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Pierre Matthieu en España: biografía, política y traducción en el Siglo de Oro Iberoamericana, 2019
by **Adrián Izquierdo**

Dr. Adrián Izquierdo's study of the translator, author, playwright and political figure Pierre Matthieu centers on this author's historical, biographical and translation work, and its reception in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spain. In addition to recovering and exploring the impact and ramifications of Pierre Matthieu's translations in Spain, and how he was both praised and criticized at various junctures by the likes of such important historical figures as Juan Pablo Mártir Rizo, Lorenzo Van der Hammen, Baltasar Gracián and Francisco de Quevedo, Dr. Izquierdo examines the concept of historiography that existed in sixteenth-century Spain, and how Matthieu's histories were viewed in accordance with differing dominant paradigms of the time. Izquierdo explores the political ramifications of Matthieu's own works as well as how he was translated in Spain. He demonstrates, for example, the manner in which the omission of certain key details or the suppression of passages, as well as the slight re-writing or reinterpretation of specific phrases, serves the political ends of the translator.

The book is organized into four distinct sections, each of which deals with a different aspect of Pierre Matthieu's writings and their influence and impact on the Iberian Peninsula. The study opens by situating Matthieu in his appropriate socio-historical context. Educated by the Jesuits, Matthieu began writing plays at the age of 15, and showed great skill as a writer and translator. He was well-versed in Spanish, German and Italian, in addition to Latin and Greek. Re-readings

of biblical episodes and anecdotes from figures of classical antiquity were hallmarks of Matthieu's writings throughout his life. Politically, Matthieu belonged to the moderate line of magistrates and men of letters that proposed conciliatory solutions seeking political unity, thinkers that also participated in the reconstruction of the French monarchy following Henry IV's conversion to Catholicism. Matthieu was also an important representative of jurist humanists who sought to emend and closely examine testimonies of authors and original source documents, and ultimately became the royal historian for the French monarchs Henry IV and Louis XIII, which was his primary distinction during his lifetime.

The rhetorical aspects of Matthieu's historiography and the relationship of his works with the polemics of the time period about Laconic style are closely examined by Professor Izquierdo. Matthieu's style was both criticized and celebrated for its dramatic qualities, for its frequent use of aphoristic language, and for its detailed employment of indexes and marginal commentary. Izquierdo argues convincingly that Matthieu's writings and translations are one of the major entry points of Tacitism as a dominant historical writing mode in Spain which emphasized syntax, brevity and word choice. Izquierdo examines many of Matthieu's most prominent translators and imitators, and in particular, the poet, critic, and historian Mártir Rizo. Izquierdo reconstructs the probable reasons for the success of the French historian in the context of the court of Madrid in the first half of the seventeenth century.

The archetypal figure of the "favorite" and its similar but subtly different manifestations in France and Spain is also central to Izquierdo's study. The "favorite" was a confidant or political advisor to the

prince or king, generally criticized and studied because of their potential influence over courtly circles of power. This archetype was employed by many historical writers to serve as a model for improper exercise of power. The counterreformatist political imaginary, as is well-known, was deeply configured by such models of idealized archetypal conduct of rulers and their confidants, intended to be followed or scorned. In the case of Matthieu, Izquierdo argues, his political writings reflect an exploration and interest in discovering underlying characteristics of human nature, in response in part to the widespread diffusion of Machiavellianism. In this context, Izquierdo examines the way in which some of Matthieu's translators utilized his writings politically in an attempt to restore Phillip II as the model of an ideal ruler following the ascension of Phillip IV to the throne. Dr. Izquierdo provides a discussion of how we perhaps find in these texts a subtle, implied criticism of the Duke of Lerma and the Count-Duke of Olivares as two advisors and counsellors to the King who exceeded their function in the court, and misappropriated powers properly belonging to the crown. The final section of the book furthers this discussion of the political implications of some aspects of the translations with an examination of an anonymous translation concerning the life of Philip II, which was widely distributed in Spain in manuscript form with several significant variations. Dr. Izquierdo considers this to be the first political biography of the monarch.

The theories of Pierre Bourdieu and Roger Chartier provide a conceptual framework for the book, which explores the changes that occur during the process of transference from one culture to another, and the alterations that are reflected in the translated text in relation to the field

in which they are produced. One of the principle merits of Izquierdo's study is that he delves into the changing notions in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spain of how histories ought to be written. Additionally, he addresses the ways in which Matthieu's translations of authors from classical antiquity fit into the paradigm of the mirror of princes that were common in the era. Matthieu makes his own prescriptions for the conduct of early modern rulers and those in their favor by focusing primarily on negative counterexamples of bad behavior and how to emend the errors of leaders of antiquity. With his close-readings of several key passages of Matthieu's works, Izquierdo illustrates how Matthieu would elaborate upon historical details using rhetorical and poetic devices in order to achieve a didactic moral function. Though this practice was common to many political writers of the time period, the strength of Izquierdo's argument is that it demonstrates clearly the way in which this ornate, flowery style of elaboration came into favor in Europe, following several paradigmatic models from antiquity such as Tacitus, Plutarch and Cicero. This style was already starting to be seen unfavorably by the early-to-mid seventeenth century, criticized for being artificial and less true-to-the-facts. Matthieu tries to make concordant differing perspectives in histories from antiquity by enumerating and juxtaposing rumors and opinions that exist in source texts, and then drawing his own conclusions from the materials he presents, for which he is praised by Quevedo and other major authors as a scrupulous and careful historian.

In addition to its contributions to the recovery of an important political and historical writer, as well as the close examination of the archetype of the favorite, Izquierdo's study is also of great interest to

the field of translation studies. With his close examination of Matthieu's reception and translations in the Iberian Peninsula, Izquierdo opens the door to new avenues of exploration within the field of reception theory. Great detail and attention are given to the ways in which Matthieu's texts are subtly altered in translation, in the interest of specific political ends. To give one example, Izquierdo notes how the anonymous translator responsible for *La vida de Felipe II* characterizes the Spanish conquest of the new world as "an extremely just cause" aimed at illuminating the natives to the word of God, whereas the original text was critical of the Spanish crown's expansionist aims, which were seen as a distraction from defending Christianity from the Moors within Europe.

This study centers on the evolution of historiography, biography, translation, and political thought, and how the analysis of Matthieu's writings illuminates the ways in which these four areas were inextricably linked to the circles of courtly power and their critics in the time period. Scholars of historiography and translation studies will particularly benefit from the close attention given by Dr. Izquierdo to Matthieu and his contemporaries' conception of thinkers from classical antiquity, like Seneca and Tacitus, who served as models for writing histories in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. Izquierdo clearly illustrates the didactic function of the use of their styles by Matthieu and others in keeping with the dominant ciceronian topos of *historia magistra vitae*. Finally, Dr. Izquierdo's study is invaluable in illuminating the confrontation between different sources, the polemic on the rejection of encyclopedic tendencies, and the nebulous line between the fictional and the factual in biographical texts and their translations of the early modern period. I enthusiastically recommend this detailed

analysis and close-reading of Matthieu's historical and biographical works and their translations to scholars interested in these topics.

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Con el franquismo en el retrovisor: Las representaciones culturales de la dictadura en la democracia (1975-2018)
Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2020
editado por Elizabeth Amann, Diana Arbaiza, María Teresa Navarrete Navarrete y Nettah Yoeli-Rimmer

Este volumen colectivo incluye once ensayos que analizan la presencia y la memoria del franquismo en la cultura española de la democracia, desde la llamada Transición hasta la época actual. A través de la referencia al "retrovisor" en el título, los editores aluden a la mirada colectiva de la sociedad contemporánea al periodo que se halla justo detrás, la dictadura de Franco, sirviéndose de la alegoría del coche como uno de los símbolos principales del desarrollismo español a partir de los años sesenta.

Frente a los numerosos estudios sobre la memoria de la Guerra Civil Española y la inmediata postguerra en las obras contemporáneas, el libro explora el franquismo de manera conjunta en sus diversas etapas, una realidad a la que la crítica ha prestado menos atención. Otro aspecto original del volumen es que abarca un amplio marco temporal, desde finales de la década de 1970 hasta el momento presente, incluyendo tanto autores de la generación del medio siglo o de los niños de la guerra que reflejan sus propios recuerdos del franquismo, como aquellos nacidos en los años 60 que, en obras