

corner of the Mediterranean, which could become a standard for similar investigative efforts in other parts of Europe.

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*Philip II of Spain and the Architecture of Empire*. Laura Fernández-González.  
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In her concise introduction to *Philip II of Spain and the Architecture of Empire*, Laura Fernández-González summarizes the copious scholarship on King Philip II of Spain (r. 1556–98), while justifying another monograph and distinguishing her contribution. Rather than following more traditional approaches that privilege singular individuals, static monuments, celebrated sites, and neatly classified styles, she instead addresses processes, syntheses, intersections, and multiplicities. Centering the concept of circulation, Fernández-González examines four case studies of Philip II and visual culture in the same number of chapters. She studies several visual forms (houses, archives, ephemera, ceremonies, drawings, frescoes) in relation to texts (regulations, documents, narratives, chronicles, elegies) in order to understand concepts (rulership, court, empire).

The first two chapters study the translation and adaptation of architecture in the pan-Iberian world. Chapter 1 sets aside celebrated palatial architecture in favor of lesser-known domestic architecture and regulatory legislation in Spain and Iberian America. Fernández-González uses this building typology to ask larger questions: How did architectural ideas, styles, materials, and technologies circulate in the Iberian world? What was the relationship between courtly architectural trends and local styles/practices? Her examples are many and wide-reaching (Madrid, Valladolid, Seville, Lima, Cholula, Cuzco, etc.), and the answers complex. Two important conclusions are that under Philip II, domestic architecture “employ[ed] a shared visual lexicon and at the same time project[ed] distinct identities that reflect the traditions of each particular locale or region” (41–42), and that efforts were made to regularize domestic building in Spain and its transatlantic empire. Though impressive in scope, one wonders if there might be a way to organize the comparisons more cogently in order to sharpen the broad points.

Chapter 2 continues with Philip II’s use of architecture for empire-building but focuses on a single edifice, the uncelebrated fortress of Simancas. She traces Simancas’s evolution from treasury-archive in a medieval fortress under Charles V to royal archive for the *patronazgo real* in the harmonious Austriaco style under Philip II (1540–98). Comparison to early modern European archives shows that the transformation reflects the growth of the Spanish Crown from a European kingdom

to a transatlantic empire. Philip II established the archive and oversaw its expansion and design because collecting, organizing, and safeguarding the written proof of his rule supported his political agenda of dynasty-making. Refuting the existing narrative that the design and realization was a minor work of Juan de Herrera, Fernández-González shows that the architect was the mastermind largely responsible for realizing the king's vision.

The second half of the book shifts from architecture to other media that represented the rulership and empire of Philip II. Focusing on Philip II's triumphal entry into Lisbon in 1581, chapter 3 considers the synthesis of visual cultures, the multiple constituents of the event, and the circulation of the reinvented image of the king after he ascended to the Portuguese throne and formed the Iberian Union. Fernández-González's reconstruction of the lost visual imagery of the pageant, known today only through texts, is a major contribution. Using diagrams, she demonstrates that the entry celebrated the Iberian Union and Philip II as the absolute ruler who protected the global empire and promulgated the Catholic faith. The triumphal imagery relied on ancient Roman and Italian Renaissance models, yet also represented the negotiation of power between Philip II and local authorities and the incorporation of local traditions. It would have been interesting to learn more about the meaning of the festival iconography when transferred to new geographical contexts.

Chapter 4 further examines the image of the ruler and its circulation through the *Battle of La Higuera* fresco, Hall of the Battles (1584–91), El Escorial, and the funerary ceremonies of Philip II (d. 1598) in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Mexico City. The repetition of narratives and imagery continued to present Philip as defender of the faith and protector of the global Iberian empire. Although Fernández-González states that her analysis of the funerary images is preliminary, greater attention to non-European examples (perhaps at the expense of the long discussion of the *Battle of La Higuera*) would have solidified her point about images circulating in the pan-Iberian world.

Beautifully illustrated and admirable for the original archival research and range of material, this book makes an important contribution to our knowledge of Philip II and the complexity of the visual culture of his reign. It succeeds in offering a global perspective on the function of images in the early modern world. However, a theme alluded to in the introduction—that is, whether works of art express “particular preferences” (10) of the patron or artistic trends—could have been explored further as a means to interrogate patronage studies. Although her descriptive writing conjures the richness and diversity of her examples, there are moments when the argument would benefit from a pithier style. Nevertheless, these suggestions are minor compared to the value of Fernández-González's book.

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