

Call for Contributions: *postmedieval* cluster, “Approaching Premodern Critical Race Studies in Iberia and Latin America”

Studies of the literature and culture of Iberia before 1500 have produced important theories and continue to unearth crucial data about constructions of race in this period. Race has often been conceptualised as ethnicity or conceived of as a somatic characteristic and/or religious identity, and early contributions on the topic were made by scholars such as Américo Castro, María Rosa Menocal, and David Nirenberg, among others. More recent work approaches race through Blackness (*La corónica* 52 [1], 2023), which Nicholas R. Jones claims has been obfuscated or ignored as a result of scholarly focus on Castro’s *convivencia*. Forthcoming articles delimit the parameters of race to the long fourteenth century (*Digital Philology* 15 [1]). Studies on the early Americas have, meanwhile, concentrated on the racialization inherent to Spanish colonial violence and the expansion of capitalism (e.g. Fisher and O’Hara 2009) and have explored Indigenous conceptions of identity in specific geographical contexts (e.g. Broda and Báez-Jorge 2007).

Thinking across disciplines and temporal and geographical categories, this critical cluster of *postmedieval* aims to bridge the copious work on race by specialists of premodern Iberia and Latin America, and the more recent studies of Premodern Critical Race Studies (PCRS), thus far largely spearheaded by those working in other linguistic contexts and fields. The latter have importantly overturned the problematic view that the period more commonly defined as “medieval” was “preracial” (Kim 2021) and invite us to explore how temporalization and temporal terminology have perpetuated the notion that race and racism are phenomena solely instated by capitalism and colonialism. At the same time, we note capitalism’s inherent dependence on systemic racial division starting in the early modern era of imperialism and colonization, thus marking a shift from earlier times (Wilson Gilmore, 2020; Robinson, 2020). Here we therefore encourage scholars to consider the opportunities that the premodern and, more expansively, the nonmodern (e.g. Rabasa 2009) can bring to race studies in the societies and centuries in question, beyond the eurocentric “medieval”.

We seek to address how scholars of nonmodern Iberia and Latin America can contribute to discussions on and theorisations of PCRS. How might we respond to PCRS’ call to go beyond seeing race as a taxonomic feature of nonmodern life to viewing it as a strategic and contingent social construct, formed in order to wield power over, and distribute power unevenly to, different groups (Chakravarty and Thompson 2021, vii)? How might we respond to Geraldine Heng’s proposition that “race is a structural relationship for the articulation and management of human differences, rather than a substantive content” (2018, 19), which has in recent years inspired many new studies of race before 1500? How does race as a sociopolitical and economic structural component differ across nonmodern times? How might existing studies on race in

nonmodern Iberia and Latin America be nuanced or developed with the methodological tools developed by PCRS scholars?

In addition, we seek to interrogate how foundational work in nonmodern Iberian studies, by Castro, Menocal, and others, influenced the way in which race has been conceived of in our field, and what merit is there in bringing these studies into dialogue with PCRS. Beyond Iberia, we also invite scholars to consider how nonmodern, Indigenous conceptions of identity challenge eurocentric racialisations and how Latin American scholars have approached race and identity in Latin America and Iberia before and after the colonial violence perpetuated by the Iberian Kingdoms. We are sharing a bibliography below, which is by no means prescriptive: authors are encouraged to engage with it and/or go beyond it.

To these ends, we invite scholars to reflect in varied and flexible scholarly forms, and offer the opportunity to utilize one of [the alternative formats that have been developed and recently expanded by the editors at *postmedieval*](#). We particularly encourage submissions that are briefer than standard research articles that could range between 2000 and 5000 words, depending on their format, but are also open to longer pieces. Submissions should follow *postmedieval*'s [style guide](#). Please send any inquiries to the co-editors of the cluster, Rebecca De Souza (rebecca.desouza@stir.ac.uk) and Jean Dangler (jdangler@tulane.edu).

Titles, format of submission, and abstracts of no more than 300 words are due by **October 15th 2025**. Potential contributors will be selected and notified by **November 1st**, and complete manuscripts should be received by **February 15th 2026**. Contributors should send both directly to the co-editors via email in the first instance, and not via *postmedieval*'s online submission platform. We anticipate that the cluster will be published in 2027.

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