

the merchant European, and particularly the Italian, elites. These were characterized by the predominance of the families and their clients, who worked together to form marriage alliances and collaborate in the fields of politics, culture, and religion. The political domain was a crucial element which permitted these families to participate in obtaining power, as Vieri Mazzoni exhaustively demonstrates in his essay, in which he stresses the succession of an oligarchy, a *signorile*, and a democratic regime during the central decades of the Trecento. Niccolò was surely a merchant banker, but one who desired not only wealth and power: his Certosa is a telling demonstration of his quest for fame and celebrity.

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Ámbitos artísticos y literarios de sociabilidad en los Siglos de Oro.

Elena Martínez Carro and Alejandra Ulla Lorenzo, eds.

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This volume brings together a wealth of essays that contextualize the literary, musical, and artistic output of Golden Age Spain within a social continuum characterized by pragmatism and a high degree of self-awareness. All four parts of the collection highlight the intrinsic and complex relationship between art and society as a dynamic exchange many times exemplified in the relationship between patron and protégé and invariably reflected in and altered by art.

In the first essay in part 1, Julio Vélez Sainz examines the dynamics between literary tradition and the contemporary needs of playwrights to assert authorial dominance while demonstrating, for literary and social reasons, their knowledge of the symbolism contained in traditional genres. María Rosa Álvares Sellers compares Spanish plays by Portuguese playwrights Jacinto Cordeiro and Juan de Matos Fragoso and finds that both authors make use of the *comedia nueva* style in its native tongue to advance their careers, albeit in strikingly different ways and with distinct goals. The last two essays of part 1, by Adriana Beltrán del Río Sousa and Christophe Couderc, focus again on the relationship between literary output and the merging of social and personal circumstances. While Beltrán del Río analyzes the impact of a patron on the works and personal life of poet Agustín de Salazar, Couderc contemplates evidence of relationships articulated in paratexts pertaining to theatrical works.

In part 2, music becomes the object of consideration. Álvaro Torrente traces the many types of collaborative webs to which musicians belonged, and the heroic professional and creative lives they led ambulating to and from different parishes while collaborating with peers from all over Spain. Carmelo Caballero also explores a type of web, one characterized by the fruitful relationships between musicians and

playwrights, with a focus on the composer Cristóbal Galán, whose cooperation with several prominent theatrical figures is recorded in the archives of the Cathedral of Valladolid. Sebastián León and Fernando J. Pancorbo examine the history of the *Chacona* and *Zarabanda*. These dances were infamously connected with the theater, and their lascivious connotations caused them to be persecuted by moralists and relegated to other countries in refashioned, rectified versions. The essay that concludes part 2, by Patricia Manzano Rodríguez, departs from the musical sphere and considers how two iconic painters of the Habsburg court, Rubens and Velázquez, contributed through their voyages into foreign soils toward the diplomatic efforts of Philip IV of Spain.

Part 3 focuses on literature. María Ángeles González Luque addresses the concern by the moralist Antonio de Guevara with the moral decadence of courtesan society, and how this preoccupation gave way to the palace epistolary. Next, Alejandro García-Reidy discusses the socializing role enjoyed by posthumous homage volumes, while the third and last essay, by Manuel Piqueras and Elena Trapanese, explores the intersection between creativity and literary expansion within the social environment of *casas de placer*, or leisure vacation houses maintained by the aristocracy.

Part 4 closes the collection with an exploration of the process of self-fashioning undertaken by authors seeking to ascend the socioeconomic ladder and gain prestige. Eduardo Torres discusses how Jorge de Montemayor links himself to the legendary figure of the Abbot Juan the Montemayor in order to associate himself with the Abbot's heroic feats. Sara Sánchez Bellido centers her essay on self-fashioning for self-promotion while commenting on less-known author Baltasar de Collazos, whose works' dedications seek to develop a relationship of patronage with principal figures of sixteenth-century Spain. David González Ramírez discusses the short story as a genre and the way it came to embody not only the movement toward authorial identity and self-affirmation, but also a means of self and artistic promotion. Similarly, Guillermo Gómez Sánchez-Ferrer explores how performances and the printed editions of theatrical works were used to control the image of the author. The volume closes with Jacobo Sanz Hermida's recounting of the first and troublesome phase of the prestigious Royal Press (*Imprenta Real*) of Spain, which led ultimately to its absorption and subsidization by the crown under the reign of Charles III.

In conclusion, *Ámbitos artísticos y literarios de sociabilidad* presents a series of well-researched, thoughtfully articulated arguments about the sociability embedded in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish art forms, hence providing a fresh and poignantly useful contribution to the scholarly dialogue at large.

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