

The Franco North African Pilgrims after WWII: The Hajj through the Eyes of a Spanish Colonial Officer (1949)

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Introduction

In this chapter I will analyse a report written by a Spanish colonial officer who described a Hajj trip by air from Morocco, when he was accompanying and supervising a group of Moroccan notables in 1949. The document, narrated in the first person, is different from other colonial sources of the same period, which were more official and technical. The flight took three days after its departure from Tétouan by stopping at Nador, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, Benghazi, Alexandria, Luxor, and finally Jeddah. By giving a particular and informal perspective, the officer gathered the impressions of the pilgrims, mainly Tétouani notables, their contacts with local populations at the stops on the journey, his own feelings of disorientation in Jeddah, and many other problems related to passports and borders. The Spanish officer's report shows how he and Moroccan notables had encountered similar problems, especially that the Moroccan delegation could not communicate well in the Mashriq Arabic dialects, and that they discovered other customs and traditions that were not common in the Maghrib. By analysing the report, we situate the question of the Hajj in the political realms of Franco's Spain, the Spanish colonial views of the Hajj, as well as this colonial officer's perceptions of the social agency of the Moroccan notables during their religious rituals of the Hajj after WWII.

Spanish Policy towards Islam and the Hajj

This Hajj report should be seen within the colonial context of the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco (1912–1956). It was, however, written at the end of the period of Spanish colonisation, when colonial authorities were concerned about the pressure of Moroccan nationalism, even if an important group of these nationalists participated in the Protectorate's political structures and benefited from long-term clientelism with the Spaniards.

In the beginning, the Spanish policy encountered a phase of resistance in many tribal areas between 1909 and 1927, combined with a progressive clientelism between the Spaniards and certain Moroccan dignitaries. This was followed by the administrative control of the tribes from 1927 onwards by means of a system of indirect rule, where the Spanish promoted the dignitaries who were capable of maintaining the colonial status quo, even if they had earlier fought against Spain. The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) had great impact on the Protectorate, especially after the recruitment of colonial troops and the control of the colonial administration by the Franco regime. Throughout the 1930s onwards tension increased between traditional dignitaries and urban nationalists, who were followers of an Islamic reformist policy in the country.¹

Spanish policy regarding Islam was not immune to the political and ideological context of the time. In the 1920s, in its policy guidelines for colonial officers the Delegation of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) highlighted the need for respect towards Islam, provided that this respect did not contradict the principal objectives of political domination on the country. In this regard, Spanish Africanism that appealed to Spain's Islamic past was stressed. As was stated in the manuals written for colonial officers, the official strategy indicated a formal respect of Islam, combined with the aim of controlling the chiefs of the Sufi brotherhoods in order to avoid potential dangers.²

Once local resistance was defeated in 1927, the DIA promoted the reconstruction of religious buildings and supported certain rituals that reinforced the submission of the local political and religious authorities or which legitimised the power of the new colonial *makhzan*.³ In accordance with this propaganda policy, the Spanish administration restored buildings, promoted rituals and maintained the formal independence of the *ḥabūs* (*waqf*) properties. Yet during the Spanish Civil War this political propaganda concerning religion was promoted in order to fight the Republicans, presenting them as the main

1 M^a Dolores Aranda, "Evolución del nacionalismo marroquí en los años treinta," *Awraq* XVII (1996): 167–188.

2 Manuel Nido y Torres, *Marruecos. Apuntes para el oficial de Intervención y de Tropas Coloniales* (Tetuán: Editorial Hispano-Africana, 1925), 111. Eduardo Maldonado Vázquez, *Cofradías religiosas en Marruecos*, Curso de Perfeccionamiento de Oficiales del Servicio de Intervención (Tetuán: Alta Comisaría de la República Española en Marruecos, Inspección de Intervención y Fuerzas Jalifianas, 1932).

3 Josep Lluís Mateo Dieste, *La "hermandad" hispano-marroquí. Política y religión bajo el Protectorado español en Marruecos (1912–1956)* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2003), 231–247.

enemies of Islam.⁴ Apart from the distribution of sheep for ritual slaughtering during the annual Feast of Sacrifice, the DIA was definitely interested in the promotion of the Hajj to Mecca because of its international and political impact on the Muslim world.⁵ The Spanish policy was focused on facilitating transport, financing some flight tickets, and supervising Moroccan delegations during the Hajj trips. This strategy was not implemented in an organised manner until the Civil War years, when the funding of the Hajj was represented as a reward for the participation of Muslim troops in the war. The purpose of the organised pilgrimage journeys in the years 1937, 1938 and 1939 was to politically exploit “all those aspects that primarily affect the spirit and feelings of this people.”⁶ In order to implement this policy, the DIA organised pilgrimage journey and offered various subsidies for pilgrims. Propaganda became a major challenge, given that until that moment French shipping companies monopolised the transport of pilgrims. Given the context of Civil War, the High Commissioner sought ultimately to organise Hajj trips for Moroccans that were controlled by Spaniards in order to prevent the exposure of pilgrims to French propaganda.⁷

In November 1936 Colonel Juan Luis Beigbeder y Atienza (1888–1957) proposed for the Board of Burgos⁸ to organise a pilgrimage trip, which was approved to be arranged on the ship *Domine*.⁹ At the beginning of 1937, the DIA exploited the Hajj in Spanish propaganda by sending a ship from Ceuta which left for Mecca on January 29 with 298 pilgrims on-board. On this ship other pilgrims had joined at the stops of Melilla, Tripoli and Benghazi. Later, several pilgrimages were organised by the High Commissioner. For example, on January 14, 1938, the Spanish ship *Marqués de Comillas* sailed for Mecca carrying 331 pilgrims from Ceuta, 128 pilgrims from Melilla, 235 pilgrims from Tripoli

4 M^a Rosa de Madariaga, “The Intervention of Moroccan Troops in the Spanish Civil War: A Reconsideration,” *European History Quarterly* 22 (1992): 67–97; Ali Al Tuma, “The Participation of Moorish Troops in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). Military value, motivations and religious aspects,” *War & Society* 30 (2) (2011): 91–107.

5 Mercè Solà i Gussinyer, “L’organització del pelegrinatge a la Meca per Franco durant la Guerra Civil,” *L’Avenç* 256 (2001): 56–61.

6 Peregrinación a la Meca, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas (DAI), Tétouan, August 13, 1946 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, Archivo General de la Administración, Alcalá de Henares, AGA).

7 Letter from the DIA to the Interventor Regional, Peregrinación a la Meca. Circular, Tétouan, November 16, 1939 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

8 Letter from colonel Juan Beigbeder to the president of the Junta Técnica del Estado de Burgos, Tétouan, December 6, 1936 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

9 Peregrinación a la Meca, DAI, Tétouan, August 11, 1936, 1 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

and 102 pilgrims from Benghazi. In the next year (8 January 1939), the steamer *Marqués de Comillas* headed for Mecca with a total of 800 pilgrims.¹⁰

Due to World War II the Spanish government did not organise any Hajj trips between 1940 and 1943. After making the needed preparations for the Hajj in 1940, the trip was cancelled, which sparked a wave of rumours stating that after the Civil War, Spain would no longer finance the travel to Mecca, like the French did after WWI.¹¹ In order to lessen the negative effects on Spanish policy, the DIA ascribed the travel suspension on the pilgrimage ships to the French and British interference, which was not completely true.¹²

The Spanish sponsorship of the Hajj revealed the nature of colonial politics of this time. In fact, such Hajj expeditions were monitored by an *interventor* (colonial officer) who had to write a report about the trip to be submitted to the government after their return. The processing of ticket itineraries was also carried out by the *Intervenciones* offices. For the pilgrimage trips of 1937 to 1939, grants were awarded to notables but also to soldiers from lower social classes. In 1939 the High Commissioner donated 388,760 pesetas for 128 ticket itineraries and travel grants paid in pounds sterling for travel expenses.¹³ The distribution of such grants was new “colonial capital” that was negotiated between the *interventores* and their notable clients. Each *Intervención* and Regular forces group proposed lists of “loyal Moroccans, without recourses or with merits of war.” In 1938, 71 grants were awarded as based on official requests that were submitted to the High Commissioner, the DIA, the Sahara and Ifni, as well as different military barracks.¹⁴

The Moroccan chiefs selected for the Hajj became an issue with political meaning in the Spanish colonial discourse. The trip committee had to include a “religious leader, a hakim, an imam, a *qadi*, two notaries and two muezzin.”¹⁵ They were accompanied by a Spanish *interventor*, a medical team and a security

10 Letter from the DIA to the captain of “Marqués de Comillas,” Tétouan, January 12, 1938 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

11 Letter from the Interventor Regional of Gomara to the Delegado de AI, December 16, 1939 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

12 Letter from the DIA to the Interventor Regional, Peregrinación a la Meca. Circular, Tétouan, November 16, 1939 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

13 “Estado demostrativo de las resultantes del viaje a la Meca de 1939,” Comandante Inspector del viaje a la Meca, DAI, Tétouan, September 15, 1939 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

14 Rapport to the Delegado de Asuntos Indígenas, Tétouan, November 1, 1939 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

15 “Gestiones a realizar para la organización de una peregrinación a la Mecca,” Delegado de Asuntos Indígenas, Tetuán, August 31, 1943 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

service (a *muqaddam* with ten *makhazni*—Moroccan police). In 1937, the religious leader was Aḥmad al-Rahūnī (1871–1953), a prominent Muslim scholar, historian and former Minister of Justice in the Spanish Zone of Morocco, and whose *riḥla* (travelogue) was later published in 1941 by The Franco Institute of Arabo-Spanish Research as part of Franco's propaganda in the Muslim world.¹⁶ In 1938, the Blue Sultan, Sīdī Muḥammad b. Muṣṭafā Mrabbi Rabbu (1879–1942), son of Sheikh Mā' al-'Aynayn,¹⁷ was chosen as a chief for the Hajj delegation financed by the Spanish authorities. Most of the delegates were chosen from the *makhzan*, including pashas, *mudīrs* and justice officials. Also loyal leaders (*qā'ids*) of tribes, such as Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī of Banī Waryāgal, were selected for his support in recruiting Moroccan troops during the Spanish Civil War. In 1939, the DIA recommended the Delegate of the Grand Vizier in the Eastern region, 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥajj Ṭayyib, as the hakim of the expedition, for being a prominent *moro amigo* (moor friend).¹⁸

In a period of nine years (1937–1946), several High Commissioners were nominated for the position; some supported the Hajj to Mecca while others discouraged its organisation. These changes of policy in the DIA regarding the Hajj illustrate the political anxieties among the Spanish authorities. In 1943 the Delegate of the DIA feared that the pilgrims would be exposed to “dangerous propaganda,” but at the same time he acknowledged that in spite of “these inconveniences, we have to satisfy the religious feeling of these Muslim people.”¹⁹ In fact, at that time the Franco regime had already adopted an international policy of rapprochement with the Arab world in order to counterbalance the isolation imposed on Spain by the Western countries.²⁰ The Spanish authorities justified this approach by using the idea of a particular brotherhood between Spain and the Arab world which was based on Spain's Muslim past.²¹

16 Ahmad al-Rhoni, *Al-Riḥla al-Makkiyya 1355–1356 h.* (Tetuán: Instituto General Franco de Estudios e Investigación Hispano-Árabe, 1941).

17 Julio Caro Baroja, *Estudios saharianos* (Madrid: Júcar, 1990), 330–332.

18 DIA. Sección política. 1939. Viaje a la Meca. Comisión oficial de este viaje, Tétouan, November 8, 1939 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

19 “Gestiones a realizar para la organización de una peregrinación a la Mecca,” Delegado de Asuntos Indígenas, Tétouan, August 31, 1943 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

20 Isabel González González, “La hermandad hispano-árabe en la política cultural del franquismo, 1936–1956,” *Anales de Historia Contemporánea* 23 (2007): 183–198. María Dolores Algora Weber, *Las relaciones hispano-árabes durante el régimen de Franco. La ruptura del aislamiento internacional (1946–1950)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1995).

21 Mateo Dieste, *La “hermandad,”* 223–230.



FIGURE 9.1 *"Peregrinos del Protectorado español en Marruecos a bordo del Marqués de Comillas" (1937 or 1938)*

TOMAS GARCÍA FIGUERAS, MARRUECOS. LA ACCIÓN DE ESPAÑA EN EL NORTE DE ÁFRICA (MADRID: EDICIONES FE, 1944) 272–273

Context of the 1949 Hajj Journey

After World War II, the DIA regained its interest in promoting the Hajj despite the changes in international political context. The main fears of the DIA were the pilgrims' exposure to new political ideologies and movements in the Mashriq, especially through their contacts with people like 'Abd al-Karīm al-Khaṭṭābī who was then a refugee in Egypt.

By 1945 the DIA had already considered any opposition to the Hajj as inappropriate. By 1946 the DIA became reluctant to continue its promotion of the Hajj, despite the advantages that could be gained by means of this propaganda for the Spanish policy. According to the DIA, the gradual expansion of a pan-Arab ideology in the Hajj region, as well as its high costs, all led the High Commissioner José Enrique Varela to discourage the organisation of the Hajj trips anymore.²² In that year, the French authorities disseminated leaflets about the Spanish inability to organise the Hajj as means of counterpropaganda in order to attract Moroccan pilgrims from the Spanish zone to Tangier and Casablanca.

22 Letter from the Alto Comisario to the Delegado of DIA, Tétouan, April 15, 1946 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

Some Spanish officers in the border regions, like the Kert, hesitated to undertake the right policy: losing prestige after closing the borders, or sending pilgrims to a “dangerous area.”²³

In these post-war years the international isolation of the Franco regime made the organisation of the Hajj more difficult.²⁴ Finally, the DIA did not recommend any Hajj trips organized by the IMA²⁵ for political reasons: “given the current exacerbation of Arabism and nationalism in that part of the world.”²⁶ However, later in 1947 the DIA tried to organise a trip, but it was finally suspended when the colonial authorities observed that several rumors were circulating in the Protectorate. As the Spanish feared that the pilgrims would come into contact with ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Khaṭṭābī in Cairo, three of his former fellow leaders in the Rif area were banned from undertaking the Hajj by the *qā’id* of Gueznaya in line with the policy of the Spanish authorities.²⁷ Another rumour was spread about this trip that Moroccan nationalists would burn the Spanish ship upon its arrival at Port Said. It was also said that having heard about these reports many working-class mothers began to discourage their sons from their travel on Hajj. Besides, the news about the spread of a cholera epidemic in Cairo in September 1947 was the impetus for the Spanish authorities to stop the trip.²⁸

In 1948 the reluctance of the Spanish authorities to organise the pilgrimage was even greater when compared to the years of the Civil War: “The virulence of the war in Palestine during the latter months pointed against the Pilgrimage to Mecca by the Muslims of our Protectorate zone.”²⁹ Therefore the Spanish authorities decided to arrange the 1949 pilgrimage by plane in order to reduce the number of pilgrims. Also in order to minimise the political impact of the Hajj on Moroccans, the authorities selected a specific group of distinguished elite pilgrims, who were known for their loyalty to the Spanish and non-involvement in any nationalist, anti-colonial movement.

23 Letter of the Delegado de AI, at Villa Nador, July 31, 1946 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

24 In fact, the Franco policy towards the Arab world was specially conformed by this international isolation. González González, “La hermandad.”

25 “I.M.A. Agencia de Prensa de Información del Mundo Árabe,” located in Madrid in 1945.

26 DAI, Asunto. Peregrinación a la Meca en el año 1946, Tétouan, May 28, 1946 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

27 Territorial del Kert, Villa Nador, August 13, 1947 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

28 DAI, Suspensión del viaje a la Meca, 1947 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

29 DAI, Tétouan, September 6, 1948.

Beneitez Cantero: Colonial Officer and Costumbrist

The 1949 Hajj trip was dispatched by the Spanish authorities under the leadership of Valentín Beneitez Cantero (d. 1975), a cavalry major of the Spanish army. He became *interventor de cabila* (or tribe officer) in the Spanish Protectorate, where he came into close contact with Moroccan rural life, especially in the Jebala area of North Western Morocco. He worked as an *interventor* in Banī ‘Arūs in western Jebala for years. Like other colonial officers, such as Emilio Blanco Izaga,³⁰ Beneitez Cantero wrote some ethnographic texts about Northern Morocco in spite of the lack of his anthropological training. In fact, colonial officers received a rather scarce education in sociology or linguistics and only in the last years of the Protectorate when the DIA created an Academy of *Interventores* in Tétouan.³¹ Beneitez Cantero was appointed as a teacher of this academy.³²

Just as many other officers of his time, Cantero supported the Franco coup d'état of 1936, when the political structures of the Protectorate were controlled by the military. Since the 1920s the *interventores* received the main mission of controlling tribal authorities, using techniques of indirect rule.³³ In this sense, the political role of Beneitez Cantero during the Hajj journey of 1949 was part of his activities as a supervisor of Moroccan notables.

During his stays in Jebala he gathered a rich amount of costumbrist information related to Moroccan local customs and manners, such as witchcraft, tattoos, rituals and other beliefs of superstition.³⁴ His view of Moroccans was dominated by paternalism and evolutionist notions, like many of his contem-

30 Vicente Moga Romero, *El Rif de Emilio Blanco Izaga: trayectoria militar, arquitectónica y etnográfica en el Protectorado de España en Marruecos* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2009).

31 The Academy was founded in 1946. José Luis Villanova, *Los interventores. La piedra angular del Protectorado español en Marruecos* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2006), 233.

32 See his conference, Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Supersticiones marroquíes y tatuajes en la zona,” Selección de conferencias y trabajos realizados por la Academia de Interventores durante el curso 1949–1950 (Tetuán, 1950).

33 Mateo Dieste, *La “hermandad,”* 103–138.

34 Abdelmajid Benjelloun, “L’identité jebliè et la sociologie coloniale espagnole,” in *Les Jbala. Espace et Pratiques*, ed. Groupe Pluridisciplinaire d’Étude sur les Jbala (Kénitra: Université Ibn Tafāil, 2001), 191–206; Alberto López Bargados, and Josep Lluís Mateo Dieste, “Parler au désert. Bilan de l’anthropologie du Maghreb en Espagne,” *Prologues. Revue maghrébine du livre* 32 (2005): 110–125; Pablo Gonzalez-Pola de la Granja, “La aportación militar a los estudios etnográficos,” in *Aproximación a la historia militar de España*, ed. A. Valdés (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2006), 1177–1189.

porary Spanish and French officers in both French and Spanish Morocco.³⁵ He wrote about Islam, agriculture, popular religion, food, songs and many other anthropological topics in Africanist journals, which were promoted by the Franco regime.³⁶ His main work, *Sociología marroquí (Moroccan Sociology)*,³⁷ won a prize of sociology in 1949, which was organized by the Alta Comisaría. In this book, we find a chapter devoted to religion and Islam. In this section he described the five pillars of Islam and under the Hajj he listed the conditions to perform the pilgrimage and its different rites: “Ihrám (...) Tauaf (...) Sái (...) El Uukuf fi Yebel Aarafa (...) Ed Dahhía (...) Et Tauaf del ifáda (...) Et Tauaf el uadaa.”³⁸ He published an article about the same question, where he presented Spain as “the friend of the Arabs par excellence.”³⁹ In this sense, Cantero reproduced the official rhetoric of the Franco regime which defined Moroccans as “brothers,” but they were situated in an inferior stage of development and civilization.⁴⁰ This paradoxical combination of ethnocentrism and proximity between coloniser and colonised emerges many times in the 1949 report as well.

The Hajj Report of Beneitez Cantero

Beneitez Cantero joined two Hajj trips to Mecca: in 1949 by aeroplane, as the main Spanish supervisor of the group, and in 1951 by sea.⁴¹ I will analyse his colonial report of the first trip in 1949 for its value as an unpublished document

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- 35 Hassan Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain. Un siècle d'anthropologie au Maroc* (Marseille: Éditions Parenthèses, 2012), 127–138.
- 36 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Fiestas musulmanas en Yebala,” *África* 59–60 (1946): 32–36; *Vocabulario español-árabe marroquí* (Tetuán: Imprenta del Majzen, 1948); “La agricultura en Yebala,” *África* 99 (1950): 112–115; “La yemaa en Yebala,” *África* 120 (1951): 600–604; *La alimentación en Marruecos* (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1951); “Miscelánea costumbrista de Beni Aaros,” *Archivos del Instituto de Estudios Africanos* 22 (1952): 15–28; “Los Zocos de nuestra zona,” *África* 134 (1953): 65–68.
- 37 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, *Sociología marroquí* (Ceuta: Instituto General Franco, Imprenta Olimpia, 1952b).
- 38 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, *Sociología marroquí* (Ceuta: Instituto General Franco, Imprenta Olimpia, 1952b), 79–80.
- 39 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a Mec-ca,” *Cuaderno de Estudios Africanos* 31 (1955): 37–46.
- 40 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “La evolucion de Marruecos,” *Sociología marroquí* (Ceuta: Instituto General Franco, Imprenta Olimpia, 1952b), 263–276.
- 41 “Peregrinación a la Meca. Año 1951” (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid).

of the Spanish colonial administration. As we have already said, despite being an official document for the DIA, this 24-page report was written in the first person and in an informal style, expressing the author's observations, feelings and sometimes disappointments with himself and with the group of Moroccan pilgrims.⁴²

The flight left Tétouan on September 25 and stopped in Nador in order to get more passengers for the Hajj. Before reaching Jeddah on September 27, it also made several stops, for logistical reasons (see illustration). Besides Beneitez Cantero as the only Spanish trip supervisor, the flight Spanish crew included two pilots, a mechanic, a radio technician and a stewardess. The flight was conducted in a British Bristol model aircraft.

Itinerary and stop-overs of the 1949's trip

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- 25 September: Tétouan, Nador, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli
 - 26 September: Tripoli, Benghazi, Alexandria
 - 27 September: Alexandria, Luxor, Jeddah

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- 13 October: Jeddah, Wadi Halfa (Sudan), Tobruk, Tripoli
 - 14 October: Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Nador, Tétouan

On board there were thirty-two pilgrims who were considered by the Spanish authorities as “trustworthy” and loyalist Moroccan dignitaries and a few members of the lower class who had received a grant from the Spanish administration. The pilgrims came from different parts of the Spanish zone, especially from Tétouan and Jebala, Chefchaouen, Rif as well as the Eastern region. Some of these notables belonged to the Tétouani Andalusian bourgeoisie, such as Slawī or Rkaina and some other notables of rural origin, such as Sī Baraka (Banī ‘Arus). From the Eastern region were a delegate of the Grand Vizier Aḥmad bin ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Haddād, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥajj Ṭayyib, and the *qā’ids* ‘Abdallah (Kebdana) and ‘Amar Ushshan (Banī Sa’īd).⁴³

The pilgrims were therefore selected according to specific political criteria. It is noteworthy that the colonial administration used to manage disputes in

42 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

43 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

different regions which required that each regional office had to recommend their preferred notables to represent the region during the Hajj. After the selection, the pilgrims had to provide a vaccination certificate issued by the Health and Public Hygiene Department of the Spanish Protectorate. Then the Spanish administration facilitated the payment of duties, the provision of passports, and money to exchange in Saudi Arabia.⁴⁴

The farewell of Tétouan pilgrims was a public ritual during which people observed prayers in the city mosque of Sidi Sa'īdī.⁴⁵ The departure of the aircraft, from Tétouan's Sania Ramel Airport and Nador's Tauima Airport, was also accompanied by political ceremonies, such as military marches and speeches given by Spanish and Moroccan authorities. Just as previous Hajj trips by boat, the Spanish authorities took advantage of the occasion as propaganda by displaying their official protection of the Moroccans and the Spanish-Moroccan brotherhood. In Tétouan some *makhzan* Moroccan ministers were also present as well as Spanish High Commissioner general Varela and the leader of the DIA, general Larrea.⁴⁶

It should be noted that Beneitez Cantero's offered a political vision of his personal evaluation of the events that happened on and off the aeroplane. But his narrative described interesting references to the pilgrims' reactions during a journey that was emotionally significant for the spiritual life of Moroccan pilgrims.

Rituals and Prayers

Rituals have often been studied not only as means of social reproduction, but also as an eventual mechanism of political transformation.⁴⁷ In their performance, people may develop creative adaptation to new situations that are not codified by the religious texts, as we will see when the trip by air generated unexpected situations for the Moroccan pilgrims. For instance, according to the report, during turbulences, some passengers became airsick while others kept

44 Certificados de vacunación, Dirección de Sanidad e Higiene Pública. Peregrinación de 1949 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

45 *ABC*, 27 September 1949, "Informaciones de Marruecos. La peregrinación marroquí a la Meca."

46 *Diario Africa*, 15 October 1949, "Feliz regreso de los peregrinos a la Meca."

47 Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Modernity and its Malcontents. Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).



FIGURE 9.2 *Moroccan Pilgrims in 1949*
 REVISTA ÁFRICA, N° 94 (OCTOBER 1949): 37

praying in silence or reciting the Qurʾān.⁴⁸ When the pilgrims were encountering uncertainties and fears, they yielded to their rituals as protective tools on such occasions.

The views from the air triggered various emotions for the pilgrims. For example, Beneitez Cantero noted that when the aircraft flew over the Algerian town of Mustagānim, the sheikh of one of the Sufi brotherhoods, probably of al-ʿAlawiyya order, paid special tribute and attention to the landscape as their spiritual leader Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā al-ʿAlawī (1869–1934) was born there.⁴⁹

The group of pilgrims did not have any medical staff on board. After departing Tunis, an older passenger, who was a rural chief of Banī Bū Ifrūr, became seriously ill because of air pressure. He became delirious and started to cry and laugh. Besides, a *ṭālib* (seeker within the Sufi order) began to loudly recite Qurʾānic verses that are related to life and death. Some of the passengers thought that he was already dead because the chief’s eyes turned white for

48 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 1 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

49 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 1 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA). See Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century. Shaikh Ahmad al-ʿAlawī. His Spiritual Heritage and Legacy* (Cambridge: Golden Palm Series, 1961).

a while. Since the pilot was also a veterinarian, he intervened and sprinkled orange blossom water that was brought by one of the Tétouani notables on the chief's face who soon recovered his consciousness.⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that the pilgrims were able to observe their daily collective prayers in the aircraft, which were led by the *faqīh* (religious jurist) al-Hājaj.

Travelling by air was a new invention for these pilgrims. As they were not certain about the journey dangers, one of the pilgrims told Beneitez Cantero that all of them had already written their wills before their departure in case that they would never return back. Imbued by his ritual inclinations, the same Moroccan informed Cantero that his family members had requested him to call their names aloud three times, when he would approach Jeddah and Mecca by turning his face to the direction of Morocco as a representation of their spiritual presence in the Holy Cities of Islam.⁵¹

Cantero was even keen on recording many details with no political relevance in his report, such as their breakfast and getting water for their ritual ablutions. In Luxor they exchanged their normal clothes with *iḥrām* clothing. Sarcastically Beneitez Cantero depicted the scene of the pilgrims as if they were "dressing themselves in underwear or like second-class Romans." Beneitez Cantero was even addressed by the title of *al-ḥājj* by the Moroccan pilgrims and was moreover invited to make ablution in order to wear his *iḥrām* clothing as well.⁵² As followers of Mālīkī school of law, these pilgrims had chosen to put on their Hajj ritual clothing before approaching the *miqāt* (the stations bordering the Sacred Territory of *iḥrām*) for North Africans, which is al-Juḥfah, which is more meritorious from a Mālīkī point of view.⁵³ Some of the pilgrims, such as *al-faqīh* al-Hājaj and al-Karkarī, preferred to postpone the wearing of their *iḥrām* clothing until the aeroplane approached Rabigh, an ancient town on the western coast of Saudi Arabia close to al-Juḥfah. While these pilgrims were putting on their *iḥrām* clothing on board, the Spanish stewardess felt embarrassed and left the passengers' cabin for a while pretending that she was dizzy.⁵⁴

50 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 2 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

51 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 4 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

52 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 5 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

53 See Muḥammad Jawād Mughniya, *The Hajj* (Alhoda UK, 1997), 33–34.

54 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 5 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

When the pilgrims were approaching the Muslim Holy Lands, one of the pilgrims, al-Ghazuanī, got a piece of paper with Arabic writings out of his pocket and started to recite religious chants quietly with other pilgrims. In Cantero's description: "Some of them, not knowing the words of the chants, took a look at the page held by their neighbour. Others had curious obsolete boxes with rubber feet containing a complete collection of pilgrimage chants; and that had been used by their ancestors during past Hajj journeys."⁵⁵ Beneitez Cantero also noted that when they reached the right coast of the Red Sea, he saw a few circular signals meant for planes that they should not fly over Mecca.⁵⁶

On their return trip, the pilgrims wanted to observe *al-zuhr* prayer at Algiers Airport. In order to control the pilgrims, the French authorities requested Beneitez Cantero to lead them in a group to the washing place if they needed to have their ritual ablution. Beneitez Cantero rudely replied to the French officers that these pilgrims were free enough to walk alone.⁵⁷

Food

Beneitez Cantero usually became impatient with pilgrim delays to the journey schedule by taking their time during meals and prayers.⁵⁸ However, he made several ironic references to the food served to the Moroccans during the journey. In Algiers Beneitez Cantero discovered that there was nothing special prepared for the pilgrims, except coffee, some cold drinks and bread with cheese. Between Algiers and Tunis, the stewardess served the pilgrims glasses of typical Moroccan green tea with mint and biscuits. Also boiled eggs were served with bread, almonds, dry fruits and chewing gum. The pilgrims, including the country notables, were told that chewing gum should not be swallowed! In this regard, Beneitez Cantero cynically remarked that "everybody was chewing gum like children."⁵⁹ It is evident that the social displacement of

55 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 6 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

56 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 6 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

57 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 23 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

58 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 2, 4 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

59 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 1 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

the rural pilgrims in another environment was connected to anecdotes that Beneitez Cantero was interested in recording. In a hotel room in Tripoli, a pilgrim from the tribe of Ahl Sharīf was locked inside because he was not familiar with such doors, till another pilgrim from Tétouan helped him get out of his room.⁶⁰ In Tripoli Airport, the pilgrims were served tomato juice, eggs, liver, bread, butter and jam with coffee and milk for their breakfast, while the Spanish crew were eating bacon.⁶¹ Cantero did not mention any conflict over this issue.

For Beneitez Cantero, it was his first time encountering different Arab cultures during this trip, much like the Moroccan pilgrims. He shared with his fellow Moroccan voyagers their surprises and cultural shocks which emanated from their lack of knowledge about the Arab world, not only on the cultural level, but also because of the lack of language communication. It is interesting to see that Cantero as a Spanish officer spoke in the pronoun “we,” when he placed himself and the Moroccan pilgrims versus the other Arabs. About a café in Tripoli, he said: “they served a different tea from ours [‘ours’ meaning ‘Moroccan’], with the sugar added to each glass of English tea” and lemon.⁶² When the waiter brought them a narguile to smoke, Beneitez Cantero found it an “exotic” instrument, which was not common in the Spanish Zone of Morocco in contrast with kif pipes and snuff.⁶³

At Jeddah Airport the pilgrims were exhausted because of the high temperature. Looking for water, they were given a jug containing warm water because of the heat. In Cantero’s account, they entered a canteen to get cold Coca-cola bottles, which were so expensive. He wrote: “we ask for a cold Coke, which was brought in glasses with large chunks of ice. We almost fell sick, when we heard the price of such small bottles.”⁶⁴ Beneitez Cantero was surprised by the dominant presence of Coca-cola consumption in the Middle East. In Alexandria he

60 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 3 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

61 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 3 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

62 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 2 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

63 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 2 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

64 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 6 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

described it “a Coca-cola invasion,” which was enhanced by big advertisement posters on buildings, Coke in bars, vending machines, etc.⁶⁵

Politics

As an integral part of Beneitez Cantero’s supervision mission of this Hajj trip, he was assigned to make pro-Spanish propaganda in the Arab world by showing his country’s “respect” for Islam as well as their “protection” of Moroccans. Due to the isolationist international situation of the Franco regime, Beneitez Cantero had to take measures in case of any unexpected political encounters during the journey. At Tunis Airport, the pilgrims were served by two “friendly” Spanish waiters whom Cantero described as *rojos* (Republican refugees and thus enemies of the Franco regime). Therefore, he tried to distance himself and the pilgrims from them.⁶⁶

We also note that Beneitez Cantero’s experience of travelling through the French colonies was extremely cold-shouldered, while the stop in Libya was reminiscent of the previous political affinities between the two fascist regimes.⁶⁷ We have to recall as well that in the years when Spain had organised a pilgrimage by sea, the only ports where non-Moroccan passengers boarded outside the Spanish Protectorate were Tripoli and Benghazi.⁶⁸

In Tripoli the pilgrims were taken by bus to the city where they stayed at the hotel Albergo Mehari. Some of the Tétouani notables in the group, such Baraka, Rkaina and Slawī, had already visited Tripoli on their way to Mecca before by ship. At a café in Tripoli, Beneitez Cantero joined the pilgrims. A Libyan waiter, who did not notice Cantero’s presence, started to criticise the British military occupation in the Arab world openly. After the waiter’s

65 See the advertising campaign of Coca-cola in the Middle East in 1955 (United States, Saudi Arabia, 10’, 1955, <http://www.desorg.org/titols/online/coca-cola-bottling-plant-arabia-north-africa/>, accessed April 12, 2015).

66 After the escape of the fascist persecution, some of these exiled Spanish Republicans in North Africa were interned in French concentration camps in the Tunisian and Algerian desert. José Muñoz Congost, *Por tierras de moros. El exilio español en el Magreb* (Móstoles: Ediciones Madre Tierra, 1989).

67 Libya remained an Italian colony until 1947. Angelo del Boca, *Gli italiani in Libia. Dal fascismo a Gheddafi* (Roma: Mondadori, 1988).

68 Peregrinación a la Meca de 1938, DIA, Tétouan, June 2, 1946 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA). Number of passengers boarded in Lybia in 1938: Tripoli (235), Bengasi (102)—from a total of 796 pilgrims.

critiques, Beneitez writes: “some young lads asked us how Spain behaved, and they (the Moroccans) answered perfectly at my presence by counting the aids and facilities given for this trip, and the schools that the [Spanish] constantly built.”⁶⁹ The presence of the Spaniard probably curtailed the free expression of opinions by the Moroccans, although there were no anti-colonial North-Moroccan nationalists among the pilgrims.

It is clear that the Hajj trip allowed the contact between people from different colonial situations, and these kinds of exchanges were liable to generate undesirable political views that were bothersome to Spanish authorities, especially among the transnational networks and activities led by young Moroccan nationalists in the Mashriq throughout the interwar years.⁷⁰

During their stay in Libya, Beneitez Cantero was especially interested in collecting information about the images of the Protectorate in the Spanish Zone as perceived in the Arab world. At a café in Tripoli he heard local people saying that a spy under the name of al-Khuḍīrī was sending critical letters about the Spanish Protectorate, from Tangiers to Tripoli and Benghazi, after he had been expelled from Tétouan.⁷¹

Moroccan notables expressed their gratitude to Spain in their conversations with other Muslims. The deputy of the Grand Vizier ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥājj Ṭayyib exaggerated his loyalty by describing himself as a “friend of Spain.” During their meeting with the Spanish consul in Alexandria, al-Ḥājj Ṭayyib extolled his love for Spain by thanking Franco and the Spanish authorities for their support for Morocco.⁷² In Jeddah al-Ḥājj Ṭayyib even insisted on thanking the Spanish authorities publicly among a big group of pilgrims from different Muslim countries. Beneitez Cantero stated that it was as if he was challenging those pilgrims.⁷³ We need to remark that ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥājj Ṭayyib was portrayed by the Spanish press as one of the most loyal *moros amigos* since his

69 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 3 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

70 Toumader Khatib, *Culture et politique dans le mouvement nationaliste marocain au Machreq* (Tétouan: Publications de l’Association Tétouan Asmir, 1996).

71 We have no further information about this person. Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 3 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

72 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 24 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

73 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 6 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

collaboration with the Spanish authorities in the 1920s and particularly against the revolt of ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Khaṭṭābī.⁷⁴

Borders and Bakshish

The pilgrims had to deal with the changing social and political frontiers in the post-WWII era. In the report, Beneitez Cantero described some of the border conflicts and administrative obstacles in different regions. At Alexandria’s Fuad I Airport, for example, a black Egyptian officer entered the aircraft shouting and asking rudely for passports. The official wanted some taxes to be payed, but Beneitez Cantero did not speak English at all. In fact, only the stewardess spoke English, while Beneitez Cantero and “his pilgrims” suffered various misunderstandings of this type during the trip due to such linguistic difficulties.

The Spanish aircraft landed in Jeddah on 27 September. At the airport’s pilgrim office a tall Englishman and an Arab in European clothes tried to force the pilgrims to “quickly pay the taxes, with bothersome inflexibility.”⁷⁵ According to Beneitez Cantero, such continuous obstacles were caused by local officers. The European passports were sent to the governor and some *bakshish* (tips) were paid to speed up the procedures. Beneitez Cantero repeatedly mentioned the practice of this *bakshish* as the most effective way to solve any kind of problem during the trip. This phenomenon must be contextualised as a social practice based on informal networks and the role played by intermediaries.⁷⁶ We will see the importance of these people during the last step of the Hajj in Jeddah.

In Mecca, one of the Moroccan pilgrims died. At the same time, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥājj Ṭayyib asked Beneitez Cantero if it was possible to admit another Riffian on board, who had started the Hajj from the Riff two years ago and was not able to get back to Morocco. Cantero replaced the place of the dead pilgrim, who was already buried in Mecca, with this Riffian who had no passport. In order to achieve this, Cantero resolved the situation by paying more *bakshish* to the border officials.⁷⁷

74 See his obituary: “Abdelkader, ejemplo y justificación,” *ABC*, November 13, 1950, 11.

75 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 6 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

76 See works about the *wāṣṭa* or intermediary: Amina Farrag, “El *Wastah* among Jordanian Villagers,” in *Patrons and clients in Mediterranean societies*, ed. Ernest Gellner, and John Waterbury (London: Duckworth, 1977), 225–238; Robert B. Cunningham and Yassin K. Sarayrah, *Wasta: the hidden force in Middle Eastern society* (Westport: Praeger, 1993).

77 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 22 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

'Lost' in Jeddah

In Jeddah, Cantero accompanied the pilgrims to the city centre by bus. For him, the city was dusty, hot and crowded. Cantero and the Moroccan pilgrims tried to find accommodation, with the pilgrims looking for transport to Mecca and arranging the services of a *muṭawwif*, a guide.⁷⁸ Amidst the crowd and the chaos, some of the Moroccan pilgrims managed to negotiate the price of renting a car and horses. The chauffeur accompanied Cantero and some of the Moroccans to the chief of *muṭawwifs*, who arranged accommodation in houses especially prepared for pilgrims.⁷⁹ Communication with local guides was not easy for the Moroccan pilgrims. According to Cantero, Baraka and 'Abd al-Salām al-Ghazuanī were not able to communicate with them as he could not speak a proper "Arabian Arabic."⁸⁰ The pilgrims dispersed in order to find their own *muṭawwif*.

In the city, Cantero could not find any proper accommodation for himself, since hotel rooms were either unclean or shared with other people. Having failed to find a proper clean accommodation in Jeddah, Cantero asked if there was a "hotel for non-Muslims" in the city. Local people laughed at him and answered that the only non-Muslims who lived in Jeddah were some diplomats.⁸¹ Meanwhile, Cantero tried to telegram his superiors in Madrid and Tétouan asking for assistance, but due to the large number of pilgrims he was not able to send it. Then he decided to go back to the airport looking for the Spanish aeroplane and ask the pilots to "let him in Alexandria"⁸² and bring him back again to Jeddah after the end of the Hajj rituals. He asked Sī Baraka to take the responsibility of the pilgrims if something should happen in his absence. In order to get his passport, he again paid *bakshish* and left to Cairo (October 2) where he stayed for a few days at the Spanish Embassy.

After his stay in Egypt, Cantero returned to Jeddah from Alexandria Airport. When he met the Spanish crew of the Bristol aeroplane, he felt at home among

78 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 7 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

79 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 7 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

80 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 7 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

81 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 8 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

82 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 8 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

the Spanish. At Jeddah Airport, a long queue of aircrafts was waiting to carry the pilgrims back home. At the Airport Cantero met an English officer who invited him for a glass of whisky at his house in Jeddah. Searching for the Moroccan pilgrims, he first met Sī Baraka, who immediately informed him of the death of ‘Anān Ahwārī, a Riffian pilgrim in the group from Frakhana close to Melilla, which we have already referred to above. Ahwārī died because of a heat stroke beside the Ka‘aba. He was one of the few poor Riffians who had been primarily funded for this trip because of his loyalty to Spain.⁸³

According to Baraka, one of the biggest problems that the Moroccan pilgrims faced in Mecca was bargaining and paying the *bakshish*.⁸⁴ The pilgrims were proud of their Meccan gifts, which they showed to Cantero. Sī Baraka bought some gifts for the *khalīfa* of the Moroccan Spanish Zone, Ḥasan bin al-Mahdī, and he brought a narguile, a copy of the Qur‘ān belonging to Sheikh Muḥammad al-Tāwudī (1700–1795), a Moroccan scholar who had taught at al-Azhar and became mufti of the Qarawiyyīn Madrasa of Fez, which was kept in a golden box.⁸⁵

Coming Back

When the plane was approaching Morocco, the pilgrims collected 60 duros as tips for the stewardess, but she felt embarrassed and brought the money to the pilot in the cockpit.⁸⁶ This anecdote may reflect different notions of reciprocity between the Moroccans and the stewardess, who replied to them that this kind of gift was not allowed.⁸⁷

It is well known that the Hajj constitutes a remarkable rite of passage, with the three phases described by Arnold van Gennep:⁸⁸ separation, liminality and reincorporation. The pilgrims were now performing the last phase of the

83 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 23 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

84 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 22 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

85 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 22 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

86 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 24 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

87 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, “Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje,” Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 23 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

88 Arnold Van Gennep, *Les rites de passage* (Paris: E. Nourry, 1909).

ritual. In the air over the Chafarinas Islands, near Nador, Beneitez Cantero observed that the pilgrims' emotions went high when they saw the landmarks of their home again. This moment had awakened their feelings and even tears. Their return was also accompanied by political ceremonies arranged by the Spanish administration. At Villa Nador Airport, the pilgrims were well saluted by a group of Regulares, *interventores*, police officers and many journalists, and fireworks went off.⁸⁹

In Tétouan they were again welcomed by higher authorities, including the Spanish High Commissioner Varela and the *khalīfa* of the Spanish Zone, Mūlāy Ḥasan b. al-Mahdī (1915–1984). Before this welcome ritual, the pilgrims changed their clothes and put on white burnouses and the new *razzat* (a Moroccan flat turban) bought at Mecca. After the official welcome at the airport by the authorities, the pilgrims went to the shrine of Sīdī Saʿīdī in Tétouan. They were surrounded at Bāb Saʿīda by a crowd of men and women who wanted to touch and kiss the clothes of the *ḥājjis*.⁹⁰ Beneitez Cantero ended his report in a patronising way that was connected to the Spanish Africanist policy in Morocco by saying: "The pilgrims and other Riffians kissed my shoulder as if I had brought the *baraka* of Muhammad that was stuck to my body."⁹¹

Conclusion

The report of Valentín Beneitez Cantero is an illustration of the Spanish colonial policy and its effects on the Hajj. Since the Spanish Civil War the Franco regime was instrumentalizing an official rhetoric of support for Islam as a sign of friendship and closeness to Morocco. This policy hid two basic objectives: in the international scene, it was meant to prevent the isolation of Spain by seeking the complicity of the Arab world while it was sustained in the colonial sphere so as to justify the Spanish presence in Morocco. The colonial authorities used the pilgrimage of 1949 to show in the press the "generosity" of Spain to Morocco. They emphasized the feeling of "gratitude" that was dominant among the pilgrims after their return, especially in the case of those dignitaries who defined Franco and the High Commissioner as "friends of Islam."⁹²

89 "Feliz regreso de los peregrinos a la Meca," *Africa*, October 15, 1949.

90 "Feliz regreso de los peregrinos a la Meca," *Africa*, October 15, 1949.

91 Valentín Beneitez Cantero, "Peregrinación a la Meca. Memoria del viaje," Tétouan, Delegación de Asuntos Indígenas, October 1949, 24 (Box 3013, IDD 13, AFR, AGA).

92 "Del Protectorado. De Villa Nador. Una rosa más en el Jardín de la Paz. La peregrinación a la Meca"; "Noticias de prensa sobre la peregrinación a la Meca desde el Protectorado";

The 1949 trip also represents a change in travel logistics over previous pilgrimages by steamships. The promotion of an airplane flight was a new strategy of the Spanish administration which allowed a better control of the pilgrims, at a time of rising Arab nationalism and anti-colonial ideologies. Spanish propaganda reinforced the legitimacy of the aeroplane trip in this time of political uncertainty. Beneitez Cantero himself wrote a text for the journal *África* explaining that the airway was a licit resource which could not be defined as religious innovation. Then he quoted Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī (1320–1388), a Sunni scholar of Granada, “who had already resolved the case five centuries ago,” explaining that the most important thing was to get Mecca and fulfill the religious duty of the Hajj, but not primarily the way to do it either “by air or walking on the sea.”⁹³

The report expresses the particular perspective of Beneitez Cantero in describing informal aspects of the trip and illustrating the existing patronage between Spanish and Moroccan authorities. The text reveals the way its author constructed and participated in the idea of a “brotherhood” between Spaniards and Moroccans; at the end of the trip he was excited to observe the satisfaction of his “protected” people.

At certain times during the trip, Beneitez Cantero identified himself with ‘his’ pilgrims in that feeling of strangeness by the Moroccans in the Mashriq. The officer, like many of the pilgrims, was decoding a new world. However, this identification was partial, instrumental and circumstantial. Of course Cantero was imbued by the official rhetoric of the proximity between colonisers and colonised. In this sense the trip generated ambiguous and paradoxical situations: the coloniser exercised as such and he was the guardian of the pilgrims. However, the Spaniard could not have control over all situations during the Hajj. For example, in the café in Tripoli, Beneitez Cantero had to hide his identity in an openly anti-colonial arena. Travel as a social process may produce multiple identities and identifications.⁹⁴ This situated identity was clearly conformed by a political strategy, as we have seen in the pro-Spanish discourses pronounced during the trip by the delegate of the Grand Vizier ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥājj Ṭayyib, or in the way Beneitez Cantero defined himself as

“Melilla. Aviones especiales para la peregrinación a la Meca. La decisión del Gobierno español causa extraordinario júbilo entre los musulmanes,” in Tomás García Figueras, *Miscelánea. España en Marruecos*, vol. 88, n.d. 69–96 (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid).

93 “Peregrinación del Marruecos Español a la Meca. España les paga parte de los gastos. Mañana salen en avión para el Sagrado Lugar,” *Africa*, September 24, 1949.

94 Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Travellers. Pilgrimage, Migration and the Religious Imagination* (London: Routledge, 1990), 15–17.

part of the group of pilgrims, when he wrote: "They (Libyans) are kind to us [Muslim Moroccans]."⁹⁵

The report shows the weight of successive social boundaries that emerged along the journey. On one hand, the Hajj and diverse religious rituals generated enthusiastic feelings among the Moroccans, reinforcing the mechanisms of *communitas*. On the other hand, the trip brought evidence of forms of differentiation exerted by the new nation-states or the colonial powers. As Turner wrote, ritual houses this dual connotation of structure and anti-structure.⁹⁶

Finally, the rituals of the journey were not exclusively defined by Islamic precepts. The trip also ritualised the Spanish colonial policy, and the Moroccan notables took part in that. Therefore, the religious ritual adopted a dual role of political ceremony and propaganda. Taking part in a pilgrimage organised by the colonial *makhzan* meant that the notables were receiving a gift,⁹⁷ which functioned as a mechanism of reciprocity, as far as the Moroccans secured political loyalty during the rite of passage of *al-ḥajj*. As Bourdieu wrote of circumcision, this was not just a rite of passage, but also a rite of institutionalisation.⁹⁸

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