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in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Igor Pérez Tostado. *Irish Influence at the Court of Spain in the Seventeenth Century.* Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008. 213 pp. $75.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-84682-110-3.

Reviewed by Ciaran O'Scea (University College, Dublin)
Published on H-Albion (October, 2011)
Commissioned by Brendan Kane

Confederate Ireland, Habsburg Spain, and the Breakdown of *Recíproca Correspondencia*

Igor Pérez Tostado's monograph *Irish Influence at the Court of Spain in the Seventeenth Century* is a welcome addition to the much-neglected area of Spanish political relations with Confederate and Cromwellian Ireland (1641-59). More particularly, it deals with the spectrum of Irish political lobbying at the Spanish Habsburg court, and both charts and accesses its relative success or failure in promoting the cause of Confederate Ireland. At the basis of this relationship was the ideology of *recíproca correspondencia* or "mutual support and responsibility" whereby the Spanish monarchy took the *nacion irlandesa* under its protection and provided them with employment in its armed forces or education in its network of Irish colleges in exchange for their fidelity to the Spanish crown and to its world political and religious outlook. This ideology of mutual support, which had been in existence in an unstated manner since the failure of the Spanish intervention in Ireland at Kinsale in 1601, had been strengthened in the subsequent decades through service to the Spanish crown in both Spain and its dominions. By 1641, this ideology, now termed *recíproca correspondencia,* consisted of the exchange of arms and financial aid on the part of the Spanish crown for Irish troop levies that were to be provided by the Confederate forces for service in the Iberian Peninsula. At a secondary level, though less successfully, the author shows how the lobbying of Irish Confederate agents at the Spanish court was only made possible by the experience, contacts, and patronage networks that had been set up by the Irish communities in Spanish dominions over the previous decades. Prior to 1641, members of the expatriate intelligentsia reinvented a concept of Irish identity that contributed to the Catholic-separatist myth as identified by Theodore Moody. This redefining of Irish identity, though primarily destined for a Spanish political audience, was then re-exported to Ireland.

Chapter 1 sets the background to the subsequent Confederate diplomatic activity by showing how the creation of expatriate communities in Spanish dominions in the decades prior to 1641, and the reinvention of an Irish exile ideology, paved the way for the initial Confederate success at the Spanish court. Pérez Tostado shows the important role played by Irish clerics both as mediators for the Irish communities and as formulators, though not exclusively, of this ideology. He provides an excellent and informed synthesis of the various waves of Irish emigration, the foundation of the Irish community, and the creation of an Irish "exile ideology" for Spanish consumption as expressed in the works of Richard Stanyhurst and Philip O'Sullivan Beare, and in other anonymous pamphlets. As a welcome counterbalance to this one-sided view, the last part of this chapter is dedicated to Spanish perceptions and stereotypes of Irish emigrants, which for the most part deals with the marginalized, the poor, and the soldiery.

Chapter 2 represents a continuation of the previous chapter though focusing more on how the Irish community presented the 1641 Rebellion and the Confederate cause in Madrid. As the author eminently shows, it was only when internal events in the British Isles put paid to any possible Anglo-Spanish alliance that the Spanish monarchy turned to the Irish Confederation. The bulk of the book (chapters 3 to 5) deals with how Confederate diplomatic activity at the courts of Madrid, Rome, and Paris influenced Spanish policy toward Confederate Ireland, as well as illustrates the problems and difficulties faced by Spanish diplomats in their dealings with the Confederation in Ireland. Finally, by way of epilogue, the last chapter takes the story beyond the Confederate period and Cromwell's conquest of Ireland to include a review of Irish diplomatic activity on the continent up until the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659.

Above all, the author admirably illustrates the complex interaction between diplomatic activity at the dif-

ferent courts, and how this shaped Spanish policy toward the Confederation. At the same time, he does not lose sight of the dynamics between political events in the British Isles, the raising of Irish recruits, and the complexities of Spanish and French diplomatic activity in Ireland. In the process, Pérez Tostado shows how Spanish policy toward the Confederation was primarily determined by the need to restrict French influence in Ireland. At best the Spanish monarchy did the minimum necessary to maintain the Confederation on its side. This the author eloquently exemplifies in regard to the mission of Dermot O'Sullivan Beare, Count of Berehaven, in 1648 to Ireland. Thus, at the same time as this noble was being sent to Ireland to recruit more troops to help quell Spain's internal revolts, the Spanish monarchy was redirecting monies, which had been destined for the Confederation to help suppress the revolt against its authority in Naples. In addition, a further consequence of the Franco-Spanish political rivalry was that it forced Spanish diplomats to make predominant use of the offices of the Old Irish faction in Ireland owing to the pro-French leanings among the Ormondists. Finally, the limited financial resources, restricted bargaining capacity, and the low rank of its Irish diplomats damaged the Spanish monarchy's potential prospects of striking mutually beneficial agreements with the Confederation.

The author argues that although the policy of "mutual support and responsibility" began well, the failure of the Confederation to build on this initial success by supplying the Spanish monarchy with adequate numbers of recruits during the 1640s pushed Philip IV to seek Spain's self-interest rather than the fulfilling of any contractual ties arising out of *recíproca correspondencia.* Both Cromwell's conquest of Ireland and Spain's normalization of relations with the English Commonwealth in 1651 effectively ended Spanish interest in Confederate Ireland. From a Spanish perspective, the Confederate defeat finally gave them the abundant supply of Irish Catholic troops that they had so eagerly sought during the 1640s. The abandonment by the Spanish monarchy of the cause of Confederate Ireland combined with the treatment of Irish recruits to Spain as cannon fodder effectively undermined the traditional undivided loyalty of Irish Catholics to the Spanish monarchy, and with it the important role played by *recíproca correspondencia.* This Pérez Tostado shows clearly in regard to the changing attitude of the Irish Franciscans toward the Spanish crown as the one and only champion of the Irish Catholic cause. From this point on, Irish Catholic allegiance to the French crown was in the ascendency.

In compiling his ambitious monograph, the author has made use of state papers from the Archivo General de Simancas together with other state archives in Madrid, Rome, Paris, Brussels, Lisbon, and London. He has also utilized the archives of the principal religious orders, notary archives, and private correspondence in building up this fascinating and composite picture of Hispano-Irish relations during the Confederate period.

Despite it being one of the stated aims of the book, more attention could have been paid to the impact of the events of the 1640s on the expatriate communities and their relationship to the Spanish monarchy. Moreover, the link between these communities, Irish lobbying at the court, and the resultant Spanish policy could have been made more apparent. I would also like to know to what extent the Irish agents at the Spanish or other European courts were influenced by these expatriate communities or by the French, Spanish, or Flemish societies where they resided? How representative were they of Confederate Ireland given that most of these religious were educated on the Continent? Finally, a little more space dedicated to the concept of *recíproca correspondencia* would have helped the reader.

Undoubtedly, Pérez Tostado's book represents a welcome correction to the traditional anglocentric views of the War of Three Kingdoms not just in terms of focus but also in its attention to the extensive and detailed material relevant to this period available in continental archives. Although Spain was not a major player in these events, it did influence events in Ireland during the Confederate period. This book, I am sure, will remain essential reading for scholars of Confederate Ireland and its relations with Spain and continental Europe.

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Citation: Ciaran O'Scea. Review of Tostado, Igor Pérez, *Irish Influence at the Court of Spain in the Seventeenth Century.* H-Albion, H-Net Reviews. October, 2011.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=31104

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