MORE, ANNA. *Baroque Sovereignty. Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora and the Creole Archive of Colonial Mexico*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. 360 pp.

Anna More's recent monograph reads like a procession of monuments. Weaving down the path of *Baroque Sovereignty*, the first 'monument' one encounters is the primary subject of the study, Mexican Creole polymath Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645-1700), whose prodigious literary production and archive organize the volume. More systematically addresses novel elements of Sigüenza's diverse writings while elaborating an understanding of Creole subjectivity in urban New Spain as "baroque sovereignty." Creoles, she argues, compiled an impressive textual, pictorial, and antiquarian archive in order to articulate a local sovereignty transcendent of the terms of political and cultural authority allowed by the Spanish imperial administration in New Spain. This notion of baroque sovereignty develops atop the Creole classes' paradoxical, simultaneous claims to ascendancy from European conquerors and local indigenous elites. This identity subsequently enables Creole authors such as Sigüenza to suggest "the privileged position of the regional savant" (262), a locus capable of mediating the racially diverse viceroyalty of New Spain in public and political discourse at the close of the Habsburg monarchy.

Theoretically framing the volume are the broader concepts of the *archive* and the *baroque*, monumental categories within the fields of early modern Spanish and colonial Latin American literature and culture. Chapter 1 assesses the critical lineage of both terms in the wake of a discussion of sovereignty and patrimonialism focused on Juan Solórzano Pereyra's *De Indiarum Iure* (1629) and its amended Spanish translation, *Política indiana* (1648). More demonstrates how Solórzano avoids discussions of legitimacy and cruelty—most prominently articulated by Dominicans Francisco de Vitoria and Bartolomé de las Casas, and later appropriated by rival imperial powers—focusing instead on the pragmatics of Spanish colonial jurisprudence by conveying the potential political and epistemological contributions and failures of Creoles to enable what she terms "Creole patrimonialism." Behind this discussion of Solórzano lies More's appraisal of the term *archive*, which can be read as an additional pageant of monuments: More cites and builds upon the work of Jacques Derrida, Roberto González Echevarría, Antony Higgins, and Diana Taylor.

Likewise, her discussion of *baroque* summons the theoretical artillery of Walter Benjamin, José Antonio Maravall, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and others. Such exhaustive review of these scholarly concepts enables More to thoroughly plot *Baroque Sovereignty*'s theoretical coordinates while framing her argument that Sigüenza's writings reveal the "interdependence of style, rhetoric, and political ideals" (251) and suggesting that the emergence of a proto-national political consciousness should be understood as a metaphoric and material archive imperative to Creole authority in late seventeenth century Mexico.

Chapter 2 discusses the manner in which Sigüenza y Góngora's *Triunfo parthénico* (1683), *Glorias de Querétaro* (1680) and *Primavera indiana* (1662) further local adoration of New Spain's primary religio-cultural icon, the Virgin of Guadalupe. More highlights how the *Triunfo*'s discussion of the festival's altar to the Virgin deploys the dehumanized, materialist tropes of Bernardo de Balbuena's *Grandeza mexicana* (1604) through an account of two poetic duels (*certámenes*) and the accompanying festivities held at the Royal University of Mexico. The two works notably differ, says More, in their allocation of surplus value, a concept symbolically represented through their respective enumerations of global commodities such as precious metals and stones originating around the world: Balbuena cedes Mexican extraction of surplus value to imperial Spain as tribute, whereas Sigüenza's *Triunfo parthénico* dedicates luxury items disembarking in New Spain and the resulting surplus to "what he has posited as the source of Novohispanic autonomy: the Virgin Mary's Immaculate Conception" (66).

Marching onward from the *auto*, altar decorations, and literary contest in the *Triunfo*'s celebration of the Immaculate Conception, chapter 3 discusses the monumental triumphal arch designed to celebrate the 1680 arrival of Mexico's new viceroy, Don Tomás Antonio de la Cerda, Marqués de la Laguna, ekphrastically elaborated in the *Theatro de virtudes políticas* (1680). As a literary explanation and justification of the triumphal arch erected for the viceroy—distinctively representing eleven Mexica rulers and the war god Huitzilopochtli instead of the mythological beings traditionally depicted in Mediterranean triumphal arches—More argues that Sigüenza's textual rendering of the ceremonial structure seeks to dissociate Mexico's pre-Columbian history from stigmatized associations

with idolatry and paganism. Contextualizing the representation of the Mexica figures within Renaissance emblem literature and baroque interest in cultural exotica (such as glyphs, hieroglyphics and scripts), More further argues that Sigüenza y Góngora's use of pre-Columbian icons cites the local "foundation of good governance" (145), which serves as a productive allegorical model for the new viceroy.

Chapter 4 analyzes *Alboroto y motín* (1692), Sigüenza's highly racialized assessment of the 1692 Mexico City uprising that left many administrative shrines to the Spanish empire in ruins and temporarily paralyzed the city's commercial activities. This chapter elucidates the manner in which Creoles vilified and racialized indigenous subjects under the specter of threats to imperial sovereignty, such as indigenous riots and piracy, inserting Creoles as a necessary mediator between indigenous and Spanish subjects upon the disappearance of New Spain's indigenous nobility. Chapter 5 posits that Sigüenza's hallmark pirate narrative *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* (1690) can be read as "an allegory for Creole citizenship in a postimperial world" that uses Sigüenza's relationship to his protagonist to unify "elite and common Creole subjects" (204-5). In tandem, the final chapters demonstrate how Sigüenza further pejoratively homogenizes the indigenous *plebe* in order to oppose the racialized masses to the Spanish-descended Creole class.

Active in recent conversations about the disciplinary intersections of literary and visual studies in Latin American colonial scholarship, More incorporates twenty-five illustrations into her text. It is fitting, then, that the tome begins with an analysis of the ten-panel *biombo* housed at Mexico City's Museo Franz Mayer, contrasting the screen's frontal depiction of the violent Spanish conquest of Tenochtitlan with its reverse image of an ordered, pacific cityscape, highlighting "the uncomfortable meeting of two planes of history around sites in the city" (5), a contraposition that anchors More's work. Following the *biombo*, two-dozen well-known frontispieces, emblems, maps, prints, book illustrations, *casta* paintings, and canvases elucidate More's reading of Sigüenza's vast literary catalog. Far from the token reproductions of canonical images common to many scholarly monographs on the colonial period, More delves deeply into the relationship between image, text, and Creole ideology, effectively deploying the visual record in defiance of traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Like these images, the study itself is also monumental: as Ralph Bauer notes, More's monograph is the largest, most comprehensive analysis of Sigüenza y Góngora since Irving Leonard's seminal study published in 1929.[1] From More's novel turn away from Creole subjectivity in order to focus on Creole politics "within the context of Spanish imperial ideology" (26) in an against-the-grain reading of Sigüenza, to her productive supplementary readings of the colonial visual archive oft-claimed by art historians, *Baroque Sovereignty* is certain to become a touchstone of the colonial studies field, a monument of the scholarly canon.

Note

1. See Irving A. Leonard, *Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora: A Mexican Savant of the Seventeenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1929). Also see Ralph Bauer's review of More's work in *Renaissance Quarterly* LXVI.4 (Winter 2013): 1468-70.

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