

Review of *El patrimonio documental en las relaciones entre Gran Bretaña e Irlanda y la Península Ibérica a lo largo de los siglos*. Edited by Mónica Amenedo-Costa. (Peter Lang, 2022, 268 pp. ISBN 978-1-80079-611-9).

This volume is a welcome addition to academic study of the relationships between European nations. It promotes awareness of Europe's cultural diversity and identity by offering in-depth reflections on transnational interactions that are a window into socio-political and cultural phenomena that have shaped its history. Relying predominantly on a variety of historical source materials, such as state papers, legal documents, census records, parish registers and periodical publications, it is devoted to furthering the study of the relations between Great Britain and Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula from the late Medieval period to the twentieth century. This is significant as it demonstrates how the past is used to make sense of the present and define the future, especially the challenges in international affairs, which underlines the need to intensify the cooperation between countries. In the introductory chapter, "Patrimonio documental, testimonio de la interacción transnacional," Amenedo-Costa and Mendo-Carmona point out that the study of these documentary texts prove a vital source of information for the interpretation and re(construction) of the past and for the understanding of the present: "brinda una oportunidad para afrontar los retos futuros en el ámbito de las relaciones internacionales y, de manera específica, de las relaciones entre Gran Bretaña e Irlanda y la Península Ibérica" (2022, 8).

Thematically arranged, the book is divided into two parts, entitled "Interacción política" and "Interacción cultural," in order to reconsider the links between societies and the enriching experience of otherness in culture. Both parts bring together pertinent essays from leading scholars in the field. They cover important topics that are placed in their political and cultural context from the Medieval to the Contemporary period. Through this chronological approach, the contributors provide valuable insights on

these nations influencing each other over the course of several centuries. In the first part it is emphasized that the political and economic domains are inextricably intertwined. It starts with the chapter by Flávio Miranda, "*Dissensions & Alligantia*. Diplomacia económica y comercio entre Inglaterra y los reinos ibéricos en los siglos XIV y XV," which adds a new and different dimension to the analysis of Anglo-Iberian commercial relations during the Middle Ages. Applying an economic diplomacy methodology to the examination of three treaties (two Anglo-Castilian of 1351 and 1466 and one Anglo-Portuguese of 1353), this study shows that non-state agents were the first to use politics for economic purposes. Fernández Nadal reflects on the Anglo-Spanish relations during the Regency of Mariana de Austria and the reign of Charles II in the second chapter. The perspective of Spanish diplomats on these relations can be appreciated thanks to the written testimony in the Council of State and to personal correspondence. These private and official records revealed that there was a dichotomy of opinion between diplomats and the council members regarding trade issues. In *Trade and Peace with Old Spain 1667-1750* (1940), Jean O. McLachlan establishes that the complex interrelationship between politics and economics was a central element of the relations between Great Britain and Spain. In the next chapter by Amenedo-Costa, it is also recognized that trade is influenced by international politics and transnational interactions. Her examination of eighteenth-century state papers has shed light on the diplomacy of wartime years and on its role in promoting strategies for protecting British maritime commerce from the threat of Spanish naval action. In addition, the role of periodical publications in disseminating information about Spanish military activities also contributed to the development of policy responses to address the economic impact of war on the country's stability and prosperity. The first part concludes with a chapter on the Spanish government financial support for the Comité Hispano-Ingles during the period of the Military Directorate. Its authors, Mendo-Carmona and Torreblanca-López, state that the public funding directed to this Anglo-Spanish society, which aimed to



disseminate and promote British culture and thought in Spain, is a clear indication that Spain considered that the bilateral relations with the United Kingdom at that time were of special importance.

The second part of the book explores the dynamics of intercultural encounters and interactions between Spain and Great Britain and Ireland, and explains their nature and influences. It begins with Sáez-Hidalgo's chapter "Extravagancias culturales anglo-hispanas," which addresses the afterlives of English material objects in Spanish libraries, archives and churches which signal culture change. The author establishes that the tangible items from the early modern period, such as documents, books and portraits, underwent a process of acculturation when moving to Spain in a complex framework of cross-cultural perceptions. This material heritage is now a testimony of the Anglo-Spanish cultural relations and a symbol of distinct cultural heritage and identity.

Culture change and contact between two distinct cultural groups is also considered in Lario de Oñate's contribution. In this chapter, readers are taken to the city of Cadiz, which developed as a flourishing centre of trade and commerce in the eighteenth century, with diverse immigrant communities. Among them were the Irish, who had the custom of expanding their commercial relationships through their daughters' marriages (Fannin 2003, 350). In order to provide a more detailed look at these families and the implications of marriage to develop and expand their business, the study contributes to the cultural process of increasing recognition of women's role in trade agreements and Irish economic development in that Southern port city. In the next chapter, "Más allá del tópico: política y literatura en los hispanistas e hispanófilos del Romanticismo británico," Laspra Rodríguez examines the relationship between British literature and Spanish culture. Spain, with its rich cultural legacy, was used as poetic material in the writings of major British poets of the Romantic era such as Lord Byron, the Shelleys, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey and S.T. Coleridge.

This, therefore, illustrates that Britain's most renowned literary figures were deeply interested in Spain and its history, and implies that cultures influence and enrich each other. The presence of Spanish history and culture in Britain is again visible in "Edgar Allison Peers: un hispanista británico y la guerra civil Española," the title of the next contribution written by Nadal Ferreras. This chapter is focused on the British Hispanist, founder of the *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, who contributed to the emergence of Hispanism and to the consolidation of Spanish Studies in British Universities (Frost 2019). Professor Peers' fascination with Spain is displayed throughout his writing, particularly in his depictions and perception of the Spanish Civil War which are compared to those of Ferrán Soldevila and George Orwell, especially with regard to Catalonia's political situation. The volume closes with Lorenzo Modia's analysis of the Galician press reception of images of Ireland during the 20th century. Irish culture had a great impact on Galicia, especially on a group of intellectuals (*Irmandades da Fala* and *Xeración Nós*) who followed the path of Irish writers and politicians. There are two types of newspapers in Galicia. Some, such as *La Voz de Galicia* or *El Faro de Vigo*, had a general perception of Ireland and its nationalist situation. Others, such as *A Nosa Terra* and *Nós*, were in favour of Irish nationalism and supported its attempt to separate from the British crown.

By examining a range of archival and documentary source materials, *El patrimonio documental en las relaciones entre Gran Bretaña e Irlanda y la Península Ibérica a lo largo de los siglos* expands our understanding of cross-border ties and interconnections as well as of reciprocal influences that are directly related to the contemporary relationships between cultures. Both in the political and cultural spheres, the structure of this book reflects the exchange of ideas and knowledge throughout the centuries that raises awareness of the cultural wealth of Europe. It not only contributes to generate insight of our contemporary world, but also to promote mutual understanding, embracing a diversity of views and experiences needed for influencing policy-making and shaping the future.



Review sent to author: 09/01/2023  
Revised version accepted for publication:  
01/02/2023

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25145/j.recaesin.2023.86.16>

