

for whom the reclamation of honour can still be plausible,” although their exploits include violence, deception, and erotic intrigue (112).

In her pursuit of coloring the concept of honor and taking up Roland Greene’s methodology, Harden rearranges her categorization of military life writing through sharp analysis, by picking “semantically fluid terms” that correspond to ideological and sociological inflection points. She connects the different texts and conceptions of honor with three words: *merced*, *sufrir*, and *pícaro*. While authors such as Diego de Paredes look for *mercedes* (rewards), others rely on their capacity of suffering having an intellectual intention (Toral y Valdés, Suárez) or a spiritual one (Pasamonte); still others (Casto and Erauso) use the tropes of the *pícaros’* lives to praise their honor.

All six works examined by Harden are well contextualized within the authors’ historical and literary milieus. Harden brings canonical works, such as *El Quixote*, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, or *Estabilllo González*, into the conversation and establishes thoughtful connections. *Arms and Letters* offers indispensable insight into our understanding of the literary, cultural, and intellectual context and content of early modern Spanish life writing.

Susanna Allés-Torrent, *University of Miami*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.407

*Knowing Fictions: Picaresque Reading in the Early Modern Hispanic World.*

Barbara Fuchs.

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021. viii + 176 pp. \$55.

---

In this brief monograph Barbara Fuchs explores how the picaresque creates skeptical readers attuned to narrative’s subversive potential. The introduction examines Inquisition Spain’s reliance on first-person narration through confession to ensure religious unity, and observation as a tool for imperial expansion. After sketching the notorious difficulties of defining the picaresque, Fuchs argues that captives’ tales fit within the picaresque tradition of unreliable narrators. Fuchs situates her work within Mediterranean studies and alongside scholars who demonstrate that forced conversion and other enforcement of religious conformity created skepticism of orthodoxy.

In the first chapter, “Imperial Picaresques: *La Lozana andaluza* and Spanish Rome,” Fuchs discusses the unreliable narration of the prostitute-protagonist Lozana and the author Delicado, a voyeuristic narrator implicated in the corruption he denounces. Fuchs asserts that the Spanish Empire defined itself as inheritor of the classical Roman tradition and that Delicado blames Roman decadence on Spaniards, foreshadowing the sack of Rome. Fuchs also juxtaposes the novel with Delicado’s medical treatise on syphilis, a disease that afflicts the author and his protagonist Lozana. Fuchs concludes that Delicado demonstrates the messy consequences of empire such as exile and disease.

In chapter 2, “Picaresque Captivity: The *Viaje de Turquía* and Its Cervantine Iterations,” Fuchs outlines the Inquisition’s imperial function of assessing returning captives’ narratives to claim fictionalized captives’ tales as picaresque. In the understudied *Viaje de Turquía*, the captive Pedro recounts his experience to two false pilgrims who utilize his knowledge to improve their deception, displaying the corruption concurrent with imperial power. Cervantes’s plays *Comedia famosa de Pedro de Urdemales*, *Los baños de Argel*, and *La Gran Sultana* locate the picaresque captive in Algiers and Constantinople. Fuchs demonstrates that though characters mock and belittle Muslims and Jews they also betray intimate knowledge of their culture through erotic liaisons and knowledge of dietary laws. Fuchs reads these literary captives as *pícaros* who are authoritative yet unreliable sources. Their survival in captivity depends on suspect intimacy with the religious other, and both *pícaro* and captive invoke religion opportunistically.

Chapter 3, “O te digo verdades o mentiras’: Crediting the *Pícaro* in *Guzmán de Alfarache*,” examines the multivalence of credit in the financial sense and as a synonym for trustworthiness. Suspicion that poverty could be feigned for economic gain, Fuchs argues, creates the perception that all systems of documentation are subject to imposture. Guzmán gains his victims’ trust, or credit, by investing his own resources in his deceptive schemes and using the proceeds from one scheme to fund the next. Fuchs also explores *cambio* (change/exchange) as either mercantile exchange or reformation of character. She concludes that *Guzmán de Alfarache* creates knowing fictions by demonstrating the illusions and artifice on which Spanish society relies.

In chapter 4, “Cervantes’s Skeptical Picaresques and the Pact of Fictionality,” Fuchs examines how Cervantes’s exemplary novels create knowing fictions through the ironic contrast between the exemplary novel format and the non-exemplary conduct of noble protagonists who wander the Mediterranean feigning picaresque life. In *La ilustre fregona*, *Rinconete y Cortadillo*, and the paired novellas *Casamiento engañoso* and *Coloquio de los perros* Fuchs suggests savoring Cervantine meandering middles rather than reading through the lens of denouement. She demonstrates that Cervantes encourages and rewards skepticism by insisting on the veracity of such absurdly unreal elements as talking dogs or a possibly hallucinating syphilitic narrator, alleging that for Cervantes the pleasure of fiction trumps mimetic veracity.

In the postscript, “The Fact of Fiction,” Fuchs concludes that the picaresque instructs the reader not to doubt everything but, rather, to read skeptically and discerningly. Fuchs highlights the picaresque’s social critique and explicates imperial functions, such as reintegration of captives, mercantile exchange, and religious confession. However, her analysis tends to treat the Spanish Empire as a homogenous whole in an era in which the Spanish often saw themselves as members of a set of Spanish nations (Castilian, Catalan, Basque, etc.) rather than a single entity, and would benefit from some parsing of the distinction between nation and empire. Increased attention to gender and inclusion of the female picaresque might also enrich the argument. For example,

in the analysis of the *Ilustre fregona*, the scullery maid of the title is barely mentioned. Overall, this work will be of great interest to scholars of early modern Spain and the picaresque genre. Given the picaresque's reach, Fuchs's contribution enriches early modern literary analysis in general and her analysis of empire, confession, travel narratives, and the unreliable narrator have broad interdisciplinary applicability.

Emily Kuffner, *California State University, Fullerton*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.408

*Spanish Romance in the Battle for Global Supremacy: Tudor and Stuart Black Legends.* Victoria Muñoz.

London: Anthem Press, 2021. x + 232 pp. £80.

---

The Black Legend endures. Nowhere is this anti-Hispanic prejudice more evident than in present-day manifestations of anti-Latin American sentiment in US academia, anti-immigration hatred at the US-Mexican border, and anti-Indigenous rhetoric in Latin America. These biased iterations were inherited from a Northern European, anti-Spanish mindset that developed in reaction to Spanish imperialism over four hundred years ago. Muñoz's monograph explores the historicity of the Black Legend in early modern England through analyses of the Spanish romance in translation, highlighting how this and other Spanish literature influenced both Tudor and Stuart English writers. The book is divided into six stand-alone chapters that analyze the effect of transforming Spanish romance into anti-Spanish prejudice in England, the Americas, and Australia. Because it dialogues with Cervantes's influence on early modern England, this book will interest scholars of Spanish and English language and culture regarding the reception and transformation of chivalry in England.

Muñoz builds upon works by Barbara Fuchs, William S. Maltby, and Raymond Williams to explore how the Black Legend developed in England as a response to Spanish Habsburg nationalism and imperialism. The author identifies a key moment in this development: the undeclared war between England and Spain (1585–1604), after which English writers focused intensely on defining England and ethnic Englishness, as defined by the social Otherness of Spain and Spanishness. Muñoz highlights the complicated role that Spanish poetry, drama, novels, and chivalric romance, collectively named “tales of love and arms,” played in inspiring prejudice in English culture (7). English translations of these works, at once embraced for their popular culture appeal and rejected for their promotion of Spanish imperialism, intrigued readers through grand heroic adventures, classical myth and epic, and the supernatural hero. Such notions of conquest subsequently inspired the “colonizer mindset” that would fuel England's imperialistic endeavors (9). Specifically, Spain's contribution to secular fiction during its *Siglo de Oro* (Golden Age) was perceived as corrupting humanists of