

experiments had a powerful vein of inspiration in its American dream.

This thesis, backed by the examination of diverse texts, will make this study of interest to a wide range of students and scholars of early modern Europe and the colonial Americas. Non-Hispanists may, however, find that the breadth and range of sources Vilches discusses require further orientation. An appendix to define technical terms of finance and identify the many lesser-known writers mentioned would be a helpful addition to a paperback reprint. For now, readers might pair *New World Gold* with studies by John H. Elliott for orientation on the historical context, or with the essays on “Golden Age” literature by the contributors to the *Cambridge History of Spanish Literature* (ed. David T. Gies). Despite this difficulty, readers from early-modern English studies and other fields outside of Hispanism need not be daunted. With the thematic organization, individual chapters work well as stand-alone studies, whether to provide comparative analysis for individual research or in graduate seminars. Even advanced undergraduates could benefit from the book, particularly in light of how much financial anxiety has informed their own college years. For instance, the “Conclusion” along with the last two chapters would provide a fresh and illuminating perspective on Baroque literature of Spain. The first two chapters could enrich a study of Columbus’s travel log or Cortés’s “Letters from Mexico.” Whether read in parts or as a whole, Vilches’s book offers the reader a layered and insightful examination of early modern Spain’s “Golden Age,” attune to all the contradictions that follow from this term.

Alban K. Forcione. *Majesty and Humanity: Kings and Their Doubles in the Political Drama of the Spanish Golden Age*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. x + 286 pp. Review by LAURA BASS, TULANE UNIVERSITY

Most well known for his groundbreaking books on the novelistic universe of Miguel de Cervantes, Alban Forcione brings to us in *Majesty and Humanity* a no less original study of the theater of Golden Age Spain in relation to absolutist monarchy, that most theatrical of institutions of the Baroque. In doing so, he newly enriches the body of scholarship that has emerged in the past two decades to challenge

the long-held view of the *comedia* as a cultural form in the service of what José Antonio Maravall labeled the “monarchical-seignorial interests” of seventeenth-century Spanish society. Forcione anchors his study in two plays, Lope de Vega’s *El villano en su rincón* and *El Rey Don Pedro o el Infanzón de Illescas*, attributed to Lope, though his rich analysis, facilitated by generous summaries in the appendices, unfolds through engagement with a broader corpus of texts and images. The result is a book of luminous erudition and eloquence (Forcione is a master of copious sentences, subordinate clauses, and discursive endnotes—Yale University Press deserves praise for allowing them) on the nature and limits of the subjectivity of individuals in relation to their monarch and of the monarch’s own identity in relation to his subjects.

As the title announces, never far from view is the theory of the king’s two bodies (the immortal, royal being and mortal, human nature), classically expounded by Ernst Kantorwicz. Starting from its introductory chapter, Forcione sets out to uncover a “countercurrent in the political and literary culture” of seventeenth-century absolutism that enacted a demystification, or what he refers to as a “denuding” and “disrobing,” of the royal body (1). For his point of departure, he brings into dialogue Diego Velázquez’s *Las Meninas* and Miguel de Cervantes’s famous burlesque sonnet on Philip II’s tomb as bold examples of that demystification: both works point to the ultimate insubstantiality of the sovereign of official imagery—whether state portraits (such as Velázquez’s own equestrian paintings) or monumental catafalques (like the one mocked by Cervantes). Both, moreover, disrupt the spaces of royal representation with gestures of their creators’ own self-assertion. (Forcione’s argument here is more in keeping with Roberto González Echevarría’s recent political comparison of *Las Meninas* and *Don Quixote* [see *Love and the Law in Cervantes* [New Haven, Yale UP, 2005], pp. 119-124] than with Foucault’s well-known epistemological reading). Forcione then introduces his main topic—the demystification of the king in Lopean drama. For all the recent reevaluations of Lope’s theater, it is still refreshing to find him given place alongside the paradigmatically self-reflexive Velázquez and Cervantes, especially because Cervantes, in particular, is often championed for unmasking the playwright’s putative strategies of

conformity (see, for example, William Egginton, “The Baroque as a Problem of the Thought,” *PMLA* 124.1 [2009], 143-149).

In his multilayered analysis of *El villano en su rincón*, the subject of chapter one, Forcione shows Lope himself unmasking baroque rituals of power. Constructive contrast between the *comedia* and a subsequent adaptation of it as an *auto sacramental* by José de Valdivielso allows the author to question previous readings of the drama as an apotheostic celebration of monarchy. Although the play concludes with a spectacle put on by the king, “it itself is not a spectacle of power” but more profoundly a critical reflection on “the dynamic of royal visibility in the theatrically constructed absolutist state” (25). Lope introduces points of fracture in the contemporary cult of the monarch in Juan Labrador’s refusal to see the king, which undermines the totalizing royal gaze of public ceremony and much of seventeenth-century political theory. In a reversal of the monarch-subject hierarchy, the king becomes obsessed with laying his eyes on the peasant and pays him a visit *in cognito* in the second act. That encounter becomes a veritable *speculum principis*: cast in the role of the classical peasant-sage, the protagonist has a transformative effect on the monarch; before his “modest philosophical double” (32), the king is “humanized” (“humanarse,” we learn, was actually a term employed in contemporary writings on kingship). Indeed, Forcione argues that it is precisely a humanist vision of kingship that prevails in the third act when the royal figure abandons the specter of tyranny evoked in his allegorical masque and offers instead promises of reason and justice—the foundations of a “kingdom of good” (79). At the same time, though, the humanizing reconstitution of the sovereign exacts a price: in finally submitting to the “dispossessing power of the court” (90), the peasant-protagonist loses much of his own humanity—the freedom and individuality emblemized in his utopian *rincón*.

If *El villano en su rincón* aims to transcend the “radical dualism” inherent in the conception of the king’s two bodies (30), in *El Rey Don Pedro en Madrid y el Infanzón de Illescas*, the focus of chapter two, the “doubleness of the king crystallizes as a hybrid that is truly monstrous” (102). Forcione argues that the principal duality in the play’s title between king and feudal lord works as a displacement for the fundamentally ambivalent legacy of Pedro I of Castile summed up in

his two nicknames, *El Justiciero* and *El Cruel*. In keeping with attempts on the part of royalist historiography to purge the latter epithet from early modern Spain's collective memory, the drama aims to project the medieval king's notorious cruelty onto his tyrannical fictional double, Tello, and, in the process, to cast him as a foundational figure in the emergence of a just, centralized monarchy. However, Forcione brilliantly shows that Don Pedro cannot fully submit to the "repressive order of his own majesty" (155) and that the "cleansing" (178) of his historical memory is far from complete. While superficially the play could be read as a celebration of a triumphant ascendancy of the modern state over Spain's bloody medieval past, dramatically it conveys a longing for the "sublime individualism" (178) and "manly" force embodied by the lawless *infanzón*. As in the case of *El villano en su rincón*, the complexity of *El rey don Pedro* comes into sharper focus through comparison to a later reworking of the drama—Agustín Moreto's "rational, statist" *El valiente justiciero* (126)—and in relation to other fields of contemporary cultural production. For example, Pedro's slaughter of his unruly horse betrays the violent underside of the commanding majesty of equestrian portraiture; Tello's "exuberant enumeration" of his possessions echoes Góngora's Polyphemous and the anarchic self-assertion that court society sought to suppress (160-163).

Forcione's epilogue treats us to a brief excursus on Bernini's famous equestrian statue of Louis XIV, a work, he explains, so daring in its rapturous dynamism that the king wanted it demolished and commissioned more staid versions in its place. Bernini's sculpture, in turn, dovetails with the principal dramas that have been Forcione's focus: all three works depict kings breaking out of the bounds of their prescribed roles, and they were each followed by tamer, more conventional renderings by subsequent artists and authors. The epilogue concludes with penetrating reflections on the "disrobing of the king" in Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño* and *El príncipe constante*, dramas deeply pessimistic in their views about earthly political order. Although Forcione addresses this only in the case of the latter, it is worth noting that in both plays the princely protagonists are given female doubles; the questions of majesty and humanity explored throughout the book were often played out in relation to women.

In the epilogue, Forcione also argues that the works studied ultimately dramatize the burdens and limitations the rise of the modern state imposed on all human beings; the monarchs' "nostalgia for humanness" becomes the "condition of every man and woman" (187). Taking the book as a whole, at times I sensed the author's own possible nostalgia for an archetypal criticism prior to the historicist turn in early modern literary studies. For example, he considers *El villano en su rincón* to be much more pertinently related to the genre of romance than to the double royal wedding of 1612 and the ambitions of Lope's patron, the Duke of Sessa, with which it may have been linked (29). Even as he recognizes the identification of the figure of Tello in *El Rey Don Pedro* with "the anarchic, violent culture of the feudal aristocracy" (and indeed devotes several pages to the social and political structures of medieval Spain), he argues that he "is simultaneously connected with areas of human experience that are far more fundamental and universal than anything that can be accounted for by reference to a specific social class or historical moment" (157)—areas of experience he finds in the heroic registers of myth and epic. Still, this appeal to universal structures does not diminish the importance and brilliance of this study on the political drama of the seventeenth-century Spain. With his magisterial readings and dazzling erudition, Alban Forcione reminds us that we find the culture's deepest reflections on its structures of power and social order not only in writings of political theory but in works of art and imaginative literature, in all their complexity and resistance to closure.

Xavier Bray. *The Sacred Made Real. Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700*. London: National Gallery Press, 2009. 208 pp. \$65. Review by JOSEPH R. JONES, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY.

Like other conservative Spanish art forms that non-Spanish historians have neglected or, worse, rejected as kitsch, Spain's polychrome wooden religious sculpture is as worthy of serious attention for its beauty, emotional content, and display of exquisite craftsmanship as the colorless marble saints of, say, the Italian Renaissance, which even those who disapprove of religious statuary on principle have been