

## Local Versions and the Global Impacts of Euro-African Memories: A Revision through Spanish Colonial Imprints. Introduction

### SPANISH SOCIOCULTURAL IMPACT IN AFRICA: FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

This dossier aims to analyse Spanish imprints in Euro-African identities and memories in both oral and written sources from a postcolonial perspective. “Memories” are understood as individual and collective narratives able to shape national, ethnic and cultural identities (Thompson, 1988, p. 25; Spivak, 1993, p. 76; Stoler and Strasler, 2000, p. 7; Stoler, 2002, p. 87; Schroeter, 2018, p. 1185), and “Euro-African” is used to describe the contacts between Europe and Africa (Aixelà-Cabré, 2017). Our objective is to reverse the constant subsuming of the Spanish experience into other European colonialisms in Africa. This subsidiary position has complicated the understanding of the identity hybridisation processes – both local and global – (Appadurai, 1999; Bhaba, 1994; Werbner, 2002; Bauman, 2006) in the African countries colonised by Spain. Being subsumed by, for example, French or Portuguese colonialism has led to certain specificities becoming irrelevant and a number of mistaken equivalences that only began to be reversed with the works of Pennell (2003), Jensen (2005, 2017), Miller (2013), Hertel (2015), Pinhal (2017) and Calderwood (2018). This lack of interest has clouded the study of certain highly interesting aspects of the Afro-Spanish interrelation, such as its similarities and differences with other Euro-African postcolonial legacies. This work is urgent – over a decade has passed since Cooper (2005, pp. 9-10) called for a deeper review of the mutual influences between Africa and Europe, and Stoler and Strassler (2000, p. 38) explained the need: “the work of remembering other colonial pasts in the form of counterhistories carries a sense of urgency as contemporary political demands are fuelled by indictments of colonial categories and claims”.

This pluridisciplinary dossier, which includes anthropology, history and linguistics, is therefore driven by three main arguments. First, for countries with imperial and colonial pasts historical continuities affect the construction of certain othernesses in the modern era (Cornejo, 2007, p. 20; Delgado, 2014, pp. 28-29; Santamaría Colmenero, 2018, p. 446; García Balaña, 2019, p. 316). Second, Afro-Spanish imprints in Africa and their postcolonial effects may be studied by examining certain highly important social, ethnic, religious and linguistic facts (Stucki, 2016, p. 343-344; Castillo-Rodríguez and Morgenthaler, 2016, p. 2; Fleisch, 2018, p. 185; Fernández, 2018, p. 82; González-Vázquez, 2018, p. 143; Iliescu and Bosaho, 2018, p. 210; Aixelà Cabré, 2018, p. 3). Third,

continuities between the methods of Spanishisation of the Americas and the colonisation of Africa strengthened domestication logics that ended up promoting certain Spanish memories that remain in effect today despite their inaccuracy (Lewis, 2007, p. 55; Resina, 2009, p. 29; Martín Márquez, 2011, p. 50; Martín Díaz et al., 2012, pp. 824-829). Hence, this dossier raises the need to use a postcolonial perspective as a theoretical–methodological tool to understand Afro-Spanish hybridisations in Africa; to study the Hispano-African imprints in Spain; to explain how Spanish identity was projected in the African colonies; to go deeper into how postcolonial states were distorted; and to compare the how transnational and transcultural identities have permeated.

With these objectives, an analysis is proposed of postcolonial identities in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa based on the study of its two most emblematic territories, the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco and the Spanish Territories of the Gulf of Guinea (also known as Spanish Guinea). These were the only two colonial territories where cultural coexistence with Spaniards was prolonged and close – the result of transfers of people and effective civilian settlement. This coexistence left clear traces of mixing between the population groups in Equatorial Guinea (less so Morocco), and contrasted with places such as Sidi Ifni and the Western Sahara, which were principally Spanish military occupations.

The final objective is to show the postcolonial impact of certain experiences and memories in constructing current cultural identities using a local and global framework. Spanish colonialism and its legacies affected both the people in the colonies and the former metropole (Buettner, 2016, pp. 423-424). On the one hand, a distorted ethnic empowerment and linguistic claim is emitted by the metropole that is able to project the culture beyond its borders and validate itself in its territory of origin (Silverstein, 2011, pp. 63, 71). On the other, contradictions emerge from the difficult ethno-cultural reconfigurations that call the current composition of nation-states into question, hindering the national consolidation of the bases of the recognition of a cultural pluralism that goes beyond invented communities (Redclift, 2016, pp. 131-132). And, of course, there is the direct impact of the memories in the former metropolises, as these constructed identities have settled in Spanish memories of Africa (Rizo, 2012, p. 32). These tensions around identity configuration are also an effect of what Vergès (2013, p. ix) called the “war of memories”, referring to monuments as spaces of frictions, as reflections of the way “our memories of the past

– what we choose to remember and the narratives we construct – are shaped by our interpretation of present realities” (Barclai, 2013, p. 5).

## SPAIN IN AFRICA

Spain’s colonial presence in Africa, beyond the autonomous cities of Ceuta (1580–) and Melilla (1497–) and various islets that face the Moroccan coasts, took shape in the Moroccan protectorate (1912–1956), the Spanish Territories of the Gulf of Guinea (1777/8–1968), Sidi Ifni (1934–1969), and the Western Sahara (1884–1976). Some of these territories faced similar consequences to other areas colonised by the British, French and Portuguese. But the size of the empire and the diversity of its colonial policies mean the Spanish most closely recalls the Italian presence in Africa – a secondary power in possessions and influence compared to the other European colonialists (Calchi Novati, 2008). As in other cases, the vicissitudes of the metropole influenced colonial management and negotiations over independence. In the case of Spain, the form of the state changed over this long time-period: from the Iberian dynastic union to a monarchy in the form of a proto-state, to the incipient state in 1812 consolidated over the past two centuries by monarchical, republican and dictatorial systems, and the adoption of a democratic regime in 1977 following Franco’s death, eventually sealed by a new constitution in 1978.

These events had repercussions for colonised Africa, as Spain’s colonies there sustained its conquistadorial pretensions following the losses of Cuba and the Philippines (Fradera, 2015, p. xxxv), which activated different civilising rhetorics. Spanish Guinea was effectively colonised at the end of the 19th century; control of the Moroccan protectorate was achieved in 1927; and the Western Sahara and Sidi Ifni were not effectively occupied until the 1940s when, primarily, military detachments and administrative cadres were moved in to manage them. Indeed, the territories colonised by Spain in Africa were also characterised by delayed independence, except for Morocco, where Franco was forced to accede to the 1956 French agreement (albeit after a three-month delay): the Spanish Territories of the Gulf of Guinea won independence in 1968, Sidi Ifni in 1969 and Western Sahara in 1976. There can be no doubt that the dictatorial system influenced the delayed and painful decolonisation of Africa. This was also the case with the Portuguese empire, which was subjected to Salazar’s military dictatorship (Stucki, 2019, pp. 6-7).

Recognition of independence was never extended to the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Their populations have never sought independence, but the Spanish state has repeatedly relativized or denied their Africanity and Moroccanity on the basis that they formed part of the former Spanish empire and are considered part of trans-Iberian territory. Ceuta, like Melilla, is a symbol of ‘Fortress Europe’ (Ferrer-Gallardo and Albet-Mas, 2016, p. 528). Despite this disinterest towards African legacies in Ceuta and Melilla, the two locations have been the sub-

ject of historical studies that highlight their Moroccan imprints (Bravo Nieto and Fernández Uriel, 2005; Villalda Paredes, 2009) and address their multiculturalism, religious pluralism (Nair, 2008) and migrations (Rosander, 2004; Carling, 2007). The main issue is that the Spanish state considers these territories part of a national identity that is indissoluble because of its territorial unity in a similar way to other overseas European territories, such as those of the Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom, although each country manages them in different ways. This hampers reflection upon their African identity or influence.

In this sense it should be said that the construction of the Spanish nation as a territorial unity seems to a large extent to be the legacy of the imperial outlook expressed in its first constitution in 1812. Gareis (2005, p. 12), Kamen (2006, p. 293) and Delgado (2014, p. 156) all claim that Spain continued to reflect on the empire it once had even when, to all practical effects, it existed only in the memory, as a ‘national fantasy’. This self-identification is a fundamental explanation for the extraordinary delay in granting African independences: for the Spanish state, the loss of territory was seen as the dismembering of the state because its collective imaginary still connected its territorial unity with its imperial past.

The marginal nature of Spanish colonialism in Africa does not relieve it of responsibility either in those countries’ histories or in conditioning postcolonial identities or political trajectories, like any other European colonial power. Revising Spanish colonialism will help complete studies on the current problems in certain regions, improve intra-African and intra-European comparisons, and strengthen the knowledge of the range of interrelations between metropole and colonies.

The Iberian imprint must be drawn out of its marginality. The Spanish and Portuguese influence on British, Dutch and French imperial route maps is well known; and the important contribution to Europe of the consolidated Muslim presence in Al-Andalus from the 8th to the late 15th centuries has led prominent researchers like López García (1990) to nuance Said’s *Orientalism*. The shared religious and sociocultural inheritance of Al-Andalus in the Iberian Peninsula had various historical phases, some of which were less fraternal than the images portrayed, as Fierro’s study of the term “convivencia” reflected (2004; 2018, p. 5). For García-Sanjuan (2013, pp. 17-25) and Calderwood (2014, p. 36), the role of Al-Andalus today is rhetorical and partly based on reinvented history, although it symbolises cultural and religious coexistence from the Middle Ages onwards.

Santana’s “The formation of North African otherness in the Canary Islands from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries” opens this special edition by bringing historical perspective to the construction of Hispano-African otherness, showing that it is subject to a longstanding collective imaginary, with contemporary Spain inheriting its medieval worldviews. His study also reveals the memories in the modern age that contribute to constructing North African otherness: the image and integration of this group in the

Canary Islands has centred on stereotypes activated by various strategies whose goal was to promote their (then desired) religious and cultural integration. By including a study of the Canary Islands we can demonstrate its geo-strategic position in developing Spanish imperialism and colonialism in Africa. Santana describes the integration of North Africans, the types of conflicts that have arisen around them and the role of the Inquisition. The study and its conclusions help us understand some of the precedents later repeated in the Spanish colonial projects of the 19th and 20th century and the constructions of otherness they involve. His work shows the historical continuities that influenced the image of North African people, specifically Moroccans, and the conceptions of identity held about these groups.

### FROM THE MARGINS: SPANISH COLONIALISM IN AFRICA

The historiographical invisibility of Spain's African colonialism promoted by the Franco regime only began to be reversed after the establishment of democracy in Spain in 1978 and thanks to the endeavours of the first Anglophone, French, Moroccan and Equatorial Guinean researchers who, along with a few Spaniards, opened up this field of research. Overall, the classic works of Laraoui (1970), Martín (1973), Morales Lezcano (1976), López García (1979), Pennel (1987, 2003), and Martín Corrales (2002a, 2002b) stand out on the Spanish Protectorate in colonial Morocco; Péliissier (1963), Ndongo (1977), Lini-guer-Goumaz (1983), Nerín (1998) and Cusack (1999) on Equatorial Guinea; Caro Baroja (1955), Criado (1977), Barbier (1982), Hodges (1983) and Diego Aguirre (1988) on Western Sahara; and Diego Aguirre (1993) on Sidi Ifni. These researchers raised extensive questions about Spanish colonisation that shed light on a previously unknown colonial reality in Africa. Their work has been especially important in raising awareness about the still-unresolved problems in Western Sahara, a conflict that originated in the decolonisation process in which Spain refused the territory's request for self-determination and ceded the resolution of the conflict to the Kingdom of Morocco, which intended to annex it. In the cases of Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish territories in Africa, on the other hand, Morocco's occasional desires to annex them have always been warded off with threats of adversely affecting their interests in the self-determination of Western Sahara. Similarities exist with the resolution of the conflict over Gibraltar, given its geostrategic position and the internationalised management of the strait.

Spanish colonialism in Africa has received little attention outside Spain because it ruled fewer territories than European powers such as France, Great Britain and Portugal. Some recently published works have underlined its importance in Morocco (Tschiltschke and Witthaus, 2017; Stenner, 2019), the Sahara (Correale and Gimeno, 2015), Morocco and Equatorial Guinea (Doppelbauer and Fleischmann, 2012; Aixelà-Cabré 2018), and from a global Hispanophone perspective (Campoy-Cubillo and Sampe-

dro, 2019). But it remains relegated to the margins of the European colonial experience, and efforts to trace the imprints of Spanish colonialism in the Euro-African orbit must continue. The marginal interest in Spain's influence in contemporary Africa is longstanding and contrasts greatly with the fascination for Spanish imperialism in the Americas, and even the interest in the Spanish presence in Africa in the modern era, on which significant researchers have worked such as García Arenal and Bunes (1992). The Spanish imprint in America is today interpreted from decolonial perspective as a precedent for European imperialism and colonialism, as shown in the critical work by Diagne and Amselle (2018).

Said's *Orientalism* (1978) included neither Al-Andalus nor the experiences of Hispano-Muslim and European othernesses. Work is similarly lacking that investigates these legacies in contemporary Europe beyond those linking it to tourism (Calderwood 2014) and particular aspects of Al-Andalus (Álvarez Chillida and Martín Corrales, 2013; González Alcantud, 2014). The few exceptions – which connect the legacy of Al-Andalus with Spanish colonialism in Morocco – appear in the postcolonial studies of the two Americans cited, Martín Márquez (2011) and Calderwood (2018).

Seeking to go deeper into Hispano-Moroccan relations, Moreras's "The way to Mecca. Spanish state sponsorship of Muslim pilgrimage (1925–1972)" contributes a review of the regularity of the *hajj* in Morocco to this dossier. This is a subject of great importance, because while Spain ceased to be a monarchy during the Franco dictatorship and its policy remained deeply rooted in that of empire – including a discourse of Spanish racial uniqueness – domesticating the Moroccan helped maintain control of the country. In fact, revealing the regularity of the *hajj* is ground-breaking because it suggests post-colonial times should be included when examining Spanish colonial policies on Islam, and that the discursive continuities are greater than the discontinuities.

However, beyond the consideration given to the Spanish protectorate in general and the Moroccans in particular, Spain's was a cut-off twilight empire, all that remained of which was the glorious memory of the Americas and "an African destiny alive" (Blinkhorn, 1980, p. 12). The imperial past and colonial nostalgia seems to have influenced the foundations of the Spanish state in a similar way to France, as studied by Lorcín (2014, p. 152) and Barclai (2013), to the extent that all the different political formulations in 20th century Spain until democracy insisted on the need to hang on to the overseas possessions and Spain's imperial past emerged as a cohesive element for the Spanish state. This Spanish leadership can be seen today, according to Rings (2016, p. 50), in its presentation of "global Cosmopolitanism under Spanish patriarchal guidance and protection".

At this point it should be noted that the colonisation of the Spanish Territories of the Gulf of Guinea is the most connected to the Hispanisation of the Americas. This may be because they were acquired in the 18th century or because their cultures were as devalued as those of the first

peoples of Latin America. Certainly the similarities are substantial, with the missionary action and the Hispanisation of the country going hand in hand, as Fernández and Iliescu show in this dossier.

In this vein, Fernández's "Between Tradition and Evangelisation: Marriage Ritualisation on Colonial and Contemporary Bioko Island" addresses the process of Spanishisation of the Bubi, the original community on Bioko Island. The text perfectly describes how, just as with the Hispanisation of Latin American, Catholic evangelisation had no other objective than the erasure of Bubi power structures and the transformation of its family structure, which it achieved by controlling and changing their marriage practices. The results of the research show how current Bubi identities are a reflection of the way the new practices ended up impacting the Bubi construction of gender and the variables that made up their ethnic identity.

Iliescu's "Power through Language, the Language of Power: Equatoguinean *emixiles* facing lingua franca" also observes the Hispanisation of Equatorial Guinea through the process of the linguistic Spanishisation that took place. Her study shows the hybridisation of the Equatorial Guinean group resident in Spain and, thanks to her use of Ugarte's (2010, p. 2) "emexiles" – a combination of exile and migration processes – compares the mechanisms transnationalised ethnic identities activate in a "third space" as a reflection of the social and territorial exclusion suffered by Equatorial Guinean ethnic groups during the post-colonial past.

Both reflections on the Spanishisation of Equatorial Guinean colonisation raise the need for new research to promote better comparisons between Spanish practices in imperial Latin America and colonial Africa.

## COLONIAL MEMORIES, CONTEMPORARY VERSIONS

In this special issue, African memories are reconstructed from multiple voices and disciplines. Interest was kindled by a mosaic of works on the Moroccan population in the former Moroccan Protectorate such as Madariaga (1999, 2002), Mateo Dieste (2003), Aziza (2007, 2008), Benjelloun (2008), Menéndez (2008), Fera (2012), Akmir (2012) and Aixelà-Cabré (2019a); on the Equatorial Guinean population in Spanish Guinea, such as De Unzueta (1947), Ávila Laurel (2005), Cornejo (2007), Bolekia (2010), Sepa (2011), Morales and Vietez (2014); on the Spaniards in the former Moroccan Protectorate, I would like to particularly highlight Bonmatí (1998), Rodríguez Mediano and Felipe (2002), Vilanova (2004), López García (2007, 2008), and Amran el Maleh (2008); and on Spaniards in Equatorial Guinea the most relevant works are those of Ndongo (1977), Belmonte Medina (1998), De Castro and Ndongo (1998), De Castro and De la Calle (2007), Brunet et al. (2008), Santana (2008), Carrasco González (2011), and Armengol (2015). Today the number of scientists studying everyday coexistence between Spaniards and Moroccans and Spaniards

and Equatorial Guineans remains very small. Among the exceptions are, for example, Nerín (1998), Rodríguez Mediano (1999), Mateo Dieste (2003), Marín (2015), Fernández (2018), Goikolea-Amiano (2018) and Aixelà-Cabré (2019a, 2019b).

Recovering primary sources has been key to reconstructing African and Spanish memories. This has been possible through direct interviews with witnesses and descendants, and through the study of documentation found in personal archives and collections, as each researcher details in their articles. Methodologically, the dossier focuses on Hispano-African memories in general, and less on established Hispano-Arab memories in particular, because a broader conception is preferred that can include the Imazighen, the largest ethnic group in the former Spanish Protectorate. In fact, these memories add to the knowledge on Hispano-African encounters, which are in need of reconstruction. Few works in either Moroccan or Equatorial Guinean historiography address "native" colonial memories, with a few exceptions, such as Boum's (2013) *Memories of Absence* on the Jewish communities in Morocco who began their diaspora in the colonial and postcolonial eras.

González-Vázquez's "Untribing the (Post)-Colonial Spanish Archives: Material Records, Boundary-making and Linguistic Diversity within Northern Morocco's Berberophones" examines a central issue. There is a need to consider the extent to which the construction of colonial otherness promoted by the Spanish has affected the way ethnicities think of themselves. Where applicable, the article reviews the impact of digitised colonial archives on some of the Imazighen in the former Spanish Protectorate. Imazighen consulting the archives and self-identifying with them means re-creating and revitalising identity, linguistic and border constructions that are more the product of Spanish perspectives than any process of emic ethnic segmentation. Despite this fact, these configurations currently form part of the collective self-representation of certain Imazighen *cabilas*.

Efforts to develop Spanish colonial legacies in Africa also offset the direct consequences of delaying research in these countries. The widespread lack of knowledge about the Spanish Protectorate and Spanish Guinea was especially marked in Equatorial Guinea, which found itself drawn far to Africa's margins under the yoke of two postcolonial dictatorships. The first devastated the country; the second survived thanks to a corrupt and kleptocratic system based around oil extraction. The disinterest towards these territories also had collateral consequences: there is a continuing absence of historical assessments of the influence of Spanish policies on the colonial and postcolonial fates of former colonies. The best-known example is the Moroccan Protectorate, which has been studied more in terms of the French colonial legacy than of Spanish policies and practices. This marginalisation suits a Spanish state that has been reluctant to amend its colonial narrative and which continues to refrain from counterbalancing the accounts of colonial action given by former colonists and military officers. These Spanish testimonies

have not been contrasted with Moroccan and Equatorial Guinean voices, which remain unheard.

That is why Aixelà-Cabré's "Colonial Spain in Africa: Building a shared history from memories of the Spanish Protectorate and Spanish Guinea" sets out the need to renew Hispano-African colonial history. It is imperative to contrast visions and versions of the past that subvert differentialist discourses and finally allow us to hear Moroccan and Equatorial Guinean voices. In fact, comparative analysis of the testimonies of Spanish men and women who have lived in Morocco and Equatorial Guinea, and Moroccan and Equatorial Guinean women and men, is revealing: the Spanish memories parallel the historical narrative the Spanish empire activated to justify its colonial past. The research reveals that the past has not been rethought and restructured in Spain by renewing post-colonial memories. Reassessing their colonial pasts is a necessity for states like Spain in the 21st century, along with the continuity between imperial logics and identity constructions today (Delgado, 2014, p. 84).

## CONCLUSION

The papers presented here show how empire and imperial logics have influenced the construction of colonial otherness. Santana reveals the bases of certain stereotypes in the modern age in the Canary Islands. Moreras identifies the Francoist appropriation of the *haji* as a way to consolidate the rhetoric of Hispano-Moroccan brotherhood; and González-Vázquez highlights how some Imazighen groups from the Spanish Protectorate reaffirm themselves using Spanish colonial archives without debating the necessary verifications of post-colonial self-identification. Meanwhile, Fernández, Iliescu and Aixelà-Cabré help us to refocus how identities were configured during that period and what their effects are on the identity construction and self-identification of the current group – those resident in their countries of origin, those who settled in the former metropole after independence, and of course Spanish citizens.

This special issue proposes a post-colonial revision from a pluridisciplinary perspective of the scope of the impact of Spanish colonialism on African identities and memories. In this sense, we have taken on the challenge of the need to rethink Africa in the world based on its relations with Europe by going deeper into the particularities of the Spanish situation and we have included African migrant experiences with clear colonial imprints. These issues are crucial to reverse the Spanish state's colonial amnesia which, as well as being promoted by the Franco dictatorship, has become a genuine state policy in democratic Spain, just as happened, though to a lesser degree, in neighbouring Portugal.

The aim is to restore Afro-Spanish experiences and empower certain Euro-African memories. This plurality of versions is a mechanism for resisting a representation dominated by the colonial narrative present in the Spanish accounts of their narrated memories, and encourages a more integrated Afro-Spanish history, given that the most

influential colonial memories are Spanish, not Moroccan or Equatorial Guinean. Urgent work is needed to retrace colonial imprints, reduce biases and counterbalance some views, which means questioning who remembers this past and how, as we have seen that first-hand testimonies are scarce, dispersed and lack plurality.

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