This talk, based on a book of the same title, will explore the culture, politics, and legacies of Spanish colonialism in Morocco (1859-1956). It will take, as its point of departure, a very common idea about Morocco: namely, the idea that modern Moroccan culture descends directly from al-Andalus (medieval Muslim Iberia). This idea is widespread in contemporary Moroccan literature, historiography, and politics. Calderwood’s talk will argue that Morocco’s Andalusi identity is not a medieval legacy, but is, instead, a modern invention that emerged from the colonial encounter between Spain and Morocco in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The talk will focus on the nineteenth-century origins of this process, exploring how Spanish writers revived the memory of al-Andalus in order to emphasize Spain’s historical connection to North Africa and to justify Spain’s colonial projects in Morocco and the wider Muslim world.

Monday, February 5
6pm
Music Room, Rochambeau House