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Arriving (Way Beyond) Where We Started: Forty-Eight Years of Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies

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Arriving (Way Beyond) Where We Started: Forty-Eight Years of Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies

Cover Page Footnote

An earlier version of this paper was presented as the keynote address to the annual meeting of the Association for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, held at New York University, 16–18 March 2017, hosted by Andrew H. Lee.

**Arriving (Way Beyond) Where We Started:
Forty–Eight Years of Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies**

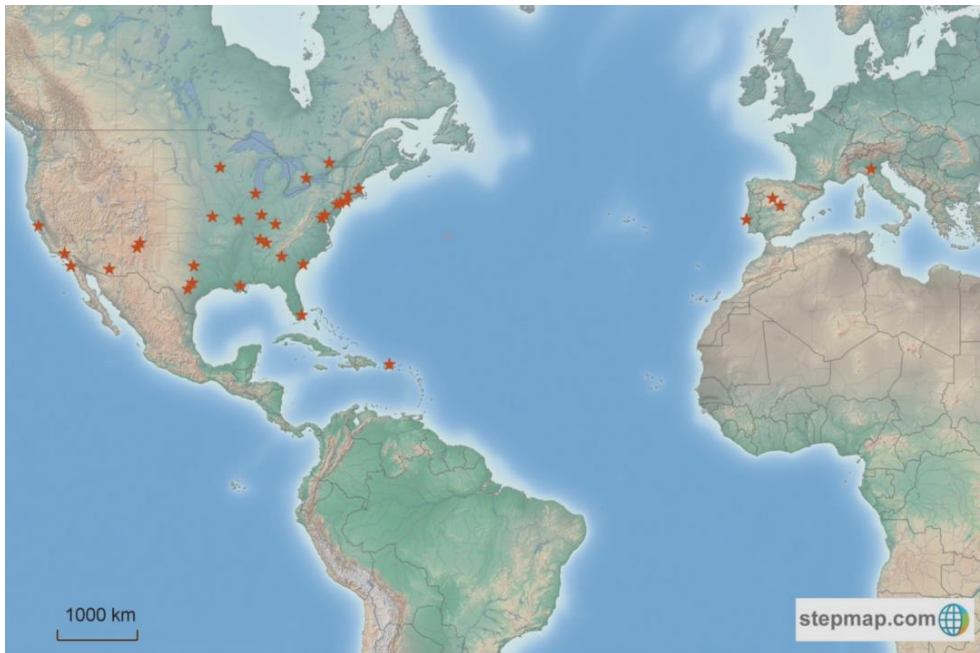
Carla Rahn Phillips

It's a great honor and a real pleasure for me to address this group, which has been my extended intellectual family throughout my career. When Andrew Lee asked me to give this talk, he said I should discuss the history of the society. In other words, you have Andrew to thank that I'm not talking about galley oarsmen or Bluefin tuna, both of which are current research interests of mine. Instead, I'm going to take some of you down memory lane and others into unknown territory for the history of our annual meetings in the past 48 years. My husband William Phillips (Wim) and I attended the first official meeting of the society in 1970. Over the years we have attended many other annual meetings, though by no means all of them.

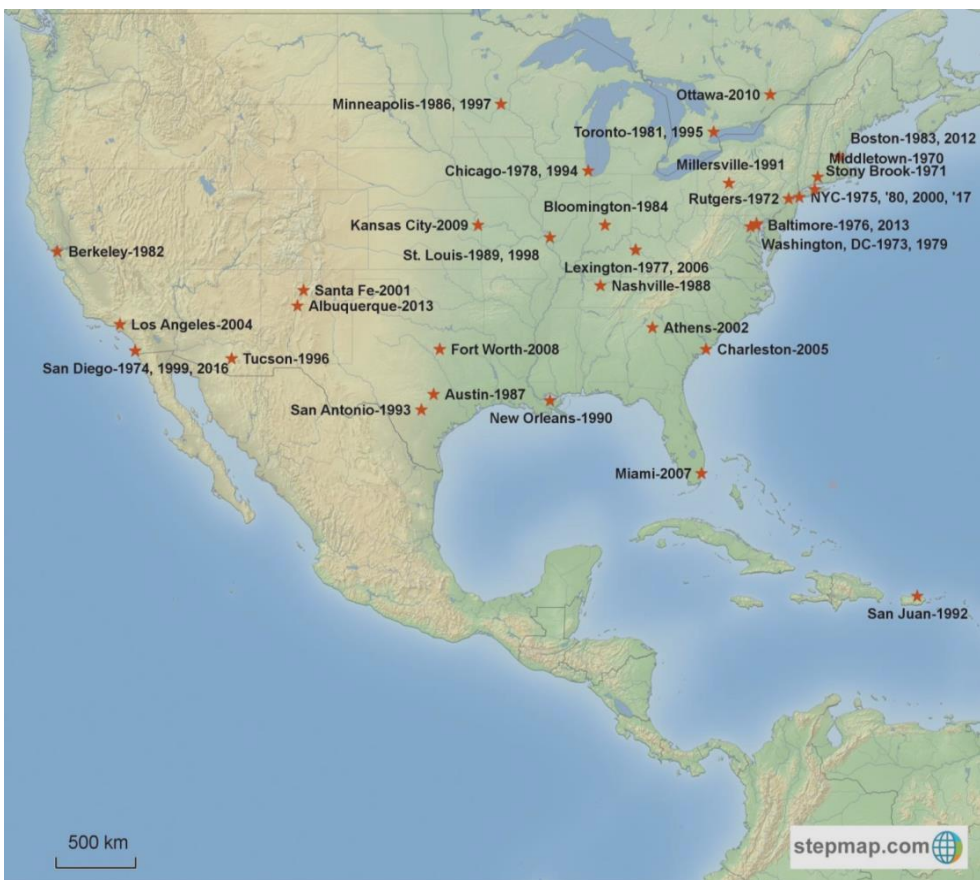
As some of you know, I like to count things – sheep, fish, people, and so on. What I decided to do for this talk was to look at the programs for all of the annual meetings and to analyze the papers statistically in terms of their temporal and thematic focuses. As the late Father Robert Burns, a member of the society, noted, “Money talks, but its conversational range is limited.” The same can be said about statistics, but they do have something to say. My aim was to find out what has interested the membership over the years and how those interests have changed over time. I could have sampled the papers and extrapolated some general notions about them. However, I much prefer to see the whole picture. Even when sampling techniques are carefully defined and the results are considered statistically significant, I always wonder what I'm missing.

In all, I entered the titles of 3,136 papers on an Excel spreadsheet. As far as I know, that includes all of the papers given at all of our meetings, but it does not include keynote addresses, films, or other invited presentations. I wanted to see what interests emerged from the conference attendees, rather than events defined by the organizers. Obviously, there were some cases in which a paper on the program was not actually given, because the presenter failed to attend the meeting. Nonetheless, I included all the papers on each conference program as an indication of the research interests of the presenters. That said, I can't be sure that I captured all of the papers, as I was only able to find provisional programs for several meetings.

Since the first annual meeting in 1970, the organization has met in numerous venues in North America, and four venues in Europe.

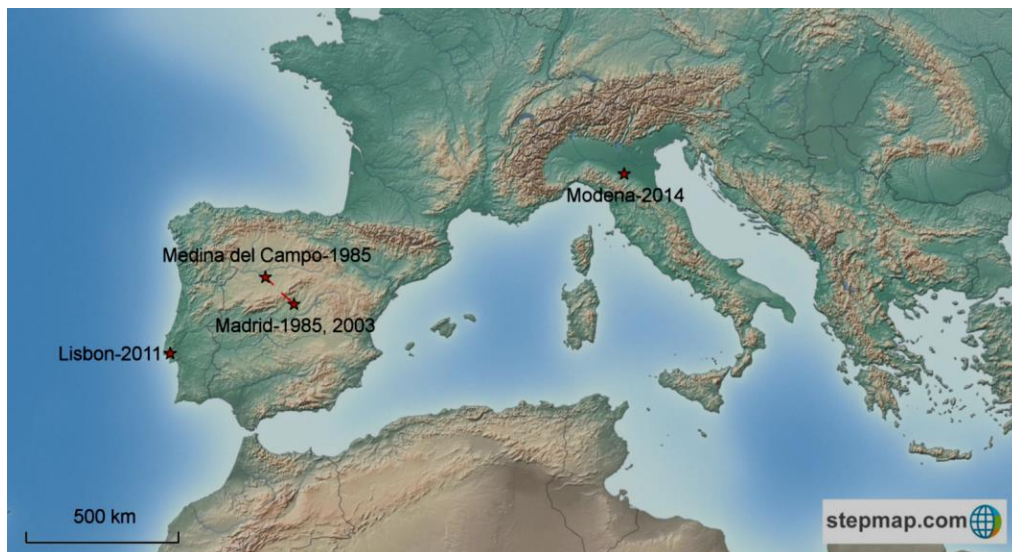


Annual Meetings



If we look at the North American meeting sites between 1970 and 2017, we see a fairly wide range of venues, especially in the northeast. The places and years for each site are on the map. Because our meeting sites have generally depended upon invitations from members and whether their institutions could provide facilities and support, we have met several times in some places. With a number of members in the northeastern part of the United States and eastern Canada, there are many possible venues, most of them with major airport connections. For many of our members, the ability to attend a meeting depends on obtaining funds from their institutions. If transport costs to a particular place are high, it presumably limits the number of attendees, and that is even more important for those coming from Europe.

We have met in Europe several times as well, with our usual Spring schedule shifted to Summer so that attendees could combine the meeting with a research trip. Even with enthusiastic sponsoring institutions in Europe, it is obviously more complicated to arrange meetings outside of North America. In 1985, we met in Madrid, with one day at the castle of La Mota in Medina del Campo. The meeting coincided with the approval for Portugal and Spain to join the European Union, after a long process of negotiation. We were privileged to attend a reception at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Madrid marking that important event. The second Madrid meeting in 2003, the Lisbon meeting in 2011, and the Modena meeting in 2014 were embedded in the histories of places that we study, as was the 1992 meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



European Annual Meetings

Our organization began quite modestly nearly half a century ago, when Clara Lida (Connecticut Wesleyan University), Iris Zavala (SUNY Stony Brook), and Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz (New York University), led an effort to make the historical study of Spain and Portugal more visible in the United States. They founded the Society for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies at a conference on modern Spanish literature at Connecticut Wesleyan in 1969 with an eye toward establishing an affiliation with the American Historical Association.¹

You see here a list of the years, venues, and number of papers given for all of the annual meetings from 1970 through 2017:

Year	Total Papers	Spain	Portugal	Venue
1970	17	14	3	Middletown, CT Wesleyan
1971	17	15	2	Stony Brook, NY
1972	18	14	4	Rutgers, NJ
1973	6	6	0	Washington, D.C.
1974	15	12	3	San Diego
1975	6	5	1	New York
1976	9	6	3	Baltimore
1977	24	22	2	Lexington
1978	16	9	7	Chicago
1979	13	12	1	Washington, D.C.
1980	35	31	4	New York
1981	24	21	3	Toronto
1982	26	24	2	Berkeley
1983	25	21	4	Boston
1984	22	18	4	Bloomington, IN
1985	66	55	11	Madrid & Medina del Campo
1986	30	26	4	Minneapolis
1987	28	25	3	Austin, Texas
1988	33	29	4	Nashville
1989	38	34	4	St. Louis

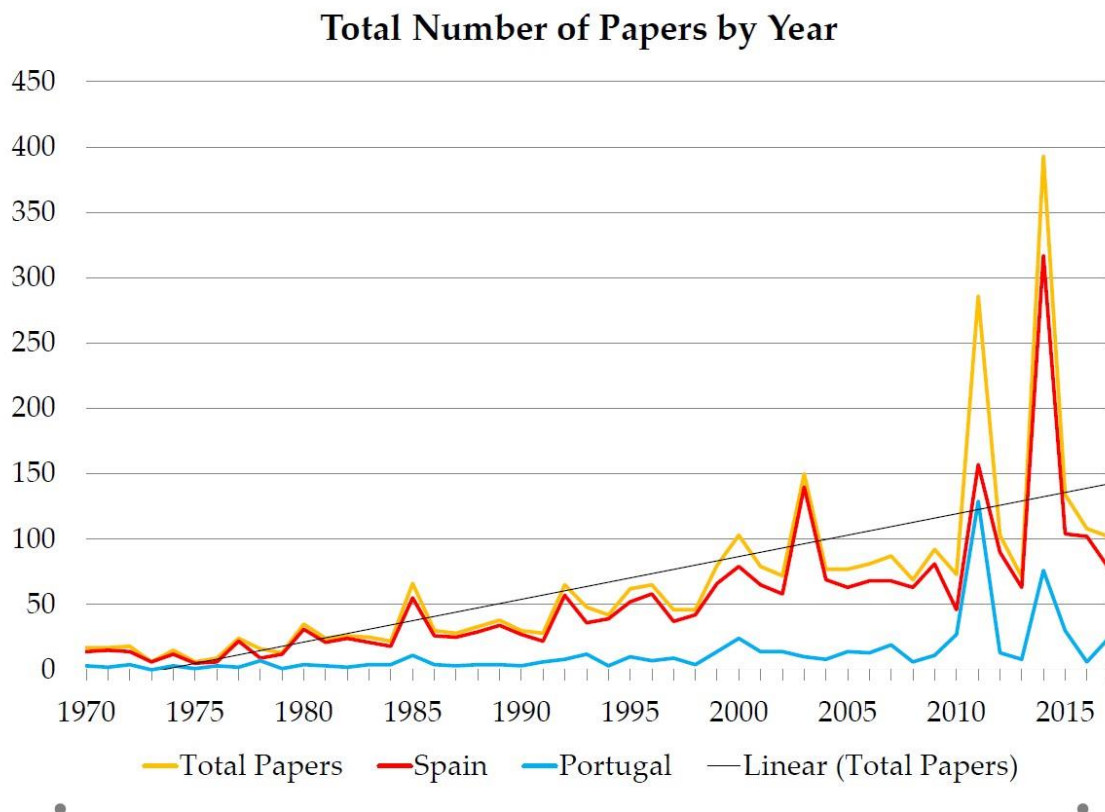
¹ Clara E. Lida, “Nacimiento y primeros pasos de la Society for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies,” *Bulletin* 34, no. 2 (2009): 5–9. <https://www.ucmo.edu/asphs/fall2009/nacimiento.html>

Year	Total Papers	Spain	Portugal	Venue
1990	30	27	3	New Orleans
1991	28	22	6	Millersville, PA
1992	65	57	8	San Juan, PR
1993	48	36	12	San Antonio
1994	42	39	3	Chicago
1995	62	52	10	Toronto
1996	65	58	7	Tucson
1997	46	37	9	Minneapolis
1998	46	42	4	St. Louis
1999	80	66	14	San Diego
2000	103	79	24	New York
2001	79	65	14	Santa Fe
2002	72	58	14	Athens, GA
2003	150	140	10	Madrid
2004	77	69	8	Los Angeles
2005	77	63	14	Charleston, SC
2006	81	68	13	Lexington
2007	87	68	19	Miami
2008	69	63	6	Ft. Worth, TX
2009	92	81	11	Kansas City
2010	73	46	27	Ottawa
2011	286	157	129	Lisbon
2012	103	90	13	Boston
2013	71	63	8	Albuquerque
2014	393	317	76	Modena
2015	134	104	30	Baltimore
2016	108	102	6	San Diego
2017	102	78	24	New York

The meetings were very small in the beginning, with 15–20 papers in most of the early years, and (as far as I can tell) only 6 papers in Washington, D.C. in 1973, with the same number in 1975 in New York City. The meeting in Lexington,

Kentucky, in 1977, marked the first time that we had more than 20 papers, but from 1980 on we never again saw the underside of 20. Those of us who attended some or all of those early meetings recall fondly that all the sessions were plenary, enabling—indeed, forcing—us to hear papers that were often far from our individual fields of research. That was invaluable for keeping up with developments in research about periods and topics that we might not otherwise have followed. As the organization grew, the meetings inevitably had to schedule two or more sessions at the same time, and they were usually differentiated by temporal focus, or topic, or both. The alternative would have been to restrict the number of sessions and papers and to reject many more proposals than we could accept. Instead, we chose to be inclusive and to grow the membership. That was the right choice, but there were definitely trade-offs.

The overall trends are clearer when we chart the figures. The scale for the number of papers is on the left side of the chart; the years are along the bottom. The papers focusing on Spain and/or its overseas interests are charted in red; Portugal is in blue; the combined total is in gold; and the trendline is in grey.

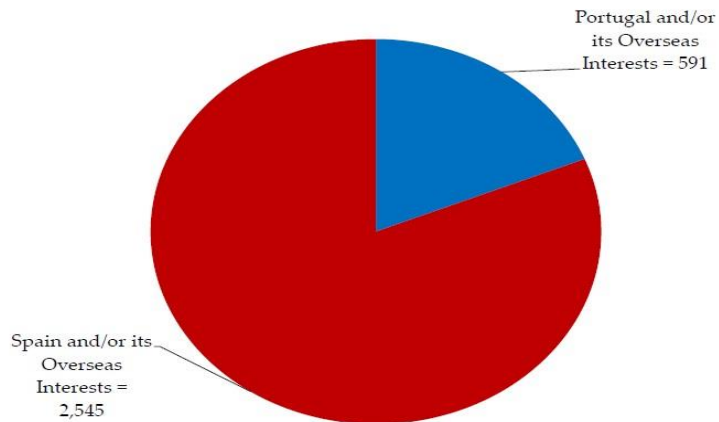


Despite the jagged appearance of the lines, the upward trend is unmistakable. Some of the high points correspond to the venues outside continental North America: Madrid in 1985; San Juan in 1992; Madrid again in 2003; Lisbon in 2011, and Modena in 2014. Those meetings attracted not only the membership, but many local scholars who had not attended any of our previous meetings. Other notable years simply reflect the growth of the organization, such as 2000 in New York City. Presumably, the normal ups and downs in the chart reflect our individual decisions about how many conferences we could afford to attend in any given year, or the availability of travel support from our institutions, or our family and academic responsibilities, or any number of other reasons.

In categorizing the contents of the papers, I relied mostly on their titles, unless I had other information about the paper or the presenter. Some titles told me everything I needed to know. For example, a hypothetical paper called “Economy and Society in Extremadura in the Fourteenth Century” obviously indicated that the paper’s primary geographic focus was Spain, that the temporal focus was the 14th Century, and that its two main themes were economy and society. The contents of other papers were less obvious. For example, the main title of one of my papers was “Bourbon and Water.” The subtitle made clear that it had to do with the transition from Habsburg to Bourbon rule in Spain’s empire overseas. Without that subtitle, however, I’m not sure that even *I* would have remembered what it was about. The current trends in academic discourse seem to favor titles that are whimsical, provocative, startling, or completely obscure. That has its merits in attracting an audience, especially if the paper itself is less than riveting. However, I have come to appreciate the old-fashioned approach that tells the potential audience what the paper is about. Some of our European colleagues are so concerned with being clear that their titles run on for several lines in the program, for which I am grateful.

The most straightforward way that I categorized a paper had to do with whether its primary focus was Spain or Portugal. As you have no doubt already noticed, papers focused on Spain and/or its overseas interests greatly outnumbered those focused on Portugal and/or its overseas interests. This pie chart makes the contrast even clearer. There are many potential reasons for this disparity, including the fact that there are more scholars in North America who focus on things Spanish than on things Portuguese, whether we’re talking about history, literature, art, music, architecture, or any number of other fields. Moreover, it’s difficult for graduate students in North America to find proper training in the Luso-phone world, with some notable exceptions in this country and in Canada. From the beginning, many of us have worked to boost the representation of Portugal and its overseas interests in our organization and its annual gatherings. The meeting in Lisbon in 2011 was proof that scholars based in Portugal are much more aware of

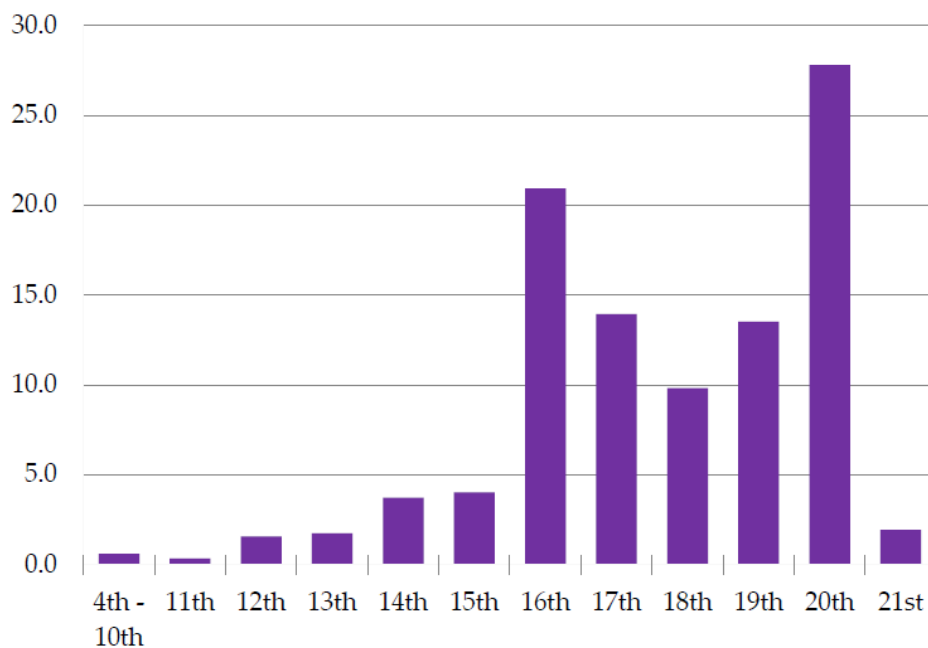
Numbers of Papers Focused on Spain or Portugal,
1970-2017 (N=3,136)



our organization than ever before, joining specialists in the Luso-phone world on this side of the Atlantic. Nonetheless, the large numerical gap between Spain and Portugal has remained fairly stable over the years. For that reason, in my analysis of the contents of the papers, I have reduced the numbers to percentages to make them more comparable.

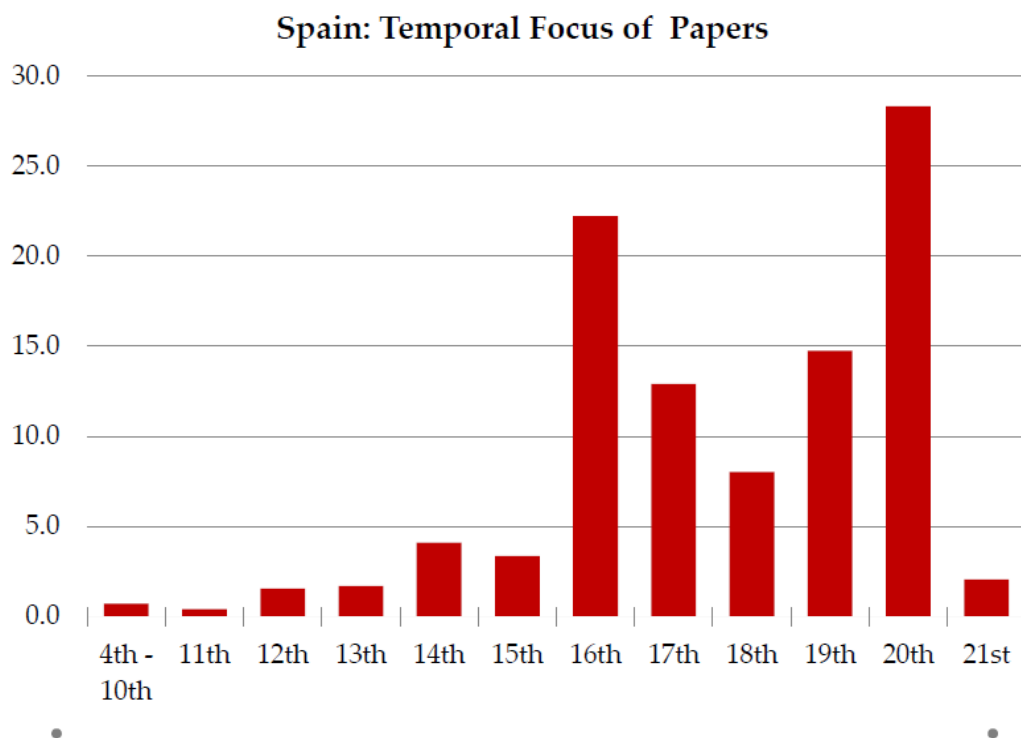
The second thing that interested me about the papers was their temporal focus. In this chart of the percentage of papers concerned with various centuries, the percentages are on the left side, the centuries are at the bottom, and the purple

Temporal Focus Overall

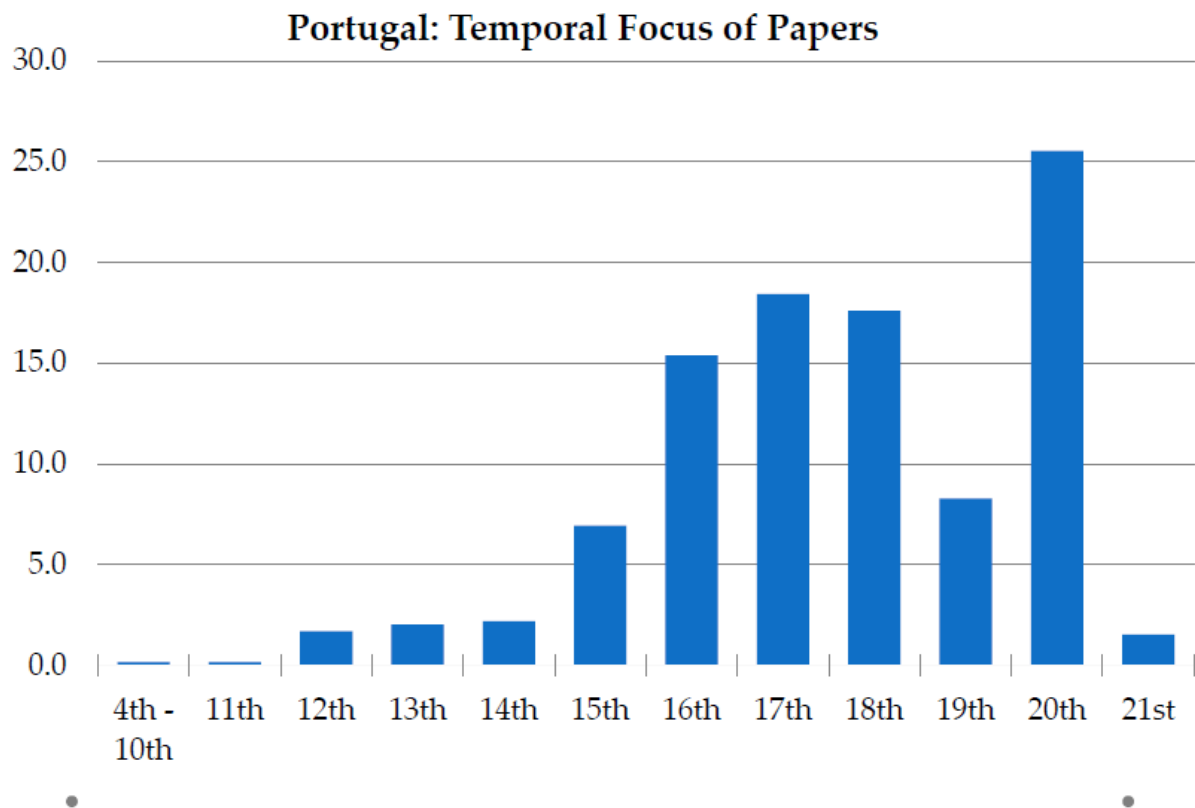


bars reflect the temporal distribution of all the papers. From the beginning, there have been very few papers dealing with any period before the late Middle Ages, and almost none dealing with ancient times, when all of Iberia was shaped by successive invasions from the Eastern Mediterranean: Carthage, Greece, and Rome. Considering how very important those cultures were for the development of both Portugal and Spain, it's a great pity that we have had so few specialists in ancient Iberia among our members.

Because of the dominance of papers about Spain and/or its overseas interests, the combined chart obscures some interesting differences, which we can see by separating out Spain and Portugal. In the chart for Spain, the two periods before the 12th century together account for fewer than 2% of the papers, and subsequent centuries are not much higher. The 16th century, by contrast, accounts for more than 20% of the papers, presumably because of the importance of the early Habsburg period in Spain and abroad. The rest of the early modern period trails off sharply in interest; in fact, I was surprised that only 8% of the papers concerned the 18th century. For the modern period, the 20th century obviously dominates, with almost double the representation for the 19th century

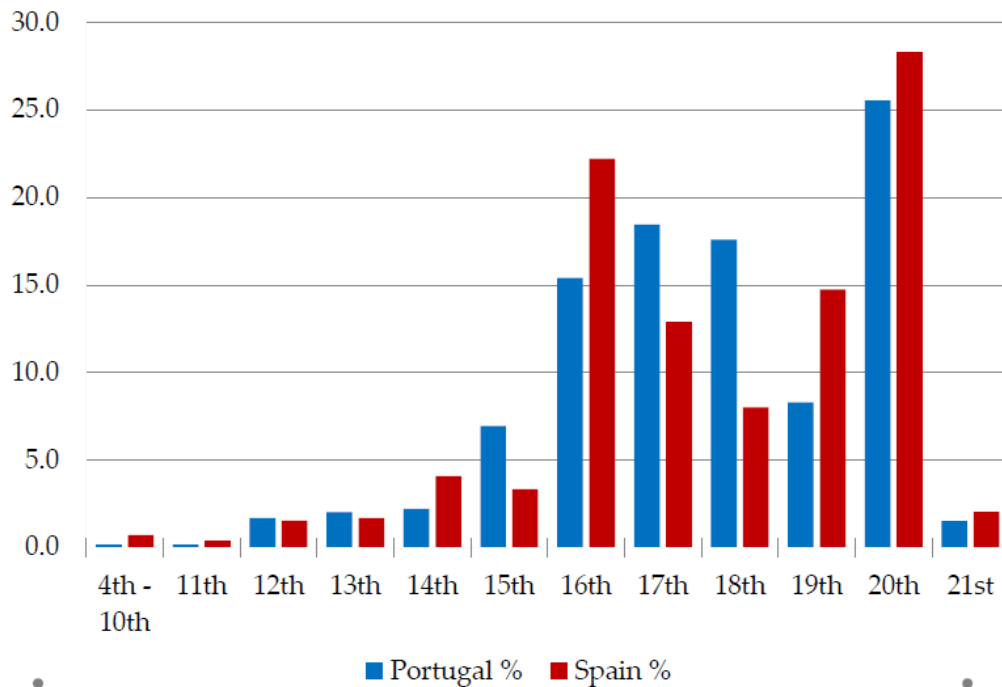


Papers focused on Portugal show a similar pattern for the earliest periods, with the 4th through 11th centuries barely registering, and the later medieval centuries showing only a bit more interest. By contrast with Spain, however, papers on the 16th 17th and 18th centuries are much more evenly represented. For the modern period, however, the 20th century is even more dominant for Portugal than for Spain, with three times the percentage of papers on the 20th century compared to the 19th.



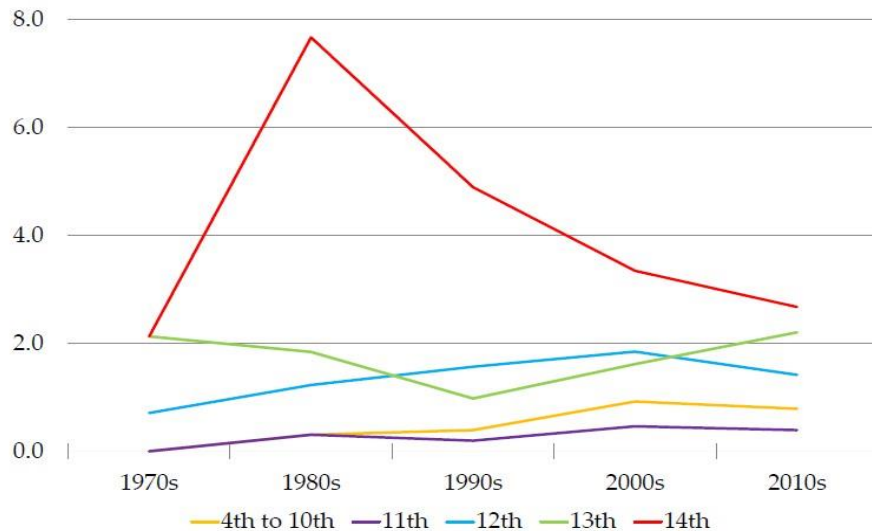
Looking at both sets of figures, the differences in temporal focus are easier to see, with the Portuguese percentages shown in blue and the Spanish percentages shown in red. Papers on the 16th and 19th centuries account for a notably higher percentage for Spain than for Portugal, and the 18th century is notably more prominent among papers with a Portuguese focus. Undoubtedly, the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and its aftermath account for much of that prominence.

Temporal Focus Compared

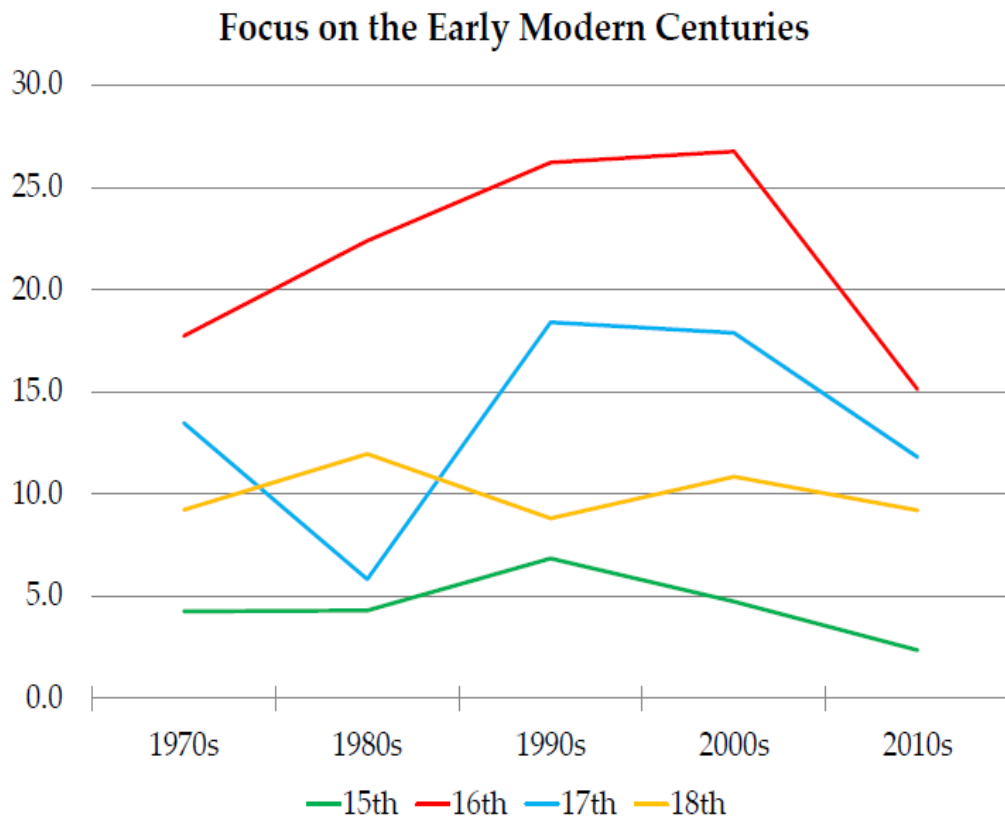


Looking at trends over time for the membership's interest in various periods, we can start with what I have defined as the Medieval Centuries. The percentages are on the left, with a high near 8%, and the years of our annual meetings are at the bottom, grouped by decade. The lines on the chart, with the points situated mid-decade, show the percentage of papers devoted to various periods: the 4th through 10th centuries in gold, the 11th in purple, the 12th in blue, the 13th in green, and the 14th in red. None of the periods through the 13th century ever accounted for more than about 2% of the papers, and usually fewer than 1%. Papers about the 14th century have been more numerous, rising to nearly 8% in the 1980s, but declining thereafter.

Focus on the Medieval Centuries



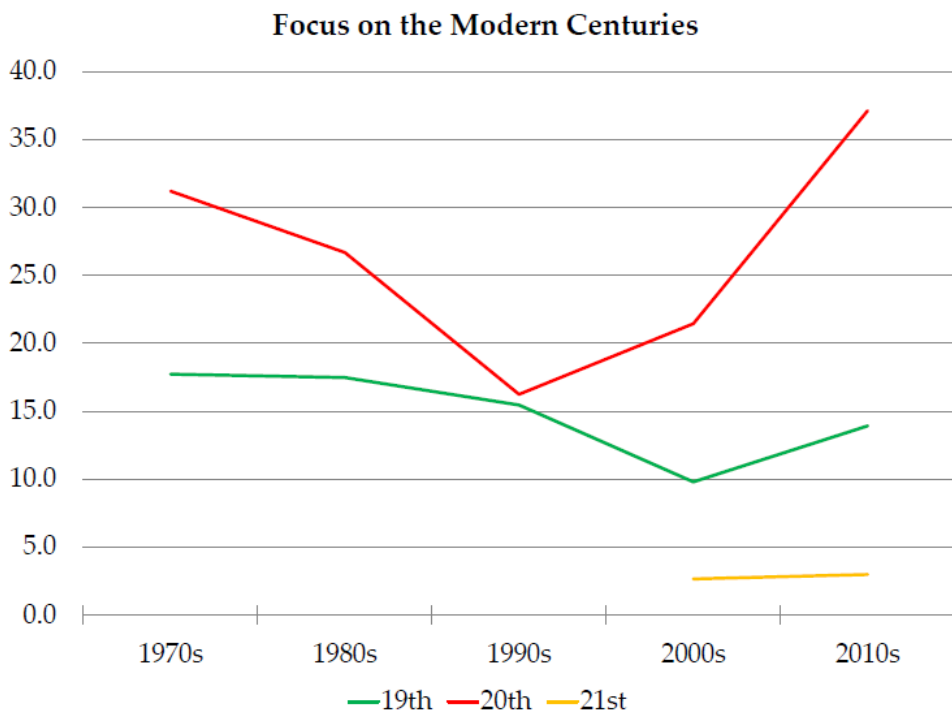
The Early Modern centuries — that is, the 15th through the 18th — have attracted more interest than earlier times throughout our meetings. Note the change in the percentage scale on the left, compared to the chart for the medieval centuries. The 15th century is in green, the 16th in red, the 17th in blue, and the 18th in gold. As we saw earlier, the 16th century has attracted considerably more interest than the other early modern centuries, although all of them show declining interest in recent times.



Papers focused on the Modern Centuries, which I define as the 19th, 20th, and 21st, are clearly more prominent than earlier periods. Note here that the scale on the left goes up to 40%. The 19th century, shown in green, accounts for between 10 and 20% of the papers given, decade by decade. The 20th century, shown in red, is dominant overall, though fluctuating notably over time. Many of the patterns in the last three charts were influenced by the Modena meeting in 2014, which had a very strong focus on the 20th century (37.1%) and the highest number of papers given in the history of our organization as a whole (393). Although interest in the 21st century, shown in gold, is present in the statistics, it is still too

soon to speculate about whether the membership will move even further toward a presentist focus than we have shown in the past.

Overall, the strong interest in the 20th century reminds us that both Portugal and Spain, along with the rest of Europe and indeed the world, went through traumatic times in the last century or so, counting world wars, civil wars, revolutions, near revolutions, depressions, and dictatorships of one political stripe or another, along with accompanying upheavals in society. It is hardly surprising that the members of an organization focused on the histories of Spain and Portugal should want to study those traumatic times. In fact, the organization began its existence with those times very much in mind.

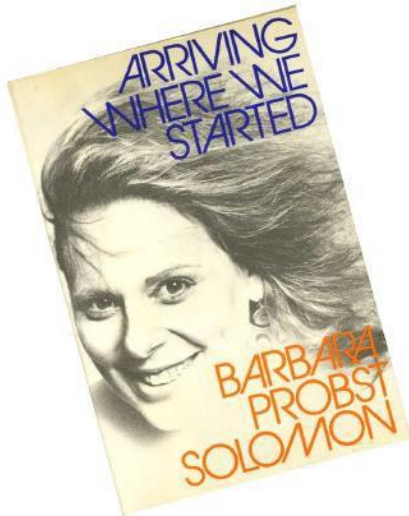


The title of my presentation alludes to a book about the intellectual and emotional context in 1969, which especially affected the individuals who founded the organization in that year. *Arriving Where we Started* (New York, 1972) is a fascinating memoir by Barbara Probst Solomon, now a distinguished writer and journalist based in New York City. The story is a personal exploration of her experiences in Europe in the late 1940s, when she was a high-school graduate trying to figure out who she was intellectually and emotionally. In 1969, she published part of her memoir as an article in *Harper's Magazine* (August 1969), titled "Back to Madrid." A recent profile about her includes this description:

Coming of age in New York as World War II was ending, after high school Barbara Probst did not follow her classmates to college; instead, she went to Europe with somewhat indefinite plans—until she met a young novelist named Norman Mailer, [who] ... invited her to “uh, sort of, spring a few people from a Franco jail in Spain.”²

In Paris, she fell in with a group of intellectuals and leftist political activists that included Norman Mailer, who would publish his novel, *The Naked and the Dead*, in 1948, based in part on his experiences in the Philippines during World

Arriving Where We Started



New York: Harper & Row, 1972; title quoted from T.S. Eliot, “Little Gidding”.

War II. Mailer had enough cash on hand to buy a car and finance an astounding adventure. The idea was that Barbara Probst and Mailer’s sister, also named Barbara, would travel through Spain as American tourists, with a young Spanish leftist posing as their guide. Once they had collected two particular young men from jail, they would drive them to the French border, with the fugitives and the bogus guide posing as lay-about playboys who were showing the Americans the sights of Spain. It sounded simple enough, notwithstanding the security forces in Franco’s

² Robert Ast “Alumni Spotlight: Barbara Probst Solomon ’60” Columbia University, School of General Studies. <https://gs.columbia.edu/owl-article?ntitle=2183&mgid=2179>

Spain and the privations that ordinary Spaniards were suffering in the late 1940s. Making things more interesting, the “jail” where the young men were held was none other than the work camp at Cuelgamuros outside Madrid, where some of the Franco regime’s political prisoners were being forced to build the monument called the Valle de los Caídos.

Against all odds, the plan worked almost flawlessly. On Sundays, the prisoners were taken to El Escorial to attend mass. Following prior instructions, the two young men simply ducked out of the line, and the so-called guide took them to the waiting car. The two Americans and the three Spaniards then drove toward Barcelona, playing their assigned roles. During a long evening at a *parador* in the mountains, they made themselves thoroughly irritating to the waiters, then drove into Barcelona with the Monday morning traffic. If security forces questioned the waiters at the *parador*, they could truthfully say that they hadn’t seen any suspicious characters—only two silly American girls and their rude Spanish boyfriends. The Spaniard posing as the guide remained in Barcelona, and the other four drove on toward France. Between security checkpoints, the fugitives left the car to make their way on foot over the Pyrenees. After a series of mishaps over several days, they finally arrived in France and then took a train to Paris. Meanwhile, the two Barbaras drove across the border and continued on their own to Paris.

Barbara Probst stayed on in Europe among the Spanish exile community in France and witnessed their gradual realization that the Franco regime would not fall anytime soon. She eventually returned to New York, got a degree at Columbia in 1960, and went on to establish her career as a writer and journalist. The Cuelgamuros story formed only a small part of her 1972 memoir, but one of the young men she helped, Manuel Lamana, by then living in exile in Argentina, described the escape at length in his novel *Otros hombres* (1956). The story eventually attracted the attention of one of Spain’s foremost film directors, Fernando Colomo. He brought the story—essentially a “road movie”—to the screen in 1998 as “Los años bárbaros,” which is available on the internet. The publicity poster for the film, with book credit to Manuel Lamana, shows the American girls and the two fugitives in a sharp red MG.

The other young fugitive in the story was my doctoral advisor, Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, the son of Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, a distinguished medievalist who was the President of the Government of the Spanish Republic in exile. After the escape from Cuelgamuros, Nicolás lived in Argentina for many years. He came to teach at New York University just as I was finishing my coursework, and later returned to Spain as the director of the Instituto Cervantes, from which he retired several decades ago. Now 91 years old, he still lives in Madrid. From all appearances, he has come to terms with his own history and with

that of his country. When Wim and I asked him about the movie and whether the car was really a red MG convertible, he laughed and said, “No. It was a Peugeot sedan.” Barbara Probst Solomon attended the first annual meeting of our society in 1970, and Nicolás introduced her around, but most of us didn’t know the history of their common adventure until she published her memoir in 1972.



2003 – Madrid meeting

I inflict this long story on you because it evokes the atmosphere in which this organization began. Although the United States was engaged in the Cold War with the Soviet Union in the late 1960s, that was not the pertinent context for the early days of our society. Instead, the context was shaped by Spain’s Second Republic and Civil War, World War II, and the persistent dictatorships still controlling Spain and Portugal. Among other things, that explains why we have a General Secretary, a title often related to leftist politics and organizations in the 20th century, and not a President, a title that connotes elitism to some. The memories of the conflicted history of the 20th century were simply inescapable when this organization was founded. Our early meetings often featured contentious analyses of the events of the 1930s and 1940s, with heated discussions among the participants. The contention never got as far as screaming matches or fistfights, but they left no doubt that many of the issues involved still remained very fresh and

alive in the minds of the participants.

Those of us who were just starting our careers came to realize that we had entered a mine field, not just a research field. Even if we focused on earlier centuries and non-political themes, our choice to work on Spain or Portugal was often suspect in the early 1970s, when both countries remained under authoritarian regimes. In my own experience, shortly after I joined the faculty at the University of Minnesota, my chairman asked me how I could bear to do research in Franco's Spain, and he was not alone in his disapproval of all things Spanish. I do not know if scholars studying Portugal encountered the same prejudice that I did, but it would not surprise me. Regardless of the focus of our research, or the importance and availability of documentation for that research, we were suspect simply because we were interested in Iberia.

And what *did* interest us—not only in the 1970s, but over the long haul? In categorizing our conference papers, I relied primarily on their titles and created a list of themes that seemed reasonable and logical to me. Because I was the only one doing the categorization, I'm hoping that whatever biases emerged in the process were at least consistent. This alphabetical list contains all of the themes that I used

THEMES REPRESENTED BY THE CONFERENCE PAPERS, 1970-2017

Architecture	Labor	Research Methods
Archives	Law	Revolt
Art, etc.	Maritime	Rural Life
Crime	Medicine	Sexuality
Economy	Migration	Society
Education	Military	Spanish Civil War
Elite	Music	Trade
Gender	Outsiders	Urban Life
Government	Parties	Violence
Historiography	Politics	Women
Ideas	Population	Written works
International Relations	Religion	

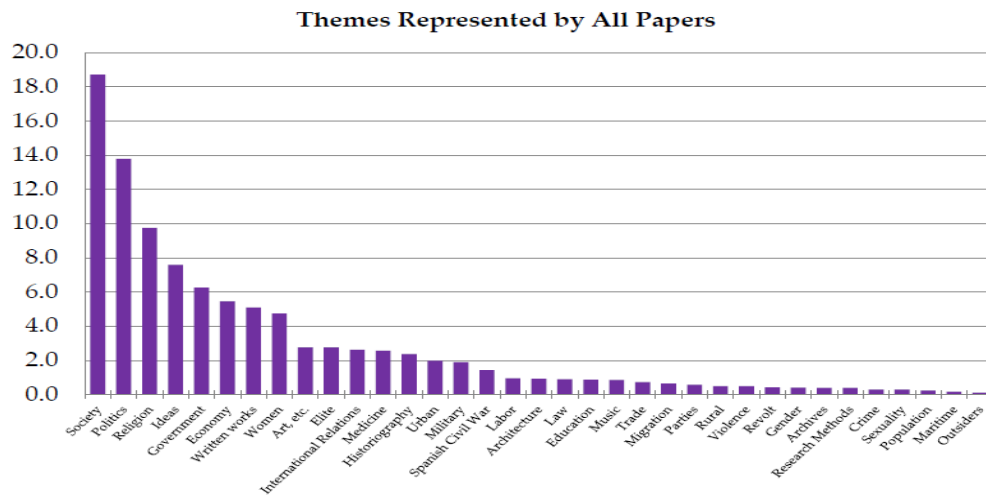
to define the contents of the papers.

Most of the themes are general in nature. However, there were enough papers focused on the Spanish Civil War that it merited a place on the list. Had there been a few more papers on the Lisbon earthquake, that would have been on the list as well. I assigned two themes to each paper, and those themes could be combined in many possible ways. For example, Maritime could be paired with virtually any other theme on the list, depending upon what I judged to be the contents of the paper. In calculating the prominence of each theme, and assigning two themes to every paper, I ended up with twice as many themes as there were papers. The following ranked list shows the relative prominence of the themes that I defined.

<u>THEMES RANKED BY FREQUENCY, 1970-2017</u>		
1 Society		24 Parties
2 Politics	13 Historiography	25 Rural
3 Religion	14 Urban	26 Violence
4 Ideas	15 Military	27 Revolt
5 Government	16 Spanish Civil War	28 Gender
6 Economy	17 Labor	29 Archives
7 Written works	18 Architecture	30 Research Methods
8 Women	19 Law	31 Crime
9 Art, etc.	20 Education	32 Sexuality
10 Elite	21 Music	33 Population
11 International Relations	22 Trade	34 Maritime
12 Medicine	23 Migration	35 Outsiders

Society emerged as the most frequent theme overall, and it was paired with nearly every other theme on the list. A disclaimer is in order. My underlying approach to historical study assumes that most topics have to do with human society in one way or another. That presumably skewed the results, but I'm willing to

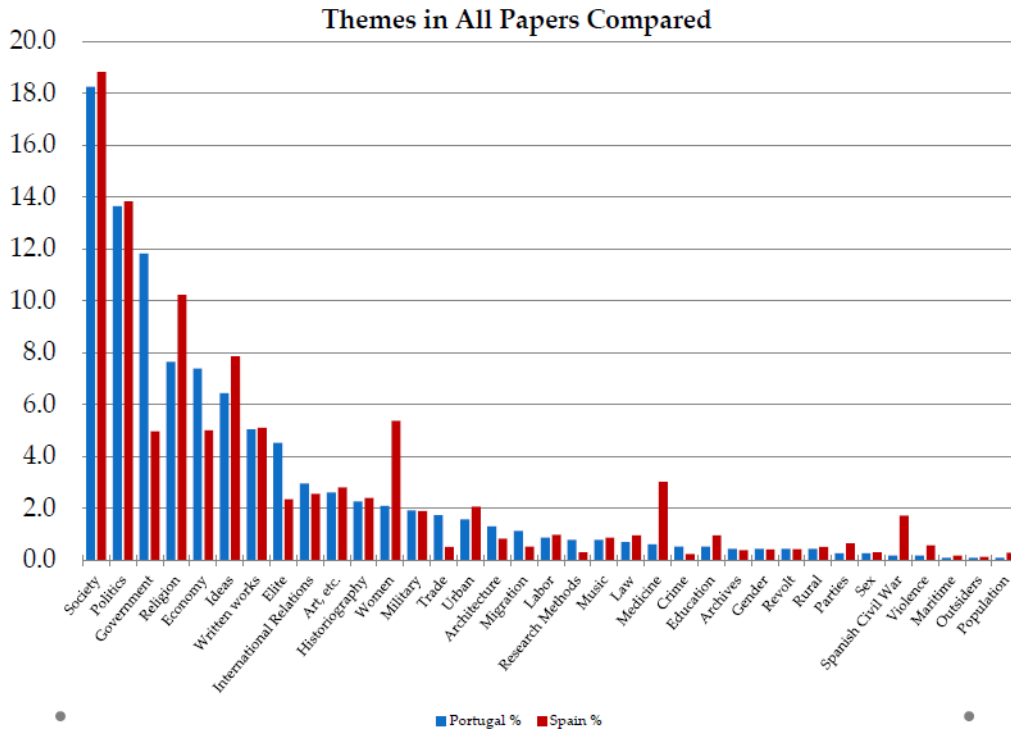
defend my assumption. Similarly, in my view Politics as a theme can describe all sorts of interactions, not just traditional political interactions. For example, I might categorize a paper about the rivalry between two monastic orders by the themes of Religion and Politics. The percentage frequency of the various themes shows clearly in charted form. (The labels on the charts are easier to see by adjusting the view to 200%.)



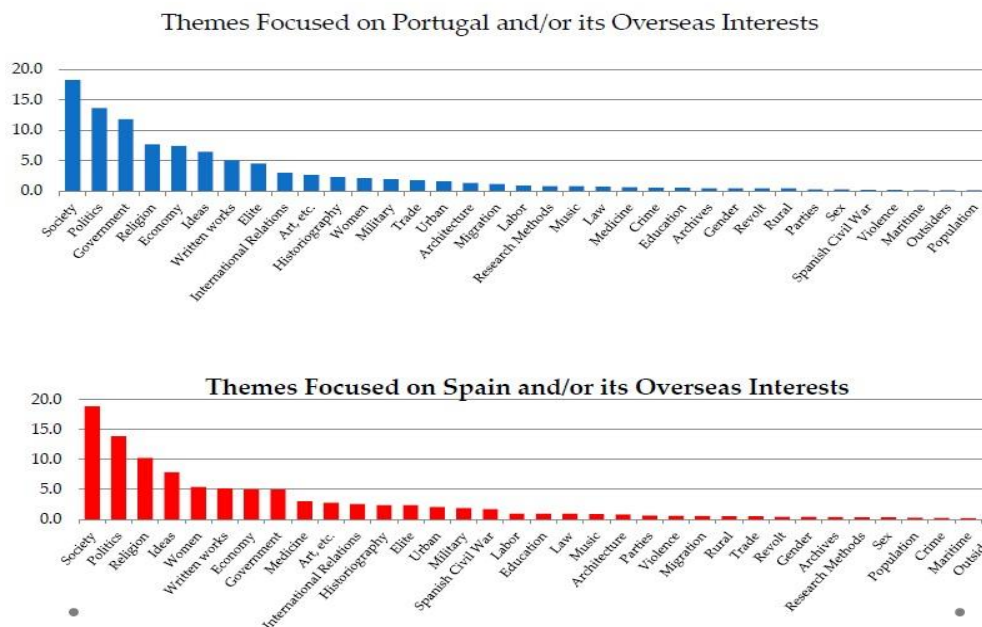
The percentages are on the left side, the themes are at the bottom, and the tick marks on the bottom fence off the bar pertaining to each theme. Remember that the chart is based on a combination of all the themes I assigned—two per paper. As in the other charts, the purple color of the bars indicates that the percentages include papers focused on both Spain and Portugal.

The following two charts separate out the two countries. The percentages are again on the left side and the themes at the bottom, with Portugal in blue and Spain in red.

Because the themes for each country are arranged in descending rank order, both charts look very similar. However, the labels at the bottom indicate that the rank order differs considerably for the two countries. This becomes much clearer if we look at the percentages side by side.

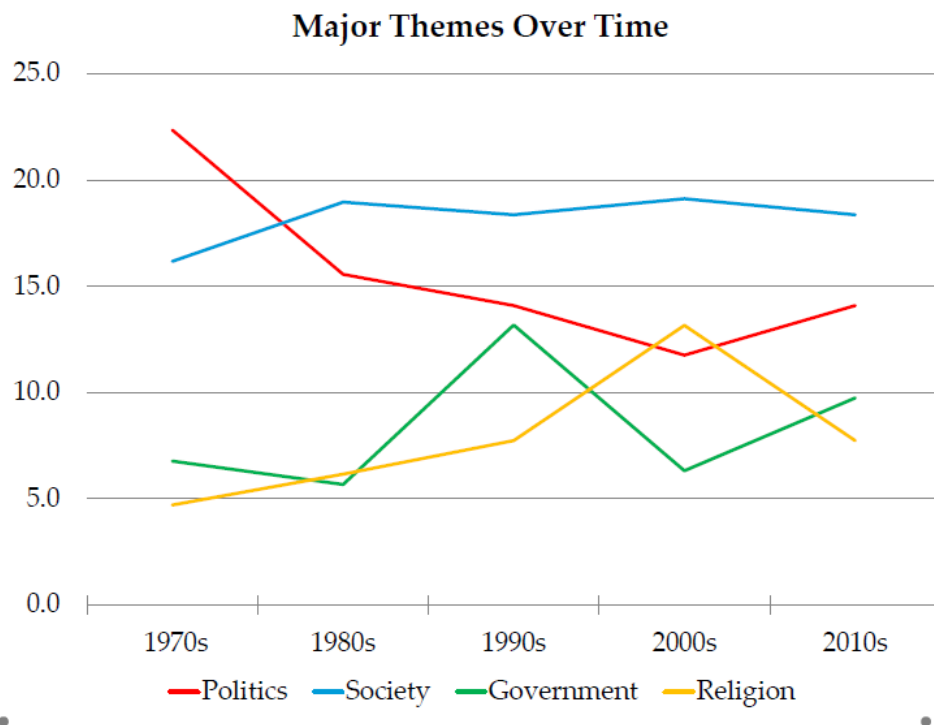


This chart uses the rank order of the Portuguese themes in blue to set the general shape of the chart. Viewing the Spanish themes—in red—alongside the



Portuguese themes in blue highlights the differences between them. For a start, although Society is the most important theme for both, it is slightly more important for the Spanish papers. The same is true for the second most prominent theme: Politics. By contrast, Government is more than twice as important for the Portuguese papers, and the theme of Women is more than twice as important for the Spanish papers. Economy is nearly 2.5 percentage points higher for Portugal than for Spain, and Medicine is 5 times as important for the Spanish papers, although it is a minor theme for both. Not surprisingly, the theme of the Spanish Civil War is considerably higher for Spain, although a number of Portuguese papers also dealt with that tragic conflict.

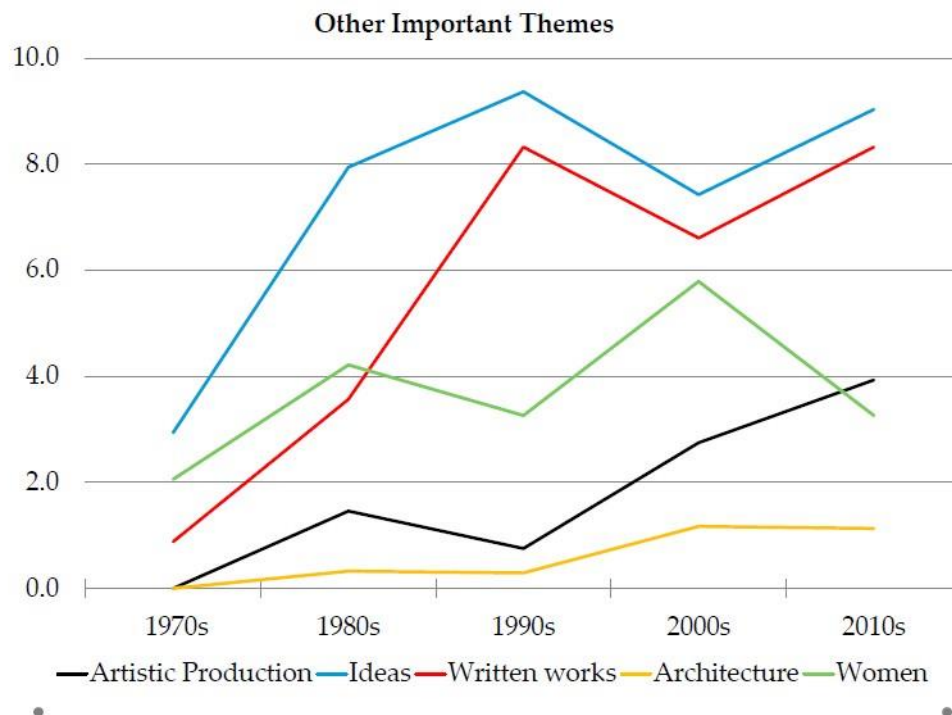
Although all of the themes were present in papers throughout the history of our organization, there were some interesting changes over time. To track those changes, I grouped the themes by decade.



This chart shows the distribution of major themes over time. The percentage scale is on the left, and the decades of our meetings are at the bottom. Politics is in red, Society in blue, Government in green, and Religion in gold. As you can see, the theme of Society appeared consistently in 15 to 20% of all the papers given throughout our history. By contrast, Politics as a theme was much more prominent in the 1970s than it was thereafter, with a low point of less than 12% in the 2000s.

Government showed notable ups and downs over time, with a low of 6.2% in the 1980s, and a high of 13.2% in the 1990s. Religion began at less than 5%, rose to over 13% in the 2000s, and has recently fallen back sharply, though it is still a theme for nearly 8% of the papers given. I remind you that all of these numbers reflect my assignment of themes to each of the papers. If someone else had categorized them, the results might differ.

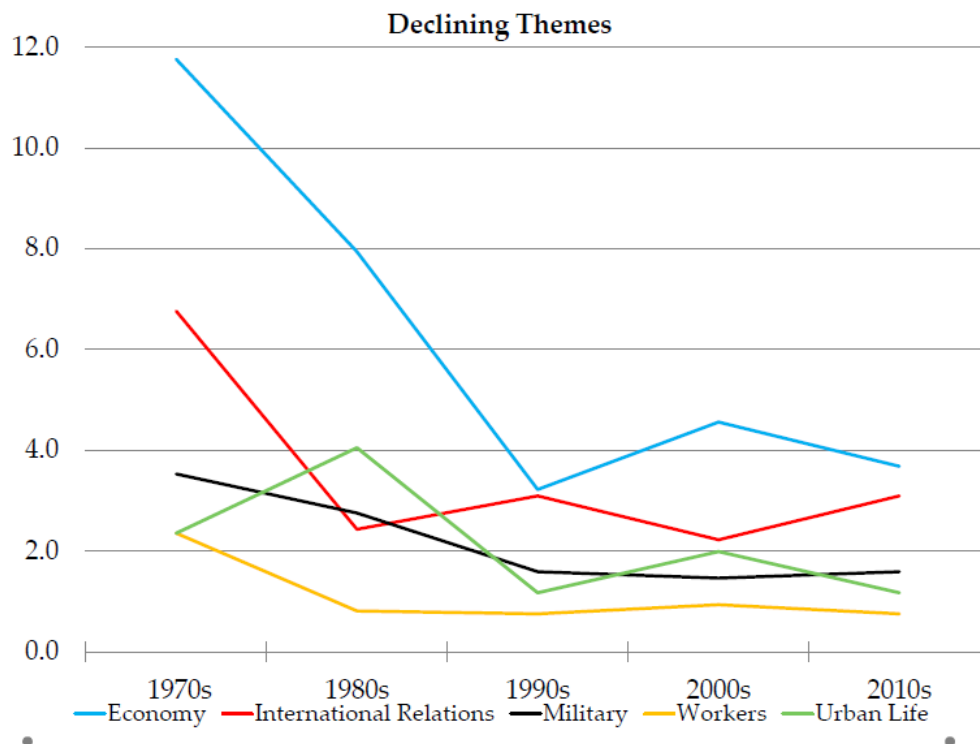
Other important themes and their changes over time appear in the following chart.



Note here that the percentage scale is quite different from the scale for the major themes, rising no higher than 10%, whereas the scale for the major themes rose to 25%. The theme that I call Artistic Production here (and Art, etc. elsewhere) appears in black. It includes painting, sculpture, decorative arts, and so on. The theme that I call Ideas, shown in blue, includes what is often called Intellectual history, but it also includes the study of all sorts of other ideas from high culture to low. Similarly, the theme that I call Written Works, shown in red, includes the analysis of virtually every historical source in writing, whether in manuscript or in printed form. In other words, literary analysis comes under that theme, but also the contents of recipe books, memoirs, newspaper stories, and so on. Architecture as a theme, shown in gold, includes urban planning as well as the study of building design and related themes. And the designation of Women as a theme, shown in

green, includes every paper that dealt with women at every level of society. All of these themes changed notably in prominence over time, and despite ups and downs show an upward trend. The increased interest in Women presumably reflects changing trends in historical analysis in general, especially among female scholars. The increased interest in the other four themes more likely reflects changes in the membership, which now includes many more specialists in textual analysis and artistic production than in the early days of the society.

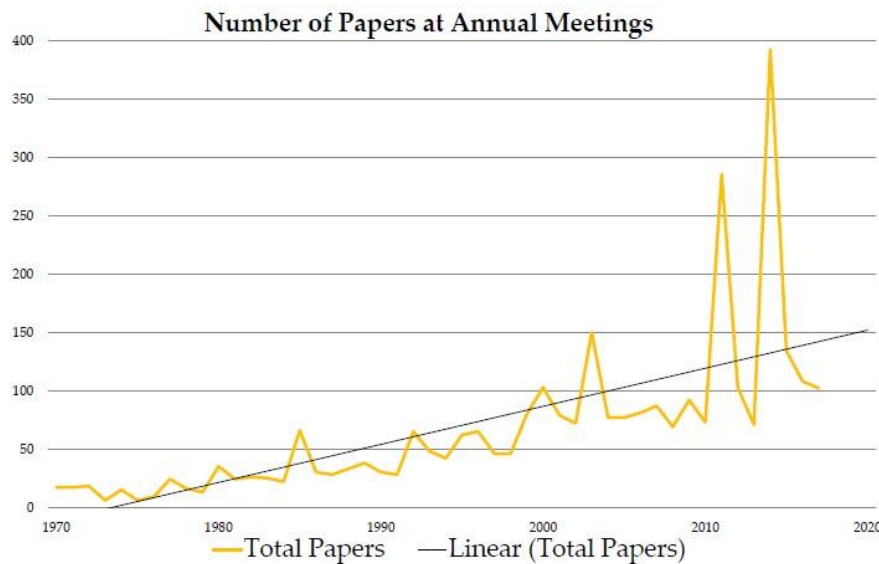
Some themes have declined over time, a few of them sharply. In this chart, again note the percentage scale at the left and the decades at the bottom.



The focus on Economy, shown in blue, accounted for nearly 12% of the papers presented in the 1970s and fell to less than 4% in the 1990s, with only slight recovery since then. International Relations, shown in red, featured in nearly 7% of the papers in the 1970s, and now accounts for just slightly more than 3%. I included here not only papers dealing with traditional diplomacy but also papers that dealt with relations between or among states in general. Interest in the Military (in black) and Workers (in gold) began between 2 and 4% of the papers and now account for only 1 to 2% each. Interest in Urban life, shown in green, shows a similar downward

trend but more varied interest over time. There are several other themes that are always present at our meetings, but they show no clear trend over time. They include a focus on the Elite, Law, Historiography, Trade, and the ever-present Spanish Civil War.

“Arriving (Way Beyond) Where We Started”



Overall, it’s clear that we have arrived way beyond where we started in terms of the size of our membership, the number of papers presented at our meetings, and our visibility in the academic world, reflected in our presence on the internet and the readership of the *Bulletin*.

Less tangibly but equally important, it seems to me, our focus on the historical study of Spain and Portugal now seems to be viewed as a normal and necessary element in the effort to understand the human past. Believe me, that was not the case when we started. Just as Portugal and Spain are now “mismocracies”—that is, democracies like all the others — our choice to study them is, shall we say, now socially and intellectually acceptable. Through our publications and awards won by those publications, our teaching, and our participation in scholarly organizations such as the American Historical Association, the Renaissance Society of America, and the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction, among many others, we have arrived at a very different place from where we started.

In another sense, we haven't changed. I'm referring to the attitude of inclusivity, non-elitism, and genuine camaraderie that has characterized this organization from the very beginning. Graduate students can feel comfortable challenging well-established scholars, who, in turn, can feel comfortable learning from junior colleagues. At our meetings, we know how to give and take pointed critiques focused on the work presented, and to profit from the exchange, without worrying that it will harm us professionally. That's a real rarity in the academic world, both in the past and in the present. Let's work to maintain those valuable intellectual and human traditions as we move into the future.

