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Muslims in Spain, 1492-1814: Living and Negotiating in the Land of the Infidel, by Eloy Martín Corrales, translated by Consuelo López-Morillas (Mediterranean Reconfigurations 3), Leiden and Boston, MA, Brill, 2021, 689 pp., €139.00; \$167.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-90-04-38147-6.

As Martín Corrales argues, Western historiography on Islam in Iberia after 1492 has always focused on the study of Spain's Morisco 'crypto-Muslims' (who were eventually expelled in the first decades of the seventeenth century), with much less attention given to the fates of other Muslims who equally happened to reside on the territory of the Peninsula and its North African *presidios*. Muslim prisoners and slaves, but also Muslim traders, military men and scions of North African ruling houses had a much larger presence in Spain than was long assumed; with the exclusion of eastern and south-eastern Europe, no other country in Europe had a comparable number of Muslim exiles. The author studies how these people – voluntarily or not – adapted to Spain, and how Spain reluctantly

accommodated their presence. The book demonstrates the porosity of Spain's Mediterranean border, and argues that, in spite of much violence, Spain's policy towards Muslims was not simply dominated by a dogmatic and militant crusader spirit. While focusing on Muslims in Spain, this volume is also a contribution to the history of Spanish–North African relations; here too, the author emphasizes the pragmatism on both sides of the Mediterranean, a pragmatism reflected in a huge amount of short-lived treaties with competing North African princely dynasties in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in the peace and friendship treaties that Spain eventually concluded in the 1770s to 1790s with Morocco, the Ottoman Empire, Tripoli, Algiers and Tunis. While not ignoring the chain of military conflicts, Martín Corrales speaks of an era also characterized by long periods of relatively peaceful relations.

The individual chapters discuss reports, letters and petitions, as well as statistical and other information, concerning specific social groups residing on Spanish territory. At the centre are Muslim slaves and captives (Ch. 2), Muslim 'royal exiles' from the North African dynasties (Ch. 3), ambassadors and envoys (including a few Ottoman and Persian missions; Chs 4, 5, 6 and Epilogue) and captains and sailors (Ch. 7), as well as merchants (Chs 8, 9, and throughout). Of paramount interest is how these Muslim actors engaged with Spanish regulations, expectations and security interests; and all through the book the topic of conversion to Catholicism is paramount, whether by force or by rational choice (to escape slavery, or to integrate into the Spanish military elite). Oftentimes we hear of converts through documents related to the Inquisition that investigated their alleged return to Islam.


There were several thousands of enslaved Muslim people in Spain; the book offers a few charts based on the available (though incomplete) evidence, broken down according to places and regions. Cádiz emerges as the central node in the slave industry. To be sure, Muslim slaves were far outnumbered by enslaved people from sub-Saharan Africa, but they occupied important professions, from handicrafts to harsh work on the galleys of the Spanish navy. In the 1690s, those who worked in the shipyards of Cartagena had a primitive mosque, but in general we know little about their practice of Islam. A special category of enslaved people were the *cortados*, whom their private owners used to rent out to third parties for profit; Muslim or baptized, the *cortados* tried to save money in order to buy themselves out of slavery. Martín Corrales repeatedly compares the status of such Muslims with that of other marginalized groups in Spain, such as Gypsies and 'paupers', but here again, it seems little can be said yet about their social position more specifically.

Pressured by the Church, Spain's emperors repeatedly ordered the expulsion of all Muslims – free and unfree – but labour shortages meant that most of these decrees do not seem to have been implemented. At times Muslims of North African origin were then deported further inland, to cities like Madrid, to keep them out of the reach of the corsairs. Diplomatic relations between Morocco and Spain were often driven by the desire to ransom or exchange prisoners and slaves; this also required some pragmatism, for an overtly harsh treatment of Muslim slaves in Spain had negative consequences for the many Christian slaves kept in the *bagnos* of North Africa, who generally enjoyed a higher degree of religious tolerance than their counterparts on the Peninsula. The same limited pragmatism governed access to trade; while overseas shipping was largely in the hands of Christians, Muslim merchants increasingly managed to do business in Spanish ports (although their stories usually come to light only if they ran into conflicts with Spaniards). Oftentimes, the Spanish administrators were simply confused when Moroccan princes and adventurers appeared with specific claims, or when Moroccan navy captains demanded that their ships be repaired and refuelled for free. The examples selected for this book show that, in most cases, the authorities tried to be accommodating; this also holds true for the treatment of ambassadors, who

at times were allowed to converse freely with Muslim captives and their families, and who were shown the Oriental manuscript collection of the Escorial.

I personally appreciate this work as a rich source book that accords much space to historical context and detail, with a serious footnote apparatus that even includes the original Spanish quotes. Eloy Martín Corrales has been publishing on Spain's (and in particular Catalunya's) relations with North Africa for more than 35 years, and this book clearly brings together many threads of his work. It also does an excellent job in presenting the archival findings of other scholars from Spain who usually publish only in Spanish, Catalan or French. In this regard, the professional translation of this book's manuscript into English, by Consuelo López-Morillas, must be lauded as a valuable contribution to the broader field. The index is unfortunately too sketchy to serve as a reliable tool for navigating this large book, but the 70-page bibliography presents a good overview of the fascinating work on the historical presence of Muslims in Spain that has been done there over the past decades. Less prominent in this synthesizing oeuvre is international research published in English; and Arabic and Ottoman sources are only used if they were available in Spanish translation. With these limitations in mind, this is a colourful guidebook to Spanish scholarship on the broader history of Christian–Muslim relations in Europe, and an invitation to collate more pieces of the overall picture.

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