

Ricci, Cristián H. (editor). *Twenty-First Century Arab and African Diasporas in Spain, Portugal and Latin America*. Routledge, 2023. 255 pp.

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What borders demarcate the field of Luso-Hispanic studies? Three decades ago, Jorge Schwartz made the call to bring down the “Line of Tordesilhas / Tordesillas” that still divides much scholarship on Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking worlds. Such an undertaking, for Robert Patrick Newcomb, has the potential to “question the deeper ontological value of categories such as *Latin America*, *Íbero-America*, and *Iberia*” (127, emphasis in original). In reframing the study of Latin America, Portugal, and Spain, Cristián H. Ricci’s edited volume on African and Arab diasporic subjects straddles outward-facing boundaries and, to borrow from Ann Stoler, the “interior frontiers” of Luso-Hispanic studies.

With an introduction and fifteen body chapters, the volume is made up of three sections on Spain, Portugal, and Latin America, respectively. The globalizing map of Luso-Hispanic studies unfolds in “imaginative geographies,” to use Edward Said’s phrasing, connected to North Africa, Southern Africa, Southwest Asia (a.k.a., the “Middle East”), West Africa, and beyond. The volume’s African and Arab protagonists, crisscrossing literal and metaphorical borders, are conceptualized as occupying what Homi Bhabha characterized as an “in-between,” “liminal,” or “Third Space.” Such insights of Ricci’s key interlocutor bring into the same purview an array of migrant trajectories. The five chapters in the first section on Spain center on Equatoguineans, Moroccans, Sahrawis, and West Africans, respectively. The five chapters on Portugal in the second section look at Angolans and Mozambicans, as well as Arabic, Andalusian, and Orientalist traces. Lastly, the five chapters in the third section on Latin America highlight Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian migrants and their descendants. As Bhabha’s idea of a Third Space can “give rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation,” the volume’s ambitious breadth reveals the plurality of diasporic subject formation and a globalizing Afro-Asia-Luso-Hispanic-Latin América.

In the first section, Daniela Flesler explores Spain’s cinematic and literary representations of integration and schooling, depicting the assimilationist expectations shouldered by North African migrants, who “talk back” against structural and symbolic violence. Raquel Vega-Durán considers

affect in documentary films that make more visible the struggles of *porteadoras*, Moroccan women who carry goods across the border from Spain to Morocco. Debra Faszter-McMahon takes a transnational feminist approach to Sahrawi women writers in Spain whose poetry challenges colonial legacies via gendered critiques of so-called brotherhood. Mahan Ellison highlights the narrative strategies that Equatoguinean authors employ in Spain, confronting colonial and postcolonial constructs of sexuality and identity. Anna Tybinko draws attention to the racialized future of Spain through the intellectual and political work of mothering led by women writers from Benin and broader West Africa.

In the second section, Daniel Silva looks at literary and music production that questions the association between Blackness and migration in a broader critique of Portugal's racial capitalism, highlighting the links between Black anti-colonial struggle and Portuguese-ness. Margarida Rendeiro explores street art that feature Blackness in distinct ways on Lisbon's urban periphery and center, mirroring the uneven reckoning with imperial legacies of race and racism. Sandra Sousa asks how a new generation of Angolan diasporic writers critique colonial processes of racialization and put into check the whiteness of Europe. Catarina de Nunes Almeida proposes to redefine the very idea of "Luso-Arabic poetry" as a genre of not only the past but also the present, writing against the effacing of Arab and Muslim legacies in Portugal. Everton Machado explores the simultaneous exoticification and selective erasure of Arab Muslim pasts and presents in the Portuguese opera, "Geraldo e Samira."

In the third section, Heba El Attar examines the award-winning journalist, Faride Zerán, who brings together both Arab and Chilean histories in the hybrid genre of the *crónica*. Marcus Palmer positions late-twentieth- and twenty-first-century narrative constructs of Arab heritage in Argentina as connected to, and not separate from, early-twentieth-century *mahjar* literary movements. Angela Haddad "proposes the death of the Arab" in the Orientalist mode popularized by boom writers like Gabriel García Márquez, directing attention toward Luis Fayad's *La caída de los puntos cardinales* that deconstructs mainstream representations. Rose Mary Salum explores a Lebanese-Mexican memoir as a prism of the past and present, foregrounding the "otherness that remains" among the descendants of migrant forebears who settled in Mexico more than one-hundred years ago. Nazir Ahmed Can focuses on Raduan Nassar's *Ancient Tillage* that "anticipates," rather than imitates, "a set of questions that would mobilize the theory of translation in the decades that followed" (239).

Read in its entirety, this volume avoids the tropes of "competition, hierarchies of whiteness, [and] replacement paradigms" that Therí Pickens critiques in her insightful study of Arab and Black bodies in the U.S. Though the fifteen chapters on African and Arab diasporas are separate from one another, the volume's contributors share intersectional sensibilities. The classed, ethnicized, gendered,

racialized, and sexualized dynamics under study are not among the diasporic subjects in the volume's title, but rather in relation to colonial, postcolonial, national, and transnational hierarchies. Together, the volume displaces, without ignoring entanglements with, Anglophone and Francophone genealogies, where most diaspora and transnational studies still start or end. That being said, scholars of peripheralized cultural production in North America would benefit from this work. Indeed, the Portuguese- and Spanish-language-dominant settings of this volume not only contribute to scholarship in African diasporic studies, but also "can productively open up the historiography of Arab *Amairka* and shift it away from some of its epistemological inequalities," as Sarah Gualtieri recently wrote about the urgency to further broaden a heretofore U.S.-centered Arab American studies. Indeed, an Afro-Arab angle can expand the purview of a Luso-Hispanic-Latinoamerica, not unlike the relatively recent advent of the acronym, SWANA (Southwest Asian and North African) among a newer generation of activists and scholars in North America. This naming can be the passport across exterior and interior frontiers.

In exploring commonality and plurality, *Twenty-First Century Arab and African Diasporas in Spain, Portugal and Latin America* brings home the point that difference is not only a target for erasure or exclusion, but also a marker of contestation, resilience, and solidarity. Importantly, the editor and fifteen contributors to the volume share training in Hispanic literature, Portuguese and Brazilian studies, and Romance studies, as well as teach in African literature, Luso-Hispanic studies, Spanish, Spanish and Portuguese departments, or related thematic units in Peninsular and Transatlantic studies, among akin intellectual homes in other linguistic and literary pursuits. Their interventions respectively map African and Arab migrant geographies in the redrawing of boundaries across and around "Latin America," "Portugal," and "Spain." In so doing, their endeavor helps to globalize the very relationality of these and other ontologies. In dialogue with the aforementioned SWANA rubric, such work could help point the way to what might be called Afro-sia-Luso-Hispanic studies, borrowing the compound term, Afro-Asia, from the center founded nearly six decades ago at the Colegio de México, and the long-standing journal based at the Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA), in Brazil. Undeterred by those who would police boundaries in and beyond the academy, this ongoing and critical line of scholarly inquiry gives voice to and hears subjects working the borders of area and ethnic studies, comparative literature, and cultural studies.