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English Renaissance Drama and the Specter of Spain: Ethnopoetics and Empire (Hardback)

By Eric J. Griffin

University of Pennsylvania Press, United States, 2009. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. The specter of Spain rarely figures in our discussions of the drama that is often regarded as the crowning achievement of the English literary Renaissance. Yet dramatists such as Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare are exactly contemporary with England's protracted conflict with the Spanish Empire, a traditional ally turned archetypal adversary. Were these playwrights really so mute with respect to their nation's Spanish troubles? Or have we failed—for reasons cultural and institutional—to hear the Hispanophobic crosstalk that permeated the drama no less than England's other public discourses? Imagining an early modern public sphere in which dramatists cross pens with proto-imperialists, Protestant polemicists, recusant apologists, and a Machiavellian network of propagandists that included high government officials as well as journeyman printers, Eric Griffin uncovers the rhetorical strategies through which the Hispanophobic perspectives that shaped the so-called Black Legend of Spanish Cruelty were written into English cultural memory. At the same time, he demonstrates that the English were as ready to invoke Spain in the spirit of envious emulation as to demonize the Spanish other as an ethnic agent of intolerance...



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