

RESEÑAS

Jan LOOP, Alastair HAMILTON, Charles BURNETT (eds.), *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, Brill Series History of Oriental Studies, Leiden – Boston, 2017, 354 pp., 8 figures.

In the seventeenth century the Scottish scholar David Colville (ca. 1581-1629) boasted that he could speak Hebrew and Greek better than the native speakers. Self-assured by these claims he set out to study Arabic by himself, primarily by copying Arabic dictionaries and a translation of the Qur'ān he found in the El Escorial Library.¹ As far as we know, Colville was not very successful in his pursuit of the Arabic language, but shared many characteristics with contemporaries who were. The collection of essays edited by Jan Loop, Alastair Hamilton and Charles Burnett draws together histories not of universities or libraries, but of successful Arabic learners. The studies were collected on the occasion of the conference on *The Learning and Teaching of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, held in 2013 at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, and subsequently supplemented by additional contributions.

The selection of case studies is preceded by an extremely comprehensive introduction, which not only presents the content and the problematics of the book, but also fills certain gaps such as the work of the most famous Leiden Arabic scholar Thomas Erpenius (1584-1624). Erpenius and his long surviving grammars are referenced profusely throughout the book, yet none of the studies contained therein focus specifically on the Dutch scholar. It is therefore satisfying to encounter the summary of his career and updated bibliography included in the introduction.

Although most of the essays in the volume focus on individual scholars and their trajectories, the first two texts offer an overview of group learning, in the Netherlands and in England. Arnoud Vrolijk's "Arabic Studies in the

¹ On Colville see K. Starczewska, "Beyond Religious Polemics: The Qur'ān as a Textbook – A Case Study of a Latin Translation of the Qur'ān" in *Latin and Arabic: Entangled History* (forthcoming) and *Latin Translation of the Qur'ān (1518/1621) Commissioned by Egidio da Viterbo. Critical Edition and Case Study*, Wiesbaden, 2018.

Netherlands and the Prerequisite of Social Impact – a Survey” recounts highlights of the 400 years of Arabic teaching and learning in Leiden. Vrolijk’s text is specked with illuminating observations regarding Arabic studies, which, though uttered in reference to the Low Countries, may be valid for the rest of Europe. One such observation is that “Arabic studies in the Netherlands have always had a strongly apologetic character... One will generally find the arguments enumerated in the inaugural addresses of the professors from the earliest period onwards – the importance of combating Islam with the force of arguments, or converting Muslims to Protestant Christianity. Of equal importance was the use of Arabic as an aid for learning Hebrew, which led to the nickname of Arabic as *ancilla theologiae*, ‘the handmaiden of theology’” (p. 15). As we learn from the content of *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic*, these were the official reasons often quoted in inaugural speeches, prefaces to translations, dictionaries and Arabic grammars. Nevertheless, other motivations for the study of Arabic rise to the surface in Arnoud Vrolijk’s chapter, and in other contributions to the volume. These include interest in scientific texts written or preserved in Arabic, and the need to maintain or strengthen diplomatic and economic relations, particularly with the Ottoman Empire.

Mordechai Feingold’s study focuses on Arabic learning in England in the Early Modern period. The author also introduces a thesis which holds true for the other essays: “a late entry into the universities necessarily relegated Arabic to an ancillary position. Not only did Arabic become the fourth learned language that students were now asked to acquire, but it shared nothing of the infrastructure that facilitated the acquisition of Latin and Greek, or even of Hebrew.” (p. 37) Far more often than was the case with other languages, Arabic was taught by private tutors, not necessarily native speakers, outside the context of the university. This particular setup contributed to the creation of mutual support groups of scholars who shared not only their interest in the language but also the precious and scarce materials available.

Asaph Ben-Tov’s essay titled “Johann Zechendorff (1580–1662) and Arabic Studies at Zwickau’s Latin School” takes us from the bird-eye perspective of the overview to a case study firmly focused on the intriguing figure of Johann Zechendorff, German headmaster surprisingly passionate about teaching his pupils Qur’ānic Arabic. This fascinating text sheds light on the context and means by which Arabic found its way into the teaching curriculum of a German school. We can surely expect to learn more about Zechendorf in the light of the recent discovery of a translation of the Qur’ān in the Cairo National Library attributed to this figure.²

From Germany we move further north to Sweden. Bernd Roling’s chapter, poetically titled “Arabia in the Light of the Midnight Sun: Arabic Studies in

² Roberto Tottoli, “The Latin Translation of the Qur’ān by Johann Zechendorff (1580–1662) discovered in Cairo Dār al-Kutub”, *Oriente Moderno*, 95 (2015), S. 5–31.

Sweden between Gustaf Peringer Lillieblad and Jonas Hallenberg,” situates the agenda of Arabic studies in Sweden in a context of baroque nationalism. The author introduces Sweden’s most prominent early modern Orientalists and their works. He pays special attention to Gustaf Peringer and Jonas Hallenberg’s pioneering *Historia linguae et eruditionis Arabum*, underlining that these authors primarily valued Arabic as a tool to shed light on the biblical, or otherwise mythological, past.

Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano’s text “Sacred History, Sacred Languages: The Question of Arabic in Early Modern Spain” addresses related themes, noting that, if Arabic was to be used as a tool for examining the sacred origins of a Christian nation, it first had to be separated from its function as a vehicle of Islamic theology. This goal was achieved not only with the Morisco forgeries of the supposedly Christian relicts written in Arabic later known as the Lead Books of Sacromonte,³ but was also pursued by Spanish scholars of the so-called old Christian background. For instance, Francisco de Ulloa Solís argued in his treatise that the Spanish language was actually different from Latin and should more accurately be compared to Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic or Greek (p. 148). The Granadan priest Diego de Guadix took the matter one step further in his etymological dictionary of toponyms and other words, claiming that practically all of the Castilian lexis derived from Arabic (p. 153-157).

This brings us to the question of how advanced Arabic teaching actually was in Spain. Nuria Martínez de Castilla Muñoz strives to answer this question with regard to the case study of Salamanca in “The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Salamanca in the Early Modern Period”. Beyond the general conclusion that limited Arabic teaching took place in the Spanish university at that time, the author’s reconstruction of the intellectual biography of Nicolas Clénard is particularly noteworthy. This most persistent Flemish scholar of Arabic (also known as Nicolaes Cleynaerts and Niklaas Cleynaerts)⁴ spent a vast proportion of his life travelling through Portugal, Spain and Northern Africa in search of a competent Arabic teacher. Nicolas Clénard blended philological interest in Arabic with missionary zeal, and was far from alone in his approach.

If obliged to record the purpose of their study in writing, the vast majority of early modern learners of Arabic would state their belief that it was necessary for the conversion of the Muslims. Aurélien Girard explores Italian institutions dedicated to Arabic teaching with a view to proselytize in the chapter “Teaching and Learning Arabic in Early Modern Rome: Shaping a Missionary Language”. While the key organization concerned with teaching

³ On the subject of the Lead Books of Sacromonte see especially Mercedes García-Arenal Rodríguez and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano’s *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism*, Leiden, 2013.

⁴ See Joris Tulkens, “Nicolaes Cleynaerts”, in *Christian-Muslim Relations 1500 - 1900*.

Arabic for missionary purposes was the *Propaganda fide*, Girard also considers colleges independent from that jurisdiction. The author also describes the role of Eastern Christians as teachers and the particularities of textbooks prepared for the students. As far as textbooks are concerned, one category of reading fragments used for language exercises, albeit not a particularly popular one among Roman Catholics, was passages of the Qurʾān. Alastair Hamilton elucidates on these usages in his study “The Qurʾān as Chrestomathy in Early Modern Europe”. Probably the most prominent case of use of the Muslim holy book for Christian teaching purposes is Thomas Erpenius’s *Historia Iosephi Patriarchae*, printed in Leiden by the specially designed oriental press. This short grammar book contains the twelfth Sūra of the Qurʾān, Yūsuf. The Sūra is printed in Arabic with interlinear word-by-word translation into Latin and a more comprehensive rendition in the margins, and is followed by other translations and notes.

Perspectives regarding the use of the Qurʾān in teaching Arabic constituted yet another difference between Protestant and Catholic Europe. While Erpenius’ popularity was unquestionable among the Protestants, Catholics preferred to aid themselves with Arabic translations of Christian gospel and prayers. On the other extreme, Jan Loop in the chapter titled “Arabic Poetry as Teaching Material in Early Modern Grammars and Textbooks” focuses on the use of lay literature for linguistic exercises. This study shows how various scholars, including Pococke, followed Golius’ example of making reading and translating of Arabic proverbs and poems fundamental component of their teaching.

The remaining group of essays tackles the issue of enhancement of Arabic learning by travel to and from the Middle East. As we leave the realm of institutionalized teaching, Sonja Brentjes invites us to take a look at dictionaries and vocabularies. Among the primary sources included in her study “Learning to Write, Read and Speak Arabic Outside of Early Modern Universities,” particular attention is paid to François Pétis de la Croix’s French-Latin-Arabic Dictionary, a voluminous manuscript of 1,905 pages produced during de la Croix’s ten-year educational stay in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires (p. 262-271). Simon Mills’s contribution “Learning Arabic in the Overseas Factories: The Case of the English” sheds light on how the language was studied among merchants and consular officials stationed in the Ottoman Levant, North Africa or East India. The most accomplished beneficiary of the Arabic learning opportunities offered by the English Levant Company was Edward Pococke. Pococke arrived in Aleppo as the Church of England chaplain in 1630 and spent six years studying Arabic there, aided by local native speakers. Another European church official who devoted his free time in foreign lands to language learning was Johannes Heyman, chaplain to the Dutch consul at Izmir. His learning trajectory and subsequent academic career is described by Maurits H. van den Boogert in the essay “Learning Oriental Languages in the Ottoman Empire: Johannes Heyman (1667–1737) between Izmir and Damascus.” The final chapter of the volume, authored by John-Paul A. Ghobrial,

is dedicated to Solomon Negri, a distressed figure as the title of the study suggests: “The Life and Hard Times of Solomon Negri: An Arabic Teacher in Early Modern Europe.” This Eastern Christian, known in his mother tongue as ‘Sulaymān b. Ya’qūb al-Shāmī al-Ṣāliḥānī,’ spent over three decades travelling across Europe and the Ottoman Empire in search of a sustainable position as an Arabic teacher.

It would be impossible to incorporate all the cases of Arabic teaching and learning in early modern Europe into one volume and this book understandably leaves blank spaces on the map of the continent. For example, we learn nothing of the case of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where Tatar Muslims cohabited with Christians. However, this can hardly be considered a flaw in the work given the vast scope of countries and case studies covered in the volume. The studies included in this publication are innovative, meticulously referenced, and based on fascinating and, in some cases, largely unknown primary sources. The volume as a whole is thoughtfully edited and immensely useful to anyone interested in the history of Orientalism. Each of the chapters also stands alone as a highly informative work. Moreover, to our sheer delight, the book is published in open access and can be downloaded in its entirety at <http://www.brill.com/products/book/teaching-and-learning-arabic-early-modern-europe>.

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Philippe SÉNAC and Tawfiq IBRAHIM, *Los precintos de la conquista omeya y la formación de al-Andalus (711-756)*, Granada, Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2017, 156 págs.

In this brief volume, Philippe Sénac and Tawfiq Ibrahim present two collections of lead seals from early Umayyad al-Andalus. The first is a large cache of seals found in Narbonne in 2005. The second is an even larger collection of seals found in assorted locations in southern Iberia. Together, these two collections include 141 seals, most of which appear to have been used to seal bags of commodities. The Narbonne cache, consisting of some 42 seals is significant both for its size and for the evidence it provides for a sustained Umayyad presence in what is now southern France. The Iberian collection is more diverse and more likely to include place names and identify local governors. It is curious that these seals come entirely from the south, with none originating from the Mediterranean coast leading north to Narbonne. Whether this suggests a lighter Umayyad presence along the coast, or a lighter archeological effort merits discussion.

In their analysis of the two collections, Sénac and Ibrahim focus largely on the vocabulary employed on the seals. They note the frequent appearance

of terms such as *qism*, *maqsūm*, *jizya*, *ṣalh*, and *fay*'. They argue convincingly that the consistent use of such bureaucratically and legally specific terminology is evidence of an orderly system for the collection of tax and tribute from a pacified population. This is particularly important in the case of Narbonne, where the extent and duration of Umayyad control have been debated. They also note the uniformity of the standard Kufic script on the seals from both collections.

After describing the two collections in separate chapters, in their final chapter the authors turn to a broader discussion of the implications these seals have for our understanding of the beginnings of Umayyad rule in al-Andalus. First, they emphasize that the material evidence of the seals largely confirms descriptions of the period in the narrative sources. In particular, governors named in the written sources also appear on the seals. Sénac and Ibrahim also note that the seals point to Umayyad success in long-term, bureaucratic management of the local population. They spend considerable time exploring the nature of the Umayyad conquest of al-Andalus, focusing on the question of whether or not the expansion reflects a *jihād* ideology. Based on the lack of *jihād* vocabulary on the seals, they conclude that it does not. However, this reviewer remains skeptical about the usefulness of the seals for this debate. As the authors have demonstrated, the seals were used primarily to identify spoils and tribute from particular locales. Their function was not ideological, but bureaucratic. Indeed, seals from other regions typically lack ideological references as well.

While the publication of these seals in a single volume is useful and important, the discussion could have addressed a number of additional issues. In particular, comparisons to seals found in other regions of the Umayyad empire would be insightful. A brief perusal of published seals from other regions (which are surprisingly few in number) suggests that there are both similarities and differences between the seals found in al-Andalus and those originating elsewhere. The uniformity of the Kufic script on the Andalusian seals is quite striking, as is the complete absence of non-Arabic words. This is a contrast to seals found elsewhere, where local languages (Bactrian, Syriac, etc.), and peculiar spelling variations appear. It is not clear what significance the surprisingly standard, entirely Arabic form of the Andalusian examples might be. Perhaps it suggests that the seals were used only by a narrow stratum of Arabic-speaking administrators? Perhaps it reflects a paucity of local, multilingual converts in bureaucratic positions? Perhaps there is some other explanation? It remains a question that merits further examination.

Finally, the majority of the book consists of the catalogue of the two collections of seals. Gathering this material together and making it more accessible is perhaps the book's most important contribution. Unfortunately, the images of the seals are low-resolution and in black and white. Had the publisher invested in higher quality photos, the volume would be more useful to researchers, who will find some of the images frustratingly blurry.

Despite these minor shortcomings, this book makes an important contribution by collecting and analyzing so much material. It is also a reminder of the incredibly rich archeological record al-Andalus has to offer, a resource often overlooked by scholars whose focus is more eastern.

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Daniel BALOUP y Raúl GONZÁLEZ ARÉVALO (dir.), *La Guerra de Granada en su contexto internacional*, Toulouse, Presses Universitaires du Midi Méridiennes, 2017, 339 págs.

Daniel Baloup, director de la serie “Cruzadas tardías” en la que se inscribe esta publicación y coordinador, junto con Raúl González Arévalo, del coloquio que daría lugar a este volumen, declara en sus primeras palabras de presentación la voluntad de definir fenómenos como el de la Guerra de Granada en el contexto de la expansión de Occidente. Se trata de una declaración certera, a mi juicio, que, al trascender la mera confrontación interconfesional, en este caso con el Islam, sitúa al lector desde el primer momento en el lugar elegido por los responsables del diseño de esta obra. Un contexto de crecimiento, de cambio, de modificación profunda de las bases sobre las que se está construyendo la sociedad occidental, ágil a la hora de recurrir a argumentos y prácticas anteriores para sustentar ejercicios de construcción nacional, sólo posibles si se integran adecuadamente en un complejo entramado de relaciones internacionales. Así lo pone de manifiesto también Franco Cardini, que cerraría las sesiones de aquel coloquio y también el libro que resulta del mismo.

En ese sentido, me parece un acierto subrayar también, desde el primer momento, tal y como hacen los profesores Baloup y González Arévalo, la dimensión internacional de la Guerra de Granada, las implicaciones diplomáticas que pudo tener su desarrollo y su comunicación. Y muy interesante la reflexión que gira en torno al frágil equilibrio que se habría de mantener en la búsqueda de proyección internacional de la empresa, a través de los relatos oficiales que se construyen y que deberían ser fuente de prestigio para sus impulsores. Prestigio sobre el que sustentarían su estrategia de construcción nacional, que, al fin y al cabo, constituiría el objetivo prioritario de los Reyes Católicos.

Prácticamente mortecino el fenómeno cruzado desde finales del siglo XIII, asimilado el peligroso nuevo avance del Islam para Europa a partir de Constantinopla, la Guerra de Granada se presenta como una oportunidad preciosa, única, para recuperar el liderazgo de la Cristiandad y, de camino, dar a sus precursores un fuerte impulso y prestigio, que sabrían aprovechar en el nuevo cuadro de liderazgos y equilibrios que se estaba constituyendo en Occidente a fines de la Edad Media.

Los trabajos recogidos abordan la proyección internacional de la Guerra de Granada desde dos perspectivas diferentes. Por un lado, se aborda la aportación internacional a la empresa granadina, entendida en un contexto de ideología cruzada que entronca perfectamente con las tendencias expansivas del mundo feudal, a pesar de las dificultades que presentaría su asimilación definitiva a este fenómeno, en parte debido a la actitud de la Iglesia. La segunda propuesta se centra en analizar el impacto que los acontecimientos granadinos, y el relato construido en torno a los mismos, tuvieron en Europa desde una perspectiva fundamentalmente política y diplomática, en un mundo plenamente volcado en la constitución de las nuevas identidades nacionales y en el que el establecimiento de redes debía sustentar ese objetivo estratégico.

Jacques Paviot recupera el proceso a través del cual Granada se formó como objetivo de cruzada por parte de los caballeros europeos, una vez agotado su interés por Oriente. El impulso inicial de su percepción como nuevo espacio de confrontación, presente en obras dedicadas a la construcción del ideal caballeresco, se fortaleció a través de su vinculación directa con objetivos universales del antiguo espíritu cruzado, como Jerusalén. Por último, es también alimentado por el conocimiento del territorio facilitado por caballeros europeos, que perciben claramente sus posibilidades como territorio a repartir. De este modo, la nobleza europea pretendería beneficiarse de los mismos métodos aplicados en las cruzadas de Levante a partir del principio del reparto de territorios, llegando, incluso, algunos caballeros, como Bertrand Du Guesclin, a nutrir ciertas esperanzas como futuro rey de Granada.

En un trabajo que completa la visión anterior, subrayando el carácter de las tierras granadinas como objetivo honorable de la nobleza europea, López de Coca, llega incluso más allá, al ampliar los ámbitos en los que se muestra viva esa idea de Granada como espacio de cruzada, sobre todo a partir de su presentación como tal según la propuesta de Raimundo Lulio. Recuerda, por ejemplo, que la participación europea en los proyectos cruzados granadinos, se puede observar también en las Cruzadas Populares, lo que indica que esta idea no estaría circunscrita a ciertos ámbitos o estrategias políticas, sino que habría calado en el imaginario popular, que asimilaría perfectamente esta idea. La Cruzada de los Pastorcillos se plantea entre sus objetivos Granada, aunque sus intenciones fueran convenientemente frenadas por la Corona de Aragón, sabedora de lo dañino que podía resultar este movimiento allá por donde pasara.

Desde estas propuestas que justifican con solidez el sesgo cruzado con el que se percibe la Guerra de Granada en el contexto bajomedieval, se llega a los primeros trabajos que abordan esta circunstancia granadina como parte de una estrategia compleja de definición nacional y de búsqueda de equilibrios internacionales que compongan el nuevo mapa de Occidente.

A partir, por ejemplo, de un tratamiento escrupuloso de los casos genovés y aragonés, Salicrú, reflexiona acerca de las diferencias entre la información que circuló y las noticias oficiales, que pedirían respuestas también oficiales

por vía diplomática. El caso genovés y la incidencia de la Guerra y conquista de Granada en el desplazamiento de los ejes de negocio peninsulares, ayudan a entender la dimensión de un fenómeno que trasciende las consecuencias meramente políticas y que sin embargo puede determinar, en función de las noticias recibidas, los movimientos estratégicos de ciertas naciones.

Es, pues, importante, la carga simbólica que conllevan noticias de este tipo. Y se encarga de subrayarlo mostrando como ejemplo el uso propagandístico a partir del cual se elaboran estas noticias por parte de Aragón, reparando en cómo fueron confeccionadas atendiendo a sus diferentes destinatarios. Resulta también interesante observar las diferentes reacciones que se muestran ante la comunicación oficial de los avances sobre Granada, en función de intereses tan diferentes ante el Islam como los de Génova o Roma, y por supuesto en función de las distintas conexiones estratégicas que se pretenderían construir.

El trabajo de González Arévalo, más allá de la intención inicial del autor de reunir y ofrecer informaciones ricas y novedosas acerca de la Guerra de Granada a través de su repercusión internacional, consigue completar de manera muy interesante esta visión dual del poder de las noticias. En un seguimiento minucioso y bien tratado de la información enviada por los embajadores de Ferrara en Nápoles a su casa ducal de Este, redactadas fundamentalmente por Matteo Canali y Benedetto Dei, muestra los intereses subyacentes en la circulación de información a la hora de construir una política internacional favorable.

Ricci, completaría el estudio en ámbito italiano a través del caso veneciano, que protagonizaría uno de los últimos intentos de apoyo internacional a la causa nazarí, en un movimiento fuertemente marcado por los intereses estratégicos de una nación en pleno proceso de definición en el contexto europeo. En un escenario marcado por el acoso turco y por el interés veneciano de contrarrestar el liderazgo de la Corona de Aragón en el contexto mediterráneo e italiano, el profesor Ricci interpreta la actuación veneciana como una forma de avisar al resto de potencias de la necesidad de contar con el apoyo y la presencia de Venecia en ese juego de equilibrios político-diplomáticos que ayudarían a definir la calidad internacional de estos nuevos actores.

Nicasio Salvador aborda, en la primera parte de su amplísimo trabajo, una descripción extraordinariamente minuciosa de la toma de Málaga gracias al rastreo sistemático de todas las fuentes disponibles, con interesantes e inexploradas consideraciones sobre la cuestión. La segunda parte se dedica a tratar los ecos de esa toma en Roma a través de un esfuerzo recopilatorio sobresaliente y en el que destaca a partir de los discursos de Boscà y Diego de Muros.

Jasper cierra con un trabajo serio y de fácil lectura, donde constata el escaso eco, más allá del impacto medio que pudo tener en ciertos ámbitos intelectuales, de la caída granadina en el norte de Europa. En cierto modo este silencio resultaría interesado. Se justifica la escasa reacción oficial y el nulo

interés popular que se pretendió despertar, por las necesidades de primar las veledades expansionistas de los Habsburgo. Todo ello a pesar del cuerpo social, el entramado personal, económico y político que unía el reino de Granada con el resto de Europa, y que el profesor Jasper descubre en interesantes conexiones no destacadas hasta ahora. Un nuevo e interesante ejercicio, pues, de utilización y manipulación de la información en el contexto de definición y consolidación nacional, que cierra de manera brillante una obra interesante y necesaria, salpicada de constantes novedades en la muestra de nuevas informaciones y fuentes y, sobre todo, tratada desde una perspectiva extraordinariamente interesante y abierta a futuros desarrollos aplicados, por ejemplo, a su existencia en ámbitos tan implicados en este asunto como el mundo islámico, no tratado por el momento.

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FERNÁNDEZ-MORERA, Darío, *The Myth of the Andalusian Paradise: Muslims, Christians, and Jews under Islamic Rule in Medieval Spain*, Wilmington (Delaware), Intercollegiate Studies Institute Books, 2016, 363 págs.

The task of reviewing this book for a scholarly journal is not an easy one, since the book's objective is not – as is usually the case – to answer a series of questions based on a reading of the source material. This book is the reaction of the author (hereinafter FM) to various studies, written mostly by contemporary scholars, where FM sees an approach to the historical experience of al-Andalus that he considers to be not only incorrect, but even blameworthy, and goes so far as to suggest that such criticism applies to the near totality of the studies in circulation. In FM's view, he, and he alone, is raising his voice to decry other studies' lies and silence. But who is the man we should all be thanking for such outstanding detective work, tracking down criminals and exposing such elaborate cover-ups? FM is a professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois), and is a specialist in Spanish Golden Age literature. He has no prior publications on Andalusian topics, and at no point indicates that he has knowledge of Arabic or Hebrew. His incursion into the field of Andalusian studies with this book is motivated by his animosity toward scholars who he views as having wrongfully cast an Islamic society like al-Andalus in a positive light.

To this end, he dedicates seven chapters to recording his own convictions. One of them is that when the Muslims conquered the Iberian Peninsula, they destroyed a flourishing civilization – that of the Visigoths – which the conquerors had found nothing short of astonishing. As there are few examples in the source texts of this admiration towards the Visigoths, FM repeats in various instances that the Muslims “cannibalized” Visigothic art, invoking the

studies of L. Caballero and M. A. Utrero, whose work he clearly has not read, as it argues just the opposite. These same Muslims destroyed magnificent constructions such as the idol of Cádiz (p. 61), but, to my knowledge, none of the Arabic texts, including the one cited by FM, refers to it as a monument from the Visigothic period, ascribing it instead to one of the “ancient kings” of the Peninsula, a formula used to indicate the Roman and pre-Roman periods.

FM also argues that the influence of al-Andalus has been overblown, that it did not have the impact on Europe that is normally attributed to it. His main source for this argument is the controversial book by Sylvain Gouguenheim, *Aristote au mont Saint-Michel: Les racines grecques de l'Europe chrétienne* (Paris, 2008), which contends that the Renaissance came about without any Arab-Islamic mediation of the intellectual legacy of classical antiquity. Based on Charles Burnett's response to that book (“Mont Saint-Michel or Toledo: Greek and Arabic sources for Medieval European culture?” <http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/mont-saint-michel-or-toledo>), FM labels Burnett – a renowned historian of the intellectual relations between the Islamic world and Europe – as one of those “Western historians who not only are biased against Christianity but also are often occupationally invested in the field of Islamic studies and Islamic cultural influence” (p. 72 and p. 272, note 68). In other words, Burnett says what he does not because he has arguments to support it, but rather because of his own prejudices against Christianity and his ‘economic’ dependency on money from ‘Islamic’ sources.

FM sees in al-Andalus a society wherein non-Muslims were subject to *dhimmi* status, something that we are all aware of and that no one has ever attempted to deny. This status, he argues, imposed humiliating and threatening living conditions that inevitably weakened the Christian community until it disappeared altogether. However, FM in no moment explains why this occurred in the Iberian Peninsula but not in Syria or Egypt, or why the Jewish community was strengthened in al-Andalus (here I am referring specifically to the periods prior to the Almohads, who oversaw one of the few documented episodes of forced conversions throughout Islamic history, even though by this time the Andalusi Christian community was virtually non-existent). But if the Jews prospered in this society, says FM, it was only because they benefited from having sided with the Muslims against the Christians. Once again we see the old argument of the collaborationist Jew, recently studied by Fernando Bravo (“La traición de los judíos. La pervivencia de un mito antijudío medieval en la historiografía española,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 63 (2014), pp. 27-56), which FM fails to cite. However, even the Jews' collaboration was not enough to spare them the Muslims' violence, and, what is more, the Jews themselves were as eager to attack and persecute the heretics as the Muslims themselves were. In support of these arguments, FM cites a selection of texts that – as is generally the case when he talks about non-Muslims – lack any sort of contextualization.

It was not only non-Muslims (especially Christians) who were exposed to all manner of abuse in al-Andalus; women, too, lived in terrible conditions that included circumcision, stoning, compulsory veiling and sex slavery. FM has clearly read Manuela Marín's book on women in al-Andalus (Madrid, CSIC, 2000), "cannibalizing," to use his phrase, the data and references on these practices that he found there, and adding a handful of other legal factoids that, again, are taken completely out of context. Marín's examination of these practices demonstrates that they have by no means been silenced. However, whereas Marín engages in the historian's task, analyzing what can be done with these data uncovered in Arabic source texts, FM does not hesitate to magnify them and elevate them to the level of a self-sufficient truth confirming what he already believed: that all women in al-Andalus suffered circumcision (Mālik *dixit*), were punished by stoning (without taking into consideration Delfina Serrano's conclusions on the matter, in her article, "La lapidación como castigo de las relaciones sexuales no legales (*zinā*) en el seno de la escuela mālikī: doctrina, práctica legal y actitudes individuales frente al delito (ss. XI y XII)," *Al-Qantara* 26/2, 2005), wore the veil (all of them, even among the peasantry?), and were in some cases subjected to sex slavery (which, again, is nothing new).

What is more, not only women were affected by the evils of Islamic society. The men, too, suffered the violence of their coreligionists, given the strict imposition of a single interpretation of Islam, that of the Mālikī school. As I have worked on processes of heresy and religious dissent in al-Andalus, I will refer the reader to one of these studies ("Religious dissension in al-Andalus: Ways of exclusion and inclusion," *Al-Qantara* 22, 2001, pp. 463-87) in order to compare FM's conclusions based on his reading of secondary sources – which he repeatedly misinterprets or distorts – with my own, based on primary sources. I might also mention in passing that my article on the practice of *raf' al-yadayn* has nothing to do with hand-washing (p. 286, note 76), which leads me to believe, once again, that FM at times has not read or understood the works he is citing.

It is not so much that FM does not think al-Andalus was a paradise, as that he is convinced it was pure hell. He is willing to make one concession: that theory and practice do not always go hand-in-hand, an assertion that I initially interpreted as his academic conscience speaking. However, he only makes this concession because he needs it in order to address the Christian societies of the Peninsula, applying it only nominally when dealing with Muslims or Jews. The texts he cites in such cases, generally taken out of context, do not serve to illustrate how their message was articulated in specific societies and in the lives of real individuals. For example, FM has read the legal treatise of Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795) via an English translation, and is convinced that, just because the legal school imposed in al-Andalus was the Mālikī school, this text in and of itself explains what Muslims believed and did throughout al-Andalus's eight centuries of existence. Wherever he discovers

that an Arabist has not cited Mālik's work, he points his accusing finger, as if the scholar in question were silencing the truth, without understanding that Islamic jurisprudence developed over time, and that scholars working on al-Andalus are interested in seeing how Mālik was read in each particular context, if he was even read directly at all, and not through a cumulative tradition of commentators and interpreters. In response to a book arguing for the compatibility between Islam and democracy by contemporary Sudanese author Abdullah Naim, a follower of the reformist thinker Mahmud Muhammad Taha, sentenced to death in 1985 by the Islamist government, FM angrily counters that Naim must not have really read Malik (p. 246, note 20), *sic*. He also brags that he is the only one ever to have read legal sources such as the *Muwatta'*, *al-Tafri'*, the *Mudawwana* (what he has read is in fact the analytical index published by Bousquet), and Ibn Rushd's *Bidāya* – all of them in translation, of course –, as well as the *Leyes de Moros* (p. 245, note 15). Continuities between earlier and later works only serve to reinforce his essentialist conception of Islam. What he has not consulted – because, with a few exceptions that FM appears to have overlooked, they are not available in translation – are the compilations of fatwas, which is where he would have discovered the jurists' great efforts to contextualize doctrine in specific circumstances.

There are abundant opportunities to confirm that FM lacks first-hand knowledge of his subject matter and has misinterpreted his readings. Thus, he points out that Almanzor ordered all books of philosophy and logic to be burned, and adds that the ban on such books continued under the Taifa kingdoms (p. 33). However, the source he cites is Sa'īd of Toledo (11th c.), whose work is a case in point of the philosophical and scientific advancement during the Taifa period due to the circulation of the sort of books FM asserts were banned. FM maintains (p. 55) that, following the Mudéjar rebellions, the Spanish authorities were right to fear that Muslim subjects might forge an alliance with the Ottomans. However, when discussing the deportations of Christians during the Almoravid period, and in spite of D. Serrano's article on the subject, he makes no mention of the Almoravids' fear that the Christians could act as a fifth column after the king of Aragon's expedition into Andalusian territory (p. 186 and note 48, cf. p. 225). The anecdote of the Byzantine embassy during the reign of 'Abd al-Raḥmān III, and how the Emperor had to send along a Greek monk to assist in the translation of the book of Dioscorides that he had given the caliph, is a mainstay of discussions about the intellectual development of al-Andalus, and is cited far and wide, for example in the books by Vernet and Samsó referenced in FM's bibliography. However, FM shamelessly asserts that, "One does not learn of such stories in the many textbooks and other writings on Muslim Spain" (p. 66). Time and again FM claims that everyone but him tends to obscure the Greco-Roman and Christian influences on al-Andalus, despite the fact that he himself has learned of such influences from other scholars, not through any original research of his own. For example, when he remarks that even in the field of linguistics the Muslims were

indebted to the Greeks, he merely cites K. Versteegh's well-known 1977 study. In his view, everything positive about the Muslims ultimately comes down to an external influence, while negative practices among other groups can often be traced to Islam's bad example. For example, he claims that the Christians may have learned the practice of beheading from the Muslims, only to then use it against them (p. 296, note 44). Likewise, when Jewish scholar and statesman Ibn Naghrela voices support for beating women, FM contends that this may have been the influence of Islamic doctrine at play (p. 319, note 77).

I could go on, but prefer instead to return to what I said at the outset of this review, that FM writes his book as a reaction to studies written by other, mostly contemporary authors, in whose work FM sees a treatment of the Andalusí historical experience that is both factually and morally wrong, a criticism that in his view extends to nearly all of the studies on al-Andalus available today. This treatment, to which his title makes reference, can be summed up as the idea that al-Andalus was a paradise for tolerance, religious coexistence and cultural flourishing that had a decisive impact on Europe. However, as he himself suggests at the beginning of the book, there are many studies that have adopted a different approach, and in fact FM is indebted to them, however reluctant he is to admit this.

FM lives in the United States, where, in the aftermath of 9/11, authors from a variety of backgrounds, and with varying levels of academic qualification, wrote books on the one hand demonizing Islam, and on the other trying to counter this demonization by invoking a supposed Andalusí model of religious tolerance and cultural cross-pollination. To this latter group belong books by authors as diverse as Chris Lowney, David Levering Lewis or María Rosa Menocal. Driven by his love of controversy, FM has distorted the prominence of these authors within academic spheres directly concerned with Andalusí studies, has turned a blind eye to the critical reactions they drew at the time, and gives the erroneous impression that few if any scholars write differently. FM has read and made use of the many studies that speak of violence, of the limitations to which women were subjected, and of the discrimination implicit in *dhimmi* status; indeed, these studies are the very thread with which he has woven his cloth. And yet he is always dissatisfied with these authors for not drawing the conclusions which to him are obvious: that Islam is an essentially violent and intolerant religion, and that it is impossible for Islamic societies to break free from this essence. FM is not at all concerned with medieval al-Andalus as such; his only interest is to make clear that Islam has remained exactly the same throughout its entire history, and that as a religion and civilization it is unacceptable. The fact that the book is more about the present than it is about the past is also made clear on the numerous occasions where FM offers the reader his personal views on current issues such as abortion (p. 265-6, note 7), the Taliban and the Islamic State (p. 277, note 97), punishments in Saudi Arabia (p. 288, note 118) or Somali emigrants (p. 291, note 184).

If anyone wishes to get a reasonable idea from FM's book as to what scholars today know about al-Andalus, they will have to read the studies that FM has cannibalized. Then they will discover that the majority of the vast production on the history of al-Andalus is made up of scholarly analyses – i.e. studies that are neither apologetical nor polemical – on aspects ranging from women's condition to wine consumption, from famine to frontier fortifications, from the evolution of marriage norms to urban sewage systems. An easy tool to gauge the number and orientation of studies on al-Andalus is the catalog of Granada's Escuela de Estudios Árabes. In it, one will find that only a few works match up with the exaggerated caricature that FM has drawn. Precisely because there are so few of this kind, FM must go to great pains to force the rest of them to fit his preconceived mold, which means that any researcher who does not refer to al-Andalus as a paradise, but likewise does not write about it in disparaging terms – the only ones that for him are valid – becomes the object of his attacks. His book will not lead to a better understanding of al-Andalus, but is certainly useful in understanding how al-Andalus is employed to fight the battles of the present.

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