(160–96); “The Virus in the Language: Alonso de Cartagena’s Deconstruction of the ‘Limpieza de Sangre’ in *Defensorium unitatis christianae* (1450)” by Maria Laura Giordano (226–51), and “Apologetic Glosses—Venues for Encounters: Annotations on Abraham in the Latin Translations of the Qur’ān” by Katarzyna K. Starczewska (252–85). These three chapters focus on individual texts but all point to the role of converts in Jewish-Christian-Muslim polemical cultural transfers in an Iberian world where mass conversions were redefining the borders between the three religious groups.

The Jesuit order only features in the final chapter of this book, in Pereda’s discussion of the debates about the immaculate conception. Indeed, the Spanish Jesuits were enthusiastic proponents of the immaculate conception and found themselves on the receiving end of polemical attacks penned by Dominicans. As Pereda notes, this dispute mapped onto a pre-existing controversy over racial purity, which had seen the Jesuits attacked by the Dominicans in the sixteenth century for their reluctance to embrace racially discriminatory statutes of *limpieza de sangre*.

At first sight, the ten chapters of this work might appear to present a somewhat eclectic mix of works. Yet, there is much that connects their subjects beyond the chronological focus of this work. The editors have admirably succeeded in their desire to present a body of scholarly work that demonstrates how the study of polemical exchanges cannot be limited to physical violence and textual aggression but must also involve the study of how they produce important cultural exchanges. All of the contributions are fascinating in their own merits and the book thus offers a valuable resource to students and scholars conducting research in this field.

François Soyer

University of New England, Armidale, Australia

fsoyer@une.edu.au

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Margarida Miranda

Miguel Venegas and the Earliest Jesuit Theater: Choruses for Tragedies in Sixteenth-Century Europe. Jesuit Studies, 23. Leiden: Brill, 2019. Pp. xv + 240. Hb, €106.00; \$127.00.

Poor Miguel Venegas! When Jerónimo Nadal (1507–80) was visiting Coimbra in 1561 and conducted an *examen* (professional development review) on the thirty-two-year old Jesuit, the overworked teacher was approaching burnout.

He complained of headaches that made him lose his mind and of being “tired and weary of teaching, but I will do what I am ordered to do.” He claims to have spent “the required time preparing my lessons; in fact, rather more time than is required.” He has been “teaching humanities for six full years, without ever taking a break for a month” (5). Venegas’s predicament will be recognizable to many overburdened modern university lecturers. He seems to have been a victim of his own success. In the first few decades of the Jesuit order, as new schools were being founded and classrooms were exploding, sufficiently skilled teachers were in high demand. A talented Latinist and dramatist from the prestigious Colégio Trilingüe of Alcalá de Henares, Venegas was posted hither and thither—Lisbon, Coimbra, Paris, and Rome—garnering praise for his literary gifts but also criticism from his superiors for his instability and immaturity. He left the order in 1566, having been denied the leave he craved to complete his long-deferred theological studies.

Miranda’s slim but dense volume packs in a lot of original research and corrects several scholarly misconceptions about Venegas’s career. She argues for nothing less than his pioneering of a classicizing biblical drama in the Society of Jesus, pre-dating the famous Roman plays of Stefano Tucci and Bernardino Stefonio, and influencing the resolutions on drama in the *Ratio studiorum*. His works gave rise to an international “cycle of tragedies” based on the stories of Ahab and Jezebel (within and beyond the Society of Jesus) that continued into twentieth century (chapter 7). He even seems to have created the template for dramatic dialogues on the distribution of prizes, later adopted by Orazio Torsellini at the Collegio Romano in the 1560s. Most significantly, he was crucial in the development of a new “genre” of sung choruses, integrated dramatically with his sacred tragedies, but circulating, and sometimes performed, separately from them (chapter 8).

In her third chapter, on Venegas’s pre-Jesuit education in Spain, Miranda describes the Erasmian humanism of the university of Alcalá de Henares—which eschewed imitation of the familiar “old” classics of Virgil and Ovid in favor of “new” or Christian classics such as Persius and Sedulius—contrasting it with the expurgated pagan humanism that would become dominant in Jesuit schools. She also notes the importance of Hellenistic and Byzantine rhetoric in this environment, so that stylistic features of Venegas’s works seem to prefigure the baroque poetics of later Jesuit theatre. If Venegas’s education was not yet “Jesuit,” his biblical, dramatic, and rhetorical training at the Complutensian University brought a lustre to his compositions that was widely admired and made him an attractive candidate for recruitment to the young Society.

Miranda's fourth and fifth chapters set Venegas's oeuvre in the context of earlier and contemporary traditions of religious and classicizing drama in Spain and Portugal (Juan Bonifacio, Pedro de Acevedo, Mal Lara, Tanco de Fregenal, Micael de Carvajal, Pérez de Toledo, Diego Sánchez de Badajoz, George Buchanan, Marc Antoine Muret, among others). This is the cultural backdrop to Venegas's affective, declamatory drama combining Old Testament exegesis with classical tragic form, designed not only to edify theatre audiences but for teaching elegant Latin and rhetorical skills. In chapter 6, Miranda charts the composition and production of Venegas's dramatic works during a prolific period in Coimbra (1559–62). It was here that he came into contact with men who had a formative influence on the future of Jesuit education and the *Ratio studiorum* (Cipriano Soares, Pedro Juan Perpinyà, Manuel Álvares, and Pedro da Fonseca). Miranda contends that Venegas "would have become equally famous and his name well known if he had not left the Society, meaning his texts circulated anonymously." His play (sc. *Saul Gelboeus*) was performed at Jesuit colleges in "Rome, Sicily, France, Austria, and the German-speaking lands, providing Jesuit theater with a decisive impetus shaped by many years of experience and approved by the superiors" (130).

There is plenty of fascinating documentary detail in Miranda's book about the movement of manuscripts, the reception of performances, sets and costumes, including an amusing anecdote about the riot that broke out when Italian students banned from the Collegio Romano stormed a performance of the *drama sacrum et Latinum* and began to improvise a comic scene; the tragic actors, overcoming their initial shock, used their theatrical weapons to exchange blows with the interlopers in front of an astonished audience of cardinals and noblemen.

The book's themes converge in its subtitle and final chapter—the invention of musical tragic choruses. It is a pity that a sample of transcriptions (or even reproductions) from the extant scores was not included to assist the reader to follow the argument about innovations aiming at textual clarity and heightened emotion. If Miranda is correct—unfortunately I am no historian of music—the tragic choruses for neo-Latin Jesuit drama originating in Portugal predate the musical choruses of secular Italian theatre, and the "Coimbra tragic choruses represent one of the rare outcomes of the collaboration between the poethumanist [*sic*] and the musician [Francisco de Santa María], in which the former appears to have taken the initiative and the latter adopted his aims at his own" (200).

Miranda certainly piques our curiosity to seek out and read Venegas's plays. Unfortunately, as the appendix reveals, they remain in manuscript. Another

appendix, with a plot synopsis of the *Saul Gelboeus* and the *Achabus*, would have been welcome. (The influence of Seneca on Venegas is affirmed throughout but not really discussed.) The introduction refers the reader to a CD-ROM with Latin text and Portuguese translation accompanying the author's 2006 study, *Teatro nos colégios dos jesuítas: A Tragédia de Acab de Miguel Venegas S.I. e o início de um género dramático (séc. XVI)* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian), and one wonders whether this text, together with the *Saul Gelboeus*, would merit an English critical edition and commentary. While the present work is scholarly and well-researched, I was surprised not to encounter references to some recent literature on Jesuit neo-Latin education and drama, notably Jan Bloemendal's and Howard Norland's *Neo-Latin Drama and Theatre in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), which includes a long chapter on neo-Latin drama in Spain, Portugal, and Latin America by Joaquín Pascual Barra; or indeed on Jesuit music, e.g. by Alexander J. Fisher, Franz Körndle, Margaret Murata, and the special issue edited for the *Journal of Jesuit Studies* by Daniele Filippi in 2016.

Miguel Venegas and the Earliest Jesuit Theater is a plucky and provocative book with many original contentions about the history of early Jesuit education, drama, and music; it brings Venegas's work to the wider scholarly public it seems to deserve. The volume is well produced and relatively free from errors (although Jerónimo Nadal is listed in the index as Rafael!). A very minor quibble: it was unnecessary to include "pp.," "vv.," and "MS" in the list of abbreviations.

Yasmin Haskell

University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia

yasmin.haskell@uwa.edu.au

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Andrew Horn

Andrea Pozzo and the Religious Theatre of the Seventeenth Century. Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 2019. Pp. 427 + 257 color images. Hb, \$120.00.

When a book is published about a well-known artist, it is a success if it reveals new insights and brings to the front lesser-known projects. Andrew Horn achieves this in his new book, *Andrea Pozzo and the Religious Theatre of the Seventeenth Century*. He unearths new documents and carefully reviews previously published ones; he thoroughly analyzes the paintings, *macchine*, and printed material of Pozzo. The result is a focused study of the Jesuit artist's