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Did they do it to mock or defy the notion that sex is only legitimate in heterosexual marriage? These questions seem beside the point; as Ferguson shows, marriage in these texts seems to mean having sex. Ultimately, Ferguson wishes he could identify the men as gay. Sometimes it seems that for him the last word in the history of sexuality was written by John Boswell.

But just as often, Ferguson balances such an approach against recognitions that he fetches from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick on the Great Paradigm Shift, or on universalizing and minoritizing claims about identity. He also refers to recent work on sexuality in early modern France, Carla Freccero's in particular, that acknowledges the "multiple and diverse ways" people have of understanding themselves "as gendered and sexual subjects" (158) as a link between past and present that cannot be resolved into the singularity of identity. If most of the men had no wives, as it appears, it might be that their status as itinerant foreign workers of little means was the central fact about them, not that they enjoyed sex with men. Accounts like Bray's or Michael Rocke's established such behavior as unexceptional in an era when homosexual activity did not entail a gay identity. The sex lives of these men that Ferguson regards as modern (their versatility in sex position) may reflect the geographic and economic displacement that especially affected the lower stratum of European society then and now. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

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Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome: The Rise of the Resident Ambassador.

Catherine Fletcher.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. x + 194 pp. \$93.90.

"Resident embassies are a secular institution," wrote Garrett Mattingly in his 1955 classic *Renaissance Diplomacy*, "and the Roman curia played only a slight role in their development" (65). Pace Mattingly, Catherine Fletcher's excellent and well-written *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome* sets out to show that Rome's role in the development of resident diplomacy was anything but slight. Whereas most diplomatic historiography has focused on bilateral relationships, Fletcher's court-centric approach allows her to persuasively argue that Rome, as a meeting place for diplomats from across Europe, was central to resident diplomacy's gradual expansion in fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Europe, becoming "a fulcrum for the refinement of diplomatic practices" (6) more generally.

By focusing on practices rather than institutions, Fletcher approaches the rise of the resident ambassador in contemporary terms and offers intelligent correctives to the prevailing historiography. The work is the fruit of more than a decade's immersion in

Roman, curial, and diplomatic materials. Fletcher draws not only on prescriptive treatises, portraits, travelogues, and diplomatic correspondence but also on the unpublished and underexploited diaries composed by papal masters of ceremonies between 1466 and 1540. These ceremonial manuals reveal a nuanced chronology of residential diplomacy's emergence as well as its corresponding practices and personnel.

In the first half, Fletcher argues that three events, each closely tied to the Curia, shaped resident diplomacy's rise: the post-Schism return to Rome, the fall of Constantinople, and the 1454 Peace of Lodi. With the return to Rome, popes gradually came to perceive resident ambassadors as lending luster to their project of remaking Rome as *caput mundi* (world capital), while the fall of Constantinople cemented Rome's preeminence as the clearinghouse for political information. But peace between 1454 and 1494 gave resident diplomacy its greatest developmental impetus: the cardinalate's expansion and Italianization diminished national cardinals' representative efficacy, while prelates' exclusion from ceremonial roles encouraged the appointment of lay ambassadors—in particular, fixers with local networks and knowledge of the complicated curial machinery. These preferences solidified after 1494.

Fletcher shows that the increasing regulation of curial ceremony, far from being empty pomp or mere reflection of political hierarchy, paralleled an increasing formalization of diplomacy. By the 1520s, ambassadors were firmly incorporated in the symbolic and political world of the papal court. However, given ambassadors' dual personae as private gentlemen and public representatives, Fletcher suggests that the increasing formalization of diplomacy and ceremony also generated "constructive ambiguity" (170) in Roman politics. Rome's new resident diplomats were responsible not only for representation and negotiation but also for gathering and transmitting information. The book's second half opens with astute observations on news-gathering strategies and structures. Building on Fletcher's earlier work, family and commercial networks are given particular prominence, while the post road is fruitfully reframed as political space.

The renewed city of Rome offered a rich spatial backdrop for diplomats' performances of honor, liberality, and magnificence. Fletcher focuses on entries, audiences, and the symbolic and practical advantages diplomats derived from providing hospitality. She offers welcome, if fleeting, attention here to the often-invisible ambassadorial households—secretaries, servants, and womenfolk—that supported resident diplomacy. Her final theme excavates another aspect of the "constructive ambiguity" that, she argues, characterized Renaissance diplomacy: the boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate gifts. While there is a rich literature on diplomatic gift giving, Fletcher particularly examines gifting's little-studied gray zone: gratuities, tips, and bribes. Whether licit or illicit, she emphasizes gifts' importance as diplomatic tools for securing access, information, and honor.

Fletcher's survey concludes with the 1527 Sack of Rome, prior to the changes that, she suggests, confessional contestation brought to diplomacy from the mid-sixteenth century. This is a slender volume, packed with insights that readers might wish to

see further fleshed out. It is also among the earliest monographic harvests of the New Diplomatic History's broader sociocultural and relational approach to politics, signaling the richness of this perspective in ways that will surely undergird future research. Its clarity and astute observations make it especially accessible for undergraduate and general readers. Yet Fletcher's greatest contribution to diplomatic history's recent renaissance may be more fundamental: her central assertion that the papal Curia—a decidedly non-secular, non-national court—played a constitutive role in resident diplomacy's rise convincingly decouples this process from conventional narratives of modern state formation. As a result, scholars of diplomacy and early modern politics will find the book both stimulating and essential reading.

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Saberes inestables: Estudios sobre expurgación y censura en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII. Dámaris Montes, Víctor Lillo, and María José Vega, eds.
Biblioteca Áurea Hispánica 118. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2018. 384 pp. €44.

Books, as well as people, were among the Spanish Inquisition's preferred targets of mistrust in the early modern period. This is no surprise. Books, at the advent of printing, were key for the circulation of dangerous ideas. To be sure, they were not an exclusive Spanish obsession. But book censorship within the Spanish kingdoms—with attention to Portugal and Rome—is the focus of *Saberes inestables*, the fourth publication to gather the production of a network of Spanish and German scholars. As book vigilance was not restricted to a particular genre, the case studies in this volume range from religious books of private devotion to Spanish bibles, from historiographic and literary works to scientific treatises. Special emphasis is placed on expurgation, a procedure with considerable impact on textual stability as well as on how authors and printers adapted to the changing directives of successive Indexes.

The essays in this volume allow us to form a rich picture of book censorship in early modern Spain. Londoño explains that books of hours—texts of private devotion, mostly used by women, and often in the vernacular—became objects of prohibition by virtue of their mixed and variable content, as they frequently included accessory prayers of superstitious character. It was superstition and the will to control popular piety that accounted for prohibition in this sixteenth-century case. Gamba Corradine does not focus on why books were censored but on why people thought that books were censored. In the not-unusual cases where titles of prohibited books varied from Index to Index, readers tried to identify the book in question according to what they assumed authorities objected to in a text. For her part, through the fate of the *Orlando furioso* in Italy, Portugal, and Spain, Montes Pérez shows the different criteria that guided book