Spanish Orientalism: Uses of the Past in Spain's Colonization in Africa[1]

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The arrival of Moorish troops on the Iberian Peninsula in 711 would change forever the perception that the inhabitants of that territory had of themselves and of others. For almost eight centuries, there was a continu ous Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula, and that presence and the exchanges with Islam that it allowed shaped the way the territory developed through history; how it was created; how it presented itself and was perceived by others; how it spoke; and how it related to its neighbors, both European and African.

Before the Muslim arrival, there had been different religions on Iberian soil, mainly Judaism and Christianity of varying denominations. The majority of the population followed Arianism until the conversion to Catholicism of King Recaredo and the Council of Toledo in 587; from that moment until the arrival of Islam, the ruling classes would be orthodox Catholics. Muslim conquest was mainly a change in the ruling elites: the new rulers would be Moors, but that did not necessarily mean that all of a sudden the population of the Peninsula converted to Islam. In a very different approach from that of eight centuries later in 1492, Christians and Jews were allowed to continue with their faith, since they were both Peoples of the Book (*dhimmi*). Only pagans (mainly peoples in the North who had not been christianized) were persecuted. This situation, which has been labeled *convivencia*, the coexistence of three monotheistic religions, continued during the entire Muslim rule of Spain. While some historians see it as a golden age of cultural exchange and religious tolerance, others describe it as a period of turmoil and difficulty.[2] It would probably be better to think of it as a sociological experiment: Christians would be under Muslim rule or, later on, have Muslim subjects; Muslims would have non-Muslim subjects (although they were prepared for that since the Prophet had already described how to treat them), and, in time, they would have to deal with a non-Muslim ruler (something that had never happened before and would be a site of theological and political controversy); and, finally, Jews would find a kinder ruler until they were expelled by the Catholic Kings.

The Spanish Middle Ages are, then, a very interesting period, and the difficulties and problems faced by the people would eventually have a literary reflection. As optimistic as one would like to be about *convivencia*, the fact is that literary portrayals often relied on stereotypes and caricatures:[3] Jews were accused of the death of Christ and consequently criticized for that as well as for their wealth, real or imaginary, whereas Muslims were described either as barbaric infidels and invaders or as exotic sybarites. Castilian "romances" included all sorts of non-Christian characters, but they did not consider questions of race. Spanish Muslims were described by Castilian sources as evil, but as physically human, not as giants or as a monstrous race as would be the case with representations of sub-Saharan Africans.[4]

For Christians fighting to conquer territory from Muslims, the unity of the majority of the Iberian Peninsula under a single monarch in Visigoth times very soon became a sort of foundational myth: a Christian nation which had to be restored. This idea has been used to read Visigoth Spain as the natural origin of a unified Christian state, momentarily disrupted by a Muslim invasion, which struggled for survival during the *Reconquista* period, and was reborn with the Catholic Kings. Linguistic and cultural differences were conveniently erased and subordinated to religion, which stands out as the epitome of the Spanish people: one country, one monarch, and one faith. Not surprisingly, the conquest of Granada, the last Moorish kingdom, and the expulsion of the Jews from Spanish territory, go hand in hand. In 1492, *Catholic* and *Spanish* became synonyms and have remained so for the majority of Spaniards, despite some modern efforts to see the Moorish presence in the Peninsula not as a foreign invasion, but as part of the very fabric of the Spanish state.

Spain had been the site of a social experiment (Islam in Europe), and it has ever since looked back at that moment either to despise or glorify it. It has been the measure against which all new social experiments have been evaluated. Thus, for instance, when the Spaniards sailed and discovered what they thought to be the In-

dies, they described the American Other as the Other they had seen at home; Cortés labeled the Mayan temples *mezquitas* (mosques), because that was his reference for an alien faith.

The Moor has had a continuous presence in the Spanish imaginary,[5] but in the nineteenth century, a new phenomenon started to develop. Its European neighbors began to perceive Spain, a poor and developing country at the time, as a new Other, largely because of its Muslim past. This fact, united with the loss of all its American colonies and the majority of its Asian and African ones, was perceived as a collapse by the Spanish intellectual classes, which started to rethink their assumptions about national identity. The famous question *¿qué es España?* [what is Spain?] was constantly posed after the events of 1898,[6] and some found an answer in the Visigoth myth of a Catholic monarchy ruling over a country undivided by religious or linguistic borders. Intellectuals such as Menéndez Pidal provided a scholarly basis for a tradition that considered the Muslim period as a mere parenthesis in Spanish history and Castile as the very heart of the true Spain.[7] Medieval epics were read by intellectuals and used by politicians as historical truths; for example, they portrayed el Cid as an ultra-Spanish and ultra-Catholic hero, forgetting that the real Rodrigo Díaz also served in Muslim armies against Christian kings, as was quite common at the time.

These ideas about an eternal Catholic-Spanish soul were applied to the African ventures of Spain in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Spanish colonialism in Africa, though limited, relied heavily on myths that had been perpetuated through history. The *Reconquista*, the American expansion, and even the 1936-1939 Civil War were read as religious wars to fight evil and bring the true light of Christianity to all peoples. At the same time, another set of myths was also incorporated into the colonial discourse: one that recognized the Muslim past of Spain and capitalized on European conceptions of Spain as part of the Orient. The aim of this paper is to highlight the impact of different ideas of Spain on Spanish colonization in Africa during the twentieth century and the manipulative use of the past by Spanish colonizing authorities in Morocco and Equatorial Guinea.

Spanish Orientalism

Postcolonial theory and criticism have opened up new ways of approaching literatures hitherto neglected or little studied by critics. Works coming from different parts of the former British and French colonies have been incorporated into the curriculum of metropolitan universities and can no longer be ignored by scholars working in French or English departments. In addition, the term "postcolonial" has been expanded to include situations that historically belong to the colonial period but are read as sites of resistance and anticolonial struggle.[8] This approach, focused on opening the canon to non-European literary works, parallel to the struggle for recognition of women's or gay and lesbian writing, eventually engendered a critique of the white, male, Western approach to non-Western cultures and literary traditions, which was largely a matter of dominating and colonizing them. With the work of Edward Said, this latter approach was labeled "Orientalism," a concept that criticized the reductionist European vision of the Orient, especially the Middle East.

As useful and seminal as it has been, Said's notion of Orientalism is limited insofar as it focuses only on the relationship between Self and Other (the former being European metropolitan centers and their cultural productions, the latter being Asian or African territories and their cultural productions) and does not take into account the complexities of European state formation nor attempt to explain the images of themselves that European countries projected on their colonies. Said draws a picture of Western countries that is culturally homogeneous and is not always a fair description of the tensions existing in the metropoles. In a sense, he establishes a sort of "orientalism in reverse,"[9] where colonists' cultures are described in terms of essence and immutability. Because he starts his analysis in modernity, moreover, he cannot account for phenomena that have their origin in remoter times, as I try to demonstrate in the case of Spain.

If Said's notion needs expansion and clarification to be appropriate to the Spanish context, most modern discussions of Spain need revision as well. Most are based on intra-peninsular factors such as language or territory and seldom take into account the external relationships that shaped the configuration of the state. This perspective recognizes a central nationalism (traditional, Catholic, and identified with Castile since the *Generación del noventa y ocho* and several peripheral nationalisms (mainly Basque, Catalan, and Galician) with different degrees of articulation and political affiliations; the discourse on the state revolves around the relationship between these entities[10] and often forgets that when the time came to go abroad and colonize, Catalans, Basques, and Galicians went hand in hand with Castilians, as nationals of the metropole.

This external perspective (the image of Spain seen as a homogeneous unity outside its borders), not based on language but on religion and race, is rarely present in contemporary political discussion or literary works in Spain; the only writer who addresses it seems to be Juan Goytisolo. In order to begin to articulate this external perspective, I want to develop the concept of "Spanish Peninsula," which, drawing on and revising Said's work, describes Spain from the outside as it was seen and perceived by non-Spaniards. This perspective is necessarily

double: it includes both European accounts of Spain *as* the Orient and the literature of those from Spain's short-lived African colony in Equatorial Guinea.

Foreign travelers found in nineteenth century Spain an Orient *à la carte*: exotic enough to be interesting, but not so different as to be considered completely alien. Spain could not become a colony, but it certainly could be orientalized through travel writing and literature, as indeed it was. Prosper Merimée's *Carmen* and Washington Irving's *The Alhambra: Tales of a Traveler*, for example, transformed ultra-Catholic Spain into a mythical Muslim space, exotic and foreign.

This paradox is at the heart of Spanish Orientalism, the narrative of a country that Orientalizes and indeed colonizes the Other (in this particular case, in Africa), but which is described as Oriental itself. This is a very different case from that of France or England and requires a more nuanced analysis of Orientalism. In order to study the theorization of Spanish colonialism in Africa and its relation to Spanish history, I will follow the notion of "hispanotropicalismo" proposed by Gustau Nerín,[11] but will expand it to include not only the Orientalizing of the Other and the Spanish colonization of Africa, but also the fact that Spain was perceived for a long time as the Orient within Europe.

Nerín describes five particular features of Spanish colonial discourse, features that construed a justificatory discourse employed to legitimize African expansion and to distance Spanish from British or French colonialism (labeled "coloniaje," as opposed to good old Spanish "civilización"), especially during Franco's dictatorship: "total absence of racist attitudes; innate African vocation of Spaniards; missionary tendency of the Spanish nation; lack of economic exploitation of the colonial territories, and presence of mestization."[12] For me, the most interesting are the second and the third of Nerín's characteristics, because they are the two sides of a historical coin that has its origin in the Muslim presence from 711 to 1492. They are the recognition that Spain wanted both to exploit its Islamic past (in the image of an innate African vocation) and to efface it (in the image of the Christian nation and its missionary ambitions).

Any colonial power has developed, over time, some kind of discourse to justify the invasion of a foreign country to exploit it economically. Unlike German colonization which, as Russell Berman has demonstrated, functioned as a way out of Idealism,[13] the Spanish case was quite different: Spanish Orientalism included the Orientalizing of the Other and the assumption of the Self as Other. At a time when Western Europe was rediscovering its Muslim past, Spain harbored ultra-Catholic sentiments based on the suppression of the Islamic past. This Islamic past has been used when useful and discarded when inconvenient, sometimes even at the same time. This seems to be the case with African colonization: Spain could claim an inherent African vocation, which embraces the Islamic past, and at the same time claim a Christianizing mission which largely denies Islamic influence.

During the 1880s, foreseeing the end of Spanish ventures in the Americas and Asia, a group of men, mostly adventurers and geographers, started to think about the state of Spanish colonial possessions in Africa and asked the government for a prompt intervention in Western Sahara and the Gulf of Guinea in order to keep alive the Spanish presence in those parts of the world. The Spanish colonialist intellectuals of the nineteenth century were worried because they saw that Spain was losing the battle over Africa; other European countries were getting a slice of the cake, and they wanted their share too. However, instead of using the rhetoric of civilization and modernization, they played the card of an inherent Spanish vocation in Africa, which constitutes one side of Spanish Orientalism. While the civilization, modernization and Christianization argument could be made by other European nations, the African vocation argument was unique to Spain; Spanish Orientalism worked two ways: it both allowed the inherent vocation argument and capitalized on European's exoticized, Orientalized fantasy of Spain. Their argument was that Spain was indeed part of Africa because of its historical links to the continent and its geographical proximity to it. Joaquín Costa[14] expressed it in a very graphic way when he wrote:

> Spain and Morocco are two parts of a geographical unit, sort of a river basin whose borders are the Atlas in the south and the Pyrenees in the north…. The Straits of Gibraltar are not a wall that separates one house from another; on the contrary, it is a door opened by Nature to communicate two rooms of the same house. [*España y Marruecos son como las dos mitades de una unidad geográfica, forman a modo de una cuenca hidrográfica, cuyas divisorias extremas son las cordilleras paralelas del Atlas al Sur y del Pirineo al Norte…. El Estrecho de Gibraltar no es un tabique que separa una casa de otra casa; es, al contrario, una puerta abierta por la Naturaleza para poner en comunicación dos habitaciones de una misma casa*].[15]

In December 1883, the *Sociedad española de africanistas y colonistas* was founded in Madrid, and its members started very soon to lobby the government for a more active presence in the African continent. Their interests were, of course, economic and political, but they used another, uniquely Spanish argument about the Muslim past. Since Morocco founded a civilization in Spain during the Middle Ages, it was Spain's "providential mission" to promote a civilization in Morocco.[16] The innate African vocation of Spaniards existed, however, primarily in the dreams of some romantic expeditionaries and in the interest of the generals who won the 1936-39 Civil War, most of whom had been serving in

Northern Africa and saw the Muslim past as an excuse to defend Spanish expansion in Africa and, therefore, their jobs and privileges.

A good example of this kind of attitude towards Africa is the affair of Santa Cruz de Mar Pequeña, a fortress supposedly built in 1476 by Diego García de Herrera in the Western Sahara and later abandoned.[17] This incipient African expansion of the Catholic Kings, the story went, soon gave way to the fight against the Turks in the Mediterranean and to the American conquest, and the fortress and its exact location were completely forgotten. Only in the nineteenth century did the Spanish government, after several requests from geographical societies, take steps to claim Spanish sovereignty over the territory. After several treaties and misunderstandings between the government of Madrid and the Moroccan sultanate, the assumed location of the old fortress was designated to be in Ifni (south of modern Agadir), but the question was dropped again because nobody was able to corroborate the exactitude of this location. Finally, on 6 April 1934, Colonel Capaz disembarked at Ifni and, on the basis of the alleged former fortress, proclaimed Spanish sovereignty over the territory. The town was not returned to Morocco until 1969.[18]

Spanish presence in Morocco, based on this ideological manipulation of the Peninsula's Islamic past, was short lived and left little visible imprint on Moroccan cultural life. We have, thus, few Moroccan cultural products in Spanish. Nevertheless, there is much historiographical information on Spanish colonialism in Northern Africa, especially during the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War and the subsequent Francoist dictatorship. A curious anecdote illustrates the usefulness of the Islamic past: in 1937, General Franco requested the Delegation for Indigenous Affairs, located in Tetouan (Spanish Morocco), to organize a sea pilgrimage to Mecca for local Muslims. The departure was scheduled for 21 January, but a Republican plane bombarded the port, and the travel had to be postponed. Francoist propaganda used the incident to highlight the antireligious zeal of the "red government paid by Moscow"[19] and the need to strengthen the links between Spanish rebels and Moroccan armies in order to fight a common crusade against Communism and atheism. It is curious, to say the least, to find such a strong defense of Islam orchestrated by Francoist troops, who claimed to fight for a Christian Spain "soiled by the Communist atheism of the Republican government."

The Other Side of the Coin: Equatorial Guinea

After the conquest of Granada, attempts to go on with territorial expansion further south (the Canary Islands, Santa Cruz de Mar Pequeña) came to a halt with the discovery of America and the threat of the Turks in the Mediterranean. Africa was forgotten. Nevertheless, in her testament, Isabel of Castile asked her heirs to go on with the conquest of Africa, with the help of the Church, and this request was to be a token of Spanish Orientalism several centuries later, not least in its inscription of the Catholic Church as a colonialist agent.[20]

No matter how important the Muslim presence in the Peninsula, the fact is that after 1492 Catholicism was at the core of *Hispanidad*. The Church was a major actor in society and controlled education, so much so that, while in continental France and its colonies schools created Frenchmen and women, in Spain and its colonies they created orthodox Catholics. This distinction is important because it necessitated downplaying Spanish Orientalism—the kind of discourse that saw Spain as hav ing strong ties with Muslim Africa—and foregrounding Spain's Christianity. While Spanish Orientalism could work in Morocco, where a system of indirect rule was implemented, it did not work in Equatorial Guinea, where Spanish colonists faced, rather than a strong religion like Islam, a kinship structure that they felt they had to destroy to "civilize" the natives.[21] Hence it was Catholic missionaries that were the primary agent of colonization in Equatorial Guinea.

Equatorial Guinea is a unique country for several reasons: the only Spanish colony in Sub-Saharan Africa, it was colonized quite late, although it had formally belonged to Spain for centuries. It obtained its independence quite late as well (1968) and is today the only Spanish-speaking country in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Spain suffered from a kind of schizophrenic identity in which it was both "self and other," both Christian and Moorish/Islamic, and it transmitted this duality to its colony, which became simultaneously traditionally African and Christian Spanish. The paradox that informed the action of its colonizer (using the past and denying it at the same time) has informed the identity of the country. The Spanish legacy (language, legal and educational system, cultural production) and a fervent Catholicism are elements that form Equatorial Guinea's identity. These two elements, and their relationship with an African past that surfaces every now and then, go hand in hand and show up in very interesting ways in Equatorial Guinea's literature in Spanish.

Both Spanish and Equatoguinean fiction dealing with Equatorial Guinea tend to be first person narrations or historical novels: reality and fiction intertwine in a historical travel that allows the reader to follow the evolution of the territory and its relationship to Spain through the work of its writers.[22] The four novels that I want to discuss, although written by black Equatoguineans, are largely obliging with the colonizer, and most of them seem to show little critical spirit. Written in perfect Castilian standard (with some African words thrown in every now and then as if to give local color to the nar-

ration), they are the story of a subdued community ruled by strong forces, either colonial or dictatorial.

The arrival of the Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Claretians) to the Spanish territories in the Gulf of Guinea in 1883 signals the Hispanization of those territories.[23] The Claretians remain the most stable sign of the Spanish presence in the region, and the Equatoguinean people accepted Catholicism, although they did not totally forget their ancient beliefs. The missionaries' presence and the importance of religion throughout Equatorial Guinea's literature can be followed through its literature in Spanish because many of its characters are either missionaries or priests and because they so closely follow the evolution of Guinean history.

The first literary works in Spanish by Equatorial Guineans can be found in *La Guinea Española*, a newspaper published by the Claretian missionaries at their seminary of Banapá,[24] but the first novel written by a black Equatoguinean was Leoncio Evita's *Cuando los combes luchaban*, published in 1953.[25] An "ethnographical" novel, it tells a story of slavery and tribal fights that are resolved with the help of an American missionary and two Spanish adventurers. The editor was the Instituto de Estudios Africanos, a branch of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) devoted to the scientific study of the colonial possessions of Spain in Africa. Although an Equatoguinean wrote the novel, it is essentially Spanish: its language, its attitudes, and its point of view are those of the colonizer. At a time when Senghor and Fanon were publishing and colonialism was being widely criticized, Evita offers an apology of the colonialist action of Spain in the Gulf of Guinea. Contrary to what was happening in Morocco, where Spaniards played the card of their Islamic past and their "African vocation," here they are described in a very different way. We find here the erasure of the past: no exotic heritage, no golden age; just pure and simple colonization, a colonization that is somehow accepted by the natives, the author among them.

Somewhat different is a short story entitled *La última carta del padre Fulgencio Abad, CMF*, by Maplal Loboch, published in 1977.[26] It is the letter of a Claretian missionary to his superior, a narrative that describes the efforts the missionaries have developed to evangelize the island on which he lives. Although no name is given to the territory in the story—a sign that the description could be applied to any part of Equatorial Guinea—textual hints help to identify it. For example, the appearance of names of real missionaries (such as Joaquim Juanola or Isidro Vila) and the indication that the missionary expedition left Santa Isabel (modern Bata) on 12 August allow one to assume that the territory described is the island of Annobón: the Claretians arrived on Annobón on 19 August 1885, and the two above mentioned priests were sent to that island.[27] This story in the form of a letter represents a second stage in Equatorial Guinea's colonial history. By the 1920s, the Claretian missions were fully functioning and Hispanization was being implemented: baptisms, communions, and Catholic marriages had been performed, and the missionaries, many of whom were of Catalan origin, had built a school. Nevertheless, Loboch's fictional Claretian is not convinced of the goodness of all this and feels that much of the missionaries' efforts has been useless. He asks for forgiveness from his superior because he doubts his faith and wonders whether he should have left the comforts of white civilization to minister to "savages" ("sons of Ham"), whose only activity is "to drink and to fornicate while their women work in the fields."[28] The missionary tendency of the Spaniards seems to backfire, and we find in this novel a return of the repressed: the negated African past dies hard and keeps surfacing in spite of the efforts of the Catholic missionaries. The novelist still chooses the voice of a white Spaniard, but he appropriates it and uses it to criticize the Spanish administration.

The end of Francoist colonization and the independence of the country in 1968 is the period covered in *Las tinieblas de tu memoria negra* by Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo published in 1987.[29] The novel, whose title is inspired by Senghor's *Chants d'ombre*, is the story of an Equatoguinean seminarian who decides to leave his career in the Spanish priesthood and to go back to Guinea to help in the construction of the new nation. In order to do so, he must confront his superior, the representative of metropolitan power. The novel follows the seminarian's memory as he describes the missionary school he attended in Guinea, the Spanish presence in his country, and the division between his father (who followed the teachings of the Spanish priests) and his uncle (who taught him traditional practices). The protagonist, who remains nameless all along, is a soul divided in a battle between Catholic Spain and traditional Africa.

Like the protagonist, who went to the Peninsula to continue his studies, many Equatorial Guineans, after independence, went to Spain to study, with the intention of returning to Guinea after they had completed their degrees. But their dreams were cut short when, in 1970, all political parties were suppressed in Guinea and the bloody dictatorship of Macías Nguema began, which prevented them from returning. By 1973, almost a quarter of the country's population was living in exile (125,000 exiles and refugees according to Liniger-Goumaz).[30] In 1979, Teodoro Obiang Nguema, Macías's nephew, led a *coup d'état*, the infamous "*golpe de libertad*," and hopes were renewed among the Guinean population. This moment is the setting for the novel *El párroco de Niefang* by Joaquín Mbomio Bacheng published in 1996.[31] Again the story of a priest, the novel tells the

tale of Padre Gabriel, released from Macía's prisons right after the former dictator, "that son of Satan,"[32] has been detained and condemned to death. After leaving the prison, Gabriel returns to his community in Bata, where he is received as a hero, but has doubts about his vocation that he shares with Cardinal Sindona, an envoy from the Vatican. The Vatican official dismisses Gabriel's doubts and tells him that his beatification is assured after his death, but that first he will be consecrated as a bishop. But Gabriel visits his hometown, Niefang (formerly Sevilla de Niefang), where he meets with traditional African magic and with his lover, Soledad, who he eventually impregnates right after the Pope's visit to Equatorial Guinea in 1982. Once again, we find a priest in the center of the conflict that opposes local traditions and European colonization: the same way that Spaniards claim an "African past" in Morocco and deny it in Equatorial Guinea, Equatoguineans learn to manage the conflict of opposing traditions. The priest has excellent relations with the Vatican, but keeps up a sexual relationship with a childhood friend.

This novel is the last stage in a series of literary depictions of the intimate relationship between Equatorial Guinea's history, Spanish colonization and the Catholic Church. While an independent country, Equatorial Guinea, like many of its neighbors, has inherited its borders, its language, its religion, and some of its customs from the colonizer's presence in its territory. Indeed, it deploys this very heritage to create a differentiated identity: the Spanish paradox of appropriation/negation of the Other to define the Self was transplanted to the colony and lives on in the mentality of the African writers who use Spanish as their means of expression.

Manipulation at the Core of *Hispanidad*

Spain rediscovered its Islamic past during the nineteenth century when foreign travelers started to describe the country as an exotic and oriental place. That outsider vision did not exactly fit the inner idea of one Christian nation under God that had helped create the modern state under the Catholic Kings. However, it was useful and came at the right time: the Afro-Moorish past was the perfect alibi to justify Spanish expansion in Africa and was indeed used in the colonization of Northern Morocco and the Western Sahara. The only problem was that, in order to use it, ideologues had to minimize the Catholic tradition that was inherent to the very idea of Spain. Some authors see in this Spanish attitude a commitment to "opening the dialogue and exchange with the East for the purpose of learning about the self from the Other,"[33] but the fact is that the exotic Other was either assimilated as the religious self in Catholicism or expelled as the unassimilable Other.

Colonization in Equatorial Guinea followed quite a different pattern. There were neither Islamic brotherhoods nor previous cultural links to be invoked, so the Muslim past was conveniently erased to give way to an ultra-Catholic colonization under the auspices of the Claretian order. Nevertheless, the manipulation of the past that is located at the core of Spanish Orientalism seems to have been transplanted to Equatoguinean identity, as we have seen in the novels discussed above.

In Spain, the contradiction between the Islamic past and the Catholic present is an ongoing conflict, and both elements are used and rejected when convenient, no matter that they are largely in opposition to each other. In Equatorial Guinea, we find a similar pattern: the African past and the postcolonial Catholic present are accepted or rejected anytime, often at the same time. Ndongo's novel, *Las tinieblas de tu memoria negra* offers a vivid metaphor for this conflict in the first communion of the protagonist.[34] He confesses in the afternoon and knows that he has to fast until Mass next morning, but cannot resist the temptation to eat and devours a series of African dishes (lamb with peanut sauce, yam, tapioca) during the night. During the communion Mass, which seems to last forever under a burning sun, he feels guilty and, in a psychosomatic move, vomits the Holy Communion wafer. Catholic guilt is intertwined with colonial images in this scene, where the white of the protagonist's suit is stained by the blackness of sin, and the little Guinean seems incapable of living up to European standards. More than an example of the problems posed by European colonization in Africa, the protagonist represents a new case of the paradox that informs Spanish Orientalism: the child who vomits the wafer eventually leaves his country to pursue a career as a priest in Spain. But neither Spain nor the priesthood can keep him; in the end, he returns to Africa. Like the Spanish colonizers, who traveled to Africa with their Muslim/Catholic past, the Equatoguinean protagonist carries two stories as well: one African, one Spanish; wherever he goes, the other follows….[35]

NOTES

[1]I thank Rebecca Saunders, co-editor of the journal, for her invaluable help on the shaping of this article. It is not a question of politeness but of mere justice: without her help, advice, and patience, I would have never been able to show the potential of my arguments.

[2]The discussion about the role of the Muslim presence in the shaping of the concept of Spain was one of the main arguments in the polemic between historians Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz. Castro considered that the concept of Spain was born in the interaction of the three communities present in medieval Iberia (Jews, Muslims, and Christians), while Sánchez Albornoz took into account pre-Muslim history and considered that there was a Spanishness that was somehow affected but not modified by the Muslim invasion.

[3]See Dwayne E. Carpenter, "Social Perception and Literary Portrayal: Jews and Muslims in Medieval Spanish Literature," in *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain,* ed. Vivian B. Mann. Jerrilynn Denise Dodds, and Thomas F. Glick (New York: G. Braziller, 1992), 61-81.

[4]See Louise Mirrer, *Women, Jews, and Muslims in the Texts of Reconquest Castile* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996).

[5]See María Soledad Carrasco Urgoiti, *El moro de Granada en la literatura (del siglo XV al XX),* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1956).

[6]"The events of 1898" or "el desastre del noventa y ocho" refers to the Spanish-American War and the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, which ended the Spanish colonial rule in America and Asia. These events had a tremendous impact on the Spanish public for several reasons and are still remembered in Spain as "el desastre de 1898."

[7]See María Eugenia Lacarra, "La utilización del Cid en la ideología militar franquista," *Ideologies and Literature* 3, (1980): 95-127.

[8]The medievalists' use of postcolonial theory heavily depends on this concept of the postcolonial in or before the actual colonial domination. For an example, see Jeffrey Jerome Cohen ed., *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

[9]I follow Sadik Jalal al-`Azm's terminology: Sadik Jalal al-`Azm, "Orientalism and Orinetalism in Reverse," in *Orientalism. A Reader*, ed. Alexander Lyon Macfie (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 217-238.

[10]Even today, twenty-five years after the end of the Francoist dictatorship, there is discussion on how the state should be defined, how different linguistic communities be treated and how they should be represented in the government of the state.

[11]Gustau Nerín i Abad, "Mito franquista y realidad de la colonización de la Guinea española," *Estudios de Asia y África* 32.1, (1997): 11.

[12]Nerín, "Mito franquista," 12.

[13]Russell A. Berman, *Enlightenment or Empire: Colonial Discourse in German Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

[14]Joaquin Costa was one of the prime advocates and potent symbols of a broad social movement for modernization through geographical restructuring called *regeneracionismo.* He was involved in the theoretical discussions about Spanish presence in Africa, although he later changed his mind and recommended selling all colonies and leaving Africa. His writings have been invoked time and time again by a wide variety of social groups.

[15]Joaquín Costa, quoted in Azucena Pedraz Marcos, *Quimeras de África. La Sociedad española de africanistas y colonistas. El colonialismo español de finales del siglo XIX* (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2000), 145.

[16]Pedraz, *Quimeras,* 245.

[17]See Pedraz, *Quimeras,* 28-29, 103-127, 292-301 and Jesús F. Salafranca Ortega, *El sistema colonial español en África* (Mélaga: Editorial Algazara, 2001), 303-309.

[18]This affair recalls the evolution of the dispute between Spain and Morocco over the Perejil island (next to Ceuta). During the summer of 2002, the Spanish population discov ered this uninhabited enclave of 13.5 hectares when it was "invaded" by Moroccan troops. Madrid launched an attack to recover it, only to later agree to remove its troops as long as Morocco neither claimed sovereignty over the island nor occupied it. The Spanish government did not even discuss the historical doubts about the sovereignty of the island or the fact that it had been abandoned by the army, and Spanish newspapers fueled the patriotic sentiments of a population who, in general, did not care at all about a territory of which they had never heard.

[19]María Rosa de Madariaga, *Los moros que trajo Franco…. La intervención de tropas coloniales en la guerra civil* (Barcelona: Ediciones Martínez Roca, 2002), 348.

[20]Pedraz, *Quimeras,* 31.

[21]Nerín, "Mito franquista," 21.

[22]I will not discuss literature written by African Spaniards, but their work poses very interesting questions. Because Equatoguinean writers did not use literature as an anticolonial tool, on which grounds can we differentiate between a memoir written by black Equatoguineans exiled in Spain for most of their life and something written by white Spaniards born in Equatorial Guinea who spent their lives in Africa?

[23]M'baré N'gom, "Caminos de África: espacio colonial y literatura en Guinea Ecuatorial," in *Caminería hispánica. Actas del II Congreso de caminería hispánica,* ed. Manuel Criado de Val (Madrid: Aache ediciones, 1996), 436.

[24]Its first issue appeared in 1903 and was published until the independence of the country in 1968. See M'baré N'gom, "The Missing Link: African Hispanism at the Dawn of the Millennium," *Aracne@Rutgers: Journal of Iberian and Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies* 1.1, (2001), <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/arachne/vol_1ngom.htm>.

[25]Leoncio Evita, *Cuando los combes luchaban: Novela de costumbres de la Guinea española* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1953).

[26]Maplal Loboch, *La última carta del padre Fulgencio Abad, CMF* (Madrid: URGE, 1977). CMF stands for *Congregatio Missionariorum Filiorum Immaculati Cordis.*

[27]Eduardo Canals, *El padre grande de Guinea: Armengol Coll y Armengol. Misionero y obispo* (Barcelona: Claret, 1993), 101.

[28]Loboch, *La última carta*, 175.

[29]Donato Ndongo Bidyogo, *Las tinieblas de tu memoria negra* (Madrid: Editorial Fundamentos, 1987).

[30]Max Liniger-Goumaz, "Guinea Ecuatorial: diecisiete años de la segunda dictadura nguemista (1979-1996)," *Estudios de Asia y África* 31.3 (1996), 56.

[31]Joaquín Mbomio Bacheng, *El párroco de Niefang* (Malabo: Centro Cultural Hispano-Guineano, 1996).

[32]Mbomio, *El párroco*, 12.

[33]Julia A. Kushigian, *Orientalism in the Hispanic Literary Tradition: In Dialogue with Borges, Paz, and Sarduy* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991), 3.

[34]Ndongo, *Las tinieblas*, 80-87.

[35]I recently came across a very interesting article ("El himno nacional tiene su origen en una composición andalusí del siglo XI," Webislam, 190, <http://www.webislam.com/

numeros/2002/190/0190.html>) that affirms that the Spanish national anthem, the Marcha granadera, could be a variation on a musical composition from the ninth century by Ibn Bayya, also known as Avempace. I am not a professional mu sician, so I cannot judge the accuracy of this claim, but the fact that it has been made reveals that the Muslim past continues to surface in Spanish cultural life.