Early medieval authors of the romance tradition such as Chrétien de Troyes and Geoffrey of Monmouth are some of the first to depict Iberia as an exotic place.

During the late Middle Ages, French chronicler Jean Froissart exoticizes Iberia as he travels to the court of Count Gaston Fébus III, where he records the Castilian Civil War.

This project identifies three literary exoticizations of Spain as an outlandish place. I argue that these exoticizations demonstrate that literature exposes the complexities of war and identity that historical accounts cannot.

Themes & Connections
Representations of Spain: Literature & Art as a Tool for Prejudice

- Iago from Disney's Aladdin.
- Iago from Shakespeare's Othello.
- Esmeralda & Phoebus in the Hunchback of Notre Dame.
- Ibiza as a travel destination.
- Don Juan & Don Quixote.
- Propagandistic depictions of Spanish refugee children during the Spanish Civil War.
- The clash between Spain's past and present multireligious and multietnic landscape.

Exoticization #1: An Arthurian Quest is Born

- Froissart reports historical events and figures as the plot and characters of a medieval quest.
- Connections to a poetic genre about rape in pastoral settings.

Exoticization #2: Uses of the Fantastical

- Strange midnight dinners.
- A poison plot involving a father killing his son.
- A murderous bear and a sleepwalking knight.

Exoticization #3: An Ordinary Basque Mercenary of Extraordinary Significance

- The Bascot de Mauléon's ambiguous Iberian identity represents the ambiguity of warfare.