

Teaching History: The Dynamics of Islamic Politics in Andalusia and Its Impact on Civilization Transformation

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji historiografi dinamika politik Islam di Andalusia dalam konteks pendidikan sejarah dan transformasi peradaban. Kajian ini menelusuri perkembangan politik Islam sejak kedatangan Islam pada abad ke-8 hingga jatuhnya Kerajaan Nasrid di Granada pada abad ke-15. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan analisis historis, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dinamika politik Islam di Andalusia dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal, seperti konflik dinasti dan perebutan kekuasaan, serta faktor eksternal, seperti invasi Kristen dan interaksi budaya dengan Eropa. Selain itu, penelitian ini menyoroti kontribusi Andalusia dalam ilmu pengetahuan, seni, dan kebudayaan yang berpengaruh terhadap peradaban Eropa. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya memahami dinamika politik di Andalusia sebagai bagian dari pendidikan sejarah, guna memperkaya wawasan tentang interaksi antara Islam dan dunia Barat serta dampaknya terhadap perkembangan peradaban global.

Kata kunci: politik islam, andalusia, peradaban.

Abstract

This study examines the historiography of Islamic political dynamics in Andalusia within the context of history education and civilization transformation. It explores the development of Islamic politics from the arrival of Islam in the 8th century to the fall of the Nasrid Kingdom in Granada in the 15th century. Using a qualitative method and historical analysis, the findings show that the political dynamics of Islam in Andalusia were influenced by internal factors, such as dynastic conflicts and power struggles, as well as external factors, such as Christian invasions and cultural interactions with Europe. Furthermore, this study highlights Andalusia's contributions to knowledge, arts, and culture, which significantly influenced European civilization. These findings emphasize the importance of understanding Andalusia's political dynamics as part of history education to enrich perspectives on the interaction between Islam and the Western world and its impact on the development of global civilization.

Keywords: islamic politics, andalusia, civilization.

INTRODUCTION

The Andalusian period was a crucial period in Islamic history that not only reflected the interaction between Islamic and Christian European powers, but also showed the complexity of the political dynamics that developed in the region. Since the arrival of Islam in the 8th century, Andalusia developed into a center of culture, science, and advanced

economy (As-Sirjani, 2013). This glory was marked by progress in various fields such as philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and art (Ahmad Salim, 2019). However, along with these achievements, the region also faced various challenges, both in the form of internal conflicts between Islamic dynasties and external pressure from Christian kingdoms that continued to try to seize power (Kennedy, 2014). This

condition created a dynamic and often changing political landscape, making Andalusia a region with a very interesting political history to study (Rodriguez, 2017).

Historiography on Islamic politics in Andalusia often places more emphasis on certain aspects, such as inter-dynastic rivalries, political divisions, or relations with Christian kingdoms (Fathurrofiq, 2021). These perspectives, although important, still leave room for more in-depth research on the factors that influenced the dynamics of Islamic politics as a whole (Abdollahian & Kang, 2008). There is still a need to understand how the interaction between social, economic, and military factors contributed to political change in Andalusia (Berkey, 2003).

In addition, it is also important to examine the role of intellectual and religious elites in determining the direction of political policies taken by the rulers at that time (El-Messeiry, 2015). A more comprehensive study in this regard can provide a broader picture of how internal and external factors shaped the political landscape of Islam in Andalusia (Benson & Kugler, 1998). The urgency of this research lies in the importance of delving deeper into the political changes that occurred in Andalusia, especially in understanding the transition from glory to the fall of the Islamic dynasty in the region (Rosen, 2002).

The political dynamics that occurred were not only limited to the conflict between Islam and Christianity, but also involved political intrigue within the Islamic government itself (Wolf, 1999). The shift in power from the Umayyads to various taifahs (small kingdoms) until finally to the dominance of the Almoravid and Almohads is an interesting phenomenon that shows how complex politics were in Andalusia (Abbey, 2022). This study also aims to provide a broader perspective on Andalusia's contribution to the development of world civilization, not only in politics but also in the aspects of science, culture, and social (Hambali, 2016). In this context, research is expected to enrich Islamic historiography by providing a deeper understanding of the interactions between various powers in Andalusia (Nadlir, 2015).

The main objective of this study is to analyze the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia with a more holistic approach. This study will identify the factors that influence political change, both internally and externally, and describe how Andalusia's contribution influenced the development of the history of the Islamic world and Europe (Menacol, 2006). Using a qualitative historical approach, this study will explore various relevant primary and secondary sources to produce a comprehensive picture of the

history of Islamic politics in the region (Cachia, 2017).

It is hoped that this study will not only provide broader insights into the political dynamics in Andalusia, but can also be a valuable contribution to the development of Islamic historiography studies in general (Pangaribuan, 2024). Thus, this study can help to understand more deeply how past political events shaped civilization and cultural heritage that are still felt today (Ruggles, 2003).

METHODS

This research is a type of qualitative research with a historiographic approach. This approach is used to analyze the dynamics of Islamic politics during the Andalusian period through a study of relevant historical sources, both primary and secondary. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the political events that occurred in Andalusia and the factors that influenced them.

This research was conducted in 2024-2025. The main data sources used came from various digital sites and internet sources that provide historical archives and literature related to Andalusian history. This research accessed journal databases, articles, and e-books available on various academic platforms and digital libraries. Some of the digital sites that are the main reference sources include JSTOR, Google Scholar, Project MUSE, and the Internet Archive. The data

collection process was carried out by utilizing search facilities and digital repositories from these sources, so that this research is flexible and can be carried out from various locations without being limited to one physical place.

The aim of this study is to understand the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia comprehensively, especially those related to changes in power, internal conflicts between dynasties, and interactions with external powers such as the Christian kingdoms of Europe. Another aim is to explore Andalusia's contributions to science and culture that influenced the Islamic world and Europe at that time.

The subject of this research covers various political events that occurred during the period of Islamic rule in Andalusia, starting from the arrival of Islam in the 8th century to the collapse of the Nasruddin kingdom in the 15th century. This research will also involve important figures in the political history of Andalusia, such as the rulers of the Umayyad, Abbadid and Nasrid dynasties, as well as historians and Islamic thinkers who wrote about the history of Andalusia.

This research procedure was carried out in several stages, as follows: a) Source Collection, Collecting primary sources such as historical archives and historians' writings related to the Andalusian period. b) Literature Study, Analyze books, articles, and journals that

discuss the history of Islamic politics in Andalusia, both written by Muslim and non-Muslim historians. c) Data Classification, Classify data based on themes relevant to the research topic, such as dynastic changes, political conflicts, and external influences. d) Data analysis, Analyze data using a historical analysis approach, connecting political events with the social and cultural context of the time.

By using qualitative research methods based on historical analysis, it is hoped that this research can produce a deeper understanding of the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia, as well as provide a significant contribution to the development of Islamic historiography, especially in the context of European history and intercultural interaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The historical analysis approach in this study aims to connect political events that occurred in Andalusia with the social and cultural contexts, and their implications in learning history. By understanding the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia, we can examine how Islamic civilization interacted with other civilizations and formed a complex political order. This study also has relevance in history education as a concrete example of how political history can provide a deep understanding of the development of global civilization.

The Presence of Islam in Andalusia and the Formation of Political Structure (8th to 11th Centuries)

When the Muslim army first entered Andalusia in 711 CE. Initially, in 710 CE, about 500 Muslim soldiers under the command of Tarif ibn Malik were sent on a reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering mission. Landing at what was then known as the Tarifa Islands, the expedition was successful and brought home much loot. With this important information, Musa ibn Nushair, the governor-general of Al-Maghrib in North Africa, decided to send 7,000 Arab and Berber troops under the leadership of Thariq ibn Ziyad.



Figure 1. Tariq ibn Ziyad, leader of the Islamic troops in the battle on the Guadalete or Barbete river

The image depicts Tariq ibn Ziyad, a renowned military leader in Islamic history, leading the Muslim army in the crucial battle of the Guadalete (or Barbate) River in 711 CE. This battle marked the beginning of the Islamic conquest of much of the Iberian Peninsula, later known as Andalusia. With his courage

and clever military strategy, Tariq ibn Ziyad not only succeeded in conquering the region, but also paved the way for the establishment of a strong Islamic political structure in Andalusia, bringing with him a system of Islamic governance that was different from that previously existing in the Iberian Peninsula.

The Umayyad dynasty in Damascus, which ruled the Islamic world at that time, established a government in the region with Andalusia becoming part of the Umayyad Caliphate. The success of the Islamic forces in controlling the region was influenced not only by military power, but also by social and cultural factors, including the religious tolerance that was implemented in Andalusia. This conquest was also an important moment in history because it created a multicultural society, where Muslims, Christians, and Jews could live side by side under Islamic rule.

Under Islamic rule, Andalusia became a relatively safe region for Jews, Christians, and Muslims to live side by side in harmony (the concept of *convivencia*). The presence of Islamic culture also brought significant social changes, such as improvements in science, art, and architecture. One clear example of this is the construction of the Alhambra and the Cordoba Mosque, which were not only symbols of power, but also reflected the deep integration of Islamic culture into Andalusian social life.

With the integration of various cultural and political elements, Andalusia became an important center of civilization. Studying the history of this period allows learners to understand how cultural and political interactions influenced the development of a civilization. This study confirms the importance of historiography in reconstructing historical events comprehensively. In the context of history education, this period can be used as a case study to show how conquest and cultural acculturation can create significant social transformation. In addition, the early development of Islam in Andalusia can be part of learning about the concept of Islamic civilization in world history subjects.

Political Fragmentation during the Taifa Kingdom Period (11th Century)

After the fall of the Umayyad dynasty in 1031 CE, Andalusia experienced a period of political fragmentation, in which the region was divided into several small kingdoms known as Taifa. This situation was influenced by various social and cultural factors, including tensions between the ruling dynasties and differences in political and religious interpretations. The presence of various ethnic and religious groups in Andalusia also created social tensions, with each group trying to fight for its rights and influence in the political structure.

When the Islamic army first entered Andalusia in 711 AD. Initially, in 710 AD, about 500 Muslim soldiers under the command of Tarif ibn Malik were sent to carry out a reconnaissance and information gathering mission.



Figure 2. Map depicting the fragmented political situation in Al-Andalus (the Muslim-controlled region of the Iberian Peninsula)

After the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate in Cordoba in 1031. Known as *taifas* (from the Arabic for "party" or "faction"), many small states (according to some scholars, as many as 50) emerged, in constant chaos and rivalry, gradually, only about half a dozen remained grouped around the major cities: Zaragoza, Valencia, Toledo, Badajoz, Seville, and Granada (Natchev, 2022). Then in 1085, seizing the opportunity, Alfonso VI (king of León and Castile) took over the taifa of Toledo, and the rest sought protection from the newly established fundamentalist Almoravid dynasty in the Maghreb. This political instability created tensions between local Islamic powers and external powers, especially from the Christian

kingdoms in the north. This worsened social conditions and led to further divisions within the Taifa kingdoms. In this context, cultural factors, such as differences in interpretation of Islam that developed among local dynasties, also influenced the political approaches adopted by rulers in the region.

This period can be used as teaching material in history learning, especially in understanding the concept of political disintegration and its impact on society. Learners can analyze how internal divisions in a civilization can weaken political power and accelerate the process of destruction. The historiography of this period also shows how historical sources are used to interpret the political dynamics that occurred, by comparing Muslim and Christian perspectives in documenting these events.

The Influence of Christian Power and the Reconquista War (12th Century to 15th Century)

From the 12th century onwards, the growing influence of Christianity in Europe contributed to the political instability in Andalusia. When the Reconquista began, the primary goal of the Christian kingdoms was to reclaim territories previously held by Muslims. Here, we can see how social and cultural dynamics played a role in exacerbating political tensions. Fighting between Christians and Muslims was often fueled by differing cultural and religious

identities, further polarizing the two sides.

The Nasrid Kingdom of Granada, which had its last existence in the 13th to 15th centuries, faced severe pressure from the Christian kingdoms, especially after the great battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, which significantly changed the map of power in the Iberian Peninsula. The Reconquista War was influenced not only by political and military factors, but also by social changes in Andalusian society, where the integration of Islamic culture began to be shaken by the conquest and exile carried out by the Christians. The culmination was the fall of Granada in 1492, which marked the end of Islamic political domination in Andalusia and also reflected major changes in the social and cultural landscape of the region.

The Reconquista War is an example of how power dynamics can transform due to internal and external factors. This war lasted for centuries and is an example of a long conflict between Islamic and Christian civilizations. In the context of learning history, this event can be analyzed to understand the concept of change of power, colonialism, and its impact on civilization. The historiography of the Reconquista is also an important tool in analyzing how different perspectives can produce different historical narratives. Historical sources from an Islamic perspective tend to describe this period as

a struggle for survival, while Christian narratives emphasize aspects of liberation and territorial expansion. By studying both perspectives, learners can develop critical thinking skills in interpreting history and understand how political interests can influence the construction of historical narratives.

Andalusian Contributions to Science and Culture

In addition to being a political center, Andalusia was also a center of science and culture that contributed to the development of European civilization. During its heyday, cities such as Cordoba, Seville, and Granada became centers of education and intellectuals. Muslim scientists in Andalusia contributed in various fields, such as medicine, astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, and architecture.



Figure 3. Alhambra Palace complex

In history education, this can be used to teach the importance of the role of Muslim scientists such as Ibn Rushd, Al-Zahrawi, and Al-Khwarizmi in advancing scientific progress in Europe. Historiography of Andalusian contributions can help learners understand how the

transfer of knowledge occurred between civilizations. For example, many works of Muslim scientists were translated into Latin in Europe, which later became the basis for the development of science during the Renaissance. One clear example of the influence of Islamic culture in Andalusia is the Alhambra Palace in Granada. This building not only reflects the advancement of Islamic technology and architectural art, but also shows how art can be a reflection of the cultural and spiritual values of a civilization. In history learning, the analysis of architecture such as the Alhambra can be used as an example of how art and culture can be a form of political expression and identity of a society. This study shows that the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia were greatly influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Broadly speaking, it can be divided into several phases, each of which describes significant changes in the political structure of the region. The following table shows the division of important periods in the history of Islamic politics in Andalusia along with the factors that influenced them:

Table 1. Division of important periods in the history of Islamic politics in Andalusia

Period	Dynasty	Key Influencing Factors	Political Consequences
711-1031	Umayyad Dynasty	Islamic Conquest, Christian European Influence	The formation of Islamic political and cultural power

1031-1091	Taifa Kingdom	Political fragmentation, inter-dynastic conflict	Formation of small kingdoms
1091-1212	Almoravid & Almohad	Invasion from North Africa, internal tensions	Consolidation of power, increasing influence of religion
1212-1492	Nasrid Dynasty	Tensions with Christian kingdoms, fall of Granada	The final fall, the conflict lingers

These data indicate that inter-dynastic conflicts and interactions with external forces, such as Christian invasions and the influence of North African kingdoms, were dominant factors that shaped the direction and stability of politics in Andalusia. From the results above, it can be concluded that internal factors, such as political fragmentation and inter-dynastic conflicts, greatly influenced political instability in Andalusia. In the early phase, the arrival of Islam brought the formation of a strong kingdom, such as the Umayyad Dynasty, but after the collapse of the Umayyad Dynasty in the 11th century, Andalusia was divided into various smaller Taifa kingdoms and was vulnerable to internal conflict. External influences were also very significant, especially with the invasion of European Christian kingdoms which further worsened the internal situation in Andalusia. For example, in the period 1212-1492, the role of the Nasrid Dynasty in Granada became very

important, but they continued to face increasing pressure from the Christian kingdoms that were expanding their territory.

The Reconquista wars that took place during this period were a major driver of Granada's final fall in 1492. In a theoretical context, this dynamic can be linked to the power transition theory, which describes how power shifts are often influenced by the interaction of internal (such as dynastic tensions) and external (such as invasion or external pressure) factors. Power Transition Theory is a research program that has been active for over 50 years and has involved four generations of scholars. Although generally categorized as part of the realist school because of its emphasis on power relations, it shows significant differences from that school, both in terms of methodology and certain conceptual content. In the assessment of external reviewers, the theory is considered a dynamic theory, with a pattern of continuous growth, spin-offs, and refinements occurring over time (Ronald L. Tammen, 2017). Based on the results and discussion of this study, further research could focus on a comparative analysis of Muslim and Christian historiography on Andalusian history. In addition, a deeper study of the role of education and scientific institutions in Andalusia could enrich the understanding

of how knowledge transfer occurred across civilizations.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia were greatly influenced by interacting social and cultural factors, with significant contributions in the fields of science, architecture, and interfaith relations. The presence of Islam in Andalusia resulted in great achievements in science and culture, reflected in the works of scientists and iconic architecture such as the Alhambra which reflected advances in engineering and aesthetics. However, political fragmentation and external pressures, especially from the Reconquista War, also influenced the stability and eventual fall of Islamic power in the region. From a historiographical perspective, the study of the dynamics of Islamic politics in Andalusia shows that historical interpretations can vary depending on the sources and perspectives used. Islamic sources tend to highlight the glory of Andalusian civilization in science and social tolerance, while European historiography emphasizes political conflict and the influence of the Crusades and the Reconquista. In the context of history education, this historiography is important to help learners understand how different perspectives in history can provide different narratives of an event. Therefore, this study not only reconstructs

the political history of Andalusia but also highlights how that history was written and understood from different perspectives, which ultimately contributed to the transformation of civilization.

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