

IBERIA IN TRANSIT: ADAPTATIONS, MUTATIONS, TRANSLATIONS

The theme of this issue of Lucero, "Iberia in Transit: Adaptations, Mutations, Translations," has not emerged without a certain amount of struggle and controversy. The difficulty lay in finding a subject broad enough to embrace not only issues in Peninsular Studies, but in Transatlantic and Latin American Studies as well. In other words, we wanted to choose a topic that was at once global, so as to be flexible enough to encompass the many cultures of the Hispanic and Lusophone worlds, and yet still thematically precise, with the concept of "Iberia" as the base of our inquiry. Ideally we sought to open a space for the interpretation of "Iberia" and make it available to our potential contributors, whose commentary on any number of topics in Iberian culture would be welcomed, including—but not limited to—politics, history, art and literature, especially as they have been transmitted throughout the world from the Early Modern period to the mass-media explosion of the 21st century that has permanently changed the mechanisms of cultural diffusion.

Consequently our goal was to explore the definition and articulation of "Iberia" as it has appeared across the ages, as both cultural aggressor and receptor, adapting and mutating as it has come into contact with other civilizations. Questions we felt were relevant were: How has the active conglomeration of "Iberia"—Spain, Portugal, Cataluña, Galicia, el País Vasco—retained its dynamism and traditions? How has "Iberia" managed to transcend its own locality, and what is the significance of Iberian culture as a global phenomenon? We were creating an ample terrain for the interrogation of the continuing validity of the term "Iberia"—a query that we took directly to our peers and our mentors.

Choosing "Iberia" as a point of departure proved controversial in that it provoked a variety of responses from students and faculty, some of whom have embraced the concept of "Iberia" as an inclusive designation useful for study, and others who have avoided or rejected the term as archaic, vague, and, at worst, evocative of Spain's national airline company. The dissonance of clashing opinions about Iberia-as-region and Iberia-as-concept proved to be a much richer discourse than we had originally intended, although we knew that by proposing a polemical term as the center of this issue of Lucero the responses would highlight the inherent discord therein. We appreciated this dialogue of voices and perspectives as we read the submissions, and due to the variety of responses, we decided that rather than remove these elements of conflict from the topic we had selected, we would instead ask members of the academy to voice their opinions on the matter of "Iberia".

In lieu of a traditional editorial, therefore, we submit to you here the results of our survey of a gathering of prominent faculty members from Modern Language departments at various institutions across the country. Their opinions, both provocative and illuminating, have given us room for much thought about the history and the continuing significance of the designation "Iberia." It is our hope that these responses will also give you an opportunity to reflect on the ways in which you choose to think about "Iberia" as a geographical, cultural, and linguistic locus for study.

Thank you for reading.

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