural world. How did baroque culture adapt, reproduce, and transform itself, and what aspects of this history continue to inform modern Latin American cultural politics today? They have successfully operated on the premise that it would be mistaken to define the operative terms too rigidly—"identity," "transatlantic," and "baroque." Instead each author works with and through these various terms, as is appropriate to the immediate topic at hand. Accordingly, this collection offers a series of overlapping essays that will have broad appeal not only to scholars of early modern Spain, continental Europe, and colonial Latin America, but also to those utilizing "the baroque" as a conceptual frame for thinking through postmodern global aesthetics.

The volume is divided in four parts, which I shall treat in order.

Part I: The Constitution of Identities in the Hispanic Baroque treats "theoretical and practical terms" best exemplified by the first two essays. Interestingly, the authors do not review theories about baroque identities; rather, the historical analysis in each essay functions to sound some cautionary notes about assumptions the modern reader might bring to the reading. Bartolomé Clavero treats operative categories of the period drawing upon theological and legal precedents to show how early moderns carefully parsed the difference between a "person" and an "individual." He reminds readers of the baroque *personae*—the role(s) one adopted in representing a life story. Ruth Hill cautions against swift application of modern race theory to early modern epistemologies of difference, demonstrating how alterity and biological variation relied upon "geographical thinking."

Harald Braun treats aspects of elite Catholic identity in his case study of an Italian patrician, Girolamo da Sommaia (1573–1635). Educated in Salamanca, Sommaia encountered Hispanic culture not only in the university, but through his extracurricular engagements with Spanish literature, friends, prostitution, and, Jesuit devotional life in a cosmopolitan Salamanca, demonstrating how this broad friendship/kinship/religious network acculturated him to patrician life under Spanish influence, a necessity for many Italian elites. Renée Soulo-dre-La France takes up the theme of acculturation among the Coyaima in New Granada (modern Colombia), usefully providing a formal definition of the baroque as "an arrangement constantly seeking to adjust for contradictions

and dissonance,” in other words, a captivating and dynamic form that explains Spanish hegemony in the colonial world wherein baroque indigenous identity was shaped less by notions of ethnicity but rather by the social exigencies that drew people into situational identities.

Part II: Hispanic Baroque: Religion, Politics, Society. Henry Kamen provides a wonderful sweeping and detailed historiographical overview, drawing upon his own research on Catalonia, to dismantle a historiography that reifies an unchanging “Spanish Catholicism.” Rather, everyday Catholicism was witness to transformative reforms, including the critical innovation of mandatory sermons at every Sunday Mass, the development of confraternities, and the expansion of catechesis, arguing that in all of these realms Spain was influenced by broader Catholic (largely Italian) devotional trends. José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez takes note of how Spanish imperialism brought a heightened Catholicism to the Low Countries, where, he argues, Iberian devotional practices were completely integrated into a localized sense of identity. Together with the Soulo-dre-La France and Braun pieces, the above essays construct a view of Spain as influenced and influential, and quite notably engaged in the reconfiguration of the Catholic world. This theme of transformation continues with Pablo Fernández Albaladejo’s attention to crises of rule and identity as self-consciously evaluated among rulers and writers in late seventeenth-century Spain. As preaching was a key aspect of a reinvigorated Catholicism in Spain and the Americas, Carlos-Urani Montiel and Shiddarta Vásquez Córdoba demonstrate how the Society of Jesus’s careful attention to rhetoric at the pulpit often drew upon powerful metaphors of feeding and healing. Intended to be digested, the preacher’s words animated an embodied sense of spiritual health.

Part III: The Urban World and the Hispanic Baroque. The city is the centerpiece of the essays in this section, where the themes of the volume coalesce, offering a sense of how baroque identities were put into play in the shared politico-religious practices that took place on both sides of the Atlantic. Manuel Lucena Giraldo opens this section with an essay on the centrality of identity in the American metropolis, a providential beacon. In Mexico City, Lima, and Cuzco, public ritual was utilized to claim status for the metropolis as the very heart of the Spanish empire in the Americas. Manuel Herrero Sánchez highlights foreign communities as a component of urban life in Spanish and American cities, emphasizing that their presence indicated that urban cities were centers of global information and commodity exchange, most notably the cosmopolitan hub of Cádiz. Jesús Pérez-Magallón writes about transformations in architectural styles in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Madrid, implying that architecture shaped how the city—walked, lived, experienced—was key to identity formation. José R. Jouve Martín demonstrates that the metaphor

of “the phoenix rising from flames” was operationalized in the wake of a devastating earthquake in Lima in 1747. Incan political identity was deployed to symbolically resituate the “center” of the Spanish empire in South America in Cuzco instead of Lima. Patricia Saldarriaga’s essay examines how nostalgia for the holy city of Jerusalem provided a key metaphor through which colonial cities claimed urban grandeur as a central aspect of the metropolis’s providential place in human history, as well as how this metaphor underwrote depictions of the metropolitan centers of the Aztec and Inca empires as “counter-examples” wherein, following José de Acosta, “Satan was in his Rome or Jerusalem” (243).

Part IV: Neo-Baroque Approaches to Identity. The baroque is not decoupled from early modern history, but rather, the tether that connects that history to our present itself becomes an object of attention. The “neo-baroque” is the conceptual frame that treats the layers of media aesthetics informing religion, politics, and literature in Latin America’s global age. W. George Lovell discusses how Martínez Peláez, a twentieth-century Guatemalan scholar, made use of the writings of a seventeenth-century creole to engage in a Marxist critique of a colonial history that was alive in the present such that “we saw with our very own eyes.” The layering of past and present in Kristina Norgert’s essay is both temporal and spatial: figures from Mexico’s colonial history are drawn into the twentieth- and twenty-first-century baroque televised saint-making machinery of the modern, evangelizing Catholic Church. Anabel Quan-Haase and Kim Martin’s ethnography of the Mayan community of Chichicastenango demonstrates how festivals are a site of overlap among cultures, simultaneously pre-Colombian, colonial, and modern, a kind of baroque montage. In this last section of the book, one suddenly feels the lack of a more rigorous working definition of the baroque in the preceding essays, if only to allow the reader to better differentiate and evaluate how the “neo” changes the shape of the “baroque” in its contemporary deployment.

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DOI 10.1163/22141332-00303008-07