

## From the Editors

Medieval Iberia, it has recently been written, is anything but a well-bounded geographical unit.<sup>1</sup> It was—and, on the level of historical memory, remains—a space of interaction, its borders permeable and varied, in a changing set of networks encompassing not just western Europe, but also the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Middle East, as well (we might add) as the Atlantic world. It is this capacious sense of ‘Iberia,’ diverse and mutable, that we would like to bring to this new *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies (JMIS)*. Moving away from an understanding of this place and period as part of a unitary ‘Hispanic’ society, in which Castilian and Latin cultures dominate to the virtual exclusion of others, the pages of *JMIS* offer a forum for study of the multiple languages, cultures, and historical processes of the Iberian Peninsula—and the zones with which it was in contact—in ways that move beyond the retrospective constructions of the modern nation-state and other current forms of political-cultural identity.

The term ‘medieval,’ being, of course, precisely a construction of modernity—and indeed, of those colonial frames that Nadia R. Altschul reexamines, in this inaugural issue of the journal, in “The Future of Postcolonial Approaches to Medieval Iberian Studies”—is therefore to be understood as a heuristic device. Recognizing the continuing vitality of debates about the nature and scale of change in the fourth and fifth centuries (and about the value of the term ‘Late Antiquity’), and conscious of the artificiality of the boundaries associated with 1492, we encourage submission of all innovative scholarship of interest to the community of medievalists and Iberianists. We welcome work that engages peninsular Iberia in relation to other parts of the ‘post-classical’ world; which explores links of colonization and exchange with the ‘Maghreb’ (a

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Dangler, “Edging Towards Iberia,” *diacritics* 36, nos. 3-4 (Fall-Winter 2006), 12-26.

term which, in eastern medieval Arabic sources, characteristically encompassed al-Andalus); that embraces the study of Occitania; that addresses Iberia's growing presence in the Mediterranean from the thirteenth century onwards; and that, in a 'late medieval' context, addresses Iberia in a transatlantic or Latin American frame. In this issue, Damian Smith's "Saint Rosendo, Cardinal Hyacinth and the Almohads" serves to place Galician-Portuguese church history in the broader context of peninsular and papal ecclesiastical reform, and against the backdrop of escalating tension with Northwest Africa.

As the composition of our diverse and international editorial board indicates, we are open to all methodological approaches and disciplines. We will be delighted to review high-quality submissions in archaeology, art, architecture, and music—in this field, Dwight Reynolds's study of "New Directions in the Study of Medieval Arabo-Andalusi Music" sets the tone—as well as philosophy and religious studies, history, codicology, manuscript studies and the multiple literary and linguistic traditions of Iberia. In the belief that 'theory must always return to the earth to get recharged with new energy',<sup>2</sup> it is our hope that the journal will bring theoretically informed approaches to the field into creative contact with more empirically minded scholarship. Collaborative work, such as, here, Jorge Ortuño Molina and Juan Leonardo Soler Milla's "Espacio jurisdiccional y espacio económico en el Sureste Peninsular en la Baja Edad Media," is encouraged, and submissions in languages other than English will be considered at the discretion of the editors.

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<sup>2</sup> Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, "For Peace, Justice, and Culture: The Intellectual in the Twenty-First Century," in "Presidential Forum: The Role of Intellectuals in the Twenty-First Century," *Profession* (2006): 39 [33–39].

In order to advance dialogue with non-Iberianists, the editors will solicit comparative articles and discussions of the significance of new developments in medieval studies to the Iberian field and vice-versa. Critical surveys of recent scholarship that would be relevant to Iberianists in different disciplines but will also be of significance to those outside of Iberian studies—such as, here, Maya Soifer’s “Beyond *Convivencia*. Critical Reflections on the Historiography of Interfaith Relations in Christian Spain”—will be a regular feature of *JMIS*. The editors are keenly interested in interdisciplinary work combining radically different forms of sources or theoretical proposals, such as the architectural and textual evidence which Scott Brown pursues here in “The Verse Inscription from the Deposition Relief at Santo Domingo de Silos: Word, Image, and Act in Medieval Art”. We welcome ‘unconventional’ types of submissions, and as we think ahead to future issues, we urge readers to consider the possibilities for their particular field. Such unconventional submissions might include brief ‘opinion pieces’ or archival reports, debates, or individual or clustered interviews with prominent scholars in the field. In technological terms, they might also include downloadable audio clips or ‘podcasts’ (digital/MP3 sound recordings), video files—Taylor and Francis are now able to host multimedia moving image files on the web. We will also consider for publication scholarly responses to articles published in previous issues of *JMIS*.

Themes that members of our editorial board have identified as being of particular importance include: conversion; peacemaking; the public display of violence and the theater of war; comparative rulership and political propaganda in al-Andalus and Christian Iberia; the anthropology of political culture; Jewish and Muslim communities under Christian rule; the impact of the *autonomías* (Spain’s present-day political-administrative divisions) on perceptions of the Spanish Middle Ages; the future of cultural theory in medieval Iberian studies; the

archaeology of early medieval rural settlement and religious architecture; landscape history, paleobotany, and environmental studies; the intersection of historiography, literature and folklore; and recent trends in the application of IT and Internet resources to medieval sources.

Many invisible hands have been at work in the shaping of this project. We extend our particular gratitude to Simon Barton, whose initiative to launch a new journal in Spanish history marked a moment of genesis for this journal, and whose work on border crossing in medieval Iberia continues to gesture to new ways of approaching the field, and to George Greenia, whose selfless generosity in offering guidance has always been unsurpassed. Brian Catlos, newly appointed as president of the American Academy of Research Historians of Medieval Spain, has helped to ensure a partnership between JMIS and AARHMS, the details of which can be consulted on our respective web sites. At Taylor and Francis, Christine Appel, Helen Smee, Lauren DiClaudio, and Gail Carter have helped to shepherd the journal through many a high pass. Finally, without the financial, logistical and collegial support of Paul Szarmach, Rand Johnson, and James Murray (directors past and present of the Medieval Institute at Western Michigan University), Lewis Pyenson (Dean of the Graduate College at WMU), our editorial assistants Marcie Noble and Brian Gunderson, and—at Hofstra University—Herman Berliner (Provost) and Bernard Firestone (Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), this journal would have never have come to fruition.

Simon Doubleday, Pablo Pastrana-Pérez, Julio Escalona