

# Introduction

## Mercenaries of Knowledge in a “Century of Improvisation”

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“A countryman's care placed me, a nut tree, at this cross-roads, where I am the butt of stone-throwing boys. I have grown tall, but my branches are broken, my bark bruised, I am attacked with sling-stones, competing on every side. What worse fate could befall a barren tree? Alas, cursed tree that I am, I bear fruit to my own destruction.”

Nogueira or the walnut tree...  
Alciato, *Emblems* (1577), Emblema n. CXCII, p. 623.

Renaissance conflicts gave way to a century of improvisation.<sup>1</sup> In the conventional story connecting the rise of modern states to the development of a public sphere of opinion, this period is framed as an interlude between the ambivalent collaborations of sixteenth-century humanists with structures of governance, and eventually, the growing intervention and theorization of eighteenth-century *philosophes*. These useful terms – humanists and *philosophes* – lend coherence to a history of ideas conditioned by the overarching argument of the advent of modern states and civic societies. Indeed, when reflecting on the trajectories of seventeenth-century men and women of letters, historians often add an adjective or a prefix (i.e. late humanists or pre-enlightened thinkers) which connects such figures to this argument.<sup>2</sup> These modifiers do not, however, fully capture the intellectual and political fragmentation of seventeenth-century cultures of knowledge nor the overlapping history of intellectual networks and diplomacy. This book reflects on the meaning of such fragmentation and connection from the perspective of individuals who contributed to formal and informal intellectual and political exchanges

<sup>1</sup> On the seventeenth century as “the century of improvisation” see Brook, *Vermeer's Hat*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the autonomy of the early modern literary and intellectual field see Jouhaud, *Les pouvoirs de la littérature* and Schneider, *Dignified Retreat*, pp. 18–21. On how a new model of intellectual commitment with state administrations started but was not yet empowered during the Baroque period see Tessier, *Réseaux diplomatiques et républiques des lettres* and Fumaroli, *Republic of Letters*, chapter 8.

by moving, gathering, accumulating, tracing, and transforming information contained in news, letters, books, manuscripts, libraries, and archives. Through their activities, these individuals fostered the conversion of that disparate information into politically useful knowledge.

Considering a social history of knowledge written from the perspective of men and women who were neither full-fledged humanists nor self-proclaimed emancipated *philosophes* forces scholars to reconsider the political history of the early modern period. To describe the diverse trajectories of such individuals, the term mercenary becomes apt. After all, these seventeenth-century men and women of letters did not remain neutral in the face of a world at war.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, their educations and experiences ensured that their contributions to conflict were often scholarly and literary rather than on the battlefields, though still from positions of professional or personal insecurity. Mercenaries of knowledge were men and women of letters who contributed to the mediation of information and ideas from positions of intellectual and political marginality. Like other men and women of letters from this same period (e.g. erudite libertines), mercenaries of knowledge were often characterized as such by their enemies. The line between service and survival (political and religious) during those rough times and when dealing with unfaithful patrons was thin. Being a mercenary often corresponded to a phase in one's life. This phase could be repeated as often as tensions and displacements pushed such men and women to the fringes of societies. Being a mercenary of knowledge consisted in redeploying the same tactics that these men and women once used in favor of their former masters on behalf of new ones. Their marginality was as much a social construct and a mechanism of oppression imposed on them by their adversaries, as a tool of self-representation that allowed them to react against the pejorative use of the term and make a place for themselves within an international community of knowledge. In addition to the defense of ideals such as toleration, this community fostered intellectual and political communications during a time when other forms of diplomacy were more difficult to sustain.

Like Robert Damien's "librarian-travelers," mercenaries of knowledge were interested in the art of political bibliography (i.e. the distribution, reorganization, and destruction of information contained in books,

<sup>3</sup> On the relationships between the Republic of Letters and war during the seventeenth century see Ult  e, "Res Publica Litteraria and War," 535–46. The figure of the military entrepreneur is a good example of how during the Late Renaissance boundaries between scholarly, diplomatic, and military practices became blurrier than ever. See Sutherland, *The Rise of the Military Entrepreneur* and "War, Mobility, and Letters," 272–92; and "Warfare, Entrepreneurship," 302–18.

manuscripts, libraries, and archives and any other materials or spaces that interacted with such materials and institutions).<sup>4</sup> They generated a *habitus* situated between humanistic practices and bureaucratic procedures of bibliographical criticism and organization.<sup>5</sup> Though they shared common traits and experiences, mercenaries of knowledge did not form a coherent socio-professional body nor a uniform intellectual community from which a single paradigmatic model can be extrapolated to make sense of the lives of men and women involved in seventeenth-century political and intellectual exchanges. What they shared were experiences of precarity which caused them to convert intellectual resources into a political arsenal, in a context in which such arsenals were in high demand. To secure their own survival, mercenaries of knowledge learned to deal in scholarly and material resources that were looted, sold, exchanged, relocated, disaggregated, stolen, repackaged, and reused during local and global conflicts.

While some mercenaries of knowledge took part in the transformation of knowledge into cultural and political power, not all men and women of letters became mercenaries of knowledge. What gave some coherence to mercenaries of knowledge as a group, in addition to their fights for survival, was their criticism of political abuses and their defense of political tolerance. Such criticism was often based on personal experiences of those abuses or an absence of that tolerance. Their attitudes toward abuse and tolerance affected how these agents reorganized, read, or displayed scholarly materials. Thus, mercenaries of knowledge helped bridge the culture of doubt inherited from sixteenth-century religious conflicts with seventeenth-century desires for political reforms. They made sure that the materials that inspired either doubt or reform could be mapped and manipulated by powerful patrons, making them accessible to anyone who could pay their price for them. In their hands, books, manuscripts, archives, and libraries became proxies for the discussions underpinning political negotiations, often on behalf of parties that would otherwise not have been able or willing to enter into contact with one another.

In addition to the intellectual and political consequences, mercenary accumulations contributed to the commodification of bibliographic resources across the Republic of Letters. Through the inventorying of

<sup>4</sup> Such a figure is best embodied by the book hunter and *libérin*, Gabriel Naudé (1600–1653). Damien, *Bibliothèque et état*, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> “The *habitus* is both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification of these practices.” Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p. 170. For the Spanish context see Brendecke and Martín Romera, “El *habitus* del oficial real,” 23–51.

bibliographic collections, the making of lists, the exchange of manuscripts, and epistolary conversations about how best to build a library and use it for political purposes, mercenaries of knowledge reinforced the commercial dimension of material exchanges channeled through the Republic of Letters. The networks of this Republic were not exclusively intellectual. In practice, and especially during conflicts, mercenaries deployed their resources across a broader ensemble of political, diplomatic, diasporic, and economic relations.<sup>6</sup> Though an international and ideal community of individuals interested in forging friendships and sharing knowledge via polite conversations, the Republic of Letters also functioned as a decentralized information marketplace within which political forces could access resources that could be transformed – or not – by hired pens into political assets and/or propaganda.

More than just a metaphor that amplifies the roles and practices that mercenaries of knowledge adopted during seventeenth-century wars, the term (i.e. mercenary) is apt because it was used by mercenaries of knowledge themselves. It was not necessarily a compliment. Mercenaries of knowledge had many competitors. They thus often referred to other mercenaries as such when having to discredit competitors across political and religious divides. For example, the Scottish exile and Arabic translator newly converted to Catholicism, David Colville, complained about “mercenaries” who were performing grubby exchanges of books and library inventories. Colville criticized the “Italian Princes” who ordered or promoted books and inventories gathered and compiled by improvised bibliographical experts. Colville doubled down on his critiques when denouncing the “vile mercenaries” who communicated bibliographic materials to “heretics in England” for a few “hundred scudi.”<sup>7</sup> As an experienced librarian, he proposed himself to those same potential patrons as an expert who could reform those grubby exchanges of books into something of greater political, moral, and intellectual significance. Through so doing, he hoped to gain a more established position. After spending years inventorying and translating manuscripts at the royal library of the Escorial in Spain, Colville hoped to work with the collections of the Duke of Savoy in Turin, or as a librarian at the Vatican. To do so, he needed to distinguish himself from the mercenary profiles he described to his correspondent, Cassiano dal Pozzo, who, at the time, was an influential patron of the arts in charge of recruiting

<sup>6</sup> Khachig, “Rethinking Diaspora(s),” 3–36. On the diasporic circulation of knowledge see Pirillo, *The Refugee-Diplomat*; Domínguez, *Radicals in Exile*; and Terspstra, *Religious Refugees*.

<sup>7</sup> Colville to Dal Pozzo?, Turin–Rome?, August 16, 1628?, BANLC, Pozzo IV, f. 9r.

mercenaries of knowledge on behalf of Pope Urban VIII (r. 1623–1644) and the latter's family in Rome.

Colville's portrait of mercenaries of knowledge and strategies of self-promotion transcend simple jealousies among self-proclaimed bibliographical experts across religious divides. It reveals the existence of an eclectic contingent of men of letters on the make who, amid conflicts such as the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), managed bibliographical materials in fraught contexts. Colville's allusion to trans-confessional intellectual and political exchanges was an attempt to delineate the existence of distinct groups among mercenaries of knowledge, publicizing the fact that he belonged to a group committed with the ideological projects underpinning the Catholic Reformation.

This group came of age when the association between the *Respublica Literaria* and *Christiana*, with the city of Rome at its center, started to crumble, and thus sought to reenergize the Republic with new irenic ideals.<sup>8</sup> Men like Colville thought that mercenaries of knowledge proceeding from Iberian territories could best advance such a project because they were ideally positioned to perform triangular communications between the Italian and Iberian peninsulas, and third parties across the European balance of power.<sup>9</sup> Those men and women of letters had access to a global laboratory of empirical information, and this was especially true during the Iberian Union, when the crowns of Spain and Portugal were placed on one king's head (c. 1580–c. 1640).<sup>10</sup> In addition, the hegemonic power of Spain was contested as the conflicts around the Thirty Years' War took off, and thus Iberian information was highly desirable to Spanish allies and rivals. The unceasing backdrop of war during the seventeenth century shaped the practices and discourses of men and women of letters and their patrons with an emphasis on the contingency of mercenary activities.<sup>11</sup> Mercenaries of knowledge

<sup>8</sup> Fumaroli, *La République des Lettres*, pp. 332–3.

<sup>9</sup> *Mercenaries of Knowledge* follows historian Sergio Bertelli's call for a history of rebels or "slightly skeptical" men of letters, through the trajectories of individuals connected with Iberian cultures of knowledge. See Morel-Fatio, "Vicente Noguera," 37–8 and Bertelli, *Rebeldes, libertinos y ortodoxos*. On the transnational dimension of Baroque intellectual cultures in Italy see Boutier, Marin, and Romano (eds.), *Naples, Rome, Florence*, pp. 172–242 and Bianchi, *Rinascimento e libertinismo*. Filippo de Vivo reported that during the 1630s, the Spanish ambassador in Venice was aware that "sometimes one can learn more about French business in Spain by means of the ambassador based in Venice, or Rome, than by means of the ambassador in Paris." Vivo, *Information*, p. 75.

<sup>10</sup> Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*; Cañizares-Esguerra, *Nature, Empire, and Nation*; and Brendecke, *The Empirical Empire*.

<sup>11</sup> For effects of war on early modern knowledge exchanges, see Bret et al., "Sciences et empires," 121–46.

took part in competing reform programs that altogether aimed to rethink how erudition, politics, religion, and culture should intersect.<sup>12</sup>

In the polycentric and polyglot context of seventeenth-century empires and reforms, mercenaries of knowledge conceived of and advertised themselves as fixers, who were “resourceful, problem-solving guides with a sophisticated grasp of local languages, cultures, and customs.”<sup>13</sup> They dealt with contradictory personal emotions and political uncertainties through the arts of political bibliography and historical thinking, a kind of “bibliopolitics.”<sup>14</sup> The circulation and selling of bibliographical materials for the sake of international political communication and individual survival allowed mercenaries of knowledge to mediate ideas via the nascent sphere of public opinion connected to the information societies they were helping build. Filippo de Vivo’s ongoing research into Thomas Hobbes’ early career as a secretary of the English embassy in Venice, for example, shows that the philosopher was above all an information engineer who worked on securing his survival and international political communication across powers via bibliopolitics.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, Harold Cook’s study of the “young Descartes” reveals the impact that conflicts and exile had on the acquisition of practical knowledge and the forging of philosophical ideas during this same period.<sup>16</sup> These two philosophers’ early careers resemble nothing so much as that of a mercenary of knowledge.

*Mercenaries of Knowledge* engages with this and other innovative research that from the perspective of the history of science, ideas, and politics offers a new approach to paradigmatic figures, including the painter-diplomats, Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) and Diego Velázquez (1599–1642), or the courtier-astronomer, Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), among others, whose careers intersected with those of mercenaries of knowledge.<sup>17</sup> Common among these trajectories was the

<sup>12</sup> See for example Brevaglieri, *Natural desiderio di sapere*, pp. 18–19.

<sup>13</sup> Stahuljak, *Les fixeurs au Moyen Age*; and *Medieval Fixers: Translation in the Mediterranean (1250–1500)*.

<sup>14</sup> On bibliopolitics see Montcher, “Iberian Bibliopolitics” 206–18 and Erikson, “The End of Piracy.” The term has been used to deepen the critical analysis of modern bibliometrics. See Sharpe and Turner, “Bibliopolitics,” 146–73.

<sup>15</sup> Vivo, “Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information,” 35–49; and Vivo and Malcolm (eds.), “Translation of Fulgenzio Micanzio’s Letters.”

<sup>16</sup> Cook, *The Young Descartes*.

<sup>17</sup> On the imbrications between the history of political and scientific cultures, see Pimentel, “The Iberian Vision,” 17–30; Kontler, Romano, Sebastiani, and Török (eds.), *Negotiating Knowledge*; Findlen (ed.), *Empires of Knowledge*; Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*; Vivo, *Information*; and Miller, *Peiresc’s Europe and Peiresc’s Mediterranean*. See also Biagioli, “Le prince et les savants,” 1417–53. On early modern artists as mobile courtiers as well as on their ambivalent status as diplomats see Osborne, “A Painter-Diplomat,” 185.

pull of Rome as the nominal arbiter among Catholic powers and the main pole of Catholic scholarship. On the other hand, contact and connection with Protestant politics and scholarship was common. From a Roman and papal perspective, the broader Republic of Letters was perceived as a land of mission that needed to be reconquered.<sup>18</sup> Mercenaries were thus asked to convert and commit with the defense of the Catholic Church. During the 1620s and the 1650s, many of them were recruited by Church officials while in exile. In March 1647, Lucas Holstenius, a German scholar and convert to Catholicism, who had been recruited as a librarian by Cardinal Francesco Barberini in Paris two decades earlier, asked this same cardinal to employ Thomas Vane, an English nobleman who had converted to Catholicism after his reading of the Fathers of the Church.<sup>19</sup> Holstenius communicated to Francesco Barberini that Vane had written about his and others English dissidents' experiences when denouncing the hypocrisy of the Anglican Church. Self-reflective and autobiographical compositions were something that mercenaries of knowledge were keen to produce and publicize. Vane's works had been printed in Paris in French and English. Holstenius suggested that the Congregation for the Propaganda Fide, the main organ in charge of promoting Roman universalistic missionary projects since the early 1620s, should promote Vane's writings and translate them into Latin.<sup>20</sup> The city of Rome provided a platform from where mercenaries of knowledge could keep in touch with international politics, including the ones connected to the places they were coming from and from which they had been excluded and were keen to criticize.

Whether Protestant or Catholic, or from any other religious background, mercenaries of knowledge belonged to a generation that came of age around the Thirty Years' War. The history of how they worked and thought about their position in the world as well as their self-fashioning strategies reveals the murky realities of informal diplomacy and intellectual exchanges during conflicts. This was a generation which had been educated in a relative climate of peace (c. 1600–1618) and internationalism. When conflicts made their comeback, their political views did not match those of other men of letters and politicians who espoused inward-looking reforms, protectionism, centralization projects, and campaigns of reputation promoting bellicose attitudes against foreign enemies.

<sup>18</sup> Fosi, *Convertire lo straniero*.

<sup>19</sup> Holstenius to Francesco Barberini, Rome–Paris, March 4, 1647, BV, Allacci, XCVI.

<sup>20</sup> Holstenius reported that, in addition, Vane, like other mercenaries, was looking for a room to stay in Rome. The Palazzo de la Cancelleria was one possible destination. Other mercenaries were residing inside the palazzo while carrying out informal tasks as informants, administrators, and bibliographic and legal experts within it.

Mercenaries of knowledge were “*intellectual personae*,” to follow Renata Ago’s formulation, who exercised different activities but defined themselves as intellectuals.<sup>21</sup> They also embodied the ideal of the practical men of the Baroque era, whose *ingenio* allowed them to navigate difficult situations themselves and for their friends and patrons.<sup>22</sup> The demand for their services was high but their relations of patronage were often unstable and weak. Friendship became a vital vector to secure resources and promote themselves. Attuned to the dangers of inquisitorial attention and experienced with exile, they cultivated through their friendships an idea of masculinity which underpinned the operations of mediation they carried out. Indeed, their world was purposively, although not entirely, masculine. Their sexuality and gender representations could be used to neutralize them since mercenaries of knowledge and their patrons disproportionately bore the infamous mark of being “sodomites” as imposed on them by institutions such as the inquisitions. Many mercenaries of knowledge bore their difficult relations with masculinity and same-sex relationships as badges of honor and as a proof of their virtue and engagement with politics that went against inquisitorial backwardness and intolerance. Friendship, patronage, and even persecution gave them platforms from which to publicize their anti-inquisitorial engagement throughout the Republic of Letters. Such engagement constitutes an invitation to consider the role that diverse forms of sexuality played in early modern intellectual and political relations.

Mercenaries of knowledge of course also suffered from categories that they bore as stigmas. Categories such as libertines, sodomites, and the insincerely converted, forced them to compromise with their ideal representations of themselves.<sup>23</sup> To counterbalance those stigmas, they magnified what they called their liberty and virtue when fashioning their memories for the international audiences of the Republic of Letters. These two concepts suggested that they were able to emancipate themselves from patriotic and nationalistic prejudices, and were in consequence well prepared to share a less deterministic vision of the world with their homologues beyond political and religious divides. Mercenaries of knowledge were prepared to get actively involved in under-the-table negotiations, falsifications, or bribes to protect their

<sup>21</sup> Ago, *Tanti modi per promuoversi*, [www.academia.edu/15721248/Tanti\\_modi\\_per\\_promuoversi\\_Artisti\\_letterati\\_scientziati\\_nella\\_Roma\\_del\\_Seicento](http://www.academia.edu/15721248/Tanti_modi_per_promuoversi_Artisti_letterati_scientziati_nella_Roma_del_Seicento), accessed November 3, 2021.

<sup>22</sup> On the use of *ingenio* by Baquianos (i.e. retired soldiers who in acted as guides in the New World) and other experts in improvising for the sake of their survival see José Ramón Marcaida’s work in progress on such figures.

<sup>23</sup> Muir, *The Culture Wars*, pp. 1–12.

patrons and other mercenaries with whom they identified and collaborated. Tommaso Campanella's editor, Kaspar Schoppe, a mercenary of knowledge who had converted to Catholicism and spent most of his life working as a polemicist, presented himself as a scholar and diplomat who worked across nations, and who thus needed protection. When publishing Campanella's work, while the latter was in jail, Schoppe boasted about his "liberty" to select his patron as well as his freedom (i.e. *libertas*) to threaten any powerful figures he wanted with the documents he owned.<sup>24</sup> Another mercenary of knowledge, the writer Manuel Faria de Sousa, who in appearance served Spanish interests during most of his life, underlined that he "never negotiated his liberty" in exchange for vain and immediate interests.<sup>25</sup> Though that liberty could invite attacks, it was itself an arm to deploy against potential enemies.

As *intellectual personae*, mercenaries of knowledge took great care when memorializing their deeds to a public audience which included friends, patrons, rivals, and enemies. By doing so, they joined a Baroque cohort of voices who relied on autobiographic narratives to make a place for themselves and for their ambivalent relations to the social and identity categories they were initially drafted with. The story of the life of Catalina de Erauso (c. 1585–c. 1650), known as the Lieutenant Nun, condensed what many mercenaries of knowledge experienced between the late sixteenth and the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>26</sup> Catalina was born to a well-to-do noble family of northern Spain. While her father and her brothers served the local administration and participated in the transcontinental wars of the Iberian empire, Catalina was supposed to remain silent, isolated, and pray for the fate of her family between the narrow walls of her convent cell. Against all odds, Catalina escaped what she considered to be her prison. She cross-dressed and made her way to the Spanish royal court. During the rest of her life, she traveled back and forth between Europe and the New World, self-fashioning as a soldier and a writer, fighting on behalf of the Spanish king in the Americas, and hiding from local authorities while trying to make a living through gambling and killing. Although it is not clear where her trajectory ended, whether in Spain or in Mexico (probably in Cotaxtla), Catalina ultimately came before the Pope to ask for redemption. Her cross-dressing practices and her multiple identities, if not fully redeemed in Rome,

<sup>24</sup> Schoppe to Pozzo?, to Rome?, October 14, 1644, BANLC, Pozzo VI, f. 45.

<sup>25</sup> Faria e Sousa, *Fortuna*, p. 204.

<sup>26</sup> For an updated critical introduction and edition of her life account see Martínez (ed.), *Vida y sucesos de la Monja Alferez*. On the imbrications between the lives of soldiers, mercenaries, courtiers, and men and women of letters see Calvo, *Espadas y plumas en la Monarquía hispana*.

acquired legitimate meaning through her quest for redemption. The fact that she/he positioned her/himself somewhere between reality and fiction, thanks to her/his talent as a woman/man of letters who could craft and publicize her/his *mémoires*, gave sense to a life spent accumulating knowledge based on her/his experiences and broadcasting those experiences across and beyond the empire.

Erauso's trajectory ran in parallel to, and probably crossed lines with, other representatives of her/his generation who, despite international wars and local jealousies, experienced similar fates and found outlets through the social networks of the Republic of Letters between Madrid, the Americas, and Rome. Such lives resonated even more widely through autobiographical accounts that were printed and staged in Baroque theaters.<sup>27</sup> Not all mercenaries of knowledge benefited or suffered from such public exposure, but Spanish, Portuguese, and papal archives confirm that one common feature was the quest for *bona fama* across scholarly and political networks. Recovering their trajectories shows that – between, or even behind, official diplomats and transimperial agents – a world of mercenaries filled the gray areas of Baroque cultural and political communication with their presence, ideas, and memories, and thus created personal and material connections between allegedly antagonistic powers.<sup>28</sup>

Mercenaries of knowledge's self-fashioning strategies mostly served to reaffirm their ties with learned and political elites, as well as to subvert clear-cut religious affiliations. Their relations of patronage as well as the friendships they made across overlapping diplomatic and intellectual networks were negotiated on a continuous basis. Their patrons were themselves confronted with the instability of their times, and often experienced exile or displacement themselves. In such situations, these same patrons needed experienced and multi-embedded mercenaries who could offer them timely information that was needed to face the consequences of their displacements.

By obtaining and selling rare books and natural products, among other collectibles, mercenaries of knowledge sought to furnish their patrons with the capacity to locate, possess, and display hard-to-find objects, as a sign of the broad reach of the latter's communication networks as much as of their talents for good governance in war times. If a mercenary was successful, it was his patron who enjoyed the most public recognition. Patrons, too, were in need of *bona fama* and good political outcomes.

<sup>27</sup> This observation is best put into perspective when reading Alonso de Contreras' *Vida de este capitán*.

<sup>28</sup> Levin, *Agents of Empire*; Malcolm, *Agents of Empire*; and Rothman, *Brokering Empire*.

Some of the most influential politicians in seventeenth-century Europe experienced exile. Royal favorites and state ministers, such as the Cardinal Mazarin in France, Francesco Barberini in Rome, or even princes – such as Gaston, Duke de Orléans, the heirs of the 1580 candidate to the throne of Portugal, Antonio Prior of Crato, and the princes of Portugal – and queens, including Marie de' Medici and Christine of Sweden, all formed part of a long list of rulers who increased their interests for bibliographical matters during exile. It is no surprise that these political figures became dependent on the services of mercenaries of knowledge when trying to remain politically influential via bibliopolitics. To do so, they relied on the services of agents who understood intimately the precarity of their positions when in or out of power.

Mercenaries of knowledge's patrons capitalized on their agents' realism and disenchantment. Such mercenaries became particularly useful for emerging powers during the 1640s who were looking for ways to be recognized as legitimate in places where their authority was either questioned or overlooked. In such settings, the exchange of bibliographical materials proved to be foundational to the ability to negotiate on behalf of these powers for pragmatic as well as strategic reasons. Certainly, information was power, yet at the same time, moving boxes of books raised less suspicions than coded letters exchanged through cross-country rides of lone postal agents.

Just as the patrons who fueled demand for bibliopolitical agents found themselves in precarious positions, mercenaries of knowledge knew that part of their value lay in their ready disposal. As expendable agents, mercenaries of knowledge convinced their patrons to rely on their useful but always uncertain, unpredictable, and sometimes borderline services.<sup>29</sup> By being expendable, they negotiated what and where others could not. In sum, mercenaries of knowledge were resourceful men of letters who participated in state-building campaigns without being fully invested in or co-opted by those campaigns.

Mercenaries of knowledge made explicit that their most impactful political assets resided in the potential force of the materials and information they gathered. For example, accumulations of ancient history books and manuscripts were potential mines for new political ideas and could engender political actions.<sup>30</sup> Aware that political power resided in

<sup>29</sup> The secretary of the Portuguese embassy in Paris after 1640 signaled that the restored monarchy of Portugal benefited from the services of expendable agents. Monis de Carvalho, *Francia interessada con Portugal*, ff. 13v–4r.

<sup>30</sup> For a renewed approach of a history of ideas in Iberian contexts see Cardim and Monteiro, *Political Thought in Portugal*. Pushing against the idea of the apolitical

the art of suggesting force without using it, mercenaries of knowledge talked about their own collections and those of their masters to publicize their potential strength.<sup>31</sup> For mercenaries of knowledge, politics was first and foremost an illusion. They materialized the power of such an illusion in their letters by mentioning the list of documents, books, and library or archival building projects they owned or could access.

To bring to light the manifold activities of this mobile, prolific, and transformational generation of mercenaries of knowledge, this book mines archival sources – many previously untranslated – written in Portuguese, Spanish, Latin, French, English, and Italian to establish connections between the history of wars, empires, and international relations in the seventeenth century. The diverse source base includes scholarly and diplomatic letters, administrative documents, inquisitorial reports, book lists, library inventories, printed dedications, literary and scholarly works, family and private archival notes, and references to materials and commodities (fruits, luxury products, musical instruments) that traveled with these artifacts. Bringing together these sources permits a wide-ranging exploration of the everyday practices and diverse political expertise of mercenaries of knowledge. The analysis of these sources is fundamental for understanding why modern-day historians associate this period of wars, conflicts of sovereignty, and diplomatic disarray with news and scientific revolutions, and with the formation of a public sphere of opinion and the birth of international relations.<sup>32</sup> It was the transmission of ideas, texts, and material goods among a generation of now-forgotten middlemen which gave fuel to new forms of governance emerging from mid-seventeenth-century war and diplomacy.

### **A Mercenary Triangle: France, Iberia, and Italy**

The story of the generation of mercenaries of knowledge who lived through the end of the sixteenth and the mid-seventeenth century comes with an end date. The signing of peace treaties between 1648 and 1668 across Europe and the Iberian monarchies corresponded with the formation of state intelligence systems that channeled much of the same information and knowledge materials that mercenaries of knowledge had

dimension of early modern antiquarians see Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," 285–315; and Miller, *History and Its Objects*.

<sup>31</sup> Marin, *Portrait of the King*.

<sup>32</sup> Helmers and Van Groesen (eds.), *Managing the News in Early Modern Europe*; and Childers, "The Baroque Public Sphere," 165–85.

dealt with during conflicts.<sup>33</sup> Many of these mercenaries were even hired by these systems through honorific and sometime official appointments at courts and academies. Since the early 1630s, if not earlier, attempts were made to bring them closer under state authorities, and by the 1660s the domestication of bibliopolitics and its agents was nearing completion.<sup>34</sup> This generation of mercenaries of knowledge had, after all, attracted the attention of powerful ministers, who mapped persons of interest across the Mediterranean. For example, the French Chancellor Séguier (1588–1672) was interested in men such as the following informants:<sup>35</sup>

[1.] a Spanish Franciscan who has become Jewish and is named Abraham Gayt, who has given up the faith on account of doctrine, and seems to have dreamed of returning to Rome, having obtained letters of recommendation to that effect [...]  
[2.] A Spaniard of importance whom the King of Spain sent to Hormuz who wears glasses all the time [...] The Andalusian Doctor named Aquin Mustapha, who passed through here and saw Mr. du Vair before the expulsion of the Moriscos.<sup>36</sup>

This extract is part of a list shared on behalf of Séguier with the French polymath, Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, one of the main figures of the Republic of Letters (1580–1637). For both scholarly and political purposes as chancellor, Séguier relied on the services of men such as Jean Maguy, the author of Peiresc's list, who traveled between Marseille and North Africa, meeting with other exiles from Spain, including *moriscos* (Muslim converts to Christianity) expelled from the peninsula after 1609.<sup>37</sup> Portuguese mercenaries of knowledge alluded in their correspondences to Séguier's collaborators, referring to the minister's "Jew" and "*Mancebo*," showing themselves to be aware of this mapping and their place in it.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See Maillard Álvarez and Fernández Chaves (eds.), *Bibliotecas de la Monarquía Hispánica*.

<sup>34</sup> Soll, *The Information Master*.

<sup>35</sup> The chancellery controlled library privileges and official publications. Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>36</sup> Guillaume du Vair (1556–1621) was the Keeper of the Seals, an office that shared similar functions to the ones attributed to the French Chancellor. Maguy's 1633 list is quoted by Miller, *Peiresc's Mediterranean*, pp. 266–7.

<sup>37</sup> Nexon, *Le Chancelier Séguier*, p. 437.

<sup>38</sup> The Marquis of Niza to Vicente Nogueira, Paris–Rome, August 2, 1647; and Niza to Nogueira, Paris–Rome, October 15, 1647, Gonçalves Serafim and Freitas Carvalho (eds.), *Um diálogo epistolar*, pp. 107–8 and 126–8. Another of Séguier's contacts, Daniel de Priezac, developed relationships with Portuguese and Spanish exiles. Priezac was a legal expert and a member of the French Academy specializing in Spanish and Portuguese affairs. He also had connections with Richelieu's Portuguese collaborator, Fernandes de Vila Real. Uomini, *Cultures historiques*.

Franco-Spanish tensions around 1635 inspired French authorities to strengthen their relations with Iberian agents via France itself and the Italian Peninsula. During the early 1630s, Peiresc expanded his connections in Spain and Portugal. He sought correspondents in Lisbon, complaining that he knew “no person in that land.”<sup>39</sup> He reached out to ship captains from Marseille to learn about plants and fruits coming from the Iberian East and West Indies. He contacted the Portuguese jeweler Henrique Alves, a resident of Paris, asking him for contacts in the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>40</sup> Thus, Peiresc merged the information networks of Portuguese collaborators working at the core of French politics with his own contacts across the Republic of Letters.<sup>41</sup> Peiresc was not the only French scholar to understand the political relevance of information. In his *Bibliographie politique*, the librarian Gabriel Naudé (1600–1653) signaled that “we can nonetheless find some help in the relations, newspapers and in the navigations of the Dutch and Spanish, who are today almost the only ones who travel to diverse parts of the world and who visit both the Oriental and Occidental Indies.” “Spaniards” evoked for French readers privileged access to the experiences cultivated within the territories under Spanish and Portuguese control.<sup>42</sup>

These “Spaniards” were not only to be found in the Iberian Peninsula. Because of their ambivalent relations with Spain, mercenaries of knowledge connected to the Iberian worlds were scattered widely. As one of the critical centers of seventeenth-century diplomacy and Republic of Letters, Roman networks proved particularly efficient when it came to connecting with those mercenaries.<sup>43</sup> For example, during the 1630s, Séguier sought to recruit the Calabrian philosopher Tommaso Campanella (1568–1639), who by then had become a well-known opponent to Spanish rule in Italy.<sup>44</sup> Campanella escaped his Roman jail cell thanks to the help of French diplomats and arrived in France in

<sup>39</sup> Miller, *Peiresc's Mediterranean*, p. 337.

<sup>40</sup> During the first two decades of the century, Portuguese in Paris had been influential around Marie de' Medici, and representatives of this community maintained active correspondence in Lisbon and Seville, among other cities.

<sup>41</sup> Alves offered Peiresc the names of Duarte Dios de Olivares and Diego Cardotto in Seville. Peiresc also learned what Manuel da Costa, a merchant, brought with him upon his return from the East Indies.

<sup>42</sup> Naudé, *La bibliographie politique*, pp. 77–8.

<sup>43</sup> On Rome as a key hub of the Catholic Reformation and the Republic of Letters see Romano (ed.), *La culture scientifique à Rome à l'époque moderne*.

<sup>44</sup> See Lerner, *Tommaso Campanella in France*. After the War of the Mantuan Succession (1628–1631), rumors of an invasion of Spanish Naples by the French reached the Spanish viceroy, the Count of Monterrey. At the same time, a plot to poison the viceroy and the city's population surfaced. This plot was attributed to Fray Thomas Pignatelli, who – as the investigations revealed – was working for Campanella. Pignatelli

October 1634. It was Peiresc who, in addition to acquiring the Dominican's works, paid for Campanella's trip from Marseille to Paris.<sup>45</sup> Séguier requested writings from Campanella, which could be used against the project of peace with Spain. Soon enough, however, Campanella's situation in Paris became unsustainable, due to the presence of pro-Spanish factions in the city. He died in 1639 without completing Séguier's request for materials.<sup>46</sup>

Campanella's profile fits neatly into the mercenary triangle formed between the Iberian and Italian peninsulas and France. Like other mercenaries of knowledge involved in the politics of the Hispanic monarchy, Campanella was punished for practicing same-sex relations. After being transferred from the Neapolitan jails to Rome in 1626, Campanella became attuned to Roman patrons much in the same way that Portuguese mercenaries of knowledge would a decade later.<sup>47</sup> Like them, it was also from Rome that the Calabrian philosopher established contact with French diplomacy. Campanella and Portuguese mercenaries of knowledge also shared friendships with French scholars like the orientalist Jacques Gaffarel, the royal librarians and brothers Dupuy, the book hunter Naudé, the polymath and parliamentarian Peiresc, and the *libératin* Bouchard who lived in Rome. These figures were all connected to Richelieu as well as to Urban VIII's family through primarily masculine networks of socialization and patronage.

Drawing on rich archival examples like this one, this book reveals the entanglements between the Iberian monarchies and the Republic of Letters through the lives of men of letters in exile who fostered the exchange of ideas during the seventeenth-century global crisis.<sup>48</sup> These individuals went through precarious situations. They sold their legal and historical expertise to new patrons, like Campanella and others did, but they also had stable personal allegiances toward other men of letters and members of the Republic of Letters. Someone such as Peiresc played a fundamental role in securing the embeddedness of mercenaries of knowledge in multiple societies and cultural settings. This setting was not

confessed to receiving an order to carry out a mass killing. The goal was to take advantage of the confusion to occupy the city. Though the feasibility of the plot remains uncertain, Campanella was held responsible. See *En tiempo del señor Conde de Monte Rey publicasse viene la armada de françia a este reyno de Napoles*, BZ, Altamira 383, D. 37.

<sup>45</sup> Sarasohn, "Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc," 78.

<sup>46</sup> Delumeau, *El misterio Campanella*, 32.

<sup>47</sup> Conflicts reinforced the precarious status of mercenaries of knowledge and conditioned the spaces of their action. Jail proved to be a space from where scholars strengthened their political criticism. See Castillo Gómez, *Entre la pluma y la pared*, chapter 3.

<sup>48</sup> Burke, *Exiles and Expatriates in the History of Knowledge*.

special, and, in fact, was rather typical, but what *Mercenaries of Knowledge* does is show the relationships between scholarly knowledge, political agency, and ideological dissidence in the global Catholic monarchy of Spain and Portugal, southern Europe, and across the international Republic of Letters throughout the first half of the seventeenth century.

The history of the Iberian monarchies and the Republic of Letters are not mutually exclusive. Neither was there an Iberian Republic of Letters operating in isolation from other scholarly communities and political questions. Considering together the politics of the Iberian monarchies and the mobility and mercenary practices of some men of letters born in its territories, it becomes clear that the histories of the Iberian monarchies and the Republic of Letters were entangled during the early modern period. *Mercenaries of Knowledge* thus contributes to the new narrative of the deep imbrications which existed between the Spanish and Portuguese societies and the history of early modern political ideas in an broader international framework. It shows how and why Iberian agents contributed to information techniques that bolstered and challenged the advent of Reason of State ideas, and demonstrates that these techniques fueled a pattern of imperial emulations associated with the rise of modern political economy.<sup>49</sup>

### A “Piccolo Campanella”: Bibliopolitics and Exile

With the phrase “piccolo campanella,” Christophe Dupuy, a French scholar in Rome, advertised the value of a certain mercenary of knowledge: the Portuguese jurist and humanist scholar of New Christian origins, who had been persecuted by the Inquisition for sodomy and exiled. This was Vicente Nogueira (1586–1654).<sup>50</sup> Nogueira, the main protagonist of this book, reveals how the particular contexts which obtained during the Iberian Union of the Crowns (c. 1580–c. 1640) and Portuguese Restoration (c. 1640–c. 1668) conditioned one constellation of mercenaries of knowledge operating in and outside of the Iberian monarchies.<sup>51</sup> His life proved closely connected to the

<sup>49</sup> “Collecting manuscripts in this context was not a harmless intellectual or bibliophilic practice, but part of a global reflection about information and mediation at the crossroads of political economy, commercial networks, and learned practices.” See Van Damme, “Capitalizing Manuscripts, Confronting Empires,” 110.

<sup>50</sup> For this episode see Chapter 5.

<sup>51</sup> See Morel-Fatio, “Vicente Noguera,” 1–38; Sarasohn, “Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc,” 78; and Gonçalves Serafim, “Cardeais, reis e senhores pelas cartas,” 29–56. Early twentieth-century scholars showed interest for Nogueira when writing their literary history of Spain and reflecting upon the political meaning of lives of individuals they

reconfiguration of the uneasy relationship between knowledge and power before and after the Thirty Years' War in its European and global manifestations (e.g. the Dutch–Portuguese wars). Born in Portugal, Nogueira started his career as a jurist in the administration of the Hispanic monarchy after a courtly upbringing between Madrid and Valladolid and humanist university training at Alcalá, Salamanca, and Coimbra.<sup>52</sup> He worked in the tribunals of Portugal before leaving his brief administrative career and joining the Chapter of the Cathedral of Lisbon in 1618. These experiences immersed Nogueira in the linguistic and legal diversity of the Iberian monarchies and in widening intellectual networks through which he cultivated French, English, and Italian correspondents. He came to think of himself – and be recognized by his peers – as a member of the Republic of Letters. From Lisbon, he fashioned himself as a literary patron, but in the 1630s was subject to an inquisitorial process based on accusations of sodomy and insinuations of *converso* heritage. That trial resulted in his exile to Brazil and long refuge in Rome. Nogueira died in July 1654 at Palazzo Barberini in Rome, having become one of the key Roman agents supporting the Portuguese Restoration through diplomatic networks that connected Paris and Amsterdam with Rome and Lisbon.<sup>53</sup> In fewer than twenty years, if not fully romanized, Nogueira certainly thought of himself as a Roman Spaniard. He refashioned himself as an expert in Spanish history, languages, and politics, especially before 1640. During that signal year in Iberian politics, he received the opportunity to turn against his former Spanish masters and redeploy his historical, bibliographical, and political expertise from Rome in the service of the restored monarchy of Portugal.

qualified as “heterodox.” Morel-Fatio and his colleagues commented that “[t]hey (Nogueira’s letters) look like they have a lot of interest, not only from a literary point of view, but also and mostly, from a political one.” Fernandez? Thomaz to Morel-Fatio, Rome–Paris, December 27, 1879, BMV, Morel-Fatio, ms. 16, ff. 15r–6v. Thomaz sent to Morel-Fatio a copy of Nogueira’s letters with the librarian Lucas Holstenius and the cardinal Francesco Barberini, which included the biographical account that the abbot Pieralisi added to the volume of letters at the Vatican library, and a mention to a portrait of Nogueira located “in the reading room of the [Barberini] library, where it bears, I believe, the number 39.”

<sup>52</sup> Nogueira was born in Lisbon in 1586 and died in Rome in 1654. His life was nearly coterminous with the Iberian Union of the Crowns (1580–1640), during which time Portugal remained jurisdictionally differentiated but joined the ensemble known at the time as the Catholic monarchy or Hispanic monarchy. To describe this political constellation, I sometimes use “Iberian empire” as a term of convenience in this book. See Elliott, “A Europe of Composite Monarchies,” 48–71; Bouza, *Felipe II y el Portugal dos povos*; Valladares, *La Conquista de Lisboa*; and Cardim, *Portugal unido y separado*.

<sup>53</sup> For the notice of Nogueira’s death, I am in debt to James Nelson Novoa who localized his death certificate in ASVR, San Lorenzo in Damaso, Morti, 1654. Nogueira received the last rites and was buried in the basilica of San Lorenzo in Damaso.

It was at this time when his portrait as a mercenary of knowledge reached its highest definition. Nogueira was well attuned to the most hard-to-access sites of power across Rome, and although his death happened in a prestigious family palace, it could not obviate the fact that he ended his life never achieving the longed-for opportunity to return to Portugal. He would remain a mercenary of knowledge who spent the last years of his life participating in the making of Portuguese politics from afar and serving patrons who themselves suffered from exile and displacement.

If asked, Nogueira would have probably identified himself as a Spanish Catholic of Old Christian and Portuguese origins. His daily life was long shaped by early social bonds forged in courtly and elitist *milieux*, where he joined diplomats, aristocrats, and thinkers who defended irenic views about the international politics of the Iberian Catholic monarchies. His advocacy for soft conservation and/or the assimilation of religious minorities lay at the core of his political engagement. Nogueira was far from being alone in such views. In addition to powerful friends and patrons, his social bonds with what are best defined as emotional communities and same-sex relations provided continuity and support throughout a life marked by displacements. In the Iberian and Italian peninsulas, when traveling across the Atlantic ocean between West Africa and Brazil, as well as when hiding out in Brazil, Nogueira's connections with these communities and relations remained steady. His scholarly endeavors reinforced such connections and relations by transforming the ideal of the Republic of Letters into a shelter which took on a structural agency that allowed intellectual dissidence across political and religious boundaries in an age of persecution and strife. His participation in emotional communities and his membership in the Republic of Letters constitute the two main axes that permitted Nogueira to avoid the severing of who he thought he was with what he became throughout the hazardous and improvised experiences of his life. Nogueira's identity was fluid. Although sharpened by a sense of practical and economic opportunism that best translate to the term of mercenary, his strategies of representation aimed toward self-promotion and to rebuff his critics as he established his public persona. *Mercenaries of Knowledge* aims to recover the history of the political tactics and intellectual practices at play in such a public strategy of representation of a figure who was simultaneously at the center of political action and at the margins of many social configurations.

Through his wide travels and even wider correspondence network, Nogueira's career was not entirely singular. It intersected with grand early modern political and intellectual debates that emerged between the waning of civic humanism and the development of pre-enlightened European cultures of knowledge. This was a period which coincided

with the aftermath of sixteenth-century wars of religion through the establishment of more absolute state governance systems after the mid-seventeenth century. This period also saw the quickening of a global race for empire, through which scholars living in Spanish- and Portuguese-ruled territories were exposed to a wealth of data and debates about how to govern unprecedented assemblages of territories, peoples, and resources. Meanwhile, the tension produced by the Late Renaissance crisis of belief sent scholars searching for a “third way” between dualistic representations of a world divided not only between confessions, but also between war and peace, between Reason of State and moralized governance, and between blind faith and skepticism.<sup>54</sup> Beyond the adventurous aspects of his life, and thanks to bibliographic exchanges which eventually shaped his participation in bibliopolitics, Nogueira’s trajectory intersected with power relations, imperial shifts, and the political activities of well-known members of the Republic of Letters, from Galileo (1564–1642) to Descartes’ patron, Queen Christine of Sweden (1626–1689).<sup>55</sup> Along the way, his archive connects us to a broader mercenary world of improvisation.

*Mercenaries of Knowledge* is divided into three parts. Part I places Vicente Nogueira’s education and upbringing in context to show how, during the Union of the Crowns (1580–1640), the Iberian monarchies offered extraordinary cultural dynamism. Across its composite territories, subjects originally trained to serve the Hispanic monarchy cultivated contacts with the broader Republic of Letters which allowed them to intervene in international scholarly and political debates, especially those revolving around questions of sovereignty and tolerance following the wars of religion. During the first two decades of the seventeenth century, the relative climate of peace known as *Pax Hispanica* or *Romana* fostered international scholarly contacts and allowed men of letters living in Iberian territories to cultivate original visions about how to reform the empire. As the climate of peace became more and more unstable, divisions surfaced at court and in spaces of power that led to the marginalization of young courtiers and legal experts like Nogueira, setting them on a path to becoming mercenaries of knowledge (Chapter 1). Among those who were marginalized, displaced men of letters saw in the

<sup>54</sup> Popkin, *The History of Skepticism* and Laursen and Paganini (eds.), *Skepticism and Political Thought*.

<sup>55</sup> On politics and bibliography as “the skeleton or scaffolding of literary and of intellectual history,” see Kristeller, “Between the Italian Renaissance and the French Enlightenment,” 41–72. Men of multiple worlds such as Nogueira traded and translated books and manuscripts on an unprecedented scale. For this metaphor, I rely on García-Arenal and Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds*.

Republic of Letters and in foreign representatives across Iberian territories opportunities to promote their reputation as entrepreneurs of Spanish and Portuguese literature and politics beyond the Iberian sphere (Chapter 2). They began to practice strategies of self-fashioning and intellectual friendships which bolstered their reputations when the time came to sell their services.

Part II analyzes the experiences of displacement and exile which all too frequently occurred for mercenaries of knowledge who found themselves labeled as sodomites and libertines. Such experiences became more common in the later 1620s and 1630s. It was during these trials that they further developed memories which helped articulate their commitment to tolerance along with anti-Spanish and anti-Inquisition discourses. Moreover, exile throughout the territories of the Catholic monarchy widened the access that mercenaries had to the Republic of Letters and the materials they had to offer. At the same time, exile fueled their political criticism against the institutions responsible for their forced displacements (Chapter 3). While transcontinental exile provided mercenaries with an unexpected platform from which to observe international conflicts and expand their information networks, exile could also be a very intimate experience. When relocating outside Iberian territories, mercenaries had to prove their worth to new patrons by cultivating close relationships, sometimes themselves in exile (Chapter 4). Experiences of exile forced mercenaries of knowledge to cultivate practices that would secure their economic survival and political influence. The main requisite of these practices was that they needed to be sustained notwithstanding spatial coordinates, and so improvisation and adaptability became the hallmarks of their scholarly habits. They sought positions in cities that operated as multipolar communication nodes so that their material exchanges could promote imperial emulations against Spain and support the advent of new sovereignties. Since mid-seventeenth-century conflicts, such as the Portuguese Restoration, unfolded throughout a multitude of places beyond the Iberian Peninsula, mercenaries of knowledge provided key information for negotiations from places where official diplomacy was not an option.

The final part of the book follows Nogueira among a robust Roman cohort of Portuguese mercenaries of knowledge working for or against Restoration against the backdrop of papal politics and the unstable balance of power among Catholic powers in the 1640s and 1650s. Amid such communication strategies, mercenaries of knowledge looked for tools through which to support the sovereign claims of newly restored powers, like the monarchy of Portugal, and to reform universalistic entities such as the Papacy to contest the Spanish hegemony (Chapter 5). They

supported the monarchy of John IV of Portugal and the universalist claims of the Papacy through the exchanges of books and the building of libraries (Chapter 6). These bibliopolitics contributed to their well-being and provided them with instruments to acquire and elevate their voices and criticisms against what they conceived as abuses of power.

Ultimately, this book recovers voices that caused political powers to question the information they relied on, as well as the methods they used to evaluate that information. Because of their marginality, their bibliographical interventions favored the questioning of the role that men of letters and minorities should play on behalf of state politics. The history of mercenaries of knowledge is thus intertwined with the histories of cultural capitals, along with trade, exile, and diaspora communities that during the seventeenth century supported political negotiations alongside conflicts.<sup>56</sup> Against the lasting stereotypes of the Spanish Black Legend, *Mercenaries of Knowledge* shows that intellectual activities transcended territorial and confessional boundaries while those activities contributed to a renovation of political debates and forms. Joining the dynamic conversation around informal diplomacy and polycentric political communications across the Iberian monarchies, *Mercenaries of Knowledge* recovers the lives of key representatives of an Iberian Golden Age, an age that was not limited to strictly defined literary achievements nor total loyalty to a monarchy and its territories, including its colonies.<sup>57</sup> It reveals the scope and import of the works of mercenaries of knowledge in administrative, court, diplomatic, and learned contexts as book hunters and expert bibliographers working amid Late Renaissance political conflicts and Baroque wars.<sup>58</sup> Tracing the archival footprints of Vicente Nogueira among his diverse contacts and activities highlights the contributions of this brigade of scholars to the campaign for stability, toleration, and critical reason in a world at war.

<sup>56</sup> On the importance of diasporas for knowledge circulations see Muchnik, “Dynamiques transnationales et circulations diasporiques des saviors,” 393–405; Monge and Muchnik, *L'Europe des diasporas*; Bregoli and Ruderman (eds.), *Connecting Histories*; and Trivellato, *The Promise and Peril of Credit*, chapter 4. See also Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*.

<sup>57</sup> Cardim, Herzog, Ruiz Ibáñez, and Sabatini (eds.), *Polycentric Monarchies*, pp. 3–10. On the plurality of diplomatic actors and on the necessity for state politics to rely on agents with multiple loyalties see Carrió-Invernizzi (ed.), *Embajadores culturales*; and Helmers, “Public Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe,” 401–20.

<sup>58</sup> See Marín Cepeda, *Cervantes y la corte de Felipe II*; Sowerby and Craigwood (eds.), *Cultures of Diplomacy*; and Fernández-Santos and Colomer (eds.), *Ambassadors in Golden-Age Madrid*. See also Bouza, *Communication, Knowledge, and Memory*; Kagan, *Clio and the Crown*; Olds, *Forging the Past*; and Cámara Muñoz, Molina, and Vázquez Manassero (eds.), *La ciudad de los saberes*.

