

LAUREN BECK. *Illustrating El Cid: 1498 to Today*. Quebec: McGill-Queen's UP, 2019. xvii + 251 pp. + 18 plates

Illustrating El Cid reviews the graphic representations of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar. It observes how images, by supporting and supplementing the written word, define and promote cultural identities and values associated to those. Given the nearly total absence of illustrations in old manuscripts, the period of this study goes from the invention of the printing press to the present.

Chapter 1 explores the ways in which the figure of Santiago Matamoros – St James the Moor-Slayer – is the foundation of representations of El Cid since the very start: Rodrigo, riding a horse and wielding a sword, with enemies under his horse's hooves appears first in Velorado's *Crónica* (1512). This image is systematically repeated until the present, merging El Cid and Santiago in a narrative frame of national and Catholic identity.

The second chapter approaches how masculinity appears in the illustrations of Cidian texts, aptly positioning them in the wider frame of the representations of the Middle Ages. Medievalism has served several purposes: it has supported the extension of royal authority during the early modern period by presenting idealized images of medieval monarchies; later, since the 1800s, it has illustrated expectations of male behavior. In both cases, El Cid is the medium used to convey those discourses. The graphic representation of several signifiers associated with masculinity (thrones, beards, swords) in narratives related to El Cid, reinforces the discourses conveyed by the texts in which they are included.

In contrast with the presentation of masculinity, femininity and the adscription of functions to female characters in the images that accompany these texts are more problematic. Chapter 3 notes how Iberian texts, differently from their European homologues, give considerable presence and agency to female characters. It also shows the discourses of femininity conveyed by the images in Cidian narratives. Two episodes are considered with particular attention: the "afrenta de Corpes," and the complaint of Jimena to King Fernando. For the first, the sexualization of the "afrenta" is made explicit by focusing on the nudity of the female body; for the second, the images support an increasing attention to the importance of matrimonial consent, which result in the emergence of a romantic conflict between Rodrigo and Jimena.

In chapter four, the critical model of Orientalism is projected on the representation of images conventionally associated with the "other" in

Western cultures. The “other” of Cidian narratives is, however, multiple. It is used to represent the Oriental “other” in Muslim characters, but also, in narratives originating outside of the Peninsula, to present the whole Iberia as “other.” This second body of images has two moments: first, the vilification of Spain in the context of the “leyenda negra”; later, the romantic recovery of the Iberian Middle Ages, which merges medievalism and Orientalism, and allows the use of Orientalizing images in the construction of the Iberian “I.” This chapter gives more attention to the feminization of the oriental “other;” the uses of the oriental-medieval in the representations of Spain are left for the following chapters.

Chapter 5 describes the ways in which El Cid’s figure has been appropriated in Spain for the promotion of political discourses and programs. While some images of El Cid from the 1500s are considered in this chapter, its primary focus is the 1800 and 1900s. One of the events of the Cidian legend most frequently represented during the 1800s is the episode of the “Oath of Santa Gadea.” The emphasis in this episode, as Beck argues, is related to the increasing problematization of the monarchic institution during this period. The political appropriation of El Cid has its zenith, however, during Francisco Franco’s regime. During the dictatorship, El Cid appears as an anachronic Pan-Iberian hero, implicit or explicitly assimilated to Franco as national “caudillo.” The chapter closes observing the deconstruction of the Francoist imaginary of El Cid after the dictator’s death, and the appearance of more nuanced representations.

The last chapter observes the Romantic recasting of El Cid in German Romanticism and the dissemination of this set of images that accompany this new Cid in Europe, persuasively showing the continuity in these images.

It is necessary to point out certain issues in this book that will be evident for many readers. Some are the result of a poor work of review by the publisher, which should have avoided spelling auto-correction errors such as “beautification” for “beatification” (41 and 147), or “novena” for “noveno” (42). There are also problems with the translation of medieval Spanish texts: e.g. “soltar los pechos” is translated as “collecting tributes” rather than “waiving tributes” (58). Other errors seem to belong to the book’s author, and are related to a limited acquaintance with the textual sources: the book incorrectly states that El Cid challenges his sons-in-law to a duel (46), when it is El Cid’s liegemen who do so. This error results in the mistranslation of plate 4: “Los condes [i.e. infantes] de Carrión vencidos en duelo” is translated as “El Cid defeating the Count of Carrión.”

While these errors may irritate some readers, it has to be pointed out that none of them detract from the book’s theses, nor diminish its contribution to the study of the evolution in the literary uses of medieval

Iberia. *Illustrating El Cid* is an insightful addition to Cidian studies: it approaches and systematizes a field that was, until now, unexplored. Medieval Iberia scholars, and particularly cidianists, will find in it a challenge to explore the Iberian Middle Ages from new perspectives.

JULIO F. HERNANDO
Indiana University South Bend

SANDER BERG. *The Marvellous and the Miraculous in María de Zayas*.
Oxford: Legenda, Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Cultures, 2019. viii +
177 pp.

Focusing on the figure of María de Zayas y Sotomayor, Sander Berg's concise volume is dedicated to delineating the early modern author's pervading indeterminacy in the treatment of the supernatural, a fundamental though understudied feature of her popular novella production. After underscoring that twelve out of Zayas's twenty novellas include possible "marvelous, miraculous or fantastic" aspects, Berg sets out to provide a much needed comprehensive and contextualized overview of the supernatural in Zayas (4).

The study is organized into five chapters. The first provides an overview of Zayas's life and reception. In it Berg ambitiously tackles four broad facets, while strengthening and weakening claims made by previous scholars: (a) the vast gaps of biographical knowledge about Zayas adding more evidence to support assertions of her stay in Italy, (b) the reception of her oeuvre in the seventeenth-century tempering exaggerated contentions to her popularity, (c) the history of her critical rediscovery in the late twentieth-century celebrating Juan Goytisolo's contribution, and (d) a succinct overview of scholarship on the supernatural in Zayas. Berg's main contributions to the study of Zayas center on drawing attention to "the epistemological shift affecting the belief in the supernatural" and identifying "the various subcategories of the supernatural" illustrated by close readings of pertinent novellas (35).

The second chapter, no less ambitious, aims to answer "how the supernatural was conceived in seventeenth-century Spain, how it was experienced and dealt with by the authorities, and what role it played in the literature of the period" (35). The most compelling sections (e.g., 2.5-2.7) are dedicated to illuminating the tempering role the Inquisition played in the persecution of "magical crimes" due to its increasingly skeptical attitude towards witchcraft and miracles alike. As a starting point, Berg rapidly delineates various subcategories of the supernatural as defined by