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THE FALL OF AL-ANDALUS AND THE EVOLUTION OF ITS MEMORY IN MODERN ARAB-MUSLIM HISTORIOGRAPHY

MUSTAFA KABHA*

ABSTRACT

This article explores the Fall of al-Andalus and its use in the development of its memory in modern Arab-Muslim historiography. After its final demise in 1492, Andalusia gradually disappeared from Arab-Muslim collective memory. As part of the Nahda, however, Al-Andalus' memory began to figure prominently in Arabic literary and public discourse. Using a wide array of literary works and political statements, this paper revisits and broadens the scope of investigations began by Christina Civantos, Mikaela Rogozen-Soltar and Alejandro García-Sanjuán. It shows how contemporary crisis and sense of inferiority some Muslims and Arabs have felt vis a vis Western Europe and North America ("the West") in modern times, the Palestine Question and recent conflicts, the Iran-Iraq War, civil wars in Lebanon, Algeria, Syria, Yemen and Libya, initiated a multivariate re-interpretation of the role of al-Andalus in modern Arab-Muslim historiography between nostalgia for the past and the dream of an Arab-Muslim revival.

INTRODUCTION: ANDALUSI HISTORY, POST-EXPULSION ANDALUSIS AND THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

For over 700 years of Islamic rule, between 711-1492 CE, the country of al-Andalus,[1] as the Arabs called the Iberian Peninsula, was home to numerous Muslim kingdoms, and generations of scholars, scientists and luminaries.[2] Al-

* The Open University of Israel

1 In this paper, I adopt an Arabic, emic perspective of the concept of al-Andalus/Al-Andalusia. Therefore, I will use the Arabic rendition of the name for Andalusia, and its derivative native adjectival form, Andalusi, for Andalusian.

2 'A.H. 'Abbadi, *Al-Mujammal fi Ta'rikh al-Andalus*, al-Qahira, Dar al-Qalam, 1964; M. Makki, "The Political History of al-Andalus (92/711-897/1492)," In *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, S.K. Jayyusi (ed.), Leiden, Brill, 1992, pp 3-87; M. J.,Rubiera Mata & M. D. Epalza, "Al-Andalus: Between Myth and History," *History and Anthropology*, *18*(3), 2007 pp. 269-273; Dar al-Isra', *Mawsu'at* Ta'rikh al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib al-'Arabi, 'Amman, Dar Hamurabi lil-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi', 2007; M. 'A. Hataminlah, Madkhal li-Dirasat Ta'rikh al-Andalus, 'Amman, author, 2010; D. James, A History of Early al-Andalus: The Akhbar Majmu'a, London, Routledge, 2012; H. Kennedy, Muslim Spain and Portugal: A political history of al-Andalus. London, Routledge, 2014; M. Marín, The Formation of Al-Andalus, Part 1: History and Society, London, Routledge, 2016; M. A. Mustafa, Ta'rikh al-Andalus,