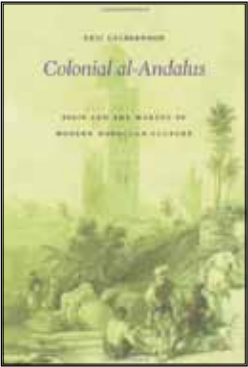




## Recension

Calderwood, Eric (2018): *Colonial al-Andalus. Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture*,  
Cambridge, Mass, The Belknap Press of Harvard  
University Press, 400 pp.



**B**eyond the fact that the Spanish Protectorate of Morocco was where the revolt against the Republican government in Madrid started in 1936, few people have any idea of the history of this part of the North African kingdom during the colonial period. Eric Calderwood's study is an eye-opener.

The book starts out from a cemetery in Tetouan, the capital of the Spanish Protectorate, where a modern mausoleum houses the (re)founder of the city in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, 'Ali al-Manzari (d. 1540), together with the leader of the 20<sup>th</sup> century nationalist movement in Spanish Morocco, 'Abd al-Khaliq al-Turris (d. 1970). Al-Manzari was a refugee from Granada, and when he and his followers rebuilt the ruined city, they incorporated features of Granada architecture and decoration in houses and other structures. Al-Turris drew on the cultural memory of al-Andalus to inspire the Moroccan nationalist movement. It is

the emergence and development of this 'Andalus-centric' narrative of Moroccan history linking al-Manzari with al-Turris which is the subject of Calderwood's book.

The first to develop this narrative was the novelist and journalist Pedro de Alarcón (1833-1891) from the Andalusian town of Guadix. He achieved recognition with his *Diario de un testigo de la Guerra de Africa*, a patriotic record of the 1859-1860 Spanish-Moroccan War which he witnessed. Conscious of the geographic and historical continuity between northern Morocco and southern Spain, he went so far as to regard Spaniards and Moroccans as blood brothers; such family metaphors reappear in later writings by a variety of authors. By analysing some of his writings, Calderwood shows how he equates Tetouan with medieval Granada – a Tetouan seen through the prism of 19<sup>th</sup> century romantic Orientalism.

A contemporary of Alarcón from Tetouan, al-Mufaddal Afaylal (1824-1887), left an account of his visit to Ceuta, a poem on the capture of Tetouan and a chronicle of the Spanish-Moroccan War. He too was profoundly aware of the links between al-

Andalus and Morocco. Thus, he expresses his response to Ceuta, Spanish since the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, through quotations from Andalusian poets, and he draws on the *rithā' al-mudun* (elegies of cities) genre, going back to 9<sup>th</sup> century 'Abbasid literature and much practised in al-Andalus, to lament the taking of Tetouan. By contrast, his chronicle of the Moroccan defeat and Spanish occupation of Tetouan, with its concrete descriptions, does not shrink from portraying the behaviour of Muslim troops as no better than that of Christians. Al-Andalus provides part of his literary repertory but it does not blind him to other realities.

Several decades later Blas Infante Pérez (1885-1936) added an important element to Spanish reflection on al-Andalus and Morocco. Blas Infante was a theoretician of Andalusian regionalism and later nationalism, which developed partly as a reaction to Catalan nationalism and as a critique of it. He emphasised the tolerant nature of Andalusian culture and, in contrast to much European thinking of the time, considered the racial mixing exemplified in its history as praiseworthy. Andalusia as he envisaged it should expand to Morocco, since Moroccans he had met traced their origins back to al-Andalus; Moroccan history was a pendant to Andalusian history. Blas Infante's ideas were taken up after the Civil War by Rodolfo Gil Torres (1901-1975), who adopted Benumeña (Ibn Umayya) as a pseudonym. Gil Benumeña first developed his ideas of the cultural and geographical unity of Andalusia and Morocco in articles in the journal of the Spanish colonial troops, which was edited from 1925 to 1932 by General Franco. He went on to reinterpret the Umayyad caliphate as a precursor of Spanish colonial rule and the refugees from the Reconquista as bringers of civilisation to a land of nomads. This civilisation originating in al-Andalus was still alive in Morocco, and it was the task of Andalusians from Spain to cherish and develop it. Such thinking provided a justification, both political and cultural, for the Spanish colonial project.

The next chapter examines Francoist exploitation of Islam to support the rebel

campaign and buttress the colonial presence in Morocco. By focusing on the Moroccan scholar Ahmad al-Rahuni's (1878-1953) account of his visits to Spain and his pilgrimage to Mecca, which was sponsored by Franco, Calderwood also brings to light an unexpected dimension of fascist religious policy. Moroccan troops were needed to fight the Republican government, and this sponsored pilgrimage took place in early 1937, while Franco also enlisted Islam as an ally in his crusade of monotheistic religions against Communism. Al-Rahuni, for his part, was well integrated into the Spanish colonial establishment, heading the Islamic judicial system for a time. Before the pilgrimage he was taken on a propaganda visit to Andalusia, and his travel account portrays Cordoba as another Mecca. The journey and the pilgrimage proper combine Islamic imagery and vocabulary in the description of events with praise for Franco's support of Islam. The culminating moment was the festive reception in Seville for the returning pilgrims, where Franco established a parallel between Mecca as the religious centre for Moroccan Muslims and Andalusia as the place where they could find enlightenment, with Cordoba as its intellectual centre.

The invention of Hispano-Arab/Arabic culture is traced in the following chapter. The concept was developed as a tool to justify the Spanish colonial presence; according to it Islam, Arabness and Morocco were integral parts of Spanish history and culture, and so the Spanish, unlike the French, understood the Moroccans and respected the unity of Arabs and Berbers. The Spanish established institutions to study and promote Hispano-Arab culture, chief among them the Instituto General Franco de estudios e investigación hispano-árabe in Tetouan. Calderwood presents the writings of the Institute's director and chief ideologue, Tomás García Figueras, who saw the legacy of *convivencia* in al-Andalus as the bond uniting Spaniards and Moroccans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The publications of the Institute were to contribute to the renaissance or rebirth of al-

Andalus, with Moroccan scholars working alongside their Spanish colleagues.

Spanish officials saw the Protectorate not only as a bridge between the Andalusian past and the Moroccan present, but also as a cultural bridge between Europe and the Muslim world. Prominent Arab intellectuals were invited to visit Spanish Morocco and the historic cities of Andalusia. One of them was the Lebanese-American writer and political activist Amin al-Rihani (1876-1940), who was committed to global rapprochement. His account of Morocco, based on his visit to the Protectorate, was aimed to inform an audience in the Arab world of the efforts deployed by Spain to bring the culture of al-Andalus back to life.

Whereas the early Francoist vision of Hispano-Arab culture stressed Cordoban *convivencia* as an ideal, later attention shifted to the architecture, music and crafts associated with Granada as expressions of interfaith life. Chapter six presents the institutions and individuals engaged in these activities. The School of Indigenous Arts, as it came to be known, is most closely associated with the painter Mariano Bertuchi (1884-1955), who grew up in Granada near the Alhambra and spent much of his life in Ceuta. His work played an important part in establishing the visual representations of the Protectorate, and he was closely involved in the conception of the Morocco Pavilion of the Ibero-American Exhibition in Seville in 1929. Seeing Moroccan traditional crafts as mementos of medieval Spanish culture, he believed that Moroccan craftsmen could easily recreate the models from the Alhambra – under the guidance of Spanish masters.

Where music was concerned, the elite Andalusian repertoire of the Moroccan *nubas* (a suite of poems set to music according to certain rules) was transcribed by a Spanish musician working with Moroccan colleagues, whose claim of Andalusian ancestry was seen as giving them extra authenticity. The Franciscan Patrocinio García Barriuso (1909-1997), the Protectorate's leading authority on the music of

al-Andalus and Morocco, believed that the most authentic continuation of the Andalusian tradition was to be found in Tetouan, home of the earliest transcripts of lyrics for the *nubas*. He argued that modern Andalusian folk music was as much a descendant of the music of al-Andalus as was the elite *nuba* tradition and held that the Spanish had an innate understanding of Andalusian music because it was part of their national musical heritage. He also extended the definition of Andalusian music to embrace the traditions of the French Protectorate, Algeria and Tunisia, which brought him into conflict with the French and their efforts to 'renovate' Moroccan music. Spanish-French rivalry in the musicological field is a recurrent theme in his *La música hispano-musulmana en Marruecos*, published by the Instituto General Franco. As Calderwood and others point out, beyond the question of authenticity and preserving the heritage, the introduction of transcriptions of music and establishment of institutions such as the conservatories (the Conservatorio al-Hasaní de la música marroquí in Tetouan was set up in 1940) radically altered the nature of Moroccan music. From a tradition transmitted orally and performed in private settings, it became a public good fixed in transcriptions.

The Tetouan conservatoire owed its existence to a Moroccan initiative, and Calderwood devotes his final chapter to tracing how Moroccan nationalists appropriated the narrative of cultural transmission from al-Andalus to Morocco and specifically from Granada to Tetouan, adapting it to their own political aims. They received support from the Lebanese Druze emir and spokesman for Islamic solidarity Shakib Arslan (1869-1946). Arslan had found Spain's Islamic heritage sites lifeless, while in Morocco he felt at home. He worked together with Moroccan nationalists from both the French and Spanish protectorates to strengthen Moroccan, and Muslim, ties to Andalusia. His description of al-Andalus as the 'lost paradise' was taken up by the Moroccans, but they modified it significantly; they considered

that while al-Andalus in Spain was lost, it was alive and flourishing in Morocco. Younger nationalists trained in the Spanish colonial academic institutions drew on the work of both Spanish and Moroccan scholars to elaborate a new historical memory for their country. Its foundation myth was the exodus from Granada, while the recognition that the sultan in Fes supported the refugees enabled Tetouan to be seen as the embodiment of Moroccan-Andalusian culture. The mausoleum with which the book begins is an expression of this vision of Moroccan history.

In an epilogue Calderwood traces the afterlife of colonial al-Andalus in contemporary Morocco, symbolised by the incorporation of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Hassan minaret in Rabat into the Mohammed V mausoleum complex and the use in it of Andalusian architectural features. Spain may have withdrawn from the Protectorate but it has profoundly influenced the Moroccans' understanding of their culture.

*Colonial al-Andalus* is important in several respects. First, its focus, the Spanish Protectorate of Morocco, is virtually unknown, and Calderwood's work is not only interesting in itself but also provides a striking contrast to the much better-known history of the French presence in the country. Moreover it adds a new chapter to the account of colonialism, for unlike other colonial powers, Spain recognised that it shared elements of culture with the territory it administered and its policies were affected in consequence. Second, the book shows that the term *convivencia*, which is frequently used in connection with al-Andalus, a region often presented as a model of inter-faith tolerance, is a creation of a particular modern political context. It is not a product of scholarly historical research on the medieval period. Third, this study argues for the need to redefine Arabic literary studies to include the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries (this has already started to some extent) and to break away from the still dominant approach to 19<sup>th</sup> century literature centred on the Mashriq and more specifically Egypt. Calderwood's analyses of Moroccan au-

thors stimulates the reader to discover more about these important thinkers and writers and to integrate them into the panorama of modern Arabic culture.

Some of the Arabic texts Calderwood discusses stand in a long tradition. It would be valuable to relate al-Rahuni's 1937 pilgrimage narrative to earlier Moroccan hajj (pilgrimage) accounts from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century on. Likewise, Afaylal's lament for the fall of Tetouan is contrasted with two poems on conquered Andalusian cities, but it probably has other parallels too. Afaylal's resorting to quotations from earlier poets in his description of occupied Ceuta, rather than portraying the people he sees there, should be understood as reflecting a characteristic of Arabic culture: poetry is the vehicle for expressing overwhelming emotion. More general questions which fall outside this book's topic are: how did Moroccans outside the circles of notables and intellectuals view the Spanish occupation? And did the discourse of Spanish colonialist intellectuals influence the attitude of the Spanish population at large to the "Moors"?

*Colonial al-Andalus* deserves a wide readership among researchers into North African, Spanish and colonial history, specialists of the creation and use of memory, and students of Arabic literature in general and North African literature in particular. It will certainly stimulate much further research.

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