Envisioning Others

Race, Color, and the Visual in Iberia and Latin America

Edited by

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Introduction: Race, Color, and the Visual in Iberia and Latin America

Pamela A. Patton

> Race – whether imaginary, or historically grounded, determined by religion, nature or geographical-environmental conditions – is what the rest of the world has.[1]

When the first European explorers crossed the Atlantic seeking an alternate route to the East, they fully anticipated finding there the monstrous races described in such lands by the travel literature of their Classical and medieval European ancestors.[2] Their expectations are attested to as much by their credulous accounts of sirens, cynocephali, and other uncanny creatures inhabiting the unfamiliar lands and waters of the Americas as by the evocative geographical names, such as Patagonia, Amazonia, and the Caribbean, that they affixed to these.[3] Columbus himself showed drawings of cynocephali – the legendary dog-headed men repeatedly described in medieval travel sources – to the Arawak in hopes that they could help him locate them; Amerigo Vespucci reported seeing giants in Tlaxcala; and multiple colonizers reported finding evidence of Amazons in locations ranging from the Caribbean to California.[4]

1 Geraldine Heng, "Jews, Saracens, 'Black Men,' Tartars: England in a World of Racial Difference," *A Companion to Medieval English Literature, c. 1350–c. 1500*, ed. Peter Brown (Oxford, 2005): 247–269.

2 On the Monstrous Races in ancient and medieval tradition, see Rudolf Wittkower, "Marvels of the East. A Study in the History of Monsters," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 159–197; John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000); Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 41–59; and *eadem*, "Monstrosity and Race in the Late Middle Ages," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous,* ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Peter J. Dendle (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 365–386.

3 Persephone Brahman, "The Monstrous Caribbean," in *Monsters and the Monstrous*, 17–47.

4 Brahman, "Monstrous Caribbean," 19–27; Luis Weckmann, *The Medieval Heritage of Mexico* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1992), 46–71. As Ilona Katzew's contribution in this volume points out, the Spanish Dominican Gregorio García included a discussion of several such races in his 1607 *Origen de los indios de el Nuevo Mundo.*

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Ingenuously, if perhaps understandably, these European colonizers had drawn upon a world view that was crafted long before their travels, first by Classical writers such as Herodotus and Pliny, then by encyclopedists and travel writers of the Middle Ages, from Isidore of Seville and the authors of the early 'Wonders' literature to later medieval writers such as the Dominican Thomas of Cantimpré and the mysterious compositor of *John Mandeville's Travels*.[5] These authorities took it as assumed that the lands beyond their own, especially those in the eastern zones that would become Columbus's intended destination, were rife with people whose bizarre physical appearance attested to their position outside human epistemological norms. Such peoples' somatic differences – whether outscale size, unusual color, added or missing extremities, or animal parts – were perceived sometimes as wondrous, often as threatening, and as nearly always as inferior. Most important for the contributions gathered this collection, however, is that they were fundamentally and emphatically visual.

The core belief shared by Pliny, Isidore, Mandeville, Columbus, and others – that the essential distinction between one's own people and alien Others was heralded, even defined, by visible and often frankly somatic deviation – provides the leaping-off point for this volume. Its ten chapters investigate how the perception and portrayal of what, with the appropriate contextual caveats, might be described as racial difference in Iberia and Latin America was affected by encounters among the widely disparate cultural and ethnic communities that were brought into repeated contact across this broad transatlantic sphere from the late fifteenth century onward. The authors represented here share two common concerns: first, their recognition of the fundamental visibility, indeed visuality, of racial difference as it was conceived and represented within the wider Iberian world, and second, their awareness of the committed preoccupation with race that was characteristic of the peoples who coincided there.[6] Examining topics drawn from both the Iberian Peninsula and the Hispanophone and Lusophone Americas between the late Middle Ages and the present, these studies bring to light many key points of intersection between emergent concepts of race and developing visual culture in locations as disparate as the mountains of Catalunya, the slave ports of the Caribbean, the public squares of Mexico, and the scholarly discourse of post-Civil War Spain. Their shared goal

5 Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews*, esp. 41–52.

6 On the aptness of 'visuality' in the study of the pre-modern especially, see Claire Farago, "Understanding Visuality," in *Seeing Across Cultures in the Early Modern World,* ed. Dana Liebsohn and Jeanette Favrot Peterson (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012): 239–255.

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is to explore how such intersections both shaped, and were shaped by, evolving notions of race in a world where diversity was concrete and ever-present; where radically different peoples were both enticed and coerced into rubbing shoulders; where the mutual translation and understanding of their differences was a constant preoccupation; and where all these processes were hierarchized and mediated by authorities hungry for land, goods, status, and control.

A preoccupation with describing and classifying human difference was neither new nor unique to the Ibero-American world; however, it is undeniable that the historical and cultural particularities of Iberia and the Americas both before and after their first encounters in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries rendered these habits particularly powerful there. Before their contact, both the Iberian Peninsula and the lands that would become the Hispanophone and Lusophone Americas already hosted diverse populations in which peoples of sharply different cultures, languages, political systems, religions, and ethnicities intermingled in contexts both conflictive and congenial. In Iberia, where the serial contests for power between Muslim and Christian rulers often known as the 'Reconquest' were concluded decisively by Christian-led victories over the last Muslim-held cities in 1492, a wide range of ethnic and religio-cultural groups – among them Arab and north African Muslims, European Christians, sub-Saharan Africans, and Jews – mingled first openly, then clandestinely within a Christian culture that eventually became fixated on promoting its homogeneity. And well before a consistent racial terminology had emerged there, medieval Iberians had already employed a variety of legislative, social, and religious mechanisms, from commercial regulation to blood purity laws, to identify and control the Jewish and Muslim peoples who continued to inhabit the Christian-ruled kingdoms of Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and Portugal in the later Middle Ages. These practices were mutually reinforced by popular stereotypes of such subalterns that not only hardened the identifying profiles of the groups under surveillance, but justified their subordination in terms well beyond the religious: Jews, for example, were portrayed as avaricious, deceptive, cowardly, ugly, and even bad-smelling, while Muslims came to be stereotyped as violent, hypersexual, and bestial, as well as swarthy or black.[7]

In the Americas, Taino, Nahua, Aztec, Maya, Inca, and many other indigenous populations had ways of valuing and assessing human and collective identity that, obviously, would have borne little resemblance to the fundamentally western constructs of race that are addressed in the present volume, and

7 Of the substantial scholarship on this topic, see especially Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews,* and Heng, "Jews, Saracens, 'Black Men,' Tartars," 247–269.

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it would be a mistake to attempt to set these two spheres into parallel. What cannot be denied is that such relationships changed irrevocably after that same year of 1492, when indigenous groups throughout the Americas were forcibly commingled not just with the white European adventurers introduced by Columbus' voyage, but also with the mixed-race Spanish and Portuguese, expelled and converted Jews and Moriscos, African slaves, and Asian merchants and immigrants who accompanied and followed them. If relatively little is recorded about the indigenous response to and characterization of these new immigrant groups at the moment of contact, the survival of seemingly racial terms like the Inca epithet 'pukakunka' ('rednecks') for white Europeans and the intriguing stereotypes of black Africans and other outsiders in Guáman Poma's *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno* suggest that the some indigenous cultures began to capitalize on European racial and visual strategies very shortly after their first contact.[8]

For the Spanish and Portuguese, the combination of Classically-derived accounts of the monstrous races and the religio-cultural stereotypes of medieval and early modern Iberia provided a reassuringly familiar conceptual armature that allowed them to translate the dramatically different appearance, language, dress, foodways, and other behaviors of indigenous Americans in remarkably similar terms. For these first European colonizers, the comparatively darker skin of some native peoples inspired ready association with Muslim stereotypes, as well as with the mythologized Ethiopians and subcontinental Indians known from Classical and Arabic texts and medieval romance literature. Similarly, the colonizers could draw easy comparison between the ritual cannibalism they observed among certain indigenous communities and both the child murder claims that had long been levied by European Christians against Jews and the fearsome cannibalistic habits ascribed to the Tartars and the dog-headed men who were believed to live in Asia.[9] The long-held reputation of such extra-European Others for such inferior moral qualities as lethargy, cowardice, and effeminacy not only helped to clarify the characterizations of newly encountered groups; it also conveniently justified the subordination of American populations in much the

8 On these issues, see the sources cited by Ananda Cohen and Larissa Brewer-García in this volume.

9 On the blood libel against European Jews, see Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); for an account of Tartars as cannibals, see Suzanne Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the Chronica Majora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 284–288.

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same manner as it had for the Muslim and Jewish communities of the Iberian Peninsula.

As the chapters in this volume attest, an eagerness to identify, exteriorize, manipulate, and dominate unfamiliar peoples through association with these uncanny Others was only one of many practices born in Europe that were adapted, often with startling efficacy, to what cautiously might be called "race relations" in the colonized Americas. Other interventions included the use of blood laws to identify and insulate subjects whose social status merited certain political and economic rights; the cooptation and reshaping of urban spaces to regulate interaction among ethnic and cultural groups; and the collusion of religious and political institutions in establishing and maintaining social segregation. While none of these practices were translated unchanged into their new contextual circumstances, their core assumptions stood – and, one might argue, some still stand – at the foundation of the construction of race on both sides of the Atlantic. There, they were and are fed by the politics, trade, missionizing, and nation-building ambitions that continue to shape identity throughout both spheres today. Moreover, as this volume argues, they remained interlinked by their persistent delineation of the racial Other in somatic, spatial, or regulatory terms that resided firmly in the appearance, locations, and behaviors of the visible human body.

Whether this focus on the visibility of the Other, as expressed in the very different times and places that are treated in these chapters, should consistently be understood as 'racial' in the modern sense is well worth asking. The perceived differences between a Muslim and a Christian in late medieval Portugal, a Spaniard and an Aztec in sixteenth-century Mexico, or a Brazilian bird-seller and a U.S. plantation owner in the mid-nineteenth century were certainly not questions of race in the same sense in which the word has been used in post-Enlightenment discourse, scientific terminology, or modern political rhetoric. Indeed, the application of the term 'race' to human beings at all is in its own way quite modern, well postdating many of the concepts that it is harnessed, retroactively, to represent.

Possibly derived from an old Norse term used in animal husbandry and first used in fifteenth-century Romance-language discourse on animal breeding and the pursuit of noble lineage in horses, dogs, and hawks, the words *razza, race,* and *raza* initially enjoyed only limited use in reference to human pedigrees, and mainly those needed to claim the privileges associated with descent from royal or noble lines. The term's use as a broader classificatory concept for discrete groups of human peoples arose only the eighteenth century, and it was not firmly linked to genetics and biology as in modern scientific discourse until

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about a century later.[10] In many fields of current scholarship as well as in popular perceptions, of course, the idea of fixed racial groupings has begun to be dismantled once more in recognition of the fragility of presumed genetic boundaries among peoples and the increasingly self-constructed nature of modern identity. Thus to apply the term 'race' in any fixed sense to perceived human differences at all, much less before the eighteenth century, may well seem at least anachronistic, if not epistemologically futile.[11]

Yet in the present context, a case can be made for a more circumscribed use of the term 'race,' as it is employed by many authors collected here: as referring to a systematic, collective drive to classify and distinguish between discrete groups of human beings within a society, and especially, as Margaret Greer, Walter Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan have put it, the "discursive classification of the chain of human beings, their distance from the ideal model," that often accompanies this.[12] This classificatory and evaluative process was central to ongoing discourse about group identity and difference throughout the Ibero-American world well beyond the word's circuitous etymological life, and it underlies the arguments in all chapters of this volume regardless of their geographical, chronological, cultural, or disciplinary range. Also central to these contributions is the natural ancillary to this practice: that in implicitly equating difference from an ideal with inferiority to it, the idea of race becomes difficult to decouple from the practice of racism, a theme that is touched on either implicitly or overtly in several of the chapters here.

At the same time, the present authors justifiably resist the notion that the definition of race can be understood as fixed in either meaning or application, whether in the historical moments on which they focus or from their own modern perspective. As their widely varied approaches to a diverse array of topics make clear, race has been and continues to be a surprisingly flexible construct despite its nominally classificatory character: whether based on cultural affiliation (voluntary or involuntary), on lineage and blood purity, on skin color, or on genetics, it exists and is sustained by constantly changing social

10 Charles de Miramon, "Noble Dogs, Noble Blood: The Invention of the Concept of Race in the Late Middle Ages," in *The Origins of Racism in the West,* ed. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge University Press, 2009): 200–216. See also Kathryn Burns, "Unfixing Race," in *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires,* edited by Margaret R. Greer, Walter D. Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 188–202.

11 On the difficulty of adapting modern notions of race to the colonial Latin America especially, see Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, "Demons, Stars, and the Imagination: The Early Modern Body in the Tropics," in *Origins of Racism in the West*, 313–325.

12 Greer, Mignolo, and Quilligan, "Introduction," in *Rereading the Black Legend*, 23.

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compacts.[13] In the cases presented here, the definition of racial boundaries depends closely not just on culture and context, but also, at times, on the circumstances of the individual, and they can be shaped by external and mutable factors, such as ethnic or religious affiliation, as well as by theoretically fixed ones like ancestry or skin color. They are also highly susceptible to changes in circumstances such as religious conversion, relocation, social transition, or alterations in the nature of the genetic 'proofs' on which racial classification depended.

This variability is particularly evident in the study of the early modern Iberian world, where definitions of race often lay obscured behind the fluctuating discourses of *raza, casta, linaje, nación*, and *natura* that had evolved from medieval epistemologies reliant primarily upon religious and cultural foundations to encompass specifically colonial concerns about lineage, blood purity, and other bodily properties. However, these discourses did not always end with colonialism: as the contributions by Moriuchi, Balanta, Mateo, and Black show, the tension between fluidity and fixity inherent in early modern notions of race often remained just as relevant to racial constructs after colonialism's decline.[14]

Throughout the Ibero-American world, visual and material culture constituted a premier medium – perhaps *the* premier medium – by which such evolving notions of race could be explored and expressed. In Iberia, such efforts already had long pre-Contact roots, as witnessed by the ideologically loaded visual stereotypes of Africans, Arabs, and Jews produced there from the thirteenth century onward. Although at this stage such differences were at least officially based on religion rather than race or ethnicity, the work of articulating them was often expressed somatically, so that the exaggerated physiognomies, wild beards, and dark skin with which Jews and Muslims were endowed in many medieval images and texts strongly proclaimed these figures' perceived differences from an idealized Christian norm.[15] The enduring

13 On the flexibility of race as a concept in Iberia and Latin America in particular, see Burns, "Unfixing Race."

14 A model of race as both fixed and flexible is explored for the early Middle Ages by Denise Kimber Buell, "Early Christian Universalism and Modern Racism," in *Origins of Racism in the West*, 109–131, at 114–115; see also Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Duke University Press, 1995). On the flexibility of race in the Ibero-American sphere, see especially the essays in Max S. Hering Torres, María Elena Martínez, and David Nirenberg, eds., *Race and Blood in the Iberian World* (Vienna: LIT, 2012).

15 For an overview and further literature, see Pamela A. Patton, *Art of Estrangement: Redefining Jews in Reconquest Spain* (College Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2012).

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efficacy of such imagery resonates throughout subsequent visual culture in both Iberia and Latin America: in the exploratory visual renderings of "new world" society produced by both indigenous and Spanish artists in the decades following the first colonial contacts; in the quasi-scientific *casta* paintings inspired by Europe interaction with Indians, Africans, and Asians; in the hierarchical manipulation of traditional religious and secular iconographies like ruler portraiture and eschatological narrative; and in the countless other ways in which race was subsequently re-envisioned during the decline of colonialism and the rise of modernism. Such examples confirm the flexibility with which visual images could be harnessed to reflect and reshape social attitudes that were in constant flux, and they offer a rich field for consideration of the ways in which notions of race and identity themselves fluctuated in the myriad societies of the Ibero-American world.

Among the many visual dimensions of race to be addressed in this collection, those linked to skin color stand apart visually, symbolically, and to some degree conceptually. The most persistent of all the visible markers traditionally associated with race throughout the western world – so persistent, in fact, as to be treated as its near-equivalent in much modern thinking – the dark skin so often deployed in descriptions and depictions of racial Others in European imagery brought with it to Latin America a host of traditional associations, among them exoticism, diabolism, heathenness, and inferior social status.[16] These connotations were soon reshaped, and at times intensified, by new factors arising on both sides of the Atlantic from the end of the fifteenth century onward: the institutionalized homogenization of the Iberian population, the rise of the slave trade, and the repeated encounters of Europeans with indigenous Americans. As the chapters by Foster, Harpster, Brewer-García, Rowe, and Katzew especially clearly show, the Old World connotations of black skin sometimes dovetailed, but also sometimes collided, with a New World agenda that viewed black Africans as not just a critically valuable labor force and permanently subordinate social category, but also as a body of potential converts in a universalist economy of salvation in which all souls, theoretically, could be 'whitened' by baptism. Many of these chapters, as well as that contributed by Ananda Cohen Suarez, also reveal the symbolic forces that were implicit in whiteness itself, whose powerful connotations of Europeanness, elite status, and high social capital held concrete advantages in both the Iberian and the Latin American spheres. As all these authors show, whiteness thus functioned in tandem with blackness to express evolving ideas about race on both sides of the Atlantic.

16 On the traditional symbolic connotations of dark skin in early modern Iberia, see especially contributions by Grace Harpster and Larissa Brewer-García in this volume.

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The contributions presented in this volume build on a growing body of scholarship recognizing the potential of visual culture to shed light on conceptions of race and identity in the Ibero-American sphere. Much of this recognition has occurred in disciplines outside art history, especially in history and Latin American studies, as exemplified by such edited collections as *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Andrew B. Fisher and Matthew O'Hara (Duke University Press, 2009), and Laura Gotkowitz's *Histories of Race and Racism: The Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial Times to the Present* (Duke University Press, 2011).[17] Other recent publications take a wider geographical perspective that is deliberately multidisciplinary, although still predominantly historical and literary; these include *Writing Race Across the Atlantic World: Medieval to Modern*, edited by Philip Beidler and Gary Taylor (Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires*, edited by Margaret Greer, Walter Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan (University of Chicago Press, 2007); and *Race and Blood in the Iberian World*, edited by Max S. Hering Torres, María Elena Martínez, and David Nirenberg (Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2012).[18]

The last decade, however, has also witnessed the publication of several substantial new contributions in the field of art history specifically that aim to treat the intersection of racial ideologies with visual and material culture. The bulk of these, too, address Latin American topics; they include Magali Carrera's *Imagining Identity in New Spain* (University of Texas Press, 2003); Ilona Katzew's *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (Yale University Press, 2005); and the multidisciplinary edited volume *Race and Classification: The Case of Mexican America*, edited by Katzew with Susan Dean-Smith (Stanford University Press, 2009).[19] Their work has been bolstered as well by several important museum exhibitions, among them *New World Orders: Casta*

17 Andrew B. Fisher and Matthew O'Hara, eds., *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009); Laura Gotkowitz, ed., *Histories of Race and Racism: The Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial Times to the Present* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

18 Philip Beidler and Gary Taylor, eds., *Writing Race Across the Atlantic World: Medieval to Modern* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); Greer, Mignolo, and Quilligan, eds. *Rereading the Black Legend*; and Hering Torres, Martínez, and Nirenberg, eds., *Race and Blood in the Iberian World*.

19 Magali Carrera, *Imagining Identity in New Spain* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003); Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); and Ilona Katzew and Susan Dean-Smith, eds., *Race and Classification: The Case of Mexican America* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

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Painting and Colonial Latin America and *Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World*, held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1996 and 2011, respectively; beyond fostering dialogue and publication, these have made a relevant body of images and objects available to newly expanded viewership.[20]

Scholarship on race and visual culture in Iberia itself has been somewhat less prolific than that on Latin America, although several recent publications have explored how Iberian notions of race found visual expression both on the Peninsula alone and in juxtaposition to those of the New World. These include Barbara Fuchs's *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); the vision-themed *Seeing Across Cultures in the Early Modern World,* edited by Dana Liebsohn and Jeannette Favrot Peterson (Ashgate, 2012); Peterson's single-authored *Visualizing Guadalupe: From Black Madonna to Queen of the Americas* (University of Texas Press, 2014); and Amy Remensnyder's *La Conquistadora: The Virgin Mary at War and Peace in the Old and New Worlds* (Oxford University Press, 2014).[21] While the predominant focus of such work has been the Contact and colonial eras, it provides an important nexus for future work extending both before and after that critical chronological span.

As a body, all this scholarship has begun to shed important new light on how race was imbricated in the production, reception, and agency of visual and material culture in both Latin American and Iberian zones, as well as how the visual shaped and disseminated racial ideologies. At its best, such work recognizes the value of a sharp local focus and the methodical excavation of images, texts, and attitudes specific to particular settings, regions or genres, while it also acknowledges that these local contexts did not stand alone, but were deeply, if irregularly, linked by a wider transatlantic network along which both ideas about race and ideas about art passed back and forth almost constantly after 1492.

Envisioning Others deliberately capitalizes on this two-pronged strategy, gathering essays that consider how evolving notions of race, identity, and

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20 See Katzew, *Casta Painting*, and *eadem*, ed., *Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

21 Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (College Park, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Dana Liebsohn and Jeannette Favrot Peterson, eds., *Seeing Across Cultures in the Early Modern World* (Farnham, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012); Jeannette Favrot Peterson, *Visualizing Guadalupe: From Black Madonna to Queen of the Americas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014); and Amy Remensnyder, *La Conquistadora: The Virgin Mary at War and Peace in the Old and New Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

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difference in the Ibero-American world intersected with the visual and material culture produced at key moments and locations within and, just as significantly, *across* that world. Expanded from a core of five papers originally presented in the session "Representations of 'Race' in Iberia and the Ibero-American World" at the 2013 College Art Association conference, the collection adds to the original contributions five new chapters written by scholars in a variety of disciplines, including history, literature, and cultural studies as well as the history of art. As a group, the contributions consider three essential questions. First, how did specific ideas about race (as variably and contextually defined) that were developed both before and after the Iberian colonization of the Americas shape the ways in which human difference was conceived and represented in both spheres? Second, how did the visual articulation of such differences shape ideas about race? Finally, how did the multifarious, multileveled confrontations and exchanges between the peoples of Iberia and America – colonization, evangelization, commerce, and perhaps above all, the slave trade – drive the development of such ideas and images on both sides of the Atlantic?

The resulting chapters tackle these questions from multiple angles. Some remain tightly focused on the local and cultural; others take approaches that are more broadly theoretical or historiographical. As a group, they consider an intriguing variety of works, from institutionally sponsored devotional sculptures, church frescoes, and altarpieces to easel paintings and images intended for popular consumption, such as prints, illustrated books, and magazines. They range equally widely in time and place, stretching chronologically from the late Middle Ages to the mid-twentieth century and geographically from the Iberian peninsula to South and Central America, Mexico, and the United States. Many, moreover, capitalize on the collection's transatlantic structure to emphasize the movement of racial ideologies and images both westward and eastward across the Atlantic, revealing the role of that ocean not as divider but as conduit, an active and unpredictable agent that mirrored the effect of other historically dividing/connecting bodies such as the Mediterranean, another globally important waterway whose advancement of exploration and conquest, maintenance of empires, and facilitation of trade among diverse constituencies foreshadow the transatlantic exchange discussed here.

Many chapters in this book are brought into relational dialogue by shared themes, such as conversion, commerce, or nationalist ideologies; some lend new texture to existing questions by juxtaposing complementary facets of a single shared topic; others leap across time, space, and cultures to highlight unexpected moments of continuity or revival. Many, as has been noted, address the challenges raised by early modern and modern perceptions

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of skin color, considered since late Antiquity to be an index of moral and/or social status, even when this was not strictly compatible with colonial or Englightenment ideals. Still other chapters describe pressures to reject, affirm, or even revive influential racial and social hierarchies in emergent American nations. However, common to all the contributions is their assertion of the centrality of the visual in advancing the nearly universal human drive toward a classificatory, and usually deeply hierarchized understanding of difference and identity.

The collection opens with two chapters that examine how changes in the social and ethnic makeup of the Iberian Peninsula transformed the meanings of race and its perceived markers, particularly skin color, in the late Middle Ages and early modern era, as Spain and Portugal solidified their Iberian holdings and turned their focus to exploration and the slave trade in north Africa and the Americas. Elisa Foster's essay on the Black Madonna of Montserrat scrutinizes the traditional attribution of the statue's dark complexion to its multicultural medieval context, positing that the figure's color was added not in the Middle Ages, as widely believed, but as late as the sixteenth century, well after her emergence as one of the most important cult images of the Iberian Peninsula. Foster argues that the blackness of this Madonna is not, as often assumed, the coloration of an exotic medieval Other, but an early modern modification designed to emphasize the sculpture's antiquity and importance, and perhaps as well a response to the emergent tradition of dark-skinned Madonnas in colonial Latin America.

Foster's argument is complemented by the work of Erin Rowe, whose scrutiny of the patronage, locations, and visual characteristics of devotional sculptures of black saints in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Cádiz allows her to assess the shifting devotional priorities of both black confraternities and white parishioners in early modern Iberia. Set against the backdrop of a burgeoning slave trade and evolving notions of the salvific potential of black Christian converts, this essay reveals the range of values invested in the veneration of black saints by Iberia's various religious communities. In exploring how the appearance, and specifically the blackness, of such devotional sculptures intersected with demographic and cultural change, both these chapters highlight the struggle faced by viewers of such images to resolve the inherent tension between the longstanding negative connotations of black skin and the soteriological challenges posed by an increasing population of actual dark-skinned Christians in Iberia and in its colonies.

The symbolic freight borne by blackness also figures in several subsequent chapters that focus on colonial Latin America, specifically on how the perception and representation of racial difference, as marked especially but not

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exclusively by skin color, could be used to advance colonial goals in Latin America. Grace Harpster analyzes how the Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval's manipulation of the symbolic associations of the color black aimed to reconcile European discomfort with the conversion of African slaves and their position in the economy of salvation. Sandoval's efforts to present black skin as a mere covering for a 'white' Christian soul is bolstered by textual and visual analogies with appealing dark surfaces such as black clothing, the skins of fruit, and oyster shells. Larissa Brewer-García investigates how images employed in the evangelization of black Africans in Cartagena, specifically a now-lost painting of the Baptism of Christ described by Alsonso de Sandoval's Jesuit associate, Peter Claver, and the black interpreters who aided the pair in the teaching and baptism of newly converted slaves, manifest a new, aestheticized conception of blackness as transformed by Christian conversion. Drawing on texts describing the use of this and similar images to teach Christian doctrine, Brewer-García highlights the tropes of beauty that began to be associated with the Christianized blackness of men and women caught up in the slave economy of seventeenth-century Cartagena.

Pivoting from soteriology to science, Ilona Katzew's contribution takes a contrasting approach to the issue of skin color, scrutinizing the florescence of images of albinos and so-called "spotted Blacks" that were produced on both sides of the Atlantic during the eighteenth century. Her work investigates the intersection between traditional theories of racial origin and deviation and the rise of self-consciously scientific study during the Enlightenment to highlight the tension between the theoretical understanding of skin color as a somatic property shaped by lineage and environment and the spiritually symbolic readings of blackness that predominated in the late Middle Ages and early modernity. Katzew's chapter makes plain the important role played by images in this complex intellectual exchange, bolstering both theologically- and scientifically-framed arguments about the origins and significance of skin color as they crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic, heightening debates over the meaning and manipulability of caste, race, and color.

Ananda Cohen Suarez explores an alternative race-based polarity, that of indigeneity versus 'whiteness.' Her chapter analyzes the imbrications of caste and purity within visual formulations of 'Indianness' and its implicit opposite, 'Spanishness'/whiteness, in frescoes of the *postrimerías* (the Four Last Things) in several colonial churches in the southern Andes. Her careful observation of the ways in which visual markers of both categories fluctuate in eschatological and biblical images, casting Indians in both negative and exemplary roles, supports an argument for understanding colonial racial categories as relational and fluid, rather than analytical and static. It also shows how potently such

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properties could function to support or alter social hierarchical and power relationships.

The tension between racial fluidity and racial fixity so critical to the understanding of Latin American visual culture is also tested in the chapter by Mey-Yen Moriuchi, the first of two contributions to consider, if in very different contexts, how racial ideologies that took shape under colonialism were transformed in the struggle to articulate new forms of identity and statehood in the emerging American nations. Moriuchi examines how *costumbrista* painters in nineteenth-century Mexico reconfigured the conventions of *casta* painting to craft their own idealized social spaces in easel paintings for elite consumption; her analysis reveals how the racial ordering of society that was officially rejected after Mexican independence continued to offer a means of structuring and manipulating social and political experience. Beatriz Balanta's contribution likewise asks how images served in the restructuring and idealization of racial perceptions across two deceptively disparate cultures, in this case along a north–south axis formed between the United States South and Brazil in the nineteenth century. Her examination of how the textual descriptions and imagery of U.S. exploration records and travel literature characterized Brazil and its inhabitants during this period reveals the construction and ready consumption of an exotic, mythicized land by north Americans still struggling with fundamental questions about slavery, race, and nationhood in the wake of the U.S. Civil War.

The volume's two final chapters explore how an increasingly complex discourse regarding race and identity in the twentieth century commensurately complicated the ways in race was and still is depicted and understood on both sides of the Atlantic. These chapters focus not on popular ideologies, but on scholarly theories of race as they shaped the understanding of visual culture in both Iberia and the Americas. Matilde Mateo closely analyzes the 1947 claim, by the Spanish architect and historian Fernando Chueca Goitia, that the abstract forms of Spanish architecture constituted in their own right an invariant expression of the Spanish race ('casta'). She evaluates his argument against the fertile intellectual backdrop of Spain's post-98 generation as well as then-current Spanish debates over the potential for cultural purity in a nation with undeniable multicultural roots. Charlene Villaseñor Black closes the collection by calling attention to the often startlingly racialized stylistic terms that have been, and sometimes still are, applied in the historiography of both Iberian and colonial Latin American art. In doing so, she demonstrates how variable notions of race have inflected not just the historiography, but the conceptualization of visual culture in both spheres, obscuring the cultural fluidity of both ethnicity and artifact with an illusion of tidy facticity. Both contributions

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highlight for readers of the volume the overt and subtle ways in which the scholarly understanding of Latin American and Iberian art both has been, and continues to be, shaped by racialized preconceptions.

The chapters that comprise this book could not possible exhaust the potential of a problem so broad and multifaceted as the representation of race in Latin America and Iberia. While their themes and profiles were dictated in part, as all such collections are, by the research interests and priorities of those scholars who chose to take part in this particular discourse, they were also selected with an awareness of their topics' conduciveness to the kinds of thematic interchange and continuity that allow such volumes to succeed as collaborative works. This has meant, of course, that many topics that remain central to an understanding of the visuality of race in the Ibero-American world have been left unexplored or only hinted at, a situation perhaps best envisioned as a road map for future work.

Chief among these is a consideration of how American indigenous cultures themselves conceived and portrayed identity and difference prior to the Contact, a question raised overtly in the contributions by Brewer-García and Cohen but much deserving of examination in its own right. As has been observed, the notions of race examined in this collection remain fundamentally western in origin, and to seek out comparisons with 'racial' practices and imagery in pre-Contact cultures would be both fruitless and misguided. More germane to the goals of the scholarship contained in this collection would be to ask how ideas and visual practices already in place in the indigenous Americas – for example, the Aztec association of black skin color with masculinity, power, and divine light, rather than the darkness or evil with which it was often invested by European viewers, or the ideals of ancestry reflected in the use of genealogical trees by Creoles wishing to recuperate and emphasize their native descent when this became advantageous – might have shaped the ways in which race was constructed in Latin America following European contact.[22]

Another arena left relatively unexplored in this volume, beyond the valuable observations contributed made by Elisa Foster's chapter, concerns the

22 On blackness in pre-contact Mexico, see Jeanette Favrot Peterson, "Perceiving Blackness, Envisioning Power: Chalma and Black Christs in Colonial Mexico," in *Seeing Across Cultures*, 49–71. On the genealogical trees, see Eduardo de Jesús Douglas, "Our Fathers, Our Mothers: Painting an Indian Geneaology in New Spain," in *Contested Visions,* 117–131. The deep differences between indigenous and European views on a range of cultural structures have recently been addressed by Adam Herring, *Art and Vision in the Inca Empire: Andeans and Europeans at Cajamarca* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

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intersection of race and the visual in the Iberian Middle Ages. The cultural and ethnic diversity for which the medieval Iberian Peninsula is renowned would seem to offer fertile ground such research, and indeed it has inspired a lively scholarly exchange concerning the distinctive visual and material forms that emerged from the coexistence of Muslims, Jews, and Christians of various ethnic origins in Iberian cities and towns.[23] Yet with some notable exceptions, few scholars have examined these forms or their communities through an explicitly racial lens. It remains unclear whether this results from the tendency of medievalist scholars generally to consider 'race' as simply too modernist a concept to apply to the distinctly non-biological categories, such as religious identity, cultural affiliation, or geographical origin, by which medieval peoples more readily identified themselves and others, or whether it stems from many Hispanist scholars' hesitation to wade into a socio-historical debate with which, as Matilde Mateo and Charlene Black suggest, modern Spaniards still are grappling.[24] Nonetheless, as recent work by the historian David Nirenberg has demonstrated, a judicious consideration of how medieval structures of thought about identity and the body might dovetail with subsequent conceptions and representations of race has the potential to be as fruitful for art historians as it may be for those in other medievalist disciplines.[25]

23 The bibliography on this topic is substantial; for a concise historiographic overview, see Pamela A. Patton, "Arts," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* (Special Issue: "Shards of Memory: Reflections on the Legacy of María Rosa Menocal") 5, no. 2 (2013): 111–117.

24 For some of the problems posed by applying concepts of race to the medieval world, see William Chester Jordan, "Why Race?" *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (2001): 165–173; Robert Bartlett, "Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (2001): 39–56; Geraldine Heng, "The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages I: Race Studies, Modernity, and the Middle Ages," *Literature Compass* 8, no. 5 (2011): 258–274 and *eadem*, "The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race," *Literature Compass* 8, no. 5 (2011): 275–293.

25 E.g., David Nirenberg, "Race and the Middle Ages: The Case of Spain and its Jews," in *Rereading the Black Legend,* 71–87; and *idem*, "Was There Race Before Modernity? The Example of 'Jewish' Blood in Late Medieval Spain," in *Origins of Racism in the West*, 232–264. The role of skin color in the art of later medieval Iberia recently has been explored, although often as a property apart from race, by several scholars: see e.g., Mercedes García Arenal, "Los moros en las Cantigas de Alfonso X," *Al-Qantara* 6 (1985): 133–151, esp. 149–150; Inés Monteira Arías, *El enemigo imaginado: la escultura románica hispana y la lucha contra el Islam* (Toulouse: CNRS-Univ. de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 2012), 479–488; and Pamela A. Patton, "An Ethiopian-Headed Serpent in the *Cantigas de Santa María*: Sin, Sex, and Color in Late Medieval Castile." *Gesta* 55, no. 2 (2016, forthcoming).

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One might identify many other topics whose treatment in this collection points the way to more extensive attention. One, as the essays by Brewer-García, Katzew, and Balanta particularly show, is the impact of slavery and the slave trade on ideologies of race both in Iberia, where they became a significant cultural force just as the Christian conquest of the peninsula concluded, as well as in Latin America, where their impact was far greater. Another is how visual culture in the Ibero-American sphere was shaped by what Barbara Fuchs has called the "racialization of Spain" in the early modern era with the growth of the Black Legend. Still others include the intersection of race and the visual in portrayals of less frequently examined ethnic groups, such as the Roma in Iberia or Asians in Latin America; the radical transformations of racial identity and imagery that accompanied the Indigenist movements of the twentieth century; and the radical rethinking of race and race relations that continues to take place throughout the contemporary Ibero-American world.[26]

No single volume could hope to encompass such a diversity of topics, nor indeed to offer the final word on so complex a problem as race within a sphere with the cultural, geographical, and chronological sweep that is represented here. Rather than presuming to impose comprehensive answers, the contributions in this collection have aimed to pose the right questions: to investigate how and why race and the visual intersected in Iberia and Latin America, both locally and globally; to recognize how both broad and local patterns of thought and representation have shaped past and modern understandings of race; and to demonstrate the utility of engaging with these patterns from a perspective that is carefully attuned to the contextual and epistemological realities of each. If such investigations meet their goal, they will advance an understanding of both *what* and *how* race meant to the individuals and communities whose cultures ringed the Atlantic like those of a modern Mediterranean, as well as of how the visual shaped and concretized this meaning for communities within which race and its representation would bear critical and lasting importance.

26 On the 'racialization' of Spain, see Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, esp. 115–138; on other Others in Latin America, see for example Miriam Eliav-Feldon, "Vagrants or Vermin? Attitudes Toward Gypsies in Early Modern Europe," in *Origins of Racism in the West*, 276–291; and Grace Delgado, *Making the Chinese Mexican: Global Migration, Localism, and Exclusion in the* U.S.*-Mexico Borderlands* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).

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