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Introduction: New Currents in Iberian History: Old Boundaries and New Bridges

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New Currents in Iberian History: Old Boundaries and New Bridges¹

Katie Harris and Pamela Radcliff

When the editor of *The Bulletin* asked us to organize a special issue showcasing new historiographical currents in Iberian history for a broader scholarly audience, we accepted what was obviously a worthy project without quite understanding its complexities and challenges. We first debated how to break down the field into individual articles and decided on a thematic approach that would highlight subjects at the forefront of recent scholarship, across the modern and early modern divide. Race and gender emerged as important themes across all chronological periods. For the third theme, we identified specific growth areas for each period, colonialism for the modern era and Mediterranean studies for the early modern. We had not originally planned to include medieval history, since neither of us were experts, but the BSPHS Board convinced us that excluding it would undermine the inclusive claims of the special issue and of the ASPHS itself. We thus added an article on gender in the medieval era, and asked our Mediterranean studies author to expand the chronological frame across the medieval/early modern divide. We were fortunate to be able to recruit excellent scholars to join the project, and anticipated hearing about the exciting new directions in Iberian historiography. But as the essays came rolling in, we became aware of not just the exciting new directions in which Iberian history is moving in all of its frontiers, but also some of the enduring boundaries that continue to shape the field more than we had realized or anticipated.

Old Boundaries

The boundary that most surprised us was the virtual firewall inside the category of Iberian history. We had blithely accepted the task to include both Spain and Portugal as representing the Iberian scope of the ASPHS, and had instructed our authors to do the same. However, it became clear that the two historiographies have not generally been in conversation with each other, and that getting up to speed in both fields would add an enormous challenge to what was an already ambitious mandate. In consultation with the BSPHS board, we decided to retreat from the claim to cover “Iberian” historiography rather than risk a token or superficial inclusion of the Portuguese side by authors trained in Spanish history. At the same time, we wanted to understand more about the origins of this unexpected boundary, so we consulted colleagues and did our own, albeit superficial, investigation. If we had known at the outset what we learned in the process, we might have included an article on the evolving relationship between

¹ Many thanks to Liam Brockey, Richard Kagan, Marie Kelleher, and Pedro Aires Oliveira for their assistance with this essay.

the two historiographies, but perhaps this can be the subject of a future special issue.

By all accounts, the mutual lack of interest in either comparing or understanding the historical trajectories of the other country has its roots in a variety of converging factors: from historical peninsular politics to nationalist historiographies, secondary and university curricula, and international influences. After the restoration of the Portuguese monarchy in the 1640s, the Spanish and Portuguese empire states were global competitors whose histories were defined in opposition to each other. As the smaller Iberian power, Portuguese nationalist history was invested in emphasizing the radical autonomy of their nation as well as the outward-facing orientation facilitated by the Atlantic connections. In contrast, Spanish nationalist history retained an irredentist hope that Portugal would eventually be subsumed within the Hispanic monarchy, further fueling the Portuguese perspective that Spain was a threat to its identity. From the Spanish side, the frustrated irredentism led to a dismissive indifference of a neighbor that was never really viewed as an equal or legitimate nation. These tropes or “lugares de memoria” were reinforced during four decades of nationalist dictatorships, during which they informed the history curriculum for generations of Spaniards and Portuguese.

It was not until the process of European integration in the 1980s that the conditions slowly began to shift, with the first substantive initiatives to build historiographical bridges across the Luso-Spanish divide beginning in the 1990s. The international shift from enemy to ally, as well as the equal status of both countries within the supra-national body of the EU, provided a new context for improved relations. At the same time, the historiographical cultures in each country were oriented in other directions. While both Spanish and Portuguese scholars were influenced by trends emerging from France (e.g. *Annales*) and the UK, Portuguese researchers drew on a tradition of situating Portugal into international, not Iberian, frameworks. In contrast, Spanish historiography since the 19th century had been focused on domestic explanations of the historical past, a tendency exacerbated by the Franco regime’s intellectual isolationism. As a result, structural obstacles to a more integrated historiography have been slow to change. There are few chairs of Spanish history in Portugal or the reverse in Spain. Likewise, few Spanish doctoral students study Portuguese history and even fewer Portuguese focus on Spain, while secondary and university history courses still provide minimal attention to Iberian history.

Over the past several decades, however, there has been an increase in scholarship that crosses the Iberian divide or that considers the framework of Iberian history. Within this world, there is an overarching debate about whether the histories of the two countries in the modern period are radically distinct, closely interrelated, or in tension between forces that divide and unite them. But

the majority of cross-border scholarship focuses more on conventional relationships between the two countries, either in the classic realm of diplomatic history, or in fields of cultural, intellectual and political exchange. Fewer works are dedicated to comparative history or to studies of mutual influence. Obvious topics of comparison or mutual influence such as empires, the Inquisitions, the twentieth-century dictatorships, and the political transitions of the 1970s have received some attention, but not as much as one would think, given the parallels.² Perhaps not surprisingly, some of the most robust comparative initiatives have come from Portugal and from Spain's border regions, particularly Extremadura, where regional universities like the UNED in Mérida and the autonomous government have promoted Luso-Spanish research projects and publications.³

From the North American side, the graduate pipeline for Portuguese history has always been even more limited than the Spanish one, perhaps in part because Spanish is a language that many take in high school. In addition, it is difficult enough to master one language and set of archives, so we don't generally train comparative historians at the Ph.D. level. But more substantively, the revisionist trend in modern Spanish historiography has directed the gaze away from Iberia and to Western Europe as part of the process of "normalization", while Portuguese historiography has already been more Atlanticist in its orientation, among early modernists and modernists alike. A few modern Hispanists like Stanley Payne and Edward Malefakis published on Portuguese history, and Malefakis taught a class at Columbia for many years on Southern European history that integrated Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece into a regional comparative framework.⁴ But in general the two fields have remained segregated in North America, as evidenced by the general division between Portuguese and Spanish panels at the ASPHS conferences.

² This appears to be changing, however, as evidenced by recent and ongoing comparative projects like "Post Scriptum: A Digital Archive of Ordinary Writings (Early Modern Portugal and Spain)," housed at the Universidade de Lisboa [<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/295562/es>] and "Rebellion and Resistance in the Iberian Empires," housed at the Universidade de Évora [<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/778076>]. On the twentieth century, see Encarnación Lemus, Fernando Rosas, and Raquel Varela, eds., *El fin de las dictaduras ibéricas* (Sevilla: Fundación Pública Andaluza Centro de Estudios Andaluces; Paço de Arcos: Edições Pluma, DL 2010) and Juan Carlos Jiménez, *España y Portugal en transición* (Madrid: Sílex, 2009).

³ Hipólito de la Torre Gómez and Antonio José Telo, eds., *La mirada del otro: percepciones luso-españolas desde la história* (Mérida: Junta de Extremadura, 2001) and co-edited by the same editors, *España-Portugal: estudios de historia contemporánea* (Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 1998).

⁴ Edward E. Malefakis, *Southern Europe in the 19th & 20th centuries: an historical overview* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales, Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, 1992); Stanley Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal*, 2 vols. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973-1976).

At the same time, there is another boundary, particularly between Spanish historical scholarship as it is practiced in North America and in the peninsula, a boundary of mutual reference and publication. Although the trend has started to shift in recent decades as more Spain-based historians have been publishing in English language journals, citing North American scholarship and sharing theoretical frameworks, while their colleagues from North America increasingly seek to publish in Spanish language venues and try to keep abreast of debates within the peninsula, the scholarly discussions still remain fairly separate. This is very probably a result from patterns laid down in earlier decades. During the Franco regime, premodern and modern Hispanists in North America and the U.K. played a special role in researching and publishing historical scholarship on fraught topics like the Inquisition, the seventeenth-century crisis of Spanish dominance, the Second Republic, and the Civil War during a time of censorship and academic restrictions within Spain. But since the 1980s, peninsular historians understandably wanted to take the lead in re-defining their own field, developing questions and themes rooted in Spanish frameworks. The result has been a complex historiographical terrain that has strong points of connection but is not fully integrated across languages, publishing venues, mutual citations and debates. For Portuguese historiography, the bigger issue seems to be the small number of historians of Portugal in North America, beyond the handful of endowed chairs, with few monographs published in these countries, either during or after the Dictatorship. At the same time, the more established tradition of English language publications within the Portuguese academic community has kept the field more open to transnational conversations, particularly on the topics of empire and fascism.

While we have had to limit our authors' engagement with the broader Latin American (and, in the case of Portugal, African and Asian) literature, these essays have also highlighted the ways in which the enduring barriers between intra-Iberian approaches and the inconsistent communication between Iberian and North American scholarly spheres is paralleled by a persistent gulf between Spanish and Latin American historiography (boundaries that seem less pronounced in the case of Portugal and its overseas empire). While the general trend has been toward approaches that integrate metropole and colonies into a common Atlantic frame, deep-rooted divisions persist, founded in the colonial experience and national boundaries.⁵ In North America, for example, specialists in

⁵ Some of these issues in Iberian historical studies are addressed through transnational and entangled approaches. See Andrea Davis and Scott Eastman, eds, "Special Issue: Iberia in Entangled and Transnational Contexts," special issue, *Bulletin of Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies* 44, no. 1 (2019). We should note that among early modernists on both sides of the Atlantic the more static and unidirectional image of metropole and colonies that was assumed in earlier historiography is increasingly being challenged by an idea of polycentric monarchies and the more complex and fluid relationships between the kingdoms that they comprised. See, for

early modern Spanish history tend to read widely in colonial Latin American history as well, and to train our graduate students to do the same. The reverse is not necessarily the case, however; far fewer specialists in colonial Mexico or Peru regularly engage the scholarship on early modern Spain. In contrast, for most of the 20th century, modern Spanish history narratives minimized the impact of the remaining colonies on peninsular history, which rendered the two fields even more separate. The articles by Goode and Stucki in this dossier map the recent trends that have challenged these boundaries, although colonial history still tends to be a specialized sub-field. Beyond specific colonial connections, Spain and the post-colonial Latin American countries are not common comparative reference points for each other.⁶

The final enduring barrier that we noted across our authors was that between Iberia and Europe. The tired old saw that “Europe ends at the Pyrenees” (or, more provocatively, that “Africa begins at the Pyrenees”) has been blamed on any number of culprits, from Voltaire to Alexandre Dumas to Albert Camus. While few historians working in European history today would consciously subscribe to such a statement, the underlying assumption that it encapsulates, the notion that Iberia lies somehow outside or at the margins of Europe proper, continues to shape the ways in which scholars not specializing in Iberian history discuss –or ignore– the Peninsula’s past. This tendency, a legacy, at least in part, of the long hangover of what Richard Kagan described as “Prescott’s paradigm,” casts Iberian history as idiosyncratic at best, backwards at worst.⁷ This trend is not, however, uniform across time, but manifests differently for different epochs. It is especially evident in textbook treatments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, where Spain’s supposed failed modernization means that it falls outside conventional narratives and thus, outside of mainstream historiography. C. A. Bayly’s popular *The Birth of the Modern World*, for example, does not mention Portugal at all and barely mentions Spain, and where it does, it relies upon outdated literature or omits highly influential works that have reshaped the field in

example, Pedro Cardim, Tamar Herzog, Gaetano Sabatini and José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, eds., *Polycentric Monarchies: How Did Early Modern Spain and Portugal Achieve and Maintain Global Hegemony?* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2012).

⁶ For an ambitious exception that includes Portugal, Spain and Latin America, see Manuel Suárez Cortina, ed., *Federalismos: Europa del Sur y América Latina en perspectiva histórica* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 2016). A similar comparative collection on federalism edited by the same editor in 2014 was titled *El Estado y la Nación: cuestión nacional y federalismo en la Europa del Sur*; but only included Italy and Spain. See Manuel Suárez Cortina and Marurizio Ridolfi, eds., *El Estado y la Nación: cuestión nacional y federalismo en la Europa del Sur* (Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2013).

⁷ Richard L. Kagan, “Prescott’s Paradigm: American Historical Scholarship and the Decline of Spain,” *American Historical Review* 101, no. 2 (April 1996):423-446.

the last few decades.⁸ While synthetic treatments of early modern European history are significantly less likely to omit the Iberian powers, mainly because of Spain's political dominance in the period and the emergence of Spanish and Portuguese global imperial power, the Iberian kingdoms tend to hover at the margins of many monographs and collections on the Middle Ages, sidelined to single chapters as the exception to the (English and French) rule. In general, Spain and even more so Portugal continue to occupy a peripheral position in relation to a European center. The tiny number of specialists in Iberian history within departments around North America is testimony to this continued state of affairs.⁹

New Bridges

These persistent boundaries provide the background context for the current generation of scholarship that is analyzed in this collection of essays. Within this context, individual scholars have pursued a variety of strategies to reduce, cross, or eliminate these borders in their own research projects. These individual efforts have also created tensions within Iberian (or Spanish and Portuguese) historiography, between old narratives and new themes. For the Spanish case, the tension between “difference” and “normalization” paradigms still haunts debates, as both Goode and Stucki illustrate in their articles. In general, however, most of the articles point to the ongoing trend of “mainstreaming” Iberian history. On the one hand, mainstreaming involves normalizing peninsular history within broader European and global trends. At the same time, it also implies adopting innovative theoretical, (inter) disciplinary and thematic approaches that incorporate Iberian history into the latest debates. Finally, as a corollary of both these trends, recent scholarship increasingly pursues comparative and transnational frameworks that are not premised on difference.

The normalization of Iberian history is a project that began after the end of the dictatorships, when the political transitions symbolized the countries' (re)integration into modern Europe. For the modern period, scholars like Isabel Burdiel, David Ringrose and Adrian Shubert challenged tropes about the “failure” of the nineteenth-century liberal revolution or economic and social development.¹⁰

⁸ C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1740-1814: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004). For example, David Ringrose's mapping of regional trading networks in nineteenth-century Spain would have served as an exemplary case study of the broader global patterns Bayly identifies. See David R. Ringrose, *Spain, Europe, and the Spanish Miracle, 1700-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996),

⁹ Adrian Shubert, “Spanish Historians and English-Speaking Scholarship,” *Social History* 29, no. 3 (2004): 358-363; Adrian Shubert, “Modern Spanish history in North America,” *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* 45, no. 2 (2015): 303–10.

¹⁰ David Ringrose, *Spain, Europe and the Spanish Miracle*; Isabel Burdiel, “Myths of Failure, Myths of Success: New Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Spanish Liberalism,” *Journal of*

But as the three modern articles in the dossier demonstrate, normalization has been an ongoing and uneven process. Goode's article on race points to a lingering framework of difference in regards to racial thinking in Spanish historiography that current scholars are still challenging, with significant innovations in the scholarship on race and colonialism but less so regarding racial thinking as it operated within the peninsula. In Davidson's article on women and gender, she illustrates the ongoing effort by women's historians to challenge old tropes of women's lack of agency within a "traditional" (i.e., backward) society, which exists alongside new trends. Perhaps the most extensive process of normalization in the modern period has occurred in the history of colonialism, as Stucki's article demonstrates. In the last couple of decades, the narrative of Spanish "difference" as a country for which empire more or less ceased to matter after 1824 has been dismantled. Instead, a wealth of innovative scholarship has argued that Spain's ongoing status as an imperial nation places it in the mainstream as opposed to the margins of Western European history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As this last case demonstrates, "normalization" should not be confused with "progress" in some cheery modernization paradigm. Instead, acknowledging Spain's continued status as an imperial nation or the role of race in defining hierarchies inside and outside the peninsula places it within the "normal" ambivalent trajectory of modernity, with all its contradictions, achievements and dark consequences.¹¹

In parallel to this process of reframing familiar themes, the articles demonstrate that Iberian scholars have also embraced new topics and theoretical approaches that have transformed the comparative scholarship on race, gender and colonialism. Thus, Goode situates the re-framing of the concept of "raza" within broader interdisciplinary trends in race theory that understand race as a constructed classificatory system that creates hierarchies of difference. This approach has allowed Spanish scholars to move beyond the old debates about whether "race" existed in order to examine the ways in which these hierarchies of difference were invented, transformed and deployed in different contexts and historical moments. This dynamic terrain includes scholarship in the related disciplines of literature and cultural studies, and the article makes the case that these historically-informed approaches should be incorporated into the historiography. Davidson's article on trends in gender studies tracks similar developments, including the disciplinary inter-mingling between history and cultural studies, evident in recent edited collections and the effort to situate the Iberian case into transnational and comparative frameworks. Following broader

Modern History 70, no. 4 (1998): 892-912; Adrian Shubert, *A Social History of Modern Spain* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990).

¹¹ See Pamela Radcliff, preface to *Modern Spain: 1808 to the Present* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), xii-xv for a more elaborate version of this argument.

trends, Iberian scholars are increasingly publishing works informed by queer studies, the history of masculinity and sexuality, alongside new approaches to women's history. For the history of colonialism, Stucki's article demonstrates that one of the main trends is to integrate the Iberian empires into a framework of global entanglements that, once again, compares and contrasts rather than differentiates. At the same time, the "normalization" of Iberian colonial history into the 20th century has included expansion into new themes, such as "bringing the empire back home", gendering the empire and post colonialism.

Related trends can be seen in the essays on medieval and early modern Iberia, with similar limitations. For example, both Armstrong-Partida and Poska note how scholars investigating medieval and early modern Iberian women, sexuality, and gender have moved away from older interpretive modes that privileged prescriptive literature and law – a tendency found across the field, not just in Iberian history. Instead, researchers have turned to emphasize women's agency and intersectionality, revealing the many ways in which Iberian women of all walks of life found ways to shape their own lives. Poska also highlights the ways in which scholars of Portuguese and Spanish history have brought questions and methods drawn from queer studies to bear on early modern sexuality and gender. At the same time, however, both contributors note the continued need to better integrate Iberian history into studies of European women, sex, and gender more broadly and into a more holistic view of empire. Likewise, Rowe's consideration of ongoing trends in the study of race in early modern Iberia points to the ways in which specialists in Portuguese and Spanish history have uncoupled premodern racializing concepts and practices from modern understandings predicated in the nation and in Enlightenment ideas about difference. Even so, she notes how Iberian history remains relatively marginalized from many of the highly visible symposia, conferences and other projects of the ongoing movement of premodern critical race studies.

An exception to this two-steps-forward-one-step-back situation seems to be the revived field of Mediterranean Studies, in which Iberianists and Iberian history have played a pivotal role. A quick survey of the leadership and advisory board of the Mediterranean Seminar, an interdisciplinary forum that has energized the field's resurgence in the past decade or so, demonstrates the close involvement of numerous prominent specialists in medieval and early modern Iberia.¹² Devereaux's contribution makes clear the many ways in which Iberian history has moved from the edges to an integral place within the movements, interconnections, and exchanges that defined the Mediterranean. It remains to be seen, however, whether a Mediterranean approach can overcome the longstanding tendency to separate the Iberian Peninsula from the rest of (northern) Europe or

¹² See <http://www.mediterraneanseminar.org/> for details.

whether an emphasis on Iberia's place in histories in and of the Mediterranean might actually reinforce that old division.

Toward the Future

How do old boundaries and new bridges help us chart paths toward the future of Iberian history? Our contributors' surveys of recent and ongoing developments suggest areas ripe for new investigation. Some, like Rowe and Goode, point to theoretical models drawn from other areas that have the potential to revitalize and renovate inquiries into race and racialization in Iberia across chronological fields. Others, like Devereaux, ask researchers to reevaluate the interpretive models they use and bring them into new relationships with others, rethinking an assumed directionality of influence and ideas and bringing the Mediterranean into connection with the Atlantic World. In terms of connectivity within the Iberian Peninsula, Stucki's article argues most explicitly for the value of pursuing a comparative framework for the Portuguese and Spanish empires as the path towards a truly global history. Many of the authors highlight topics that are emerging but still under-researched. In general, comparative Iberian history is a field ripe for further exploration in all chronological periods. In more specific areas, Armstrong-Partida indicates the need for work on medieval masculinity and the economic activity and migration of medieval Iberian women. For gender studies in the modern period, Davidson highlights the expansion of research on masculinities, but points to many areas such as queer studies that are just taking off. In addition, research on gender in the modern period tends to be over-concentrated on the Francoist era and sparse for the 19th century. For the history of colonialism in the modern era the chronological deficit is the reverse. Although Stucki highlights the growth of studies on Iberian colonialism in Africa up to the 1970s, he identifies the topic of post-colonialism and its legacies in the contemporary world as a target for future research. Above all, our contributors ask us all to redouble our efforts to connect our work to the many worlds beyond Iberia, tying it to larger geographic areas and chronological scopes, experimenting with perspectives and methods drawn from further afield, and, in doing so, rendering our field more visible and immediate to our colleagues who specialize in other times and climes.

Article Summaries:

Michelle Armstrong-Partida, "Making Women, Masculinity, Same-Gender Desire, and the GenderQueer Visible in Medieval Iberian History"

Michelle Armstrong-Partida's contribution offers an overview of both the past and the future of the history of women, gender, and sexuality in medieval Iberia. Her essay highlights both the persisting divisions that have tended to silo

Iberian history (many of which we have discussed above) and recent scholarship's overarching emphasis on the many forms of agency exercised by women within medieval Iberian culture. Armstrong-Partida notes how, while older studies that depended upon prescriptive literature and law offered a vision of women as passive objects, more recent work has drawn attention to women's roles as participants within medieval Iberian societies and cultures, engaged actors making decisions—economic, political, legal, religious, sexual, and more—and, in so doing, shaping their own lives. Like several of our authors, Armstrong-Partida offers a call for future action, urging a turn to alternative sources and methodologies, the adoption of developing new theoretical models, and a greater openness to a wide range of possibilities in the gender and sexual identities of medieval people.

Andrew W. Devereux, "Peninsularity: Iberian Studies and the Mediterranean Turn"

Among the boundaries across which new scholarship has been building bridges is the artificial division between the medieval and early modern periods. The continuity between the two eras, when considering the Mediterranean setting, occupies an important place in Andrew Devereux's contribution, which takes up the "Mediterranean turn" in medieval and early modern Iberian history with a look at the ways in which a reorientation toward the wider Mediterranean and the mobility, connectivity, and exchanges that characterized it can shift our perspectives on a wide array of areas of inquiry, from imperial expansion to religious diversity and identity, diasporas and diasporic communities, frontier zones, captives and captive-taking, communications, provisioning and foodways, and more. He notes the fruitful results of a resurgent Mediterranean studies, such as the decentering of the place of 1492 as a pivot point between medieval and modern, Mediterranean and Atlantic, and the ways in which a Mediterranean perspective destabilizes categories and institutions that have long been treated as impermeable or monolithic. In the final sections of his essay, Devereux reconnects the Mediterranean to the Atlantic to interrogate the parallels and ties between the two zones and to call into question an assumed East to West directionality of influence and precedent.

Allyson M. Poska, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Recent Scholarship in Women's History, Gender History, and Sexuality Studies"

Allyson Poska's essay carries into the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries many of the themes and issues identified in Michelle Armstrong-Partida's overview of the medieval period. Poska's survey of changes in the literature since 2010 highlights scholars' emphasis on early modern Spanish women's agency and intersectionality in a wide array of arenas, such as property rights, legal and notarial systems, mobility, devotional practices and religious

careers, literary and musical production, politics and diplomacy, Enlightenment culture, and more. Her essay points to the fruitful outcomes of “queering the archive,” reading not only for what the sources can tell us about early modern ideas and experiences of sexuality and gender but also the ways in which those sources were created and preserved. She also points to differences in approach and emphasis between scholars based in Iberia and those based in the Americas, and calls for new efforts to bring both Spanish history and women’s history, gender history, and sexuality studies into the mainstream of scholarship.

Erin Kathleen Rowe, “Race in Early Modern Iberia”

In her essay on race in early modern Portugal and Spain, Erin Rowe looks both backwards and forwards, to the past and to the future. She begins by excavating the racialization of Iberian history in nineteenth- and twentieth-century writing about the peninsula’s past, arguing that narratives about race lie at the very root of modern Iberian historiography. Rowe connects this historiographical past to a discussion of more recent approaches to early modern Iberian concepts, categories, and practices of race. She raises a host of thorny questions: Is race tied to the nation and the Enlightenment? Were premodern ideas about religion, heresy, and heredity racial? How did Iberian racializing ideas and institutions change in the colonial context? In the final section, Rowe considers how an engagement with Black Studies promises to enrich investigations of race in early modern Iberia with new methodologies, new approaches, and above all, a new orientation that puts racialized people, not racializing ideas and practices, at the center.

Jessica Davidson, “Recent Scholarship in Gender and Sexuality in Modern Iberian History: Reinforcing Agency, Locating Cross-Cultural Connections, and Integrating Sexualities”

Jessica Davidson’s article on the recent scholarship on gender and sexuality in Spain during the modern era analyzes the combination of traditional themes and new approaches that define the current field. She begins with a review of some of the classic English-language works on Spanish women’s history that explored the dynamic between conservative gender norms and female agency. The bulk of the article is dedicated to new approaches that apply gender analysis to other marginalized groups, such as LGBTQ groups and individuals, as well as to studies of masculinity. At the same time, she demonstrates that scholars continue to refine their approaches to female agency in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts, analyzing how women from across the political spectrum found ways to participate in the major events and transitions of modern Spanish history. A common thread with some of the other articles is the emergence of transnational approaches to gender history, as well as the interdisciplinary

contributions of some of the recent collected volumes.

Andreas Stucki, “From Normalization” to Global History: Empire and Colonialism in Modern Iberian Historiography”

Andreas Stucki’s article explores the dynamic recent scholarship on both the Spanish and Portuguese empires, emphasizing what he calls a process of “normalization” in historiographical terms. The article tracks how the Iberian empires in the modern period have become progressively integrated into the main themes of European colonial historiography, in contrast to earlier perceptions of exceptionalism, marked by decline and decadence after the loss of the South American colonies in the early nineteenth century. Instead, recent scholarship has emphasized the themes of longevity, adaptation and flexibility, as well as the continuing relevance of the empire for Iberian metropolitan history until the decolonization of the 1970s and beyond. The evolution of the field began with the generational and political shift of the post-Transition era, when the official inward-focused narratives of the Salazar and Franco dictatorships were gradually replaced by scholarship that referenced broader historiographical trends, such as global entanglements and the intersections of gender, race and empire. In terms of future directions, Stucki advocates for more comparative scholarship on the Iberian empires in the modern period and more attention to the theme of postcolonial legacies.

Joshua Goode, “When Was(n’t) There Race in Spain: New Trends in the Study of an Old Idea in Spain’s Past, Present and Future”

Joshua Goode’s article on the historiography of race in the modern era maps the innovative avenues of interdisciplinary research that have analyzed hierarchies of difference in the colonial world and the peninsula and situates them in the comparative scholarship on race and racial thought. The article interrogates the evolving dynamic between classic frameworks of Spanish “difference” with regards to racial thought and recent trends that take comparison rather than difference as their point of departure. The clearest trend has been the growth in scholarship on race and colonialism, which has expanded along with research into Spain’s continued identity as an imperial nation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Less developed is an emerging scholarship that re-frames the old debates about Spain’s plural vs. unified national “identity” from the perspective of ethnic categories, in parallel to other nationalisms of the period. For example, situating the scholarship on anti- and philo-semitism in this framework, the article analyzes how the Jewish past was reconfigured to fit specific historical contexts and nationalist imperatives, whether building ties with colonial Morocco, demonizing the enemy in the Civil War or demonstrating Spain’s multicultural diversity in the present. The last section examines scholarship on debates over

race and immigration in contemporary Spain, and how the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are being contested, as in other European countries.