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## Islamic Influence on Spain: Discussion of Women's Rights and Islamic Influence

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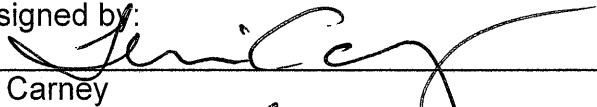
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**Islamic Influence on Spain: Discussion of Women's Rights and Islamic Influence**

A Thesis

Presented to the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

and

The Honors Program

of

Butler University

In Fulfillment

of the Requirements for Graduation Honors

Samreen Uzzama

December 2017

## Table of Contents

I.	Abstract	1
II.	Introduction	4
III.	Islamic Rulings on Women's Rights	4
IV.	Comparison of Roman versus Islamic Rule on Women's Rights in Spain	6
V.	Connection to the Modern World	8
VI.	Arab Influence Within Spain	15
VII.	Arab Influence on Spain: Confines of Language, Politics, and Social Construct	16
VIII.	Arabic Influence on Spanish	17
IX.	Conclusion	20
X.	Works Cited	22
XI.	Annotated Bibliography	23

*Abstracto*

El sentimiento actual en el Occidente que rodea el Islam proviene de una variedad de factores: ataques terroristas, falta de comprensión de la fe islámica y las culturas que practican la religión, y representaciones estereotipadas en los medios de comunicación de los musulmanes como terroristas o como mujeres oprimidas. Las sociedades árabes oprimen a las mujeres a través de leyes, como la ley que impide que las mujeres conduzcan o la ley que impide que las mujeres estén fuera de la casa sin estar acompañadas por un hombre, ambas en Arabia Saudita. Estas representaciones, especialmente de las prácticas de Arabia Saudita o prácticas similares de otras naciones, generalmente están disponibles para Occidente, a través de los medios, la web, la literatura o la radio, en lugar de las sociedades que han tenido mujeres como Primer Ministro y fuerzas principales en el gobierno, en Indonesia y muchos otros. El Islam en sí mismo no es opresivo para las mujeres, sino que son prácticas particulares del Islam. La historia española de los musulmanes en España proporciona evidencia sobre cómo se practicaban las leyes contra lo que estaba escrito. Esta división continua era evidente tanto en las leyes cristianas como en las musulmanas, lo que permite que la comprensión del estatus de las mujeres dentro de la religión difiera de la que se practicaba juiciosamente en España. España es un estudio de caso de cómo una nación occidental se ha vuelto más receptiva en presencia de la influencia islámica que ha persistido a lo largo de los siglos. La teoría del orientalismo de Edward Said proporciona apoyo para explicar por qué la cultura islámica ha sido vilipendiada en Occidente. Mientras que Said proporciona una explicación a la difamación, Fazal Rahim escribe sobre formas de

combatir el sistema de medios que margina a los musulmanes. Rahim escribe sobre una visión normalizada de los musulmanes para que los medios occidentales circulen en lugar de la versión banal de los musulmanes como terroristas u oprimidos. El trabajo de Rahim proporciona evidencia del cambio necesario que debe ocurrir en los medios de todo tipo para ver la aceptación de los musulmanes en lugar de tratarlos como el "otro". Los efectos duraderos del gobierno y la cultura islámica en la sociedad española, específicamente la influencia lingüística. Cómo creado una sociedad de aceptación más que de negación. Ralph Penny explica que la mezcla del árabe y el español fue un subproducto de la necesidad de comunicarse entre sí, creando así palabras que todavía se usan hoy en día haciendo cumplir la idea de sincretismo en lugar de dividir. Concluyo abogando por iniciativas prácticas dentro de las comunidades que puedan aliviar aún más las tensiones entre musulmanes y no musulmanes, específicamente mirando la iniciativa de la Universidad de Butler "Ask A Muslim".

### *Abstract*

Current sentiment in the West surrounding Islam stems from a variety of factors: terror attacks, lack of understanding the Islamic faith and cultures that practice the religion, and stereotypical depictions in the media of Muslims as terrorist or as oppressed women. Arab societies oppress women via laws, such as the law that prevents women from driving or the law that prevents women from being outside of the house without being accompanied by a man, both in Saudi Arabia. These depictions, especially of Saudi Arabian practices or similar practices from other nations, are generally available to the West, via media, web, literature or radio, rather than of the societies that have had women

as Prime Ministers and leading forces in the government, in Indonesia and many others. Islam itself is not oppressive to women, but rather particular practices of Islam are. Spanish history of the Muslims in Spain provides evidence on the how laws were practiced versus what was written down. This continued divide was evident in both Christian and Muslim laws, which allows for the understanding of women's status within the religion differs than that of which was practiced judiciously in Spain. Spain is a case study for how a Western nation has become more accepting in the presence of Islamic influence that has persisted throughout the centuries. Edward Said's theory of Orientalism provides support to explain why Islamic culture has been vilified in the West. While Said provides an explanation to the vilification, Fazal Rahim writes of ways to combat the media system that marginalizes Muslims. Rahim writes of a normalized vision of Muslims for the Western media to circulate rather than the banal version of Muslims as terrorists or oppressed. Rahim's work provides evidence for the needed change that must occur in media outlets of all kinds to see an acceptance of Muslims rather than treating them as the "other." The lasting effects of Islamic rule and culture on Spanish society, specifically the linguistic influence, as created a society of acceptance rather than denial. Ralph Penny explains the mix of the Arabic and Spanish was a byproduct of the need to communicate with one another, thus creating words that are still used today enforcing the idea of syncretism rather than divide. I conclude with advocating for practical initiatives within communities that can further alleviate tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims, specifically looking at the Butler University's initiative "Ask A Muslim."

### *Introduction*

There is a common misunderstanding that Muslim women are treated in a backwards manner which is a symptom of Orientalism. Edward Said explains Orientalism as an idea that the West presents the Orient in a manner that elicits a superhero complex among the Western peoples. He furthers the idea by indicating that “Western writings about the Orient carries perceptions based on fictional western images of the Orient” (Said 2-3).

The focal point of my argument is that Islamic rule is not restrictive when compared to Christian law. Focusing on Spain, the laws that indicate differences among the enforcement allowed women more freedom. The underlying cultural practices of the different societies are what cause the oppressive nature of the treatment of women. The reason for such representation is a result of Orientalism and continues to be expanded via different authors, but for this paper I am specifically looking at Abu-Lughod. Islamic influence on culture has had long lasting effects in Spain, especially language. The lasting effects of Islamic influence indicates a relationship between Islam and the world. One of the avenues to change attitudes towards Muslims is to promote accurate representation that elicits sympathy and understanding rather than fear.

#### *A. Islamic Rulings on Women's Rights*

Islam has two main concepts of human rights: classical rights and economic, social and cultural rights. These rights are further broken down to positive rights and



negative rights, according to Berdal Aral's paper "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire": positive rights being the right to war, to social security, to education, to a decent living, and minority rights (Aral 456). The negative rights entail the right to life, prohibition of torture, equality before the law, principle of non-discrimination, independence of the judiciary, the right to a fair trial, right to ownership, freedom of expression, freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of travel, freedom of association, and the right to privacy (Aral 456). Positive rights allow for active intervention on the part of the state to ensure the life for the destitute. Negative rights allow for the state to intervene only if the rights have been impeached to a degree of irreversibility. The idea is to allow for ruling by governing figures before the intervention of the state. These rights are declared within the Empire and are found in accordance to Islam as well.

The Quran dictates that "the human being is the most exalted of all creatures, and is therefore especially valuable irrespective of his or her religions" (Aral 456). Thus, regardless of the faith that the conquered people practiced, they had the same rights as a Muslim did under the same ruling body. Even though many Spaniards were not Muslim, the Islamic rule did not mean that their rights were stripped, but rather that their rights were maintained or bettered under the Empire. The laws that separated people were disregarded according to the Shariah law: "human being is superior to all other creatures, some people are superior to others by virtue of their religion" (Aral 458). According to the Shariah law, the distinguishing factor among people is how religious one is. There was a disregard in the identification of those who followed no religion. But religious

piety did not dictate that one would be seen as greater by the ruling government but rather in the eyes of God. The Moors emphasized justice and harmony alongside virtue and high moral standards.

As aforementioned, people of other Abrahamic religions were given the same rights as Muslims. This goes back to the idea that Islamic states “generally accept that Christians and Jewish subjects of Islamic states had far better chance of living in a secure and pleasing environments than Muslims who lived under the rule of a Christian state” (Aral 462). Albeit a bit self righteous to say Islamic states provide better living and rights, the Christian states of this time period were rather exclusive and did not offer the same rights to the collective as Islamic states did. The harmony under an Islamic state is what drove Moors to become a large entity within its lasting rule.

### *B. Comparison of Roman versus Islamic Rule on Women's Rights in Spain*

The common misconception that Muslim women are oppressed beings is a result of the lasting effects of Edward Said's idea of Orientalism. The emphasis of this paper is to dispel this false conclusion by comparing women's rights in Spain under Roman (aka Christian) rule and under Moor (aka Islamic) rule. The rights of women were dependent on the place within society the women stood, religious, economic, and marital status as well. Written laws were practiced differently in reality in both eras, Byzantine and Islamic ruling. The Byzantine era lasted from 330-711 AD, ending when the Moors invaded in 711. Roman law mandated that women were property of men. “Muslim women in Al-Andalus were able to assert themselves in multiple areas, including

marriage, and family law, inheritance and property rights, as well as education, religious space and employment” (Dawson). Even though women under an Islamic rule were able to assert themselves, certain laws of marriage and inheritance differed for women under the Roman and Islamic laws. Divorce under the Roman Empire (aka Byzantine Empire) is permissible and women were allowed to start proceedings for divorce. Islamic law discouraged divorce and was used as a last resort within a relationship and had to be initiated by the husband. Roman laws regarding inheritance also differed in the sense that it was less restrictive than Islamic law, but during the Islamic ruling the practice of restrictions of inheritance laws was scarce. Women had the rights to own property and gaining inheritance under the Islamic law than under the Roman law.

Women, under the written laws of the Moors, were restricted, but the actual practice of the Islamically derived laws were not heavily enforced thus allowing women of the era to have exercised many more freedoms than their counterparts under the Roman law. Jessica A. Coope explains the duality of the laws in her paper “Religious and Cultural Conversion to Islam in Ninth-Century Umayyad Córdoba.” the “enforcement of restrictions for women was equally spotty” even though the laws themselves were explicit (Coope 78). Daniel Dawson furthers the argument in his article, *Women under the Law in Islamic Spain, 700s-1492*, by illustrating that “Muslim women in Al-Andalus were able to assert themselves in multiple areas, including marriage and family law, inheritance and property rights, as well as education, religious spaces and employment.” He continues to indicate that the laws in place, in practice were more favorable towards women than what was written (Dawson). Even though Islamic law was more restrictive

on paper, limiting movement of women as individuals, the practice of said laws were not enforced and thus allowed women to live with freedom.

### *C. Connection to the Modern World*

Alongside the emergence of Orientalism, the outlook on modern Islam is that it is an oppressive religion that prevents women from having rights. In reality, Islam was the first Abrahamic religion to give women rights regarding inheritance: “In the Holy Qur’an daughters are given rights of inheritance from their parents, wives have a right on husbands’ inheritance; mothers have rights on their children’s inheritance, if they happen to die before her. Similarly in some situations daughters and sisters are heirs of their brothers. No other religion established women’s rights like this before Islam” (Ahmed). The cultural and patriarchal societies that create laws in countries and regions are what oppress Muslim women. In order to combat contemporary viewpoints regarding Islam as an oppressive religion, one can look to the past to see the effects Islam has had on women. By focusing on Spain under the Moorish rule, one can identify the freedoms of Muslim women in Spain under that time period. With the realization that the women under the rule were not oppressed, the same can go for the idea that Islam does not do the oppressing but rather the cultural agendas of different nations. The misconception of Muslims is a worldwide phenomena that needs to be addressed, seeing there are 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide (Desilver and Masci). The misconception not only affects those of Arab backgrounds, but also of backgrounds from around the world. The largest concentration of Muslims is within the Middle East and the North Africa region with 341

million Muslims. Asia-Pacific has approximately 986 million Muslims, North America has 3.48 million and the Latin America-Caribbean has 840,000 Muslims (Desilver and Masci). There are bound to be Muslims in Spanish speaking areas. According to Dawson, in his webpage called *Women Under the Law in Islamic Spain, 700s-1492*, the rules of the eighth century may have been stricter than the Roman laws, but in practice the women were able to live as freely as the men.

The negative view of Muslim women is common among Western representations of the Orient; negative view being that Muslims are backwards thinking, oppressive of their women, lack the understanding of the modern world, follow laws that are barbaric, or are seen as terrorists or the “other.” The idea that Islam is the “other” is created by constantly pushing the concept of Islam as an oppressive religion. Edward Said explains the representation of the Orient as the complete opposite of the West initiating a desire to help the orient because the representation of the Orient as “irrational, psychologically weak, immasculine when compared to the West” (Said 65-67). Thus the dual nature of the representation highlights the weak vs strong identities amongst the two, creating the desire to “help” the Orient and forcing the need to continue to represent the Orient in a manner separate from the West. By creating an “other” narrative, the West reinforces their privilege and power by an outside view of the “oppressed” women, when in reality the West and East live in the same world.

Lila Abu-Lughod, in *Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others*, enforces the idea that the West must ask what contributions it has made to the world’s conditions that resulted in the mass

misrepresentation of women in Western countries, that has continued to spread globally. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam support Abu-Lughod's point by indicating that tales from Muslim/Orient authors are translated to "satisfy the European taste for passionately violent Orient," which also leads for the necessity that West should save these suffering peoples (Shohat and Stam 163). Abu-Lughod illustrates that the action in the world's affairs should be based "in the spirit of support" rather than with the goal of saving the others (789). This would allow for an understanding and continuation of sympathy among Westerners towards Muslims. Rather than fixing the problems, the support of these women to be their own help futhers independence and actualization of worth.

The lack of education and understanding is what drives the fear and hatred against the religion itself. The way to combat the popular opinion is to educate the masses regarding the actual treatment of women under Islamic rule, specifically the religious rulings. The understanding that Muslim women are not oppressed will further the concept that they are proud to be Muslims and have the same ability to make a difference in the world. Abu-Lughod explains the idea that Muslim women do not need saving, but rather the Western interference is a result of Orientalism. Abu-Lughod argues that there is a "Need to develop, instead, a serious appreciation of differences among women in the world- as products of different histories, expressions of different circumstances, and manifestations of differently structured desires" (783). She continues to indicate that to bring forth the idea that the seeking to "save" others implies a superiority and interrupts the need for the West to feel needed. Abu-Lughod explains that saving someone implies that one is saving someone from something and that one is saving her to something (788).

Within the context of Islam, this would mean saving Muslim women from Islam itself. The idea of saving is refuted by Abu-Lughod and is problematic because Muslim women do not need saving from Islam but rather the oppressive cultural practices that occurs around them. Islam gave women rights long before the Roman/Christian counterparts. The culture within different nations ruled by patriarchy and misrepresentation of Muslims are what drive the pessimistic views regarding Muslim women. Abu-Lughod explains the patronizing attitude felt by Westerners under the guise of saving the women: “saving other women depend[s] on and reinforces] a sense of superiority by the westerners, a form of arrogance that deserves to be challenged” (789).

The presentation of the positive effects of Islam in the world will create the bridge needed to eradicate the defeatist opinions; meaning that representing Muslim women as women with career goals, who are content with their faith regardless of the flaws, who have the same values as the Western women, and who are active in the community. Women in general have been deemed lesser than men. In reality, Islam grants women rights to combat that sexism and raises women to be at the same stature; Quran states: “be you male or female- you are equal to one another” (3:19) and “women too have rights over men” (2:228). Even though the representation of the religion is perverted, the book the whole religion is based on indicates the explicit equality of the sexes.

The basis of Orientalism can be represented by three meanings combined or in singularity: 1) academic tradition or field; 2) a worldview representation and “style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the

‘‘the Orient’ and the ‘the Occident’’; 3) as a powerful political instrument of domination (Said 2-3), When using the basis of Orientalism, the cause of the negative portrayal of Muslims is explained as the creation of need for the Westerner to be needed by the people represented as Oriental. The representation in media presents Muslims as violent, full of rage, irrational, scary, barbaric, backward, inferior to the West, and helpless which elicits the need for the West to be wanted in order to ‘‘save’’ the Muslims. When Muslim women are represented as those who love their religion despite the flaws, those who love their husbands and want to be devoted wives, and those who have their freedoms at their fingertips, Western people do not know how to react because they do not feel needed or fill the space of being a hero or savior (Abu-Lughod 783). Within the context of Islam, this would mean saving Muslim women from Islam. The idea of saving is refuted by Abu-Lughod and is problematic because Muslim women do not need saving from Islam but rather the oppressive cultural practices that occur around them. Islam gave women rights within its own texts, the Quran. The culture within different nations ruled by patriarchy and misrepresentation of Muslim in mass media are what drive the negative views regarding Muslim women. Abu-Lughod explains the patronizing attitude felt by Westerners under the guise of saving the women: ‘‘Saving other women depend[s] on and reinforce[s] a sense of superiority by the westerners, a form of arrogance that deserves to be challenged’’ (789). The patronizing Westerner leads to the acceptance of representations of the Orient that are degrading or illustrates oppressive attitudes. The superior attitude allows for the continuation of reinforcement of the Orient needing saving and the West is the only ones to do so.



The importance of learning about the past rights of women and the contributions of Islam throughout history and the lasting effects of the influence allows for an alternate view of Islam. Learning about the past allows people of the present to create accurate opinions about Muslims as they learn the lack of oppression in the religion itself. Knowing how Spain had survived under Islamic rule, realizing that Islamic laws are not constricting allows for the population of Spain to be critical of representations of Muslims and realize that Muslims are not evil. Spain proves to be a Western nation that rejects anti-Islamic sentiments due to their long lasting relationship with Islamic influence. The movement towards different representations of Islam would indicate the reversing of the stigma against Muslims. Normalized representations would start with media improvements, but also interactions, and changing the lack of education on what Islam is and what it teaches are all very important in changing the conversation about Islam.

Orientalism has led to misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims within the mass media, and the effects have been detrimental leading to a need to cease the negative promotion of Muslims. The continued use of negative portrayal of Muslims and Islam “generates and sustains negative public images of Islam and Muslims in the world today,” explains Fazal Rahim Khan in his paper “Global Media Image of Islam and Muslims and the Problematics of a Response Strategy” (Khan, et. al, 5). The perpetual antipathetic attitude leads to other phenomena that run rampant throughout the Western world. The misrepresentation of Islam has already influenced the “spread of *Islamophobia* in the West” (Khan et.al, 6). Islamophobia is not only the cynical media

representation, but is a result of the lack of education regarding the religions and lack of understanding among peoples.

The fear of the “other” is what drives ignorance and arrogance within a nation, thus leading to hate towards those of different categories. Another fear is that unchecked media packaging “may eventuate into some kind of clash of civilizations with horrendous consequences for human civilization on the planet (Ahrari et al. 5). The need to cease the usage of only violent, hate filled media representation of Muslims will alleviate the problem. The pairing Muslims with humanitarian work, participating in layman jobs, and representing Muslims in television/movies accurately or in ways that create a connection with the Western viewers without having the Westerners as saviors. The alternative is to create “ message system(s) will need to be created carrying positive construction of Islams and Muslims through the strategies of *attention*, *emphasis*, *tendency*, and *structure*” (Khan et al. 16). Overall the idea of attention would generate programs that carry aspects of Islam and Muslims. Emphasis is the strategy of utilizing themes, values, and topics about Islam as the focal points of the TV programs, in settings that can be perceived as the viewer’s own. Creating situations where the overlapping themes of Islam and daily Western life allows for sympathy and compassion because there is no sense of otherness when viewing the situations play out on television. The strategy of tendency is the “directionality of the theme or value being emphasized,” basically the promotion of positivity regarding the values of Islam and Muslims (Khan et al. 16). Then the idea of positive representation released on global networks leads to the use of the production and

distribution as a “cultural arm of Islam, diffusing Islamic values into global public sphere” that leads to a better outlook on the religion itself (Khan et al. 17).

#### *D. Arab Influence Within Spain*

As the mingling of Spanish and Arab cultures persisted during the Moorish rule, the Spaniards or occupants of the Iberian Peninsula adopted traditions of the Arabs that conquered them. The intentions of the Muslims to expand towards Europe via France was blocked in Poitiers in 732, which explains the lack of cultural influence of the Arabs in the Northeast part of Spain, according to Gustavo F. Balbuena. Language is the lasting change that has persisted since the reign. The Muslims introduced cultural innovations to the Iberian Peninsula. In regards to sciences and education the following terms were introduced: alchemy, algebra, the game chess, the use of Arabic numerals, the number zero, and Aristotelian philosophy (Balbuena). In addition, Spanish music was influenced by Muslims.. The guitar and flamenco are two musically centered creations. Spanish cooking was introduced to spices from Northern Africa. Even though the Muslims are considered invaders, the government during Islamic rule preserved ancient documents and translated them into common languages or from one language to the next to further distribute the knowledge. These translation schools , scholars from Islamic, Christian and Jewish origin worked together in peace. These preservations led to a lot of different excavations and texts that help with understanding the past. The resurgence of philosophy dictated by Aristotle is important because it was dying out at the time. Arabs prided themselves in the restoration of knowledge regardless of where the knowledge was from

or led to. Influence from the Arabs also led to changes in music, food, and other aspects of culture. But the longest lasting influence was the influence of the Arabic language on the Spanish language.

*E. Arab Influence on Spain: Confines of Language, Politics and Social Construct*

The year 711 is when Spain had its first contact with Arabs who had crossed the Gibraltar strait and arrived at the Iberian Peninsula. Muslim's advance was blocked in 723, hence, Northern Spain lacks the influence of Arabic. Catalan, noticeably, has very little influence from Arabic. The Spanish language, Castellano, has 4,000 words of Arabic origin (Balbuena). Arabic words that influenced Spanish are words that have Arabic origin and Latin origin. The roots of the words varied as the Byzantine introduced words into the region and the same thing occurred when the Arabs were introduced to the region. For example: aceituna and oliva, alacrán and escorpión (Balbuena).

Arab influence on places via naming, for example Al-Andalucia, the southern part of Spain. Islamic architecture also shaped Spain beautifully. The Maghrebian culture brought forth the Mosque of Córdoba, Granada's Alhambra and Seville's Giralda. Keeping the names even after the Moors were expelled as a decision that allowed for the highlight of the continuous influence that was bestowed. The lasting evidence of cultural mixing in Spain from the 8th century leads to the positive effect of Arabic influence on Spanish. The lasting evidence of this cultural mixing is indicated by the lasting usage of the words from the time period.

*F. Arabic Influence on Spanish:*

As the Iberian Peninsula was taken over by the Moors, people settled into the country. The multilingual era of Spain began once more with the addition of Arabic. Al-Andalus (Andalucía) is the area where Arabic began its influence. The heavy borrowings from the Arabic language was due to the bilingual nature of the land as Moors and Spaniards interacted on different levels: military, civil, and commercial. Although they maintained their religion, Roberto Marín-Guzmán, in the paper “Ethnic Groups and Social Classes in Muslim Spain,” indicates that Christian Spaniards were “arabized,” learning the arabic language, literature, and culture (Marín-Guzmán 48). The influence the languages results from the maintenance of the various types of culture of the people that lived in Spain during this period. The influence of the cultures intertwined as interactions increased.

Arabic influence trumped the other ethnic divisions due to the power the Arabs held within the Moorish rule. Ralph Penny, author of *History of the Spanish Language*, provides examples of the adoption of Arabic words and pronunciation into Spanish. He identifies that two main ideas drove the influence of Arabic. The first being “the need for the names applicable to the many new concepts which reached Castile from Al-Andalus” and the prestige of Arabic during these times (266). The first concept is responsible for the additions to the Spanish vocabulary while the second deals with the replacement of Spanish words with Arabic ones. The adoption of words from Arabic words stems for the need to understand the Muslim dominated government and the need to “blend in” and be able to comprehend the ruling Empire. The judicial system, organization, and ideology of

the state all reflected the ideals of the Islamic rule as well as Islam (Marín-Guzmán). The social system of Spain under the Islamic rule grouped everyone in either the higher class or the lower class; ruling class versus common class (Marín-Guzmán 52). The clumping of the vastly different ethnic groups into these two groups forced the language among the people to change so that a standard for communication was then established.

Penny identifies different aspects of culture that added Arabic to Spanish, while providing ample examples of each aspect. As the Arabs took control of Spain, the need to understand basic war terms rose. The understanding of these terms would allow for comprehension as the two peoples combined to defend other invaders after the Arabs settled in. Moorish weapons and tactical terms were adopted by Spaniards. Words of weaponry included *adarga* (shield), *alfanje* (scimitar), and *alforjas* (saddlebag), while positions, such as, *rehén* (hostage), *almirante* (admiral), and *zaga* (rearguard) were added to the Spanish vocabulary. Understanding terms such as the aforementioned ones, allowed Spaniards to be involved in the defense of their own lands even if the Arabs had taken control of the land by that time.

After the settlement of the Moors in Spain, the people of both cultures merged. With this merging, the need for common understanding rose as these people interacted on a daily basis and merchants brought forth items that were needed by all and may have been new to the surrounding people. Commonly used words were added such as *alcalde* (mayor) and *aldea* (village), which had to be understood as Spaniards and Arabs interacted (Penny 266). Allowing conversation leads to a humanization of each group to one another, which then allows for a harmonious living rather than continuous fighting.

The introduction of the Moors brought forth a new demographic of people who brought different marketable products and a new clientele to sell to. The demand for common understanding arose. Commercial usage included the words *aduana* (customs) and *ahorrar* (save money) (267). The words are rooted in Arabic and Spanish, creating a common vocabulary that all people could use during daily interactions.

The obvious pattern with a lot of the examples given is that the words start with al-. This is indicative of the Arabic language and style of speaking as the al- sound is used as the definite article the in the Arabic language. In Spanish, el/la are added in front of the words to define the gender of the word. In Arabic, the gender of a word is determined by the al- sound added as a gender neutral “the” to nouns within the Arabic context. Penny continues to as he describes the decline of Arabic culture to have allowed for the retroactive replacement of the Arabic words that took over for words derived from Latin/Greek/Occitan words.

The introduction of the different words was a result of the cultural mixings of the Spaniards and Moorish people. The interactions of the two types of people brought out the need for words that were not needed previously or were changed to adjust to the change in language due to the introduction of Arabic within the area. The usage of Arabic in the community brought forth the need to also adjust a common language that would fit both communities and bring forth understanding amongst the two groups. The two groups have a need for understanding as trade and commerce took place among the groups. Necessity in understanding one another drove the usage of common words that drove the vocabulary change. When merchants encountered people from the other groups; the need

becomes greater to be familiar with words of the other culture in order to communicate efficiently. By continuing the usage of the Islamically influenced artifacts and language, Spain has proved to be immune to Islamophobia. The persistency of the Islamic influence from the 8th century to the present signifies the acceptance of the culture.

### *Conclusion*

With the persistent oppressive portrayal of Muslims and Islam within the world context, focusing on the historical aspects of Islamic rules helps alleviate the antipathic opinions. The historical prosperity leads to the acknowledgement that the contemporary representations are incorrect or do not constitute a true or fair account of Islam. Using the past to educate the present allows for the acceptance of people across the world. Mass media paints the Muslims of the world as barbaric, but in reality Muslims were granting rights to marginalized populations long before anyone else. Islamic influence on laws concerning women, culture, and language all lend to the altered view of Muslims as being normal citizens of the world. Initiatives by Muslims can lead to positive views or more interaction with Muslims. The initiative on Butler's campus, "Ask A Muslim," was started in 2014, by Uzzama, to bring forth awareness to the Muslim students on campus. It was in the midst of presidential campaigns and marginalizing media against Muslims. The initiative on campus brought Muslim students together to handout donuts on campus to create conversation and alleviate concern of fellow students. With the work like this, the misconstrued views of Muslims can be changed by initiatives that bring Muslims and



others together for conversation and interaction. The normalization of Muslims occurs through these initiatives.

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## Annotated Bibliography

Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others." *Ethics Forum: September 11 and Ethnographic Responsibility*, vol. 103, no. 3, 2002, pp. 783-790.

Using the theory of "Orientalism" by Edward Said, Abu-Lughod explains the need for Western women to feel needed by the "oppressed" Eastern women. Abu-Lughod explains that saving someone implies that one is saving someone from something and that one is saving her to something (788). Within the context of Islam, this would mean saving Muslim women from Islam. The idea of saving is supported by Abu-Lughod and is problematic because Muslim women do not need saving from Islam but rather the oppressive cultural practices that occur around them. Islam gave women rights long before the Roman/Christian counterparts. The culture within different nations ruled by patriarchy and misrepresentation of Muslim in mass media are what drive the negative views regarding Muslim women. Abu-Lughod continues on to explain the patronizing attitude felt by Westerners under the guise of saving the women: "Saving other women depend[s] on and reinforces] a sense of superiority by the westerners, a form of arrogance that deserves to be challenged" (789).

By creating another narrative, the West pushes their privilege and power by an outside view of the "oppressed" women, when in reality the West and East live in the same world. The differences in both create the conglomeration of the world that furthers ideas, advances, and learning opportunities. Cohesion and understanding around the world proves to be the uniting factor of the world. Abu-Lughod enforces the idea that the West must ask what contributions it has made to the world's conditions that resulted in the treatment of women. She illustrates the action in the world's affairs should be based "in the spirit of support" rather than with the goal of saving the others (789).

In the context of Islam, this saving of brown women is what drives mass media of the Western world to continue to paint Muslim women as oppressed and in of liberation. It seems to be the only theme that resonates with the population of West. Abu-Lughod argues that there is a "need to develop, instead, a serious appreciation of differences among women in the world- as products of different histories, expressions of different circumstances, and manifestations of differently structured desires" (783). She continues in order to bring forth the idea that the seeking to "save" others implies a superiority and violates the need for the West to feel needed.

This author became imperative to my paper as a way to illustrate the point that Muslim women do not need saving but rather understanding in their own cultural contexts and backgrounds. Abu-Lughod proves to be the backbone of my argument that Muslim women are not oppressed, but are represented as such in media in order to maintain and support a specific agenda of the West.

Aral, Berdal. "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire." *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2004, pp. 454–482.

Aral discussed the idea of human rights under the Ottoman Empire, which has Islamic background when ruling. It is the largest Muslim empire to conquer the world. The coverage of human rights, individuality, usage of Shari'ah law, and the emphasis on justice all lead to the argument that Ottomans supported the prioritization of life, property, fair trial, and social protections and rights of women.

This work was background information on human rights within the context of Islam. The introduction of the topic is necessary when discussing women's rights within the context of Islam. The perversion of human and women's rights under Islam within the context of Western media, provides a biased portrait that must be countered.

Balbuena, Gustavo F. "Arab Influences in Spain." *donQuijote*. Ideal Education Group, 1989-2017.

This webpage illustrates the Arab influences in Spain in multiple facets. Balbuena explores the history, going back to the invasion of Moors in 711 and then connects why Arabic influence is not negative to the region of Spain. He also goes into specific linguistics that are used as support in my paper.

This proved to an extremely reliable source that is backed by many other organizations. The evidence and examples provided helped a lot of my paper. The connection of Arabic influence is not negative and has lasted a long time to the influence of Islamic laws for women allowed for my paper to be created.

Barlow, Rebecca, and Shahram Akbarzadeh. "Women's Rights in the Muslim World: Reform or Reconstruction?" *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 8, 2006, pp. 1481–1494.

The most important aspect of this work is the idea that "muslim feminists should not simply adopt the dominant discourse on human rights. Rather, Muslims must find a 'homeomorphic equivalent' of human rights in their own cultural and religious traditions" (1492). And that the typical debate of Muslim women's involvement in Islam is linked to political standings: "The debate on the role of women within Islam is both closely linked to the debate on Islam and the state, and bound-up in the Arab -Islamic search for an authentic identity, political independence and economic self-reliance" (1492).

Her paper focused mostly on the writings of a Moroccan feminist, Fatima Mernissi, and tying together the concept of feminism and Islam together. Which is a valid discussion topic, but for the focal point of my paper was irrelevant.

Coope, J. A. "An Etiquette for Women: Women's Experience of Islam in Muslim Spain." *Essays in Medieval Studies*, vol. 29 no. 1, 2013, pp. 75-83. *Project MUSE*.

Cooper discusses the actual implementation of the laws in Spain under Moorish rule. The first fault is the lack of enforcement of Islamic laws themselves, which allowed for women to have more freedoms than the laws dictated: "Enforcement of restriction for women was equally spotty" (78). She continues to bring forth substantial examples of how women lived under Moorish rule in Spain. Her examples are what drive my argument that women had more freedoms than under Roman rule. She uses the basis of Islamic law, Shari'ah, to explain that under Moorish rule women were more free: "The fact that men regularly signed some of their privileges suggests that Muslim women in al-Andalus had powers in marriage that went beyond those that Shari'ah specified" (79).

This work allowed me to give direct examples of Shari'ah law and Moorish laws that Spaniards lived under. This created the opportunity to compare the differences among the Islamic versus Christian rules of Spain.

Dawson, Daniel. "Women under the Law in Islamic Spain, 700s-1492". Armstrong Undergraduate: Journal of History. Armstrong University; 2017.

This website had the literal comparison of Muslim and Roman laws that dictated life in Spain; the main intent of the paper. The article described different laws under the Moorish rule and Roman rule, which then was followed by explanations of why Islam in Al-Andalus was better for the overall quality of life for women. Islamic law can be "summarized for our purposes as the legal system derived from the Muslim holy texts, the *Quran* and *Hadiths*, interpreted by Islamic scholars and judges and used as the primary law code in areas under Muslim rule" (Dawson). The rights of women in particular were contingent on their place within society on several levels including religious, economic and marital status. However, it should be noted that the law in practice was more favorable towards women than it was on the books and women of different religious and social groups experienced different treatments under the law system. In reality, Muslim women in Al-Andalus were able to assert themselves in multiple areas, including marriage and family law, inheritance and property rights, as well as education, religious spaces and employment. Islamic law in Al-Andalus, therefore, was essentially no better or worse for women than contemporary law codes, and it simply operated differently in its granting and withholding of rights and privileges.

Dawson explained the laws of the Roman and compared them to Islamic laws: “Roman laws regarding inheritance were often restrictive towards women, but were not always followed exactly when put into practice.[22] Inheritance, then, was comparable to Islamic practices as it was permitted, if restricted, but allowed for greater opportunities in practice than on paper” (Dawson). He was clear to point out the limitations women endured both rules as well.

This webpage illustrated a main aspect of my paper when I needed to compare Roman/Christian laws to Islamic laws. This article proved to be extremely imperative when it come to the understanding of the two. This also allowed me to explain the problem with the modern perception of Islamic laws, In reality, Islamic laws allow women rights while cultural/patriarchal societies limit women. This cultural rule is what is oppressive rather than the religion itself.

Esposito, John L. “Women’s Rights in Islam.” *Islamic Studies*, vol. 14, no. 2, 1975, pp. 99–114.

This work covers women’s rights within the context of Islam. This is the literal epitome of what I was looking for when searching for sources. The examples of different laws that are statead in the quran help provide evidence that Islam is not an oppressive religions: “The quran affirmed her [women’s] full legal capacity to contract marriage and receive the dower (*mahr*)” (103). The idea of dowry illustrates the capacity of a woman’s rights within Islam. “Quran gives rights of inheritance to wives, daughters, sisters, and grandmothers of the deceased, all of whom had previously had no rights of succession at all” (104).

He also discusses the change that Islam brought to the social structure of the Arab world, which then translated to other Islamic societies: “Islam brought a shift in the basis of the social foundation- from blood kinship to fellowship of the community (*umma*) of believers, from loyalty to the tribe to that of the extended family as its basic unit, and a strong family meant recognition not only of male rights but of female rights as well” (102).

Esposito also discusses pre-Islamic Arabia and compares it to the world under the Islamic world: In Pre-Islamic Arabia, as in many civilizations, inheritance passed only to mature male relatives upon whom the women were totally dependent for their survival” (104). He furthers his argument by indicating that the Quran declared women’s rights socially, monetarily, as well as the religious equality associated. Quran declared woman’s religious equality with men both as regards their obligation to pray and lead virtuous lives and their equality of rewards and punishments at the final judgement: “If any do deeds of righteousness,- be they male or female - and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them. (Quran: IV, 124)” (104).

This work was extremely helpful in understanding and providing examples within the religion that explicitly detail women's rights. This helped my argument that women under Moorish rule benefited from the Islamic background of the rule.

Khan, Fazal Rahim, et al. "Global Media Image of Islam and Muslims and the Problematics of a Response Strategy." *Islamic Studies*, vol. 51, no. 1, 2012, pp. 5–25.

Khan writes of the strategies to combat problematic media representation of Islam and Muslims. His writing directly indicates the problems with misrepresentation of Muslims in media and various ways to counter the problematic media. His solutions are explored in my paper as possible ways to improve the general outlook of Muslims within the world: message system(s) will need to be created carrying positive construction of Islams and Muslims through the strategies of *attention, emphasis, tendency, and structure*" (Khan et. al, 16). It served as a direct source for solutions that needed providing.

Marín-Guzmán, Roberto. "Ethnic Groups and Social Classes in Muslim Spain." *Islamic Studies*, vol. 30, no. ½, 1991, pp. 37-66.

Marín-Guzmán discusses the spread of Islam during the 7th century, alluding to the idea that Arab Muslims were not strong in their administrative skills: lack of knowledge of agricultural techniques, industry and science lagged behind those of conquered people. Meaning they let the conquered people to keep their institutions, knowledge, experiences and skills to build a powerful empire (40). The author also discusses the differences among Christians versus Arab rules in Spain, alongside the explanation as to how Christian cultures triumphed in within the caliphate. He illustrates the different social classes throughout the paper: Social classes divided via religions, ethnicity, lineage, wealth patronage, connections, education, and talent and abilities (52).

I used this source for examples regarding different women's social statuses. It was also useful for the comparative work of Islamic and Christian rules within the context of Spain.

Mayer, Ann Elizabeth. "Women's Human Rights and the Islamic Tradition." *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics*, vol. 17, 1997, pp. 311–317.

Mayer discusses women's role in the Prophet's time period: "Muslim women in the Prophet's day fought alongside men in battles for the survival of the new religion.

The Prophet seemed comfortable interacting with women who were playing prominent roles in religious and community life” (315). She brings forth this historical example in order to refute claims that Muslim women are to abide the men and stay at home. Women are to be interacted with and fight alongside when needed. The Prophet did not see a need to limit women, so why do contemporary rulers in patriarchal cultures deem it valid to limit women.

She also includes a portion where she discusses the importance of women and their fight to be Muslim: “The majority of Muslim women seem unready to give up on their religion, and most feminists prefer to continue fighting to end the stranglehold of patriarchy over Islam. In their struggle they are often joined by Muslim men, who may find it equally essential for the future of Islam that the principle of full equality for women be adopted and who may share the view that Islam and human rights can be mutually reinforcing” (313).

Her work allowed for me to come up with the basis of my conclusion and need for equality of muslim in Islam. I believe that Islam protects the equality of women while Christian laws limit women a lot more. In practice, Islamic laws were not enforced on women, as the Christian laws were. Overall, Muslim women demand equality and are not oppressed by their nations.

Penny, Ralph. *A History of the Spanish Language*. 2nd ed., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Penny explores the influence of Arabic on Spanish in his book, “A History of the Spanish Language.” He begins with the explanation of where the Moorish rule took place, Andalucia. He brings forth specific vocabulary that has been influenced by Arabic and puts into perspective the lasting effectiveness of Arabic on Spanish.

This source provided the evidence needed to illustrate the lasting effects on Arabic influence within Spain. With this understanding, people can learn to not undermine the positive influence Islam can have in a country. Rather than dismissing all Muslims under the umbrella of terror, by looking at historical evidence, people can learn to appreciate the positive influences Islam has.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. Vintage Books: New York, 1978.

This book explains the theory of “Orientalism.” Said explains Orientalism by dividing it into three characteristics: 1) an academic tradition or field; 2) a worldview, representation, and “style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident"”; and 3) as a powerful political instrument of domination (Said, 2-3) . He then furthers the definition



by tying in the Western writings and images: Orientalism is the idea that the western writings about the orient carries perceptions based on fictional western images of the Orient (Said, 2-3). The history of area is perverted via the fictional representation that infiltrated the media through misguided tales of oppression and abuse. Said argued that, even though representation is needed within societies, the halt of repressive, authoritative representations is needed. The negative portrayal does not allow for those represented to defend themselves against the representation. The idea of “other” is investigated as a causing factor for creating the rift in understanding between the West and Orient. The idea of other is the creation of a perspective that is completely opposite of the West, and thus provokes the desire to help the Orient. The depiction of the Orient as irrational, psychologically weak, immasculine when compared to the West (Said, 65-67). The dual nature of the representation, especially the highlighting weak vs strong natures, drives the need for Westerners to want to help the Orient and creates the need to represent the Orient in a different manner altogether. The binary presentation reinforces the weak-Orient and strong-Western ideas, thus promoting the stereotypes of the Orient that occur in literature, movies, and fictitious historical texts.

This became the basis of my explanation for why media representation around the world presents Islam/Muslims in a negative perspective. The theory of Orientalism provides the answer to a lot of the main concern in my paper as to why Muslims are represented in such negative manner in the West. The theory also serves to answer the need for the West to save Muslim women in any/every context.

Shohat, Ella and Stam, Robert. “Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the media.” Routledge, London. 1994.

Ella Shohat and Robert Stan focus on bringing to center the eurocentric nature of media and representation of Muslims. They clarify the historical accounts from women that testify that women had access to other women and knowledge: “Historical accounts by Middle Eastern women testify to a system that allowed women access to other women, providing a shelter for the exchange of ideas and information safe from the eyes and ears of men” (Shohat and Stam, 163). The focal point of the paper revolves around harems, but also include ideas regarding orientalism and the discourse that alludes to Muslim women being oppressed. The explanation of oriental discourse allows for the understanding of where the perverted representation of Muslims in media: “In orientalist discourse, material abundance, product of imperial enterprises, functions as part of the generic utopia of the musical, constituting itself as a projected (masculinist) fulfillment of what is desired and absent within socio-political status quo” (Shohat and Stam, 161). There is also an indication of what Westerners desire when it comes to literature about the Orient: Tales from others are translated to “satisfy the European taste for passionately

violent orient” (Shohat and Stam, 163) and Character in a film by Ben Lyazid, Nadia, “gradually abandons the idea of the West as a site for her liberation, and sees Arab/Muslim society as a possible space for fulfillment” (Shohat and Stam, 165). They also indicate the dichotomy among the European and Muslim societies: The film, *Bab Ilisma Maftouh (A door to the sky, 1989)*, “favours the rhythms of contemplation and spirituality” rather than illustrating the Europe as a place of liberation and Arab/Muslim society as oppressing (165).

This work allowed for the understanding of the view taken by Westerners in regards to representation and understanding the Orient. Multiple examples are laid out for use and comprehending the points made in the work itself.

Stearns, Peter N. “The Spread of Islam.” *Cultures in Motion: Mapping Key Contacts and Their Imprints in World History*, Yale University Press, 2001, pp. 46–55.

Stearns writes about the influence of Islam as it spread across Spain and Portugal. He writes of the different impacts of Arabic influence on Spain as well as the attitude of Spain under Muslim rulers (vice versa): “But the Muslim period in Spain and Portugal had vital consequences. Muslim rulers developed an elaborate political and cultural framework while largely tolerating Christian subjects. A number of Spaniards converted under the influence of conquest and Muslim success. Muslim artistic styles long influenced Spanish architecture and decoration, even after Islam itself had been pushed out. Music, including the guitar, an Arab instrument, merged traditions as well—and from Spain the new styles would later spread to the Americas. Centers of learning, like Toledo, drew scholars from all over Europe, eager to take advantage of Muslim and Jewish science and philosophy; the result helped spur change and development in European intellectual life” (49).

The importance of this work was to illustrate the different avenues in which Islam/ Arabs etc influenced Spain. These long lasting influences are still today, but very few attribute these changes to Muslim. The other important point is to understand that Islamic/Arabic influence is not a terrible occurrence. Islam is not destructive but can provide different avenues of influence that can lead to positivity.