Ana Paula Torres Megiani and Luís Silvério Lima, eds.

Visions, Prophecies and Divinations: Early Modern Messianism and Millenarianism in Iberian America, Spain and Portugal. Leiden: Brill, 2016. Pp. 268. Hb, \$142.

Across the early modern Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking worlds both elite and popular cultures nurtured yearnings for perfection, salvation, vindication, and power in prophetic invocations of imminent social and political transformations. *Visions, Prophecies and Divinations* examines these hopes and expectations, manifest in dreams, visions, spiritual practices, healing, exegesis, and Inquisitorial interrogations. The result of a collaborative research project, these essays offer fine-grained case studies and illuminate broader connective experiences including the movement and circulation of ideas and people within the Iberian world, the interplay of erudite and popular cultures and of local practices and politics with imperial and universalizing projects, the imperatives of history and cosmology, and the gendered configurations of authority and dissidence. While many of the essays address specialists and intervene into established historiographical debates, the extensive introduction by the editors Luís Filipe Silvério Lima and Ana Paula Torres Megiani provides a comprehensive guide to the scholarly inquiries and claims that have led to this point. In doing so, the editors also survey the categories that scholars have deployed to describe and understand prophetic experiences. Are millenarianism and messianism two “sides of the same coin” joined by expectancy? (7) Is millenarianism “one possible form of messianic expectation”? Or is messianism “one expression of millenarianism, which, in its turn, would be one among many apocalyptic movements”? (8) Recognizing the origins and explanatory power of each term, the editors note that in Iberia and the Americas millenarianism has been associated with missionary experiments that envisioned new earthly kingdoms of happiness, while in Portugal and Brazil expectations have attached to messianic anointed and “hidden” leaders. The essays that follow provide ample opportunities for readers to trace and reflect upon these and other conceptual divergences and convergences. While more space is given to the Lusophone world and “pervasive” expressions of messianism in Portugal and Brazil (5), throughout the book various aspects of a shared Iberian prophetic imagination remain clear: scriptural reading practices shaped by Jewish and Moorish pasts and a new Christian present, the influence of Joachim de Fiore, and *Encubertismo*, belief in the arrival of a hidden savior. As several chapters also observe, in the Iberian world prophetic discourses flourished in moments when the political boundaries within the peninsula were challenged and, in turn, provided both the Portuguese and

the Spanish with ways of reckoning with “a widening of the world” under the aegis of empire (29).

In the first section on the Americas, Eduardo Natalino dos Santos analyzes the diverse ways that indigenous elites encountered and appropriated Christian concepts as they sustained political projects to uphold their status in the years following conquest, from integrating the new religion and ancient prophecies to the complete rejection of Christianity as a rival power. Stefania Pastore examines the complex interplay between prophesy and social discipline in the case of Francis Borgia, Duke of Gandía. Having entered the Society of Jesus secretly, Borgia cultivated a prophetic calling at odds with “Ignatius’s pragmatism” (59). While Loyola admonished Borgia to distance himself from those who saw in him the “angelic pope” prophesied by Joachim de Fiore, Borgia’s spirituality inspired others, including a young Spanish-American woman engulfed by visions of both saints and demons. Cristina Pompa challenges scholars of Brazilian messianisms to recognize the historical roots of utopian quests that twentieth-century observers regarded as evidence of a barbarism produced by biological and environmental constraints. In engaging native rituals and prophetic beliefs, she argues, Jesuit and later Capuchin missionaries laid the ground for a popular Catholicism that privileged penitential practices and, in a chronically drought-stricken land, produced a “view of history as a permanent death threat” (89).

The essays in Part II examine how the Inquisition responded to individuals who received, harbored, and spread prophetic knowledge. Marcos Antonio Lopes Veiga analyzes the mid-seventeenth-century case of Dominican priest Juan Serrada and his appeal to mystical objects, especially the rosary, to explain challenges to imperial Spain. Jacqueline Hermann reveals the convergences of politics and prophecy in the early years of the Iberian Union, as the cause of Dom Antônio, Prior of Crato, a challenger to Philip II’s claim to the Portuguese throne, surfaced in cases of women accused of heretical ecstasies and communications. Mark Cooper Emerson further explores the links between authority, the Inquisition, and folk belief through the curious case of a Portuguese hermit whose account of a vision of Saint Paul and reputation for healing both raised suspicion among religious authorities and caught the attention of João IV who summoned the hermit to his court.

The final section of the book examines Sebastianism, the belief that King Sebastian, killed in North Africa in 1578, would return to deliver Portugal from Spanish rule, together with the broader terrain of imperial prophecies within Iberian lettered cultures. Francisco Moreno-Carvalho explores the work of seventeenth-century polymath Jacob Rosales who, having embraced Judaism in exile, re-envisioned the return of the Hidden One not as ushering in

a rupture with Spain but rather as the beginning of a new Iberian Union led by Portugal. João Carlos Gonçalves Serafim examines “the Prophetic Arsenal” deployed by the Portuguese under Spanish Habsburg rule in the work of João de Castro and accounts of the apparition of Christ to Dom Afonso Henriques before the Battle of Ourique in 1139. While António Vieira, born in Portugal in 1608 and raised and educated in Brazil where he entered the Society of Jesus, surfaces on many pages here, the last two chapters are dedicated exclusively to his life and work. Marcus De Martini examines the Inquisition’s proceeding into Vieira’s prophetic writings and the multifaceted ways that Vieira defended both specific prophecies and the potential for and promise of prophecy itself. Ana T. Valdez sheds new light on Vieira’s vision of a “Fifth Empire” expressed in *History of the Future* and his unfinished magnum opus *Clavis prophetarum*. She meticulously traces the relationship between the two works through chronology, theology, and imperial theory, incorporating readings of less-cited, and in one case previously unknown, *Clavis* manuscripts, explicating Vieira’s innovative exegesis that illuminated the convergence of the temporal and the spiritual and the promise of indigenous and Jewish “returns” to God in conversion (223). Together, this excellent collection of essays will engage both specialists and those new to the study of prophetic experiences in Spain, Portugal, and the Americas.

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