

9 The Convivencia Wars: Decoding Historiography's Polemic with Philology*

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"Our Romanticism is contradicted by our Enlightenment, our inner by our outer."

Richard Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*

The quincentenary remembrance of Columbus's first voyage, the expulsion of Iberian Jews, and the conquest of Muslim Granada produced a barrage of texts meditating on the nature of medieval Iberian multiculturalism, specifically as it might reflect the *convivencia* (coexistence or cohabitation) of disparate groups. The concept of *convivencia*, while falling from favour among many academics, has (in historian Jonathan Ray's words) "been embraced and distorted by an ever-widening group of academics, journalists, and politicians" (1).¹ Despite the spread of this popularity and the persistently positive spin that the concept has come to acquire in current usage, not everyone can agree that *convivencia* equates with harmony. In 2005, historian Olivia Remie Constable posed the vexing question, "Is *convivencia* dangerous?"² As she explained, *convivencia*, or any form of cultural intermingling, was viewed with skepticism by many in medieval Iberia for its "potential to foster actual harm: whether physical, economic, social or sexual." It is, more importantly, dangerous as a modern concept, "since it can tempt us to read the Middle Ages through a murky – though often rosy – lens of biased historical memory and deterministic modern values." While *convivencia* may indeed be "dangerous" because it is too simple a model, it may equally be so because it is too complex: it may be "dangerous" for modern Iberianists, historians and literary critics alike, because it represents a conundrum that cannot be solved, an irreducible set of contradictions that can, judging by the manifold and contradictory spirit in which it has been employed, be easily evoked and yet not so easily explained. John Boswell adroitly captures this difficulty in *The Royal Treasure* when he observes, "The question of *convivencia*, the living together of the various Iberian religious and ethnic groups, is intensely complicated, and the task of a

scholar trying to understand and describe this symbiosis is rather like that of a man attempting to reconstruct a broken and crumpled spider's web" (12).

Because of this complexity and fragility, *convivencia* has generated for over half a century and continues to generate a vast array of widely divergent and fractious interpretations. *Convivencia*, ironically, has become a source of modern scholarly conflict and an inspiration for ongoing polemic. As Maya Soifer comments, "many scholars today treat it like a once sought-after guest who has overstayed her welcome" ("Beyond *Convivencia*" 20). One is hard-pressed to find another critical term that has exerted such a long-term impact in Ibero-medieval studies or spurred such a polarized mix of zealous devotion and fierce opposition across disciplines. Yet a closer consideration of the scholarly arguments over the term *convivencia* and what it is used to describe suggests that the debate over medieval Iberian tolerance and intolerance, rather than deriving from the actual difficulty of "reconstructing" that "crumpled web" – difficult though that certainly is – is in fact the product of unsettled rivalries generated by the shared disciplinary history of philology, historiography, and literary criticism, methodological rivalries which at their core have very little to do with medieval Iberia. The overall argument I wish to proffer here – that the ongoing debate over *convivencia* can best be explained as opposed reactions to the conflict of method in the human sciences in the wake of the linguistic turn – consists of three parts: first, that the comparatist method followed by Américo Castro and other literary historians of his generation (most notably, Erich Auerbach) derived ultimately from an early Romantic concept of history, itself an expression of an earlier model proposed by Giambattista Vico, of the intimate connection between philology and philosophy; second, that the collapse of this model has created a methodological rift between interpretive and empirical arguments both within and across Humanist disciplines such as philology and historiography; and third, that this division has produced a profound conflict of method between a predominant focus on hermeneutics in North America and on scientific philology in Spain. The disagreement over the meaning of *convivencia* is principally a symptom of this methodological division. By better understanding the rivalries generated by this division and their impact on the various disciplines implicated in the study of medieval Iberia, we may be able to frame the discussion in new terms that do not reduce the question of interaction between the faiths of medieval Iberia to a facile one simply of tolerance or intolerance, but instead emphasize the importance of methodology in determining the outcome of historical and philological research.³

The Epistemological Origins of *Convivencia*

Before considering Américo Castro's connection with other Romance philologists such as Erich Auerbach and his engagement with the interpretive insights of early

Romanticism, it is necessary to trace the emergence of his terminology out of a vocabulary of scientific linguistics.⁴ The term *convivencia*, “living-together-ness” as it has been awkwardly translated, has been associated with competition from its early scholarly use. The grandfather of modern Spanish philology, Ramón Menéndez Pidal, adapted the term (the use of which can be found in Spanish at least as early as the seventeenth century)⁵ in his massive history of the language, *Orígenes del español* (1926), using it to describe the coexistence of phonetic variants among regional versions of medieval Romance in Iberia, the “convivencia of many norms which struggle among themselves with equal strength” (555).⁶ For example, the word for “old,” from late Latin *vetulus*, existed as *biello* in Aragonese, *bieyu* in Leonese, and *viejo* in Castilian; river, *río*, varied within dialects, alternating with *rido* and *rigo*; and so on. Pidal provides scores of examples of such variation, driving home the point that on the local level of the evolution of languages, *convivencia* was not a static concept describing a balance of forces, but a dynamic one, associated from the very beginning with competition.⁷

Within the disconcerting variety of forms that the documents present we should not see a jumble of chance, but rather a silent battle of tendencies [un sordo combate de tendencias] which, although slowly and obscurely, surely brings a victory and a defeat. (*Orígenes* 556)

Various scholars have highlighted the pseudo-scientific overtones of Pidal’s language. Linguist José Portolés attributes Pidal’s notion of evolution to nineteenth-century German linguist August Schleicher (45–8). Responding to Portolés, Thomas Glick has shown how such notions of competition were directly informed by Pidal’s own understanding of evolution not only as it had been distilled in Schleicher’s linguistic trees, but even more significantly through evolutionist concepts such as Darwin’s notion of competitive selection and the notions, received from early evolutionary biologist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, of the “will to develop” and of “inherited changes” (“Darwin” 36–9).⁸ The competition that Pidal describes is that of the survival of Castilian as the fittest of many variations among the languages of Iberia, and the “will” he attributes to Castilian represents a notion of competitive adaptation arising out of an evolutionary need to take precedence over other dialects. *Convivencia*, in Pidal’s formulation, denoted conflict, competition, and victory.

This is, to be sure, not the meaning that has persisted. The word was made famous not by Pidal in his linguistic history but by his student, Américo Castro, who applied the term to describe not the competition of linguistic variants but the social coexistence of peoples, specifically of medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula. First in 1948 in his work *España en su historia*, and through subsequent revisions in 1954 and 1962 in *La realidad histórica en España*, Castro developed

his notion of religious syncretism and symbiosis, which he proposed as essential for understanding Spanish history. As is now well-known, the charged and far-reaching nature of his terminology and arguments provoked bitter polemics among his contemporaries, most notably Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz and Eugenio Asensio.⁹ Out of Pidal's rigorous, scientific philological notion of progress, conflict, competition and evolution, the term, used by Castro in a much vaguer, poetic sense, shifted to indicate instead stability, mutual dependence, cooperation and coexistence, and it was this static and largely positive connotation that has caught on so famously.

The Polemic over Convivencia

Reversals such as the one the evaluation of *convivencia* has undergone, especially in so short a span, are themselves dangerous because they threaten to obscure the origins of ideas and make them comprehensible only within the terms of dichotomous opposition. Such paired extreme images abound in the histories of medieval Iberia, and ramify from the ill-conceived original debate between tolerance and intolerance. Some familiar examples include the lachrymose and neo-lachrymose schools of Jewish historiography with their emphasis on persecution,¹⁰ or other views recasting multiculturalism as a panacea for modern woes in the context of postcolonial immigration, soaring unemployment, and the Bush-era “war on terror.”

There has been more recently a critical effort to reassess the legacy of Castro's terminology and propose alternative models without vituperation, such as Constable's timely remarks on the question, Brian Catlos's wry renaming of *convivencia* as “conveniencia” (“convenience” or “agreement”), or María Rosa Menocal's insistence that *convivencia* is most fruitfully understood as inherently paradoxical and not exclusive of violence and reconquest – a point that David Nirenberg has defended with extensive evidence.¹¹ Others, like Mark Meyerson, have explored “the economic foundations of *convivencia*” (*Muslims of Valencia* 271), showing how complex social relationships created interdependence apart from categories of religious or cultural difference. In an effort to rethink the question of the influence of modern bias on our understanding of medieval attitudes, Ray has noted – in terms very similar to those of Constable cited above – that cultural openness was “seen as a primary challenge to Jewish religious piety, social cohesion, and political autonomy” (12). Equally balanced in their assessment are Jewish studies scholars Esperanza Alfonso (*Islamic Culture through Jewish Eyes*) and Jonathan Elukin (*Living Together, Living Apart*) who emphasize that within the nineteenth-century positivist “Science of Judaism” in Germany (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*), the notion of a Sephardic Golden Age provided a model of successful integration for modern Ashkenazi Jews, reifying the early modern Jewish myth of tolerance under Islam and suffering under Christianity.

Parallel to the many balanced and valid criticisms of *convivencia*, a more vehement polemical attack on the term can be seen in both popular and scholarly writing.¹² Within Spain, numerous academics – including Serafín Fanjul, professor of Arabic at the Universidad Autónoma in Madrid and member of Spain’s Royal Academy of History – have lodged vociferous criticism of the concept of *convivencia*. Although Fanjul criticizes all extreme views including those that represent medieval Iberia as completely intolerant, he devotes more energy to demonstrating that “the splendid [exquisita] *convivencia* of the three cultures is ... imaginary” (*La quimera* 22), arguing that “this panorama of ... tolerance ... cooperation, and jubilant friendship among communities breaks down soon after we begin reading original texts” (28). He even goes so far as to claim that Islamic al-Andalus was “a regime more like South African apartheid, *mutatis mutandis*, than the idyllic Arcadia invented by Castro” (29). Equally acerbic in his assessment is distinguished medievalist Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, who in the foreword to Fanjul’s *Al-Andalus contra España* called Fanjul’s book “the only adequate way to respond to the ocean of falsities denounced in the book and to the limitless capacity for confabulation, prejudice, and self-delusion, of ... biased ignorance or mental laziness observable among those who elaborate and proffer” such ideas (xi). These comments suggest that, far from being a closed chapter in twentieth-century Iberian Studies, the polemic over *convivencia* is alive and well and continues to adduce new observations to support its arguments.

In all fairness, the tone of these arguments does not exemplify mainstream voices in the academy. Yet one can detect a more muted opposition to one-sided presentations of *convivencia*, in large measure corrective of earlier trends, even among more balanced writers. Consuelo López Morillas, scholar of *Aljamiado* literature, explains in her overview of scholarship on Al-Andalus in North America that the celebrations of 1992 ushered in “a bias towards themes of intercultural and interconfessional contact” (242). She includes within this bias a more general criticism of the concept of *convivencia*, specifically as it has come under scrutiny within studies of religious polemics:

Al-Andalus is often hailed as a model of tolerance, or at least of toleration, but that idealized view ... is belied by the many varieties of polemic that have recently come under study. . . . All these reveal, as one scholar has put it, that so-called *convivencia* was a precarious affair. Such investigations as these can only lead to a more nuanced and less cliché-ridden understanding of the true relations among the major religious confessions in medieval Spain. (243–4)

Arabist Manuela Marín is more emphatic in her conclusions: “The myth of the Spain of Three Cultures, a title used as an element of propaganda, is so far from the historical reality that it cannot but generate new elements of confusion in a

debate already perverted in many aspects” (Marín and Pérez, “L’Espagne” 23).¹³ Hispano-Arabic lexicographer Federico Corriente also criticizes what he calls the “myth of the three cultures,” which he claims was invented during the late Franco era, and instead proposes a three-religion/two-culture model that dissolves “Sephardic culture” as another “contemporary myth.” We should avoid

fabricating for Spain three medieval cultures, Christian, Islamic, and Jewish. There were only two ... both “practiced” by one people with the aim of eliminating the other, despite circumstantial situations of delicate and short-lived *convivencia*. This is the only historical truth that should prevail, even though we all would have liked that the past and present were otherwise. (46–7)¹⁴

In chorus with these arguments, Eduardo Manzano Moreno, medieval historian and director of the humanities centre at the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, denounces the modern ideological motivations he sees behind an overly Romantic vision of Islam:

If in place of defending the existence of values shared between Islam and Christendom, we project onto the past the ideas of “tolerance” and “*convivencia*” as intimately linked to peninsular Islam and in opposition to secular Hispanic provincialism [*cerilismo hispánico*], we do nothing more than make an ahistorical and equally idealistic transposition of a series of contemporary concepts which have their justification in a history that is never described or interpreted but simply depicted [*plasmada*]. (37)¹⁵

Against “the heap of lyrical nonsense that continues to be written about Al-Andalus with great frequency” (37), he praises the perceived trend in peninsular Arabism since the 1970s of establishing connections with other disciplines like history “without giving up scientific rigor.”¹⁶ Hebraist María Fuencisla García Casar criticizes what she calls Castro’s “original but quixotic intuitions” and “dangerous deformations which are in no way beneficial,” instead praising Castro’s critics Eugenio Asensio and José Maravall for “balance,” “detachment,” and “historical rigor.” “Their unbiased reading is in all ways obligatory if we desire that future studies on Spanish Judaism ... do not continue to be based on supposition, vacuous dialectic, and trite but profitable topics [*manidos pero rentables tópicos*]” (81). In the face of such perceived scholarly misguidedness, Corriente displays the same overweening *gravitas* with regard to detached historiography, stating that “the mission of the historian is to transmit faithfully the facts and give them their correct interpretation, never altering them with a moral or ideological goal” (47). As Ladero Quesada emphasizes, “one must stop the falsifications of History” (Fanjul, *Al-Andalus* xiv).

What unites the historian and the philologist for these critics is their shared attention to objective facts and intention to avoid bias. Corriente explains his position clearly:

There is a hierarchy of interests in research in which the establishing of facts takes precedence over the listing of opinions given about them ... For those of us who like scientific rigor, we find ourselves more easily trying to confirm the reality of things and preventing their oblivion than gathering and valuing what opinions may have been given about them with greater or lesser accuracy. (39)

Given the shared histories of the disciplines of philology and historiography, histories which we will here examine more closely, it is not surprising that these examples share a very clear pairing of the two disciplines as somehow converging at their most elevated and disinterested state in the love of hard facts. In order to understand better the significance of this opposition in Spanish scholarship between “lyrical nonsense” and “scientific rigor” on the one hand or between convivencia and “the supposed scientific truth” (Castro’s words), on the other, it is necessary to situate the debate in a wider historical context and to identify the specific origins of this parting of ways that has had such a profound and determinative effect on Iberian medieval studies, both in Spain and in North America.

Castro, Auerbach, Vico, and Figural History

The “hierarchy of interests” between facts and opinions within Iberian medieval studies of which Corriente speaks is only part of a wider conflict between empirical and interpretive criticism within all of the disciplines that were born out of philology. The distilling of the anti-convivencia polemic into an unspoken companionship between philology and history on the grounds of their shared scientific objectivity automatically recalls the words of Castro’s contemporary and one of the twentieth century’s greatest Romance scholars, Erich Auerbach, who wrote at the end of his life, in his very last work (*Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*), “My purpose is always to write history” (20). One can only imagine how, *mutatis mutandis*, the historians and philologists of today with a pronounced love for scientific rigor would find ample cause to attack such a statement.

In explaining how it could be that a philologist’s primary cause was not text editing and the cataloging of manuscripts, but something as vast and as nebulous as “to write history,” Auerbach invokes the well-known words of another historian-philologist hybrid, Giambattista Vico, who (he says) viewed history and philology together as one discipline. Vico’s ideas were of primary importance for

Auerbach's understanding of literary history; and because of the wider context in which the rhetoric of the *convivencia* debate must be understood, its connection to Auerbach's Vichian thought is in no way coincidental.¹⁷ Not only was Auerbach trained in the German tradition of Romance philology that evolved from the second half of the nineteenth century until the rise of National Socialism, the same tradition had a determinative influence on the philological discipline in which Castro himself was trained.¹⁸ More importantly, both Auerbach's invocation of Vico and Castro's promulgation of *convivencia* can also be understood as reactions against the limits of that tradition. As a result, there is a direct intersection of terms and concepts in Auerbach's and Castro's definition of historiography and, correspondingly, the criticism of the ideas of Castro and his later proponents closely resembles, both temporally and conceptually, the critical reaction against Auerbach and his notion of literary history. The parallels between the two thinkers and their reception are so marked that an examination of Auerbach's Vichian thought can lead to a better understanding of the latter as well as provide insight into the origins of the internecine wrangling of modern Iberianist scholarship. The verbal wars over *convivencia* are by no means meaningful in a limited or local context only, but are in fact part of a wider, more universal epistemological divide within the intellectual history of the West.

As is well-known, Vico distinguishes between what he calls the true (*verum*) and the certain (*certum*); and he associates the former, understood as absolute truth, with "philosophy" and the latter, understood as the certainties subject to historical change, with "philology." As Vico's famous (if overemphasized) remark, *verum ipsum factum* – that which is true is the same as that which is made – has been understood, the task of the scholar is to seek the true in a human context, in human things, not in nature or metaphysics.¹⁹ In short, the universally true must be approached only as it is manifested within the locally certain, an insight that Isaiah Berlin has described as "a sense of knowing which is basic to all humane studies" (*Three Critics* 116).²⁰ Auerbach saw Vico's concept as a stronghold within which to protect the *Geisteswissenschaften* from the incursion of excessively linear, mechanistic, or scientific methodology. Philology, the study of human language, is comparable (as Auerbach sees it) to history, precisely because the stuff of its conclusions is the human, the *certum*, and it is only possible to approach the *verum* spread across history by observing the patterns of individual certainties. Auerbach explains that

the truth sought by philosophy is inseparable from philology, which investigates the *certa* both singly and in their systematic context ... [T]his philological philosophy or philosophical philology is concerned with only one thing – mankind ... [S]uch is the conception of philology that I have learned from Vico. (*Literary Language* 16)

As a result, rather than (as Corriente urges) “faithfully transmitting facts and giving them their *correct* interpretation” (italics mine), Auerbach’s history is not a chronological construction, in which the past is understood to be the sum of its individually measured and verified empirical parts. As he asserts, “it is patently impossible to establish a synthesis by assembling all the particulars” (*Literary Language* 18). Rather, his historiography is “vertical”: a conceptual history that is extra-chronological, built not around the ordering of data but around the prominence of repetitions. This historiography is exegetical, not scientific; circular and paradoxical, not linear and logical. Because for Vico (and for Auerbach) one can only fully understand what one has made, history, like philology, is not based on measurement but on interpretation. As Auerbach explains, “Strict scientific methods are not applicable to historical phenomena or to any other phenomena that cannot be subjected to the special conditions required by scientific experimentation” (8). History is, literally, *figural*: built around the operative narrative concepts of proleptic prefiguration and analeptic fulfillment, just as the Hebrew Bible is understood, in Christian exegesis, to foreshadow and be fulfilled by the New Testament on a figural level of interpretation. In his exposition of figural reading – which he is careful to distinguish from allegorical reading, in which signifiers are read plainly as non-literal or metaphorical – Auerbach insists that the connection of two events in history through “prefiguration” and “fulfillment” both preserves the literal historicity of facts and events from being transformed into allegories or metaphors, and at the same time insists that such historicity is never transparent but must always be received and explained within an interpretive framework (*Scenes* 54). Although itself not based in fact but in interpretation, figural “omni-temporality” (to borrow one of Auerbach’s terms; *Mimesis* 544),²¹ free of strict causal and chronological ties but still defined in its warp and weft by the perceived interconnectedness between events, is the only proper way, he suggests, to access the human past. Auerbach insists that “history, with all its concrete force, remains forever a figure, cloaked and needful of interpretation ... [T]he history of no epoch ever has the practical self-sufficiency which ... resides in the accomplished fact” (“Figura” 58–9).

For this anti-empirical position, Auerbach was attacked by his fellow philologists, precisely because they believed his history was not historical enough (Nichols, “Philology in Auerbach’s Drama” 66). René Wellek criticized what he saw as Auerbach’s “reliance on intuition and interpretation,” his “disregard for generic boundaries dividing fiction from non-fiction,” and his attempt “to discard the whole conceptual structure of modern scholarship in favor of what he calls ‘philology,’ textual interpretation, close reading, combined with something which can at best be described as personal insight, artistic imagination” (“Auerbach’s Special Realism” 305). At the same time, Dutch philologist Joseph Engels dismisses

Auerbach and other interpretive philologists like Leo Spitzer and Ernst Robert Curtius as aesthetic, literary critics who wrongfully subordinate the study of language to that of literature and, following the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen, rejects the term “philology” altogether, advocating instead linguistics as a positivist science separated from literary study (Engels 22–4), a view put forth only a few years earlier by René Wellek (*Theory* 38).²²

According to Stephen Nichols, this clash of philological titans resulted from the emergence at the end of the eighteenth century of two divergent notions of language: the classicist vision of (in E.R. Curtius’s words) “the universal concept of Antiquity, which unites philology and history” (519) and the vision of comparative grammarians, in which language was to be studied for itself (Nichols, “Philology and Its Discontents” 122–3). Out of this division, a crisis between language as systematic object (linguistics) and language as culture (philology) was precipitated by Romantic ideas of creativity.²³ Nichols calls the debate between philology and linguistics “the issue at the heart of philology’s discontent” (123), a conflict of identity built on the clash of subjective, interpretive criticism, and objective, empirical science, or as Jan Ziolkowski puts it (with tongue in cheek), between “*thinking* about what we are doing and *knowing* what we are doing” (9; italics his).²⁴ We can easily see the traces of this clash not only in the modern division between academic units of linguistics and literature, but also within medieval studies in the truculent debate between those who approach philology as synchronic – i.e., as textual criticism and manuscript scholarship – and those who see philology as diachronic, i.e., as the study of the evolution of culture within language. Philology survives in its erstwhile hybrid state of hard science blended with hermeneutic sensibility in both classical and medieval studies; but in the latter there is a more troubled divide among those who edit manuscripts and those who read them, a divide, as Nichols and Hans Gumbrecht name it, between “fundamentalist philology” and “essentialist philology” (Gumbrecht, “A Philological Invention” 32–3).²⁵

Because both Auerbach and Américo Castro were trained in the former and moved steadily towards the latter throughout their careers, their views on both philology and historiography are extremely similar and bear the marks of this profound shift in focus. In fact, on the subject of history, Auerbach’s words are almost indistinguishable from those of Castro, who himself reflected obsessively on the task of the historian in all of his works after *España en su historia*, principally in the 1950s (the same years when Auerbach finished *Literary Language*). Beginning with his essay “Ensayo de historiología” in 1950, he presents a theory of history very similar to Auerbach’s figuralism in which he rejects all pretensions to scientific methodology. He developed his historiographical theory in the 1954 version of *La realidad histórica en España* (chapter 2, although much material was

subsequently removed from the final version in 1962),²⁶ and presented the most precise version of this theory in his essay “Descripción, Narración, Historiografía” (in *Dos ensayos*, from 1956), where he states: “The human past ... is made present in us like a link between a possibility and its realization” (22). Like Auerbach, Castro rejects all possibility of scientific objectivity in history, stating in his 1959 work *Los españoles, cómo llegaron a serlo*, “the pretension of arriving at the rigorous truth of what happened in the past is illusory” (253).²⁷ Even more directly, he states: “Historiography cannot shelter itself beneath a science that covers it like a roof of fixed and univocal concepts ... No history is scientific” (241). It is logical that “those ... who like scientific rigor” (as Corriente says) would find Castro’s historiography problematic.

This vision of historiography as essentially poetic rather than scientific, expressed in almost equal terms by Auerbach and Castro in the very same years, is itself a polemical response to a contrary model: the model of history as antiquarianism or science rather than narrative. The aim of historiography to rise above what Hayden White calls historiographical “emplotment” (*Metahistory* 5–11) by cleaving as closely as possible to facts is based on an implicit valuation of things above ideas, of data as a substitute for interpretation and as a way to ensure objectivity and impartiality. In this view, history becomes not a narrative but a result, the sum of its measurable parts rather than a deliberately constructed interweaving of possibilities. The history of this model of historiography reveals that the separation of history writing from narrative and criticism was achieved only through a series of decisive divisions within the human sciences over the last two centuries. Thus, this fissure between hermeneutics and empiricism by which philology was divided and parceled out to its modern heirs, linguistics and literature, did not run through philology only, but also through its problematic Doppelgänger, history; and so historiography too, in its modern sense invented at the same time that philology came into being as an academic subject, has evolved into its current state of valuing objective, archival research over mere interpretive narrative.²⁸ The resulting “hierarchy of interests” forms part of the essential framework of human sciences as they are distributed across academic disciplines today, and the debate over convivencia is caught in the middle of this methodological bifurcation.

History and Philology between *Bildung* and *Wissenschaft*

Although it is generally accepted that the valuing of empirical exactness in historiography has its origins in Germany in the nineteenth-century Romantic re-conception of Enlightenment models of scientific history, it must be stressed that in its Romantic beginning, this “empiricism” did not exclude interpretive

narrative. Following Vico's first proposal for a "New Science" centred on human action, a new, holistic, organic representation of the past emerged in Romantic historicism, represented by the oft-misconstrued recommendation of Leopold von Ranke (a founding father of primary-source-based history) to write history "wie es eigentlich gewesen [ist]," *as it essentially was* (*Geschichten* 7). This early nineteenth-century historiography, patent in the foundational histories of Ranke and Michelet, sought to blend the text criticism developed in classical philology and the erudition of legal scholars with narration and interpretation of a universal world history (Breisach 229).²⁹ History is, in Ranke's words, a "holy hieroglyph,"³⁰ interpretation of which required not the objectivity of a scientific method but the Romantic hermeneutic of empathy and identification with one's object of study.³¹ This Romantic notion of "sympathy" – which implies a complete, inner identification with the world of the past through what Wilhelm Dilthey, the transmitter of the Romantic tradition, later called an inner experience (*Erlebnis*) of empathy (*Einfühlung*)³² – was based on a dialectical opposition between self and other. This opposition derived from the Hegelian effort to reconcile the idealism of Kant and especially Fichte with the realism of Spinoza through an organic and holistic notion of the animated universe.³³

The quintessential expression of the Romantic reconciliation of idealism and realism within a holistic organicism is the cultural ideal of *Bildung*, the notion of self-realization of the individual through education and aesthetic cultivation. *Bildung*, as the highest ideal of German Romanticism, was the form given to a belief in harmony between inner consciousness and outer manifestation, between idealism and realism, and in this sense the cultivation of the individual towards self-realization was a consciously social act. In practical terms, the ideals of early Romanticism (*Frühromantik*) were manifest most significantly in the realization of a new ideal of university learning, marking a new constellation of areas of academic work, especially in Prussian universities like University of Berlin, founded under the neo-Humanist guiding hand of Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1810.

In these new disciplines, the Romantic realm of *Bildung* – of personal cultivation and aesthetic judgment – intersected with neoclassical *Wissenschaft* – science and research, understood in a pre-positivist, neo-Humanist sense.³⁴ Humboldt's concept of *Bildung durch Wissenschaft*, self-cultivation through research, found its most apposite application in classical philology. Pioneered by figures such as Friedrich August Wolf and his pupils, the development of classical philology as a new academic *Altertumswissenschaft*, a science of antiquity, with its epicenter at the University of Berlin, came to embody the ideal of *Bildung* and the holistic vision of academic work.³⁵ Wolf's vision of philology's intersection with history, elaborated further by his pupil August Böckh, was to have a decisive influence on the growth of both disciplines, above all through those influential figures

who attended Böckh's lectures, including August Droysen, Jakob Burckhardt (who also studied under Ranke), Friedrich Nietzsche, and Wilhelm Dilthey.³⁶ Many of the disciplines established at this time following the model of Wolf and Böckh – source-based historiography with Ranke, comparative grammar and Indo-European linguistics with Friedrich Schlegel and Franz Bopp, German philology with the Grimm brothers, and later Romance philology with Friedrich Diez – not coincidentally shared a Romantic vision of language as simultaneously the stuff of both neo-Humanist *Wissenschaft* and Romantic *Bildung*, a meeting point of exteriority and interiority. Such a view, later developed in the hermeneutical thought of Dilthey at the turn of the twentieth century and manifest in Spain, in altered form, in the early educational reforms of Krausism, can be epitomized by Schlegel's dictum, "It is equally deadly to the spirit [gleich tödlich für den Geist] to have a system and not to have one. One must ... combine the two" (Athenäumsfragment no. 53, in *Kritische* 2:173).

This Romantic synthesis was, in practice, short-lived. In the wake of the revolutions of 1848, the mixed ideals of Romantic historiography and philology were no longer tenable within the same paradoxical conception. There was, especially among the Neogrammarian philologists later in the century, both a sharp criticism of *Bildung* as overly subjective and a concomitant tendency towards a new *Wissenschaft* of science and positivism.³⁷ Likewise in historiography, poetic and teleological narratives of the past – of history understood as a *Geisteswissenschaft* – quickly became, when stripped of Romantic or Christian or Idealist bias, a renewed devotion to historical and linguistic study as a *Naturwissenschaft*: a natural science, although different from the Enlightenment mechanical view that early Romantic thinkers sought to transform and to transcend.

The bifurcation between *Bildung* and *Wissenschaft* in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century human sciences such as philology and historiography formed part of an essential schism of method that eventually developed into our modern divisions between linguistics and literature, or our active ones in medieval studies between "real" scholarship and mere criticism. It was the same division between Rankean historicism and liberal positivism that relegated *Bildung* either to cultural historians such as Jakob Burckhardt and Johan Huizinga or to narrative histories designed as nationalist and racist propaganda.³⁸ It was the same division that prompted Nietzsche, himself a philologist unhappily divided across philology's split purposes, to lambaste the philological tradition from which he emerged and, like Burckhardt, to define himself in opposition to it.³⁹ The harsh criticism weathered by Burckhardt for his cultural histories and Nietzsche for his efforts to *épater les philologues* with unconventional classicism evinces the degree to which *Bildung* became detached from scholarship both in historiography and in philology. In this context we can understand the lament by philosopher Karl Jaspers in 1923

and again in 1946 that “the university is impoverished when there is only philology and no more philosophy, only technical practice and no more theory, endless facts and no ideas” (48; translation, Ringer 257).⁴⁰

The duality of science and metaphor is present at the very heart of all of the human sciences founded at this time, and the schism produced by the loss of this Romantic ideal is still very much with us today in our disciplinary and methodological squabbles, even though the modern university has evolved far from the Humboldtian or Krausist blueprints. Following Nietzsche’s lead, and in opposition to Saussure’s reification of the *Bildung/Wissenschaft* divide as a divide between synchronic and diachronic sign systems, between objective *langue* and subjective *parole*, the general postmodern and poststructural aversion to any form of *grand récit* (including narratives of collective identity – liberal or conservative – in post-Francoist Spain, and defenses of closed cultural canons in contemporary North America) has driven deeper the wedge between philological science and criticism.⁴¹ This divide between empiricism and evaluation is not only limited to the conflict between linguistics and literature, but has also prompted critics like Edward Said to lament that Near Eastern Studies now suffers from a “retrogressive position when compared with the other human sciences, [a] general methodological and ideological backwardness, [a] comparative insularity” (*Orientalism* 261), and medievalists like Lee Patterson, in the same vein, to denounce the “barriers that divide medieval studies from the rest of the human sciences” (104). While medieval Romance philology has allowed some new pockets for generalization by occasionally sharing space with cultural and gender studies, Arabic or Near Eastern philology – especially in Europe – has put up a firm opposition to the incursions of non-specialists like Castro and his proponents.⁴²

This resistance is largely in keeping with the tradition of western Arabic philology since its inception. Despite the well-demonstrated connection between the formation of philology and the emergence of modern Orientalism – comparative Indo-European philology emerged under the structure of a classicist model, which itself was structured in part on a model of Biblical Hebrew studies⁴³ – there was at first a notable division between Indo-European philology, interested in establishing the ancient foundations of European languages, and “Semitic” philology, which consisted principally of the study of Biblical Hebrew and initially gave little attention to the study of Arabic.⁴⁴ The two most important pioneers of academic study of Arabic in the nineteenth century, Antoine-Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838) and Edward Lane (1801–76), did not share the ideals of German Romanticism, even though many of the key figures of Indo-European philology studied with Silvestre.⁴⁵ The upshot of this lack of commitment to neo-Humanist notions of *Bildung* within Arabic studies sets it firmly apart from other subdivisions of philology such as classical, Indo-European, German, and Romance. When Silvestre’s student Ernest Renan (1823–92) began to enlarge the curriculum

of his teacher, the paradoxes of Romanticism began to give way to a pronounced dualism between opposed methods of research.⁴⁶ The decidedly vocational and practical approach to Arabic by Silvestre de Sacy and the critical agnosticism of his pupil Renan had the effect of situating Arabic philology at a distance from the purely Humanist ideals that guided other branches of philology while at the same time infusing Arabism with a dominant empiricist vision of textual study as an exact science. In Spain, by contrast – although the patriarch of Arabic studies in the Peninsula, Francisco Codera, studied under one of Silvestre’s Spanish students, Pascual de Gayangos (1809–97), and had pursued studies in natural science before turning to Arabic (Monroe, *Islam* 128–33) – Arabic studies were quickly linked to cultural and religious studies (one can think of the musical interests of Julián de Ribera or the religious comparativism of Miguel Asín Palacios)⁴⁷ and eventually to nationalist historiography rather than the Arabic language in itself.⁴⁸ The scientific tradition that peninsular Arabists have cultivated for the last few decades can be seen as a deliberate attempt to distance themselves from the focus of their past tradition and associate more closely with the ideals of Arabic studies beyond the Peninsula.

The issue, however, is not one confined to Arabic philology, but also reflects a more general trend in the evolution of peninsular academic culture in the twentieth century. In Spain, the attacks against German idealism as the “foreign secularism” of Krausism and its educational reforms through the *Institución Libre de la Enseñanza* (which directly impacted Castro early in his career) came not from positivists but from conservative Catholic nationalists such as philologist Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo (1856–1912). Such attacks, to be sure, formed part of Spain’s own larger ideological divide that, in political form, came to a decisive climax in the Spanish Civil War. Not surprisingly, peninsular academic “science” since the transition to democracy after the death of Franco in 1975 has aimed to distance itself from *both* of “the two Spains” of its past, progressive/idealist and conservative/nationalist. We can thus equally sympathize with the condemnation by historian Carlos Carrete Parrondo of “pseudoscientific propagandists” who “confuse historical reality with extreme sentimentalism [and for whom] interpretive calm is lacking and nineteenth-century impulse abounds” (146). The embracing of “science” as an alternative to both reformist idealism and religious nationalism has led in historiography to a decisive local focus and in Arabic studies to the final emergence of an explicitly scientific philology as an independent discipline, similar to that cultivated elsewhere in the West (Manzano Moreno 25).⁴⁹

Contextualizing Convivencia

When we take these various factors into account, it is not surprising that Auerbach – who, like his contemporary Curtius, sought to rise above the horrors of

nationalism through his philology – would find his closest affinity with Vico, a pre-nineteenth century proto-Romantic model whose history was in no sense riven by this essentialist-fundamentalist divide or co-opted to the projects of racism or nationalism. It is not surprising either that the contemporary anti-nationalist vision articulated by Castro would be based on a theory of figural historiography very similar to that espoused by Auerbach. Nor is it surprising that both Auerbach and Castro wrote their unifying, anti-positivist poetic historiographies during the same period, both from an exile produced by the excesses of nationalism that had its roots in the projects of nineteenth-century philology (an exile that, for both men, ended in the United States). Finally, it is not surprising that Spanish Arabist philology – still within living memory of Francoism and its own conflicted identity as a part of western Orientalism – is now very much on guard against interpretive or poetic histories that use philology as a technique for *Bildung*, whether national or individual; and that consequently it hews very close to the righteous rigors of philology as a fundamentalist science of post-Romantic *Wissenschaft*.⁵⁰

Given that Castro posed such ideas as a Romance philologist, it is also not surprising that Castro's ideas have had their deepest impact and have found their most steadfast defenders in North America, where the ideological preference for comparative criticism in the humanities is closely tied to the same Germanic tradition of Romantic hermeneutics from which Castro drew many of his fundamental insights.⁵¹ At the very moment when Spanish Arabists, in attitude and in method, made a firm break with previous Arabic philology insofar as it was linked to nationalist or religious ideology, philological studies in North America have moved in the opposite direction. The influx into the North American academy in the second half of the twentieth century of French poststructuralism and postcolonialism and German hermeneutics and neo-Marxism, alongside the comparatist ideas brought by exiled European philologists such as Auerbach, Wellek, de Man, and Spitzer, has brought about a preponderate theoretical concern with exclusion and impurity. This dual focus has produced a general opposition to closed canons, a fascination with subalternity and the conceptually marginal and neglected as the manifestation of the postmodern law of supplementarity, a penchant for hybridity and other perceived manifestations of intermixing of racial and national identities, and a commitment to the perspective of the individual reader – as a region of marginality vis-à-vis the public and the state – through meditation on the subjective reception, transformation, and subversion of historical tradition. Such tendencies have contributed to the cultural preference for interdisciplinary and interpretive criticism over focus on single national or linguistic traditions or the punctilious work of material philology.⁵²

The different circumstances under which the history of totalitarianism was weathered have, not surprisingly, provoked different methodological responses

in the academy in general and in Iberian medieval studies in particular. In the same sense that *convivencia* has represented an attractive, albeit simplistic, model for some medievalists faced with what were perceived as dangerous tendencies towards uniform models of Eurocentric westernness, so it has come to represent for other philologists and historians a dangerous imprecision that runs the risk of resurrecting the ideologies of nationalism and propagandistic historiography. This divergence, however, can be traced to the same source: the epistemological rupture upon which the human sciences as such were founded. Ironically, both the embracing and the rejection of *convivencia* – and both hermeneutic and scientific philology more generally – can be understood as articulations of local cultural identity in response to the thorny by-products of the decay of Romanticism.

The opposed uses of the concept of *convivencia* by Menéndez Pidal and Castro are only reflections of the wider epistemological split in both philology and historiography between empirical linguistics and poetic metaphor. As such, *convivencia*, which has “consistently failed on empirical grounds” (Soifer 31), can serve as a sort of litmus test concerning how the various human sciences view their object of study in different cultural settings. In both historiography and literary criticism, it forces the decision to view the Middle Ages either, in Brian Stock’s words, as “an objectified period or a subjective state of mind” (542). It seems dangerous because, in the wake of the linguistic turn, it is unstable, representing an active fault line in the rupture between *Bildung* and *Wissenschaft* as it manifested itself in a rupture between interpretive philology and scientific linguistics, between literary and social histories, or between figural readings of coexisting opposites and scientific models of competitive evolution. In this precarious position, *convivencia* is indeed dangerous precisely when it is forced from being a term of figural, nonlinear history or even of *mythopoesis* into being only an empirical term of analysis, a tool of scientific historiography or reified critical periodization.⁵³ This danger, moreover, cuts both ways. We risk not only the local danger of misunderstanding caused by the careless mixing of metaphors, but a broader danger, on a disciplinary level, of reducing our representation and understanding of manifold and contradictory historical circumstances to the rigid terms of one philological or historiographical model. Those critics who have taken pains to expose “the Spain of three cultures” as a modern historiographical myth have at the same time left little room for reflection on the critical question of how an absolute embrace of scientific method with the deliberate goal of detaching scholarship from ideology itself serves as a counter-myth of identity with equal potential for ideological distortion.⁵⁴

In the face of this divide, no totalizing synthesis can or should claim precedence. Contrasting visions of the past must not be taken as mutually exclusive, but as

coexisting alternative approaches to an inexhaustibly rich and ultimately unreachable past, approaches judged to be no more or less valuable (or “true”) by virtue of being empirical or interpretive, descriptive or evaluative, literal or metaphorical. It is only through the coexistence of competing, opposed, but mutually correcting historiographical and philological models that critics can effectively protect each other from the occluding blinders we unwittingly wear by relying too heavily on any one master narrative of the past. As Fanjul himself reminds us, “scientists end up identifying, to a greater or lesser extent, with their object of study” (*Al-Andalus* xxix). If this is so, then any vision of history premised on the priority of only one epistemological model is always at risk of devolving into a consuming dualism in which scholarship ends up being overspecialized and hermetic at best, divisive and hegemonic at worst. Anything less than *convivencia* among scholars, itself viewed simultaneously as both balanced coexistence and progressive competition, will most certainly engender not only its own polemics and ideologies – as it already has – but also its own crusades, its own inquisitions, its own reconquests, and ultimately, the impoverishment resulting from expulsion, exile, and oblivion.

NOTES

- * This research is part of a collaborative project entitled “The Intellectual and Material Legacies of Late Medieval Sephardic Judaism: An Interdisciplinary Approach,” directed by Dr Esperanza Alfonso (CSIC). I wish to thank the European Research Council for its support of this project with a four-year Starting Grant and to thank Dr Alfonso for her ongoing coordination as Principle Investigator of the project. I also wish to thank Murray Baumgarten, David Wacks, Catherine Brown, and Edward Casey for their helpful criticism of previous drafts of this essay.
- 1 Examples supporting Ray’s point abound: the term has been adopted for things as disparate as the titles for a music ensemble and performance festival in France, a bookstore in Brazil, a conservative Christian radio station in Mexico, an ecumenical church in Texas, and a civil liberties lobbying group in Catalonia, to cite just a few of the odd examples of its wide dissemination. Likewise, scholarship has seen a proliferation of collections of essays treating the subject of “contact” between Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, such as *Convivencia* (eds. Mann, Glick, and Dodds); *Chrétiens, musulmans et juifs dans l’Espagne médiévale* (ed. Barkai); *Creencias y culturas* (eds. Meyuhas Ginio and Carrete Parrondo); and *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (eds. Meyerson and English).
 - 2 Professor Constable read her paper at the Fortieth International Congress on Medieval Studies (2005) in Kalamazoo, Michigan. I am grateful to her for sharing her paper with me and granting me permission to cite the text.

- 3 I here follow the illuminating observations of Monroe in “Américo Castro” and, above all, Martínez Montávez in “Lectura de Américo Castro,” which are among the very few attempts to offer an analytical explanation of the extreme reactions to the work of Castro and his disciples.
- 4 The origins of the notion of *convivencia* have now been carefully laid out by Glick (“Convivencia” 1–2; *Islamic and Christian Spain*, on which, see n.7 below), and summarized by various scholars, including Novikoff (18–21), Akasoy, “Convivencia and Its Discontents” and Wolf, “Convivencia in Medieval Spain.”
- 5 De la Puente, *Tomo primero de la convivencia de las dos monarquías católicas* (1612). The Latin “conviventia,” the shared food of a (monastic) community, can be found as early as the 10th century (Gysseling and Koch 294).
- 6 Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this essay are mine.
- 7 In his *Islamic and Christian Spain*, Glick has traced the early use of the term in Pidal’s *Orígenes del español* (281, 293–6). It is possible to see this usage even earlier than Glick has claimed. Pidal employed the word in 1921 in *El Cid en la historia* (30–1) to mean “coexistence,” a sense Julián Ribera had already used in 1912 to discuss medieval Iberia (*Discursos* 54).
- 8 Cerquiglini has observed a similar influence of theories of evolution, especially in the theories of Joseph Bédier, who “introduced neo-Lamarckian thought into philology” (69).
- 9 Sánchez-Albornoz mounted his attack in *España: un enigma histórico* in 1956. The first of Asensio’s various attacks came with “Américo Castro historiador” in 1966, followed by numerous later additions. This conflict has now been amply reconstructed by various scholars including Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain* 6–13 and Gómez-Martínez, *Américo Castro*, among others. The specific debt of both Castro and Sánchez-Albornoz to Peninsular Arabic studies has been traced by López García in “Enigmas de al-Andalus.”
- 10 See Mark Cohen, “The Neo-Lachrymose Conception” and the response by Stillman, “Myth, Counter-Myth and Distortion.”
- 11 Novikoff has presented a detailed overview of the criticism and defense of the notion of tolerance in medieval Iberia (“Between Tolerance and Intolerance”), and much of the important scholarship relevant to the debate can be found cited there. Catlos first proposed this notion in his article “Cristians, musulmans i jueus” and has since repeated the notion (*The Victors* 407). Menocal, who has avoided using the word almost completely in any of her books, commented in her “Visions of Al-Andalus” that “the conceptual error that has plagued all sides of the study of [medieval Iberia] is the assumption that these phenomena, reconquest and convivencia, are thoroughgoing and thus mutually exclusive” (14). Nirenberg presented his views most completely in *Communities of Violence*, in which he observes, “*convivencia* was predicated upon violence; it was not its peaceful antithesis. Violence drew its meaning from

- coexistence, not in opposition to it” (245). The compatibility of these views has gone little remarked by critics.
- 12 It is easy to write off certain popular critics of *convivencia* as mere conservative reactionaries or uninformed editorialists, such as the journalist Cesar Vidal, whose many publications include the 2004 polemical history, *España frente al Islam*, in which he proposes to meet “the challenges that Islam presents for free, peaceful, and democratic *convivencia* in Spain” with stricter immigration quotas. Another example from among the fourth estate, though less reactionary, is the *New York Times* critic Edward Rothstein, “Was the Islam of Old Spain Truly Tolerant?” (2 September 2003). The popular press has served as a forum for numerous salvos from academics as well; see, for example, Joseph Pérez, “Chrétiens, Juifs et Musulmans.”
 - 13 In “Arabistas en España” Marín also observes, “in the origins of academic Arabism there is a firm desire to extract from the history of Al-Andalus the Romanticism and exoticism with which it has been so much viewed both inside and outside Spain. This exoticism has been renewed and transformed to take on some peculiar forms today, which are no less false for being new (such as the myth of the Spain of the three cultures)” (389).
 - 14 In the face of such pronouncements, Ridaó (e.g., in his *El País* article, “El oscurantismo reverenciado”) has argued that the debate over “multiculturalism” depends on a clarification of what is actually being meant by the word “culture.” See also Juan Goytisolo’s similar concurring remarks in “Convivencia con el Islam.”
 - 15 In a similar vein, Durán Velasco observes, “If there had not been a *Reconquista* and al-Andalus had survived until today, the country would have been just as monocultural and monoreligious as it was after the decrees of expulsions of the moriscos by Felipe III. Three cultures? No way. [De tres culturas nada]” (168).
 - 16 Rodríguez Magda complains that “the supposedly pacific *convivencia* of three cultures and religions postulated by Castro has become an uncritical cliché repeated ad nauseam” (*Inexistente* 38) and condemns “all of those who, far from rigor, use pseudo-historical rhetoric as a projectile weapon” (24). Madariaga, who shares her complaints, notes with approval that Spanish Arabists have recently “reconsidered with a critical spirit some of the mythical aspects of the society of al-Andalus and analysed this historical past with scientific rigor, free of ideological passions and interferences” (“En torno” 82–3).
 - 17 Auerbach wrote pieces explicitly devoted to Vico on no fewer than thirteen occasions (Wellek, “Auerbach and Vico” 85–6n1). He noted his debt to Vico in his introduction to *Literary Language*, stating that Vico’s conception of philology “in a very specific way ... has complemented and molded, in my thinking and in my work, the ideas deriving from German historicism” (7). On this connection, see also Bahti, “Vico, Auerbach.”
 - 18 Araya, *El pensamiento*, divides Castro’s work into two periods before and after 1938, noting the traditional philological cast of his first period of work (27–8). Portolés

- discusses in some detail Castro's early "positivist" phase as a scientific philologist beginning at the Centro de Estudios Históricos in Madrid under the influence of Menéndez Pidal, when he translated the *Einführung* of the Neogrammarian philologist Meyer-Lübke (*Medio siglo* 97–103). For a general overview of the conflict between Romance philology and linguistic studies, see Malkiel, "Filología española."
- 19 While Vico actually only expresses this phrase as such in an early work, *De antiquissima Italorum sapientia* (*On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians*), it is one of the guiding principles of his later versions of the *New Science*. On Vico's concepts of *verum* and *factum*, see Berlin, "The Philosophical Ideas" 34–8 and "Vico's Theory of Knowledge," both in *Three Critics*; "Vico's Concept of Knowledge" in *Against the Current*; and Morrison, "Vico's Principle."
 - 20 Significantly, Berlin locates Vico at the heart of what he has named the Counter Enlightenment, the beginning of an anti-rationalist and anti-empirical thread that, he argues, culminated in the emergence of various lines of anti-empirical thinking cumulatively referred to as "Romanticism" ("Vico and Herder," in *Three Critics* 8–12). In this sense, we can appreciate Croce's assertion that Vico "was neither more nor less than the nineteenth century in embryo" (*La filosofia* 257).
 - 21 See Uhlig in "Auerbach's 'Hidden' (?) Theory" 42–34 and 257n33.
 - 22 This summary of the criticism of Auerbach is drawn largely from Nichols, "Philology in Auerbach's Drama." In espousing this view, Engels was only repeating a view put forth nearly a century earlier when linguist August Schleicher proposed enforcing a firm division between the aesthetic bias of philology and the scientific rigor of the newly emerging science of linguistics. As he stated, "the method of linguistics is totally different from those of all the historical sciences, and essentially joins ranks with the methods of the other natural sciences" (from *Die Sprachen Europas* [1850], cited in Amsterdamska 45). On the question of Schleicher's blending of biological and Hegelian ideas, see Arbuckle, "Schleicher" and Amsterdamska's critique in *Schools* 44–50 and 277n.31.
 - 23 As Anthony Grafton remarks, "in the late eighteenth century . . . scholars throughout Europe were desperately trying to drive two very different horses in a single yoke: the historical method that tried to situate every text in a unique context and the comparative method that tried to find in every text a normal stage in the uniform development of all societies and cultures" ("Man muß" 423).
 - 24 On the history of philology, see Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant* and Helsloot, *Een korte geschiedenis van de rede*; Gumbrecht, "Un Souffle d'Allemagne"; Amsterdamska, *Schools*. For consideration of the issue in a specifically Spanish context, see Gerli, "Inventing the Spanish Middle Ages"; Hess, "Castilian Hegemony"; and Brown, "The Relics."
 - 25 Endorsing the former, Old French philologist Mary Speer states that a philologist's work is "empirical, properly focused on the concrete realities of one or more manuscript traditions and therefore skeptical – in an informed way – to theories of any

kind ... their primary allegiance is to the text" (cited in Nichols, "Philology and its Discontents" 115). In essentialist philology, on the other hand, which focuses on the "manuscript matrix" (Nichols's term) rather than just the manuscript, the concern is with the hermeneutics of signifiers, not only their materiality. Brian Stock summarizes the conflict thus: "The good editor still wishes in part to emulate the Enlightenment goal that history, in revealing the perversities of the past, will free him from them. But he is also tainted by historicism. His re-creation of context, if only in the apparatus, may be interpreted as a minor tributary of relativism, and his search for origins and analogies implies a characteristically Romantic conception of the organic unity of the age" (542). It is not insignificant that this conflict within Medieval Studies is represented *in nuce* in one of its most venerable journals, *Speculum*, whose title can be deconstructed alternately as both a mirror dispassionately reflecting its historical object (*Wissenschaft*) and as a *speculum puerorum* serving as a subjective interlocutor for teaching wisdom and interpretive judgment (*Bildung*).

- 26 For example, he removes all mention of Fichte and greatly reduces discussion of Dilthey in the 1962 edition. Compare e.g. 40–68 in the 1954 edition with 80–111 in the 1962 text.
- 27 The text from 1959 was entitled *Origen, ser y existir de los españoles*, which was republished in expanded form as *Los españoles: Cómo llegaron a serlo* in 1965.
- 28 In the words of Michel de Certeau, "by distinguishing between two discourses – the one scientific, the other fictive – according to its own criteria, historiography credits itself with having a special relationship to the 'real' ... Debates about the reliability of literature as opposed to history illustrate this division" (201). On the question of the historiography of historiography and its relationship to philology in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Muhlack "Historie und Philologie"; Gildenhard, "Philologia Perennis?"; and Gadamer, *Truth and Method* 174–97. For a critique of Gadamer's theory, see Gjesdal, "Hermeneutics and Philology."
- 29 It is no coincidence that Michelet was primarily responsible for recuperating Vico from oblivion, translating the *New Science* in 1827 and even stating in his *History of France*, "Vico was my only master" (cited in Gossman, *Between History and Literature* 162–70).
- 30 "God dwells and lives and can be known in all of history ... the connectedness of history in the large ... stands there like a holy hieroglyph... . May we, for our part, decipher this holy hieroglyph!" (*The Secret* 241–2).
- 31 In Spain, the same universalizing and still-empirical tendency is embodied by Rafael Altamira (1866–1951), who infused Peninsular historiography and pedagogy with a commitment to a holistic vision of civilization and sought to apply that vision in the service of national reform. For a discussion of Altamira, see Boyd, *Historia Patria* 135–46, and the bibliography cited there.
- 32 In his unpublished text *We Philologists*, Nietzsche observes that "Experience [*Erlebnis*] is certainly an essential prerequisite for a philologist" (113). Nietzsche's use of

the word “Erlebnis” instantly evokes the contemporary thought of Dilthey on the essential role of *Erlebnis* within interpretation in the human sciences. On the history of the word “Erlebnis” in hermeneutics, see Gadamer, *Truth and Method* 60–70. Not only was this term of vital importance for Castro and his concept of “vividura” (on Castro and Dilthey, see Gómez-Martínez, *Américo Castro* 120–5); Leo Spitzer, in his lecture on “Linguistics and Literary History,” a lecture he was invited to give by Castro at Princeton, calls for all literary reading to be *inductive* rather than *deductive*, arguing “Methode ist Erlebnis” (“Method Is Experience”; 1). On the polemic that developed between Castro and Spitzer, see Gómez-Martínez 74–7.

- 33 Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative*, explores this “marriage of opposites” in his chapters “The Paradox of Romantic Metaphysics” and “Kant and the *Naturphilosophen*” 131–70. For an exploration of the concept of alterity in early Romanticism, see Gossman, *Between History and Literature* 259 and 283; and Gumbrecht, “Un Souffle d’Allemagne” 4–10. Gadamer urges a privileging of *Erfahrung*, meaning “experience” in a wider, more transcendent sense, over Dilthey’s *Erlebnis*, which he sees as contaminated by the concepts of scientific method. See *Truth and Method* 346–62.
- 34 On the question of *Bildung* and *Wissenschaft*, see the foundational documents anthologized by Ernst Anrich; the discussion by Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative* 88–105; Hofstetter, *The Romantic Idea*, especially 104–7; Schelsky, *Einsamkeit* 63–9; Ringer, *The Decline* 83–90 and 102–13. On the growth of science and specialization, see Turner, “The Growth of Professorial Research”; for a general consideration of the history of Prussian universities, in addition to Hofstetter’s brief history, see T. Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism* 218–305.
- 35 Grafton has shown that Wolf’s philological *Altertumswissenschaft* was centered on fundamentally historical method (417), and this vision had a deep methodological impact on Karl Lachmann, the father of modern text editing (Lachmann in fact succeeded Wolf at Berlin in 1825 after Wolf’s death the previous year). Lachmann’s comment that “the establishment of a text according to tradition [nach Überlieferung] is a strictly historical undertaking” (*Kleinere Schriften* 2:252) reflects this context. See also Marchand, *Down from Olympus* 16–24.
- 36 On Böckh’s comprehensive notion of philology as the study of culture that combined history, classical philology, and philosophy in a striving toward self-realization through *Bildung*, see Gossman, *Between History and Literature* 277–8 and Amsterdamska, *Schools* 67. It was, not coincidentally, what Stock calls “broad philological training in the tradition of Boeckh” that led Auerbach to develop “a distinctive aesthetic historicism” (531).
- 37 Gossmann observes, “where the neohumanists saw [classical philology] as a total inner education or formation of the individual (“*Bildung*”), the [neogrammarian] philologists saw it as an exercise in critical method and an accumulation of reliable information (“*Wissenschaft*”)” (*Basel* 161). On this divide, see also Reill, “Philology” 28.

- 38 Jarausch and Ringer, among many others, have both charted the decay of Romantic ideals of nation and identity within the late nineteenth-century rise of nationalism and militarism in Prussia. Recently, the essays contained in *Out of Arcadia* (edited by Gildenhard and Ruchl) have explored connections between that decay and classical philology.
- 39 Burckhardt, who was fiercely opposed to dry, punctilious scholarship and was instead committed to an early Romantic concept of *Bildung* which he believed had been lost, deliberately stated, in the introduction to his *Cultural History of Greece*, “We are ‘unscholarly’ [unwissenschaftlich] and have no method; at least we do not follow that of others.” He even states that he, like his reader, is a *Nichtphilologe*, a non-philologist, who is *jeder humanistisch Gebildete*, [“any Humanistically educated layperson” (both quoted in Gossman, *Basel* 308)]. It is in these terms that we can understand Burckhardt’s words to Nietzsche in a letter from 1882 – nearly the same words that Auerbach spoke of himself seventy years after – stating, “Fundamentally, of course, you are always teaching history” (quoted in White, *Metahistory* 331–2). On Nietzsche’s relationship to philology, see Whitman, “Nietzsche.” On his relation to historiography, see Brobjer, “Nietzsche’s View.”
- 40 Similarly, Heidegger remarked in 1929 in “What Is Metaphysics?”: “Only if science exists on the basis of metaphysics can it advance further in its essential task, which is not to amass and classify bits of knowledge but to disclose in ever-renewed fashion the entire region of truth in nature and history” (*Basic Writings* 111). It is in this vein that Gadamer, his prodigal student, could insist thirty years after that “the hermeneutic phenomenon ... is not concerned primarily with amassing verified knowledge, such as would satisfy the methodological ideal of science – yet it too is concerned with knowledge and with truth ... [T]he human sciences are connected to modes of experience that lie outside science: with the experiences of philosophy, of art, and of history itself. These are all modes of experience in which a truth is communicated that cannot be verified by the methodological means proper to science” (xxi–xxii).
- 41 On the development of modern linguistics see Amsterdamska, *Schools*; Lehmann, “Philology to Linguistics”; and Henkel, *The Language of Criticism*, who also provides a critique of perceived misapplications of linguistic ideas by literary theorists. Against the traditional view that Saussure was deeply influenced by German Romantic philosophy and linguistic thought, see Aarsleff, *From Locke to Saussure*. For a penetrating criticism of Aarsleff, see Hacking, “Locke, Leibniz, Language.” For an overview of the implications of the “linguistic turn” in historiography, see Toews, “Intellectual History”; Clark, *History, Theory, Text*; and Iggers, *Historiography*.
- 42 This resistance has alternated between cold silence and outright attack. On the silence over Castro’s work in Spain, see Subirats, “Américo Castro Secuestrado” and his “Nota Preliminar” in *Américo Castro y la revisión de la memoria (El Islam en España)*; Juan

- Goytisolo, “Américo Castro en la España actual” in the same collection; and Martínez Montávez, “Lectura de Américo Castro” 21–5. One example of resistance from outside Spain is the Arabist-only stance of Allen Jones of Cambridge in regard to the study of Arabic *mumashshabas* and their final *kharjas*, (Jones, “Sunbeams” and “Eppur si Muove”). Monroe, “Pedir peras,” offers one of various ripostes to Jones. For a recent reconsideration of the debate, see Mallette, “Misunderstood.”
- 43 See Grafton, “Man muß” 419–23, for a discussion of Wolf’s debt to Eichhorn’s *Einleitung*.
- 44 August Schlözer proposed the term “semitic” in a racial sense to describe descendants of Shem in the Bible (“Von den Chaldäern” 161). Renan, in his *Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques* (finished in 1847 and published in 1855), makes specific reference to this and rejects the notion of a racial grouping. He is, in a sense, the first to develop the notion in a linguistic context, setting out (as he states) to do for “semitic” languages what Bopp did for Indo-European. See Said, *Orientalism* 139–41.
- 45 Amsterdamska observes that the differences between Silvestre de Sacy and Bopp correspond to a difference between a view of philology conceived as *Bildung* in Germany and professional training in France (71). For a recent exploration of the intersection of early Orientalism and the discourse of historiography, see Freitag, “The Critique” and Ganim, *Medievalism*.
- 46 When Renan made statements in his work *The Future of Science* such as “The founders of the modern mind are philologists” and “Philology is the exact science of things of the mind [des choses de l’esprit],” his language shows traces of a Romantic understanding of education; but his belief in philology as a “lay science” (“science laïque”) stands in marked contrast to the pantheistic, undeniably spiritual outlook of *Frühromantik* in Germany. On what Gossman calls Renan’s “sclerotic dualism” (Gossman, *Between History and Literature* 193–4), see Said, *Orientalism* 130–48; and his essay “Islam, Philology, and French Culture” in *The World* 268–89.
- 47 Arabist García Gómez calls Francisco Codera the “root” of Spanish Arabism, from which grew the “trunk” in his student Julián Ribera, and the “delicate flower” in their disciple, Miguel Asín Palacios (“Primer centenario” 208). “As may be expected from the character of his work,” Monroe concludes, “Asín’s ideas have found less than sympathy among Islamic Scholars” (*Islam* 194).
- 48 As Manzano Moreno observes, this is evident in the general dearth of any complete grammar or dictionary of Arabic in Spanish before the last quarter of the twentieth century, and the fact that the primary tools for studying the Arabic of Al-Andalus – those of Dozy and Levi-Provençal – were until then by non-Spaniards (24–5). For the abundant historiography of Peninsular Arabism, see the bibliography provided by Penelas, “Hispano-Arabic Studies” 238–9; Fück, *Die arabischen Studien* 265–9; Monroe, *Islam*; Manzanares de Cirre, *Arabistas españoles*; López García, “Arabismo y

- orientalismo” and “30 años de arabismo”; Martínez Montávez, “Sobre el aún ‘desconocido’ arabismo”; Mikel de Epalza, “Les études arabes”; Manula Marín, “Arabistas en España”; Ridaó, “L’arabisme”; and Viguera’s introduction to the new edition of Francisco Codera’s *Decadencia y desaparición de los almorávides en España*.
- 49 Ironically, the epicenter of scientific research is the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, the inheritor of the educational reforms of Krausism in the Junta de Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas – which was itself a creation of the Krausist Institución Libre de la Enseñanza and the final fruit of the seeds sown by Castro’s professor, Giner de los Ríos. On the commitment to “science” in Peninsular Arabism, see Martínez Montávez, “Lectura de Américo Castro” 26–30. For a penetrating consideration of science within the academic debate over “las dos Españas” in historiography, see the epilogue in *Historia de la historiografía española* by José Andrés-Gallego, “El problema” 297–338. For a discussion of the new “localism” of Peninsular historiography, see Marín Gelabert, *Los historiadores españoles*, 11–33. For an overview of Spanish medievalist historiography, see Mitre Fernández, “La historiografía.”
- 50 Marín observes that in Spain, “Arabists had to fight, from the first moment, to construct for themselves an academic [científica] reputation, as much in Spain as outside it” (“Arabistas en España” 390). On the conservative ideological shift in Arabism brought on by the civil war, see Monroe, “Américo Castro” 355.
- 51 The unique character of Spanish Romanticism is due in part to the conservative resistance against foreign Romantic ideas, the eventual waning of Krausist Idealism and educational reform, and the trauma of the Spanish Civil War, among other things (see Shaw, “The Anti-Romantic Reaction”). The rise of a manifestly “scientific” philological tradition in Spain can be seen as a simultaneous rejection of both Krausist idealism and its heirs and the conservative religious nationalism that attacked and dismantled it. On Krausism and the Institución, see De Puelles Benítez, *Educación e ideología* 166–88 and 283–96. For the conservative criticism of the Institución, see Díaz, “La Institución Libre.” On Castro’s link to Romanticism and the Institución, see Marichal, “Américo Castro.”
- 52 Two clear examples among many are the article by Amer, “Integrating Multiculturalism”; and Nichols’s endorsement of what he calls the “manuscript matrix” (“Introduction” 9).
- 53 Glick’s proposal to attribute the debate over *convivencia* to an “inadequate theoretical grasp of the relationship between social relations and cultural interchange, between social distance and cultural distance” (“Convivencia” 7) intimates the underlying divide in methodology, but does not provide an acceptable explanation because it attributes the methodological debate over “history” and “criticism” to an inherent division in the “reality” of medieval Iberia between society and culture, rather than understanding this division itself to be a product of modern scholarly methodologies.

54 As Umberto Eco pointedly observes, “Frequently, to be really ‘scientific’ means not pretending to be more ‘scientific’ than the situation allows. In the human sciences one often finds an ‘ideological fallacy’ common to many scientific approaches, which consists in believing that one’s own approach is not ideological because it succeeds in being ‘objective’ and ‘neutral.’ For my own part, I share the same skeptical opinion that all inquiry is ‘motivated.’ Theoretical research is a form of social practice” (29).