

*Memory, Transition and the Transnational  
in Iberia*

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## INTRODUCTION

SUSANA ROCHA RELVAS, MARK GANT & SIÂN EDWARDS

Within the aims and scope of the Association for Contemporary Iberian Studies (ACIS), the current volume is the fifth collection of selected studies drawing on research presented to the Association, in this case papers delivered at the 43rd Annual Conference hosted online by the University of Cardiff in September 2021, postponed from 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This edited collection covers a wide range of disciplines, from political science to historical, social, cultural, artistic and literary aspects of contemporary relevance in the intra- and extra-Peninsular spaces, reflecting the latest trends in the academic field of Iberian Studies. The chapters rely on cutting-edge research under several distinct themes, from memory politics and historical revisionism, committed to uncovering new data on Peninsular dictatorships, to the Spanish Civil War, the Francoist legacy and transition to democracy, and colonial and postcolonial exchanges between Iberia and other regions on a global scale.

In close association with these key themes, motifs and research areas, pressing topics such as migration, resistance, memory, exile and trauma, violence, sexuality and feminism, and their literary and artistic representations, form the core of this volume. The book benefits from eclectic methodologies in the study of social realities in the Iberian Peninsula (identities, cultures and nationalities) and devotes a considerable number of chapters to comparative and interdisciplinary approaches, like those dedicated to Inter-Art Studies and Gender Studies, combining literature, cinema and fine arts to explore the representation of war, social conflicts and their consequences, such as trauma, exile and social discrimination. More specifically, new contributions to Gender Studies examine the image and reception of Spanish religious and secular female characters, as well as revealing female writers and filmmakers marginalised by the literary canon. Cross-border relations within the European space are also highlighted, with special emphasis on contacts, influences and exchanges between neighbouring Peninsular regions and nations, broadening out to Anglo-Iberian and French-Iberian contacts and influences in the political, historical and cultural domains. Colonial and postcolonial legacies and transatlantic crossings are represented here too, not only focusing on foreign affairs and cultural practices in other latitudes beyond Iberia, but also shedding new light on African diasporas, and on South American and Asian dialogues and exchanges.

Publishing innovative contributions within the scope of Iberian Studies can be seen as the most reliable barometer for a more comprehensive understanding of the potentialities of this emerging and consistently productive academic field. Therefore, research in these areas has proven to be of great potential and highly captivating due to the diversity of themes to be explored. It engages the academic community devoted not only to the study of peninsular affairs, but also to the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking worlds, taking into account the historical and cultural relations that bring them together. Along these lines, bridges and networks between Iberia and Africa, South America and Asia have been increasingly important subjects for research fostered by ACIS. They are represented here by chapters on the challenges facing the Iberian Peninsula in recent decades, concerning the colonial past, war, dictatorships and strains in the transition process to democracy, culminating in integration into the European community and favouring closer contact between the Iberian regions, especially those sharing borders.

The collection therefore reflects the progressive expansion of Iberian Studies, which has been widening its scope to Lusophone and Hispanic Studies and attracting scholars not only from universities in the English-speaking world, but also from other cultural spheres with a significant tradition in Hispanic Studies, such as Germany, Hungary and France and even more distant countries such as Japan, which have participated consistently and continuously in the annual ACIS conferences. Reflecting the international scope of these gatherings, this volume therefore brings together contributions by both emerging scholars and established academics from countries including India, Brazil, France, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Ireland, the UK, Hungary and Mexico. The Association's role as a catalyst for research is attracting an increasing number of academics from all over the world as well as from Iberia and the UK.

The sixteen chapters in this book are structured into four sections that serve as umbrellas for the themes and topics developed in the subsequent chapters, providing consistency in both form and content.

The first section, "Spanish Civil War, Dictatorship, Exile & Resistance", gathers chapters focused on revisiting historical perspectives on these highly significant periods for Iberian Studies. In the opening chapter, "SIDBRINT: Memoria Histórica y Brigadas Internacionales", Teresa Abelló Güell and Lourdes Prades Artigas present their ground-breaking Digital Information System on the International Brigades. This major research project, which pays tribute to historical memory, aims to carry out the most exhaustive survey of the foreign volunteers who joined the Brigades to fight for the Republic between 1936 and 1939. In Chapter Two, "Understanding the 'Pío Moa' Phenomenon", Durba Banerjee undertakes a comparative study of Moa's revisionist interpretation of the

origins of the Spanish Civil War using A.J.P. Taylor's study of *The Origins of the Second World War*, contextualizing his work within Spanish historiography as a political act that filled a critical vacuum and led to the diffusion of a simplistic and erroneous version of the past among sections of the public. In Chapter Three, Manuel López Forjas continues the theme of re-examining Spain's traumatic mid-twentieth century with "An Approach to Moorland Vegetation: Political Philosophy in Franco's Spain". He uses three case studies to explore the little-known and sometimes controversial work of those philosophers who did not go into exile at the end of the Civil War, but instead chose to work within the Francoist university system. He concludes that, despite the impact of censorship, philosophical ideas retained some critical perspectives and he advocates a more holistic approach to the intellectual life of the period.

Section Two, dedicated to "Feminism & Gender Equality in Literature, Film & Fiction Serials", opens with María Encarnación Carrillo's chapter on "The Spanish Gypsy by George Eliot: Fedalma's Decision and the Heroine's Journey", in which she revisits this nineteenth-century narrative from the perspective of Geosophy, revealing the protagonist as an active heroine creating her own destiny in a contested landscape. Rathí Anandu's chapter, "Cortar escenas con un cuchillo: la maternidad y la sexualidad en *Volver* (2006) de Almodóvar", brings together Gender Studies and cinema, focusing on the representation of women in Almodóvar's films, analysing pressing topics within the scope of gender emancipation such as motherhood, sexuality, femininity and female empowerment. In the following chapter, "Teresa de Jesús. Josefina Molina y la televisión desde una nueva perspectiva de género", Hernando Gómez Prada analyses the social impact of the TV programme *Teresa de Jesús* (1984) from film director Josefina Molina and the relevance of her discourse in building a new, more empowered female imaginary. Considering that Spanish female filmmakers have always been relegated to the space of invisibility, erased from the canon, the author delves into audiovisual work by women, demonstrating that beyond being made for the big or small screen, it has transformed the audiovisual field as a whole in Spain. Monica Varese continues this focus on the reinterpretation of Teresa de Jesús in her chapter entitled "'A markedly individual and dangerous fellow creature': Kate O'Brien on Teresa of Avila", in which she reveals how the Irish writer de-Catholicises and even de-Christianises this controversial female saint as part of the critical examination of the Church that takes place in her literary corpus.

The third section, "Memory & Trauma in Literature, Cinema & Art", comprises a series of chapters exploring aspects of representation of the violent Iberian past. In Chapter Eight, "Literature and Cinema: A Narrative Palimpsest in Vergílio Ferreira's Novels?", Luís Cardoso opens the section with his close reading of the role of memory in the writer's novels and their relationship to the presentation of space and time in word and film. He reveals a strong relationship with Nouveau Roman and Nouveau Cinema and a series of multimodal connections pointing to the permanent questioning of a range of boundaries in the writer's work. In the following chapter, Deirdre Kelly turns to the graphic novel in "Characterization and the Aesthetic Representation of Violence in the Graphic Novel *Esperaré Siempre tu Regreso*, by Jordi Peidro", in which she picks up the theme of memory and explores how the writer and illustrator navigates ethical and aesthetic issues in representing the trauma and violence of civil war, exile and deportation. She concludes that he uses a range of kitsch and anti-kitsch devices to draw attention to those victims of fascism and Nazism who have been silenced by underrepresentation and also to draw attention to the victims of traumatic histories more widely. In Chapter Ten, "El diálogo entre Carpentier y Goya en *El Siglo de las Luces*", Stella Galvão continues this theme of the relationship between violence, text and the visual by developing an inter-art and transatlantic approach in focusing on literary and artistic representations of the warlike confrontation that afflicts humanity. This dialogue between art forms crosses two historical periods and locates the nineteenth-century Spanish artist Francisco Goya and the twentieth-century Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier within the same dilemmas. Blanca Gómez García concludes the section with "Memory and Genre in Arturo Barea's *La Forja de un Rebelde* and *La Raíz Rota*", in which she examines the relationship between autobiography, history and fiction in the underrated final volume of the author's trilogy. She contends that its generic hybridity lends it a clear interconnection with the two better-known novels, and that by distancing the protagonist from the self, Barea was able to enhance the novel's significant testimonial importance in the representation of Republican exile.

Section Four embraces a range of socio-political and cultural practices and transnational networks, delving deeper into peripheries and cross-border literary and cultural relations. In his chapter focusing on the historical relations between Spain and Morocco, Mohamed Douief Merras provides a thorough account of the strategic role of the former North African colony in Spanish foreign affairs, analysing the approaches of successive Spanish democratic governments towards Morocco's dispute over the Western Sahara, a policy guided for decades by neutrality and recently officialising a pro-Moroccan stance. This chapter also focuses on sensitive issues such as the self-determination claimed by Western Sahara, the Spanish possession of Ceuta and Melilla, uncontrolled migratory flows and the threat of terrorism. In Guadalupe Nieto Caballero's chapter, "El conflicto de la tierra a través de la literatura: la narrativa de Trigo, Saramago y Delibes", the author stresses the problem of social inequalities in both Spain and Portugal, giving rise to multiple interpretations in literature from the Spanish writers Felipe Trigo and Miguel Delibes and the Portuguese Nobel prize winner José Saramago. Border and peripheral spaces like Extremadura and Alentejo are the settings for the two novels discussed. These provide fertile ground

for the study of comparative links, taking into account the affinities that can be found between them, especially the social clash between landowners and peasants, ultimately leading to an attempt at agrarian reform in Portugal and Spain. In Chapter Fourteen, Kata Murányi broadens the Iberian focus to a global and postcolonial perspective in her exploration of “Lusophone Identity in the Urban Context: Creative City Practices through Examples of Lisbon, São Paulo and Goa”. She uses recent studies on path dependence in the complex field of urban creativity to examine the role of the creative economy in identity formation in the chosen cities, providing them with distinctive features within the global markets in which they compete. She concludes that in these cities the Lusophone heritage is an important presence, often blended with other influences, and that bottom-up and top-down creative processes combine to create dynamic environments that lend these cities a key role in terms of path dependency in their respective countries. Then, in Chapter Fifteen, Carlos Pazos-Justo continues the theme of transnational networks in proposing the concept of *Euroiberization* to describe the relational framework within Iberian regions in its economic, social and cultural dimensions, which are most visible in Portugal’s northern region and Galicia. He examines the impact and consequences of this relational framework for the reinforcement or dissolution of identities or the creation of new ones within the Spanish-Portuguese borders. Even more relevant, according to the author, is to find out whether this dialectic of affinity contributes to the well-being of the communities engaged in the process. In the final chapter, Darío Varela Fernández also uses a comparative transnational framework in order to examine how the magazines *Acção Realista*, *Action Française* and *Acción Española* promoted conservative nationalist projects in Portugal, Spain and France between 1920 and 1930, sharing nostalgia for authoritarian monarchical regimes and projecting a common enmity for liberal, democratic republics, while providing the writers involved with useful vehicles for career advancement and preparing the ground for the coming authoritarian regimes.

In conclusion, following the thematic trends in Iberian Studies that academia has witnessed in recent years, the chapters in this volume provide a broad and insightful view on the multiple dynamics and connections within the relational space of Iberia and its political, social, economic and cultural domains. The work undertaken by a growing number of academics who seek to present innovative lines of research is adding value to this promising area of study. Therefore, this book will be of particular interest to early-career scholars and established experts alike who wish to deepen and broaden their horizons in this rapidly developing field of Area Studies.

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