

Professions of exchange: Circulating expertise between Spanish Habsburg lands and Saadian Morocco

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Abstract

This article brings together the varied writings of the «Flemish *alfaqueque*» and Moroccan translator, Jorge de Henin (*floruit* 1597-1628), to illustrate how the professional category of *hombre de estado* emerged from strategies of self-fashioning by diverse agents seeking positions in the Spanish monarchy. This profession was not that of a statesman, but rather a professional intermediary who ensured the success of diverse translations across deep religious, political, and economic rivalries among Mediterranean powers. Along with his other self-vaunted credentials—redeemer of captives, royal advisor, economic expert—Henin's facility with languages and his ability to translate between Dutch, Arabic, and Spanish speakers was at the core of his persona as an *hombre práctico* or *de experiencia*—a role he eventually came to characterize as *hombre de estado*—who could ensure the reform and success of the Spanish state.

Keywords: Mediterranean, Spain, Morocco, Philip III, Philip IV, Muley Zidān, reason of state.

Resum

El present article reuneix diversos escrits de l'«alfaqueque flamenco» i traductor marroquí Jorge de Henin (*floruit* 1597-1628), per il·lustrar com la categoria professional d'home d'estat va sorgir gràcies a les estratègies de construcció de la identitat i la imatge pública desenvolupades per diferents agents que bus-

caven créixer en el si de la Monarquia Hispànica. La seva professió no era la d'un estadista, sinó la d'un intermediari professional que s'assegurava fer de manera correcta diferents traduccions entre poders mediterranis separats per profundes rivalitats religioses, polítics i econòmiques. Les seves elogioses credencials —redemptor de captius, conseller reial, expert en economia—, juntament amb la seva facilitat per als idiomes i la seva habilitat per fer de traductor entre parlants holandesos, àrabs i espanyols, van ser el nucli de la identitat de Henin com a home pràctic o d'experiència —un paper que finalment ell va equiparar al d'home d'estat— capaç de garantir la reforma i l'èxit de la monarquia espanyola.

Paraules clau: Mediterrani, Espanya, Marroc, Felip III, Felip IV, Muley Zidān, raó d'estat.

Resumen

El presente artículo reúne varios escritos del «alfoaque flamenco» y traductor marroquí Jorge de Henin (*floruit* 1597-1628), para ilustrar cómo la categoría profesional de hombre de Estado surgió gracias a las estrategias de construcción de la identidad y la imagen pública desarrolladas por diferentes agentes que buscaban medrar en el seno de la Monarquía Hispánica. Su profesión no era la de un estadista, sino la de un intermediario profesional que se aseguraba de realizar de modo correcto diferentes traducciones entre poderes mediterráneos a los que separaban profundas rivalidades religiosas, políticas y económicas. Sus elogiosas credenciales —redentor de cautivos, consejero real, experto en economía— junto con su facilidad para los idiomas y su habilidad para hacer de traductor entre hablantes holandeses, árabes y españoles fueron el núcleo de la identidad de Henin como hombre práctico o de experiencia —un papel que finalmente él equiparó al de hombre de Estado— capaz de garantizar la reforma y el éxito de la monarquía española.

Palabras clave: Mediterráneo, España, Marruecos, Felipe III, Felipe IV, Muley Zidān, razón de Estado.

Jorge de Henin (fl. 1597-1628) was a Flemish agent who acquired a rich set of Mediterranean experiences before serving the Spanish kings Philip III (r. 1598-1621) and IV (r. 1621-1665) in Madrid and Brussels, and as an emissary to England, Denmark, and Poland. Nominally a life-long Habsburg vassal—as he claimed in the pre-foliated dedication to his 1620 *Discurso sobre la monarquía española*, in which he identifies himself, «Como vasallo, y miembro deste cuerpo mistico [the Spanish monarchy]»—he lived and worked in the Ottoman Empire, Morocco, Spain, and Northern Europe. His career played out against the backdrop of the Eighty Years War (1568-1648) between Spain and the Low Countries, the beginning of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), and the Civil War in Morocco (1603-1627). This latter conflict was used by European powers, including the Dutch and Spanish, as a proxy conflict for other European wars and imperial rivalries. Henin witnessed and participated in many of these conflicts as they played out in Morocco, sometimes making a profit from the bloody mix of economic, mercantile, religious, and military rivalries. He later claimed the authority of these experiences to seek status and salaries from the Spanish monarchy.

Henin's case connects global mobilities reflected in genres of service to broader European discourses of reform (political, religious, economic). His writings show how early seventeenth-century reform discourses, nominally centered on the example of the Spanish state and its potential or lost opportunities, were in fact forged through the circulation of diverse models and experiences. Understanding the materials and models invoked in that reform discourse thus benefits from a trans-regional framework. Henin's writings offer a window into how early modern societies grappled with similar problems at around the same time, and offers an important indication of how rivals like England, the United Provinces, Morocco, and Spain benefited from the exchanges embodied by agents like Henin, as much as higher-profile figures like the English Sherleys or the Moroccan Pallaches.

Over the course of his career, Henin's writings developed from the *relación's* familiar hybrid of petition, report, and news brief, eventually adopting the format of the increasingly popular reform proposals—*abri-*

trios—with recommendations for averting Spanish political and economic decline.¹ His texts joined the innumerable *relaciones de servicio*, *memoriales*, and *avisos* that circulated through the council chambers during the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV and that were supplied by a heterogeneous group of self-proclaimed experts who nevertheless shared common points of experience in their movements across the empire and outside its borders: captivity, commerce, (re)conversion, military service, exile.²

Spain's «empirical turn» in the sixteenth century—incorporating eyewitness testimony from across the global empire—relied on an ever-growing cadre of informants far and wide to supply eyewitness reports and field experiences that could be channelled into the business of empire.³ From the state's perspective, this information economy was an ideal channel through which to receive data and incentivize service while eschewing formal institutions that would tie a wide range of

1. On reforming political thought, see the excellent overview in Xavier GIL PUJOL, «Spain and Portugal», in H. A. Lloyd, G. Burgess and S. Hodson, eds., *European Political Thought, 1450-1700: Religion, Law and Philosophy*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007, pp. 416-57.

2. On Spanish agents (soldiers and otherwise) returning from North Africa, see Cecilia TARRUEL, «Prisoners of War, Captives, or Slaves?», in C. G. de Vito and A. Geritsen, eds., *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labor*, Palgrave MacMillan, Cham, Switzerland, 2018; and Miguel MARTÍNEZ, *Front Lines: Soldiers' Writing in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2016, pp. 86-88 and *passim*. During the course of the Moroccan civil war many of the *renegados* who had managed to establish themselves in privileged positions over the previous decades lost their status and many began to make their way back home. Abdelouahed AKMIR, «Estado, economía y sociedad en Marruecos del siglo XVII según el manuscrito de Jorge de Henin», in M. Salhi, ed., *El siglo XVII Hispanomarroquí*, Université Mohammad V, Rabat, 1997, pp. 149-158: 154.

3. Recent decades have seen an explosion in scholarship about Spain's «Empirical Empire» through seminal studies like Antonio BARRERA-OSORIO, *Experiencing Nature: The Spanish American Empire and the Early Scientific Revolution*, University of Texas Press, Austin, TX, 2006; and Arndt BRENDECKE, *The Empirical Empire: Spanish Colonial Rule and the Politics of Knowledge*, De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston, 2016 (first published in German in 2009 and in Spanish in 2012).

agents too firmly to the monarchy (or vice versa). Unsurprisingly, agents like Henin who dedicated time, resources, and connections to carrying out and bringing their service to the attention of the king in the hopes of receiving some kind of *merced*, made the case for a more formal status within Spanish institutions. Henin used his own copious writings as a mechanism to render his experiences and expertise legible as credentials needed to become what he would eventually characterize as an «*hombre de estado*». These testaments to his experience were his entry point into the «economy of *mercedes*».⁴ His trajectory, and his reports about that trajectory, reveal the deep imbrication between empiricism and reform through practices and discourses related to inquiry, examination, comparison, description, and the subsequent elaboration of laws and principles.

Henin's position as a Dutch-speaking Catholic allowed him to maneuver across the territories of the Spanish monarchy and its rivals.⁵ As a Habsburg subject from a territory with an ambivalent political status and religious associations, Henin bridged the empiricism of the *relación* and the call to reform of the *arbitrio* through claims of access to Islamic expertise in politics and administration.⁶ Rather than a symptom of Braudel's «Northern Invasion» by Protestant commercial pow-

4. Building on Michel de Certeau, Folger assesses the discursive fashioning of this economy through *relaciones de mérito y servicio*. Robert A. FOLGER, *Writing as Poaching: Interpellation and Self-Fashioning in Colonial relaciones de méritos y servicios*, Brill, Leiden, 2011, pp. 4-5 and *passim*.

5. Higher-status examples of Flemish in Spain, like Enrique Cock or Henin's more noble homonyms the Henin-Liétard family—to whom Henin himself does not appear to be related—lived profitably in Spain and intermarried with Spanish nobility.

6. On the ambivalent Habsburg policies regarding rule and rebellion in the Low Countries, see Rafael VALLADARES, «La Monarquía Hispánica y el problema de los Países Bajos: Decid adiós a Flandes», in W. Thomas and L. Duerloo, eds., *Albert and Isabella, 1598–1621: Essays*, Brepols, Brussels, 1998, pp. 47-54. On outsiders like Henin who found some refuge through service to the Spanish monarchy, including Flemish subjects, see Igor PÉREZ TOSTADO and José Javier RUIZ IBÁÑEZ, «Introduction: Los exiliados del rey», in I. Pérez Tostado and J. J. Ruiz Ibáñez, eds., *Los exiliados del rey*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Madrid/Mexico, D.F., 2015, pp. 9-52.

ers who came to dominate traditional Muslim and Catholic Mediterranean hegemony, Henin's presence in Morocco was the product of longstanding and regular circulations between Northern Europe, Iberia, and the Mediterranean.⁷ Even his self-fashioning as an *hombre de estado*—a specific position of his own design related to administrative reforms—was based on Henin's ambivalent status as a Flemish subject of the Spanish king whose valuable expertise had been forged in Islamic courts.⁸

Henin's career is a useful reminder that the relationship between the Mediterranean and Northern Europe in the sixteenth century was multivalent and far from predetermined. Nothing is known of Henin's early life until he set out from Flanders in 1597 and travelled to Istanbul. Henin then found himself in Morocco between 1603 and 1612, working as a redeemer of Christian captives, the same profession he had pursued in Istanbul. His stay in the Maghreb coincided nearly exactly with the period of greatest intensity in the civil war between the sons of Ahmad al-Manṣūr (r. 1578-1603), the powerful contemporary and correspondent of Philip II and Elizabeth I. Al-Manṣūr's long reign was one of relative stability, but his unexpected death in the plague of 1603 left the matter of succession unresolved. In Morocco, Henin found himself in debt, and entered the service of Abū Fāris, one of al-Manṣūr's sons and a claimant to the throne after 1603. When Abū Fāris died in 1608, Henin continued serving Abu Fāris's brother Zidān until the latter was briefly ousted from power in 1612. Having lost his protector, Henin managed to escape the pressure to convert to Islam and fled to

7. A recent rebuttal against Braudel's thesis is Molly GREENE, «Beyond the Northern Invasion: The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century», *Past and Present*, 174/1 (2002), pp. 42-71. Greene posits more complexity and continuity in the Eastern Mediterranean, and Henin's case demonstrates that similar revaluations are due for the Western Mediterranean.

8. In this he bears comparison with a nearly contemporaneous case across the Mediterranean, studied by Natalie ROTHMAN, «Self-Fashioning in the Mediterranean Contact Zone: Giovanni Battista Salvago and his *Africa Overa Barbaria* (1625)», K. Eisenbichler, ed., *Renaissance Medievalisms*, Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Toronto, 2009, pp. 123-143.

Spain, where he set about trying to make himself an indispensable advisor to the Habsburgs. While in Zidān's court at Marrakesh, Henin had entered into an international network of informants and informers, who fulfilled their duties to their patrons, while simultaneously cultivating informal relationships with foreign agents for their own gain.⁹ It was on the basis of this network (which he referred to as his *honrables correspondances*) that Henin later constructed his past record of experiences and his future promise as an expert and information broker in the service of the Spanish monarchy.

Henin's access to these *honrables correspondances* and their information was tied closely to his knowledge of languages. While in Morocco, Zidān had regularly charged Henin with interpreting oral exchanges between Dutch agents and the Sultan, which he then rendered into Spanish in his later narrative of those exchanges for the Spanish king, and by reading or generating written correspondence between Morocco and the Estates General. According to Henin, this access to foreign embassies and their documents allowed him to influence international politics in the Spanish king's favour.¹⁰ As Zidān's Dutch translator, Henin

9. In the *Descripción* that he submitted to Philip III, Henin's descriptions of the Dutch agents are unfavorable, but the Dutch archives tell a different story. In fact, in July of 1609, Henin, along with several other European agents present in Marrakesh, gave a signed statement testifying to the good behaviour of Pieter Martinzoon Coy (de facto Dutch consul in Marrakesh). Not only did Henin sign his name to Coy's letter of reference, but he also negotiated Coy's departure directly with Zaydān. According to the Dutch account books, on August 5, 1609, Coy paid Henin for his intercession with Abū Fāris, noting that Henin was someone who saw the sultan very frequently. *Sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc. Première Série. Dynastie Saadienne. Archives et Bibliothèques des Pays-Bas* t. I, H. de Castries, ed., Ernest Leroux and Martinus Nijhoff, Paris and The Hague, 1906, pp. 346-350.

10. Describing his work in Morocco, Henin reported that «pasaron por mis manos todas las embaxadas que fueron a ellos de Turquía, Olanda, Inglaterra, Francia, que todas se enderçaban contra España, como consta de las mismas cartas originales que los embaxadores llevaron a aquellos príncipes, que como yo tenía el manejo de estas cosas, se me quedaron en mi poder, en las quales he hecho a V. M. servicios muy considerables, guiando los negocios con mis consejos, de manera que V. M. no fuesse ofendido». Jorge de HENIN, *Discurso*, 1620, ff. 32v-33r.

had acted alongside a robust stable group of translators and ambassadors. These included well-known intermediaries like the *morisco* Aḥmad ibn Qāsim al-Ḥajarī and the Jewish Pallache family, who used Spanish and Arabic as a diplomatic *lingua franca* to transport information and goods throughout the Western Mediterranean.¹¹ Henin translated—and then transcribed—the speeches, overheard conversations, and intercepted correspondence of the Dutch agents into his Spanish reports.¹² These experiences allowed Henin to translate physically and discursively useful information about Zaydān’s character, resources, and strategies to the Spanish government (including materials like one of the royal account books which were interpolated into his first report in 1614).

By the conclusion of his 1614 memorial, *Del sitio, de la disposición, y humor de los marruecos y los modos de pelear, etc.*, Henin began to cultivate a novel idea about the place of men like him in the Spanish monarchy: a class of practical experts and authors derived from the middling sorts rather than noble councillors.¹³ He used the idea of *experiencia* to craft a powerful organic metaphor through which he hoped to convey the value of his service and that of «*hombres de experiencia*» like him, that is, those without noble titles and who had gained their *experiencia* without an official position in the monarchy.¹⁴ This metaphor established his meaning of the terms *experiencia* (which he described as a fruitful seed) and *hombres de experiencia* (which he described as the ants who bear seeds which promise just as much value as the more noble eagles who seem to bring richer prizes). He went on to use the

11. On these figures, their careers, and networks, see Gerard WIEGERS *et al.*, *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn ‘alā-l-Qawm al-Kāfirīn*, CSIC, Madrid, 2015 (2nd edition); and Mercedes GARCÍA-ARENAL and Gerard WIEGERS, *Un hombre en tres mundos, Siglo XXI*, Madrid, 2007.

12. For example, Henin purportedly intervened in the proposed Moroccan-Dutch alliance to take La Mamora (in which Moses Pallache negotiated) and persuaded Zidān that the Dutch could not be trusted. Jorge de HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, ff. 117-138.

13. HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, p. 195 [f. 343]. The idea is fully elaborated in HENIN, *Discurso*, f. 9v.

14. HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, p. 38 [f. 5] and passim.

terms repeatedly throughout the text, conveying both how he acquired the valuable seed of experience and into what it could bloom. The actual *experiencia* that he offered contained his strategic knowledge about Morocco's military resources and practices, along with information about the civil war and other conflicts among the Moroccan, Ottoman, and European factions in North Africa. This strategic knowledge was supported by documents and historical examples, like transcriptions of conversations between Muley Zidān and his generals or Dutch representatives, or the copy of Zidān's royal account book that Henin managed to abscond with during his 1612 escape.¹⁵ Finally, Henin promised that his *experiencia* would continue to bear fruit despite his absence from the field. He might have left Morocco, but a robust network of informants (*honrables correspondientes*) continued to keep him abreast of political and military events across the Strait.

A developing political language of experience emerged at the turn of the seventeenth century, and Henin did his best to use this new discourse to his advantage.¹⁶ *Experiencia* or *expert*, as Henin used them, were precise terms that referred to specific attributes and fostered a «legitimizing discourse» for a new class of professional expert.¹⁷ These concepts overlapped conceptually in the Spanish words that Henin used to refer to an important intangible capital and his embodiment of it: *experiencia* and *experto*.¹⁸ The underlying message of all of Henin's

15. This particular account traced the annual tributes of tribes and regions across Morocco. HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, pp. 155-59 [ff. 252-263].

16. On the shifts in political vocabulary like «experience» after 1600, see José Antonio FERNÁNDEZ-SANTAMARÍA, *Reason of State and Statecraft in Spanish Political Thought, 1595-1640*, University Press of American, Lanham, MD, 1983, pp. 166-171 and *passim*.

17. On «legitimizing discourse» in Spanish conceptions of royal authority (which impact the *organigrama*), see Antonio FEROS, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598-1621*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, p. 5.

18. For an overview of expertise in the service of early modern states, see Eric ASH, «Expertise and the Early Modern State», *Osiris*, 25/1 (2010), pp. 1-24. For a classic study on the changing meaning of expertise in Spanish statecraft and political thought, see FERNÁNDEZ-SANTAMARÍA, *Reason of State*, pp. 139-169 and *passim*.

writings is summed up in the title of his second to last chapter: *Los Reyes suelen hacer caso de hombres de experiencia*.¹⁹ Henin identified with these *hombres de experiencia* as the «hombres de mi profesión».²⁰ The qualifications of these men was based on two kinds of experience: the experience of study (*de estudiar*) and the sensory experience of sight (*de vista*).²¹ By 1621, Henin had written and submitted twenty-four additional reports on topics ranging from the dangers represented by the Persians, their ambassador to Spain, and the English adventurer Robert Sherley who accompanied him, to proposals for new monetary valuations of gold and silver coinage and commercial companies in the Baltic and Mediterranean to both increase the royal *hacienda* and circumvent Dutch and English commercial expansion.²²

In later texts, Henin began to use the word *experto* along with *experiencia*. As he fashioned himself according to the qualifications for loyal expertise, Henin insisted that the king was obligated to pay such experts, who were more deserving than the hangers on who contributed nothing while sucking the state treasuries dry.²³ This insistence on mutual obligation may have its source in Henin's experience in the Moroccan court, in which the princely obligation for services rendered manifested itself as 160,000 ducats. Again in 1620, Henin invoked the experience of having been paid for services by Muslim princes, chiding the king that there is thus all the more reason for Christian princes to pay their *hombres prácticos* well.²⁴

19. «Y si Vuestra Majestad me empleara en negocios graves, echará de ver que soy idóneo para gobernarne en ellas. Los reyes suelen recoger a sí a las personas que tienen experiencia del mundo y de sus motivos. Si Vuestra Majestad fuera servido [en] ampararme, aunque me ponga de mozo de su caballeriza, me tendré por más dichoso que no ir a buscar Reyes o Principes extraños a quien servir, por mucho beneficio que me pudieran hacer, como me han hecho en ocasiones en muchas partes del mundo». HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, pp. 195-196 [ff. 343-344].

20. HENIN, *Discurso*, ff. 3r-4v.

21. HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, p. 165 [f. 273].

22. Most were submitted via Baltasar de Zúñiga. HENIN, *Discurso*, ff. 35v-38v.

23. HENIN, *Discurso*, ff. 44-45.

24. *Ibidem*, f. 1.

To Henin's great frustration, the king rewarded his service and expertise with a stipend from the Armada, rather than the position in the Council of State which he proposed to create, the «consul of nations», to help manage Spain's simultaneous demographic and immigration crises, and whose characteristics Henin happened to embody exactly.²⁵ For this reason, Henin was inspired to advocate for reform of the very state system he appealed to for his credentials.²⁶ There were two main components of Henin's expertise as he offered it to the Spanish king: strategic knowledge, and language skills (the latter something his rival Anthony Sherley—a famously untalented linguist—was not able to offer).²⁷ He proposed that this expertise could be of service to Philip's Mediterranean policies, and could benefit the education of Prince Philip (the future Philip IV).²⁸ He advertised his experience in military and civil architecture, gained firsthand, that is, by sight (*experiencia de vista*), and his ability to build models for Prince Philip to study and learn from. To literally illustrate this experience as something tangible, he included doodles of Moroccan soldiers, forts, tents, and even the sultan on horseback with his retinue. He also promised to tutor the prince in horsemanship and jousting, chemistry, and other practical subjects. Whether consciously or not, he echoed the earlier arguments of the Spanish humanist Fadrique Furio Ceriol that experience and linguistic

25. «Consul general de las naciones, que sea hombre practico, que aya andado por el mundo, que sepa diversas lenguas, sea de condición afable trabajador, y bien zeloso del servicio de V. M». HENIN, *Discurso*, f.16v.

26. By this period the state had already become a principal source of credentialing and authenticating credentials. ASH, «Expertise», p. 3.

27. Anthony Sherley (1565-1635) and his brother Robert (1581-1621) were frequent targets of Henin's commentary about his own experiences, used as a foil to highlight why the king should prefer his expertise. On the Sherley family, see Sanjay SUBRAHMANYAM, *Three Ways to be Alien: Travails and encounters in the Early Modern World*, Brandeis University Press, Waltham, 2011; and Luis GIL FERNÁNDEZ, *De pirata inglés a républico español: Vida e industrias de Antonio Sherley (1565-1633)*, Ediciones Complutense, Madrid, 2018.

28. On the importance and content of princely education, see FEROS, *Kingship and Favoritism*, pp. 11-19.

capabilities qualified him as a princely tutor—and thus an important advisor.²⁹

The importance of *experiencia de vista* was thus reflected in Henin's reporting in word and image, and the promise of future transmission of expertise and experience for the benefit of the state. The *hombres de experiencia*—«*hombres de mi profesión*»—for which Henin advocated were literally the eyes, ears, and even tongues of the sovereign they served. Of course, the nominal requirements for officials and especially official intermediaries to be wise and battle tested was not new—requirements like this can be found in the *Siete partidas* to cite only one significant earlier example.³⁰ Nevertheless, Henin's particular depiction of expertise and its relationship to senses like sight and hearing was part of a novel set of self-representations of expertise as senses that could be controlled by the state or sovereign power.

Indeed, Henin's campaign to elevate the professional category to which he claimed membership was a symptom of a broad culture of political and administrative reforms that transcended national boundaries. In his ability to translate materials and information from his past experiences, Henin embodied a specific line of argument about those adventuring experts who offered Islamic examples and experiences to improve Spanish statecraft. The goal was to create a new administrative class that would be open to agents like Henin with ambivalent status in the Spanish monarchy as simultaneously a vassal and a foreigner. These were the «*hombres prácticos en materia de Estado*», who eventually became the *hombres de estado*.³¹ Creating this category discursively

29. «Y me parece que yo podría dar a Su Alteza algún entretenimiento para su recreación, porque además de saber hablar español, italiano, francés, alemán, flamenco, inglés, y arábigo, y principio de otros lenguajes, podría dar a Su Alteza noticia de muchos reinos extraños donde he estado y estudiado el modo del gobierno de cada reino, y de la milicia y modos que tienen de pelear». HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, p. 195 [ff. 341-342].

30. For example, the *alfaqueque*, or Captive Redeemer, was supposed to be a propertied man of good morals and reputation, who could also navigate the potential violence of wartime exchanges. *Partida I*, Title XXX, Laws I and II.

31. HENIN, *Discurso*, f. 5r.

through his insistence on the value of «*hombres de mi profesión*» while designing administrative reforms to employ them, was a way for Henin to create a place for himself in the empirical empire, which was happy to use his expertise but disinterested when it came to rewarding it.

The Spanish monarchy was far from the sole early modern state that used or rewarded *experiencia de vista*. In Morocco, for example, where Henin had gained so much of the *experiencia de vista* that he subsequently translated into his Spanish reports, the sultans maintained networks of expert informants (*aṣḥāb al-akhbar*) from among whom the «sharpest eyes» (*athkā' al-'uyun*) were dispatched to gather information from all corners of the realm and carry (*naqala*, also meaning literally «to translate») what they received from the «tongues» (*al-alsana*) back to the court. According to the royal secretary and historiographer al-Fashtālī, from whose chronicle these terms are drawn, al-Mansur had at his disposal a network of «unsleeping eyes and attentive ears» (*'ayn kāli'a wa idhn wā'ia*) to bring him news.³² Indeed, while in Morocco, Henin had served and been rewarded as the ears and the tongue (*lengua*) of the sultan himself. Meanwhile, the activities and representations of such agents by writers like al-Fashtālī and Henin paralleled contemporaneous depictions in European political iconography, like the *Rainbow Portrait* of Elizabeth I (c. 1601) or the Cesare Ripa engravings (1613) *Spy* and *Reason of State*.³³

The information derived from these statist eyes and ears could then be deployed by the state itself to protect or extend its power. The men of Henin's «profession» had a unique role to play in this «Reason of State». Like other state councillors and would-be royal advisors of the period, Henin was indeed influenced by reason-of-state literature that interrogated government function and reforms as well as the heteroge-

32. 'Abd al-Azīz AL-FISHTĀLĪ, *Manābil al-Safā'*, Maṭbū'āt Wizārat al-Awqāf, Rabat, 1984, p. 206.

33. On the political iconography of Elizabeth's «eyes and ears» dress, see Daniel FISCHLIN, «Political Allegory, Absolutist Ideology, and the 'Rainbow Portrait' of Queen Elizabeth I», *Renaissance Quarterly*, 50, 1 (1997), pp. 175-206. See also Cesare RIPA, *Iconologia*, Florimi, Siena, 1613.

neous *arbitrista* literature that focused on fiscal, economic, and demographic reform.³⁴ It was through this familiar language that he distinguished the *hombre de estado*—himself—from the everyday informant.³⁵ For example, toward the end of the 1614 Moroccan report, while outlining his plan for the Spanish conquest of the neighboring kingdom, Henin explained that it was a «reason of state» in Islamic lands to prefer experienced foreigners for important positions.³⁶ He repeated early references to the openness of Muslim rulers to foreign experts (like Henin) throughout the *Discurso*, culminating in a call for Philip to prioritize North African and Mediterranean *experiencia de vista* by creating a kind of foreign service bureau for *hombres prácticos*.³⁷ The design of this bureau would, effectively, offer special opportunities and credentials for men like Henin in order to stand out from the sea of *informes*, *relaciones*, and *avisos de inteligentes* that flowed in from the Mediterranean and Atlantic worlds.

Again and again, Henin used his Mediterranean experiences to provide evidence for the importance of *experiencia* to Philip and his ministers, while chiding the king for failing to cultivate a valuable resource while «barbarian kings» do so to great profit.³⁸ Turning from this lesson to his own proposal to conquer Morocco, and thus to keep

34. Juan GUTIÉRREZ NIETO, «El pensamiento económico, político y social de los arbitristas», en *El siglo del Quijote (1580-1680): Religión, filosofía, ciencia*, Historia de España Menéndez Pidal, Vol. xxvi (1), Espasa Calpe, Madrid, 1986, pp. 235-354.

35. «La causa que desde mi juventud me ha movido a procurar tener alguna luz de la razon que llaman Estado, ha sido por no aver reconocido escala mayor que ella para poder subir mas alto en el servicio de V. M. el qual ha sido siempre mi fundamento principal». HENIN, *Discurso*, f. 32v. Once in the service of the Habsburg kings after 1612, Jorge de Henin began to contribute to the reform literature of the *arbitristas*. HENIN, *Discurso*, f. 41v.

36. «Es razón de estado entre los mahometanos no admitir al gobierno a los naturales. Y hemos visto que sus famosos capitanes fueron extranjeros y están empleados en las cosas en que más experiencia tienen». HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, p. 166 [f. 277].

37. HENIN, *Discurso*, f. 46v.

38. *Ibidem*, f. 6r.

it out of Dutch or Ottoman spheres of influence, Henin pleaded with the king not to ignore his «*buen aviso*» and chided him that ignoring a potential danger «*no es razón de estado*».39 He warned that Philip and his ministers were making a grave mistake by ignoring his ideas, a defect exacerbated by their lack of experience.40 This frustration was a major motive in Henin's proposals for a new administrative category, the «*hombres de experiencia*», as distinguished from the statesmen running the councils or even their clerks—the «*infra-letrados*»—whose paperwork (Henin imagined) was no match for the fieldwork of agents like himself.41

Receptivity to Henin's ideas and credentials reflected the growing interest among Spanish statesmen in political examples and expertise from outside Christian experiences. This interest is what allowed the Sherley brothers (Henin's great rivals) to flourish at Iberian courts and the Basque Arabic translator Francisco Gurmendi to translate the most useful of the political manuscripts of Muley Zidān's Moroccan library into Spanish between 1615 and 1621.42 The following generation would find even more *hombres prácticos* with *experiencia de vista* from Muslim lands at the Spanish court.43 Like the Sherleys—whose own *experiencia*

39. HENIN, *Descripción de los reinos*, f. 280v-281r.

40. *Ibidem*, p. 168 [ff. 280-281].

41. The imaginations and expertise of the *infra-letrados* had a significant effect of the shape and administration of the Spanish empire. For example, the works of Guillaume Gaudin on Juan Díez de la Calle, *Penser et gouverner le Nouveau-Monde au XVIIe siècle, l'empire de papier de Juan Díez de la Calle, commis du Conseil des Indes*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2013.

42. On this figure and his work with Muley Zaydān's captured library, which left Morocco and arrived in Spain at about the same time Henin did, see Oumalbinine ZHIRI, «A Captive Library between Morocco and Spain», in *The Dialectics of Orientalism in Early Modern Europe*, Palgrave, London, 2018, pp. 17-32.

43. Like, for example, Jacob Cansino, the royal translator of Spanish Orán who offered a printed edition of his «translation» of Moses Almosnino's *Extremos y grandezas de Constantinopla* to Philip IV in 1638 along with long prefatory materials detailing his experiences and expertise deployed in Spanish service, or Vice Bratutovic, the Ragusan translator on loan from Vienna to Madrid in the 1650s who also translated

de vista in Persia, Morocco, Muscovy, and elsewhere Henin seems to have envied at the same time that he condemned them as unreliable—Henin begged the crown not to disregard the examples of Islamic princes or the voice of the faithful Christian and Spanish vassal who had been the monarchs' close councillor.

As promised in the opening of his 1614 report, Henin's Moroccan experiences indeed proved to be long-gestating seeds for his later recommendations for economic reform. His 1620 *Discurso* was meant to encourage Philip III to create private companies like those of the English and Dutch.⁴⁴ It was part of a growing body of reports and recommendations that looked at Dutch and English models for remedies to the economic decline of the Hispanic monarchy. After the death of Philip III and ascension of Phillip IV in 1621, other writers—including merchants and noble advisors—began to weigh in and advocate for the creation of merchant companies.⁴⁵ Henin was one of the earliest to propose such companies, based on his contacts with English and Dutch actors in Morocco.

Henin also proposed administrative reforms based on his experiences. His observations of the Spanish court had led him to conclude that the same exchange of information among competing agents from

and had printed historical and geographic works from the Ottoman world which were meant to serve as exempla for statecraft.

44. Pere MOLTAS RIBALTA, «La compañía como proyecto (siglos XVII-XVIII)», *Anuario de Estudios Atlánticos* 50 (2004), pp. 607-623: 609. In particular he advocated for a company focused on Baltic trade, and one focused on Atlantic trade. In 1628, after much advocacy by certain Portuguese merchants, a Portuguese company for the *Indias Orientales* was created. MOLTAS RIBALTA, «La compañía como Proyecto», p. 611.

45. John H. ELLIOTT, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1986, pp.154-156. At the end of 1622 the *Junta de Comercio* was created, which received reports from experienced agents from a variety of backgrounds, including the exiled Englishman Sir Anthony Sherley (against whose brother Robert, Henin had dedicated no less than two *memoriales*), the Portuguese councillor Mendo da Mota, and merchants like Manuel López Pereira, Francisco de Retama, and Duarte Gómez Solís. ELLIOTT, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*, pp. 144-145.

which he had benefitted in Marrakesh had to be stopped in Spain. The inefficiencies of the *consejo* system, Henin argued, permitted too much informal information gathering and exchange by foreign agents (he names the English ambassador to Spain Francis Cottington specifically, an expert in Moroccan affairs).⁴⁶ Henin had benefitted from just such mixing in Morocco, especially through opportunities to interact with Dutch agents. Indeed, though Henin converted his experiences into advice against such interactions, reading between the lines yields an example of the transregional values and protocols which linked *hombres de experiencia* of different states who worked with and against one another far away from their governments.

Despite his many complaints and petitions, Henin integrated himself into Spanish service, and was recognized as enough of an *hombre práctico* in English affairs that in 1621 he was sent to London to help the Count of Gondomar in his long embassy to James I of England.⁴⁷ This experience led Henin to complain years later that his party was not taken seriously in their recommendations that «*no son los más acreditados mas a propósito para servir, sino los más expertos*».⁴⁸ Later, once the «Spanish match» threatened to become a reality in 1623, Henin produced a 20-point *Representación echa al Rey Felipe IV sobre el casamiento de la señora Ynfanta de España Doña Maria, y el Señor Principe de VVales* [sic].⁴⁹ In this *parecer* on the pros and cons of «*emparantar con la cabeza de los ereges*», Henin could hardly restrain himself from once again making repeated references to the many letters and reports he had submitted to Philip IV and his father since 1616, most especially his insight into the threat of English alliances with Persian, Indian, and Dutch rulers and their representatives in the Indian Ocean world.⁵⁰ His spe-

46. HENIN, *Discurso*, f. 4v.

47. On the Gondomar embassies to England between 1612 and 1622, see Glyn REDWORTH, *The Prince and the Infanta: The Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2014, pp. 12-17.

48. Koninklijke Bibliotheek België (KBB), Ms. 5167, f. 95v.

49. Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), Mss 18204, ff. 31r-44r.

50. BNE, Mss 18204, ff. 41r-42r.

cific animosity toward the Sherley brothers was again manifest, perhaps because Anthony Sherley was at the same time preparing his own report of experience and expertise with those powers, *Peso politico de todo el mundo*, likewise destined for Olivares.⁵¹ Though rivals, both Henin and Sherley's strategic portrayals of their experiences working outside of the jurisdictions or administrative apparatus of the Spanish monarchy reveal how the early modern cultures of reform and the search for political order were mutually influential across a broad spectrum of interests and activities, even across political and religious rivalries.

Henin never achieved the position, recognition, or subvention for his experience and expertise that he believed he badly needed and richly deserved. After a career fashioning himself as the king's perfect expert—the eyes, ears, and even arms that would fight to conserve the monarchy and its reputation, thus embodying its very reason of state—Henin finally conceded that the reason of state used by the Spanish king and his ministers could only function by consuming the very experts who made it run.⁵² Henin died in Brussels, blinded in one eye, bereft of all assets, without friends. Although he continued submitting reports to Olivares concerning the conditions of the Low Countries and proposals for how to strengthen the Spanish position there, none of these reports passed muster with the conde-duque.

By the time of his final extant communiqué to Olivares, dating from 1628, Henin's petition was effectively a letter of resignation after producing (by his own count) more than 12,000 pages (*pliegos*) of useful information and advice in the service of the monarchy—pages which were nearly always ignored.⁵³ His final condemnation was reserved for the reason of state for which he had so long toiled, and which ultimately proved to be the very rope that would hang him and other *expertos*

51. BNE, Mss 999 and 10580-10581.

52. KBB, Ms. 5167, f. 96r.

53. In this *Descripción de los Países Baxos*, Henin replaced his frequent use of *experiencia* with *conocimiento*, for the benefit of the *sciencia de estado*. KBB, Ms. 5167, f. 1r-v.

like him.⁵⁴ Without his own eyes and ears, how could he be an effective expert in the service of the king?

Nevertheless, Henin's personal disappointments did not hinder the developing concept of the expert and practiced *hombre de estado*. Both celebrations of good governance and calls for reform needed experts to legitimize them. As some scholars working on early modern expertise have argued, an expert cannot exist in a vacuum, without recognition of his expertise, and in the early modern period the state became the main source of those credentials.⁵⁵ The frustrated, blinded Don Jorge de Henin could never make the right people *see* the value of his knowledge and counsel; he was never able to adequately translate his experience into expertise that could be rendered into the status he sought.

Emphasizing his blindness after years of rehearsing the value of his *experiencia de vista* was a final desperate discursive strategy in his campaign to win royal favor, or at least the patronage of Olivares. Like the tale of the «*hombre de estado*» Belisarius—the Byzantine general apocryphally blinded by Justinian—that was becoming newly popular in Spain through works like Mira de Amescua's play *El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha* (1625) about the trials of Justinian's general Belisarius, or the anonymous undated early seventeenth-century manuscript history recounting the same story, *El hombre de estado o Belisario ciego*, Henin had been destroyed by the reason of state he served.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, while the destroyed servant hung from the reason of state, his written records ensured that his service continued to fuel the monarchy's machine.⁵⁷

54. «Que se burla de mi y de mis escritos y que a los hombres como yo se le va entreteniendo dandoles cordelejo hasta que penando mueren como lo manda la razón de estado». KBB, Ms. 5167, f. 96r.

55. ASH, «Early Modern Expertise», p. 9.

56. The story of Belisarius was popularized in Spain during Henin's life by the Spanish dramatist Antonio Mira de Amescua in *El ejemplo mayor de la desdicha* (1625), but also circulated in prose versions in manuscript, such as in the BNE's *El hombre de estado, o el Belisario ciego*. BNE, Mss. 10972.

57. HENIN, *Discurso*, p. 6v.