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Review of Kimberly Lynn, *Between Court and Confessional: The Politics of Spanish Inquisitors*

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Kimberly Lynn. *Between Court and Confessional: The Politics of Spanish Inquisitors*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013. 406 pp.

William Hickling Prescott famously decried the suffering of the Spanish people under “the malign influence of an eye that never slumbered, of an unseen arm ever raised to strike.” (337). Historians have since dismantled this view, revealing an Inquisition rooted in factional struggles, popular beliefs, and jurisdictional disputes. For all we have learned of the changing character of defendants before the Inquisition, or the inner workings of local tribunals, the inquisitors themselves remain indistinct. Kimberly Lynn’s *Between Court and Confessional: The Politics of Spanish Inquisitors* redresses the balance with a detailed analysis of five inquisitors active between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth century. Their careers encompass the span of time from the Council of Trent to the fall of Olivares, and the breadth of the monarchy from Mexico to Castile, from Portugal to Sicily. Through these portraits Lynn ties pivotal moments in the history of the Inquisition to the motivations, ideology, and discernment of the officials who shaped and implemented the Holy Office.

Lynn’s methodology yields new insights into the inquisitors’ intellectual formation, career trajectories, and influential writings. The first two chapters focus on two men best known via the trial of Bartolomé de Carranza. Here Lynn situates these events within the professional lives of Cristóbal Fernández de Valdotano, the councilor who urged the *Suprema* to initiate the trial, and Diego de Simancas, the jurist who subsequently represented the Spanish Inquisition in Rome. Valdotano’s service as inquisitor interrupted an ecclesiastical career that concluded with the archbishopric of Santiago de Compostela. In drawing parallels between visitations conducted by an inquisitor and a bishop, Lynn reveals a similar desire to serve justice and minister to the flock. Diego de Simancas was consigned to middling appointments as a bishop but made his mark as a key architect of inquisitorial procedure through his writings. His emphasis on conscience underscores the importance of discernment— in keeping with Lynn’s larger argument that Alonso de Salazar Frías, Gustav Henningsen’s “heroic skeptic” (7) in the Basque witch trials, was not a lone example of discretion in the Inquisition. The trial of Carranza took both Valdotano and Simancas away from their dioceses, yet provided both with experiences they would use in implementing reform and honing a common vocabulary of inquisitorial theory, respectively.

The following three chapters underscore the implications of the geographical extent of the Spanish Inquisition. Chapter 3 situates Luis de Páramo Rincón’s history of the Inquisition (1598) amid the jurisdictional disputes that plagued the Spanish viceroyalty of Sicily. Páramo’s carefully constructed arguments for the sacred origins and juridical legitimacy of his office, based in his

conflicts with the viceroy, ultimately failed to advance his own career or to shore up the authority of the Sicilian tribunal. In a similar vein, Juan Adam de la Parra (chapter 4) demonstrated the courage of his convictions, if not political acumen. His treatises on conspiracy and threats to the Spanish monarchy, drawn from his investigations of beatas in Murcia and then Portuguese conversos in Castile, initially fueled his rise in the Olivares regime. Following the revolt in Portugal, however, Adam de la Parra's continued efforts to unmask Judaizers led to his exile at the hands of Portuguese crown financiers whose fortunes rose as the Count-Duke's fell. Juan de Mañozca y Zamora (chapter 5), by contrast, capitalized on crises to secure promotions in Spain and the Americas. As inquisitor in Lima his handling of the Great Complicity, a series of trials of Portuguese merchants in the 1630s, secured him a post on the *Suprema*. Appointed archbishop of Mexico in 1644, Mañozca weathered the changes that had undone Adam de la Parra, using spectacles such as processions to promote the authority of the Inquisition in Mexican society.

Lynn modestly defines *Between Court and Confessional* as a “response” to the longstanding view of inquisitors as interchangeable cogs in a bureaucratic machine. “Rebuttal” would be a bolder word; these detailed portraits of five inquisitors show them to be part of a lettered elite, wary of heresy but actively engaged in debates over procedure and discernment. The focus on five individuals, rather than on a tribunal or set of defendants, illuminates the many connections between the Inquisition and the Church, government councils, and the court system. While choosing five subjects inevitably leaves other aspects of the Inquisition unexplored (such as the prosecution of Moriscos, or the role of the Dominican order within the Holy Office), this approach roots the writings and policies of these men securely within their experiences in tribunals across the monarchy at the height of the Inquisition's influence. In so doing this work brings Inquisition studies into conversation with recent research on Church reform, center and periphery, and legal procedure. Furnished with an excellent introduction, this book will spark conversations among students and experts alike.

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