

witch hunt in an effort to protect property from women. Other circumstances of Salem in this period are partly explored.

The traditional marriage pattern developed in peasant society. One wishes in this book for more discussion of aristocratic or middle class elites (both men and women) who are generally more interesting to historians because they are more articulate and better documented. Upper class families presumably experienced the same kind of pressures that peasant families did, but they may have expressed them differently and elaborated different outcomes. But the author passes directly from peasant society to “large social processes,” although the means of arriving at these is unclear: the Reformation, the English revolutions of the seventeenth century, the Enlightenment (labeled here the “so-called Enlightenment” [209]), the French Revolution, capitalism, industrialization, democratization, modernization. “Most women and men had no sense that familial arrangements that had emerged first among the peasant masses played any part in their attitudes or actions” (230). One misses here the “affective individualism” that more traditional historians say softened family relationships in the upper classes through the Enlightenment and helped eventually to mitigate the suffering even of unwed mothers oppressed by clerically upheld patriarchy in such places as Italy and Ireland. The author’s “re-imagining” of history goes beyond what can be sustained in the book.

Interest in this kind of demographic family history has waned in recent years, and younger historians have returned to elaborating traditional modes of history in new ways. But women’s history has developed splendidly. Perhaps readers should be advised to seek out other more rounded works in this field before accepting this one at face value.

Jesús Escobar. *The Plaza Mayor and the Shaping of Baroque Madrid*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xxvii + 347 pp. + 123 illus. \$85.00. Review by ELIZABETH R. WRIGHT, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.

The title of this book gives an understated distillation of Jesús Escobar’s wide-ranging, multi-faceted fusion of social and architectural history. His point of departure is the ambitious and sophisticated urban planning enterprise designed to give Madrid a central plaza (*plaza mayor*). But from here, he provides a dense, scrupulously researched, and meticulously documented study of how early modern people of all social echelons engaged their urban

environment and interacted with their rulers. One of the most important facets of this book relates to Escobar's consideration of Madrid's urban reforms in an international context that encompasses other European cities, as well as the evolving urban spaces of Spanish America. The author also provides large numbers of illustrations that will enlighten specialists and non-specialists alike. Particularly helpful are clear, legible photographs of the different maps, blueprints, and memoranda that Escobar found in Spanish archives. A number of photographs show the present-day state of the urban spaces the author discusses.

Chapter 1, "Madrid, Town and Court," discusses the origins of a most unlikely capital for a world empire. Unlike London or Paris, which had longstanding claims to capital status, Madrid began the sixteenth century as a market town of regional importance. In 1561, when Philip II made it his court city, its population was somewhere between twelve- and sixteen thousand people. By 1600, it had grown to between ninety- and ninety-five thousand (42). In order to shed light on Philip II's choice, Escobar pays heed to symbolic and practical factors. Thus he discusses the importance of Madrid's location at the "heart" of Philip's peninsular realms. But he also notes the king's desire to base his court at a remove from the Archbishop of Toledo, the most powerful ecclesiastical authority in Spain and a counterweight to royal authority. Escobar provides a particularly illuminating analysis of the efforts by city chroniclers to negotiate between Madrid's actual Muslim origins and the desired Roman heritage that some writers were happy to furnish through faulty lexicography.

Chapter 2, "Architecture and Bureaucracy," surveys the people who spearheaded the major urban reform plan that took shape once Madrid had become the court city. This chapter's discussion of an urban planning process that was state-of-the-art and collaborative will surprise specialists and non-specialists alike, since Spain in the early modern era has often been described as a backward place ruled by an absolutist monarchy.

Chapter 3, "Sixteenth-Century Initiatives," applies the methodologies of micro-history as it seeks to revise the long-held notion of Madrid's central plaza as an early-seventeenth-century building project that stemmed from royal initiative. Escobar begins his examination of the plaza's expansion with a discussion of the efforts, in 1551, of one property owner, Marí Gómez, to renovate her facade and thus increase her home's value. The author also

mines the labor contract of a street cleaner for clues about how the space evolved (109).

Continuing in this vein, Chapter 4, “The Panadería and its Impact,” tells the history of the central bread distribution center, which was situated on the north side of the *plaza mayor*. Specifically, Escobar notes how the need to regulate and maintain the growing town’s food supplies shaped the planning of this crucial building on the plaza.

The final two chapters will be of the most direct interest to specialists in seventeenth-century topics. Chapter 5, “Seventeenth-Century Reforms,” discusses the most famous physical transformation of the *plaza mayor*, circa 1617-19, under Philip III. Yet the author moves beyond the traditional focus on elite actors to a discussion of how ordinary residents wielded the discourse of good government in lawsuits designed to assert their needs. The chapter also records debates about the use of public space that led, among other things, to proposals to remove the “master of pulling molars” from the *plaza mayor*, since the spectacle of tooth extraction might not be worthy of an imperial capital. More than just a picturesque anecdote, this story reinforces the thesis of Madrid as a dynamic city whose residents and rulers negotiated the uses of ceremonial and public space.

Chapter 6, “The Plaza Mayor of Madrid as Political Symbol,” takes as its point of departure the Calderonian image of the “wide plaza of the great theater of the world.” As the great Baroque playwright deploys this image in his masterpiece, *Life is a Dream* (*La vida es sueño*), it is a statement of disenchantment that subordinates the “drama” of life on earth to the question of how to attain salvation. For his part, Escobar deploys this image to situate the evolution of the *plaza mayor* in relation to Spanish cities across the Atlantic. This chapter could quite easily stand alone as an introduction to Spanish urbanism for scholars of the seventeenth-century Atlantic world. Of particular interest here is how Escobar argues that contact with the Americas changed Spanish conceptions of urban planning. He notes, in this regard, the powerful influence of Hernán Cortés’s survey of the Aztec capital. One important detail Escobar does not discuss in relation to the Conquistador’s famous urban description is how he uses the Islamic cities of Andalusia and North Africa as the measures of urban sophistication. This aspect of Cortés’s “Second Letter from Mexico” (first published in Seville, 1522) could be fruitfully connected to Escobar’s discussion in Chapter 1 of the efforts by the town’s

chroniclers to erase or minimize Madrid's heritage as an Islamic city.

Overall, this study presents sufficient new documents and analysis to enlighten even the most experienced Hispanists, but also gives non-specialist scholars a window through which to examine the Habsburg court city in an international context. My one quibble with the book is the use of "Baroque" as its defining term, which Escobar ties to the influential study by José Antonio Maravall, *The Culture of the Baroque* (1975). The author draws on this political theorist to support his goal of transcending the art historical definitions of Renaissance and Baroque (7). But Maravall's overly influential depiction of the Spanish Baroque pivots on a thesis of a top-down government unobstructed by the agency of ordinary people. When this book appeared in English translation, the eminent historian John Elliott pointed out the problems with its thesis about royal power (*New York Review of Books*, 9 April 1987). Yet Maravall's paradigm of a reactionary "theater state" took root and contributed to a marginalization of Spain within studies of Early Modern Europe. In fact, the lingering and deleterious influence of this thesis inspired one of the most important recent books on Spanish theater, Melveena McKendrick's *Playing the King: Lope de Vega and the Limits of Conformity* (2000). It would be unfortunate if the "Baroque" label on Escobar's book encouraged hurried readers to filter his study through Maravall's thesis. One hopes instead that Escobar's beautifully wrought and multi-faceted book will recharge the Spanish Baroque with new significations that recall the contentious *villa y corte* (town and court) of Madrid that stood at the heart of a far-flung world empire.

Vanessa Harding. *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500-1600*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. xvi + 343 pp. + 10 illus. + 2 maps. \$65.00. Review by EDNA RUTH YAHIL, WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY, SWISS CENTER.

By 1670, the populations of London and Paris exceeded 450,000, making these two of the largest cities in northern Europe. Both cities were capitals of centralizing states, and were represented by contemporaries as unified wholes despite being fractured judicially into a patchwork of overlapping ecclesiastical and lay jurisdictions. In *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500-1600*, Vanessa Harding has attempted a comparative study of these