

SPEAKING THROUGH THE PROPHETS: ALJAMIADO LEGENDS AS SPACES OF
HISTORICAL NEGOTIATION

by

DONALD WALTER WOOD

(Under the Direction of Noel Fallows)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a critical examination of five Aljamiado legends of biblical and qur'ānic prophets likely composed in Aragon, Spain in the sixteenth-century. Having left no extant record of the historical and political events that shaped their lives, the Moriscos – those Muslims who converted to Christianity either by force or choice – have remained largely enigmatic figures. The portrait scholars have been able to form of this heterogeneous group is at best a speculative and piece-meal depiction based largely on the writings of Christian apologists, polemicists, and historians who were either themselves contemporaries of the Moriscos or who formulated accounts of these people based on biased perceptions and second-hand knowledge. To this end, I propose a close reading of Morisco writings that blends elements of a number of theoretical approaches from New Historicism and cultural anthropology, with the aim of uncovering glimpses of the Moriscos' own accounts of their histories. In order to achieve this goal, one must view each legend as a single contribution to a web of discursive strands that together contributed to a more complete historical representation of the Moriscos. Each chapter of this study is an independent examination of the dominant religious, historical, socio-cultural, and ethical themes contained within each legend. These themes are then situated as closely as

possible within the historical milieu of sixteenth-century Spain. After an introductory chapter briefly outlining the history of previous scholarship on Aljamiado literature and my own theoretical approach to these works, Chapter Two considers the themes of geography, memory, and prophecy. The third chapter examines the practice of religious dissimulation and the interactions between public and private spaces. Chapter Four first turns to the role of the *alfaquí* as Morisco religious and social leader. Then, I examine the two disparate themes of magic and the roles of men and women. Chapter Five begins with an analysis of the psychological and physical negotiations of power, followed by a study of epidemics such as leprosy and plagues in Morisco communities. Chapter Six examines Morisco eschatological theory, burial observances, and understandings of the afterlife.

INDEX WORDS: Moriscos, crypto-Muslims, Islam, Aljamiado literature, Aljamía, medieval Spain, early modern Spain, Aragon, sixteenth century, prophets, prophecy, legends, Qur'ān, Qisas al-anbiyā', didactic literature, New Historicism, religious dissimulation, Spanish Inquisition, power relations, magic, epidemics, plagues, eschatology, burial practices

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DONALD WALTER WOOD

BA, BM, State University of New York College at Potsdam, 2005

MA, University of Georgia, 2007

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DONALD WALTER WOOD

Major Professor: Noel Fallows

Committee: Dana Bultman
Elizabeth Wright
Lesley Feracho
Benjamin Ehlers

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2012

DEDICATION

To Thomas for your love, inspiration, and continued motivation...

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I would first like to thank my major professor, Dr. Noel Fallows, for his endless support, advice, guidance, and positivity during this project. It was Dr. Fallows who first introduced me to Aljamiado literature during my Masters studies by way of the endlessly intriguing *Poema de Yûçuf*. This work sparked an interest and drive in me that I had not experienced before, and I have since dedicated myself to furthering my understanding and knowledge of this unique niche within Spanish literature. Dr. Fallows continues to offer inspiration, new ideas, and tremendous encouragement.

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Also, I offer a sincere debt of gratitude to Dr. Vincent Barletta, Associate Professor of Iberian and Latin American Cultures at Stanford University, who early on in my studies of Aljamiado texts fielded my e-mails and clarified many of my initial questions. His monumental work *Covert Gestures* has been a primary source of inspiration and reference throughout the writing of this dissertation. My own work is largely inspired by Dr. Barletta's theoretical approaches to Aljamiado texts and my hope is that it lives up to the standard set forth by this gifted scholar.

Finally, my heart-felt thanks and love are owed to my family, particularly my mother, Connie, who has never faltered in her support and encouragement. I would not have made it this far without her many assurances that I can achieve whatever I set out to do.

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PRELIMINARY NOTES

1. The system for Aljamiado transliteration used throughout this study is a simplified and standardized version based on a number of previous models. My intention is to reflect as accurately as possible the true nature of the actual manuscripts. To this end, special characters, accent marks, and superscript letters commonly used in other transcriptions have been omitted. Additionally, I have added only minimal punctuation in order to facilitate reading, while remaining true to the original texts.

2. The transliteration system employed throughout this study is as follows:

ب	b
پ	p
ت	t
ث	th (Arabic words)
چ	j or ch
ه	h
د	d
ذ	dh (Arabic words)
ر	r
ز	z
س	s (Arabic words); c, z (Romance words)
ش	sh (Arabic words); s, x (Romance words)
ص	S
ڊ	D
ٽ	T
ڙ	Z
ٿ	‘
ڳ	g
ڦ	f
ڦ	q
ڪ	k
ل	l
ڻ	ll
م	m
ن	n
ڻ	nn (Arabic words), ñ (Romance words)

هـ	h
و	w
ي	y
ي	ī (Arabic words)
أ - ا	ā (Arabic words), a (Romance words)
إ - ع	e
إ - إ	ī (Arabic words), i (Romance words)
و	o,u
و	ū (Arabic words), wu (Romance words)

3. Additionally, I have added the following markings to indicate line and page division within the manuscript pages:

A. The end of a line of text is marked by (/)

B. The end of a manuscript page is marked by (//)

C. An individual word that is split over two lines or pages is marked (- / -) or (- // -)

4. All English translations of qur'ānic passages are from Maulānā Muhammad 'Alī's edition of *The Holy Qur'ān* cited in full in the bibliography.

5. All images contained in this study are in the public domain.

CHAPTER 1 | Introduction

In the hearts of every sect that has a taste of the truth
The sight and the voice of prophets work miracles.
When the prophets raise their cry to the outward ear,
The souls of each sect bow in devotion within; -
Because never in this world hath the soul's ear
Heard from any man the like of that cry.
— Rūmī, *Masnavi* Book II¹

Toward a History of Aljamiado Studies

In 1884, in the small rural town of Almonacid de la Sierra in western Aragon, construction workers unexpectedly uncovered a collection of manuscript texts rolled up and hidden under the floorboards of a deteriorated house. “Por desgracia,” recounted the Spanish Arabist Francisco Codera Zaydin that same year, “al aparecer los manuscritos fueron creídos de ningún valor por los albañiles y peones” (269). At first glance, the collection of some one hundred and forty codices and individual manuscript pages were thought to be Arabic works that miraculously escaped the destructive forces of the Inquisition. History would later prove this belief to be only half correct. Though appearing to be Arabic language documents, these texts were in fact part of a corpus of hybrid writings now known as “Aljamía” or “Aljamiado.” The term “Aljamiado” is a Romance derivative of the Arabic *ajamī* (عجمي) meaning “that which is foreign.” In its strictest sense, this label identifies any manifestation, linguistic or otherwise, that is not Arabic. However, it most commonly distinguishes the extant corpus of works composed by the Mudejars and Moriscos of late medieval and early modern Spain.

By definition, the former were Muslims who, during the Spanish Reconquest, chose to remain in their native villages and cities and accept Christian rule. Leonard Patrick Harvey, in

¹ Translated from the Persian by E. H. Whinfield.

his indispensable study of the last Muslims of Spain, provides several definitions of the term “Morisco.” “In the medieval Castilian of the twelfth century,” writes Harvey, “*morisco* (1) is an adjective associated with and derived from the noun *moro*.” Thus, in early texts, the two terms could be employed interchangeably to refer either to North Africans (or people of North African heritage) or to Muslims (Harvey, *Muslims* 2). On the other hand, the term “Morisco” – as it is most often used today, and which Harvey labels “*morisco* (2)” – did not develop until the sixteenth century when it was employed to refer to those former Mudejars who, whether by force or personal choice, nominally converted to Christianity between 1492 and 1526. It is to this latter definition that I shall refer throughout the present study. Through close contact with Spain’s Christian populations, the Mudejars and especially the Moriscos witnessed a gradual decline in knowledge and use of their once-native Arabic language. As the holy tongue of the Qur’ān and a defining aspect of their cultural heritage, however, Muslim minorities could not with clear conscience completely abandon this aspect of their heritage. In order to reconcile these two conflicting aspects of their identities, Spain’s Muslims developed the Aljamiado dialect.

Evidence of Aljamiado writings has been traced to as early as the ninth century. Harvey brings to mind, for example, the Romance refrains, or *kharjas*, that ended the popular Arabic strophic poems known as *muwashshahat* from the eleventh century (*Muslims* 131). That said, the apex of Aljamiado production clearly dates to the time of the Moriscos, particularly to the sixteenth century. According to the 1878 “Índice general de la literatura aljamiada” by Eduardo Saavedra y Moragas (1829-1912), of those manuscripts that it was possible to date with near certainty, only three pertain to the fifteenth century and earlier, while Saavedra identifies twenty three manuscripts in the period following the year 1500 (Harvey, *Muslims* 134). According to

Harvey's approximation, there are, in all likelihood, more than one hundred extant texts that date to this later period.

In the same way that precise dating of manuscripts is often difficult, if not impossible, so, too is it problematic to determine the exact origins of extant manuscripts. Aside from the cache of texts discovered in 1884, other smaller collections have surfaced in various regions of Spain, Europe, and North Africa. In most cases, knowledge of these texts' origins has yet to be determined. As noted by María José Cervera Fras explains, linguistic analysis is the primary means by which scholars attempt to ascertain the birthplaces of these works. "Efectivamente, los aragonesismos de la aljamía se aprecian a todos los niveles: fonético, morfológico, sintáctico y léxico, y constituyen uno de sus rasgos lingüísticos más característicos" (Cervera Fras 69). Based on this information, linguists are able to better focus the geographical range of their objects and approximate localities of origin, which, in the cases of Madrid, BNE Mss. 5305 and 5313, overwhelmingly point to authors of Aragonese origin.

Nineteenth-century pioneers in Aljamiado-Morisco studies focused almost exclusively on philological examinations, the cataloguing of recently discovered works, and broad evaluations of the nature of Aljamiado writings and their authors. Spearheading this movement was Pascual de Gayangos (1809–1897), professor of Arabic at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid until 1881, who published the "first modern scholarly study of Morisco language and culture" in 1839 (Barletta, *Covert* 61). In this article, Gayangos chronicles the content of Aljamiado codices as well as providing the first paradigm for transliterating the Arabic characters of Aljamiado to their Latin equivalents. Also, as Vincent Barletta describes, Gayangos understood that the apparent link between Morisco texts and the Arabic literature of al-Andalus "could serve as a sort of bridge – a way to increase interest in and knowledge of Hispano-Arabic culture while

simultaneously focusing on texts that were firmly part of the Castilian cultural heritage” (Barletta, *Covert* 61-62).

Building on his teachers’ work, Saavedra y Moragas developed a classification system for Aljamiado works dividing them into four categories: “(1) religious materials, (2) didactic and entertaining stories, (3) love stories, and (4) poetry of religious character and laments of exile” (Chejne 44). Like most early scholars, Saavedra considered the bulk of Aljamiado literature to be of poor literary quality. Indeed, a cursory reading of Aljamiado manuscripts reveals definite linguistic hybridity that extends beyond the notion of composing one language in the alphabet of another. Romance grammar appears at times broken and structurally weak, the texts abound with archaic expressions and borrowings from Arabic, punctuation and phrasing are applied only minimally, and the language itself appears simplistic, lacking any unnecessary elaboration. This is particularly true of religious legends, which early scholars tended to shrug off as being mere copies of existing narratives passed on for centuries by oral tradition. For these reasons, Saavedra, like Gayandos, focused the majority of his efforts on philological transcriptions and linguistic analyses.

The nineteenth century also witnessed the publication of a number of transliterations of individual works or collections of texts. George Ticknor, in his 1866 *History of Spanish Literature*, included a version of the “Poema de Yúçuf,” perhaps the most well-known of Aljamiado writings. German scholar Heinrich Morf later published another transcription of this poem in 1883. In 1888, Pablo Gil, Julian Ribera, and Mariano Sánchez published their *Colección de textos aljamiados*. This was a diverse anthology of Aljamiado documents copied by hand in the original Arabic lettering. The premise behind the selection of texts that make up this collection – including chapters on astronomy, divination, a legend of Alexander the Great,

the production of amulets and talismans, numerology, divination, Muslim sermons, select *surahs* of the Qur'ān, and historical narratives – was to aid students of Aljamiado texts in their battle to navigate the complexities of reading these works in their original forms. That same year, Francisco Guillén Robles (1846-1926) published his version of the *Leyenda de José y de Alejandro Magno*. Three years earlier Guillén Robles embarked on the publication of his larger project, a three volume collection of *Leyendas moriscos* (1885-1886). In each of his efforts, Guillén Robles adapts the original Aljamiado narratives, simplifying and modernizing the grammar and lexicon in order to make these works accessible to a wider audience including archaeologists, artists, linguists, and historians.

The trend of philological study continued into the twentieth century resulting in a significant output of general surveys of Morisco literature and critical editions of specific texts or manuscripts. Most notably, Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes headed the production of a series of critical edition texts under the denomination *Colección de Literatura Española Aljamiado-Morisca* (CLEAM) beginning in 1970 and published by Editorial Gredos and later the Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal. This series of nine volumes contributed exponentially to the current linguistic understanding of these texts as well as presenting previously unstudied works in transliterated form with ample critical commentary. In 1972, Galmés de Fuentes organized the first *Coloquio internacional sobre literatura aljamiada y morisca* at the University of Oviedo, the proceedings of which were published as the third volume of the CLEAM series. Similar conferences and colloquia on Mudejar and Morisco topics followed suit throughout Europe and North Africa. Between 1984 and 2005, Abdeljelil Temimi arranged a series of international symposiums and conferences on Morisco studies in Zaghouan, Tunisia. As evidenced by the studies set forth at such venues, later twentieth century scholars were beginning to move beyond

simply transcribing Morisco writings and providing linguistic analyses, shifting their focus instead to the roles of these works as cultural, religious, and historical artifacts. This is of particular importance in light of the fact that the Moriscos left virtually no historical record of their own. Scholars are forced, therefore, to glean their understanding of how the Moriscos negotiated and understood their own identities and places in society through careful study of their legal, religious, and fictional writings.

Such concerns have contributed to a substantial bibliography of Aljamiado-Morisco studies. It is beyond the scope of this introduction to enumerate the breadth of thematic and theoretical scope that these studies have assumed in recent decades. For this reason, I shall limit my mention to those themes and their corresponding scholars that in some way contributed to or inspired the present study. Reem Iversen, Joseph N. Lincoln, Luce López-Baralt, and María Teresa Narváez Córdoba have contributed pages to the role of prophecy in Morisco societies.² Both López-Baralt and Narváez Córdoba, as well as Consuelo López Morillas, have also made significant contributions to a broader understanding of religious theory and practice among the Moriscos.³ Most notably, Narváez Córdoba prepared a complete transliteration and critical study of the *Tafsira* composed by the Mancebo de Arévalo, one of the best-known compendiums of Islamic religious law and guides to ritual observance in circulation among the Moriscos. She also collaborated with López-Baralt on a study addressing representations of popular religion in

² Full citation information for the authors and works mentioned in this introductory chapter are provided in the bibliography. Lincoln's article is an early survey of Aljamiado prophetic texts. Iversen and López-Baralt, "Problemáticas" focus on Aljamiado prophecies attributed to St. Isidore, who foresaw the eventual return to Islamic dominance in the Iberian Peninsula. López-Baralt, "Mahomat" examines a prophecy attributed to Muhammad in which he predicts the destruction of Spanish Islam. Mercedes Sánchez Álvarez includes transliterations of these prophecies in her transcription and study of BNP Ms. 774. Narváez Córdoba, "Mitificación" looks at another prophecy regarding the fall of Al-Andalus as proscribed by the Mancebo de Arévalo in his *Tafsira*.

³ López-Baralt turns her attention in several instances to the voice of the Moriscos as they play witness to the destruction of their civilization. See particularly "Crónica" and "Los moriscos." Narváez Córdoba has published extensively on the works of the Mancebo de Arévalo, with particular emphasis on his rulings regarding moral and ethical behavior and evidence of Morisco understandings of mysticism.

Aljamiado literature. For her part, López Morillas has prepared numerous studies on Morisco prayer, scribal practices, comparative analyses of Morisco and Christian religious doctrine, as well as several studies on Aljamiado and Arabic versions of Morisco Qur'āns.

Considerable attention has also been placed on uses of magic and superstition among the Moriscos. Yvette Cardaillac, for example, has written numerous articles on Morisco magic and superstition – often examining these practices against the backdrop of the Inquisition or New/Old Christian interactions – as well as a book-length study entitled *Les noms du Diable: Essai sur la magie la religion et la vie des derniers musulmans d'Espagne, les morisques*, which takes as its subject the role of magic and religion in the daily lives of the Moriscos. Reinhold Kontzi, Ana Labarta, and Julián Ribera have also made important contributions in this area.⁴ In the related field of medicine, Joaquina Albarracín Navarro examines the ties that link medicine and magic in Andalusian Mujedar and Morisco societies.⁵ Luis García Ballester has written a number of works examining the social roles of medicine among marginalized and dominant societies in early modern Spain. In particular, he looks at the difficulties faced by Moriscos as they attempted to practice medicine alongside Old Christian physicians. Other noteworthy studies have investigated Morisco medicine at the local level.⁶

Increasing numbers of investigations into the Morisco polemical writings and eschatological literature have underscored a furtive preoccupation among Morisco population with questions of death, afterlife, and the World to Come. This propensity was no doubt linked to their depleted status within the Iberian Peninsula and the detectable disappearance, by force or chance, of Islamic customs and religious knowledge over the course of the fifteenth through

⁴ For his part, Kontzi prepared a two-volume, eclectic collection of texts entitled *Aljamiadotexte*. See also Kontzi, “La magia;” Labarta Gómez, “Supersticiones,” “Los nombres,” and *Libro*; and Ribera, “Supersticiones.”

⁵ See “La magia” and *Medicina*.

⁶ See Fournel-Guerin, “La pharmacopée;” Harvey, “Magic;” and Iversen, “El discurso.”

seventeenth centuries. Louis Cardaillac has paved the way for studies in Morisco polemical writings with his book *Morisques et Chrétiens: Un affrontement polémique (1492-1640)* gaining international recognition. Gerard A. Weigers has also devoted pages to the polemical works of Muhammad Alguazir (fl. 1610) and the seventeenth-century converted priest Juan Alonso.⁷ The theme of death and Morisco eschatology is one that is only recently gaining ground. Amalia García Pedraza has composed several studies on the perception and understanding of death among the Moriscos of Granada. Additionally, Miguel Ángel Vázquez recently published a thorough study on Islamic eschatology as observed in a number of Morisco texts. Other scholars have devoted pages to specific aspects of eschatological theory, particularly highlighting Morisco awareness of the afterlife and final judgment.⁸

Finally, Aljamiado manuscripts abound with poetic and prose legends of biblical and Islamic prophets. The earliest transcriptions of this genre date to the 1880s with the publications of Guillén Robles, Ticknor, Nykl, and Gil. Gayangos initiated the study of one of the most famous of Aljamiado legends: the “Poema de Yúçuf.” This poem, extant in two versions, has been transcribed as early as 1883 by Heinrich Morf and in the twentieth century by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, Ursula Klenk, and William Weisiger Johnson. Additionally, Michael McGaha prepared a volume of English translations of the Joseph story from a number of Spanish, Aljamiado, and Catalan sources. This narrative remains one of the most frequently studied of Aljamiado legends.⁹

With regard to Aljamiado prose legends, Menéndez Pidal published in 1911 a two-volume comparative study of Morisco and Christian legends. Later, in 1983, Antonio Vespertino

⁷ See “Andalusi,” “Diplomatie,” “European,” “La diáspora,” and “Muhammad.”

⁸ See George Anthony Abdelnour’s unpublished doctoral dissertation entitled “The Apocalyptic Imagination and Aljamiado Literature in Golden Age Spain,” as well as Abid and Manzanares de Cirre.

⁹ See Irving, Martínez, and Saroihandy.

Rodríguez published his *Leyendas aljamiadas y moriscas sobre personajes bíblicos* as part of the CLEAM series. As its title aptly suggests, this volume brings together legends involving prophets such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Job, Solomon, David, and Jesus selected from several extant manuscripts. Ottmar Hegyi and Mercedes Sánchez Álvarez have also contributed transcriptions of similar legends. Despite the importance of these legends in the lives of the Moriscos, as evidenced by the considerable number of extant examples of this genre, studies on these works are comparatively scarce when compared to the abundance of work that has been done in the field of Morisco history and religious studies. Barletta attempts an explanation in this regard:

The literature of the Moriscos, apparently neither sufficiently *literary* to warrant inclusion in the Hispanic canon, nor intriguing enough to serve as a foundation for new literary works based upon them, had thus been transformed – in a very short time, relatively speaking – from a metaphoric new continent of potentially endless cultural riches to the marginalized hunting ground of dialectologists and dabblers. (Barletta, *Covert* 68)

Most early scholars brushed aside Aljamiado legends as possessing little literary merit. These works were considered to be simply reproductions of legends that had been passed on via oral traditions for centuries before finally being set down in written form for the purpose of preservation. In recent decades, however, this viewpoint has begun to change, due in large part to the efforts of Vincent Barletta, Anwar Chejne, Leonard Patrick Harvey, Gerard A. Wiegers, Mary Elizabeth Perry, and Luce López-Baralt, each of whom has proposed – to differing ends and through unique theoretical approaches – a bridging of historical and literary studies in order to better understand the role that these fictional texts played in the lives of the Moriscos who

copied and used them. Continuing in this vein, recent decades have experienced an increase in the study of Aljamiado legends, though much work still remains to be done in this area.¹⁰

Approaches to Historical and Cultural Analysis

The present study will focus on five legends taken from two Aljamiado manuscripts currently housed in the Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE): the *Hadith de Ibrahim*, the *Hadith de Mūcā kon Yaku el karnicero*, the *Rrekontamiyento de Çulāymān*, the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb*, and the *Hadith i rrekontamiyento de 'Içā kon la kalavera*. The first is contained in the BNE, Ms. 5305 (previously Saavedra XLV (Gg 196) and Guillén Robles CLXXIII), a compilation of *ahadīth*, or Islamic legends. In his article on the dating of Aljamiado manuscripts, Antonio Vespertino Rodríguez includes the explanatory note, “Por las ediciones parciales que se han hecho de este manuscrito se puede considerar del XVI y de procedencia aragonesa” (Vespertino Rodríguez, “Una aproximación” 1,432). The remaining legends are taken from BNE, Ms. 5313 (previously Saavedra XV (Gg 47) and Guillén Robles XLVII), also a miscellaneous collection of legends and additional documents relating to Islamic belief and practice. This manuscript is also believed to be of sixteenth-century Aragonese origin. Vespertino Rodríguez has transliterated each of these legends in his *Leyendas aljamiadas y moriscas sobre personajes bíblicos* with accompanying critical notes and linguistic analysis.

¹⁰ See Harvey, “La leyenda” and Barletta, “Aljamiado-Morisco” regarding legends of Abraham. Joaquina Albarracín Navarro has published several studies on the “Misceláneo de Salomón.” See also Rosario Calzadilla on this prophet. For studies dealing with the legend of Job see Hermosilla Llisterri, “Una version” and Perry. Monferrer Sala looks at a legend of the death of Moses. Numerous studies on Jesus and Mary exist including Hermosilla Llisterri, “Un milagro,” Pareja Casajús; and Vespertino Rodríguez, et. al., “Las figuras.” Finally, Mami looks at miracles of the Prophet Muhammad.

As early as Saavedra, scholars have recognized that the Moriscos in some way either portrayed themselves through their legendary documents or employed the teachings therein to shape their own societies. John P. Hawkins has stated outright:

The legends are instructive allegories. They taught the Moriscos how to live and think, just as they help teach us now how the Moriscos lived and thought. The fact that the allegories ostensibly took place in the times and lands of Muḥ ammad, not in sixteenth-century Spain, gave them authority and universality. (200)

Though there is certainly merit to Hawkins's argument and we cannot rule out the possibility that many texts could be read from a purely allegorical standpoint, several points of contention complicate such an approach. In the first place, the early origins of these works likely did imbue them with a certain level of authority, particularly in light of the theocentric nature of Morisco thought. However, the labeling of a text as an allegory of the lived experiences of the Moriscos groups the entirety of Spain's Morisco population, perhaps unintentionally, under a generalized categorical umbrella. That is, according to the above statement, Hawkins approached the Moriscos in broad terms as a unified people. Recent research to this end has clearly determined that the Moriscos were, in fact, anything but unified. True, within individual communities it may have been possible to find a harmonization of religious and socio-cultural theory, but even a cursory investigation of Aragonese Moriscos and Valencian Moriscos would reveal marked differences both in their understanding and practice of Islam, their linguistic development, and their community organization.

Furthermore, the centuries-old content of Morisco legends means that many of these narratives can be traced to geographic and temporal spaces far removed from those of the Moriscos. As such, the environment of Middle Eastern orthodox Islamic theology that gave

shape to these texts bears little resemblance to the Moriscos, who found themselves isolated, in most cases, from the greater Islamic *'umma*, or community of believers. In other words, a Morisco allegorical reading of a text would necessarily vary from that of a medieval Syrian Muslim. For these reasons, Vincent Barletta insists that it is not practical to assume that traditional methods of literary interpretation can lead us to any logical conclusions regarding the contextualized meanings of these texts. “To understand the pragmatic function of these texts,” Barletta continues, “or the ways in which they were agentively engaged by Castilian and Aragonese Moriscos to mediate their efforts to construct local theories about time and reality, requires another order of analysis altogether” (*Covert* 18). In this way, he advocates a move away from analyses of the texts themselves to focus instead on the ways in which they were used – what Barletta calls an “activity-centered approach” (*Covert*).

The overarching proposal of the present study is to approach each of the five narratives listed above as containing clues as to how the creators and users of these particular works – in the most broad sense, sixteenth-century Aragonese Moriscos – understood Islam, structured their own societies, and negotiated interactions with the greater community of non-Muslims. As we shall see, such a study cannot be limited to the parameters of an individual methodology or theory. Instead, I utilize a number of analytical techniques relating, to varying degrees, to New Historicism and cultural anthropology. To this end, I view each Morisco legend as a single strand in a complex web of discourses at work in the time and space in which the narratives were written. In order to fully understand the culture or history of a particular group, it is necessary to consider the widest possible array of discourses. As new discourses are discovered – be they historical accounts, pieces of artwork, fragments of letters, or any other textual form – they are layered atop one another, contributing to the shaping of a unified image or whole; what Michel

Foucault terms an “episteme.” This episteme is “a unifying principle or pattern” that each people or period in history establishes to negotiate “standards of acceptable and unacceptable behavior, in addition to its criteria for judging what it deems good or bad” (Bressler 131).

Morisco texts, by their very nature, inhibit the formulation of a complete image of their cultural or historical parameters in several ways. First, if we are to study the threads of discourses that intertwine to form a Morisco episteme, we must have access to a viable historical record composed by the people or group that forms our object of study. That is, history cannot be viewed as merely a set of background circumstances helpful for the contextualization of the narrative discourse that is the dominant object of study. Rather, history functions independently as an additional discursive thread that participates in equal measure with literature and language. Nearly all that we now know of the Moriscos (again, generally speaking) comes to us from non-Morisco sources, such as inquisitorial documents, Christian apologists, polemicists, and historians, and North African legal documents. Therefore, we are left to negotiate independent strands of historical and narrative discourse originating from both within Morisco communities and from outside. This is of fundamental importance, for each item of discourse that enters negotiation is unavoidably shaped by the particular cultural, social, historical, and personal biases of the people that produce them. The resulting picture, though likely depicting some level of truth, is unstable, speculative, and skewed by the often negative biases of Old Christian sources. Having no extant historical record written from the point of view of a Morisco author, it is virtually impossible to construct a picture of Morisco culture, religious observations, or historical experiences that can be considered both complete and accurate.

This brings us directly to our second point of contention: the lack of an identifiable author. “Since an actual person authors a text,” explains Charles Bressler, “his or her actions and

beliefs reflect both individual concerns and those of the society” (134). Of course this problem is not unique to Morisco writings. Author anonymity is common to countless medieval and early modern narratives. However, in the case of the Moriscos, this obstacle is compounded with the inability, in most cases, to determine precisely the community from which a text originated. Owing to the efforts of linguists, we are able at best to situate a manuscript within a particular kingdom or region within the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, most manuscripts, as Barletta points out, “lack any sort of marginal commentary or annotation that might provide concrete information regarding the manner in which these texts were interpreted and applied by individuals in such communities” (“Aljamiado” 284-286). Based on these obstacles, it is important to acknowledge from the start that the findings of such an investigation will necessarily be imperfect and fraught with insinuation. On some level, this is true for any historical analysis. Scholars cannot hope to ever fully understand the lived experiences of another people having not lived those experiences themselves. Our knowledge is dependent on the accounts of others and our interpretations are contorted by our personal ideologies and biases. We are obligated, nonetheless, to strive to reconstruct as faithfully as possible the Moriscos’ historical image based on the multiplicity of discourses, though incomplete, that they have left us.

My analysis will attempt to accommodate for our lack of information regarding authorship and first-hand Morisco historical accounts in two ways. Because of the centuries-long histories of these legends, it is fruitful to identify those linguistic markers that index a work within specific temporal or geographic frameworks. To this end, I draw from the cultural anthropological work of Clifford Geertz and the literary theory of Wai Chee Dimock. For his part, Geertz affirms in his *The Interpretation of Cultures*, that every type of writing is itself a

form of interpretation in which we as readers and, thus, participants in a cultural construct actively define a culture's parameters through our own understanding and formulaic analysis of that culture. Of particular interest to the present study is the notion that "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" and that those webs are culture (Geertz 5). In her article "A Theory of Resonance," Wai Chee Dimock similarly affirms that "The ceaseless passage of time touches language on many registers (syntactic, phonological, morphological), but what is most noticeable is the changes in the webs of meaning surrounding individual words" (1060). When studied through this theoretical filter, a close analysis of how Morisco authors shaped the descriptions and discourses of an Aljamiado text – from the selection of individual words to the addition or omission of narrative details – allows the modern reader to interpret how the author may have understood his own cultural and historical existence and wrote that understanding into his text.

As a second measure of accommodation, I will compare the content of the Morisco legends – character behaviors, social interactions, religious practices, and power relations – with both contemporary and later historical accounts of sixteenth-century Aragon. This approach is again inspired by two particular ideas set forth by Dimock. The first explains that a text is imputed with meaning "by situating it among events in the same slice of time" (1061). Any attempt to situate Morisco narratives among contemporary events requires us to turn to Christian historical sources. Again, we must bear in mind the potential distortion of a particular historical account by the personal and political biases of its author. The second is what Dimock labels "diachronic historicism." This is the idea that as a text, or other form of discourse, passes through time, it will interact with different readers who will in turn read the text in distinct ways. Thus, "any particular reading is no more than a passing episode in a history of readings." In

other words, the texts themselves are not fundamentally changed as they move through time. Rather human interaction with a text briefly imprints a certain set of ideologies and biases onto a narrative as it is used by a particular person or group. Each new reading of a text as it passes along the temporal axis is a “resonance” of the original (Dimock 1061). For the Morisco users of Aljamiado legends, then, they imbued specific elements of preexisting narratives with meanings that were relevant within their own historical, social, and religious climate. This practice, then, is quite the opposite of allegory. As allegorical writing adapts a preexisting text, or creates a new text, to represent a particular present, the theory of resonance works in a paradoxical manner, reflecting a specific reader’s understanding back onto a preexisting text. Through careful linguistic and structural analysis, as well as juxtaposing the events contained in Aljamiado legends with accounts of contemporary history, we can attempt to gain some insight into how the Moriscos imposed their own histories and worldviews into their fictional narratives.

Inspired by these theories and others, each of the five chapters that follow will examine particular religious or socio-cultural themes within the context of a particular Aljamiado legend in an attempt to paint a more complete portrait of the people that created and used these texts. Chapter two considers the prominent themes of geography and memory in connection with Morisco prophecies of an eminent return to the former grandeur of Al-Andalus. In addition, I take a primarily phenomenological approach to individual ritual observances in the text in order to understand both those practices that were common practice among the Moriscos as well as how the Moriscos organized these practices within the wider framework of (crypto-)Islamic liturgy and worship. Chapter three is devoted to the brief *Hadith de Mūçā kon Yaku el karnicero* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 1r-4v) in which I examine the themes of religious dissemination, or *taqiyya*, as observed by the Moriscos, as well as the ways in which the characters negotiate

public and private spaces in the religiously heterogeneous society that they share. The fourth chapter begins with a study of the role of the *alfaquí*, or Morisco community and religious leader, in the *Rrekontamiyento de Çulāymān* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 68v-103v). This legend also reveals important information with regard to Morisco practices of magic and the production of amulets and talismans. I close this chapter with an investigation of the roles of men and women as exemplified by Solomon and the woman who would become his wife in comparison with the changing roles of Morisco men and women throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Chapter five looks at psychological and physical negotiations of power in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 23r-41r) through examination of the dynamics of interaction between Job and the Devil, Eblīç. In addition, I consider descriptions in the narrative of Job's body as a site of malady as compared with accounts of plague and other epidemics likely experienced by the Moriscos during their lifetimes. Finally, the sixth chapter is devoted to the study of Morisco eschatological theory, the practice of dying, and the twin concepts of punishment and redemption as exemplified in the *Hadith i rrekontamiyento de 'İçā kon la kalavera* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 16v-22v). This study will then conclude with a brief chapter in which the varied thematic contents of these narratives are synthesized within the wider context of the manuscripts in which they are contained. By widening our field of inquiry to consider the full range of contents in these Mss. 5313 and 5305 of the Biblioteca Nacional Española, we are able to more clearly perceive of these collections as unified, progressive narratives that index valuable details about the fears, hopes, and perceptions of the particular Morisco enclaves that used them.

CHAPTER 2 | The *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm*: Lands of Punishment, Penitence, and Providence

شَاكِرًا لِلْأَنْعُمِ
اجْتَبَاهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

Grateful for his favours.
He chose him and guided him
on the right path.
— Qur’ān 16.121

The *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm*, extant in three manuscripts,¹¹ recounts the curious journey of Abraham through an unknown, topologically varied landscape to witness six distinct miracles of Allah. As a text, like all Aljamiado-Morisco legends, imbued with the necessary elements of didacticism – i.e. unforgettable characters and settings, simplistic language, lack of extraneous detail, and an underlying socio-religious or moral message – the *Hadīth* becomes an instrument of instruction capable of being transported through time and place losing none of the potency of its message. At the same time, the text becomes a vehicle of vagary. Lack of specificity, with regard to geography and time, provides the possibility of, and indeed encourages, reading between the lines. Filling in the empty spaces of the *Hadīth* brings to it new life and vitality. More importantly, readers can bring to the text their own lives, thus positioning parts of their ideologies, hopes, and fears within their adaptations of an existing narrative. It is precisely these subtle indexical markers – these moments in which the Moriscos reveal aspects of their own histories, social practices, and thoughts – that form the basis of our investigation.

¹¹ Leonard Patrick Harvey identifies Cuenca, Legajo 237, Num. 3072 as an Aljamiado version of the legend discovered in 1568 “en una alacena en la pared de una casa que pertenecía a una familia de Moriscos de Arcos (provincial de Soria):” see “Leyenda” 1. The other two manuscripts, both housed in the Biblioteca Nacional de España are Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fols. 113r-134r (Aljamiado) and Madrid, BNE Ms. 5251 (Arabic).

A brief summary of the *Hadīth*'s storyline will be useful before venturing into interpretation. Abraham, having asked Allah to demonstrate his miraculous power, is told to go to the seashore taking with him two loaves of bread and a shepherd's staff. The first miracle narrative begins as Abraham approaches the seashore, drawn by the sound of weeping. Abraham finds there an '*abid*¹², performing *aSSalā*¹³ inside of a *mihrāb*.¹⁴

After finishing his prayers, the '*abid* turns toward Abraham who greets him according to Arabic custom with the words, "Lassalām sea sobre tu, yā-al'abid / yā-onbere." The '*abid* responds in the prescribed manner, "so / bre tu sea lassalām, yā amigo / del piyadoso" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 114r). The two then continue an exchange of pleasantries that will be repeated verbatim between Abraham and each of the characters that he encounters.

As the narrative continues, Abraham follows the '*abid* to the sea's edge where the man takes off his cloak, casts it into the water, and proceeds to walk along its surface. Abraham follows, dumbfounded, until the two men arrive at an island in the middle of the sea. There the '*abid* again performs *aSSalā* while Abraham silently waits until the following dawn.

When dawn breaks, Abraham turns his eyes toward the heavens and sees a ram (*carnero*) descend from the sky into the arms of the awaiting '*abid*. The man then slaughters the animal according to Islamic ritual and roasts its meat. Once prepared, he offers some of the meat to Abraham, who in turn offers the '*abid* some of his bread. This offer is met with momentary confusion as the '*abid* does not understand the identity of the bread nor its manner of preparation. Declining Abraham's offer, the '*abid* tells his visitor to keep the bread for himself. After the meal is consumed, the '*abid* gathers together the bones of the ram into its empty hide

¹² عَبد – a worshiper or otherwise devout practitioner of Islam

¹³ صَلَاة – the Arabic term for prayer

¹⁴ مَحْرَاب – a niche in one corner of the central room of a mosque signaling the direction of prayer

and asks Allah to restore it to life. Allah complies with the *'abid*'s request and Abraham watches as the animal, alive and healthy, returns to the heavens.

Abraham concludes his meeting with the *'abid* by asking him one final question, which will appear numerous times throughout this *Hadīth*: “¿Kuwantos años abe ke / estas aki, en-este lugar?” The *'abid* answers, “abe ciyento / i kuwarenta años i no / komo mas de una vez / en-el-año. Iy-aste acertado / en-el diya de mi-paskuwa” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 117r). Having witnessed this first miracle, Abraham continues along his path.

Again drawn by a sad weeping voice, Abraham deviates from his path in search of its source. This time he encounters a frog seated upon a stone in the middle of the sea. The two exchange the same introduction with which Abraham greeted the *'abid*. Abraham then asks the frog how long he has been seated upon this rock. The frog explains that he has been there for 1,000 years feeding each morning on a single leaf that grows out of the stone. When asked why he weeps, the frog states honestly, “e-miyedo ke no-llegara mi obra // kon lo-ke a facho Allah, ‘aza / wa jala, de garaciya sobre mi / i lloro por miyedo de-Allah” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fols. 119r-119v). With that, Abraham has witnessed Allah’s second miracle and again continues along his way.

The third miracle draws Abraham away from the sea to a great, towering city. Curiously, the *Hadīth* describes the city as though it were constructed at the moment of Abraham’s arrival. Upon entering the city gate, the grandeur that had attracted Abraham is diminished as he finds the entire population dead. Again, we encounter the words “ke parece ke la ora” underlining the immediacy with which these deaths occurred.

Abraham ascends the first tower that he comes to in search of someone who could reveal to him what happened there. In a corner of the tower, he comes across the first of four birds that

he would meet. This large bird spends its time flying through the city feeding on the bodies below. After exchanging greetings, Abraham inquires as to the history of the city and the mysterious death of its population. This bird, the youngest of the four, has been in the city for 1,000 years, yet can remember nothing of its history. His search for an explanation leads Abraham to three other birds, each 1,000 years older – as well as significantly larger and in graver health – than the previous one. In fact, given their tremendous sizes, none of the three is able to move about and, consequently, depends on the first bird to provide them with food.

Even the eldest of the four birds answers Abraham's inquiry with the same uncertainty as the first. Finally, she reveals that the only knowledge that she did possess of the city's history is that which she learned from her sister, who had lived long before. According to her, there was one old woman from the city whom Allah found to be favorable above all others. For this reason, she alone was spared from the calamity that was to befall the rest. Allah determined that the city's people "no mandaban kon-la rrazon" and with a strong voice Allah killed all of them in the blink of an eye (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 126r).

Continuing on his journey, Abraham next encounters a *malake*¹⁵ with his feet planted firmly on the ground and his head high in the clouds. The *malake* is described as having the face of a man, but two wings. Like those before him, he draws Abraham to him through his weeping. This he attributes to his disgrace and inability to obtain pardon from Allah. For 6,000 years the angel had been suffering the punishment of being removed from heaven for not having been prompt in offering praises to Allah.

The angel asks Abraham to intervene on his behalf, asking absolution from Allah for his sins. As Abraham completes his ritual ablutions in preparation for prayer, the gates of heaven

¹⁵ ملك – the Arabic term for angel

open. Before completing two inclinations, or series, of prayers, Allah had already pardoned the angel and allowed him to return to heaven.

Having witnessed this fourth miracle, Abraham journeys to the countryside where he finds a “*mancebo negoro*” guarding his flock. Thirsty from his travels, Abraham asks the young man for water. The *mancebo* replies that he has only milk to offer. Dissatisfied, Abraham is led to a mountain cliff where the *mancebo* taps a rock with his foot producing a fountain of clear water. He then tells Abraham to perform the ritual ablutions. Abraham inquires as to the identity of the young man asking whether he is an angel or a prophet. The *mancebo* replies with the proverbial message, “enpero kiyen obedece / ada-Allah en-toda kosa adebe- / -decese Allah a el” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 130v). With that, Abraham takes his leave and continues along his way.

Finally, Abraham passes through a wood just off his path and follows the familiar sound of weeping to find a second ‘*abid* engaged in prayer. Strangely, the man is submerged in the sea with the water coming up to his throat. This ‘*abid*, like the first, has been in the same place for 140 years. A bird brings him a piece of bread each day and he receives water from a rock below him, which, when tapped by his foot, shoots a stream of fresh water into the ‘*abid*’s mouth. Like the angel in the fourth narrative, the ‘*abid* asks Abraham to pray on his behalf as he is “de los del fuwego” and has been denied redemption for his past errors. Abraham, however, insists that the ‘*abid* offer his own supplications to Allah. The man then performs his rituals ablutions and recites two inclinations of prayers after which Allah is merciful and grants him pardon.

Establishing a Local Flavor: Pan de ordio

Medieval legends possess an inherent flexibility that allows them to be transported easily through time and space, manifesting themselves in any number of socio-cultural, historical, or religious settings. Aljamiado legends are no exception. There are a number of factors that contribute to this flexibility. Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes has compared the anonymity of Aljamiado texts to that of medieval romances. In both cases, anonymity, by definition, displaces the role of the author. The result, explains Galmés de Fuentes is a “gran estabilidad de temas y de técnicas condicionadas, resultantes de una actividad, no subjetiva, sino colectiva y anónima” (Galmés de Fuentes, *Estudios* 73). This formulaic combination of anonymity, motivic convention, and temporal and geographical ambiguity allows for the movement of works from one social, cultural, or temporal realm into another.

With specific reference to the Aljamiado texts of Castilian and Aragonese Moriscos, Vincent Barletta speaks of “textual relations of continuity across the temporal gamut: past, present, and future come together to weave a temporal fabric of human suffering, anxiety, survival, and in-group struggles for prestige and authority” (*Covert* 28). Seen in this light, the concepts of collective activity and “continuity across the temporal gamut” indicate that the movement of texts from one temporal plane into another does not necessitate the severing of connections with their place of origin. Rather, new versions of existing texts are dependent upon the residue framework of existing narratives – their most essential and basic manifestation – to which unique ideologies, agendas, or emphases are placed.

By isolating these individual elements that speak to a particular cultural, geographical, or temporal context, it is possible to break away from this collectivity and continuity. The result is

a particular understanding of a text and its role based on the clues provided by the context in question. Numerous motifs appearing repeatedly throughout the *Hadīth* serve to connect the six individual sections of the narrative, while drawing attention to specific terms and ideas within a Morisco socio-cultural framework. One notable example is the repeated reference to *pan de ordio* found in the first and sixth narratives. A close consideration of the labels attached to this bread by the Morisco scribe and by modern scholars will help to situate the *Hadīth* within a more specific locality. Such an approach echoes the practice of “thick description” proposed by Gilbert Ryle and popularized by anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Geertz uses thick description as a means of effectively describing the practice of ethnography within the field of cultural anthropology. In both cases, the goal is not to observe an object or practice as it appears on the surface in a particular moment, but rather to ponder the many implications – what Geertz refers to as a “socially embedded code” – carried by said objects and practices within a given culture (6).

Geertz explains this through Ryle’s example of contracting one’s eyelids. Ryle posits that one is unable from a purely phenomenological perspective to determine with any certainty if the action performed was a wink or a twitch. The use of thick description allows one to consider carefully the multiplicity of interpretations attached to the action:

The winker is communicating, and indeed communicating in a quite precise and special way: (1) deliberately, (2) to someone in particular, (3) to impart a particular message, (4) according to a socially established code, and (5) without cognizance of the rest of the company. As Ryle points out, the winker has done two things, contracted his eyelids and winked, while the twitcher has done only one, contracted his eyelids. (Geertz 6)

Though, as Geertz goes on to describe, this is just the beginning of Ryle's use of thick description; this example attests to the importance of reading a speck of movement or a particular motif in light of the perceived cultural norms of a given group. In the same way, modern readers approaching an Aljamiado narrative may begin to understand the text "as a powerful *mediating means* by which Aragonese crypto-Muslims collaboratively co-constructed, at least in part, their social world" (Barletta, "Temporality" 575). Thick description becomes a tool with which a reader can identify mediating elements and probe those significances that negotiate the placement of an Islamic legend within a Morisco setting.

In 1566, Francisco Núñez Muley composed his famous *Memorial* defending the cultural practices of Granadan Moriscos. Additionally, a large number of Aljamiado manuscripts have been compiled by such scholars as Pascual Boronat y Barrachina and Pedro Longás Bartibás that shed light on Morisco religious practices. However, efforts to engage with Morisco historical documentation at the local level – particularly in the case of Aragon – are largely stifled by a lack of comparable documentation. For this reason, our understanding of the quotidian social practices and interactions of Aragonese Moriscos relies heavily on the records left by their Christian contemporaries. Such a consideration is met with considerable challenges, the principal among them being an awareness of the differing biases of these writers. Just as Morisco records themselves exemplify varying degrees of assimilation or rejection of Christian practices and culture, so too do Christian chronicles reveal an ample spectrum of viewpoints ranging from dealing kindly and with patience toward Moriscos to outright hatred and rejection of New Christians. One such chronicler, who typifies this latter position, is Pedro Aznar Cardona (d. 1630). As a Christian strongly in favor of the forced expulsion of the Moriscos from Spanish lands, Aznar Cardona's approach in his writing was intended to devalue and dehumanize

them as much as possible. His attacks were thereby aimed at every possible aspect of Morisco thought and socio-religious practices. Cognizant of his position, let us consider a passage in which Aznar Cardona describes the brutish eating habits of the Moriscos:

Eran brutos en sus comidas comiendo siempre en tierra (como quienes eran) sin mesa, sin otro aparejo que oliesse a personas, durmiendo de la misma manera, en el suelo, en traspontines [...] Comian cosas viles (que hasta en esto han padecido en esta vida por juyzio del cielo) como son fresas de diversas harinas de legumbres lentejas, panizo habas, mijo, y pan de lo mismo. Con este pan los que podian, juntaba, pasas, higos, miel, arroz, leche, y frutas a su tiempo [...] y como se mantenian todo el año de diuersidad de frutas, verdes, y secas, guardadas hasta casi podridas, y de pan y de agua sola, porque no bebian vino ni comprauan carne ni cosa de caças muertas por perros, o en lazos, o con escopeta o redes, ni las comían, sino que ellos las matassen segun el rito de su Mahoma.

(2.33r – 33v)

Aznar Cardona depicts the Moriscos in an animalistic sense: sitting, eating, and sleeping on the ground. Yet, amusingly, his judgments do parallel at times those he seeks to vilify. The parenthetical reference to a divinely ordained punishment or suffering on the part of the Moriscos is consistent with their belief that punishment and suffering at the hands of the Christians was the rightful consequence of their neglect of prayer.

Despite his obviously biased agenda, Aznar Cardona does reveal specific information pertaining to the Islamic practice of meat preparation. He states plainly that the Moriscos preferred to slaughter meat in the prescribed (*halāl*) manner according to Islamic tradition. This statement justifies – perhaps against Aznar Cardona’s will – the Morisco practice of eating bread and refraining from meat. As Muslim religious practices were forbidden, the slaughter and

preparation of meat consistent with Islamic law was rendered impossible, causing meat to become inconsumable.

Leonard Patrick Harvey has summarized the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* as “un complejo en buena medida estructurado por esquemas de referencia a los distintos modos de preparar y consumir comida y bebida” (“Leyenda” 18). He then polarizes the representations of Abraham, “consumidor de pan de cebada,” and the ‘*abid*, “exclusivamente carnívoro,” identifying the role of food in the work as a catalyst in the age-old dispute between agricultural and hunting societies (ibid.). The opposition manifest in the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm*, however, is not the result of conflicting methods of food acquisition, but rather that of one society’s lack of familiarity with the eating practices of another. By viewing Abraham not as a consumer of bread opposite a carnivorous ‘*abid*, but as a consumer of a specific type of bread seemingly foreign to the ‘*abid*, the bread itself becomes the focal point and vehicle through which one society (Abraham) reveals itself to another (the ‘*abid*).

The first line of folio 113v of the *Hadīth* states, “tomo Ibrāhīm dos tor- / -tas de pan de ordiyo” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 113v). Three transcriptions of this particular legend currently available¹⁶ reveal the differing ways in which modern scholars have interpreted the type of bread in question. Both L. P. Harvey and Francisco Guillén Robles refer to the bread in question as “pan de cebada.” Antonio Vespertino Rodríguez, on the other hand, true to the original Aljamiado writing of Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313, transliterates “pan de ordi^yo.” Seemingly insignificant on the surface, a thick description of the distinctions between the terms *cebada* and

¹⁶ For an accurate and detailed transcription of Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fols. 113r-134r, see Vespertino Rodríguez, *Leyendas* 148-160. Harvey, “Leyenda” provides a comparative study of extant manuscripts of the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* as well as a transcription of Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fols. 113r-134r placed alongside Madrid, BNE Ms. 5251. For a modernized version of the *Hadīth* based on Cuenca, Legajo 237, Num. 3072 see Guillén Robles, *Leyendas*, vol. 3 161-171.

ordio causes the bread to index a specific position – shared by those who consume it – within specific temporal and regional borders.

Prominent medieval scholar and exegete Ibn Kathīr wrote that barley bread was the preferred bread of the prophet Muhammad throughout his lifetime. Various *hadīth* describe how Muhammad caused food to multiply, particularly barley flour and barley bread, to feed the hungry masses.¹⁷ These narratives can all be traced through a reliable chain of transmission, or *isnād* (إسناد), leading back to the companions of the prophet Muhammad, thereby lending undisputed authority to Ibn Kathīr’s accounts. Barley bread then becomes symbol of Islamic continuity spanning the history of the religion from Abraham (the first Muslim prophet) to Muhammad (the last Muslim prophet) and ultimately to the Moriscos. As the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* exemplifies, this latter group succeeded in preserving and utilizing both the memories of their ancestral prophets and ingredients of their cultural practices.

Questions of regionalism also arise with regard to the term *ordio*. Though technically a synonym of *cebada*, *ordio* evokes a greater sense of regional specificity. As *cebada* is, and was, utilized throughout Spain to refer to barley, the term *ordio* is more commonly found in texts pertaining to Castile and Aragon.¹⁸ Seen within the milieu of the “oriente peninsular,” and referring to what today might be called *avena fatua*, the election of the term *ordio* affects one’s perception of the Morisco text attributing to it a local flavor. Specifically, by writing *ordio* rather than *cebada* on the manuscript page, the Morisco scribe left an indexical marker

¹⁷ See Ibn Kathīr, *Book of Evidences* for an English rendering of the account by Jabir of Muhammad multiplying food for the masses. Other records of Muhammad’s miracles relating to food and barley can be found in two collections of Sunni *hadīth*: Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhārī, *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* and Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, *Sahīh Muslim*.

¹⁸ Manuel Álvarez discusses the term “ordio” in the context of the region of Valbanera and its corresponding *riojano* dialect. Within this framework, he propounds the following definition: “Es voz del oriente peninsular. El significado latino de ‘cebada’ no siempre se ha mantenido: con frecuencia, *ordio* es ‘avena’ y *avena* ‘cebada’. BADÍA en su *Contrib. voc. arag. mod.*, s. v. *ordi*, *ordio* documenta la voz” (Álvarez 179).

contextualizing the work's position within Spanish Islam, if not more specifically within Aragonese lands.

All of this information pertaining to bread and its specific uses within a crypto-Islamic, Spanish context constitute a thick description of *pan de ordio*. Through this, *pan de ordio* comes to be understood as an element pertaining both to the Moriscos' ancestral past as well as to their present. Moreover, assuming the survival of their manuscript pages, *pan de ordio* would come to form a part of their future as well. Thus, barley bread becomes a binding element between the socio-cultural practices of Abraham, Muhammad, and Spain's Morisco populations minimizing the historical, cultural, and religious distances between the Moriscos and their ancestral past.

Aside from the presence of *pan de ordio* itself in the *Hadīth* it is also pertinent to consider the treatment of those who utilize this bread in the narrative. In particular, the reaction of the 'abid to Abraham's offering of bread deserves a moment's consideration given its unique nature. In exchange for his portion of the sacrifice that the 'abid had roasted and prepared according to Islamic custom, Abraham offers the 'abid some of the two "tortas de pan de ordi^yo" that he brought with him on his journey. The 'abid, however, responds to Abraham's offer by asking, "de ke se faze, yā Ibra- / -hīm, ese pan?" Abraham graciously explains the process of making his bread from the initial sowing of seeds to the harvest and the processing of the harvest into bread. After listening to Abraham's explanation, the 'abid responds with the words "kome tu-pan ke-yo-no / lo-e menester ni-lo-konosqo" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 116r). Based on this exchange, it is possible to classify these two figures as those familiar with *pan de ordio* and those to whom it is unfamiliar. The 'abid's lack of familiarity may be evocative of his separation from those who consume it. By extension, as *pan de ordio* would have been presumably

commonplace in Morisco societies, its foreignness with respect to the *'abid* signals a distinction between two peoples.

Within Islam both barley bread and Pascal sacrifice are recognizable elements. As such, the *'abid*'s complete unfamiliarity with the *pan de ordio* points to a detachment from Islamic history and practice. The description of this individual in the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* bears witness to his apparent fluency in the areas of prayer and sacrifice – broadly categorized as pertaining to the ritual practice of Islam. This makes his lack of knowledge regarding *pan de ordio* all the more questionable given that numerous pages of exegetical texts are devoted to descriptions of this bread and its associations with Abraham and Muhammad. Much scholarship has shown that following the conquest of Granada, Spain's Muslim populations became less concerned with the theological and philosophical aspects of their histories, which flourished in the courtly atmosphere of the Caliphate of Cordoba, and more interested in the immediate threat to their Islamic identities. Necessity dictated an emphasis on those writings and rituals that would best safeguard the essential, rudimentary practices of Islam in the face of increasing turmoil. Additionally, as evidenced by the very nature of Aljamiado texts, social-cultural modifications among the Mudejars and Moriscos were accompanied by linguistic modifications, ultimately resulting in the loss of ability to converse in or read Arabic. Seen in this context, it was unlikely that the majority of Moriscos would have been able to approach the complex philosophical treatises of prominent *ā'immāh*, or religious leaders.

In classical Arabic literature, versions of legends involving Abraham typically situate bread and meat together within the paradigm of food offerings. In one example, Abraham visits Hagar and the wives of his son, Ishmael. Upon arriving, Ishmael's second wife offers Abraham bread, meat, and water. Shosh Ben-Ari makes two important points with reference to this

combination of food. The first is that “bread and meat appear together in Muslim versions [of this particular legend] to describe offerings of food.” The second stresses, “meat as the food of the nomads versus bread as the food of the sedentary people is common in Arabic literature” (545). Thus, the coming together of these two distinct foods for the purpose of religious offerings parallels the coming together of Abraham (the bearer of bread) and the ‘*abid* (the provider of meat) in the *Hadīth*. The paradigm set forth in Ben-Ari’s second statement, on the other hand, is curiously inverted in the Aljamiado text. There, it is the sedentary figure (the ‘*abid*) who consumes solely meat, while the nomadic figure (Abraham) carries with him bread.

This inversion of a common *topos* in Arabic literature requires additional consideration. Most notably, it is further evidence of the inversion of social norms among Spain’s Muslim population as they moved away from classical Islam both ideologically and practically. Increased prohibitions of Islamic practices, particularly observable with regard to the failed capitulations that followed the conquest of Granada in 1492, resulted in the gradual loss of knowledge relating to Islam on the part of the Moriscos. Additionally, the Moriscos found themselves largely living among Old Christian populations. In Granada and Castile, the mixing of Christian and Morisco populations became a policy of the Crown following the Second Revolt of the Alpujarras and the exile of Granadan Moriscos to Castilian lands in 1571. It was the hope of the Castilian government that forced proximity and interaction between the two populations would be a catalyst toward assimilation. The situation facing the Moriscos living in the territories of the Crown of Aragon was, in comparison, quite different. Let us consider the following description by Harvey:

Since the thirteenth century, when large numbers of Muslims passed under Aragonese rule and so came to enjoy some degree of royal protection, the Aragonese Crown had in

various ways come to be a protector of the interests of these Muslims. [...] Those who owned the lands that were rented or cultivated by Muslims had economic motives to avoid change. Nobles in particular had often in medieval times given inducements to Muslims to come and work their lands. Little had changed by the beginning of the sixteenth century. A steady drift from royal (*realengo*) to noble estates had taken place because Muslims could be enticed to leave by the better conditions offered by some of the nobles. Muslims both in the Ebro basin and in Valencia excelled in producing high-yield crops on the good irrigable tracts that they tended for Christian lords, and also in dry farming on unirrigated lands (*secano*) to which they were themselves increasingly condemned. Their masters did not want to lose them. Muslims were a vulnerable minority who would show gratitude for a little local protection, for being left alone to live according to the religion of their ancestors. (*Muslims* 85)

Harvey begins this excerpt by establishing a tradition of a more than three-hundred year coexistence between Aragonese nobles, royals, and the Moriscos, who tended their lands. This is followed by an exemplification of the symbiotic relationships that came to characterize Morisco-Christian interactions in the region. Noble landowners received the benefit of increased revenue due to the labors of the Moriscos. The Moriscos, in turn, were afforded the protection of their lords, lands on which to live, ample food, and permission to continue with their religious practices unhindered. It bears mentioning, however, that the image of the Moriscos presented by Harvey in this passage is anything but that of weak farmers indelibly bound to the service of their lords. Though they did rely heavily on noble protection, the Moriscos were not above changing alliances for a better set of working or living conditions. Harvey's description of the Moriscos' mastery of dry farming is further proof of their ability to overcome odds. Not only

were the Moriscos skilled enough to yield substantial crops on workable, fertile land, but the production of hearty crops on lands considered to be unworkable demonstrates true mastery of their craft. The knowledge that the Aragonese Moriscos must have possessed in order to yield successful crops under such unfavorable conditions is reminiscent of Abraham's knowledge of the bread-making process in the *Hadīth*. Rather than responding to the 'abid's confused inquiry with a simple list of ingredients, Abraham delves into the processes of bread making itself, thereby demonstrating his knowledge.

A consideration of the role of *pan de ordio* is incomplete without also mentioning several references to this food found in Christian works of the Middle Ages. The first appears in chapter 690 of the *Primera crónica general* of Alfonso X (1221-1284). Entitled *El capitulo de como frey Pelayo fablo con el conde Fernand Gonçalez, et dixol queel uençrie la batalla*, this chapter narrates the events of Fernán González as he sets out in pursuit of a pig that has fled into a nearby chapel (*hermita*) by the name of "Sant Pedro." Upon entering the chapel and seeing "aquel lugar tan onrrado," the count kneels in prayer:

Sennor Dios a quien temen todas las cosas del mundo, te me perdona si yo en esta entrada erre, ca non sabia nada de la santidad deste logar; et sabiendolo, non fiziera y enoyo, ante uiniera y en romeria et diera y offrendas. Mas perdoname tu, sennor, et dame esfuerço et ayuda contra aquella yent pagana que uiene destroyr a Castiella; ca si la tu non amparas, yo por perdida la tengo. (Alfonso X 393)

Following these supplications for pardon, a monk named Pelayo finds the count and, after learning of his reasons for venturing into the chapel, invites Fernán to stay as his guest. In what we can only infer to be a regrettable tone, Pelayo explains that he can offer "pan de ordio que comas, ca non tengo trigo, et de lo al que pudiere auer" (Alfonso X 393).

A second example is found in Gonzalo de Berceo's *Vida de Santo Domingo de Silos*. In this case, *pan de ordio* is coupled with the theme of demonic possession. Beginning in stanza 683 of the poem, the archangel Michael descends upon a young woman suffering violently for her sins. Michael offers her the following advice:

Sy tu guarescer quieres desta tu malaptia,
ve a Sancto Domjngo de Silos la mongia,
y trobaras conseio atu plazenteria,
nunca des un dinero en otra maestria. (Berceo 120)

The demon responsible for the woman's afflictions, recognizing the curative power of Michael's suggestion, punishes her (*maltráxola*) more fiercely than before. Finally, determined to rid herself of her torment, the woman arrives at the grave of Santo Domingo:

Yógo ant el sepulcro, toda una semana,
comjendo pan de ordio, con vestidos de lana
entrante dela otra el domjngo mañana,
salio un sancto grano dela sancta mjlgrana. (Berceo 121)

In each of the aforementioned works, Christian and Morisco, *pan de ordio* is in some way tied to the theme of penitence and the presence of a religious figure. Abraham offered *pan de ordio* to the 'abid, after witnessing the sacrifice of the Pascal ram. Alfonso X describes the count Fernán González kneeling in prayer and asking for forgiveness of his sins, after which he is provided *pan de ordio* by fray Pelayo. Finally, Gonzalo de Berceo describes a young afflicted woman waiting a week's time at the graveside of a revered saint for forgiveness of her sins and the ridding of her demonic infliction, during which time she consumed only *pan de ordio*. It is

noteworthy with regard to this last example that the woman was dressed in “vestidos de lana,” rough garments often associated with penitence.

The thematic commonality of each of these works places Morisco and Christian texts on equal footing. It is impossible to know to what extent the Morisco author may have been familiar with either or both of the two Christian works. During the Mudejar period, freedom of movement among Muslims was still very much allowed. Kathryn Miller describes mercantile activities between Aragonese and Valencian Mudejars, as well as cases of wealthier Mudejars traveling to Africa and the Middle East (68). By way of example, Miller describes the travels of Aragonese Muslim Al-Tortosini who recorded his travels throughout the Mediterranean: “On his pilgrimage to Mecca he first stopped in Bugia (in modern Algeria). There he met ‘the venerable doctor Muhammad from Marruecos’ [Morocco] who ‘lectured on the Qur’an and commented on the grammar of the *Alfiyya* and other issues touching on grammar” (Miller 69). As Miller’s account continues, al-Tortosini was fortunate enough to collect a copy of Muhammad’s teachings which he brought back to Aragon with him where they were copied for further distribution and use. The fact that such movement was possible throughout the fourteenth and most of the fifteenth centuries indicates every possibility that Mudejars and Moriscos would have come into contact with popular Christian works as they wandered in and out of Christian territories. As a consequence of close proximity and commercial interactions, elements of Christian texts and ideologies were likely absorbed into the creation of Aljamiado legends. The mutual presence of *pan de ordio* in texts of both faiths provides a glimpse of the homogeneity to which early modern Spain aspired. In the case of the Moriscos, this bread became a symbol of their continuing struggle to maintain their local religions in the face of this homogeneity. In the same way that the bread, fashioned by the hands of its consumers, provided physical sustenance,

so too did it remind the people of their enduring connection to Allah through perseverance in prayer.

Frozen Moments and Sedentary Beings

The proposition of a local framework for the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* provokes questions of temporality and history. On the one hand, approaching any Aljamiado legend is contingent upon an understanding of its origins within oral narrative, which allowed texts to wander freely in and out of time and space, adapting themselves to the conditions that they encounter. Being passed from one temporal realm to another – each contributing its own regional, historical, and cultural intricacies – allowed these texts to simultaneously belong to multiple peoples and to none. This leads us to the more pressing consideration of how the historical and temporal factors at work in the *Hadīth* come to bear on the Moriscos' own sense of historical continuity. Prominent Moriscos historian Antonio Domínguez Ortiz advances a provocative theory to this end:

Pero es que los Moriscos no tienen historia. En efecto, la historia supone la existencia de un grupo humano en evolución, dirigido por minorías activas y personalidades sobresalientes hacia un fin, bueno o malo; y puesto que la evolución, el cambio, es esencial en el proceso histórico, se comprende que el tiempo sea su coordenada esencial; no un tiempo meramente físico, astronómico, una sucesión de días, sino un tiempo cargado de hechos con sentido, con significación y rumbo: el *tiempo histórico*. (Notas 40)

The thrust of Domínguez Ortiz's argument centers on the concept of continual forward motion driven by the performance of actions. If a social network functions during a specified timeframe toward a determined goal, and the result of that functioning is notable production toward said

goal, then that population is said to possess a history. Time takes on the specific definition of a period corresponding to, and measured by, a people's actions, rather than the organic advancement of seasons or otherwise naturally occurring marker. By introducing a direct link between a society's production and its historical continuity, the logical result of a cessation in production, or otherwise *doing*, would be the simultaneous cessation of that society's history.

A consideration of the characters' geographical placement in the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* will help to illustrate this principle. Each individual that Abraham encounters is bound in some way to the land on which they are found. In the cases of the '*abid*' in the first narrative, the frog in the second, and the *mancebo negro* in the fifth, each is bound to their respective localities with no mention of whether or not they are physically able to leave. The characters in the remaining three narratives are explicitly described as being firmly rooted in a determined place and, consequently, unable to move.

In either case, being joined with the land parallels Morisco history in several ways. Electing to remain in a given locality suggests a genuine sense of attraction or belonging to that place, possibly due to an established historical presence. Certainly, such a description would resonate with the socio-cultural ideologies of the Moriscos as their writings are abundant with prophetic messages and nostalgic portrayals of their enduring longing for a return to Al-Andalus and Islamic dominance of the Iberian Peninsula.

In contrast, those characters physically bound to the land beyond their own control are, in most cases, suffering some form of punishment. The *malake* in the fourth narrative, for example, explains to Abraham the reason for his own punishment: "yo-so- / -y una almalake de los almala- / -kes de-lalhujab y-adelan- / -toseme un-almalake / kon-un atasbih. I por akello / me a-maldezido mi- señor i me / deballo a la-tiyyerra i yo-le demando / perdon tiyenbo abe de / seis

mil años i no-me a pe- / -rdonado” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 127v). Thus, the text reveals a direct correlation between punishment and the act of praising God. Similarly, the ‘*abid*’ in the sixth narrative is punished for being “de los del fuwego,” a title generally reserved for a demon or one who has fallen out of favor with God and been relegated to a similar status (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 133r). Like the *malake*, the ‘*abid*’s punishment consists of being suspended in a particular locality, submerged up to his neck in water. A sense of urgency pervades both episodes, subtly pushing the audience of readers or listeners toward promptness in their observance of prayer. Such anxiety is congruent with the fear and urgency with which the Moriscos were forced to cope daily with the realities of their Christian status and declining social positions.

The form of punishment exacted is significant in that it does not involve physical affliction or otherwise corporeal suffering. Physical manifestations of punishment through suspension serve as a visible, metaphorical representation of the suffering inflicted on the soul for negligence in religious practice. The characters in the *Hadīth* lost sight of the all-important goal that would provide for the advancement of their histories – the preservation and practice of Islam. Seen in this religious framework, their punishment becomes a kind of excommunication.

Generally speaking, the socio-religious implications of punishment resonate strongly with the social restrictions placed upon the Morisco populations following the forced conversions in Aragon and Valencia. In 1526 the Emperor Carlos I, after having traveled through Granada to witness first-hand the conditions of the Moriscos, convened a meeting of prominent theologians in the *capilla real*, burial place of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel. The Edict of December 7 set in motion the following prohibitions:

Mandaronles quitar la lengua, y el habito Morisco, y los baños: que tuviessen las puertas de sus casas abiertas los dias de fiesta, y los Viernes, y Sabados: que no usassen las leylas y zambras a la Morisca, que no pusiessen alheña en los pies, ni en las manos, ni en la cabeça las mugeres: que en los desposorios, y casamientos no usassen de ceremonias de Moros, como lo hazian: que el dia de la boda tuviessen las casas abiertas, y fuessen a oyr Missa, que no tuviessen niños expuestos, que no usassen nombres de Moros, y que no tuviessen entre ellos, gaizis de los Berberescos. (Bleda 656)

As Harvey describes them, these restrictions, rather than focusing on the religious practices of the Moriscos – who would no longer have been considered, on paper, Muslims – emphasized the banning of all social practices associated with Islamic Spain (*Muslims* 106). Having theoretically stripped the Moriscos of their religion and cultural practices, continuity of their historical lineage, as they understood and identified with it, was no longer possible. The Moriscos were a people lacking an identity; a symbolic *tabula rasa* on which could be encoded the doctrines and customs pertaining to their new Christian lives.

Spain's Christian leaders extolled a variety of reasons for restricting Morisco movement. Massive efforts were made during the reign of Felipe II to move Moriscos away from Spain's coastal areas. Increased emphasis on creating a homogenous Catholic state was supported by the paranoia of those in power regarding what they perceived to be the Turkish threat to Spanish (Christian) lands. In fact, this threat was perceived less as the threat of an Eastern enemy against a Western Empire and more as an Islamic threat against Western Christendom. As the prospect of expulsion was being considered in the early seventeenth century, alternative options were weighed including moving the Moriscos into ghettos and castration. Don Manuel Ponce de León "urged that Moriscos be forbidden to move about freely, and that galley service be the

punishment for those Moriscos who kept weapons” (Perry 145). The mutual outcome of these practices speaks to the desire of Spain’s monarchs to prohibit the growth and spreading of the Morisco populations.

The pairing of castration with the separation of populations also seems to exemplify a concern that the Moriscos would not only continue their own bloodlines, but also contaminate those of Christians. Descriptions of this type by early Christian historians categorize the Moriscos as a type of infection, disease, or pollutant that threatened the “health” of the Christian populations. On this very subject, Mary Elizabeth Perry writes, “Moriscos represented the impure, the lewd, and the nefarious – in a word, pollution. Christians had not only a right but a duty to defend themselves against this pollution” (54). As the fifteenth-century “limpieza de sangre” statutes against the Jews attest, this fear was concerned with physical rather than spiritual contamination depicting “Jewish ‘heresy’ as a source of blood pollution” (Carr 31). Such statutes thereby attributed physical ailment or disease to a religiously based pathogen. Matthew Carr then describes this ideology’s political correlation stating that “religion and reasons of state were rarely separate in Renaissance Spain” (37). The theocentric unification of Spain under the banner of Catholicism brought with it “a sense of collective purpose and a common identity that could be shared with all Spain’s subjects” (Carr 38).

The text of the *Hadīth* exemplifies this fear of infection in various ways. Punishment, for example, takes the form of an often-total prohibition of movement. Additionally, as God had informed each character, Abraham would be the only person that they would see. This pairing of total lack of movement with complete isolation effectively places the characters under quarantine, rendering them incapable of either performing “dangerous” acts or spreading “infectious” speech.

With the suspension of historical progression comes the simultaneous destruction of temporalities within the narrative. Temporalities in this case can be considered alongside Domínguez Ortiz's definition of historical time: a chronological progression toward an end goal. Moreover, the reader receives little to no information regarding the pasts or futures of the *Hadīth*'s characters. Each encounter exists as an isolated, stagnant moment that Abraham approaches, interacts with, and leaves.

A consideration of Abraham's interactions with the four birds in the tower will help to illustrate this point. One particular passage reads:

I fuwese Ibrahīm / mas adelante i paso por-una // cibdad muy-garande i buena / torreada
asi-komo ke se u- / -biyese farawado la-ora. Iy-entoro / Ibrahīm por la-puwerta / de la-
cibdad i fallo todas / las jentes muwertas / sin alqafanes sino ansi / komo se eran kon sus /
ropas no-teñiyan ni-goliyan / ke parece ke la-ora abiya- /-n muwerto. (Madrid, BNE Ms.
5313 fol. 119v-120r)

This scene is one of unfinished business, as though a writer had paused in the construction of his narrative after establishing the initial setting. Furthermore, the repetition of the words "la-ora" creates a sense of immediacy with respect to the construction of the towering city and the deaths of its inhabitants. On a more curious note, there is no indication of whom or what performed these deeds. The temporal immediacy of both the city's formation and the death of the entire population verify that those lying dead were not responsible for the city's construction. So, Abraham and the readers following his lead stand before a temporal and contextual mystery, observing what appears to be a simultaneous beginning and end. Historical time has ceased and cannot be resumed.

The second sentence of the above quotation offers a glimpse into the Islamic approach to tending to the dead by way of the term “alqafanes.” According to the *Hadīth*, one’s regular clothing would be removed and their body prepared in a *kafanun* (كفن), sometimes translated as a “winding cloth.” This is a long piece of clean, white fabric that is wrapped around the naked body. The scene described in the Aljamiado text demonstrates a complete disregard for this important tradition. Leaving the dead exposed in the streets conveys the message that as these people did not live as Muslims neither should they die as such.

Architectural comparisons are abundant between the Muslim palaces and fortresses of Al-Andalus and the city described in the *Hadīth*. Perry describes the Great Mosque at Cordoba, the Alhambra palace in Granada, the Alcázar of Seville, and the Torre de Oro also located in Seville as paying “mute testimony to the glory and grandeur of al-Andalus” (22). Not only this, these structures served the important function of being symbols of endurance, dominance, and power. Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada attaches to Granada the label “*tierra que Allah ennobleció con excelsitud y esplendor*,” stating that the city “tenía fama de poseer un clima similar al de Damasco” (17). With regard to the Alhambra, which Perry portrays as dominating the city below it, the uniqueness of this palace rests in its design as both a palace and fortress. Being completely self-sufficient within its walls, the roughly 1,200,000 inhabitants of the city were able to isolate and protect themselves from external threats, fully reliant on their own agricultural and artistic production for sustenance (Ladero Quesada 29). This combination of rich palaces, golden towers, and vibrant cities suggests the image that Abraham must have perceived as he approached the towering city described in the *Hadīth*, looking up at its grandeur as he entered through the city gates.

These descriptions also closely parallel the moment captured in the painting *La Rendición de Granada* (1882) by nineteenth-century artist Francisco Pradilla y Ortíz (1848-1921). Like the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm*, this work presents us with a moment of tense waiting. As Boabdil and his compatriots face the larger forces of Ferdinand and Isabel, the two opposing factions stand in mere observance of each other. No facial indicators suggest traces of contempt, happiness, or any other emotion aside from simple patience. As Boabdil holds the keys to the city and Ferdinand waits with outstretched hand to receive them, the observers – referring both to one studying the painting as well as the onlookers within the work – experience a mounting tension. The moment of reception and consequent passing of the city’s control from one ruler to another is beyond the temporal scope of the painting, thus leaving the tension unresolved. The observers are left to dwell in this moment of uncertainty with only a prophetic glimpse as to the outcome. The framing of this precise moment also extends the identities of Boabdil and his people as Granadan Muslims. They have not yet had to confront the radical changes that would reshape their identities following Ferdinand’s claiming of the keys, symbolically bringing the history of the Nasrid Dynasty to its end. That being said, Pradilla y Ortíz hints at the power and control of Ferdinand and his forces as they occupy the majority of the painting’s right-hand side, placing the mounted king confidently in the center of the work. Overlooking all of this is the city of Granada, silently looming in the background behind its Muslim inhabitants.



Fig. 1 *La Rendición de Granada*

Luce López-Baralt describes the conquest of Granada in 1492 as the moment that “brought the crisis” of hybridization to Spanish Muslims (“The Moriscos” 480). The reinstitution of the kingdom of Granada into Christian Spain was a world-altering event for the kingdom’s Muslim population. As Lourdes María Álvarez remarks, Granada’s Muslim population was “the first sizeable Muslim community to live under Christian rule, subject to Christian law and the power of the Inquisition by virtue of their conversion” (568). Change on such a large scale must have produced feelings of fear, even panic, on the part of Granada’s Muslim population as it awaited news of how the new identity of their land would affect their lives. As Mudejars, Spanish Muslims were permitted, for the time being, to maintain their cultural and religious practices. Even so, the Mudejars found themselves in a peculiar position both geographically and psychologically. Granada, as a separate kingdom under the Nasrid Dynasty, had developed a unique culture. Notable Morisco Francisco Núñez Muley describes in

his famed *memorial*, “while it [Granada] does not have the same customs as other parts of Spain, it cannot be assimilated to the Barbary Coast, or to Islam in general [...] because it has its own separate culture.” In response, Barbara Fuchs affirms that “the threatening otherness of the Moors is recast as the geographical particularity of a region chafing under the increasing control of a centralized state” (“Virtual Spaniards” 16).

López-Baralt, Núñez Muley, and Fuchs all describe a shifting of centers and reconfiguration of Spain’s perception of otherness. Al-Andalus, which once stood as the cultural and political capital of the entire Muslim world, was a source of alterity in 1492. The Mudejars feared for the safety and continuity of their way of life; a fear especially potent within an Islamic context in which one’s faith is itself a way of life. As Mark Meyerson describes, Muslims carry within themselves both a self-perception and a group-perception based on religious belief as well as “on the perpetuation of a social world” (366). Due to this dual perception, the social world and the Muslim identity constitute two halves of the same whole. Muslim individuals depend on an atmosphere in which the complex system of regulations set forth in the Qur’an and the teachings can be put into practice. This atmosphere, in turn, depends on the people for its preservation. As efforts toward assimilation persuaded and often pushed Mudejars and Moriscos to embed themselves within Old Christian societies, self and group perceptions were simultaneously at risk. The metaphorical death of one’s Islamic identity through assimilation would inevitably lead to the death of Islamic society as a whole, thereby correlating to the deaths of the individual and the society that Abraham witnessed as he entered the city.

Returning to the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm*, initially nothing comes of Abraham’s questioning of the four birds regarding the history of those who perished. A connection is immediately notable here between the immobility of the birds and their lack of historical knowledge. Each bird that

Abraham encounters is older, larger, and consequently less mobile than the previous. They have been prohibited from living productive lives due to their lack of movement. Consequently, the birds have no historical record of their own. Abraham finally succeeds in extracting a short historical account from the fourth and eldest bird who reveals:

—No-lo-se / mas-ke tu sino por lo-ke / me fizo a saber mi ermana ke / viviyo muy
garande tiyenpo / ke en-su-tiyenpo k-ella / viviyo ke konociyo una / viyeja de muy
garande tiye- / -npo de los d-esta cibdad / ke la-salvo Allah de lo-ke de- / -ballo sobr-ellos
ke no-ke- / -do ninguno sino akella / viyeja. I dixo ke los // d-esta cibdad eran ke / no
mandaban kon-la-rrazon / ni-se devedaban de nen- / -guna kosa eskiva. I deballo / Allah
sobr-ellos una-voz ke / muriyeron todos mas pere- / -sto ke pestañada de ojo. (Madrid,
BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 125v-126r)

Both the manner in which the bird relates this history and the content of the message parallel the Moriscos' own historical experiences. Considering first the source of this information, these memories do not pertain to the lived histories of any of the birds. Instead, they come from a far older source. As the eldest bird passes on these histories orally, she no doubt changes the way in which they were related to her. In the same vein, the Moriscos made use of existing legends and narratives from their distant past, adapting them as needed to reflect their own histories:

Notwithstanding the absence of historical writings, the Moriscos had a strong historical consciousness, derived from religious history. The Moriscos chose to be guided by old Islamic historical traditions, omitting much of the political and intellectual history of classical Islam. As a result, the nearest thing to historical writings consisted of tracts written by Muslim predecessors in which history and legend were intertwined, which

constituted an integral part of the religious writings that formed the basis of the education of the Morisco (Chejne 97).

The boundaries between the historical (factual, verifiable) and the legendary (fabricated, unverifiable) are blurred as multiple narratives collapse into one another. Despite apparent temporal conflicts, inasmuch as Islamic historical traditions were not authentic narratives of the Moriscos' own lived experiences, the universality of their morals facilitated the integration of existing narratives into new contexts. In this way, Islamic legends were not themselves allegorical representations of Morisco history. Rather, they were templates of upright behavior and religious devotion according to which the Moriscos were able to mold their quotidian interactions, while simultaneously imposing the influences and understandings of traditional narratives on the creation of Aljamiado manuscripts. Thus, texts and human beings participated in a relationship of mutual concession, each leading to the modification of the other.

Islam, unlike western Christendom, does not always view history along a linear progression. Adam, Abraham, and other prophets found in earlier Hebrew texts are considered to have been Muslims, though they existed centuries prior to the life of Muhammad and the subsequent founding of Islam. This would suggest that histories are able to progress in a more nebulous manner moving both forward and backward in time, making adjustments as necessary to suit the needs of contemporary authors. Seen in this light, the intertwining of history and legend by Morisco writers as vehicles for communicating their own histories seems entirely plausible.

Hosseini Bouzineb adds that as the Mudejars and Moriscos saw themselves literally uprooted from their lands and metaphorically ripped from their cultural roots, they consequently experienced a "ruptura con las fuentes." With the passing of generations, Morisco ties to their

historical past – las fuentes – were literally severed as offspring possessed no direct knowledge of the land and experiences of their parents and relatives. Thus personal fantasy became the sole medium through which to come to terms with what was once historical identity. The tools of personal fantasy were: “exageración, lo maravilloso, lo desmesurado, proliferación de todos los elementos que pueden dar una esperanza de volver a recuperar lo perdido, y la vuelta a la antigua situación de autogobierno; elementos, sobre todo, fantásticos y pocas veces objetivos” (Bouzineb 68). Bouzineb states plainly that as the Moriscos turned to fantasy as a means of remembering what was lost, they also understood the impossibility of actually returning to the greatness of their past, thus relegating all such desire to the realm of fantasy.

Much of the description of both “la vieja” and the birds in the *Hadīth* are evocative of the Mora de Úbeda as depicted in the *Tafsira* of the Mancebo de Arévalo. Describing the Mora’s physical being, the Mancebo states that “era tan garande suw kuwerpo i tersiyyos kes- / pantaba. No bi suw iwwal ni e oído a nadi ke ubi- / yese bisto tan desemeyada mucher” (Arévalo fol. 440r). Also like the four birds, the Mora was of advanced age and was physically unable to leave her house. Additionally, she had no living relatives with the exception of a single niece, the daughter of her sister. All of her remaining family had died following the conquest of Granada. Just as the sister of the eldest bird was the last remaining witness to the catastrophe that befell the city in the *Hadīth*, so too was the Mora the only remaining witness to the conquest of Granada. Finally, the Mora begs of the Mancebo de Arévalo, “Pelega / a suw inmensa bondad ke ansíy komo es / suw poderíyyo sea suw amahamento enta los / mmusliymes desta dorada isla” (Arévalo fol. 442r). This supplication for pardon corresponds nearly exactly to the requests of the *malake* and the second *‘abid* in the *Hadīth* that Abraham act as intercessor on their behalf. Like Abraham, the Mancebo is identified with regard to his “bondad.” With respect to the act of

pardon, the term *amahamento* is a Spanish corruption of the Arabic *mahā* (محا) meaning “to erase” or “to pardon.” The Mancebo is thus asked to fulfill the role of intercessor between God and the people of Granada seeking pardon for their past offenses.

As María Teresa Narváez Córdova explains in the introduction to her edition of the *Tafsira*, this work was most likely written during the first half of the sixteenth century, the same period proposed for the composition of Madrid, BNM Ms. 5313 (30). Such temporal proximity certainly explains the striking similarities between the two works, as well as establishing a set of *topoi* for remembering Al-Andalus: weeping for the loss of a people, firmly rooting oneself to the land, and referring to the land as an island. One final common thread that deserves further attention is the concept of divine punishment. As the eldest bird in the *Hadīth* explains, the population’s own behaviors led to their destruction. John P. Hawkins similarly testifies that “the Moriscos’ problems are for the most part a consequence of their own sins, their own capitulation to Christianity” (203). In addition to his passages concerning the Mora de Úbeda, “El Mancebo lleva a cabo una curiosa mitificación de Andalucía, que ve como una ‘nueva Israel’: ambas han caído como consecuencia de un castigo divino por los pecados de sus habitantes” (Narváez Córdova, “Mitificación” 143). Each of these sources indicates that castigation and destruction of a people was a byproduct of their transgressions. More importantly, it was God, rather than an opposing people, that in each case exacted punishment. Lack of an enemy necessitates the placement of blame for such destruction on the Moriscos themselves. Their defeat is therefore just punishment from God for failure to uphold the precepts and practices of their faith.

Further exemplification of this type of punishment can be found in the widely-studied manuscript 774 of the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. This work contains several prophecies written by Moriscos regarding Al-Andalus. Two of these are attributed to Saint Isidore of

Seville, each proclaiming the imminent return of Islamic dominance to the Iberian Peninsula following a period of hardship and suffering. Another, however, attributed to the prophet Muhammad himself, does not bear the same optimism. The prophet describes the land of Al-Andalus as one of piety, essentially a holy land, for Spain's Muslims. Yet, as all of the prophecies contained in this manuscript attest, in order for the Moriscos to return to this land they must suffer for their lack of observance of the very fundamentals of their Islamic faith. Muhammad clearly indicates that the Muslims are not exempt from assuming responsibility for their dire situation. Bouzineb identifies self-blame as a characteristic of the Islamic mindset. Moreover, he relates this perception back to the birth of the religion:

Es el momento de grandes victorias del Islam, que, socialmente, se justifican con ese estado de perfección religiosa. Si los musulmanes han tenido desgracias en otros tiempos, se explica, justamente, por la corrupción de aquéllos y por no haber seguido el verdadero Islam de esa época. (Bouzineb 71)

This statement places undeniable emphasis on the importance of the past as a model for Islamic socio-religious practice. It is not permissible, therefore, for Muslims to adapt their practices to their surroundings. Rather, their identity as Muslims is dependent upon the continuity of practices and ideologies originally associated with the model for all Muslims: Abraham.

In the six sections of the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm*, the characters appear to closely typify the mindset described by Bouzineb. Perhaps the best example is that of the frog in the second narrative. When Abraham asks him why he weeps, the frog responds, “e-miyedo ke no-llegara mi obra // kon lo-ke a facho Allah, ‘aza / wa jala” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 119r-119v). At no point does the frog place blame for his fears on another. Given the commonly didactic functions of Morisco legends, this message can be read as a lesson in strong moral character.

Though they suffered considerable damage as a civilization – due in no small part to the Spanish Crown’s failure to uphold the capitulations of the surrender of Granada¹⁹ – this legend would seem to instruct the Moriscos not to fault those in power, but to seek the betterment of oneself.

Al-Andalus: An Island of Prophecy

The connections between the lands depicted in the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* and its characters deserve further attention alongside Paris, BNP Ms. 774. Geographically situating the production of any Aljamiado manuscript proves exceptionally difficult given the inherent ambiguity surrounding them. A generalized set of statistics developed by such scholars as Eduardo Saavedra y Moragas, Pascual de Gayangos y Arce, Henri Lapeyre, Harvey, and Vespertino Rodríguez allow us only an estimate as to a text’s origins hoping that our subject falls within the proposed majority. The common hypothesis is that the majority of Aljamiado works date to the sixteenth century, particularly during times of intensified political conflict. Saavedra y Moragas dated the manuscript containing the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* to this period. With regard to locality, the majority are attributed to the Ebro Valley region of the Kingdom of Aragon. Lapeyre, in his invaluable study of Morisco geographies, states with regard to Aragon, “La mayor parte de estos pueblos están situados en la actual provincia de Zaragoza, algunos en el extremo norte de la provincia de Teruel” (117-118). These two hypotheses derive from two pieces of information:

¹⁹ These promises drawn up by the Catholic Kings on the occasion of Granada’s surrender were meant to ensure reasonably favorable treatment to the defeated Muslims. Harvey writes, “they would be left in possession of most of their property and would be allowed to continue to worship God as they saw fit, provided they made a total military and political submission. If they resisted for a long time, on the other hand, and certainly if they held out until they were overwhelmed, they could expect harsh treatment, loss of their property, and in all probability loss of their personal liberty” (*Muslims* 25). Florencio Janer quotes directly from this surrender treaty in his *Condición social de los moriscos de España* (222-228), an English translation of which is found in Cowans 15-19.

the locations in which texts have been discovered and thorough linguistic analysis of extant manuscripts.²⁰

With these considerations in mind, and assuming that Madrid, BNM Ms. 5313 forms part of the described majority of manuscripts, we can reasonably conclude that the scribe would have lived inland, possibly along the Ebro River. Because the scribe likely did not have any personal connection to the sea, repeated mention of the sea and of islands suggests an allegorical function. Henry Charles Lea attests to this, stating, “they [the Moriscos of Aragon] lived at a distance from the coast, so that they could hold no communication with Barbary and by the law they were enslaved if they attempted to leave the kingdom” (*Moriscos* 89). In a period of cultural decline, the Moriscos likely would have turned to their legends much as modern readers turn to fiction today: as a means of escape. Thus, the depiction of a varied, perhaps unknown, landscape may serve the invaluable function of allowing the Moriscos to remove themselves mentally from their present situations, turning instead to a kind of literary Utopia.

Fashioning a historical record in which the Moriscos were able to remove themselves from their current situations allowed them to preserve an image of their civilization – broadly speaking – more grandiose, pious, and devout than that which they were capable of bringing to fruition during their lifetimes. The vicarious substitution of one civilization’s history for that of another again raises the question of fractured temporalities. In the specific case of the Moriscos, they refashioned the most glorious moments in the history of Islam, thereby reigniting a waning pride in their own civilization. Distorted temporalities were met with an equally distorted sense

²⁰ For information on the dating of Aljamiado texts see Gayangos y Arce, *Catalogue*; Guillén Robles, *Catálogo*; Harvey, *Muslims* 129-135; Saavedra y Moragas; and Vespertino Rodríguez, “Una aproximación.” For a general introduction to Aljamiado linguistics, see the series of volumes published by Madrid: CLEAM (Colección de Literatura Española Aljamiado-Morisca), particularly Vespertino Rodríguez, *Leyendas*; Sánchez Álvarez; and Hegyi, *Cinco*. Other pertinent studies in this area include Fuente Cornejo et. al.; various studies by Galmés de Fuentes including *Actas del coloquio internacional sobre literatura aljamiada y morisca coedited with Emilio García Gómez*, “Lengua,” and “La literatura;” Gayangos y Arce, “Glosario”; and Ottmar Hegyi, “Observaciones.”

of what was real, favoring increased incorporation of fantastic elements in their writings.²¹ The resulting literary manifestations permitted the Moriscos to become what they (Muslims) had been (a thriving Caliphate), and not what they (Moriscos) were in reality (subjects of a growing Christian state).

Scrupulous refashioning of their own Islamic past caused geographical representations in Morisco literature to bear new and more complex significations, as the prophetic traditions of both Christians and Moriscos at the dawn of the sixteenth century attest. Reem Iversen describes the apocalyptic themes of Christian prophecy with “su estructura de ‘destrucciones’ y de ‘restauraciones’” (133). Spanish Muslims would adapt this paradigm to fashion their own prophetic tradition: “De la misma manera que las profecías cristianas, las profecías musulmanas empezaron a desviarse paulatinamente de las generalidades contenidas en la historia del Juicio Final y empezaron a centrarse más en situaciones históricas concretas que le fueron contemporáneos a sus autores” (Iversen 133). As Iversen’s description tells us, the Moriscos were acutely aware of the political and social changes and difficulties surrounding the Christian Reconquest of Spain. The result was the fashioning of their own prophecies laden with “destrucciones” and “restauraciones” on the foundations of Christian paradigms.

A unique function of Morisco prophecy, aside from inspiring hope in the face of hardship, is the quiet subversion of authority brought about by altering Christian prophecies to favor a prosperous future for the Moriscos. The fact that the Moriscos converted Saint Isidore into a mouthpiece declaring the imminent return of Islamic Spain in two of the four prophecies found in Paris, BNM Ms. 774 flies in the face of his respected position within Christendom. To cite one example, Saint Isidore exposes the false religiosity of Christian clerics “ke todos serán

²¹ For further information on representations of the fantastic and the “carácter maravilloso” of Aljamiado texts see Bouzineb and Narváez Córdoba.

dest^uruidos por sus grandes pekados, ke olvidarán el serviçiy^o de su iglesi^ya” (Paris, BNP Ms. 774 fol.298r [Sánchez Álvarez 248]). When read before a Christian audience, this prophecy demonstrates the same self-blame that the Moriscos placed on themselves for the dwindling of Islamic power in Spain. Placement of this same text within a Morisco context, however, effectively converts it into an anti-Christian polemic through which the falsehood of the Christian faith is exposed.

Each of the prophecies in Paris, BNP Ms. 774 centers on the expulsion of Granada’s Muslim population and their eventual return to Al-Andalus. Anwar Chejne describes Al-Andalus on the eve of its conquest as a “dark Island” incapable of sustaining its Islamic religion having lost so many of its intellectuals to North Africa (19). By 1520, as conversion and socio-cultural rejection became a bitter fact, the Moriscos increasingly turned toward this “dark island” with optimism. Harvey refers to this period between roughly 1520 and the Second Revolt of the Alpujarras (1568-70) as “the middle period” of Morisco history, during which Granada became “a hotbed of rumor and panic” (*Muslims* 53-54). Prophetic texts (*jófores*) circulated freely – even obsessively, according to López-Baralt – throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (“El oráculo” 42).

Placed alongside this prophetic tradition, several passages in the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* bear strong resemblances to similar accounts in the prophecy attributed to Muhammad. Muhammad begins his prophecy by telling the people, “Yo os guiaré a una isla a piedad [...] una isla en poniente que le dicen Andalucía, que habitarán en ella gentes de mi comunidad de creyentes en el fin del tiempo” (López-Baralt, *La literatura* 225).²² This explicit reference to Al-Andalus as an island is unique among the prophecies contained in Paris, BNP Ms. 774. Only one similar

²² This citation is a modernized version of the original manuscript text. Mercedes García-Arenal includes a similarly modernized version in her collection *Los moriscos* 57-62. Other, more literal transcriptions are found in Lincoln 641-643; López-Baralt, “El oráculo” 53-57; and Sánchez Álvarez 249-253.

reference is found in folio 278r to “la isla de España” attributed to ‘Ali Ibnu Jabir (Paris, BNP Ms. 774 fol. 278r [Sánchez Álvarez 239]).

In his *Sumario de la relación y ejercicio espiritual*, contained in Madrid, BNM Ms. Res. 245, the Granadan Morisco Yuse Banegas relates to his son, “Hijo, yo no lloro lo pasado, puwes, a ello no ay rretornada, pero lloro lo ke tu berás si as bida, i atiyendes en esta tierra, yen esta Isla de España” (Harvey, *Yuse* 301). The island of Al-Andalus is mentioned twice by the Mancebo de Arévalo in his *Tafsira*. As previously stated, the Mora de Úbeda refers to the “dorada isla” that she inhabits, referring specifically in this case to the city of Granada. Also, in his chapter devoted to the fall of Andalucía, the Mancebo writes, “esta mi peresente intenziyyón no es de taratar (fol. 292v:) de nuwestoro onrrado Alquren[,] sino de la kaída de los mmusliymes de Kastilla y-en espe- siyal de la isla del-Andalluzziyya” (159). Islands, by their very nature, are segregated forms symbolizing the most complete separation from all other landmasses. Given that none of the localities mentioned in these examples is in reality an island, they serve the metaphorical function of embodying each author’s approach to the uniqueness of a particular place or people.

It is notable that Muslim sources refer to Al-Andalus as an island, while the prophecies attributed to Saint Isidore refer instead to “la tierra de España.” Effectively, terminological inconsistencies result in a fundamental shift in perception. Although each of these prophecies forms part of the same Aljamiado manuscript, indexical markers signal two markedly distinct worldviews. Saint Isidore’s reference to “la tierra de España” suggests a homogenous, unified, Christian view of Spain. Muslim references to Spain and Al-Andalus as “la isla” result in a feeling of separation from another entity. In the case of the Moriscos, such a reference serves the metaphorical representation of the Moriscos surrounded on all sides by Christians. Thus, they

are separated from *dar al-Islam*, or the greater Islamic world and, on a local level, from neighboring villages or cities.

In fact, separation permeates the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* stimulating a variety of metaphoric representations. For the *‘abid* in the first miracle narration and the frog in the second, the sea acts as a physical barrier – much like a castle moat – maintaining distance between these subjects situated on their islands and the outside world. Additionally, each character expresses their physical separateness in their greeting of Abraham: “ame ve- / -nido rrevelacion de par- / -tes de mi-señor ke no / me veriya en-akeste // lugar nenguno sino-tu / ell-amigo de Allah” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 114r-114v). Mention of revelation also indexes this phrase within the prophetic tradition placing it alongside Paris, BNP Ms. 774.

A historical survey of Spain’s Islamic populations between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries reveals a common theme of separation. In the thirteenth century, the separation of religious groups was often a key tool in maintaining coexistence (Carr 21). Muslims and Christians, for example, were able to interact as needed for economic or social reasons without physically situating their communities in a proximity that might threaten the religious values and practices of either group. Matthew Carr attributes the separation of religious groups, referring specifically to Christians and Mudejars, to the psychology of the medieval period. People were “obsessed with establishing clear lines of demarcation between faiths” (25). In Aragon, where Muslims frequently lived under the protection of local lords and nobles, the minority population found their place within the feudal order as serfs. Muslims were afforded a modicum of protection and the assurance that they would be “left alone to live according to the religion of their ancestors” in exchange for working the lands of their lords (Harvey, *Muslims* 85). In the fifteenth century, during the so-called Mudejar period, separation was not always optional.

According to restrictive legislations enacted in 1412, “Morerías and Juderías were ordered to be established everywhere, surrounded by a wall having only one gate; any one who within eight days after notice should not have settled therein forfeited all his property, with personal punishment at the king’s pleasure [...]” (Lea, *Moriscos* 11-12). Much of this legislation can be attributed to contemporary events of the time, most notably the outbreaks of the Black Death beginning in March of 1348 and the subsequent pogroms against Spain’s Jewish populations in 1391.

The first half of the sixteenth century was a time of shifting labels and allegiances, scarred by the First Revolt of the Alpujarras (beginning in 1499) and the subsequent forced conversions of the Mudejars of Castile (1500-1502) and the Kingdom of Aragon (1525) (Harvey, *Muslims* 57 and 94). By the middle of the century, the entirety of Spain’s Muslim population had converted to Christianity, thus making the Moriscos susceptible to the same religious governance as the Old Christian populations. With this, the nature of separation changed having become more an internal rather than external practice. The hope of the Christian authorities was that by moving the Moriscos out of their *morerías* and into Old Christian neighborhoods, the process of assimilation would be expedited (Harvey, *Muslims* 103). Such attempts, however, often had the opposite effect. Old Christian populations likewise rejected the Moriscos claiming that their forced conversions were not genuine and they should still be considered Moors in their hearts. Likewise, mounting pressures on the Moriscos to adopt Christian practices provoked increased resistance to assimilation. Lea, describing the First Revolt of the Alpujarras, insists that the cause of the uprising was the “intemperate zeal of Ximenes” (*Moriscos* 40). Furthermore, following the suppression of the rebels and disbanding of the army, Lea states that Moriscos in the district of Ronda and the Sierra Bermeja grew “irritated by raids and ravages

made upon them by Christians – a standing grievance which frequently nullified the best intentioned efforts of pacification” (*Moriscos* 39). By 1570, in the wake of the Second Revolt of the Alpujarras, Harvey notes a complete polarization of Christian and Morisco communities in all parts of the peninsula, though the two peoples were living in closer proximity than ever before (*Muslims* 231).

Conflict and consequent separation was not exclusive to Morisco-Christian relations, but also occurred between differing Morisco groups as they struggled to assume an identity within Spanish society. Such conflict took various forms for various reasons:

Conflictos políticos porque, aunque hay Moriscos que avanzado el siglo celebran las victorias de los tercios, la identidad de la mayoría como naturales de España desde tiempo atrás es clara; conflictos religiosos, puesto que el islam que la mayoría quiere mantener es un islam con poca capacidad de renovación, condenado a una complicada erosión y en muchos casos al abandono del árabe. Tiene también conflictos sociales porque no todos los Moriscos ocupan los mismos estratos, y a veces la comodidad de un grupo va en detrimento de la de otros. Y también padecen conflictos culturales porque, por la pura acción del tiempo, muchas comunidades moriscas van integrándose en la sociedad cristiana y van tomando parte de las realizaciones culturales de ésta. (Bernabé Pons 15)

Exemplification of nearly all of these types of conflicts can be found in the *Hadīth*. The extreme variety of characters coupled with topographical variations suggests the multiplicity of Muslim identity. Images of the fantastic introduce readers to talking animals, angels, and temporal anomalies. Such variation pays tribute to the varieties of Islamic experiences that were developing, and had developed in Spain, in response to the historical circumstances that confronted them.

Considering the “island” of Al-Andalus as representative of the tense separation of the Moriscos from *dar al-Islam*, this division in many ways contributed to the changes that affected Morisco religiosity as much as did their interactions with Christendom. Generally speaking, two factors explain this particular conflict. First, according to Islamic law, it is unquestionably preferable for Muslims to live in Muslim-dominated lands than under the control of an infidel power, as explained in the famous *fatwā* of 1504 issued by the *mufti* of Oran to the Moriscos of Granada. Describing his “coreligionists” in Spain, the *mufti* uses the word *guraba*, meaning “stranger” or “outsider.” Harvey sheds light on the meaning of this statement in the following explanation:

These people, the mufti may have been suggesting by his choice of vocabulary, were “outsiders” in the sense that they were physically outside the bounds of *dar al-Islam*, but they had nevertheless been entrusted with a special honorable role in stressful times leading up to Judgment Day. Much of the behavior of the Moriscos is best understood against the background of beliefs in the imminent coming of the end of all things.

(Harvey, *Muslims* 63)

Harvey finds justification for the Moriscos’ choice to remain in *dar al-Harb* (non-Islamic lands) in the aforementioned apocalyptic and prophetic attitudes prevalent in early modern Spain. As the Moriscos awaited a return to an Islamic Spain governed by the precepts of *shari’ah* law, so too did the Christians hope for the unification of the Spanish Empire under the banner of Christendom.

Aside from geographical concerns, North African Muslims feared that the Moriscos had distanced themselves from mainstream Islam to the extent that they could no longer be considered Muslims. Harvey attributes this to the “distorting effect of the enforced retreat of this

essentially public religion into clandestinity” (Harvey, *Muslims* 102). As they continued to internalize their religion, practice of rituals were either altered or fell into disuse, the ability to converse in Arabic was lost, and the Moriscos no doubt began to appear – at the very least externally – Christian. It was this Christian façade that most fueled the conflict between the Moriscos and *dar al-Islam*. As the Moriscos fled to North Africa, either voluntarily or by force, many North African Muslims met the newcomers with disdain or open hostility, perceiving the Moriscos to be simply Spanish Christians.

Despite the numerous manifestations of conflict with which the Moriscos contended, their legends and prophetic writings allowed them to create a space that was uniquely theirs, and which reflected both their historical realities and their hopes for the future. Let us consider one final example of the use of fantasy to construct an imagined reality. The Mancebo de Arévalo describes Al-Andalus as a “nueva Israel” (Narváez Córdova, “Mitificación” 143). The overlapping of these two temporally and geographically disparate regions produces a particular paradigm of socio-religious histories by virtue of the synonymous presentations of the Jews of Israel and the Muslims of Spain. Just as Israel suffered defeat by the Babylonians and the Romans, resulting in the destructions of the first and second Temples and the Diaspora of the Jewish people, so too was Granada captured and its Muslims population scattered to the Castilian lands to the north.

In this first folio of this prophecy, the statement, “y enviará Alá, enaltecido sea, un aire que lleva a los de ella [la isla de Andalucía] a la casa santificada de Jerusalén” further localizes this “nueva Israel” by referring more explicitly to the city of Jerusalem (López-Baralt, *La literatura* 225). The original text employs the Arabic terms *Beit al-maqdis*, meaning “the sacred or sanctified house.” Three distinct images of islands – those inhabited by the ‘*abid* and the frog,

Al-Andalus, and Jerusalem – are now joined through their connections to Spain. Thus, the islands mentioned in the *Hadīth de Ibrāhīm* resonate with the famed Foundation Stone where Abraham is believed to have nearly sacrificed his son Ishmael and from where Muhammad ascended to heaven during his so-called “Night Journey” (*al-mi‘rāj*).²³ This rock, now housed inside the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, occupies a vital place in the histories of Jerusalem and of Islam. Just as that particular rock was Muhammad’s gateway to heaven, so too, as the prophecy states, “Andalucía tiene cuatro puertas de las puertas del Paraíso. Una puerta que le dicen Caylonata, y otra puerta Lorca, y otra puerta que le dicen Tortosa, y otra puerta que le dicen Guadalajara” (López-Baralt, *La literatura* 225-226). The analogous representations of the islands in the *Hadīth* to the Foundation Stone then allowed the Moriscos to transfer this holy site at the heart of Jerusalem, a focal point of religious life for all monotheists, to their own lands within the Iberian Peninsula.

Through considering images of Al-Andalus alongside those of Jerusalem, the resultant interweaving of historical representations allows the former to assume a more sacred identification. The Utopia described in Morisco prophecies becomes a holy land for Islam. Moreover, the Moriscos are again placed in the line of historical continuity reaching back to Abraham and Muhammad. As both prophets occupy places of great importance in the history of Jerusalem, so too do the Moriscos continue this history in their “nueva Israel.”

²³ The *mi‘rāj* of Muhammad is referenced briefly in the Qur’an 17.1. See also the collections of Sunni *hadīth*, particularly *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* and *Sahīh Muslim*, for further elaboration.

‘Eīd *al-ADhā* and the Rewards of Devotion

The conflict and suffering so readily perceptible in Aljamiado writings contrast with moments of unity. In the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm*, Abraham himself is a constant presence in each of the six miracles. His identification as a faithful Muslim and prophet of Islam never wavers. In fact, the Qur’an reveals Allah’s instructions to Muhammad to follow the creed of Abraham as a model for his own life (16.123). Abraham’s actions as an exemplary Islamic figure are also intimately connected to his freedom of movement in the *Hadīth*. Domínguez Ortiz’s aforementioned argument linking historical time action provides an ideal framework through which to approach this topic. Abraham’s first action at the start of the legend is to speak to Allah. In fact, the very reason that he sets out on his journey is to fulfill his desire to witness Allah’s miracles. Through this, we understand that each step of Abraham’s journey is rooted in his devotion to Islam. As he follows the path carved out for him by God, Abraham upholds two of the pillars of Islam: pilgrimage and prayer. These two practices allow him to advance from miracle to miracle, and, consequently, to establish an active historical timeline. The characters that Abraham encounters are able to resume their historical progressions only after demonstrating their religious devotion, typically in the form of prayer and penitence.

Considering Aljamiado narratives from the standpoint of use – what Vincent Barletta describes as an activity-centered approach – we can begin to link individual Aljamiado texts to specific moments in which they were read or studied. Qur’ānic passages and other writings relating to Abraham are commonly associated with the festival of ‘*Eīd al-ADhā*.²⁴

²⁴ See Harvey, “Leyenda” 17 and Barletta, *Covert* 111. Longás Bartibás includes prayers and a sermon (*aljotha*) recited during the “Pasqua de carneros” extracted from Aljamiado manuscripts in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, the Biblioteca del Centro de Estudios Históricos, and the Memorial Histórico Español. See pp. 74-75 and 186-213.

With regard to the *‘abid*’s actions while on the island with Abraham, the *Hadīth* tells us:

I la-ora levantose l-al‘abid / i fizo aSala i no fablo / Ibrahīm fasta ke / amaneciyo i
Ibrahīm / de zaga d-el. I kuwando / amaneciyo posose i pensaba / en-su-fecho iy-alzo sus
/ ojos al-ciyelo i viyo un / karonero ke deballo // del-ciyelo. I posose delante / de las-
manos del-al‘abid / I la ora tomo el-al‘abid / una piyedra i kerebola / i degollo kon-ella
el-karo- / -nero. Depuwes firyo / en-la piyedra i saliyo / d-ella fuwego i llego leña / iy-
encendiyola i puso / la-karne ad-asar i par- / -tiyola por mediylo. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313
fol. 115r-115v)

Evening prayer, ritual sacrifice of a ram, and Abraham’s presence all combine to produce an image congruous with *‘Eīd al-ADhā*. This festival, called “Pascua de carneros” in Spanish, is celebrated annually on the tenth day of the Islamic month *Dhū al-Hijjah*. The central focus of its commemoration is the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son, Ishmael, in full obedience of God’s will. As such, the above paragraph of Aljamiado text can be seen as a brief treatise or guide through which the Moriscos were informed of the ritual conduct associated with this celebration.

Four main ritual practices identifiable in the *Hadīth* relate specifically to *‘Eīd al-ADhā*: the receiving of the ram, the sacrifice, and the roasting and sharing of its meat. A mere listing of these four practices does not facilitate an understanding of them within the traditions of Islam. Given that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam each reserve a place in their sacred texts for the description of Abraham’s near sacrifice of his son, we must look elsewhere within the manuscript context for clues attesting to the specifically Islamic nature of the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm*. Two elements serve as guides to this end: the use of Arabic terminology to denote religious practices and the actions that accompany them.

The placement of the terms *aSala* and *‘abid* in the segment of text in question situates both within a specifically Islamic context. Semantic indexers such as these bring unique sets of connotations to Morisco texts. As a particular word is translated from Castilian or Aragonese into Arabic, it is simultaneously transported from a Romance-Christian to an Arabic-Islamic ideological and practical setting. The Islamic context associated with the term *‘abid*, for example, denotes a man educated in the religious teaching of Islam who upholds *sharī‘ah* law and performs rituals in accordance with the teachings of the Qur’an, the prophet Muhammad, and his successors. In fact, a consideration of the Arabic root system links the term *‘abid* to the verbs *abada* (to adore or worship) and *abbada* (to enslave), as well as to the nouns *‘ābada* (worshiper), *‘abd* (slave), and *‘ibād* (mankind, human race). What is revealed is a unique image of the worshiper as the enslaved. Devotion to God thus becomes an obligation rather than a choice. Moreover, this obligation pertains to all of mankind, transforming the *‘abid*, as a devotee of Islam, into a universal symbol of devotion. In contrast, a veil of ambiguity shrouds the Castilian term *religioso* – or *santón*, to borrow Harvey’s translation. The Catholic-centered identity of early modern Spain would more likely infuse each of these terms with Christian connotations. Thus, incorporating Arabic terminology into Aljamiado texts replaces the general (a religiously learned man) with the specific (a religiously learned *Muslim* man).

With this understanding, let us consider a thick description of prayer as practiced during *‘Eīd al-ADhā*. The text that follows is provided by Pedro Longás Bartibás in his *La vida religiosa de los Moriscos*, being derived from Aljamiado sources:

Consistía en practicar a la hora de la oración del alba, dos inclinaciones sin pregón en *alicama* previos. Se comenzaba pronunciando siete veces las palabras «Dios es muy grande», se leía seguidamente el «Alabado sea Dios...» y otro capítulo en voz alta, se

practicaba la inclinación y la prosternación, para terminar diciendo «Dios es muy grande» cinco veces, sin contar la que se decía al tiempo de levantarse. Seguidamente, se leía el «Alabado sea Dios» y otro capítulo en voz alta, se hacía de nuevo inclinación y prosternación, se recitaba la fórmula de la bendición en la forma anteriormente expuesta, y se daba la salutación. (74-75)

Thick description such as this effectively acts as a footnote defining the term *aSala* as it pertains to a particular moment in the Islamic calendar. A reader – medieval or modern – approaching the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm*, however, is not afforded such a description and so is left with the nagging question of how this term and its affiliated practices would have been perceived by a Morisco audience. Would the people have possessed a working knowledge of the literal practice of prayer in this particular setting? As the scribe did not provide a Romance equivalent of *aSala*, two possible conclusions may be drawn. Either those listening to the recitation of the *Hadīth* would have understood this term within its contextual framework, or a *faquí* or other figure educated in the practical aspects of Islam would have been present to provide explanation.

An activity-centered approach to this text would be incomplete without considering the action of sacrifice. Within the Aljamiado narrative, the sacrifice of the ram holds both literal and allegorical meaning for the Morisco audience. On the one hand, as previously mentioned, the practice of sacrifice corresponds to the celebration of *‘Eīd al-ADhā*. That being said, the miraculous reincarnation of the ram that follows is unique to the Aljamiado narrative. This act is described in folio 116v of the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* as follows:

La-ora tomo el-al‘abid / los guwesos del-karonero / iy-ajuntolos todos en-su / kuwero
delante de Ibra- / -hīm. Depuwes dixo / el-al‘abid —Levantate kon / licenciya de Allah.

I la-ora le- / -vantose el-karonero so- / -bre sus piyedes i puyo / al-ciyelo. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 116v)

At first glance, this miraculous act sits nicely among the others contained in the *Hadīth* as it testifies to the greatness of Allah. That being said, the framing of this act of reincarnation within a Morisco context produces important historical resonances with their collective social condition. In so doing, the image of the various parts of the sacrificed animal being rejoined, returning to life, and ultimately being removed from the site of sacrifice allegorically corresponds to the secrecy surrounding Morisco Islamic practices. As the ram is returned to heaven all evidence of the ritual act that took place on the island is erased. Similarly, as Spain's Mudejar population became Moriscos, thus placing them under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church and the Inquisition, secrecy became a staple of their religious existence. Increased restrictions on religious practice, dress, language, musical performance, dance, and other aspects of day-to-day Morisco behavior fed the need to preserve cultural and religious practices by sinking them into clandestinity.

Reincarnation further speaks to the Morisco hope of one day leaving their clandestine life and returning to the grandeur of Islamic Spain. Such a hope parallels the prophetic messages of Paris, BNP Ms. 774. The ram's rebirth symbolizes the rebirth of the Morisco people. Just as God answered the '*abid*'s request to revive the animal, so too would God see fit to deliver the Morisco people to their future Paradise as part of a divinely ordained plan.

Specific connections exist then between the act of prayer, ritual sacrifice, and rebirth. When juxtaposed with the celebration of '*Eīd al-ADhā*', these practices are given an equally specific purpose. As the ideological focal point of the '*Eīd*' is the importance of obeying Allah and trusting unwaveringly in his judgment, as Abraham did, the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* becomes a

vehicle through which prayer becomes a tool for salvation and rebirth. Abraham becomes a model for the Moriscos, as he is for all Muslims, of upright behavior and rewards for devotion to prayer. In an environment in which suppression threatened the continuity and existence of their Islamic traditions, the Moriscos could look to the *Hadīth* as a testament to the freedom accompanying prayer. As Muhammad affirms in the prophecy attributed to him, “God will punish their sins, but He will also have pity on them and will forgive them when those evils are eradicated and when they return to the practice of the religious law” (Chejne 27). For each of the characters bound in punishment, it was sincerity in prayer that afforded them pardon and allowed them to reclaim control of their historical development.

Concluding Remarks

Pere Balañà i Abadía summarizes the Morisco nostalgia of return as consisting of three “pillars eloquents.” The first pertains to the literary production realized by the Moriscos from their respective places of exile. From the content of these writings comes the second pillar in the form of political and military resistance against the country that had cast them out. Finally, the third pillar is the act of return itself, motivated by a consistent remembrance of Granada and the Muslim past of Al-Andalus (Balañà i Abadía 22). The *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* embodies the acts of remembrance and resistance in several ways. By bringing together the lands of Christian Spain, Muslim Al-Andalus, and the holy city of Jerusalem binding each with a common historical thread, the glory of the past becomes a source of inspiration for Spain’s Morisco populations. Contextualization reminds the Moriscos of their Muslim origins as Abraham and Muhammad serve as models for the continuity of Islamic devotional practices.

The fractured temporalities in the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm*, reminiscent of the halted historical progression of the Moriscos themselves due to the control and restrictions imposed on them, provoked a need for rectification. Thus, their legends and prophecies became sources of inspiration fueling Morisco resistance to the forces that would see their histories erased. To this end, Abraham exemplifies the salvation possible within each Morisco. The moral message conveyed in the *Hadīth* is that of self-reliance. In a world in which one's own neighbors were their enemies, the Moriscos could place their faith and hopes toward the future only in themselves. As the “mancebo negro” declares, “enpero kiyen obedece / ada-Allah en-toda kosa, adebe- / -decese Allah a el” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5313 fol. 130v). Personal identification as a Muslim and individual devotion to prayer resulted in the formation of a symbiotic relationship between Allah and the Moriscos. In exchange for their penitence and prayer, Allah would pardon their punishments and grant the Moriscos salvation, as he pardoned those who offered him praise in the *Hadīth*. The lesson conveyed through this exchange is that the fulfillment of prophecy and the restoration of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula rested on the shoulders of the Moriscos themselves.

CHAPTER 3 | The *Hadith de Mūsā kon Yaku el karnicero*: Heterogeneity, Clandestine Lives, and Enduring Hope

Puweš apegaoš kon
la fe komo še apegala karne kon el wwešo
ensiyéndaše ttuw amor en la fe komo šensiyende
el ssufre en-el fuwwego y –ešte amor šerá kawša
ke kefaráš kon voluntad enterea en laš
obraš i laš obraš šon la karrera por donde
še kamina al-Alŷannah.
— Mancebo de Arévalo, *Tafsira* fols. 5r-5v²⁵

In this brief legend, occupying folios 1r through 4v of Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305, Allah instructs Moses to leave the “monte de Tūrsīnā” to go to the city of Assam. There, Allah would reveal to him the identity of his future companion in Paradise: a butcher named Jacob. Upon his arrival in Assam, Moses is met with a most unusual reception as the villagers, both children and adults, describe Jacob as “un onbere muy malo iy-es de los del-fu- / -wego” and question why Moses would want to meet with such a man (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 1v). Finally, during his wandering around the city, Moses comes across Jacob, who greets the prophet warmly offering him peaceful welcome and referring to Moses as “siervo de Allah.” As the two converse, Jacob reveals to Moses that he is aware of how the villagers speak of him and explains, “iyo-tengo feuzā en-el-perdon i-l-piyadad de mi-seño- / -r no-kon ayuno ni-kon aSSalā ni-kon aSadaqa enpero / por la-piyadad mi-señor” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 2r). Content with Jacob’s offerings of humble rest and food, Moses agrees to spend the night in Jacob’s home.

The text continues with a detailed description of how Jacob weighs two portions of meat, which he takes home and prepares with bread for his elderly mother and father. Jacob then ventures to his father’s bedroom, taking with him a serving of the food that he has prepared.

²⁵ This citation is part of the transcription of the *Tafsira* by María Teresa Narváez Córdova.

There, he aids the old man in undressing, bathing, redressing in clean clothing, and finally eating and drinking his evening meal. After he has finished eating, Jacob's father offers praises to Allah. Jacob then reveals to his father that the villagers, whom he refers to as Bani Israel, say that he is "de los del fuwego" and asks only that his father seek pardon on Jacob's behalf for whatever offenses he has incurred that cause the people to look upon him with such negativity. Jacob then proceeds to the bedroom of his mother where he repeats the process of undressing, bathing, redressing, and feeding. After finishing her dinner, Jacob's mother also offers praises to Allah and asks that God reveal to her son the face of Moses, with whom he will share a place in Paradise.

Moses, observing the compassion with which Jacob cares for his parents, weeps silently in admiration. After consuming the food and drink that he is offered, Moses reveals his identity to Jacob and explains that he will be Jacob's companion in the world to come. With this revelation, Jacob's father and mother breathe their last contented breaths and leave their present lives, giving up their souls to the Angel of Death. Finally, Moses and Jacob bathe and shroud his parents and offer prayers to Allah for their safe passage.

Bani Israel and the Effects of Heterogeneity

As Moses enters the city of Assam, his initial conversations with the city's inhabitants reveal a society divided by conflicting ideologies. On one side of this divide is Jacob, and presumably his family, whom the people describe as "un onbere muy malo." Jacob in turn identifies his neighbors collectively as "Ban-Isarayla." Historically, variations of the name "Bani Israel" have carried with them equally varied meanings and contextual usages. Within the

realm of Aljamiado-Morisco studies, most scholars deem this a reference to Jews, as Vespertino Rodríguez notes in his transcription of the *Hadith de Mūsā*. In a study of Portuguese Converso populations who made their way to Italy, Joseph Abraham Levi identifies Bani Israel more specifically as “the Jews of India and their descendants elsewhere in the world” (160). Muslim sources, in contrast, sometimes identify a pair of differing connotations in the terms “Bani/Banu Israel” and “yahūd.” Whereas the first refers to biological descendants of the Jewish race, the second carries a broader reference to individuals who adhere to the laws and practices of the Jewish faith, but likely descend from other ethnic backgrounds.

These conflicting interpretations of the term “Bani Israel” are of little importance in the present approach to the *Hadith de Mūsā*. The more pressing question is not the specific religious or ethnic group denoted by this label, but rather that the city of Assam plays host to two opposing factions. Such opposition between neighboring groups resonates strongly both with the so-called *convivencia* that characterized the Golden Age of the Muslim Caliphate in al-Andalus as well as with the tensions that accompanied the heterogeneity of the later Middle Ages and early modern period. As Moses interacts with members of both societal groups in the Aljamiado legend, each exemplifies a distinct system of social protocols. When approaching the people of Bani Israel, for example, Moses does not precede his inquiries as to Jacob’s location with the formulaic Arabic greeting used elsewhere in Aljamiado narratives to bestow blessings and peace upon fellow Muslims. As L.P. Harvey explains, “Since the normal form of greeting between Muslims (‘*alayk al-salām*’) implies an exchange of benedictions, it was felt to be inappropriate if directed towards non-Muslims” (*Islamic* 77). Based on Moses’s behavior, we can infer that whatever the identities of the contingent known as Bani Israel, they likely did not represent practitioners of Islam. In contrast, when approaching Jacob for the first time, Moses’s first

words are “—Asallāmu ‘alayka, yā siyervo de Allah;” precisely the prohibited formula described by Harvey (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 1v). Aside from initial greetings, the people of Bani Israel immediately express to Moses their disapproval of Jacob, describing him as a bad man bound for the fires of hell. It is noteworthy that such condemnation is linked to Jacob’s failure to comply with an established ideological system, rather than an expression of personal objection to Jacob.

The *Hadith*’s geographical reference to the city Assam suggests that the work may be of Levantine origin. In his edition of the *Hadith de Mūsā*, Antonio Vespertino Rodríguez locates Assam in Syria. Documented historical evidence suggests that Syrian tribesmen were among the first Arabs to enter Iberia at the time of the initial Muslim invasion as early as 709 C.E. (Gerber 18). As the invading tribes and nations divided the land among themselves, the Syrians took Granada, while the Arabians settled the Guadalquivir valley and the Egyptians took Murcia. Jane Gerber further explains, “the few Arabs who participated in the invasions seized the choicest fertile plains and valleys, and the disgruntled Berber majority were allotted the inferior rocky hillsides” (Gerber 19). Thus, it is likely that a fair amount of the sixteenth-century Moriscos inhabiting the Ebro Valley region – excepting those relocated following the conquest of Granada and subsequent forced conversions – were descendents of these original Syrian, Arab, and Egyptian settlers. Within Muslim Spain, Jews and Christians were afforded distinct social privileges and distinctions by virtue of their identities as *ahl al-kitāb*, or people of the book. Islamic tradition, though clearly regarding Judaism and Christianity as inferior religions to Islam, does not reserve as harsh a punishment to the practitioners of the other monotheistic faiths as that which met polytheists. As a result, Jews and Christians were typically granted a modicum of protection and freedom, provided they paid a special form of taxes meant to humiliate their

inferior religious status (Gerber 21). Over time, this humiliation of the Christian populations fed the flames of vengeance and religious intolerance, which became effective catalysts toward the goal of reclaiming their prior position of supreme power in the Peninsula.

One can scarcely approach medieval or early modern Iberian history without considering the centuries of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim heterogeneity and their continuous power struggles that resulted in the very formation of Spain as we understand it today. As prominent Spanish historian Américo Castro explains, “La constitución del sistema de vida colectiva llamado español es inseparable del sistema de las tres castas de creyentes antes expuesto. Sin la acción de al-Andalus musulmán [...] es inconcebible la magnificación de la creencia Cristiana, su dimensión político- imperial en tiempo de los Reyes Católicos” (177). Seen in this light, the impetus necessary to push the Christian population toward the reconquest of lands and the creation of a Catholic Empire was in large part a direct reaction to Semitic presences and prominence in the Iberian Peninsula. Spanish history developed as a kind of cause-and-effect paradigm in which imbalances in power resulted in the mobilization of the less powerful faction against the more powerful. For sixteenth-century Aragonese Moriscos, close proximity to neighbors of differing religious or ethnic affiliations harkens back to the heyday of Muslim Spain as well as speaking to the social conditions endured by the Moriscos themselves. In a general sense, the societal representations in the *Hadith de Mūsā* reveal precisely the discontentment and tension that characterized much of Iberian heterogeneity. Each faction is aware of the other’s presence, and – perhaps more importantly – the other’s positions of power. Jacob is imminently aware of how Bani Israel views him. Through his conversations with Moses, we come to understand that not only is Jacob privy to the fact that the entire city condemns him, but he understands their reasons for doing so.

This last point begs the question of how Jacob came to know of his neighbors' discontentment. As the text itself does not exemplify moments of verbal contact between Jacob and Bani Israel, any assumptions to that effect are just that, assumptions. This awareness on the part of Jacob does, however accentuate the relative proximity of the two seemingly disparate peoples. Aside from direct conversations with Bani Israel, their judgments of him were likely the objects of gossip spread among neighbors. Jacob could have then received such information through simple eavesdropping. Whatever the case, we, as readers, are made plainly aware of the entire village's perception of the "black sheep" living among them. Furthermore, the resulting image of passing intrigues aids in heightening the tensions at play in the text.

Social representations of gossip and idle chatter call to mind analogous remarks regarding the title protagonist in Fernando de Rojas's *Celestina*. Let us compare two descriptive segments from the *Hadith de Mūsā* and *Celestina*, respectively. The first consists of a brief, but cutting description of Bani Israel's characterization of Jacob:

Dize kele disiyeron a el i-komo no as hallado e- / -n toda la ciyudad por kiyen pereguntar sino por / ese onbere? Porke te hazemos a saber / k-es un onbere muy malo iy-es de los del fu- / -wego de jahannam. Este dezir halaba Mūsā / por toda la cibdad ansi en los-chikos komo en lo- / -s mayores. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 1v)

The second text is Pármene's elaborate portrayal of Celestina that he offers to the noble Calisto in the first act of the *tragicomedia*:

Si entre cient mugeres va y alguno dize "¡puta vieja!", sin ningún empacho luego buelve la cabeça y responde con alegre cara. En los combites, en las fiesta, en las bodas, en las cofradías, en los mortuorios, en todos los ayuntamientos de gentes, con ella passan tiempo. Si passa por los perros, aquello suena su ladrido; si está cerca las aves, otra cosa

no cantan; si cerca los ganados, balando lo pregonan; si cerca las bestias, rebuznando dizen “¡puta vieja!”. Las ranas de los charcos otra cosa no suelen mentar. Si va entre los herreros, aquello dizen sus martillos. Carpinteros y armeros, herradores, caldereros, arcadores, todos oficio de instrument forma en el ayre su nombre. Cántanla los carpinteros, péynanla los peinadores, [téxenla los] texedores; labradores en las huertas, en las aradas, en las viñas en las segadas, con ella pasan el afán cotidiano. Al perder en los tableros, luego suenan sus loores. Todas cosas que son fazen, adoquiera que ella está, el tal nombre representa[n]. ¡O qué comedor de huevos asados era su marido! ¿Qué quieres más? Sino [que] si una piedra topa con otra, luego suena “¡puta vieja!”. (Rojas 255-256).

Both passages emphasize the widespread nature of these descriptions within their respective societies. In fact, it is the very act of identifying an incongruous Other in an otherwise homogenous society that springboards the development of each narrative. Such “otherness” or difference is highlighted in each work through an identification of those qualities that the majority deems as negative. Jacob’s identity “un onbere muy malo” contrasts sharply with his companion in Paradise, the law-abiding and reverent Moses. Similarly, Celestina’s identity as a “puta vieja” and an “hechicera” make her an interesting choice as a potential source of help for the noble Calisto.

Societal acceptance or rejection of either figure is based on those attributes of each that are completely external and, therefore, readily observable by general acquaintances without the need for extended interaction. That is, observable qualities such as clothing choices, skin color, and cleanliness, as well as actions such as the performance of rituals, carrying of objects, or one’s very manner of walking or body carriage all serve as indexical markers of particular

breeding or socio-religious classification. The texts are reduced in this way to exercises in perception. Readers are exposed to three differing points of view: those of Jacob, the people of Bani Israel, and of Moses. Through each lens we are provided a distinct image of Jacob's character. From his own point of view, Jacob is a character devoted wholeheartedly to "el perdon i la piyadad" of Allah, though admittedly abandoning the practices of prayer and charity (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 2r). The people of Bani Israel, in contrast, see Jacob as malevolent for precisely this abandonment of ritual practices. Finally, Moses experiences a shifting of perceptions as he interacts first with Bani Israel and then with Jacob himself. Having been informed of Jacob's evil ways, Moses likely approached Jacob with a particular set of expectations. Upon observing the piety and humility with which he interacted with his parents, however, Moses was able to observe for himself that this man was not as he appeared. Moses, therefore, assumes a position of neutrality. Only after he is able to observe both opposing parties and to consider together their opinions of each other and their general actions is Moses able to render a fair and balanced judgment.

By placing such a moral within a Morisco framework, we can better understand how both the Old and New Christian populations conceived of their own behaviors and those of each other through the veil of preconceived judgments of right and wrong, acceptable and deviant. Moses's characterization in the *Hadith* seems to suggest that of a judge or other legal authority capable of approaching a conflict from outside before imparting judgment. The neutral position of Moses in the Aljamiado text points to an understanding on the part of its author of the nature of the conflict between the Moriscos and their Old Christian neighbors. Rather than attempting to assert the superiority of one religious practice over another, the *Hadith* seems optimistically to insinuate the value inherent in both Christianity and Islam, voicing the need for third-party

intervention. To be sure, the mounting political tensions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries – leading to the Germanías Revolts,²⁶ prohibitions of Islamic practices, and their culmination in expulsion – produced an atmosphere in which it would have been difficult for Morisco authors to envision a unified, homogenous environment. Jacob’s representation seems to echo this Morisco worldview insofar as he demonstrates an awareness of his position in society. Indeed, the Moriscos were not permitted to be ignorant of the fact that they did not fit into the paradigm of a homogenous Catholic empire, as acts of racism, discrimination, and punishments constantly reminded them of their marginalized status. Vincent Barletta writes:

Now nominally Christians, they began to attract the attention of the Inquisition and faced stiff penalties and in some cases death for instances of perceived backsliding. In a very real sense complements of the external colonies that drew so much of the Crown of Aragon’s, Castile’s, and Portugal’s resources and attention, these internal communities of Crypto-Muslims – which made up just over 4 percent of the total population of the Iberian Peninsula by the sixteenth century – served persistently to undermine the official narratives of empire building and expansion from a homogenous and unified metropole. (*Death* 164)

The creation of texts like the *Hadith de Mūsā* speak to just this sort of undermining resistance on the part of the Moriscos. Defiance and preservation, common themes in most Aljamiado writings, become precursors to a final solution to conflict in this short piece. For his part, Jacob shows no signs of remorse for his difference. Rather he persists in his day-to-day life, unabated

²⁶ The Germanías Revolts in the Kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon were popular uprising in protest to the preservation of the *fueros* (*furs*), or local laws, which afforded what many considered unfair privileges to Mudejars by their protective lords. The leaders of these protests were “local craft guilds and master craftsmen, drawn primarily from the middle and lower classes” (Carr 83). In 1520, with Charles V’s permission, these guild leaders formed a citizens’ militia known as the Germanías. The ultimate goal of this group was to establish a balance of power in their favor by essentially overthrowing the feudal system in Valencia and Aragon. Without seigniorial aid from their wealthy lords, the Mudejars would not have an unfair economical advantage over local Christian workers. See: Carr 81,83, 88-89; Lea, *Moriscos* 57-67; and Harvey, *Muslims* 92-94.

by the ridicule and disregard afforded him by his neighbors. As such, he makes the decision to place the well-being of his family and their security above adhering to prescribed societal norms.

With respect to resistance, the above-mentioned citations from *Celestina* and the *Hadith de Mūsā* manifest alternative attempts at resistance by expressing the supposed majority viewpoints through the filters of two authors who themselves fall categorically outside of the Old Christian paradigm. Rather than attacking the dominant power through anti-religious polemics, these two fragments place the marginalized in the spotlight, unabashedly exposing social difference in open defiance of Spain's push toward homogeneity. The true nature of defiance is manifest in through the identities of their authors, both of whom were either themselves converts to Christianity (the Morisco author of the *Hadith de Mūsā*) or were descended from a Converso lineage (Fernando de Rojas). Regarding the latter, Peter E. Russell informs us that, "Nació Fernando de Rojas en La Puebla de Montalbán, localidad de la provincial de Toledo. No se sabe exactamente cuándo, pero lo más probable es que fuera alrededor de 1473-1476. Era converso de la cuarta generación" (33). Numerous studies have attributed Rojas's Converso lineage to the development of the marginalized characters in *Celestina*, thereby suggesting an allegorical representation of Conversos in the text. Regardless of whether or not this was indeed the case, the fact remains that Rojas, like Morisco scribes, successfully wrote the voice of the marginalized into a central position in his work.

By writing Jacob into the role of protagonist, the Morisco author deemphasizes his difference, placing him at the forefront of the readers' attentions. In so doing, the development of Jacob's characters occupies the greatest portion of the narrative, which in turn leads to a deeper understanding of the circumstances impacting Jacob's lived experiences. With this understanding comes an admiration of Jacob's moral behavior. To be sure, the evolution of the

readers' perception of Jacob is shaped directly by the text. The initial descriptions of Jacob provided by the people of Mutasah reveal a contemptible figure relegated to the margins of his own society. However, the entrance of Jacob's own voice into the narrative quickly alters this portrayal. With his first words, Jacob extends a warm greeting to Moses: "Sobre ti sea el-aSSallām / i la piyadad de Allah" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 1v). These words immediately alter the tone of Jacob's character, who speaks not of evil but of peace, piety, and devotion to Allah. From this point in the narrative, the evil Other destabilizes the balance of power casting the majority to the periphery of the readers' consciousness. Jacob, through this behavior and speech, becomes a model of acceptable and virtuous conduct for the Moriscos.

Taqiyya, Secrecy, and Suspicions

In addition to the city of Assam, references to the "monte de Tūrsīnā" create in this legend a tangible geographical and social framework, which remains ambiguously out of reach in the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* discussed in chapter one. The name "monte de Tūrsīnā" is generally believed to refer to the biblical Mount Sinai. Chapter ninety-five of the Qur'an describes four periods of human evolution. The first of these is labeled simply "the fig" symbolic of the era of Adam and the founding of human civilization. This period is followed respectively by that of "the olive" (representative of Noah), Mount Sinai (where the *shari'at* were revealed to Moses), and finally Mecca (where the Prophet Muhammad perfected divine law). Mount Sinai is referred to in Arabic as *Tur Sinina* (طور سينين), a clear parallel to the Tūrsīnā of the Aljamiado text. Basharat Ahmad, modern commentator and scholar of Islam, writes in his *Anwar-ul-Qur'an* that "tin (fig), zaitun (olive), tur sinin (Mount Sinai) and baladil amin (Makkah), refer to the

appearance of four great prophets to whom divine teachings were revealed and who became paragons and exemplars of the highest moral virtues” (130). Moreover, Mount Sinai was the place “where Prophet Moses (*as*) was granted the Law which contained teachings and examples geared to nurturing the glorious side of man’s character” (131). As these texts reveal, geography is intimately linked to individual prophets and their corresponding historical contributions.

When the *Hadith de Mūsā* is considered in light of these commentaries, it becomes part of the historical and religious continuity spanning the duration of Islamic prophecy. The Moriscos are thus symbolically joined with the lands and texts of their distant ancestral past.

The image presented by Ahmad of Moses as law bearer is accentuated when contrasted with the representation of Jacob in the *Hadith*. At the beginning of his commentary on the Qur’an, chapter ninety-five, Ahmad summarizes the theme of this brief eight-verse chapter as the exemplification of Man’s natural potential through adherence to the commandments of Allah.

He surmises:

those who develop their God-given aptitudes and abilities attain such a high rank that they are regarded with honour both in this world and the next, and among them, the prophets Moses (*as*) and Jesus (*as*) and the prophet Muhammad (*sas*) have been specially mentioned in this chapter and evidence of their being the best of Allah’s creation has been put forward. (Ahmad 128)

Moses is thereby exalted as a model of human obedience; a precedent and point of comparison for his companion in Paradise. Jacob, on the other hand, rather than providing a positive exemplification of man’s adherence to God’s commandments, continually falls short of fulfilling even the most essential acts of prayer and purification.

To be sure, close scrutiny of the historical specificities accompanying individual geographies named in the *Hadith* aid in guiding the reader to a clearer understanding of the nature of Jacob's behaviors. As the "monte de Tūrsīnā" is associated with the transference of divine law to human beings, "la ciudad de Assām," in contrast, is linked with a man whom others deem malevolent and destined for the fires of hell. David Stewart, who has contributed significant research to questions of sectarian violence between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims, describes Mamlūk Damascus as a hotbed of sectarian tensions in the fourteenth century. He states specifically that "a number of Shiites were executed in Mamlūk Damascus, including the prominent jurist Muhammad b. Makkī al-Jizzīnī, known in the Shiite scholarly tradition as al-Shahīd al-Awwal (The First Martyr), who was tried and executed as a heretic in 786/1384" (Stewart, "Taqiyyah" 1). Because of this violence propagated against them, Shi'ites were obliged to adopt a clandestine identity, allowing them to blend seamlessly into the majority Sunni population. This practice, known as *taqiyya* (تقية),²⁷ granted marginalized Muslims permission to denounce their religion if they found that not doing so could result in threats of violence. For the Moriscos, *taqiyya* became a staple of daily life, affording these crypto-Muslims a modicum of flexibility in their religious practices, which were increasingly thwarted under the watchful eye of the Inquisition.

Considering the historical development of *taqiyya*, Moojan Momen posits that the practice of religious dissimulation was developed as early as the eighth century by the sixth Imam Ja'far as-Sādiq.²⁸ Under the reign of the second 'Abbasid Caliph, al-Mansūr (r. 754-775),

²⁷ The term *taqiyya* carries a number of meanings including "God-fearing," "devout," "conformable," and "complaisant." As Stewart indicates, this practice is first alluded to in the Qur'an, 16:106, with reference to 'Ammār b. Yāsir. A companion of the Prophet Muhammad, Yāsir denied the prophecy's of Muhammad openly and engaged in idol worship as a means of protecting himself while in Mecca (Stewart, "Taqiyya" 2).

²⁸ Originally the term *imām* (إمام) is mentioned in the Qur'an denoting a person who serves as an exemplary model of leadership. Abraham, for example, is labeled as such in *surah* II, verse 118. "The Shī'ahs apply the term *Imām* to

as-Sādiq suffered repeated harassment as well as being jailed in Kūfa (in present-day Iraq) on numerous occasions. The doctrine of *taqiyya* was developed during that time “to protect the followers of as-Sādiq at a time when al-Mansūr was conducting a brutally repressive campaign against ‘Alids²⁹ and their supporters” (Momen 39). From that point, the concept of religious dissimulation became an acceptable practice of Shi‘a Islam in situations in which practitioners felt that their lives or property were in danger. Generally, the extent of religious dissimulation practiced as part of *taqiyya* is limited to “expressions of belief and ritual practices” (Stewart, “Taqiyyah” 2). The act of dissimulating, however, involves more than simply denouncing one’s religious practices. As María del Mar Rosa-Rodríguez points out, *taqiyya* is a devotional practice and, as such, is dependent upon specific mental preparation or intention. This intention, called *niyya* (نية) in Arabic, must precede the devotional action, or *a‘mal* (عمل), in order for said action to be valid (Rosa-Rodríguez 148). Through *niyya* the Muslim practitioner is aware of both the severity of denouncing his own religion as well as the true intention of his heart, which must always be present in his mind. A lack of intention or awareness of the seriousness of *taqiyya* relegates the act itself to the category of blasphemy.

Rosa-Rodríguez identifies two principle characteristics that distinguish *taqiyya* as practiced by Shi‘ite Muslims from that observed by sixteenth-century Moriscos. The first is that Shi‘ism developed *taqiyya* in response to the oppressive religious climate of eighth-century ‘Abbasid rule. Its use was therefore intended as a temporary solution to the threat of religious persecution. Or, as Stewart indicates, *taqiyya* can be employed as a temporary measure when travel or other contact with Sunni populations is unavoidable, such as the case of Lebanese born Shi‘ite Bahā’ al-Dīn al-‘Amilī (1547-1621) who traveled through the Sunni Ottoman Empire

the twelve leaders of their sect whom they call the true Imāms” (Hughes 203). According to this tradition, ‘Alī, the first cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, was the first rightful imām and successor of this last prophet of Islam.

²⁹ This term denotes followers of the first Shi‘ite Imām, ‘Alī.

between 1583 and 1585 (“*Taqiyyah*” 7). The unique circumstances governing Morisco existence, however, resulted in a period of persecution lasting over one hundred years starting with the forced conversions of Castilian Mudejars in 1502 and ending with the culmination of Morisco expulsions in 1614. This extended timeframe witnessed the births of multiple generations of Moriscos, each entering into a political climate that delegitimized their Muslim pasts and presents. Consequently, *taqiyya* became a necessary tool of daily survival and religious preservation among Spain’s crypto-Islamic population (Rosa-Rodríguez 153).

The second fundamental difference between Shi‘ite and Morisco uses of *taqiyya* is that within a Shi‘ite framework, the adoption of *taqiyya* meant turning aside one interpretation of Islamic belief and customs for another. For the Moriscos, living in *dar al-Harb*, they faced the daunting task of having to feign devotion to a completely distinct religion. The Spanish Reconquest resulted in a shifting of identities for the peninsula’s Muslim inhabitants as their identities were reassigned as Mudejars and, ultimately, Moriscos. As Catholic control strengthened its grip on the power centers of Spain, the regime became ever more theocratic enforcing “strict Catholicism, Spanish monolingualism and the hegemony of Castilian culture, thereby prohibiting all signs of cultural hybridity, including the practice of Islam and Judaism and the speaking of Arabic and Hebrew” (Rosa-Rodríguez 144). Despite their shifting labels, the Moriscos remained as “Spanish” in identity as their Muslim Andalusian ancestors. That is, the Reconquest quite literally came to the Muslims and overtook them on lands that they had inhabited for centuries. In this light, it was highly likely that Old Christians living in a particular village would have been familiar with, if not known by name, the Mudejars and Moriscos living nearby and, consequently, would have been cognizant of their former religious affiliation. In such an environment, it was not enough to dissimulate one’s religious beliefs accepting the ritual

practices of another faith. The Moriscos had no choice but to assume the – as their expulsion attests – impossible task of convincing Old Christians of their sincere adherence to the faith.

Placed against the backdrop of this historical paradigm, the *Hadith de Mūsā* conveys several similarities with the *taqiyya* observed by Syrian Shi‘ites. Following the conquest of Granada in 1492, Spanish Muslim society was dramatically reorganized. In many cases, the intellectual and religious elite among them emigrated to North African and other parts of *dar al-Islam*. Those that chose to remain assumed the classification of Mudejars. This new identity brought with it a unique set of social circumstances owing to the fact that for the first time large populations of Muslims were living under non-Muslim rule. The Mudejars were no doubt thrust into a state of confusion wondering how best to make sense of this new political regime and successfully ensure their survival as a people. Mudejar and Morisco leaders in search of legal rulings frequently turned to the *fuqahā’* (فقهائ), or jurists, of North Africa, experts in the Maliki school of Islamic law to which the Moriscos are believed to have pertained. Responses to Morisco appeals for a ruling regarding questions of religious dissimulation were varied. Many among the North African leaders felt that it was more detrimental for the Mudejars and later Moriscos to remain in a Christian land. Others felt that the Moriscos’ unique situation afforded them an equally unique exception to the commonly held belief that Muslims should not reside for any length of time in non-Muslim lands.

The document most frequently credited with the establishment of *taqiyya* on Spanish soil is a *fatwā* (فتوى), or legal ruling, issued by the Mufti of Oran, Abū l-‘Abbās Ahmad b. Abī Jum‘ah (d. 1511), in 1504. As L. P. Harvey describes, “A *fatwā* is usually a response to a quite specific enquiry on a difficult point of detail” (*Muslims* 60). In this case, the question plaguing the Moriscos was to what extent, if at all, it was permissible to relax the requirements of *shari‘ah*

law given the particular political climate in Spain at the end of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The result of this *fatwā* would be essentially a reinvention of the Morisco understanding of Islamic law and traditions placing *taqiyya* at the forefront of quotidian practices.

The original text of the 1504 *fatwā* is no longer extant, though translations survive in three separate Aljamiado manuscripts. Harvey estimates that the original document was probably sent to Granada, as that city would have been reeling from the shock of the forced conversions of 1501-1502. In a similar vein, it is also reasonable to assume, that “after forcible conversion was extended to the Crown of Aragon in the 1520s, the *fatwā* will have been read there too” (*Muslims* 64). Looking at the contents of the document,³⁰ the Mufti states first that prayer should be observed if only through gestures. With regard to *azaque*,³¹ or charity, the Mufti rules, “Pagad el azaque, aunque sea hacienda mercedes a los pobres, y aunque lo deis con vanagloria; pues Dios no ha de atender a vuestra actitud exterior, sino a la intención de vuestros corazones” (Longás Bartibás 305). Here the Mufti clearly expresses the idea that *niyya* must precede the action of prayer or the giving of charity itself. The text turns next to the theme of ritual purification and ablutions declaring that one should bathe himself in the sea or a river if possible. If such an act is not permissible, then the rubbing of one’s hands on a wall, the ground, or a stone will serve. Other noteworthy points include permission to consume pork and

³⁰ The citations used are those of Pedro Longás Bartibás who includes an abridged, modernized transcription of the *fatwā* contained in Madrid, BRAH Ms. T-13/280.13 fol. 22 in his *La vida religiosa de los moriscos*. This version is reproduced in García Arenal, *Los moriscos*. Harvey provides a complete transcription of the same manuscript in his “Crypto-Islam.” Additionally, a comparative study of the extant versions of the *fatwā* can be found in Stewart, “The Identity.”

³¹ Longás Bartibás distinguishes two types of charity. *Azaque*, from the Arabic *zakat* (زكاة), constitutes the obligatory charity forming one of the five pillars of Islam. The second form of charity is *sadaqah* (صدقة), which is almsgiving “la cual se concedía a los pobres por motive de piedad o caridad, sin exigencia alguna impuesta por la Ley” (Longás Bartibás 232). It is further stated in Longás Bartibás that “La persona pobre que no tenía de qué hacer limosna [*azaque*] podía, en compensación, recitar alguna de las siguientes jaculatorias: «Glorificado sea Dios», «Alabado sea Dios», «No hay otro Dios sino Alá», «Dios es muy grande»” (ibid.).

wine if forced, provided that the intention in one's heart is pure, and the final two rulings – again referencing *niyya* – that state that if one is caught in the balance between blasphemous acts and dissimulation, the latter is recommended “negando con el corazón lo que afirméis con vuestras palabras” and if forced to denounce Muhammad, “denostadlo de palabra y amadlo a la vez con el corazón” (Longás Bartibás 306).

The duration of Morisco history affected greatly the treatment of dissimulation in Morisco societies. Entire generations of crypto-Muslims were born into an established framework of religious dissimulation that, over the course of decades, “produced an overlap between Christian ritual practices and Islamic content or intention” (Rosa-Rodríguez 148). Later generations of Moriscos became the byproducts of a more than century-long immersion of Moriscos in Christian societies. Given this timeframe, the gradual overlap of Christian and Islamic traditions can be seen as resultant of both the immersion – and, in some cases, assimilation – of one society into another as well as of the practice of *taqiyya* itself. Following the conversions of Mudejars to Morisco status, the people who remained on Spanish soil planted the seeds of *taqiyya* into which later generations would be born. Thus, these later generations were entering into a prescribed set of restrictions, cultural adaptations, social interactions, and feigned traditions that modified forever the form of Islam practiced in Spain. Each successive line of Morisco offspring would then no doubt adapt their own practices as they negotiated with changes in societal and political structures. This leads one to question to what extent, if at all, these later generations of Moriscos would have been cognizant of their dissimulation.

Though no explicit references to religious dissimulation are made in the *Hadith de Mūsā*, Jacob's behavior throughout this short text is reminiscent of the types of dissimulation practiced by the Moriscos. For instance, when Jacob describes to Moses the nature of his devotion to

Allah, he openly admits his neglect of prayer and charitable acts – both pillars of the Islamic faith and the first two devotional practices mentioned by the Mufti of Oran. In accordance with the Mufti’s ruling, Jacob observes reverence through prayer in subtle, though not unidentifiable, ways. As he greets Moses, for example, the formulaic Arabic offerings of peace and the piety of Allah not only bestow welcome and warmth upon the visitor, but also acknowledge recognition of God through the pronouncement of his Arabic name. Through this act, Jacob cleverly, and most probably instinctually, praises both Moses and Allah. Similarly, Jacob complies with the Mufti’s suggestion of bestowing favors (*mercedes*) upon the poor through the care that he imparts toward his parents. In sixteenth-century Spain, however, the seemingly benign gestures of bathing, donning clean clothing, and praying were prohibited practices as each was associated with Islamic ritual. One final example of religious dissimulation in the *Hadith* is exacted by Jacob’s father who, after finishing his evening meal, declares, “las lo‘ores son // Allah muchas pegada komo a el es perteneciyentes. / No‘ay aparzero a el” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 2v-3r). These words bear considerable resemblance to the Qur’an 1.2, which states, “[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds.” This verse, part of the chapter entitled *Alfatihah*, is recited during each of the *rakas*, or Islamic prayer cycles, and is often regarded as the “Lord’s prayer” of Islam.

Each of these examples illustrates the doctrine of *taqiyya* inasmuch as the sacred is masked by the secular. That is, those practices, which on the surface appear nothing more than the courteous welcoming of one’s guests and the scrupulous care with which a child attends to his elderly parents, could be construed by Christian officials as indicative of prohibited Islamic customs. Taking into account its historical parameters, modern readers of the *Hadith de Mūsā* are able to glimpse the residual results of the democratic reproduction of this text. As cultural products, texts are the possessions of the collective public to which culture itself pertains.

Culture, then, opens artistic productions such as oral or written narratives to human creativity, giving the people free rein to modify existing texts as they see fit. The result is a symbiotic exchange through which the culture of a people shapes the contents of a particular text while these contents in turn shape the lived experiences of the public with which they interact. The function of such an exchange is, as Vincent Barletta writes, “to help readers and a larger listening public shape their individual and communal actions within various intersecting temporal frameworks, all overshadowed by a keenly felt sense of personal and collective mortality” (*Covert* 74). Morisco textual production in the early modern period necessarily resulted in the preservation of the lived experiences congruent with Morisco culture, which likely included the practice of religious dissimulation. Barletta further places the literal act of cultural production, following John Dagenais’s writings on manuscript glossing, within the context of “socially embedded lectoral activity [...] and its subsequent conversion into social practice” (“Deixis” 567). It is generally agreed that Moriscos met in small, secret groups to read the forbidden Islamic texts of their ancestors. The clandestine nature of these readings in itself exemplifies the dissimulation at work within Morisco communities and in their culturally embedded productions. Thus, Jacob’s exemplary dissimulation forms part of a cyclic reinforcement through which his actions validated the secret practices of the Moriscos whose cultural norms were imposed on the characters of their legends.

Aljamiado texts allow for adaptability and cultural shaping due to the ways in which they meld elements of historical narratives with those of legendary materials; a stylistic trait common to biblical texts. Erich Auerbach, comparing the narrative styles and contents of Homer and the Old Testament respectively writes:

On the one hand, externalized, uniformly illuminated phenomena, at a definite time and in a definite place, connected together without lacunae in a perpetual foreground; thoughts and feeling completely expressed; events taking place in leisurely fashion and with very little of suspense. On the other hand, the externalization of only so much of the phenomena as is necessary for the purpose of the narrative, all else left in obscurity; the decisive points of the narrative alone are emphasized, what lies between is nonexistent; time and place are undefined and call for interpretation; thoughts and feelings remain unexpressed, are only suggested by the silence and the fragmentary speeches; the whole, permeated with the most unrelieved suspense and directed toward a single goal (and to that extent for more of a unity), remains mysterious and ‘fraught with background’. (11-12)

The sparse externalization of narrative detail and the often – though admittedly not in the case of the *Hadith de Mūsā* – lack of specificity regarding place and time, afforded the Moriscos ideal mediums through which to fashion their own identities, conveying the truths of their socio-political situation without compromising their clandestine identities. Aljamiado legends became powerful vehicles for the trafficking of moral and religious ideologies via two principal means: 1) minimal saturation of contextual specificities thereby freeing the text to interpretation, 2) the *veritas* assigned by traditional Islam to the revealed text of the Qur’an. By preserving their moral teachings within religious texts, Morisco scribes no doubt succeeded in conveying the veracity of their messages to the attentive audience. Additionally, the selective revelation of detail necessary for the purpose of successfully advancing the narrative results in a text capable of moving fluidly in and out of cultural and religious paradigms, being modified by each unique encounter. Ergo, as the narrative template that would become the *Hadith de Mūsā* came into

contact with a Morisco model of socio-religious behaviors, the ideological values of this group necessarily sculpted the text to reflect the presumed realities of a sixteenth-century Morisco context.

As outsiders, distanced by centuries of interpretation and historical documentation, modern readers have a unique advantage to observe the cultural workings within Aljamiado texts. Following Auerbach's example, "we can see features of the Bible that would be virtually impossible to detect did we not know the *Odyssey*" (Gallagher and Greenblatt 42). It must be clearly emphasized, however, that as we cannot possibly understand the lived experiences of the Moriscos, it is outside of our realm of possibilities to discern definitive meanings of specific textual elements. We can only begin to *approach* these lived experiences, observing and taking note of them, in light of the comparable experiences that make up contemporary and modern historical records. Settled within this theoretical framework, observations of specific practices reveal clues as to how the Moriscos understood themselves and their interactions with the world. Cultural elements such as bathing, prayer, dressing, and food preparation then may be interpreted in a number of ways depending on the filters of historical records and similar representations that a particular modern reader brings to his or her examination of a given narrative.

Contributing to the Morisco historical record are the aforementioned prohibitions of Islamic rituals that came about in response to mounting political tensions. Ambitions toward the establishment of a homogenous Catholic empire resulted in increased obsession with baptizing Spanish Muslims. Opposition to the policy of forced conversions put into place in Castilian lands in 1501 and 1502 led inevitably to increased resistance and polarization between Muslim and Christian populations. Following the Germanías Revolts of 1520-1521, Charles V pronounced an edict of faith in 1526 prohibiting Islamic religious and cultural practices that

included, among many other things, bathing and wearing clean clothing on Fridays. Matthew Carr writes:

Dissimulation was not easy to maintain in a society where Moriscos might find themselves denounced to the Inquisition for yawning in church, failing to show the correct body posture, or wearing clean linen on Fridays. Public bathing was generally prohibited, but even Moriscos who washed in their own homes could find themselves charged with performing Islamic ritual ablutions. (108)

Subtle indicators within the *Hadith de Mūsā*, the production of which was likely contemporary with Charles V's edict, suggest a consciousness of such prohibitions. It is curious, for example, that Jacob bathes and dresses his parents during evening hours as opposed to in the morning. As one scholar notes, the practice in Muslim Spain was to bath daily, "and accordingly the public baths were reserved for men in the mornings and for women in the afternoons" (Imamuddin 208). It is probable that rituals associated with Islam would have been performed at night as there was less risk of being discovered by the watchful eyes of Christian authorities.

Along with the prohibition of Islamic practices came a lack of trust on both sides of the conflict. Christians grew ever more suspicious of false converts and started serving as spies for the Inquisition, actively seeking out even the faintest whispers that might in some way attest to Morisco apostasy or other heresies. It was not uncommon for Old Christians to fabricate elaborate scenarios of Islamic devotional practices from the most benign of acts, as Carr's description attests. Inquisitorial documents frequently cite accusations against Moriscos for having performed ritual purifications in the form of full-body ablutions (*ghusl*)³² or simple

³² غسل – "the washing of the whole body to absolve it from uncleanness and to prepare it for the exercise of prayer." In addition, *ghusl* should be performed after the acts of *pollutio nocturna*, *menses*, *coitus*, and *puerperium* (Hughes 477).

ablutions (*waDū*).³³ Cecil Roth attests to this listing “scrupulous regard for personal cleanliness” among the chief offenses by Moriscos of which Christian spies should be vigilant (152). Specific reports cite one Morisca, María de Mendoza of Cuenca, who was followed by a witness as she carried a pitcher of water to her home. Later describing Mendoza’s actions, the witness recounts that she was stark naked and barefoot, washing her hair. She was denounced to the Inquisition charged with the performance of *ghusl*. Another Morisco, Juan de Spuche, was brought before the Inquisition accused of having washed his hands and face after chopping wood (Carr 108). Henry Kamen also contributes to the discussion of prohibitions stating, “In 1544 the synod of the bishopric of Guadix held that ‘it is suspicious to take baths, specially on Thursday and Friday night!’” (223). Each of these examples speaks to the blurry line that separated Islamic customs from simple conventions of daily hygiene. Variations of washing oneself, from bathing hands, feet, and hair, to full body immersion, scarcely constituted just exemplification of religious ritual. Nonetheless, such measures were reshaped into effective weapons to be deployed against the Moriscos.

Harvey, describing the paradox of Old Christian and New Christian relations, affirms that though the former did generally hope that Morisco conversions would become a reality, these same Christians had “no practical desire to have these people in any but a menial place on the margins of society” (*Muslims* 238-239). The Moriscos demonstrated a similar aversion to assimilation into Old Christian societies and, hence, turned to reaffirming their adherence to Islam and further separating themselves from those they saw as oppressors. As they were no longer permitted to visit mosques or outwardly engage in other Islamic practices, “many Morisco homes became refuges for Muslim traditions and expressions of faith” (Perry 70). Thus, this

³³ وضوء – “the simple ablution of hands, arms, ears, face, mouth, etc., before the recital of the usual prayers” (Hughes 477).

essentially public religion was repositioned with the home at its center. The Morisco home also became the principal center of Morisco resistance. It was behind the concealing walls of the home, for instance, that Aljamiado texts were written and secretly circulated, along with other prohibited Arabic and Romance documents. Additionally, Moriscos owed much to the compact structures of many Spanish cities. They advantageously used “the hidden doors and passageways between their houses to facilitate clandestine meetings and preserve their kinship networks” (Perry 72). This afforded at least a small amount of security, hiding forbidden rites behind the few windows, shutters, and closely placed walls of their houses.

Prohibitions thus divided the Morisco world into two distinct venues: public and private, outside and inside, exposed and secret. Matthew Carr provides specific examples of this religious dichotomy with regard to religious practices:

For the most part, Moriscos paid lip service to Catholicism in public, while privately affirming their own Muslim identities. One way of doing this was to neutralize Christian sacraments. After baptizing their children in churches, some Morisco families would take their children home and wash off the baptismal chrism with hot water or bread crumbs. They would then perform the traditional *fada* name-giving ceremony and give the infant a Muslim name that would be used privately. (106-107)

This dual existence allowed Muslim culture, texts, and religion to endure as long as it did in the Iberian Peninsula as every effort was made by Christian authorities to stamp it out, clearing the way for their new Catholic Empire.

In the *Hadith de Mūsā*, the home of Jacob and his family sets the stage for the exposition of the clandestine rituals of food preparation, bathing, and dressing. Moreover, Jacob’s parents are able to freely utter the name of Allah without fear of being overheard. One scene in

particular emphasizes the extent of the clandestinity at work in Jacob's home. Having bathed and fed his parents in their respective bedchambers, Jacob returns to Moses, who had been waiting in a separate area of the house while Jacob completed his tasks. The text of the *Hadith* reveals, “i saliyose para Mūsā, / ‘alayhi i-salām, i dixole yā ermano si-supi- / -yeses la-kawsa porke yo-m-e detuvido / no me daras culpa” (Madrid, BNE 5305 fol. 3v). Prior to Jacob's return, Moses, having overheard the discussions between Jacob and his parents, was brought to tears by the piety of their words. Jacob, however, is unaware of the fact that Moses was privy to the actions that had occurred in the secrecy of his parents' *alcobas*. Two important points are exposed in this scene. First, it highlights the levels of secrecy possible within the house and, more so, within individual, separated rooms. Second, we are provided a glimpse of the eavesdropping that inevitably occurred in Spanish societies of the late medieval and early modern periods, particularly during the latter half of the sixteenth century.

Both the practice of *taqiyya* and the separation between public and private spaces speak to Perry's characterization of Morisco strategies for survival and resistance as “palimpsestic, conforming on the surface to obscure a deeper resistance and subversion of the dominant order” (72). On the one hand, Morisco resistance necessitated separation in order to assure the preservation and continuity of their Islamic practices. On the other hand, separation often took the form of forced isolation. Deborah Root describes the isolation of Mudejar communities during what she terms the “period of infidelity” immediately following the conquest of Granada. As the Inquisition spearheaded the campaign to exert Christian religious authority over the lands that they conquered, those deemed infidels were placed – symbolically and literally – outside of the community of which they had formerly been active members (Root 119). Thus, the Mudejars, by virtue of their Islamic identities, were cast out from their communities within the

Kingdom of Granada, becoming repositioned as Other in their own lands. Socio-cultural and religious labels designated by the dominant power thereby imposed a particular paradigm upon the minority. This repositioning is echoed in the *Hadith de Mūsā* as the people of Bani Israel extended the label of *infidel* to Jacob, symbolically casting him as a social pariah. Seen in this light, the examples of dissimulated religiosities in the *Hadith* embody the definition of *taqiyya* insofar as they are means through which Jacob and his family were able to preserve a part of their identity that would otherwise be threatened by the outside world. Notwithstanding, the palimpsestic nature of Jacob's existence resembles that of the Moriscos to the extent that the people of Bani Israel were not ignorant to the presence of an Other in their societies.

Palimpsestic Morals: Explicit and Interpreted Teachings

The author of the *Hadith de Mūsā* explicitly states as the central moral of the work, “Puwe- / -s sirvamos a nuwestoros pad- / -res i madres kuwanto podamos i ma- / -s i por surrogariya alkansare- / -mos lo-ke alkanso Ya‘qūb el kar- / -nicero” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 4v). Unconditional service to and reverence of one's parents is thus placed above even the most fundamental religious practice of prayer, mentioned more than any other in Aljamiado religious texts. Given his assigned role as Moses's companion in Paradise, Jacob's behavior in the *Hadith* is justified through his salvation in Paradise. By emphasizing the importance of respecting one's parents above other religious duties the text serves two important functions: underscoring the importance of bloodlines; and exemplifying dissimulation of specifically Islamic rituals. Consanguinity was a contentious issue in early modern Spain as it was precisely this concept that drove the Inquisitorial machine. Areeg Ibrahim describes the Islamic movements of ‘*aSabiyya*

(عصبية) and *shu 'ūbiyya* (شعوبية) that arose in pre-Islamic Bedouin culture and the third Islamic century, respectively. Both of these movements emphasized consanguinity in different ways, and the latter, *shu 'ūbiyya* was reinstated in al-Andalus in the eleventh century C.E. As Ibrahim explains, “strong blood ties (similar to the *'aSabiyya*) were a form of group solidarity attempting to maintain power of the ethnic. The *'aSabiyya* , the *shu 'ūbiyya*, and later on the Inquisition depended on these blood ties [...] in order to maintain their power” (213). Thus, as Ibrahim goes on to state, though the Inquisition presumably interrogated and prosecuted converts for reasons of faith, their bloodlines more often afforded the converts castigation. Through its accentuation of family bonds, placing Jacob’s devotion to his parents above his own dedication to prayer and other Islamic practices, the *Hadith de Mūsā* actually fuels the Inquisition’s approach to converts. On the other hand, by establishing as its focal point the care of Jacob’s parents, the text draws the reader’s attention away from acts of religious ritual.

Ideally, Muslims are expected to uphold the observation and practice of the five central pillars of the faith. Anwar Chejne cites Madrid, Junta 3 fol. 148r, translated and edited by Reinhold Kontzi in his *Aljamiadotexte*, as follows:

If you are asked what are the five pillars of the Islamic religion (*del-adīn del alisalām*) you shall say that they are these: the first pillar is believing in no other God (*senor*) but Allah, Who has no partner (*sin abarsonero*), and in Muhammad as the servant and messenger of Allah; the second pillar is maintaining the five prayers (*asalaes*) night and day; the third pillar is payment of almsgiving (*l-azake*); the fourth pillar is fasting during the month of Ramadān; and the fifth pillar is performing the pilgrimage (*alhaje*) to the house of Mecca, if possible. (57)

Jacob observes only the first of these pillars in the *Hadith de Mūsā*. Not coincidentally, belief in God and the prophecy of Muhammad is the only pillar that does not require visible action. That is, belief in God is, in its most literal sense, a clandestine act. One need not voice or otherwise exemplify this belief in order to fulfill the obligation. Fulfillment of the remaining four pillars necessitated the performance of observable acts; acts that no doubt would have attracted the unfaltering attention of the Inquisition.

A consideration of religious law and observation in a Mudejar or Morisco setting would be incomplete without mention of the *Breviario sunni* composed by the *alfaquí* and *imām* of Segovia, Ice de Gebir, around the middle of the fifteenth century (Harvey, *Islamic* 78). This work became a cornerstone of Muslim devotional literature in Spain, being more frequently cited by subsequent Morisco authors than any other work (Harvey, *Islamic* 86). The laws contained in the *Breviario* approach the practice of Islam from a specifically Mudejar point of view. While stressing the fundamental importance of the five pillars and unfailing devotion to Islamic ritual practices, Ice seems to have in mind an audience for whom modifications and permutations of religious practice were deemed necessary. Considering an excerpt from the first chapter of the *Breviario sunni*, enumerating the central commandments and prohibitions of Islam, a number of resemblances are immediately notable when compared to the practices of Jacob and his family in the *Hadith de Mūsā*. Let us consider the following examples:

Worship the Creator alone, attributing to him neither image nor likeness, and honoring his chosen and blessed Muhammad.

Desire for your neighbor [*proximo*] that good which you desire for yourself.

Keep constantly pure by means of the minor and major ritual ablutions, and the five prayers.

Be obedient to your father and your mother, even though they be unbelievers. [...]

Honor your neighbor [*vecino*], whether he be a stranger or a relative or an unbeliever.

Give lodging willingly to the wayfarer and to the poor man. [...]

When you meet a Muslim, greet him with your *salāms*, and assist him in whatever is to

God's service, and visit him when he is sick, and carry out his interment should he die.

(Harvey, *Islamic* 88-89)

Suffice it to say, without delving into each point individually, the deeds performed by Jacob's character in the Aljamiado legend correspond almost exactly to these initial commandments and prohibitions summarized in the *Breviario sunni* nearly a century before. This would suggest a familiarity on the part of the *Hadith*'s author if not with the earlier text itself, at the very least with its fundamental teachings. As a result, the *Hadith de Mūsā* forms another link in the chain of transmission of Islamic law, both preserving those laws in place at the time of Ice de Gebir and modifying them through future *ahādīth* with the intent of preserving these fundamental teachings for a new generation of converts living under distinct socio-political conditions.

As religious practice among Mudejars and Moriscos fell into clandestinity, so too did the moral lessons inculcated through their legends. Showing reverence to one's parents is an ideal ruse through which to disguise more specifically religious behaviors, given both the secular nature of human caretaking and the universality of this commandment within all monotheistic religions. That is, honoring and caring for one's parents was not a uniquely Islamic practice. As such, the religious authorities of the Inquisition could hardly turn to such an act as evidence of apostasy to Islam. Disguised behind this secular veneer, however, the quotidian gives way to the religious through specific combinations of actions suggestive of ritual practices. The fact that Jacob is not observant in prayer and charity, the ways in which he bathes his parents, and the

prayers that his father and mother mutter briefly and quietly could all lead to accusations of Islamic ritual practices when observed by Christian authorities searching for evidence of just such acts. By positioning these routines within the home, the physical walls that separate Jacob's family from the outside world also symbolically denote the clandestine nature of their activities.

Moses plays a crucial role in the justification of dissimulation. By revealing his identity to Jacob and assuring his companionship in Paradise, Moses turns the entire power structure at work in the *Hadith* on its head. Through his role as law bearer for each of the monotheistic faiths, having received the Torah and the initial commandments of God on Sinai, Moses stands as the supreme legal authority and the first *faqih* of Islam. Moreover, he is commonly identified in Islam as the equal of Muhammad, who received the final revelations of divine law. The fact that Moses himself recognized Jacob as a pious practitioner of his faith simultaneously substantiated Jacob's dissimulation and invalidated the accusations made against him by Bani Israel, thereby defying the authority of the majority population.

Framed within Morisco history marked by *taqiyya* and secrecy, the validation of Jacob's divergent religious observations in turn validated the dissimulated practices of the Moriscos. Silent preservation of and devotion to Islam in one's heart – the essential tenet of *taqiyya* – is placed above the physical rituals of Bani Israel. Furthermore, the promised reward of a partnership with Moses in Paradise creates a distinction between the physical, earthly world that Jacob inhabits and the world to come. Throughout history, moments of conflict have been met with hopes for future peace or a return to a glorious past. Morisco prophecies commonly predicted the imminent triumph of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula and the return to al-Andalus. Following the destruction of the first Temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. and the subsequent

exile of the Jews to Babylon, King David lamented the loss of the holy city and his longing to return.³⁴ In the *Hadith de Mūsā*, it is Jacob's parents who long for a secure position in Paradise for their son. It is only after Moses confirms that Jacob will accompany him as his companion in Heaven that Jacob's parents peacefully surrender to the Angel of Death. Thus, for the sixteenth-century Moriscos who made use of this text, it not only served to validate their earthly lives, but to offer a rarely experienced optimism toward the future.

³⁴ The text of Psalm 137: 1-7 reads, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and also wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows within it we also hung out lyres. For there our captors requested words of songs from us, with our lyres [playing] joyous music, 'Sing for us from Zion's song!' 'How can we sing the song of Hashem upon the alien's soil?' If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill. Let my tongue adhere to my palate, if I fail to recall you, if I fail to elevate Jerusalem above my foremost joy" (*Stone Edition Tanach* 1557).

CHAPTER 4 | The *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*: Honorable Leaders and Magical Lives

E çertas, do justiçia non ha, todo mal ý ha. Ca en todos los
ofiços de casa del rey e en todos los estableçimientos
buenos deve ser guardado justiçia e regla, que non fagan
más ni menos de quanto deve segunt justicia e segunt
ordenamientos buenos.
— *Libro del Caballero Zifar* fol. 154r

The first lines of the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 68v-103v) delineate the principal themes of the work: “El rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān nnabi³⁵ Allah kuwando lo rreporobo / Allah en kitarle la onrra iy-ando / kuwarenta diyas komo pobrre / demandando limosna en ser- / -vicyo de Allah” (fol. 68v). Allah gave to Solomon a ring that contained the essence of his honor and kingship, which Solomon removed from his person only when engaging in prayer. At such times, Solomon entrusted the ring to a particular *doncella* in his service. One day, while Solomon prayed, a particularly cunning demon among those who inhabited Solomon’s palace approached the *doncella* dressed as the king. Harīzu, as the *jinni* was called, had formulated a plan to deceive the maiden into handing Solomon’s prized ring over to him. Once the ring was in his possession, Harīzu proceeded to toss it into the sea. When Solomon finished his prayers, he requested his ring from the maiden, who, surprised by the request, related her encounters with Harīzu. Solomon immediately recognized his deception and, stripped of his honor and unable to convince his own people of his identity, took up his staff and set out from his palace. Harīzu in turn assumed control of Solomon’s kingdom for a period of forty days, until Solomon’s people recognized the false identity of the imposter and ran him out of the kingdom.

³⁵ نبي - The Arabic term for a prophet. “One who has received direct inspiration by means of an angel, or by the inspiration of the heart; or has seen the things of God in a dream” (Hughes 427).

In the meantime, Solomon journeyed from his kingdom in Yemen to a land known as Iram. There he found work with a group of men constructing a castle. When the company broke from working, Solomon sat alone in the shade of the palace's towers and dedicated himself to prayer. Unbeknownst to Solomon, the daughter of the king of Iram secretly watched him as he prayed. As Solomon repeatedly muttered words of devotion, Allah caused him to fall asleep. From the nearby mountain, two lions descended and sat one on either side of Solomon. The princess watched, afraid that the animals would surely harm him. Instead, they guarded the prophet, batting away even dust from touching his face. This was the first of three miracles that Allah would demonstrate to the pagan princess.

As the people of Iram were polytheists, they were unfamiliar with Islamic customs. Gradually, however, the princess came to know Solomon and his God, after which time she converted to Islam and the two were wed. Through a series of fortunate events, Solomon's ring was recovered from the belly of a fish that Solomon purchased and brought home for his dinner. As Solomon placed the ring on his finger, the *jinn* came from all corners of his kingdom and provided him and his new bride with rich clothing, food, and the construction of a beautiful palace that floated in air. Solomon's honor and kingship had been restored. That night, Solomon gathered together all of the people of Iram and provided them with food. Afterward, Solomon, his wife, and his father-in-law were transported on a cloud back to his kingdom in Yemen.

Upon his return, Solomon ordered the *jinn* to find the traitor Harīzu, who had fled to the sea of San'a near Mount Kaf to escape Solomon's punishment. As the *jinn* informed the king, Harīzu came out of the sea only once every three months to drink from a fountain on Mount Kaf. In order to catch Harīzu, the *jinn* devised a plan to trick him by replacing the fountain with a pool

of wine. When Harīzu was overcome with thirst, he would drink the wine and, intoxicated, be captured and brought before Solomon. As punishment for his deception, Solomon sentenced Harīzu to imprisonment and torture five times a day.

At that time, the angel Gabriel descended to Solomon and told him that Allah commanded him to reconstruct the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. To make matters more challenging, Allah instructed that the Temple should be constructed entirely of stone and that it was not to be worked together with iron or wood. Confounded by this request, Solomon turned to the only being able to solve such a puzzle: Harīzu. Harīzu ordered the *jinn* to go to Mount Kaf and bring back the nest of an *abubilla*, or hoopoe. They were instructed to secure the nest, being careful to lure back the mother and father birds along with them. Harīzu then enclosed the nest in a glass casing and placed it in a tree. The mother bird, seeing that she was unable to feed her babies, sought a means with which to free them. Finally, she was able to use a small stick (*paliko*) to break through the glass. The *jinn* then presented the stick to Solomon who took it to the sight of the Temple and used it to break apart the massive stones that would be used in its construction. As punishment for Harīzu's prior deception, all of the *jinn* were forced to suffer the intense labor of constructing the Temple.

The Morisco *alfaquí*

Solomon, as a historical and fictional figure, was both an earthly king and prophet of Allah. This distinction would not necessarily appear peculiar to a medieval audience accustomed to deeply religious rulers. There was no such concept of separation between Church and State as we think of them today. One's kingship was held to be divinely ordained and, as such,

sovereigns were required to uphold the highest ideals of their faiths. That said, the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* makes use of Solomon's ring in such a way as to establish clear demarcations between Solomon's roles as king and as devout Muslim. We first see evidence of such delineation in folio 69r, which reads: "Era Sulāymān / ke kuwando se poniya en su / al'ibāda³⁶ a server ada Allah kitabase / el-anillo akel ke en-el estaba la fuwerza iy-onrra de su rreismo" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305). By taking off his ring, Solomon literally removed himself from his role as king in order to dedicate himself wholly to Allah. This would suggest, in contrast, that when his ring was again upon his finger, Solomon would turn his attention toward the quotidian, earthly affairs associated with the governance of his realm. The consequence of Harīzu's deception, however, was that Solomon was resigned instead to accept the loss of his ring and depart from his realm dressed as a beggar. Solomon's willingness to comply with his diminished status conveys a sense of helplessness on his part. He recognized that the very essence of his kingship was contained in his ring, yet did not pursue any attempts to recover it, nor to seek out the one who took it. This speaks to the opening phrase of the *Rrekontamiyento*, which identifies Allah as the master of the ring and Solomon as its recipient. The alterations to his physical appearance and departure from his palace reveal that Solomon no longer viewed himself as king. Rather he respectfully assumed the role of a wandering prophet.

In his *'Arā'is al-majālis fī Qisas al-anbiyā'*, tenth and eleventh century Iranian-born scholar al-Tha'labī cites the words of Muhammad b. Ishāq and other historians who described Solomon as "a very good conqueror, who rarely rested from invading. Whenever he heard of a king in any part of the world he would come to him, weaken him, and subdue him" (491). Al-Tha'labī's extensive collection of stories of the prophets drew heavily from the *Thousand and*

³⁶ عبادة - An Arabic term meaning worship, adoration, or veneration (Wehr 685).

One Nights and other Arabic and Jewish folktale collections. In turn, the *Qisas al-anbiyā*³⁷ profoundly influenced the Morisco legends as well as later works such as *Discurso de la luz de Muhammad* written in 1603 by Aragonese Morisco Muhammad Rabadán (Brinner xxiii). The *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* constitutes a link in the chain of works passed through oral transmission, drawing elements from a number of existing sources including the *Qisas al-anbiyā*’ and the *Thousand and One Nights*. That being said, the depiction of Solomon as a warrior king is curiously absent from the Aljamiado narrative. Instead, Solomon’s kingship is almost entirely dominated by supernatural feats. Specifically, as other traditional accounts exemplify, he was given power over the natural elements, calling the clouds to his aid, speaking with the animals, and even directing the *jinn* in acts of human benefit. Thus, rather than comporting himself as a grand ruler bent on conquest and power, Solomon appears rather like a sorcerer wielding those powers bestowed upon him through his ring for the benefit of his realm and, ultimately, of Allah.

This depiction of Solomon, inasmuch as it contrasts with that of the *Qisas al-anbiyā*’, bears a much stronger resemblance to that of the Mudejar and Morisco *alfaquíes*. Stemming from the heyday of al-Andalus, the *alfaquíes* were a staple of Muslim society that continued relatively uninterrupted throughout the Mudejar period. It should be noted that the term *alfaquí* as it came to be used in the Romance vernacular carried a markedly distinct connotation than the

³⁷ *Qisas al-anbiyā*’, generally translated as *Stories of the Prophets*, are collections of narratives elaborating upon the lives and experiences of the various prophets according to Islamic tradition, as well as certain companions of the Prophet Muhammad during his lifetime. The first of such collections appeared in the tenth century. The *Arā’is al-majālis fī Qisas al-anbiyā*’, composed by Abū Ishāq Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tha’labī (d. 1036) was a product of the mystical circle of Islamic practice, which acknowledged the Master of Baghdad, Junayd (d. 910), as its founder (Thackston xvi). See William M. Brinner’s translation and edition of this work entitled *Arā’is al-majālis fī Qisas al-anbiyā’: Or “Lives of the Prophets”*. A contemporary of al-Tha’labī, Tarafī of Cordoba (977-1062), wrote a similar collection, focusing more on the moral rather than historical sides of each prophet. Roberto Tottoli has published an Arabic edition of this work. Finally, the *Qisas al-anbiyā*’, written by al-Kisā’ī constitutes a third well-respected and distributed volume of such tales. As Wheeler Thackston indicates in the introduction to his English-language edition of this work, al-Kisā’ī’s birth and death dates are unknown, but it is believed that his work “must have been written not long before 1200” (xix).

Arabic *faqīh* from which it stems. The term *faqīh* (فقيه) shares its stem with the term *fiqh* (فقه), meaning Muslim dogmatic theology. A *faqīh*, therefore, in traditional Islamic societies was a theologian and professional in Islamic jurisprudence. In medieval and early modern Spain, the role of the *alfaquí* was threefold: to provide legal counsel, to fulfill the function of religious leader, and other miscellaneous roles involving service to the community such as medical aid. Carrying on the customary function of the *faqīh*, the principal charge of the *alfaquíes* was to offer legal advice. Traditional Islamic societies differentiate between the positions of *faqīh*, being any expert in Islamic jurisprudence, and the *qāDī* (قاضي), who fulfills the role of magistrate and judge. Several factors, not the least of which were restrictions on Muslim education and the emigration of *alfaquíes* to North Africa and other parts of the Mediterranean world, contributed to the merging of these two posts in early modern Spain. Consequently, the *alfaquíes* became the chief experts in all matters of law and jurisdiction.

Kathryn Miller, investigating Mudejar communities in the reconquered lands of Christian Spain, counts over one hundred and fifty active *alfaquíes* in the Aragonese Ebro Valley region in the fifteenth century (53). During that period, those *alfaquíes* in Aragon who enjoyed significant status in the Mudejar communities were those who also served as notaries (84). Among their responsibilities in these posts was the settling of disputes over land ownership, contesting questions relating to marriage contracts and dowries, drawing up said contracts, providing legal advice to both Christian and Mudejar authorities, and translating for Christian officials (Miller 83). Such moments of collegial interaction between Christian and Muslim authorities dissolved during the Morisco period. Pascual Boronat y Barrachina cites a specific case that took place in Valencia on May 23, 1565. On this occasion, a merchant named Gaspar Coscolla from la Vall de Uxo revealed the following to the inquisitor Bernardino de Aguilera:

En el lugar de Fansara, de la misma sierra de Slida, hay tres alfaquies, nombrados: Eça, que es tenido por muy sabio en su ley, tanto allí como en todo el reyno de Valencia, por lo cual acuden a solicitar sus consejos muchos moriscos, a quienes el resuelve dudas y pleitos, y que sabe leer y escribir nuestra lengua castellana, viviendo en todo como un verdadero moro. (Boronat y Barrachina 1:541)

Gaspar's accusations against Eça on the grounds of Islamic practice contrast sharply with the earlier Mudejar period during which Christian court officials commonly sought collaboration with Mudejar *alfaquíes* in cases in which Mudejars availed themselves to Christian courts. The *alfaquíes* served in the capacities of interpreters and arbitrators in hopes of more effectively and quickly reaching resolutions (Miller 56).

Solomon's model of king in the *Rrekontamiyento* is analogous with Gaspar Coscolla's description of the *alfaquí* Eça. The reputation of Solomon's fairness and judgment was renowned throughout his own kingdom, as well as in the far-off lands of Iram. This is made apparent by the words of the fishermen whom Solomon approaches in search of food. When Solomon explained to the fishermen that he could not accept only one fish, as he needed to provide equally for his wife, the fishermen responded, "eres / de la regla de Sulāymān nnabiyyu Allah" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 89r). Mention of Solomon by name suggests a certain amount of informational migration between societies. Though the fishermen were not themselves of Solomon's realm, they were able to recognize those laws and customs that pertained to it. The king's daughter similarly reveals her familiarity with Solomon's powers over all earthly creations: "Lo ke kiyero de ti es key o e [o]i- / -do dezir ke a Sulāymān nnabiyyu Allah / ke toda kosa le obedece, ke / me digas si eres tu" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 82r). As both of these cases indicate, knowledge of Solomon circulated freely in and out of a number of

geographically distant regions, likely facilitated by fishermen and other travelling merchants. Such information is important in that it not only manifests a certain popularity with regard to Solomon's laws, being recognized over great distances, but also that Solomon's laws differed from those of surrounding lands at least to the point that the people were able to identify them in relation to a specific ruler.

As this tale is derived in large part from the *Thousand and One Nights*, written during the so-called Golden Age of Islamic cultural production, the apparent familiarity with Muslim characters and Islamic customs among the people of Iram speaks to the rapid growth and geographical expansion of Islam throughout the early Middle Ages. It is noteworthy as well that mention of Solomon and his laws in the *Rrekontamiyento* does not carry with it the hostility or disapproval that Christian writers of early modern Spain projected toward the Morisco *alfaquíes*. As Chejne points out, "The Christian authorities feared them and considered them troublemakers and corruptors" (36). One such record, which I shall quote at length from Fray Damián Fonseca, one of the chief apologists of the Morisco expulsion, depicts the *alfaquíes* as cunning in their ability to maintain the faith of the Morisco populous despite the numerous Christian forces bent on conversion:

Sobre esta generalidad concurrian otras causas particulares, por las quales esta gente desdichada estaua en el mas miserable estado que se puede imaginar: la vna porque tenian estos Apostatas Republica, cabeças, y muy estrecha subordinacion à los mas principales, y a sus Alfaquies, de los quales dependian los menores en todo lo que tocauan à su ley, y les tenian tan grande respeto, y sugecion, que sin otra razon alguna, ò discurso creian lo que estos les dezian, y enseñauan de la secta de Mahoma: y por esta causa nunca se han visto entre ellos particulares conuersiones de dos, ò de quatro, ò de

veynte, como las ay en los de mas hereges, Lutheranos, y Caluinistas, sino que ha de ser conuersion general de todos, y particularmente de los principales, y Alfaquies, y hasta que ellos se reduxessen, era moralmente imposible tratar de la conuersion de los demas, como la experiencia lo tenia bien enseñado: pues viamos que los Prelados, y Retores, y los Conuentos muy cuidadosos de su instruccion, no han ganado mas tierra que otros que han sido algo descuydados: antes si se considera bien, mucho menos: y la causa dello es (fuera de la que poco ha dauamos) que los Alfaquies mucho mas cuidados ponian para contradezir a lo que les enseñauan en aquellos lugares, que en otros. (429-430)

Though in vehement opposition to Morisco leadership – aware that conversion of the Morisco masses was dependent on first converting the *alfaquíes* – Fonseca cannot but acknowledge the fact that the Moriscos held a deep-seated respect for their religious leaders. Along similar lines, the fishermen, the king of Iram, and the king's daughter in the *Rrekontamiyento* each acknowledge the existence of Solomon and his laws, even to the point of referring to him according to his Islamic title as “nnabiyyu Allah.” The fluid movement of information between cultural and geographic borders in the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* was incongruous with the Moriscos' own lived histories, characterized by the halting of such movement in favor of a homogenization of legal and religious governance. Solomon consequently becomes a reminder of the once-great freedom associated with earlier Islamic history.

In addition to his role as legal authority, the Morisco *alfaquí* also typically carried out the functions of *imām*, bent on preserving their local Islamic faith in the Peninsula following the Christian Reconquest, galvanizing their communities, as Miller describes, to resist oppression (9). Among the practical religious duties of the *alfaquíes* was the leading of Friday worship ceremonies, religious observances associated with different stages of life such as naming and

circumcision, and instruction with regard to the proper observance of the month of Ramadan (Ehlers 32). In the *Rrekontamiyento*, Solomon fulfills the role of religious leader in so much as the reader of the text, or the attentive audience, is able to glean clues as to correct behaviors and ritual observances through close attention to Solomon's own comportment. This is most apparent with regard to prayer. Moriscos are first instructed to approach prayer setting aside their pride and ego, as evidenced by the fact that Solomon habitually removed his ring – the source of this kingship and honor – prior to addressing Allah.

During his time in Iram, it was through his interactions with the king's daughter that Solomon's acts of personal devotion become instructional tools. While resting himself in the shade of a tower during his first day of work, Allah caused Solomon to fall asleep. The king's daughter then watched as two lions descended from the mountain to sit on either side of the prophet, guarding him from even the slightest fly that dared to approach. From the description it becomes clear that this episode was intended as an exemplary moment for the maiden: “Esto fuwe ke kiso Allah / tan-alto es mostarar akella // maravilla a la donzella porke / teniya ordenado en-el / adelantado de su saber ke / abiya de ser kasada kon / Sulāymān aunke andaba tan me- / - noskabado” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 77r-77v). Solomon's role in this episode is seemingly that of a passive medium through which Allah demonstrates His divinity. That being said, the true moment of instruction occurs when Solomon utters the words, “Alhamdu li-llahi illadi wahdahu / lā sarika lahu” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 78r). It is only in that moment that the woman realizes that it was not Alāta and ‘Uzzā, the pagan gods of her people, who performed the miraculous act, but Allah.

Two other miracles follow, each accompanied by a similar declaration in Arabic describing a particular attribute of Allah, to which I will return later in this chapter. Having

heard the recitation of these attributes of Allah and having witnessed His miracles, the *doncella* was ready to submit to the will of the one God thereby becoming a Muslim. Solomon's recitation of these Arabic phrases in the *Rrekontamiyento* is accompanied by a concentric system of frame narratives that constitute mimetic reenactments of Solomon's own words. At the outset, the narrator of the Aljamiado text reveals the identities of three known narrators: himself, Ka'abā, and the Prophet Muhammad, the latter two being identified in the phrase, "Rrekontado por Ka'abā i por el mensajero de Allah" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 68v). The narrator of the extant Aljamiado version of this tale suggests his identity by directly addressing his audience: "Dixo el rre- / -kontador ke andando Sulāymān / ell-annabi de Allah de la maner ke / abeys oido" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 74v). The image posited by this phrase is that of a Morisco audience gathered in secret to listen to the retelling of a perhaps familiar and exemplary tale. But beyond this, the mention of a "rrekontador" exposes a historical lineage associated with this tale that situates the named Morisco audience – suggested by the word "abeys" – within a living chain of transmission reaching back through past generations ultimately to Solomon himself. Moreover, as Vincent Barletta explains, the "rrekóntonos" or "rrekontamiyento" construct "situates the telling, and subsequent retellings, of this story within a very specific, orthodox, and authoritative genre of Islamic discourse" (*Covert* 20). The extent of this mimesis is summarized in the following illustration:

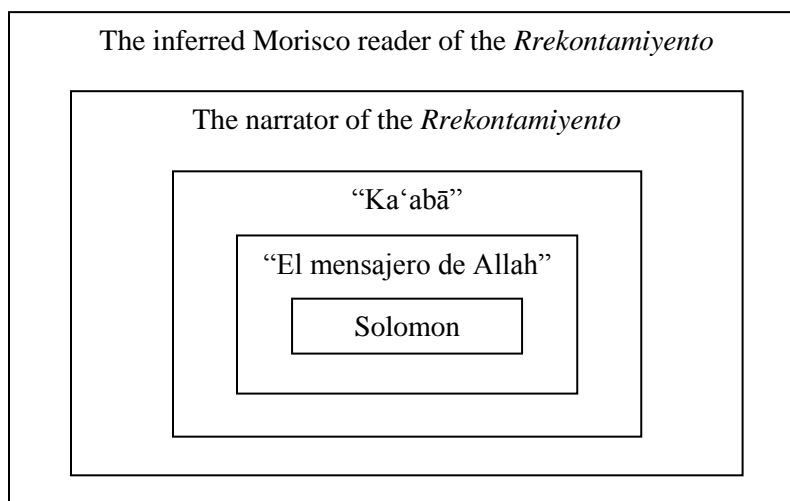


Fig. 2: The *isnād* of the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*

As this figure shows, each successive retelling of this narrative continues the instructive tradition established by Solomon himself. Consequently, each new narrator, through the very act of reading this text in a communal setting, becomes an *alfaquí* as he or she continues the tradition of instructing the established audience in the attributes of Allah and Islamic history.

The method of Solomon’s instruction is inherently passive. That is to say that at no point does he explicitly instruct the maiden in Islamic traditions or ritual practices. Instead, Solomon models correct behaviors, which are then observed and copied by his pupil. This passive model effectively absolves Solomon of responsibility for the *doncella*’s adopted beliefs and behaviors. Keeping in mind the king of Iram’s reaction to his daughter’s conversion, at no point does he accuse Solomon of influencing his daughter toward the practices of Islam. Instead, the king approached his daughter directly begging her not to part with the ways of their gods, Alāta and al-‘Uzzā (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 85r). Necessity dictated that sixteenth-century Morisco *alfaquíes* adopt Solomon’s passive instructional model. As the role of the *alfaquí* was closely watched by the Inquisition, Morisco religious leaders were unable to openly instruct their flock. Instead, like Aljamiado literature itself, the *alfaquí*’s very way of life became mute testimony to

the struggle of passive resistance against Christian authorities. Through their actions, religious leaders were able to quietly and clandestinely instruct fellow Muslims without unnecessarily arousing the suspicions of Inquisitorial officials.

The text of the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* also makes subtle references to the prohibited practice of alcohol consumption according to Islamic law. Chejne indicates that beverages of all forms were regulated according to Islamic law, but that the most severe of rulings were reserved for alcoholic beverages. “Prophetic traditions were invoked with regard to the seriousness of imbibing wine and the danger accruing therefrom. A tradition attributed to a scholar says: ‘Wine remains in the body of its imbiber for forty days; and if he dies during that time, he will die as an unbeliever and will go to hell’” (Chejne 65). After returning to his kingdom, Solomon makes finding the treacherous Harīzu his first priority. Hidden away in the sea of San‘a, Harīzu came to the surface only once every three months to drink from a fountain on Mount Kaf. According to the *Rrekontamiyento*, Solomon took his army of *jinn* to Mount Kaf where they dug a deep cave in which to hide the fountain. In its place, the *jinn* made a pool filled with wine. When it came time for Harīzu to resurface and quench his thirst, he found the false fountain filled with wine. Incensed by this deception, he cursed: “—Maldito siya el pirimero ke lo / invento bebrajo malo // ke enpuwes de bebido te puyas / a la kabeza i fazeste señor / de la persona i pribaslo de juicyo. / I huyo i no bebyo i tornose / a la mar” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 97v-98r). This moment in the narrative brings to light numerous points regarding wine consumption mentioned by Ice de Gebir in his *Breviario Sunni*. Longás Bartibás offers the following citation:

Guárdate también del vino

Y de acercarte a su olor,

Porque hace perder la honra
Y es amargo su sabor.
El día del juicio sale
El tal muy avergonzado,
Negro, muy triste y oscuro,
De suciedad demudado. (10)

As Harīzu submerges himself in the pool of wine, the first thing that he notices is its strong aroma, referred to in the second verse of the above citation. Afterward, the *jinn* himself instructs the audience through his cursing warning that consumption of alcohol causes one to assume himself to be master, rather than Allah. As the consumer becomes intoxicated, his judgment becomes clouded, resulting in a false sense of reality. Eventually Harīzu is left with no choice but to give in to his thirst and drink deeply from the pool. As the Aljamiado text tells us, “le penetoro a la kabeza i kayo / en tiyerra sin ningun sentido” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 98r). The result of Harīzu’s consumption was his complete loss of faculties and, ultimately, his defeat and punishment at the hands of Solomon.

Turning to the role of the *alfaquí* as healer, Benjamin Ehlers notes that in the later sixteenth century, wealthy families would occasionally turn to local *alfaquíes* to seek medical help (34). As of the fourteenth century, medicine had been a regulated, state controlled discipline in which people of all faiths received licenses. However, with the end of the Spanish Crown’s policy of toleration in the sixteenth century, when anti-Islamic sentiments ran high and forced conversions were put into effect, Moriscos were denied appropriate education and the subsequent licenses needed to practice Western medicine. This left them with little option than to rely on their “oral traditions, direct experience, and superstitions derived from their Latin

environment as well as from the Arabic cultural legacy” (Chejne 116). Dependence on oral tradition tended to lead the Moriscos toward medieval Arabic customs of superstition and sorcery, resulting in a blending of scientific, folkloric, and superstitious elements. Moreover, as García-Arenal tells us, “Los moriscos se transmiten conocimientos de curandería y magia al tiempo y del mismo modo que se instruyen unos a otros en las prácticas religiosas y en los preceptos coránicos. La práctica de la medicina suele ir unida a la magia” (*Inquisición* 111). That being said, the self-appointment of *alfaquíes* to the post of medical professional was not wide-spread among Moriscos. Chejne categorizes Morisco doctors as “*medico* (physician), *cirujano* (surgeon), *sanador* (healer), or rarely, *alfaqui* (a learned man)” (127). As we can see from this statement, the *alfaquíes* were placed at the bottom of the hierarchy of medical professionals. It is most likely that the role of healer was added to the list of the *alfaquí*’s responsibilities during the sixteenth century when education was increasingly denied the general Morisco public and, thus, the people turned to their dwindling bodies of religious leaders and educated elite for a greater variety of reasons.

The role of healer is completely lacking from Solomon’s portrayal in the *Rrekontamiyento*. Nevertheless, López-Baralt identifies the remedies most commonly prescribed by Solomon in other works as verses from the Qur’an and magical words that “Producen un efecto hipnótico de adormecer la inteligencia crítica consciente al que aludimos antes y que son típicas de los ensalmos mágicos de todas las culturas” (*Literatura* 254). A reference to this swooning, hypnotic quality is found in the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*: “Iy-asentose en la // tiyerra iy-a[r]rimo sus espaldas / a la torre iy-enpeso de santifikar / ada Allah. I diyole Allah suweño / i durmiyose” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 75v-76r). Given that this phrase tells us simply that Allah caused Solomon to become drowsy and drift off to sleep, we can only assume

that a correlation exists between the chronological sequence of prayer (*santifikar*) and sleep. The recitation of mantra-like phrases is a common feature in this work. In fact, Solomon's role in the middle section of this tale – from the point where his ring is taken until the moment that it is recovered – is almost entirely devoted to prayer. Let us consider for a moment Solomon's reaction to his loss of honor:

Iy-estuvo todo el diya [r]re- / -taraido en su *al'ibāda*. I quwando / vino la noche tomo una gayata en su mano / iy-unas rropas muy viles i sali- / -yose de su palacio muy enkubiye- / -rto. I fuwese *dando loores ada / Allah*, ta'alā, i *ke lo guiyase* por do- / -nde el fuwese servido i *ke lo // defendiyese* de los taratos de / l-asaytan. Iy-asi se fuwe.

(Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 71r-71v)³⁸

In these few lines of text, references to prayer, praise, and supplications occur no less than four times. The prevailing perception is quite literally that Solomon sought Allah's aid in every step of his journey. In this particular example, Solomon's recitations may be considered "medical" only to the extent that, as they are precursors to actions, they are understood as preventative.

A similar exemplification of the curative power of words occurs earlier on in the *Rrekontamiyento*. Balqis, having recognized that Harīzu was indeed not Solomon, read the words engraved on Solomon's ring. Immediately, Harīzu fled from the throne, but not before offering the following warning: "—Alegaraos, yā maldichos, ke si por las fuwerzas de las / palabras dell-anillo os a de señore- / -ar Sulāymān nnabiyyu Allah nunka os / señoreara" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 74r). Though the goal of Harīzu's statement was to discredit the power contained in the ring's inscription, his statement ultimately produced the opposite effect. By acknowledging that the words recited by Balqis contained certain "fuwerzas," it was Harīzu

³⁸ Italics are added for emphasis.

who revealed to the audience for the first time that the words themselves were powerful. Furthermore, he awakened this conviction in Balqis and the rest of Solomon's devoted subjects as Balqis publicly declared, "—Yā je- / -ntes, no temaes d-el ke / kiyen le diyo la onrra i / je la kito // akel mismo se la tornara quwando el sera servido" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 74r – 74v). For the first time in the narrative, not only are we introduced to the belief that certain words contain magical properties, but Balqis's stance regarding honor links these two elements as part of a common practice and result. Thus, audiences approaching the *Rrekontamiyento* are exposed to a particular blending of pre-Islamic sorcery and Islamic prayer that in due course would symbolically, if not literally, "heal" the people by reestablishing their honor in the sight of Allah.

Talismans, Amulets, and Other Mysteries

In addition to the power inherent in certain Arabic words and phrases, Solomon legends abound with references to magical and supernatural objects and enchanted phenomena. An example of the latter occurs after Solomon regains possession of his ring. By Allah's will, great gusts of wind carried all of the *jinn* from Solomon's kingdom to the lands of Iram. Later, when Solomon decided to return to his kingdom, he, his new bride, and his father in law were carried there in the blink of an eye upon a cloud (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 94r). It is the supernatural power of Solomon's ring, however, that receives the most consistent treatment in both Arabic folklore and Morisco writings. As such, this object, its numerous attributes and functions, and its presence in the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* deserve particular attention.

By the sixteenth century, distinguishing between Morisco medical and magical practices was an increasingly difficult task. Both blended elements of Western science, folk traditions, natural healing, and magical arts with the common goal of preservation and protection. Joaquina Albarracín Navarro describes the *alfaquí*'s role with regard to medicinal practices as “médico de cuerpos y también de las almas” (139). Because of the severity of this period in Morisco history, the magical/medicinal workings of the *alfaquíes* were, as López-Baralt posits, primarily “magia profiláctica,” or preventative measures that aimed to console the individual practitioner and guard against harm (*Literatura* 241). In the appendix of her *Inquisición y moriscos*, García-Arenal includes the details of an inquisitorial trial against one Juan Corazón of Deza documented in the Archivo Diocesano de Cuenca. The accused was said to possess a large book attributed to the “Rey moro Zulimen” with which Corazón was able to cure any ailment by placing the book on the body of the afflicted (García-Arenal, *Inquisición* 133). Additionally, Aljamiado manuscripts abound with references to magical phrases, talismans (or *alharces*), and amulets designed to block such forces as the evil eye and demonic possession. Moriscos, like traditional Muslims, connected human illnesses and other maladies to the presence of malevolent beings in the body. While most of these beings are believed to be invisible, two types can, if they choose to do so, manifest in forms visible to human beings: the *jinni* and the *tawāliq*³⁹ (Albarracín Navarro 136). Another Inquisitorial record cited by López-Baralt recounts the charges of witchcraft and Islamic apostasy presented against Lucía de Toledo in 1538. Lucía repeatedly testified to the presence of the *jinn* and claimed that her efforts were meant to “cure” those who suffered under the influences of these problematic beings (244). Regarding Solomon's interactions with the *jinni*, it was generally believed that they could be controlled by the powers

³⁹ Joaquina Albarracín Navarro describes the *tawāliq* as “demonios expulsados del Paraíso” (136).

of his signet ring. In effect, the *jinn* were prevented from working malevolent acts, preferably steering their actions toward beneficial ends.

To understand the practical production and uses of amulets and talismans, we should first consider Ana Labarta's distinctions between the two. She identifies the first as a "fetiche hecho a base de un objeto natural que se considera de por sí vehículo de las fuerzas sobrenaturales y que protege del mal de manera indiscriminada" while the latter is a completely artificial creation designed for a very definite purpose, defending the user from a specific evil (López-Baralt, *Literatura* 253). Albarracín Navarro provides a somewhat different definition: "Si el papel o pergamino escrito y preparado lo lleva una persona en su ropa, colgado, pero siempre consigo, es el *amuleto*; y si se pone para proteger un edificio o cualquier otra cosa se llamará *talismán*" (136). In either case, the production of amulets and talismans was a formulaic process, not altogether dissimilar to modern notions of diagnosing an illness and prescribing a curative medicinal regimen. As knowledge of magical incantations and the mystical properties of the Arabic alphabet, names of God, and certain Qur'ānic phrases became relegated to only an elite minority, the Moriscos had no choice but to turn to their trusted *alfaquíes* to diagnose their specific problems and prescribe appropriate means of spiritual and physical healing. Such prescriptions generally consisted of three necessary features: the power of the literal name of Allah, certain herbs and other plants with curative properties, and formulaic texts often taken from the Qur'an (Albarracín Navarro 135).

In the production of both talismans and amulets, the *alfaquíes* were scrupulously discerning with regard to the types of paper, parchment, or velum used; the tints and sources of inks; and, most importantly, the election and physical positioning of individual words and phrases. Talismans, specifically, derived their powers almost exclusively from the combinations

of letters and phrases written upon them. In her edition of the *Libro de dichos maravillosos*, Ana Labarta lists among the most common Arabic words and phrases the *basmala*⁴⁰ (in the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate), *tasliya* (God bless and save Muhammad), *Allāh akbar*⁴¹ (God is the greatest), and *yā Allāh* (oh God) (0.35). Several of these are repeated by Solomon in the *Rrekontamiyento*. The text itself, in true *hadith* fashion, begins with the recitation of the *basmala*. The very recitation of this phrase elevates the sanctity of the text that follows.

Interspersed through the text are the following expressions of piety:

Alhamdu lillahi illadi wahdahu lā šarika lahu⁴² (fol. 78r)

Lā illāha illā Allah wahdahu lā šarīka lahu⁴³ (fols. 79v-80r, 92v).

Innaka ‘alā kuli šay’i qadirru⁴⁴ (fol. 80v).

Çubhāna Allah wa alhamdu lillahi wa lā ilāha ilā Allahu wa Allahu akbar wa lā hawla wa lā quwwata illā bī Allahi il‘aliyi il‘azīmi⁴⁵ (fol. 81r).

⁴⁰ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ – The *basmala* is the name derived from the first four consonants of the word *bismilla*, thus forming a quadriliteral root used to label the phrase as a whole (a common practice used to identify specific prayers) (Haywood and Nahmad 263). This prayer is recited in a multitude of contexts in Islam, most notably at the start of each *surah* of the Qur’ān with the exception of the ninth. Additionally, it forms part of daily prayers and is frequently found in dedicatory inscriptions of buildings, monuments, or other artistic creations.

⁴¹ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ – This statement is known as the *takbīr* and is used among Muslims in formal and informal settings, in moments of prayer, to express joy or celebration, or in moments of defiance.

⁴² الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَحْدَهُ – This prayer, known as the *hamdala* marks the ends of activities – typically begun with the *basmala* – or as an interjection in appropriate circumstances. It carries a sense of acceptance of the completed action, as well as wonder and reverence for God, who allowed the action to come to fruition (Glassé 362). The longer form recited by Solomon in the *Rrekontamiyento* can be translated as “Praise be to God, the only One, and there is no equal (literally ‘partner’) to Him.”

⁴³ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ – This declaration forms part of the central creed, or *shahada*, of Islam in which the Muslim testifies to the oneness of Allah and recognizes Muhammad as His prophet. Through this, a Muslim not only attests to the presence of the One God, but also declares his intention to live out the truth of this testimony (Glassé 417). The quote as it appears in the Aljamiado text may be translated “There is no god but God, and there is no equal (literally ‘partner’) to Him.” It should be noted as well that the second repetition of this phrase in the *Rrekontamiyento*, by the king of Iram, substitutes recognition of Muhammad as the Prophet of Allah with “Sulāymān nnabiyyu Allah” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 92v).

⁴⁴ This phrase, like the *shahada*, attests to the all-encompassing power of Allah. A literal translation reads, “Certainly unto You is power over all things.”

⁴⁵ This declaration combines five key phrases into one glorious utterance: 1. *Subhan ‘allāh* (سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ) meaning “Glorious is God,” a statement of surprise and fear (Hughes 608); 2. The *hamdala*; 3. The beginning half of the *shahada*; 4. *Allāhu akbar*; 5. The *hawqala* (لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ) commonly translated as “there is no power and no strength save in God.” Muslims commonly recite this phrase when in a state of calamity or when seized by

Lā hāwla wallā quwwata illā biillahi il‘aliyi il‘azīmi⁴⁶ (fols. 90r, 92r, 93r, 99r, and 103v).

La-hu mā fī ilḥmāwāti wa alārđi wa mā baynahumā wa mā tahata azarā⁴⁷ (fol. 81v).

The very presence of these Arabic phrases in a predominantly Spanish-language text calls into question the role of Arabic in Aljamiado manuscripts. A number of studies attest to the inherently divine characteristics of the Arabic language. In fact, even during the Morisco period, when the Arabic language was all but forgotten, the Arabic letters themselves were still used as they were believed to possess mystical powers. Consuelo López-Morillas claims that their veneration of the Arabic alphabet led the Moriscos to write their Aljamiado documents in this script. After all, Allah chose to reveal His Qur’an in the Arabic language, thus raising it to a position above all others as a divine gift (López-Morillas 199). Arabic was therefore the language of divine creation through which Allah spoke all life into being through various combinations of the sacred letters. Ottmar Hegyi also describes the diverse functions of code switching in Aljamiado manuscripts:

el uno serviría para la expresión de la espiritualidad particular de la comunidad, adquiriendo un matiz afectivo e íntimo, mientras que el otro se emplearía para usos seculares, impuesto por las circunstancias y obedeciendo a la necesidad práctica de comunicar con individuos ajenos a la comunidad. (“Uso” 151)

Hegyi refers first to Arabic as the language of popular spirituality. In sixteenth-century Aragon, the majority of Moriscos possessed only the most rudimentary knowledge of Arabic. For the most part this consisted of terms and phrases relating to particular aspects of Islamic ritual such

circumstances or conditions that are out of their control. Additionally, Cyril Glassé identifies the *hawqala* as “an incantation in the face of evil” (196).

⁴⁶ See previous note.

⁴⁷ This phrase is derived from the Qur’ān *Sūrat Al-Saba’*, which starts, “الحمد لله الذي له ما في السماوات وما في الارض” meaning “Praise be to Allāh! Whose is whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth.” Interestingly, the title of this *sūrah* is the Arabic name of the Queen of Sheba, whom Solomon claimed as one of his lovers.

as prayer (aSSalā), fasting (aSSawm), and ritual ablutions (alwaDū’); concepts that cannot be expressed in their entirety in non-Arabic terms. Their placement of such terms in Aljamiado manuscripts served the dual role of preserving the last remnants of this knowledge and providing instruction. Through Aljamiado *ahadith*, or legends, the *alfaquíes* were able to impart these terms to their attentive audiences, subtly instructing them in the basic tenets of Islam.

Additionally, as we have previously seen, Arabic was also a tool for empowerment and dissent. Empowerment among the Moriscos took a number of forms. By inserting Arabic terms and expressions into their texts, the Moriscos connect themselves linguistically to the great Islamic *umma* (community) in the same way that Hebrew linguistically connects Jews throughout the world. This connection ran far deeper than mere linguistic mimicry, however. As Hegyi indicates, Arabic represented for the Moriscos a connective tissue to the entire system of Muslim life, religious and secular: “la parte perteneciente al culto exterior, las disposiciones legales contenidas en la *sharī’a*, y por fin una serie de costumbres cotidianas que en sí no forman parte integral de la religión, pero sí que se asocian con una manera de vivir vinculada con el ser musulmán” (“Uso” 162). According to Hegyi, the election of certain linguistic criteria situated the Moriscos within specific socio-religious communities. By not only writing in Arabic characters, but also lending voice to the Arabic lexicon, the Moriscos symbolically severed all linguistic ties with Spanish Old Christians. Not only that, but due to the religious nature of the Arabic language given its integral role in the Qur’an, the Moriscos also defiantly expressed *en voz alta* their lingering attachment to their Islamic faith.

Of the Arabic phrases spoken by Solomon in the *Rrekontamiyento*, the *hawqala* alone receives five repetitions. The placement of this phrase throughout this work reveals important clues as to how Solomon approached the governance of his realm. Specifically, he

acknowledged that all judgment, rule, and control belong inherently and unquestioningly to Allah. By way of example, when Solomon's ring is discovered in the belly of the fish, he takes it in his hand and recites the *hawqala*. Later, Solomon reveals his identity to the fishermen in Iram, saying:

yo soy Sulāymān / nnabiyyu Allah ke le palaziyo ada Allah / kastigarme por mis
merecimiye- / -ntos I fuwe kitarme ell-anillo / de la onrra en el quwal estaba la fuwe- /
rza de mi rreismo iy-ell-anillo es parecido. Tan loado es Allah ke da / el rreismo a kiyen
kiyere i tira / el rreismo. Iy-en su mano es / el biyen. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 92r)

Again, these words are followed immediately by the recitation of the *hawqala*. As this example shows, Solomon acknowledges punishment as congruent with the will of Allah. This sentiment resonates with the Moriscos' own submission to the belief that their social decline was the direct result of their own failure to follow the laws of Allah. Both Solomon and the Moriscos stand as lasting reminders of the mortality of earthly power.

Repeated writing and recitation of the *hawqala* also stands as a type of talisman used to solicit divine aid in the face of potential harm or evil forces. For the Moriscos, the hardships of everyday life – low incomes, threats against their persons and properties, fear of the Inquisition – all contributed to a practical need for protection. In addition, Ana Labarta lists planting and harvesting, vermin, and welfare of the family as among the top concerns of rural Morisco families (0.42). A consideration of the ways in which the Moriscos used their legends calls to mind an image of a small group of devoted followers gathered in a remote corner of an old house, secretly listening to the *alfaquí*'s stirring reading of the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*. As the words washed over the crowd, the Arabic syllables of the *hawqala* rang in a consistent pattern over and over again, gradually becoming familiar, if not ingrained, in the minds of the

attentive audience. Such techniques of subconscious memorization provided the Moriscos with a rare and powerful weapon that would aid them directly in their struggle to maintain their Islamic identities. The act of passing on the *hawqala* to entire audiences of listeners was in itself a historically noteworthy task as the *alfaquíes* were able to transmit a teaching previously inaccessible to the largely illiterate masses.

Shifting our focus to the physical forms of talismans, Solomon's ring constitutes one in a limitless number of magical objects common to international folktale traditions. Once again, one of the earliest and most plentiful references in this regard is the *Thousand and One Nights*. While Solomon frequently figures in this collection, two tales in particular make mention of his ring. The first, entitled "The City of Brass" in Richard Burton's landmark translation, occupies nights 566 through 578. As this tale opens, the Caliph Abd al-Malik bin Marwan listens to the testimony of his Grandees who describe the lordship and dominion over all creations that Allah had entrusted to Solomon. Though this tale does not directly attribute Solomon's dominion to his ring, the description just provided is followed immediately by an account of the imprisonment of certain *jinn* and demons in copper jars, which were then sealed with Solomon's signet ring (VI.84). These copper jars are mentioned on a number of other occasions throughout the volumes of tales.

"The Story of Prince Sayf al-Muluk and the Princess Badi'a al-Jamal," which fills nights 758 through 778, offers considerable more physical description of Solomon's ring. Burton provides in a footnote the following description:

The signet consisted of four jewels, presented by as many angels, representing the Winds, the Birds, Earth (including sea) and Spirits, and the gems were inscribed with as many sentences (1) To Allah belong Majesty and Might: (2) All created things praise the

Lord; (3) Heaven and Earth are Allah's slaves and (4) There is no god but *the* God and Mohammad is His messenger. (VII.317)

It should not seem incidental that the phrases inscribed upon the ring's gems closely resemble the Arabic phrases spoken by Solomon throughout the *Rrekontamiyento*. Another episode later on in this same tale specifically exposes the ring's power. Prince Sayf al-Muluk, as instructed by a *jinn*, took Solomon's ring, waded into the sea up to his waist and laid his hand on the surface of the water saying, "By the virtue of the names and talismans engraven on this ring, and by the might of Sulayman bin Dáúd (on whom be the Peace!), let the soul of Hatim the Jinni, son of the Blue King, come forth!" (Burton VII.351). The recurrent emphasis placed on the written word is manifested in this description inasmuch as the ring's power is derived from that which is inscribed upon it. In this particular case, the reference to names points to the numerous references to Allah and the prophets that fill Islamic prayers. The Qur'an, for example, reveals ninety-nine names of God, each conveying a unique quality. Islamic tradition dictates that these names are meant to be learned by heart and frequently recited.⁴⁸ Fulfillment of this practice ensures that attributes of the divine quite literally remain on the mind and lips of the practitioner.

As previously mentioned, tales such as these, and others pertaining to Judeo-Christian oral and written folklore, gradually filtered the motif of Solomon's ring on to the popular Islamic genre of *Qisas al-anbiyā'*. From there, it was disseminated further, adapting and changing to the societies and histories with which it came into contact. Each new contact with a distinct time period and society contributed to the complex web of interlacing narrative threads that affected the creation of the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*. It is not my intention here to enter into a comparative analysis of each episode of motivic borrowing, but rather to highlight the types of

⁴⁸ Glassé indicates that "the more important, sacred, or profound an object or a person is, the more names there are to describe it [...] The Names of God are limited by those which have been revealed, but the Prophet is identified by two hundred names" (297).

sources that the Moriscos likely had at their disposal at the time of composition. Through a careful blending and reconfiguring of narrative episodes, motifs, character development, and plot points, the Morisco author of the *Rrekontamiyento* seamlessly created a narrative that straddles the literary worlds of folktale and romance, consequently melding the literary past with the Morisco present.

The *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* itself reveals little about the physical design of Solomon's ring, telling us only that there were words written on its "quwadras." The meaning of this term in this particular case is equally vague. There is no clear indication as to whether "quwadras" signifies that the ring's shape itself is quadratic or that it refers instead to the smooth inner or outer edge of its surface.⁴⁹ In his modernized rendering of this legend, Francisco Guillén Robles interprets the term in question as "los ángulos del anillo" (121).

The function of Solomon's *anillo* in the Aljamiado legend is also unique when compared with those of the *Thousand and One Nights*. Whereas the latter placed an emphasis on the punishments and strict governance enforced by Solomon's ring, the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* focuses instead on those qualities that the ring bestows upon Solomon himself, most notably his *honra* and kingship. *Honra*, as it is exemplified in this legend, is a twofold paradigm of observable external and internal qualities. Externally, Solomon embodies the physical grandeur and strength associated with kingship. Internally, *honra* colors Solomon's approach to his rule through the qualities of right judgment and generosity that win the trust and devotion of the people. Let us consider each of these respectively.

⁴⁹ Covarrubias y Orozco offers the following definition of the term "qvaðra": Qvaðra, la pieça en la casa que esta mas adentro de la sala, y por la forma que tiene de quadrada se llamo qvaðra. Quadrar, poner vna cosa en quadro. Quadrar, en conuenir y ajustarse con el entendimiento: y assi dezimos, No me qvaðra lo que dezis. Quadro, en la figura quadrada, que llaman quadrilatora. Quadro algunas vezes sinifica la tabla olienço de pintura por estar en forma quadrada. Quadrado, cierta chia que las mujeres cortan en las camisas con las mangas. Quadrado, el que se echa en el tobillo de la calça. (601r)

The physical embellishments associated with Solomon's kingship are best exemplified in the following passage:

I pusose ell-anillo / en-el dedo iy-asi komo lo tuvo / luwego le fuwe obidiyente / toda kosa. I por kerimiyento / de Allah viniyeron kon // garandes terimutes de ayre / muy rreziyo todos los alsaytannes / kon muchos paños i rropas / pereciyosas. Iy-en los / ayres edefikaron un-alqasar / muy onrrado el quwal oy diya / es en-el mundo fasta ke Allah / ta'alā kiya. I luego fuwe / entolado de paños sin pere- / -ciyo i fuweron el i su mujer / vestidos de paños de mucho / valor i fuweron servidos // de muchos komeres muy biyen / guisados. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 90r-91r)

As the ring is placed on his finger, Solomon's physical identity is transformed from a poor beggar to a quasi-supernatural king. The instantaneous resurgence of Solomon's kingship that accompanies the donning of his ring speaks to the fragility of earthly hierarchies of political power. For the Moriscos, who witness the decline of their own society and the concurrent growth of the Spanish Empire, this notion of the impermanence of political power was no doubt significant. Solomon's example stands as a symbolic reminder that as easily as a ring can be tossed into the sea or slipped onto a finger, so too can a power be overturned and a new one established in its stead. That being said, the eventual return of Solomon to his throne likely fueled the widespread hope among Moriscos of an eventual return to the once-great Islamic rule of the Caliphate.

The lavish clothing given to Solomon by the *jinn* accentuates the physical grandeur of the king. On a different note, however, the descriptions in the *Rrekontamiyento* of "paños i rropas pereciyosas" and "paños sin pereciyo" call to mind the aforementioned Inquisitorial case against Juan Corazón. Declared an apostate heretic, Corazón was sentenced to jail time, wearing of the

habit of penitence, participation in a public mass and the receiving of communion, and was ultimately reconciled in the eyes of the Church. Additionally, he was prohibited from holding public office or other positions of honor or from having on his person “oro, plata, perlas ni piedras preciosas ni seda, chamelote ni paño fino” (García-Arenal, *Inquisición* 140). Nearly identical sentences were issued against a number of other Moriscos, each charged with heresy and apostasy. In 1576, Beatriz de Padilla was brought before inquisitors in Arcos on just such charges. After nearly two decades of trials, reconciliations, and repeated accusations of Islamic practices, Beatriz was eventually sentenced in 1596. The following *penas* issued against the accused were to extend as well to her future generations:

Se declara a los hijos e hijas de la dicha Beatriz inhábiles e incapaces para obtener ni tener dignidades, beneficios, ni oficios, así eclesiásticos como seglares ni otros oficios públicos ni de honra; ni poder traer sobre sí oro, plata, piedras preciosas, corales, seda, chamelote, ni paño fino, ni andar a caballo, ni traer armas hasta la tercera generación.
(García-Arenal, *Inquisición* 45)

Here we have not only a definite link between charges of heresy and apostasy and prohibitions against holding positions of honor in Spanish society, but also against any external representations of such honor. That is, through the vestment of the rich materials prohibited by the Inquisition, honor quite literally took physical form. Reconciled Moriscos, having soiled their Christian identities rendering them dishonorable members of society, were visually branded by the restrictions placed upon them.

Viewed differently, these sumptuary penalties were also visual clues by which community members could identify the heretical or otherwise religiously deviant among them. López-Baralt indicates in no uncertain terms that the prohibitions enforced against Juan Corazón

were common to his caste (*Literatura* 238). Seen from this perspective, the external stamp of alterity that was the product of sentencing nearly identical penalties to individual Moriscos collectively bracketed them as part of an ethno-religious model. Curiously enough, though convicted Moriscos were denied certain attire and privileges, such limitations nonetheless caused the Moriscos to become physically less distinguishable from Old Christians. Judging by the content of the inquisitorial records from Cuenca, appearing like Old Christians likely displeased the Moriscos who made valiant efforts to set themselves apart. García-Arenal quotes Pedro de Valencia who affirmed that the Moriscos “hacen en todo por distinguirse y apartarse de los antiguos cristianos en la lengua, en el trage, en las comidas, en los casamientos, en el huir de las Yglesias” (*Inquisición* 114). By forcing the Moriscos to physically blend in with the Old Christian populations, inquisitorial authority both impeded the Moriscos’ efforts to maintain an identity independent of that of the Old Christians and, in so doing, further punished the Moriscos for their heretical practices.

Comparable moments of sartorial imitation are realized in the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*. It was by altering his physical appearance to assume that of the king that Harīzu was able to deceive Solomon’s maidservant and, subsequently, his entire court. Furthermore, with the loss of his ring, the hierarchical distinction between Solomon and his subjects ceased to exist. In fact, the alterations to Solomon’s physical appearance made him virtually unrecognizable to his subjects. Though it is never explicitly stated in the text why Allah dispossessed Solomon of his honor, Balqis indicates that it would be returned to the king after such time that he performed acts of service to Allah (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 74v). Solomon, then, suffers a similar punishment to that of the Moriscos, being stripped of his honor, social privileges, and physical

adornments to the point that neither the poor of his own kingdom, nor those of the land of Iram seek his company.

Despite his physical alteration, however, Solomon remained true to his inner devotion to Allah. It was ultimately through this devotion, this inner *honra*, that Solomon was able to regain his kingship. Similarly, though Juan Corazón and other Moriscos may alter their physical appearances, they remained for the most part true to their Islamic traditions and beliefs. It is largely due to their inner convictions that these “cristianos nuevos de moros” were eventually expelled from Spanish soil. Despite their visible practice of Catholicism, their observable baptisms, genuflections, and receiving of communion, the Old Christian population was never truly convinced of the sincerity of the Moriscos. Again, Solomon’s model persuades us to look toward the future, to such a time when, by virtue of their devotion to Allah, the Moriscos would themselves regain their dominion.

Domestic Justice

Several passages in the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* detail Solomon’s reputation for sound judgment with regard to rights and responsibilities of the sexes. Balqis first introduces this theme when he seeks Harīzu’s judgment on a question of divorce and dowry. Through this act, Balqis intended to trick the *jinni* into revealing his true identity, knowing that the deceiver would pass false judgments in matters of Islamic law. The case was stated as follows: “Yā rrey yo te- / -ngo mi mujer kon assidaq. // Agora es mi voluntad apartarme / d-ella. Digole ke se vaya a kasa / de su padre ella no kiyere sino ke le / pague su derecho y no kiyero pagarla. / Juzga tu entere mi iy-ella” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 72v-73r). As expected, Harīzu’s ruling flew in

the face of the sound judgment for which Solomon was revered. The *jinni* bluntly concluded that the husband owed his wife nothing and that he should feel free to pursue whomever he deemed worthy. Balqis, however, was quick to refute the *jinni*'s argument quoting a previous judgment by Solomon in which the king ruled that “kiyen // faziya perder el-asidaq / a su mujer ke dize Allah tan-alto es / ke porna a ella en-ell-aljanna por las / alhaçanas d-el i ke porna a el / en jihannam por los pekados d-ella” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 73r-73v). Such a judgment reveals the obligation of a man to care financially for his wife until they are no longer legally wed. Moreover, the ruling that the woman return to her father's house symbolically releases the husband from further financial or marital responsibility.

It is useful, before continuing our analysis, to consider the similarities and distinctions with regard to marital practices between Western Christian societies and traditional Muslim societies in the Middle Ages. Though the social structures of both were based on patriarchy, they differed in several key points. Marriages between medieval Christians were commonly arranged between families to benefit the social standing of one or both parties. Thus, considerations of how marriage would affect the family as a unit were of central importance in this paradigm. Often the family of a prospective groom would propose marriage to that of a chosen bride, only afterward putting forth the match to the intended couple. As history forged ahead from the High to the Late Middle Ages, the process of arranged marriages began to change. By the fourteenth century, young peasants were engaging in courtship rituals with increasing frequency (Gies 242).

Stephanie Coontz describes a ruling by the Fourth Lateran Council, which met in 1215, that deemed a marriage to be valid if the bride was provided a dowry, banns were published in advance of the marriage, and the wedding took place in a church (106-107). The offering of a

dowry served two functions. First, it attested to the man's ability to financially care for the woman. Second, it "effectively undercut the independence of a young woman from her parents" (Coontz 106). During the High Middle Ages, dowries typically included both money and chattels, the latter being comprised of such things as farm animals, grains, oils, jewelry, furnishings, and other necessary household items. Additionally, dowries were commonly arranged and presented by the father of the bride. The groom, for his part, was expected to exceed the contributions of the bride's father, often promising his bride-to-be "from a third to a half of his land, to be hers for life when he died" (Gies 168). Despite the increased freedoms that accompanied courtship in the Late Middle Ages, seldom could youth outwardly disregard the matchmaking techniques of their families, as the idea of marrying without establishing exchanges of dowries and the securing of chattels was inconceivable.

After marriage, both partners played integral roles in household economics. Among the peasant populations, men might focus particularly on agricultural labors related to the planting and harvesting of crops and the preparation of the fields, while the woman tended to such chores as milking the cattle, preparing food, producing textiles, and taking excess goods to market for sale (Coontz 110). Thus, financial security was the shared responsibility of both spouses.

Despite this synergistic relationship, however, women in most parts of Europe found their legal standing restricted post marriage. Any property that a woman brought to the marriage became the property of her husband. As a result, he was free to dispose of those materials that he felt were unneeded or inappropriate for his wife's possession. Moreover, a married woman was not able to enter into contracts of her own accord. As the legal "property" of her husband, his identity was also hers (Coontz 115). This patriarchal framework owed much to the inseparable role of the Church in matters of government. Accordingly, women were seen as

sexually persuasive beings with the power to seduce and overtake the sensibilities of men. In Spain, advice manuals – commonly called *consejos* in Castilian or *consells* in Catalan – were published with increasing frequency from the fourteenth century onward. These exemplary works detailed the expected behaviors of married women and, as Antonio Cortijo Ocaña notes, were closely linked to representations of the so-called “female ideal” in pious-chivalric works of the age. One such work entitled *Letra deval escrita feu lo marques de Villena e compte de Ribagortça qui apres fo intitulat duch de Gandia, per dona Joahan filla sua quant la marida ab don Johan fill del compte de Gardona, per la qual liscrivi castich e bons nodriments, dient axi*, dating to fifteenth-century Barcelona, includes a letter written by a father to his daughter. Cortijo Ocaña provides the following excerpt: “In your father’s house you were not in charge, but you will be in your husband’s; in your father’s house you did not suffer, but you will in your husband’s; in your father’s house you did not lack anything, but you will in your husband’s” (41). The author of this text attempts to prepare the woman for the difficulties associated with married life. Though technically assuming control of the household upon her marriage, the role of the woman as caretaker, mother, and wife is not without significant adherence to protocol and equally severe punishment for lack thereof. A similar Castilian text, also believed to have been written in the mid fifteenth-century, describes the following responsibilities of a Christian wife:

Christian female spouse is advised: to love God, to pray daily, and to fast; to love your fellow man as you love yourself; to love your husband and to show obedience and humility; to be honest and moderate in your ornaments and attire, to not go out of the house, to not listen to vicious words, to not talk to men (especially in secluded places), to not allow males to enter your chambers, to not have contact with men without your husband being present, to not frequent windows and doors; to be frugal in food and drink;

to be thrifty; to not disparage your husband's friends; to not be jealous; to be benevolent with your vassals. (Cortijo Ocaña 42-43)

As this text indicates, Christian women specifically were held to idealized standards of behavior and physical appearance both within the confines of the home as well as in the public sphere.

The overall portrait presented is that of a subdued, humble woman, whose rightful place was in the home where she would not arouse the interests of others nor potentially risk bringing shame on her husband through word or deed.

The practice of marriage in medieval Muslim societies was in many ways analogous to that of Christians. For instance, traditional Muslim societies viewed marriage as a contractual agreement entered into by two consenting parties. Also consistent with Christian customs, Islamic law placed strictly prohibited marrying outside of one's social class (Esposito and DeLong-Bas 15). Finally, according to *sharī'ah* law, courtship between young men and women was permissible provided that both were of marrying age; that is, past the age of puberty.

Though strictly speaking it was permissible for a Muslim woman of marrying age to contract her own marriage, this practice was seldom carried out. Instead, a woman's male guardian normally received the man's proposal on her behalf. Once one of the contracting parties presented an offer (*ijab*), acceptance (*qabul*) by the other was required. Marriage was never to be entered into unless both parties reached a mutual agreement regarding the terms of the union, which included the exchange of dowries. Additionally, it was required that two witnesses preside over the process of proposal, negotiation, and mutual acceptance (Esposito and DeLong-Bas 15). Like medieval Christian marriages, Muslims generally entered into marriage contracts out of necessity in order to secure economic stability or a certain prestige within the

community. For this reason, Muslim families took a vested interest in their children's future partnerships as it would have a lasting impact on the family as a whole.

The process of dowry exchange differed somewhat in an Islamic context. Rather than the bride's father proposing a dowry, as was the Christian custom, Islamic tradition held that the bride should demand a proper dowry. If she was not satisfied with the proposal, she was within her rights to reject it. Additionally, once a dowry was accepted, it became the sole property of the woman, which she could dispense as she saw fit. Thus, there is a noticeable distinction between notions of property rights between medieval Christians and Muslim. In Muslim societies, a woman's property did not become that of the man upon marriage.

Muslim couples, like Christians, formed part of a characteristically patriarchal paradigm. However, history does not reveal the same portrait of strict male dominance that we find in medieval Christian settings. A number of *ahādīth*, or teachings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, dictate that the husband should bestow kindness upon his wives. One such record quotes the words of Abū Hurairah who claimed that the Prophet Muhammad said to him, "The most perfect of the believers in faith is the best of them in moral excellence, and the best of you are the kindest of you to their wives." Another reports that when 'Ā'ishah, the favorite wife of the Prophet, was asked what Muhammad did in his house, she responded, "he served his wife, meaning that he did work for his wife" (Ali 313). Women were also afforded certain economical freedoms that were not part of the Western Christian paradigm. For example, any wages earned by a woman, though typically lower than those of men, were retained exclusively by the woman. The man was under no authority to procure his wife's earnings as his own (Rapoport 32). Additionally, men were required to provide two basic forms of financial support for their wives: "the marriage gift, or the *sadāq*, and marital support, or *nafaqa*" (Rapoport 52). In fact, a man's

financial support of his wife continued even after cases of divorce. A legal ruling based on chapter two, verses 226 through 228 of the Qur’ān requires men to continue to care for their divorced wives for three months following divorce until such time that it is known for certain that she is not pregnant (Lindsay 185).

To a Morisco audience, the role of the *doncella* in the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* defies the commonly proscribed protocols regarding Islamic marriage on many fronts. First, she proposes marriage without the moderation of a male guardian. Furthermore, there is no negotiation of dowry, and no witnesses are present at the time of the proposal or marriage. We must keep in mind, however, that she was not herself a Muslim at the time of her proposal. According to Islamic law, Solomon, as a Muslim man, was free to marry another *ahl al-kitāb*, or “people of the book.” That is to say, Muslim men are permitted to marry Christian and Jewish women, as these two religions adhere to the belief in one God and are therefore considered precursors to the final revelations of Islam. Pagan women, as they do not proscribe to Abrahamic monotheism, are not suitable spouses. The problem of the *doncella*’s paganism is resolved, however, when she follows her marriage proposal with a declaration of her desire to become a Muslim. With this act, the marriage is deemed *halāl*, or fitting, according to *sharī‘ah* law.

Solomon, for his part, questions the *doncella*’s proposal asking, “Yā donzella, si tu padre no viyene en-ello komo lo haras” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 83r). True to Islamic custom, Solomon questions the validity of such a proposition without the presence of the woman’s male guardian. She contends, “mi padre me a dado / en mi mano el fecho de mi mesma / en-el kas[a]r. Y-ultra d-eso mi padre / es deskereyente i soy // mas obligada ada Allah ke no / ad-Alāta e-al ‘Uzzā” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 83r-83v). This statement directly addresses the Islamic

laws governing who may serve as a woman's male guardian. In his *Tafsira*, the Mancebo de Arévalo lists a specific succession of all possible male relatives who may serve as a woman's legal guardian beginning with her father. In the case of a woman whose family is not Muslim, "eš alwali⁵⁰ el chuwes ke eš alwwali / šubenido de parte de Allah sbhnh" (267). In the *Rrekontamiyento*, the archangel Jibrīl (Gabriel) descended to Solomon informing him of Allah's consent to the marriage. Allah thereby assumed the role of "alwali" for the princess in her father's stead (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 83v).

When the king of Iram learns of his daughter's marriage to Solomon, his disapproval of the match was not founded on matters of religion or prior consent, but on the fact that she had chosen a poor man as her spouse. This suggests that marriage within one's social class was not simply restricted to Islam, but was a defining quality of the medieval world. At the same time, it may speak to the Morisco author's own understanding of Islamic law, which was carried over into his development of a non-Muslim character. In response to his daughter's insistence on the marriage, the king strips her of her royal jewels, her elegant clothing, and her place within the castle walls. In so doing, the king ensured that his daughter join the social sphere of her husband.

Once married, the interactions of the couple clearly reflect the role of men and women in a traditional Islamic context. By way of example, let us consider Solomon's attempt to purchase food for himself and his new wife. Having only two coins to her name, the princess offered them to Solomon, who took only one of the coins telling his wife, "si akellos ke peskan / en la mar nos diysen dos // peces por-este dinero / cenariyamos" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 87v-88r). As the fishermen lack sufficient food even for themselves, however, Solomon is offered only one meager fish for his coin. Grateful as he is for their offer, Solomon is compelled to explain to the

⁵⁰ ولي - The Arabic term identifying a relative of a proposed bride who gives the woman's hand in marriage.

fishermen, “Mis [a]migos este / yo lo rrecibo en merced pero ke aporovecha ke me / a dado Allah en-arrizqe mujer / y-es de derecho darle parte / iwal ke es enkomiyenda / de nuwestro señor” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 88v). The two terms “derecho” and “enkomiyenda” infuse Solomon’s statement with a certain legalese, thus indicating that he was under obligation by mandate from God to provide equal provision for his wife. The fishermen responded to Solomon’s statement with amazement stating, “Por Alāta w-al‘Uzzā ke es / este onbere de la regla / [d]ell-annabī de Allah ke manda dar // a la mujer su parte iwal. I por-eso / levaras otro de los miyos” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 88v-89r). This scene once more evidences the widespread recognition of Islamic ideologies among non-Muslims. The fishermen unmistakably recognize Muhammad’s *hadith* as well as the identities of the Prophet and Allah. What is more, with their gift of a second fish, the men actively abide by Islamic law. The interactions between the fishermen and Solomon demonstrate a notable amount of respect and mutual understanding between religious groups that characterized Muslim and non-Muslim interactions throughout the Middle Ages.

The Morisco situation of the sixteenth century, shaped by a climate of threats and extreme politicization, produced a social dynamic that broke considerably the traditional molds of patriarchy. Economic constraints stemming from Old Christian discrimination often resulted in all members of a household working to contribute to financial stability. Such a feat meant altering traditional Muslim norms of social interactions. As Perry describes,

When Christians intensified their attempts to obliterate Morisco culture, both the women and men of this community had to become more aware of the context of power in which they sought to survive and to preserve their culture. Traditional Muslim ideals for women might prescribe marriage and homes for them in which men would make

decisions and carry out all interactions with outsiders. In sixteenth-century Spain, however, this ideal became impossible to realize. (74)

This description speaks to the ways in which the Christian Reconquest quite literally determined much of Morisco identity. As ever new restrictions, prohibitions, and punishments were placed upon the Moriscos, they responded with appropriate behavioral and societal modifications. It is to a large extent due to Christian pressures that Moriscos developed the kind of egalitarian society that they did. As Perry indicates, most Morisco families required labor from all of their members in order to earn the meager wages necessary to support themselves (75). Times of war and conflict are met with change. So it was for the Moriscos that their identities gradually adapted to new forms of government and they eventually acclimatized to the foreignness of Christian rule. But, as legends such as the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān* tell us, they never ceased to cling secretly to their honor as Muslims.

CHAPTER 5 | The *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb*: Negotiating Relationships of Power, Limits of Authority, and Roles of Pestilence

*Disperge illos (suple Mahumetanos) et depone eos vindica
sanguinem sanctorum confundantur et reuertantur retrorsum.*
Executaralas digo, desposseyendo los Moros de sus haziendas y bienes,
afligiendolos con enfermedad, destierros, captiueros,
guerras, pestilencias, y otras agudas penas corporales,
y vltimamente con muerte temporal y eterna en los infiernos;
y esto es lo que las dichas oraciones de la
Santa Iglesia contienen.
— Aznar Cardona 198r

This chapter will examine the principal themes of power, trials, and disease as they relate to the conflict between Job and the Devil, known in Arabic as Eblīs, in Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 23r-41r. Following a formidable chain of authority through which this tale was transmitted, leading back to the Prophet Muhammad himself, the narrative describes the nature of the protagonist. The most perfect and honorable of God’s servants, Job cared for the poor and widows, was an honorable husband and father, and was blessed with considerable wealth and property.

According to tradition, however, Eblīs took up the challenge of testing Job’s allegiances, seeking to lead him astray from his devotion to Allah. Given permission by God himself to use whatever means he saw fit to persuade Job, Eblīs and his legion of demons embarked on a campaign of destruction. Initially, Eblīs targeted Job’s crops, flocks, and servants, burning them all. As these attacks did not dissuade Job from his devotion to Allah, Eblīs then murdered Job’s children. Finally, in a third attempt to win over his prize, Eblīs attacked the body of Job. For seven days Job endured the firey breath of Eblīs until nothing remained of his charred figure except his eyes and tongue, but still Job did not relent.

Eventually, as the result of Eblīs's influence over their friends and neighbors, Job and his beautiful wife, Rahmah, were forced to leave their home and village venturing into the unknown. They found themselves on the outskirts of a village inhabited by the people of Bani Israel. The people, familiar with Job's plight, were sympathetic to the couple and agreed to provide them with food and shelter. Rahmah insisted that she remain with her husband on the outskirts of town, as the stench of his rotten frame would no doubt offend the village. After fashioning a small shelter for Job, Rahmah cared for her husband day after day, pledging not to leave him. She journeyed into the Jewish neighborhood to acquire food and bathed his rotten remains. In the meanwhile, Eblīs, furious that the couple continued to be aided by others, managed to convince the people of Bani Israel to cast out Job and Rahmah. Desperate to care for her husband and denied help by everyone, Rahmah finally comes upon the wife of the local baker, who agrees to provide food for the couple in exchange for a lock of Rahmah's hair.

While Rahmah collected food from the baker's wife, Allah sent the Angel Gabriel to Job to inform him that Allah had heard his pleas and would end his suffering. Gabriel carried Job on his wings to the "monte de Tursīnā" where Job was bathed in a fountain of clear water and restored to his full human form. In the end, Job returned to Rahmah and Allah reinstated all of the property, servants, crops, and livestock that Eblīs had destroyed. Job declines God's offer to resuscitate his children, however, saying simply that they were better off in the World to Come. Job and Rahmah resumed their former lives as they had left them, tending to the poor, the widows, and the less fortunate of their community until their last breathes.

Relationships of Power and Authority

Eblīs and Job come face to face in a relationship of power in which the negotiations of authority by each party determine the development of the narrative. Following the lead of Michel Foucault, who suggests that we analyze such power relations by looking to the type of resistance that it creates, we can conclude that Job's consistent passivity in the face of Eblīs's attempts to coax him away from his devotion to Allah is met with increased antagonism and violence. Additionally, we must bear in mind that power is, in its most general manifestation, a negotiation of ideologies, a means by which one force (individual, state, faction) exercises its behaviors over another (adversary, subjects, opposing faction). Thus, relationships of power are predicated on a dialogic formula – a continual medium of give-and-take – by which the living organism of society is permitted to function. Accordingly, power becomes synonymous with government. Foucault tells us that within a sixteenth-century context, government referred broadly to “the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed” (*Power* 341). This definition implies a plurality of approaches to governance through its apparent focus on the micro rather than macro level. That is, by emphasizing the direction of the smaller unit of the individual or of groups rather than the larger state, it is possible for any number of forms of government to be at work simultaneously within the same space. This in turn leads to a significant malleability with respect to the parameters of direction. Considering the Moriscos, for example, it is true that the Spanish kings developed structural paradigms designed to shape and manage Morisco societies. But interactions at the individual level between Old Christian and Morisco societies including the education of children, the spiritual and religious care entrusted to the Church and the *alfaquíes*, and other forms of social interaction that demanded

the negotiation of conducts⁵¹ also contributed to the definition of government with regard to the Moriscos.

The conflicting viewpoints of Job and Eblīs demonstrate precisely a framework in which opposition produces the “goal-directed” impetus to engage in a relationship of communication and, ultimately, a relationship of power. The goal in both cases centers on the question of allegiances. Eblīs seeks to gain the favor of Job, thereby rupturing existing allegiances and inspiring the formation of new ones. Job, in contrast, strives fervently to circumvent Eblīs’s advances, remaining firm in his devotion to Allah. Questions of allegiance are a central facet of Morisco social history. The Morisco was living testimony to the many shifts in political, religious, and social policies that bridged the late medieval and early modern periods.

Under the Hapsburgs, Spain witnessed the birth of a sprawling empire. Charles V, who took up the throne after the death of his father, Ferdinand, in 1516, would become one of Europe’s greatest and most powerful rulers. It was during his reign that Spain was introduced to the international political scene, affording the country previously unavailable honors and privileges in foreign realms. International collaboration took a number of forms toward equally as many distinct goals. Funding for overseas expansion and for international military campaigns, for example, came primarily from Italy. In fact, as Kamen writes, “there would have been no Spanish empire without Italy” (*Empire* 65). Charles V felt that his role as Holy Roman Emperor, a position rooted in the Italian states, would help to sway Italy to comply with his requests for financial assistance.

Aside from its ambitious campaign in the Americas, Spain engaged in a number of military campaigns that would test the allegiances between European powers for the duration of

⁵¹ Foucault refers to “conduct” as “at the same time to ‘lead’ others (according to mechanisms of coercion that are, to varying degrees, strict) and a way of behaving within a more or less open field of possibilities” (*Power* 341).

the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In July 1557, for example, as the French sent one army against Milan and another to invade the Netherlands, King Philip II, son of Charles V, assembled a defense force composed of Germans, Netherlanders, Spaniards, and English to hold the French at bay (Kamen, *Empire* 152). More pressing, however, was the threat of a growing Ottoman presence in the Mediterranean. Europe's campaign against invading Muslim forces, most notably the Ottoman Empire, would prove a major factor in the formation of Spain and Europe as a whole during the sixteenth century. This enemy was unique in a number of ways. First, military campaign with the Turks brought East and West together. In a very real sense, the battle against the Ottomans was viewed by many as a holy war in which Europe's Christian forces squared off against a formidable Muslim force comprised of Ottoman Turks and their North African allies. Should this Muslim force prove victorious, it would inevitably alter the religious identity of Europe. Second, and directly related to this first point, the religious nature of this conflict successfully united the major powers of Europe against a common enemy. By the time of the initial Ottoman attacks against Hapsburg Austria in 1529, religious conflict had already played a crucial role in the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Of particular note were the confrontations between Spaniards and the indigenous religions of the New World, the birth of humanism, and the increasing threats of Protestantism. Thus, as Spain entered onto the European stage in the sixteenth century, it opened itself up to a number of influences that could potentially threaten efforts toward establishing Catholic homogeneity in the empire.

The result of the European victory against their Muslim adversaries in 1566 did much to fuel the already burning fires of racism within Spain. From the 1480's onward, the Spanish Inquisition had been successful in fomenting anti-Semitic sentiments and *limpieza de sangre* statutes (Kamen, *Spanish* 233). Distinction became the principal marker of one's honor in Old

Christian societies. According to Kamen, the poor, mean, and outcast, and those who did not share the same faith as Old Christians, were considered incapable of honor (*Spanish* 230). Hence, during the sixteenth century great efforts were taken to remove such difference. Following the surrender of Granada, Spanish authorities immediately set to the task of converting their new Muslim subjects to Catholicism. By mid-century, the last of the Mudejars were converted, completing another step toward Spain's goal of homogeneity. The religious fervor that brought about the Inquisition would deepen further under the rule of Philip II. The principal catalyst to this end was power. For the first time, since the establishment of the Spanish empire, Spain had a resident monarch who would execute his administrative role from the power center of Madrid (Kamen, *Empire* 153). Additionally, regarding his policies in the New World, Philip II insisted that Spanish imperial expansion be vested in the power of the Spanish crown. By affirming this authority, Philip rejected the previously held notion that Spain's presence in the New World was dependent on substantial funding from the papacy. Kamen summarizes best the restructuring of power under Philip II writing, "There was henceforth to be one sole empire, ruled over by one sole authority, the Crown of Castile" (*Empire* 195).

Transformations in power and authority in the Spanish empire also provided fertile ground for the propagation of new thought and philosophical development. Erasmianism was well received in the first half of the sixteenth century as religious reforms became necessary to accompany Europe's changing intellectual climate. Spaniards were attracted to Erasmus's unique form of humanism due to their interest in reforming ecclesiastical education. At the forefront of this movement was Cardinal Cisneros who, between 1514 and 1517, printed the Complutensian Polyglot Bible in Alcalá, which would open the Bible to study on a scale never

before seen. Spain, however, did not embrace humanist ideas with the same zeal as the rest of Western Europe. The Reconquest and the Inquisition produced a dominant Spain whose principal mission was the preservation of orthodoxy. Any threat to this orthodoxy by outside heretics was quickly crushed, as Leopoldo Zea describes:

The voices of the Vives brothers, Vitoria, Valdés, and other Spanish humanists who tried to bring about this reconciliation of Spain and Europe, of Spanish orthodoxy with the new heterodoxy, were silenced. With the same stubbornness and insistence with which she had stopped and expelled the Oriental invaders threatening Europe, Spain stopped, persecuted and drove out any idea that might present a danger to her orthodoxy. (124)

The greatest challenge posed by Erasmian humanism was the advocacy of freedom of thought, individualism, and self-fashioning. Such extreme notions contradicted the blind adherence to church doctrine that the Inquisition sought to uphold.

Renaissance, or humanist, self-fashioning became the subject of a number of important studies following the success of Stephen Greenblatt's book on the same topic. Greenblatt devotes the second chapter of this work to Sir Thomas More and his *Utopia*. There he examines in detail how More's intellectual prowess allowed him to fashion an identity outside of the confines of the Church, assuming a place within the lavish ranks of court society, while simultaneously engaging in "profound self-criticism" of that same identity (Greenblatt 37). Though More directly interacted with the economic and social prestige associated with the court of Henry VIII, he nonetheless abhorred the pride, selfishness, and worldly attachments that characterized sixteenth-century court life. Greenblatt writes:

More gives voice to a lifelong current of contempt for a world reduced in his mind to madness, a rejection not only of all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of men, but of much

that he himself seemed to cherish, a desire to escape into the fastness of a cell. In part, this attitude should no doubt be traced less to qualities peculiar to More than to the style of late medieval culture with its intense shiver of revulsion against the world it nonetheless embraced. (16-17)

Our initial introduction to Job likewise demonstrates these qualities characteristic of the late Middle Ages. Having amassed significant wealth, lands, servants, and livestock, Job nonetheless rejects any notion that the goods of this world truly belong to him. To illustrate this point, upon providing food for the poor, Job says to them, “Komed i bebed de los arrizkes de Allah, ta‘alā, i fa- / -zedle loores i garaciyas a vuwestoro señor por lo qe / os-a dado de sus arrizkes” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 23v). With this statement, Job acknowledges that the foods provided to the poor are not provided by him, but by Allah. His role, therefore, is simply that of intercessor, cultivating the goods of this world, but having no personal attachment to them.

With the exposition of Eblīs, this dichotomy contained within More and Job is split into two visibly distinct factions. Eblīs exemplifies man’s embrace of the physical world, promising to return to Job all of his earthly possessions in return for denouncing Allah. Job, in contrast, embodies man’s rejection of the earthly realm recognizing Allah as the sole possessor of all creation. By engaging in dialogues of power, Eblīs and Job come together as a metaphor for the conflictive spirit of late medieval society described by More. The immediate result of this conflict is precisely the negotiation of personal identity characteristic of humanist self-fashioning.

Social uniformity of the kind depicted in *Utopia* is dependent on the ability of human beings to abandon personal ambition in favor of complete submission to a governing authority. That is, individual identity must be set aside for the betterment of the whole. In deference to this

ideal, humanist attention to the individual – to artistic, literary, and scientific creation – elicited an increased need for discipline. Only the exercise of discipline could maintain a balance between the two conflicting tugs of contempt for and embrace of this world, thus upholding the desired Utopian conformity. Let us consider Greenblatt's thoughts on the role of "religious fear" as a catalyst to the enforcement of conformity, which I will quote at length:

Shame is a very important part of the enforcement of conformity, but it is not trusted to work alone. The full complement of disciplinary forces may be seen quite clearly in the account of priestly admonition: "It is counted a great disgrace for a man to be summoned or rebuked by them as not being of upright life. It is their function to give advice or admonition, but to check and punish offenders belongs to the governor and the other civil officials. The priests, however, do exclude from divine services persons whom they find to be unusually bad. There is almost no punishment which is more dreaded: they incur very great disgrace and are tortured by a secret fear of religion" (227-29). The public disgrace of excommunication is reinforced by a secret fear which is, in turn, reinforced by the threat of physical punishment: "Even their bodies will not long go scot-free. If they do not demonstrate to the priests their speedy repentance, they are seized and punished by the senate for their impiety" (229). It is here, in this crushing of impiety, that all the coercive powers of Utopian society – shame, guilt, and bodily harm – come together. And the form of their union, in this commonwealth celebrated for its intolerance, is the precise form of the operation of the Holy Inquisition: excommunication, public shaming, the attempt to awaken guilt, the grim transfer of the unrepentant sinner from the religious to the secular arm. (56)

The *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb* reveals a similar ideology to that expressed by Greenblatt. In his efforts to govern Job, Eblīs employed the same weapons of shame, guilt, and bodily harm with which the Inquisition sought to crush heresy. The destruction of Job's belongings and, more importantly, of his children no doubt aroused feelings of guilt in the devoted father. We are given a glimpse of such emotions as Job throws himself to the ground weeping and tossing dirt over his head. Yet, even in this vulnerable state, Job quickly offers, "Las loor- / -es son Allah sobre su ordenacion," affirming still his devotion to Allah. Also like an accused heretic, Job incurs considerable fear as the threat of Eblīs draws closer to his own person. This is seen quite clearly when he begs Allah, "Yā mi señor, sokorreme i defendeme de Eblīs" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 27v). When shame and guilt fail to inspire conformity in Job, however, Eblīs exercises physical punishment.

Following the fall of Granada, the Moors underwent a profound metamorphosis of identities. The reassignment of labels – Moor/Muslim, Mudejar, Morisco/Cristiano Nuevo – doubtless had profound psychological effects as these newly subjugated people attempted to rationalize their own identities within the greater framework of Spanish society. As the Moors passed under Christian control, they suffered severe humiliation as evidenced by the restrictions placed on their liberties. No longer their own masters, the Mudejars fell under the legal jurisdiction of a foreign, non-Muslim system of government. What's more, their new Christian rulers employed ever more persuasive and invasive means of converting them to the Catholic faith. It is difficult to imagine the shame and humiliation that these people must have experienced as not only their lands and freedoms, but also their Muslim faith, so essential to the formation of their identities, were taken from them. In sum, the once-great pride of Al-Andalus was reduced to the lowest caste of Spanish society.

The development of Job's character parallels this trajectory from economic and social prosperity to complete degradation. As Eblīs's power increased, due to the liberties granted him by Allah, the outcome of power negotiations with Job likewise shifted in his favor. Hence, the paradigm of power in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* is turned on its head. Job, who at the start of the narrative was the respected caretaker of not only his own family, but of a myriad of neighbors, servants, poor, widows, flocks, and lands, became the very embodiment of helplessness. The destruction of Job's body is the culmination of this transference of power leaving him completely dependent on the mercy of others. This literal unmaking of Job represents on a microcosmic level the undoing of God's creation of the world. Just as Allah created the world in a period of seven days, so too did it take seven days for Eblīs to reduce Job's body to a charred mass of putrid matter. Such a representation of the Devil, embodiment of evil, destroying the world that Allah had created is analogous to the persecuted status of the Moriscos who similarly witnessed the undoing of their world by those who opposed the rule of Allah.

Inquisitorial Denunciations, Monitions, and Punishments

Descriptions of demons or demonic behavior are employed to varying ends in Aljamiado writings. In his seminal study of polemical confrontations between Christians and Moriscos, Louis Cardaillac cites several sources in which Moriscos expose the ferocity of the inquisitorial tribunal referring to inquisitors as “lobos robadores sin bondad, su ofiçio es soberbia y grandía, y sodomía y luxuria y blasfemia, y reneganzas y pompa y vanagloria; y tiranía y robamiento y injustiçia.” Another example from Madrid, BNE Ms. 9653 identifies the Inquisition specifically as “el tribunal del Diablo, “donde preside el demonio y tiene por consejeros el engaño y la

çeguedad” (Cardaillac 98). The authors of these descriptions conceive of a representation of the Inquisition as precisely that which Islam is not. Thus, we are painted a picture *al revés* of the polemicist’s beliefs and values. Yet another example cited by Cardaillac speaks of the inquisitors as allies of the devil: “Ynfieles ynquisidores, pues con su diabólico estilo, yncitados del demonio, querían o eran jueçes de las almas y apremiarlas por fuerça a seguir su maldita y endemoniada seta sin fundamento” (99). The fact that each of these three citations forms part of a distinct manuscript affirms that the sentiments contained therein were not isolated to a single polemicist. Rather, their similarity is indicative of a larger ideological framework in place within Morisco communities. Seen in this light, the negotiations of power between the opposing factions of Job and Eblīs cogently duplicate the conflict expressed in Morisco polemical writings. Hence, it is useful at this point to consider the structure and operations of the Inquisition as it engaged in negotiations of power with Spain’s Morisco populations.

Reestablished during the reign of the Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, in 1474, the Inquisition had as its overarching goal the unification of the whole of Spain under the banner of Catholicism. This goal was achieved through the seeking out and interrogating of suspected heretics in order to ascertain the validity of accusations and administer punishment or pardon accordingly (Netanyahu 1008). Since heresy, by definition, signifies a willing dissent from or rejection of Catholic practice, the reach of the inquisitorial arm was limited to baptized Catholics. Following the conquest of Granada and the subsequent shift in legal status of the Moors to Mudejars, the official policy of Castile was to encourage conversion by persuasion and example. However, with the approach of the sixteenth century and only minimal evidence of progress toward conversion, officials determined the need for methods that were more rigorous. On February 12, 1502, the Castilian crown issued a pragmatic that ordered the voluntary

conversion or expulsion of Castile's Mudejar population (Lea, *History* 3.325). Edicts were issued in Valencia and Aragon in 1525 and 1526, respectively. After that point, the entire population of Spain was theoretically a single flock under the jurisdiction of the Church and the Inquisition.

By the sixteenth century, the Inquisition had established an imposing presence throughout Spain with twelve permanent inquisitorial tribunals in the Crown of Castile and another four in the Crown of Aragon. Each governed a specific district of the Peninsula and were generally equipped with two inquisitors and two jurists. Additionally, a number of other officials assisted inquisitors including a prosecutor, constable, theologians, and notaries (Homza xxii). Though the even dispersion of tribunals throughout the country seems to indicate an ample inquisitorial presence, in reality the number of tribunals was considerably small when pitted against the size of the country. For that reason, the Inquisition relied heavily on outside informants to denounce supposed heretics.

Denunciations took a number of forms. The Inquisition hired two official bodies of informants: the *familiares* and the *comisarios*. The former was a select group of lay servants who stood ever ready to assist the Inquisition in its causes. The latter consisted mainly of "local parish priests who acted for the Inquisition on special occasions and also supplied it with information" (Kamen, *Spanish* 145). However, as Kamen indicates, it was not fear of the Inquisition and its tribunals that had the greatest impact, but rather fear of the testimony of one's community. The denunciation of acquaintances – including neighbors and family members – was often a practical way of shifting the Inquisition's focus from the denouncer to the denounced, thereby safeguarding one's self and family. On other occasions, the testimony of one community member against another was an act of personal vengeance. Regardless of the

case, the proximity of one's potential denouncers produced a more immediate and continual fear among Moriscos than did the Inquisition. That's not to say that the Inquisition did not play its part in fanning the flames of this fear. Inquisitors encouraged and even rewarded those who spied on neighbors and family members. For example, following the mass conversions of the Jews, Fray Tomás de Torquemada, the first Inquisitor General, issued in his *Copilacion de las instrvciones del Oficio de la Santa Inquisicion* of 1484 that Edicts of Grace should be issued for a period of thirty to forty days in order to encourage self-denunciation and the denunciation of known accomplices. In this proclamation, Torquemada details the rewards of compliance as follows:

todas las personas, assi omes, como mujeres, que se hallen culpados en qualquier pecado de heregia, ò de apostasia, ò de guardar, ò hazer los ritos, y ceremonias de los Iudios, ò otros qualesquier que sean, contrarios a la Religion Christiana, que vengan a manifestar sus errores ante ellos durante el dicho termino, y hasta en fin del, asegurando, que todos aquellos que vernan con buena contricion, y arrepentimiento à manifestar sus errores, y todo lo que saben enteramente, y se les acordare cerca del dicho delito, assi de si mismos, como de otras qualesquier personas que ayan caído en el dicho error, serán recebidas charitatiuamente, queriendo abjurar los dichos errores; è les sean dadas penitencias saludables a sus animas, y que no recibiràn pena de muerte, ni de cárcel perpetua, y que sus bienes no serán tomados, ni ocupados por los delitos que assi confessaren, por quanto a sus Altezas place de vsar de clemencia con los que assi vinieren a se reconciliar verdaderamente en el dicho edicto de gracia, y fueren recibidos a la vnion de la Santa Madre Iglesia. (Arguello 2.3v)

These early instructions would continue to form the cornerstone of inquisitorial procedure during the sixteenth century, being modified and supplemented in 1561 by Inquisitor General Don Fernando de Valdés. As Torquemada mentions in passing, simple confession was not sufficient to warrant exemption of reconciliation, confiscations, and other punishments. Lea clarifies, “to be efficacious it must be the result of conversion and repentance, implying the denunciation of all accomplices in the crime of heresy” (*Moriscos* 113). Cecil Roth elaborates on this claim adding, “The disclosures made in one insignificant instance might ultimately involve entire families, or even communities, which would methodically and mercilessly be tracked down in their turn” (75). Thus, individual accusations could perpetuate a chain reaction of denunciations against anyone even remotely connected, personally or otherwise, with the accused. This produced a constant paranoia and strain on the connective tissues of communities. Fear for one’s own wellbeing pitted neighbors against neighbors, friends against friends, even spouses against spouses.

Eblīs acknowledges this ideology of cooperative involvement in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb*. From the outset, he is aware that in order to sway Job, he would first have to contend with a number of other obstacles:

no podre yo apartarlo de tu serviciyo / por lo mujos ‘algos ke tiyene ke akello le a- / -
yuda i le da fuwerza para servirte i lonbararte // y-el anojeece y-amaneece alegere i gozoso
por lo mujos / algos ke tiene en-este mundo. I por sus biyenes / mujos i mujas asadaqas
yo no e poder para estobar- / -lo de tu serviciyo. I si por ventura Ayūb fuwese pob- / -r
fallariya viya i kamino para vencerlo y-apartarlo de tu lo- / -nbaramiyento i serviciyo.

(Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 24r-24v)

This passage reveals the crucial point that the conflict of power in this work is not isolated to two individuals, but rather envelopes an entire society. Eblīs is aware of the strength that Job gains from his lands, crops, animals, servants, and family members. Consequently, he believes that he can weaken Job by systematically eliminating his earthly ties. The choice of the word “pobr[e]” is important in that it points to the key difference between the contrasting worldviews of Eblīs and Job. Eblīs assumes that Job’s faith in Allah can be swayed through the systematic elimination of Job’s material wares and earthly wealth. However, when Eblīs offers to return all that he had taken from Job, provided that the latter denounce his belief in Allah, Job responds, “Yā mala‘ūn, / la goloriya i biyenes d-este mundo se van i se akaban / i la goloriya i palazer d-el-ot[ro] es durable para siyenpere / ke nunka se akabara” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 28v). With this statement, Job renounces any earthly attachment, directing his focus instead toward the World to Come. The specific wording of this phrase is also unique among the different permutations of this narrative. Even the collections of *qisas al-anbiyā*’ by al-Tha‘labī and al-Kisā’i, from which the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* is heavily derived, shift the focus of Job’s rebuttal to questions of property and guardianship. Al-Kisā’i writes, “They were not my possessions, [...] but the Lord’s and He may do with them as He pleases” (194). Al-Tha‘labī adds to this “For I have assured myself and set my mind at ease that I and my possessions are but passing” (256). Only through the word “passing” are we given any indication of the transitional, impermanent nature of human existence. Hence, the clear separation of the worldly from the heavenly in Job’s response suggests a mindset akin to the *contemptus mundi* of medieval monasticism.

Within an Islamic setting, the Qur’an speaks to the question of human attachment to the transitory world as follows:

There are men who say: “Our Lord! Give us (Thy bounties) in this world!” But they will have no portion in the Hereafter. And there are men who say: “Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire!” To these will be allotted what they have earned; and God is quick in account. (2.200-202)

Respected Arabic scholar and qur’ānic commentator Abdullah Yusuf Ali interprets these verses to mean that one should not dedicate themselves solely to things of this world, losing sight of the higher ideals of Paradise. Nor should one completely renounce this world in favor of Paradise. The proper Muslim attitude is rather to strike a balance between the two in which one is able to enjoy the good in this world without allowing themselves to become “so engrossed in it as to forget the spiritual future” (Ali 80). Job personifies this belief through his care of the poor and the widows on his community. Care for those in need seems, to our modern sensibilities, a commendable and expected behavior of a pious individual. However, as several inquisitorial accounts reveal, providing care for the poor was considered indicative of Morisco communal solidarity. García-Arenal writes, “El cuidado con el que la comunidad morisco atiende a los más desasistidos de los suyos fue señalado ya por autores antiguos, entre ellos Bermúdez de Pedraza, que decía de los granadinos: ‘Tienen gran caridad con sus pobres’, o Janer, citando la *Historia de Plasencia*: ‘No dejan que los suyos mendiguen’” (*Inquisición* 96). According to such accounts, caring for the poor was an uncommon act in Christian societies. This directs us once again to consider the roles of the individual and society as they relate to Old and New Christian – or Christian and Crypto-Islamic – contexts.

As the newly converted Moriscos came under the control of the Inquisition, officials were advised to show leniency and tolerance in their exercise of power until the Moriscos could be properly instructed in their new faith (Lea, *History* 3.357). Efforts toward such instruction were

dependent in large part on policies of assimilation; the assumption being that if the bonds of communal solidarity could be broken, then the Moriscos would be more easily persuaded toward Catholicism. Assimilation was also beneficial in facilitating the surveillance of Morisco activities. To this end, the Inquisition attempted to force the Moriscos out into the open by literally moving them out of their *morerías* and into Old Christian neighborhoods. Inquisitorial efforts, however, were largely futile. The Moriscos ignored or otherwise paid little attention to the Inquisition's early attempts at instruction by example and compassion. It was during what Harvey labels the "middle period" of Morisco history in Spain – the period to which Madrid, BNE 5305 is dated – that the so-called "Morisco question" turned for the worse: "The Christians, possessed of all power but yet powerless to impose their will, began in their frustration to contemplate ever more violent solutions" (Harvey, *Muslims* 109). Despite their attempts, however, increasing violence was met with an increase in resistance. In fact, fear of the Inquisition tended to strengthen the Moriscos' sense of communal and familial bond, deepening their hatred toward the Christian religion.

Conflicts between social solidarity and individualism figure prominently in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb*. On one occasion, having exhausted his destructive power against Job, Eblīs turns his attention to Job's neighbors insisting, "Katad avisovos i desengaños / ke vosotros sakeis ad-Ayūb de vuwestra / villa porke si no lo fazey[s] rreporobarvos-a Allah a todo- / -s kon la malabtiya ke dado i rreporobado ad-Ayūb" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 34v). The repetition of the verb "rreporobar" before both "vos" and "Ayūb" indicates that each will share in the same fate. With this statement, Eblīs attempts to use fear as a tactic of motivation. To this end, Job serves as a visual exemplification of the consequences of noncompliance. In this case, his neighbors ultimately comply with the outsider's demands, risking the rupture of their social

solidarity for the benefit of their individual wellbeing. Later in the narrative, Eblīs presents a similar choice to the people of Bani Israel. If Job were to remain among them, he explains, they would both run out of food and goods as well as contract Job's malady. Again, fear for one's own welfare triumphs over community solidarity and the people cast out both Job and Rahmah.

Despite the consensus of the community, one woman, the wife of the town baker, pledges her continued aid to Rahmah. The free will exercised by these two women is a powerful testament to both the emerging autonomy associated with humanism and the exceptional roles of women in times of social crisis. Through their failure to comply with the majority position of their communities, the two women openly challenge the established patriarchal social framework in profound ways. Job's disfigurement, for instance, placed Rahmah in the role of caretaker. The result is a repositioning of the peripheral role of women, according to the Western patriarchal construct, to the center of power in their relationships. This is beautifully exemplified when Rahmah hoists Job onto her back in order to transport him out of their town. In so doing, Rahmah literally and figuratively carries the weight of her remaining family on her shoulders. It is important to note that Rahmah was in no way obliged, by Job or anyone else, to accept such a role. On the contrary, Job tells his wife plainly that if she wished to leave him, she need only kiss him goodbye and be on her way. Rahmah, however, reiterated her vow to remain devoted to her husband until her soul leaves her body.

With regard to the baker's wife, upon meeting Rahmah the woman was struck by her beauty. The text tells us, "miro la mujer del panadero a ella i mara- / -villose de su beldad i fermosura i mirolo i viyole los / kabellos de su kabeza muy fermosos i kobdiciyo aber alguna kosa d-ellos" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 37v). The Jewish woman's curiosity toward Rahmah's hair in part speaks to the appeal of the unknown as two women from distinct

communities come together for the first time. That said, her desire to possess Rahmah's hair is reminiscent of the male protagonist in chivalric narratives desirous of his lady's favors for good luck or to help bear the separation between them. Read in this light, the relationship between the two women adopts an element of sexual intrigue. The baker's wife first disobeys her husband's wishes, meeting with Rahmah in secret. Rahmah then complies with the other woman's request, literally surrendering a piece of her body in exchange for food. Such underpinnings of same-sex desire on the one hand indicate the lengths to which a devoted wife would go to care for her husband. On the other hand, this may be seen as an extreme example of the heresies of heterodoxy and free thought that threatened Spanish orthodoxy.

Let us return to our previous contemplations of inquisitorial processes. Once denounced to the Inquisition, someone accused of heresy was generally incarcerated while evidence against them was compiled and evaluated. Following several rounds of preliminary questioning during which details of one's identities, genealogy, and Christian observances were divulged, the accused would finally be given an opportunity to voluntarily confess his or her crimes against the faith. As Lea notes, typically this first monition was met with a negative response (*History* 3.38). This opportunity to confess could be repeated up to two additional times over a considerably lengthy period. Comparably, after each wave of attacks against Job, Eblīs appeared before his victim to question the nature of his allegiances. Finding Job ever more firmly rooted in his devotion to Allah, Eblīs had no choice but to employ progressively more invasive methods of persuasion.

Ergo, the relationship of power between Eblīs and Job is consistent in its execution with the methods and goals of inquisitorial tribunals. Eblīs first approaches his target antagonistically, hoping to weaken Job's spirit by attacking those things that he holds most dear.

Job is then given the opportunity to denounce his faith. Unable to coax Job away from Allah, Eblīs reevaluates his strategies in consultation with his corps of demon followers, leaving Job alone to contemplate his persecuted situation. According to Lea, this period of procrastination between monition was often the greatest device with which to encourage confession. Since prisoners were not informed of the charges brought against them, their period in isolation allowed them ample time to postulate a number of theories as to the nature and evidence of their crimes (Lea, *History* 3.39). If the accused could still not be broken, inquisitors would increase the ferocity of their questioning, not excluding physical persuasion, with each successive attempt at monitions.

The form of the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb* reflects the three repetitions of inquisitorial monitions. As I mentioned previously, the narrators of traditional Islamic *ahādīth* customarily introduced the narratives after providing a reliable chain of transmission – or *isnād* – which authenticated the authority of the words that followed. In this case, a new *isnād* is recited at key moments in the Aljamiado narrative. Each new recitation symbolizes a division within the text, marking the end of one narrative segment and the start of another. Consider the following figure outlining the first three attacks against Job:

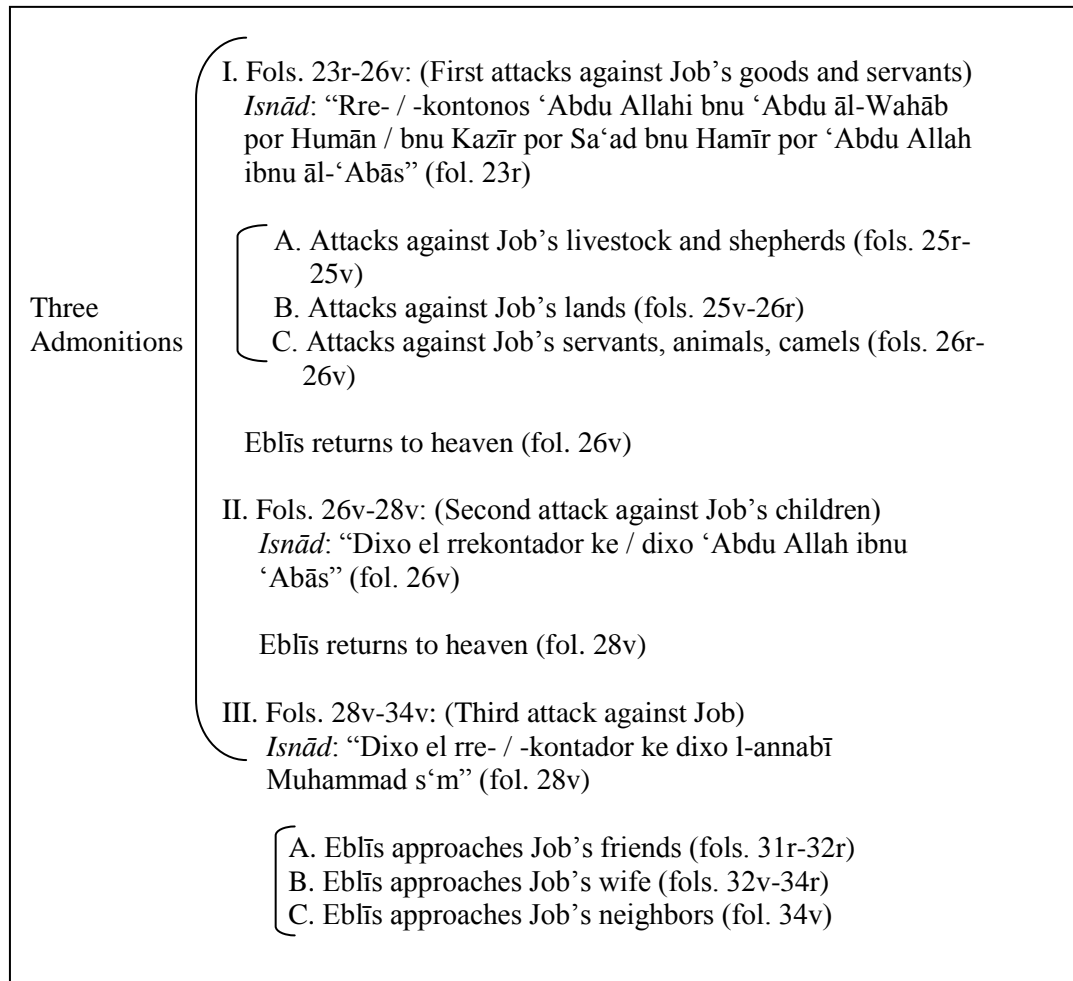


Fig. 3: Outline of Eblīs's attacks against Job

By observing the moments in which a new *isnād* is recited, the text becomes fragmented into a tripartite system of repetitions that correspond to each major incitement by Eblīs. Following each series of attacks is a period of respite during which Eblīs returns to heaven to reassess his strategies and appeals to Allah for additional liberties in his attacks. In the meantime, Job must have endured considerable psychological trauma as he watched the systematic destruction of all that he knew and loved. Such trauma was no doubt heightened as the attacker grew progressively nearer to his victim. Additionally, the sequential rather than simultaneous system of attack expanded the temporal framework of these events. By both augmenting the duration of Job's suffering and delaying a direct assault against Job's person, Eblīs sought to not only

remove the physical obstacles standing between him and Job, but also to damage Job psychologically, weakening his victim from within.

Eblīs's pattern of destruction and election of victims reveal clues as to how the Moriscos understood discipline and punishment. The destruction of Job's property, servants, and children shares both the threefold structure and end goal of the inquisitorial monitions. By approaching Job indirectly, Eblīs attempts to persuade a reaction from the true object of his efforts. Yet Eblīs, like the Inquisition, was himself deceived by his own intentions. Both focused entirely on the elimination of the physical: goods, properties, symbols of religious identity, evidence of heretical acts, and the like. For the Inquisition, this meant the confiscation of the property and financial holdings of the accused. In fact, canon law held that the confiscation of one's good and property be an invariable penalty in cases of heresy (Lea, *History* 2.320). The inevitable failure of Eblīs and the Inquisition is their inability to strike at the source of their victims' devotion itself. The eventual expulsion of the Moriscos speaks directly to this fact. In addition to being the byproduct of centuries of growing racism, the Morisco expulsion was an expression of defeat by the Spanish Crown. For Moriscos, then, the trials of Job and Rahmah provided an enduring testament to the resilience of the human spirit. Job never wavers in his devotion to Allah, even welcoming the physical castigation of his body if it be the will of God.

Admitting that his arts of deception had failed to persuade Job, Eblīs's followers suggested that he turn his attention to two of Job's close friends. After speaking with Eblīs, these same friends then approach Job telling him, "nuwestoro padre Adam desobedeciyo en l-aljanna i se rrepe- / -ntiyo i lo perdono. Puwes demandale perdon i di una sola / palabra de la deskereyenza i por aventura abras / fuwelgo de tu mal i garan tarabajo" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 31v). This example of repentance and subsequent pardon speaks to the common inquisitorial

procedure of confessing one's heresy, expressing repentance, and being reconciled to the Catholic Church.⁵² By assigning this persuasive role to friends of Job, pressures from external sources create tension within Job's community. Neighbors question the practices and beliefs of neighbors, threatening the unity of the community. The result is the dissolution of communal solidarity into separate factions leading to conflicts across the boundaries of religious identity and consanguinity.

In a second example, Eblīs approaches Rahmah under the guise of a Syrian doctor. After listening to the doctor's proposed cure for her husband's "illness," Rahmah relates the details of their conversation to Job:

Yā Ayūb, a la puwerta ay un onbere mediko de tiyerra- / -s de Asām i dize k-el te kurara de tu dolenciya kon me- / -dezinas ke taraye en su barjuleta o talego de ti- / -yerras de Asām i kon todo lo ke tarae de medezinas / ke deguwelles un-ave ke no lonberes ada Allah / i ke te untaras kon su sebo i sebo de puwerko / i ke depuwes ke te dara la medezina a beber kon vino puro // i ke kuraras de tu dolenciya i mal garan ke tiyenes.

(Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 32v-33r)

Here, Eblīs's aim goes beyond a desire for mere confession of devotional practices to elicit observable proof of Job's allegiances. To this end, he formulated a "cure" the preparation and consumption of which would violate three fundamental precepts of Islamic law. First, Job is instructed to slaughter a bird without offering praises to Allah. As Longás Bartibás stipulates in his compendium of Morisco religious practices, the laws of Islamic ritual slaughter dictate that the animal's head should first be positioned facing eastward toward the Mecca. Afterward, "El morisco, al degollar los animales, pronunciaba las palabras 'En el nombre de Dios' y 'Dios es

⁵² For detailed information regarding the process of the inquisitorial trial see Roth 75-107, Kamen, *Spanish* 174-213, and Lea, *History* 2.457-586.

muy grande” (Longás Bartibás 266). Eblīs then specifies that some of the tallow of the bird should be mixed with that of a pig. The mixture should then be swallowed down with pure wine. As Islamic law prohibits the consumption of both pork and wine, the practice of either by Job would render him heretical in the eyes of the Muslim community. The abstention from certain foods was also a common charge used to denounce Moriscos to the Inquisition. García-Arenal quotes a passage from the archives of Ignacio Bauer Landauer revealing that the aversion to pork “era señal indicativa de su condición de moriscos que, para burlar a la Inquisición, ‘muchos de ellos lo compran por ostentación y no lo comen, y mas en particular las mujeres moriscas que de ninguna manera quieren verlo en casa’” (*Inquisición* 68). The avoidance of these prohibited foods became increasingly difficult as efforts toward assimilation placed Moriscos side by side with vigilant Old Christian neighbors. Invitations to Old Christian homes as signs of goodwill and friendship were not uncommon. That said, such invitations, as Cardaillac explains, were also an opportunity for Old Christians to remove further layers of separation between themselves and their New Christian neighbors, thereby subjecting the latter to continual scrutiny. “Los menores hechos y gestos que no concuerdan con los usos y costumbres de la comunidad cristiana serán interpretados como índice de islamismo, y motivarán investigaciones más amplias” (Cardaillac 27). As audacious as the notion that Job should consume such a remedy are the implications of his fervent rejection of the very idea. Job describes as “malo i falso” not only Eblīs, but also his medical advice and the scribe that composed such a recipe. Thus, his condemnation is an act of collective denigration against any who would conspire to use such remedies against him. Read against the backdrop of Morisco history, Job’s condemnation of Eblīs and his accomplices rings true with the opposition that both Christians and Moriscos felt toward the evil and false doctrine of the other’s religion.

The death of Job's children in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* also raises important questions regarding the treatment and education of Moriscos children. "From the late fifteenth century," Perry writes, "Christian efforts to convert Muslims targeted their children, who they hoped would not only grow up to become a new generation of loyal Christian subjects, but would also invert the usual generational order by teaching the basics of Christian doctrine – and a love for it – to their parents." Later, between 1555 and 1560, the then Archbishop of Granada, Pedro Guerrero "declared that Morisco boys should be educated in Christian schools and cut off completely from contact with their families" (Perry 69). In many instances, the legal jurisdiction of the Catholic Church over the Moriscos rendered the submission of Morisco children to Christian education a matter of obligation. Under such conditions, Morisco children occupied an unsettling middle ground between Christianity and Islam. Forced participation in Christian sacraments, for example, was often followed by their annulment. Matthew Carr writes, "After baptizing their children in churches, some Morisco families would take their children home and wash off the baptismal chrism with hot water or bread crumbs" (107). Alternatively, fear of the Inquisition occasionally prompted Morisco parents to avoid educating their children in Islamic customs altogether "hasta que tenían uso de razón" (García-Arenal, *Inquisición* 66). This decision was justified by the argument that the natural innocence and indiscriminate nature of children rendered them unable to keep necessary information secret when questioned. Such was the case of Isabel Bastida of Socuéllamos, whose granddaughter fell victim to questioning by two Christian gentlemen one day as she passed by their church. When asked whom she preferred, God or Muhammad, the eight-year-old child responded, "Muhammad." The men then offered the girl bread containing pork, which she refused to eat for fear that her grandmother would whip her (García-Arenal, *Inquisición* 65-66). For Morisco parents, such a decision to

delay an Islamic education meant running the risk that Morisco children would come to love the Christian faith in which they had received instruction from an earlier age.

As tensions between Old Christians and Moriscos escalated in the latter half of the sixteenth century, King Philip II imposed legislations that increasingly pushed for the Christian education of Morisco children. Following the Second Revolt of the Alpujarras (1568-1571), the king decreed that captive Morisco children “should not be enslaved but instead should be distributed among Old Christians who would bring them up as good Christians” (Perry 119). With the final expulsion of the Moriscos came further decrees mandating the separation of Morisco children from their parents. The Archbishop of Valencia, Juan de Ribera, advised king Philip III in a document dating to the first of September, 1609, “Los menores de la dicha edad, se avran de reservar deste destierro *por ser baptizados*, deteniendolos en España, aunque sus padres los pidan: porque por el mismo caso que los padres son apostatas, deven ser apartados de ellos *para que no caygan en los mismos errores*” (Boronat y Barrachina 2:523). Allah responds to the separation of Job from his children by offering to restore them to life. Job, nonetheless, rejects Allah’s offer explaining, “Yā mi señor, si es ke no [a]y dubd[a] de / la muerte sino k-ellos an de morir puwes ell-otro / mundo es mejor para ellos ke no este mundo” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 41r). It is curious to note that in the tales of both al-Kisā’i and al-Tha‘labi Job’s children are restored to him. The decision to change this ending in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* suggests a final act of defiance by the Morisco author. Like the Moriscos, Job must acknowledge the inevitability of human mortality. He nevertheless is empowered by the fact that the souls of his children live on in Paradise. This tale then ends as it began, with an affirmation of the limitations of power. Through his writing, the Morisco author has symbolically limited the reach of inquisitorial power just as Allah restricted the authority of Eblīs.

The negotiations of power between Eblīs and Job reached their climax with the destruction of Job's physical body. Perry proposes a consideration of the body "as a social construct that acts as a metaphor for society" (59). Accordingly, the conflict between Job and Eblīs disfigures the body of the former, metaphorically distorting his perception of society. As the negotiation of power between Job and Eblīs is developed in the narrative, two distinct forms of power come into play. Foucault describes the first as that which instigates a dialogic interplay between objects separated by a point of difference. Through dialogue, which can assume innumerable forms, the parties involved act upon each other in an attempt to exert a measure of government. The second form of power is what Foucault would label "capacity" or "that which is exerted over things and gives the ability to modify, use, consume, or destroy them – a power that stems from aptitudes directly inherent in the body or relayed by external instruments" (*Power* 337). As exemplified in the aforementioned outline of monitions, Eblīs's power over Job's person is primarily steeped in questions of negotiation. Early in the narrative, Allah fashions Job as a subject of difference with which Eblīs must logically interact. To this end, Allah reveals to Eblīs, "a mi ay un siyervo purefikado / enta mi i tu no 'abras fuerza ni poder para estorbarlo / de mi serviciyo" and "no ay en la ti- / -yerra su senbalante enta mi" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 24r). Sensing the threat of deviation that comes with the presence of difference, Eblīs seized the opportunity to frame himself as the dominant power through negotiations with Job.

After each attempt to negotiate with Job proved futile, one of Eblīs's servants suggested physically confronting Rahmah as a final act of coercion. The demon urges, "Por ventura si tu / fuweses a su mujer i fiziyeses korrer d-ella la sangere / i la rretentases i la rreporobases puwes ella te fari- / -ya a saber a tu todo su fejo su segre[re]to i su publiko" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol.

28r). This suggestion clearly advocates the use of torture to elicit information. Inquisitorial instructions determined that torture could be employed by inquisitorial officials, generally following a trial, if the inquisitors harbored any doubt with respect to the testimony of the accused. During the slow, progression of intervals of pain, the accused was repeatedly advised to tell the complete truth. In the event that a victim of torture recanted his or her previous claim to innocence, or denounced previously unknown accomplices, they were customarily reconciled to the Church and sentenced appropriate penances.⁵³ The demon speculated that by torture Rahmah would similarly reveal her secret and public deeds. It is unclear whether the repeated “su” in the above quote is meant to refer to Rahmah or her husband. Nevertheless, it is the distinction between public and private that is of importance. With this distinction, the Morisco author exposes the reality of his lived experience. For most Moriscos, as clandestine Muslims, their identities were predicated on the division of the public and private spheres as two distinct entities. The ultimate goal of the Inquisition was to ensure the merging of these two identities through sincere conversion to the Catholic faith.

At last, having failed in all previous attempts to coax Job to his service, Eblīs turned directly to the site of deviance: Job’s physical body. What concerns me with regard to the burning of Job’s body is not the destructive act itself, but rather those parts of Job’s anatomy that were spared. Allegorically speaking, the burning of Job parallels the relaxation of *negativos*, or unrepentant heretics, to the secular arm where they were burned at the stake. In Job’s case, however, he is burned only until his skin and muscle tissue are consumed and his blood has mixed with his remaining flesh. Again, blood, typically hidden within the body, is exposed. Referring back to the demon’s proposal to spill Rahmah’s blood, the sequence of events

⁵³ For information on the use of torture by the Inquisition, see Lea, *History* 3.1-35; Roth 95-107; Kamen, *Spanish* 187-191.

suggested to Eblīs specify that Rahmah’s blood would first be shed and then knowledge of her secret and public dealings would be exposed. The fact that the revelation of Rahmah’s secrets is contingent upon rendering visible the blood concealed within her body suggests that the blood itself contains previously unknown information. Likewise, the spilling of Job’s blood through burning exposed that part of his anatomy encoded with information until that moment known only to Job. Blood is thus one’s greatest accomplice in concealment and secrecy. It is likewise a faithful ally in acts of deception as it indiscriminately withholds information from even the closest of acquaintances.

Areeg Ibrahim explains that references to “blue blood” in the early *limpieza de sangre* statutes “meant that a nobleman’s blue veins were easily distinguishable beneath a pale skin that was not contaminated by dark ‘Moorish’ blood” (218). In this way, the people of the late Middle Ages looked to the literal color of one’s blood as indicative of their ethnic or religious lineage. As we are told in the Aljamiado text, due to the burning of Job’s body “se vino a meskalar la sangere kon el podre” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 29v). In so doing, Job’s pure blood is polluted with the decay of his charred flesh. To put it differently, his life force is literally touched by death. With this act, the text symbolically points to the destruction not only of Job but of his bloodline and, by extension, the faith that it represents. Despite this fact, however, Job’s steadfast devotion to Allah drives home the ultimate failure of Eblīs’s efforts.

The importance of the physical performance of devotion, and power for that matter, is evidenced by the roles of eyes and tongues in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* and in inquisitorial documents. In the former, Allah explains to Eblīs: “Ves ke yo / te do licenciya i poder en su peresona qe fagas / lo ke kiyeras. I guwardote ke no le fagas mal-en sus / ojos i lenguwa porke no te doy licenciya ni pode- / -r para ello” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 29r). The extent of Job’s

activities up to this point in the narrative has been to offer praise to Allah and to defend his faith. Hence, the tongue is the primary instrument of these acts. To be sure, Islamic doctrine, including Aljamiado religious texts, is saturated with references to the honor associated with diligence in prayer. Longás Bartibás relates a number of references to “el carácter divino de la oración” in the Qur’an. The following verses specifically contain references to speech as associated with prayer:

«Ensalza el nombre de Dios, la verdad por excelencia»: XX, 113.

«Publica la gloria del Altísimo, antes de la puesta y de la salida del sol, durante la noche y en las diversas horas del día, a fin de que tu corazón se conserve contento de sí mismo»: XX, 130.

«Rogad a Dios con temor y esperanza; su misericordia está siempre cerca de los que obran el bien»: VII, 54.

«Invocad al Señor en público y en secreto; pero evitad la ostentación: él odia a los soberbios»: VII, 53. (Longás Bartibás 32-33)

In inquisitorial settings, however, one’s own tongue could also lead to their undoing. Perry, writing on acts of torture committed against Moriscos, remarks that “inquisitors seemed to put words into the mouths of prisoners, whose testimonies and confessions became little more than exercises in ventriloquism” (Perry 84). The limitations enforced by Allah with regard to the destruction of Job’s body rendered Eblīs incapable of such ventriloquism. That said, Job is never stripped of his freewill, affording him the liberty at any moment to praise or denounce God.

If the tongue is the medium of devotion, the eyes are surely that of sincerity. Job sheds tears for the first time upon learning of the deaths of his children: “I la ora Ayūb kayo azajadado enta Allah / señor de todas las kosas i tomaba la tiyerra i lan- / -zabala sobre su kabeza i ploro”

(Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 27v). It is reasonable to assume that the cause of Job's tears was the grief that he felt at the loss of his children. Quickly regaining his composure, he again set to praising Allah. Later, after being cast out of his village, Job tells Rahmah that even if she were to leave him Allah would never abandon him. With this affirmation, Job again lifts his eyes to the sky crying: "levantose Ayūb su vista enta el ciye- / -lo i tomose a llorar fasta ke levanto su voz kon / el poloro." Following suit, Rahmah herself begins to cry, startled by her husband's reaction. A moment of uncertainty ensues when the reader is unsure of the cause of Rahmah's alarm. The narrator then quickly reveals, "Por su poloro iy-ubo piyadad ella d-el" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 35r). Job reciprocates Rahmah's expression of fidelity, most explicitly declaring, "Poloro / por piyadad ke te tengo" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 40v).

Thus the circumstances affecting Job, both mentally and physically, spawned a profound self-reflection by which the protagonist was able to come to terms with his ultimate fate as it concerned his power in this world. With the loss of his children, Job mourned the loss of their human lives with the shedding of his tears. Yet, following the destruction of his own body, Job appears resigned to his fate, exhibiting none of this despair. He instead willingly encourages the worms gathered in the cavities of his body to feed on his decomposing flesh. None of the prior covetousness toward human life remains. This is not to suggest that Job admits defeat; quite the contrary. His persistence in his convictions causes his metamorphosis and endears him to Allah. This tale then becomes, for the Moriscos, both a warning of the imminent dangers of power in this world and a prophetic glimpse of the incomparable rewards of Paradise. Though destructive forces may act upon their human forms in this lifetime, as they acted upon Job, the Moriscos could overcome their enemies even in death through the sincerity of their convictions.

Physical and Spiritual Disease

To step outside of a framework of torture and destruction, Eblīs transforms the nature of the relationship of power between himself and Job referring to Job's bodily afflictions as a malady. Let us consider then questions of transmission and "symptoms" of this affliction as they developed over a period of seven days. The source of contamination is identified as "un soflo muy fuwerte ke / lo tomo dende los piyedes fasta su garganta" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 29v). Once contracted, Job's body "encendiyose" and became the color of fire. By the second day, his body had turned black and, on the third, "todo lleno de liñas." Context leads us to assume that this refers to a cracking of Job's charred skin. The fourth day brought ruptures to these "liñas" causing great wounds. The term used to refer to these wounds is "plagas," commonly understood as equivalent to "llagas." That said, early Spanish dictionaries and lexicons, among them Covarrubias y Orozco, include an additional definition that speaks of plague and calamity brought among the people by God.⁵⁴ Job's body had begun to rot by the fifth day, while on the sixth the putrid materials began to run off from Job's body mixing with his blood until virtually no flesh remained. Finally, by the seventh day, only Job's eyes and tongue remained. The horrific effects of this malady on the body, causing a blackening and putrefaction of the flesh and finally bodily mutilation as the flesh begins to rot, resonates considerably with the abundant documentation of leprosy and plague throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern period.

⁵⁴ The exact definition contained in Covarrubias y Orozco reads, "PLAGA, la llaga, o herida. Latine plaga, del nombre Griego *πλῆγμα*. Plaga la persecución, o calamidad, como las plagas de Egipto (590). Additionally, the earliest entry for this term in the dictionary of the Real Academia Española published in 1737 includes the following two definitions: "(1) PLAGA Otros dan diversa interpretación, y pretenden que significan las cinco *plagas* de Christo Hijo de Dios. (2) Plaga. Se llama también la calamidad grande, que ordinariamente envia Dios à las Provincias, Reinos ò Lugares, en castigo y pena de sus culpas: como la langosta, peste, hambre y otras semejantes" (5.287r).

From the biblical period, leprosy was the most feared of diseases. In fact, this ailment is often referred to by the seemingly interchangeable terms of “leprosy” and “plague.” The descriptions of Job’s condition in the differing version of his narrative have led many to conclude that leprosy was in fact the cause of his suffering, though the disease itself is never specifically mentioned (Sherman 303). The Book of Job clearly states that “Satan departed from the presence of God and afflicted Job with severe boils, from the soles of his feet to the top of his head” (2.7). Nevertheless, Job identifies God as the power that exacts both the good and the bad upon mankind, rendering the Devil little more than a medium of transmission. A number of verses from the Book of Job forge a direct connection between the suffering of man and his sinful behavior.⁵⁵ This in turn contributed to the medieval association of sin with leprosy. Practically speaking, lepers became the victims of intense social stigmatization. Bodily signs of affliction marginalized them, placing them on similar social footing as other heretics including Jews and Muslims. This becomes most evident with the onset of bubonic plague in the fourteenth century during which both Jews and lepers were popular scapegoats on whom was placed the blame for outbreaks (Zeigler 97).

In victims of both leprosy and bubonic plague symptoms often manifested physically in similar ways. Most notable is the deformity caused by open sores. Irwin Sherman writing on leprosy notes that the exposure of blood by open sores contributed to the belief that the disease was contagious (305). Detailed descriptions of plague symptoms are extant from a number of medieval chroniclers. The earliest of these consistently refer to such visible manifestations as black spots, black blisters, pustules, swellings, fever, and the spitting of blood. One of the most

⁵⁵ In his rebuke of Job, Eliphaz states, “Remember, please, which innocent person ever perished? Where have upright people ever been obliterated? As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow injustice harvest them. By the breath of God they perish; by the wind of His anger, they expire” (Job 4.7-9). He continues later, “For destruction does not emerge from dust, nor does misery grow from earth” (Job 5.6). Commentators on this verse read it to mean that “Suffering befalls a person as a consequence of his own sins” (*Stone Edition Tanach* 1626).

detailed of the extant accounts of the Black Death was written by Gabriele de' Mussis, a lawyer from Piacenza, Italy, who chronicled the progression of symptoms in plague victims:

Those of both sexes who were in health, and in no fear of death, were struck by four savage blows to the flesh. First, out of the blue, a kind of chilly stiffness troubled their bodies. They felt a tingling sensation, as if they were being pricked by the points of arrows. The next stage was a fearsome attack which took the form of an extremely hard, solid boil ... As it grew more solid, its burning heat caused the patients to fall into an acute and putrid fever, with severe headaches. [...] In some cases it gave rise to an intolerable stench. In others it brought spitting of blood, for others, swellings near the place from which the corrupt humours had arisen – on the back, across the chest, near the thigh. (Cohn 83-84; Horrox 24-25)

Though most modern studies of bubonic plague focus on fourteenth century accounts, similar records were composed throughout the early modern period. At the local level, Spain experienced outbreaks of plague nearly annually. In his *Epidemiologia española* published in 1802, Joaquin de Villalba compiled records and testimonies of outbreaks of plague and other forms of pestilence from the Middle Ages until 1801. One document of particular interest to the present study chronicles an outbreak of plague in Zaragoza between May and December of 1564. During that time, around 10,000 people died within the city alone. The following year, a Zaragozan doctor, Juan Porcell, composed his *Informacion y curacion de la peste de Zaragoza, y preservacion contra peste en general*, which he dedicated to King Philip II. In it, the author provides the following description of the symptoms and physical manifestations caused by the plague:

salian á los pacientes tumores, ó apostemas, muy sensibles y dolorosos, que el vulgo llamaba landres: eran de diferente figura y magnitud; redondos, largos, llanos ó puntiagudos, del tamaño de garbanzos, de avellana, de almendra, de castaña, de nuez, hasta de un huevo. Atacaba indiferentemente tras de las orejas, en el cuello, espaldas, brazos, nalgas, barriga, ingles, y junto al empiene. Salian á diferente tiempo, unos juntamente con la calentura, y era por la mayor parte; otros uno ó dos días ántes ó despues de la calentura. Y al mismo tiempo le solian salir carbunclos, antraces, pequeños como un garbanzo, ó mayores, de la magnitud de medio ó un real, hasta la circunferencia de una taza ó escudilla; quando era uno solo era grande, pero si muchos eran entonces pequeños. El tozuelo, cuello, cara, pecho, espaldas, barriga, lomos, nalgas, muslos, piernas, tovillos, y aun encima de los mismos tumores eran partes indiferentes para manifestarse. Estos carbunclos estaban por la mayor parte acompañados de pústulas mas ó ménos semejantes á las que se hacen de quemadura, ó caen de yerro quemado: esta pústula por lo regular tiraba á un color de azul claro, aunque algunas tiraban a verde oscuro, amarillo ó negro; eran tan dolorosos y molestos, que parece que tenían atada con cuerdas la parte donde los tenian. (170-171)

Each of these accounts along with that of the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb* show considerable lexicographical and structural similarities. The result is a curious channeling of plague narratives through three disparate times, places, and religious frameworks. Furthermore, the placement of the Aljamiado narrative alongside Christian plague chronicles allows Job – a common factor between the three Abrahamic faiths – to mediate the development of each text within the specific parameters of moral exemplification and religious didacticism. In other words, Job’s affliction, the causes thereof, and his impending healing as dictated in the Hebrew

Bible and the Qur'an no doubt came to bear on the development of both Christian and Muslim plague chronicles. Furthermore, the extent of such influence penetrates beneath the surface of historical accounts of plague – that is, beneath the logistical construct of the written page – lending the moral and theological implications of Job's own afflictions to one's understanding of plague.

The responses to pestilence varied considerably between Christian and Muslim communities according to each peoples' theological understanding of disease. "Fourteenth-century western Christians," writes William Phillips, "believed the plague was God's punishment for a sinful society, that the disease was contagious, and that measures to avoid contagion such as quarantine and flight would be effective" (58). Since the sinful acts of human beings were believed to cause plague, human efforts should be made to exact a cure. To this end, William Zouche, the Archbishop of York at the time of the Black Death, ordered "that devout processions are to be held every Wednesday and Friday in our cathedral church, in order collegiate and conventual churches, and in every parish church in our city and diocese, with a solemn chanting of the liturgy" (Horrox 111). The illuminated pages of the fifteenth-century French book of hours, *Les très riches heures du Duc de Berry*, depict just such a procession led by Pope Gregory I through the plague-ridden streets of Rome in 590 C.E. (see figure 4).



Fig. 4: Plague procession led by Pope Gregory I in the fifteenth-century *Les très riches heures du Duc de Berry*

In addition to processions, clergy and laity were encouraged to partake in confession, the recitation of psalms, and the performance of charitable works (Horrox 112).

The Christian belief that disease was contagious instigated efforts toward separation or quarantine. In 1348, authorities in Pistoia, Italy imposed fines of 500 pence to anyone, inflicted or otherwise, who dared to leave Pistoia for Pisa or Lucca, or who dared to come to Pistoia from either of those places (Horrox 195). Later, in 1374, the lord of Milan, Bernabò Visconti, ordered “that each person who displays a swelling or tumour shall immediately leave the city, castle or town where he is and take to the open country, living either in huts or in the woods, until he either dies or recovers. Item, those in attendance upon someone who died shall wait ten days before returning to human society” (Horrox 203). Boccaccio depicted the flight of plague survivors in the introduction to his *Decameron* noting that “they would keep their distance from the plague-victims, and from their chattels too, thus hoping to preserve their own skins. [...] they would form into a group and withdraw on their own to closet themselves in a house free of all plague-victims” (8).

We can extrapolate similar theories of contagion and separation in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento*. As stated previously, the exile of Job and Rahmah from their own community and from that of Bani Israel was intended to prevent the spread of Job’s malady to the rest of the population. These instances of exile contained within a Morisco document and, more broadly, within the context of Spanish imperial ambitions underscore Spain’s push toward a homogenous nation. But more so, for the Morisco users of Aljamiado manuscripts, images of exile constituted lasting reminders of how their own identities had been transformed. For many, the Reconquest conjured memories of the colonization of lands, forced conversions, and edicts prohibiting the exercise of nearly every Arab or Islamic custom. In short, their Muslim identities were quite literally forced into exile. Consequently, the post-Mudejar historical record is characterized by the formation and disintegration of social paradigms. Muslims and crypto-

Muslims found themselves – whether by edict or by choice – migrating between religions and communities all the while negotiating the parameters of their own identities and limits of authority.

Muslims largely shared the theodicean view of their Christian counterparts attributing plague to the will of God. The difference lay in how one perceived of and understood God's will. Muslims considered the will of God to be "unknowable and unavoidable" (Phillips 58). Attempts at cure were therefore futile. For this reason, Muslims tended to view plague and other diseases through the lens of fatalism. Paul Slack writes, "epidemic disease was regarded as a mercy sent by God, which should be welcomed, not combated" (116). Phillips adds that disease "could be seen as a purification of the soul" (58). Job models this ideology telling Eblīs that Allah takes from him that which he was freely given "porke siya mas purifikado para su serviciyo" (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 25v). Since Islamic medicine discouraged attempts to cure plague, it also placed little importance on isolating the afflicted. Isolation was further considered unnecessary given that the need for spiritual purification was determined by one's own transgressions from the Law, not by spatial proximity to others.

The *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* plays against this point by isolating Job and, therefore, signaling the fear among his neighbors that his suffering was indeed contagious. Again this passage is unique among the *qisas al-anbiyā'* collections. It is true that Job is forced from his village by his neighbors in the collections of both al-Tha'labī and al-Kisā'i. But, on neither occasion was the reason a fear of contagion. Al-Tha'labī's version reads, "He went on scratching until his flesh was sagging, ripped open and turned putrid. The townspeople set him away, made him sit on a dung heap and set up a hut for him" (259). Al-Kisā'i's text differs from that of al-Tha'labī stating, "Finally the people of the village came to him and said, 'Job, we can

no longer endure your affliction. Either depart from among us, or we will stone you to death to be rid of you” (196). The community members in both cases justify their behavior on the grounds of religion, claiming that Job had brought sinful behavior into their communities. The stench and decay, metaphors for immoral and sacrilegious acts, repulsed the people and rendered Job’s presence among them intolerable.

In contrast, the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* depicts a fearful rather than intolerant people. It is likely that the description of Job’s forced exile from his community in the Aljamiado narrative is an amplification of a single verse from the Hebrew writings in which Job rebukes his fearful friends: “And now, that is how you have been – you saw disaster and became frightened” (Job 6.21). Like much of the Hebrew Book of Job, this passage is shrouded in ambiguity and metaphor. The medieval French rabbi and commentator, Rashi, interprets this verse to mean, “Job accuses his friends of lacking the courage to admit that as injustice had been done him for fear that God would punish them in the same manner” (*Stone Edition Tanach* 1628). Based on Rashi’s interpretation, the behavior of Job’s friends and neighbors in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento* perpetuates a Judeo-Christian reaction to epidemic and divine punishment.

I should clarify here my earlier statement regarding perceptions of contagion in Islamic medical treatises by stating that although rejection of contagion was the norm, this was not without exceptions. Michael Dols, writing on leprosy, identifies a contradiction in the *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, one of the principal collections of Sunni *hadith*, in which the “tradition advising flight from the leper is, in fact, preceded by a complete denial of interhuman transmission” (896). Leprosy, however, was a unique case as this affliction was generally associated with questions of moral degradation. Even so, the majority of Islamic religious texts and, by the Middle Ages, Islamic medical tracts rejected contagion and advised against isolation of the afflicted. The

apparent preoccupation with contagion in a Morisco text seems contrary to the Islamic principles that these crypto-Muslims actively sought to preserve through their writings. Are we to understand this incongruence to be indicative of acculturation on the part of the author? Alternatively, does it speak to the commonly held belief that the Morisco period was marked by a waning knowledge of Islamic practices and laws? In any case, such moments of incongruence act as a kind of fingerprint, or gloss, affording us a glimpse of the Morisco author's presence in the text.

For Europe's Christian communities ravaged by plague, the spread of pestilence was synonymous with the spread of sin. Leprosy, writes David Nirenberg, "was a disease of the soul, brought on by moral corruption and sin. Leprosy thus served as a sign of sin. The leper was a heretic or an unrepentant sinner and should be separated from communion with society" (Nirenberg 57). Quoting from the *Gesta Romanorum*, compiled between the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, Nirenberg continues, "By infecting the healthy, lepers sought to reduce all Christians to the same corrupt and sinful state in which they found themselves" (58). Like the leper, the Jews and later Moriscos, deemed heretics and the propagators of sinful doctrine, "represented the impure, the lewd, and the nefarious – in a word, pollution. Christians had not only a right but a duty to defend themselves against this pollution" (Perry 54). In the case of the Moriscos, the pollution of Moorish bloodlines, Islamic teachings, and Arab customs soiled the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Perry details numerous Christian accounts of deaths, principally in Castile and the Extremadura, that accompanied the emigration of Moriscos northward from Granada following the Second Revolt of the Alpujarras. One account affirms, "The residents of the land flee from the Moriscos because 'this land of Extremadura is full of illness and they understand that evil has come from them'" (Perry 113).

Illness is again the byproduct of evil, this time embodied in the polluted Moriscos. The spreading of Job's malady to his own community and to Bani Israel is likewise both ideological and biological, substantiating the view that the subject of morality was intimately linked to representations of the physical. His mutilated body, putrid and crawling with worms, bore silent testimony to the sins of the afflicted. What's more, as the recounting of Nirenberg and Perry affirm, just as sin begat pestilence so too could pestilence beget further sin.

From here, a vicious cycle is set into motion the cessation of which is predicated on the elimination of one or the other of the forces in play. By extinguishing sin, pestilence would also die out. Conversely, the elimination of pestilence symbolized the end of sin. What remains in either case is a state of absolutes. With the eradication of sin comes the return to Eden, to the point of the initial perfection of God's creation; or rather, the perpetuation of a type of religious Utopia. Again, the domestic policies of Spain, most notably the expulsions of the Jews and the Moriscos, suggest that such a Utopia was predicated on religious homogeneity. The restrictions against Muslim religious and cultural practices put forth by the Edicts of Faith in 1524 and later by numerous other royal and inquisitorial proclamations constituted efforts on the part of the Spanish Crown to erase visible evidence of heterodoxy and heresy from their lands. Pedro Aznar Cardona writes in his volume justifying the expulsion of the Moriscos that Jesus had been sent from God precisely to liberate human beings from sin and the devil. Moreover, he instituted the seven sacraments "para remedio eficaz de nuestras enfermedades, y conseruacion y nutrimento de nuestra vida espiritual" (Aznar Cardona fol. 49v). Later, the author forges a connection between the correction of abnormalities in the natural world and the purging of heretics from Spanish soil:

El Sol presente està, la luz su officio haze; pero el ciego lexos està del Sol y de ver, y tan apartado està de la claridad, que no la siente, ni la puede dar alcance. Que es la causa?

El impedimento, la ceguedad, la enfermedad, y la mala disposición. Que remedio le daria vn buen fisico? Que purgue los ojos de aquellas cataratas, o mal humor que corre a ellos; y quitado el impedimento, verà sin duda el que no vaya. Purgue pues el Iudio, y el Mahometano incredulo, los ojos del alma, procurando quitar della la ciega obstinacion; los pecados, y las iniquidades, la presuncion y soberuia de su parecer, de querer comprehender los secretos de Dios. (fols. 86r-v)

Religious difference stamped the Moriscos – as indeed it did the Jews, Lutherans, Calvinists, and other heretics – as anomalies that fell outside of the natural order. In the same way that the blind man cannot see the sun, deviation from the doctrines of the Catholic Church rendered the heretic blind to the truth. The only logical solution, according to Aznar Cardona, was that the illness be removed.

Ironically, however, the same powers that sought to erase heretical behavior from Spanish soil repeatedly refashioned the parameters of what it meant to be a heretic. “Because the Moriscos were continually (re)produced as heretics,” writes Deborah Root, “they were not permitted to assimilate into the mass of Old Christians, if indeed they wanted to do so” (130). Barbara Fuchs adds that because the Moriscos increasingly approximated Old Christians in behavior and external acts of religious devotion, Christian officials were forced “to keep raising the bar of national identity, from conversion to Christianity, to adoption of ‘Christian’ cultural practices, to genealogical purity” (99). A pluralistic definition of Spanish identity, recognizing an individual as both Morisco and Spanish, gained little ground among Spanish Christians. With the creation of a unified Catholic empire came the desire for an accompanying “licit, Christian

history of Spain” (Fuchs 107). This necessitated the eradication of evidence that there had ever been a Semitic presence in the Peninsula. As long as Morisco bloodlines could be traced to Muslim ancestry, they had no place in a country that prided itself on being a Catholic stronghold in Europe. Old Christians were never willing to accept the sincerity of the Moriscos’ conversions because of their inherently heretical ancestry. Consequently, as the pestilence of heresy was contained within the bloodline, the Crown had little option than to destroy or displace the entire body.

Restoration: The Fulfillment of Prophecy?

The close of the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb* is characterized by a cyclic return to the physical wholeness that preceded Eblīs’s attacks. Job, by the mercy of Allah, is restored to a near perfect semblance of his former self. That said, the text reveals that Job’s body still bears the metaphorical scars of his experiences. When he reappears to Rahmah at the end of the narrative, after being washed clean in the waters of the “monte de Tursīnā,” Job finds her searching for him in desperation. She does not immediately recognize her husband, but notes that his eyes look like those of Job. After revealing his identity to her, Rahmah declares, “No fagas burla de mi. Apiyadese / Allah de tu porke mi marido Ayūb era mas fermoso / ke tu kuwando estaba en su porosperidad” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 40v). In that moment, Job is situated at a temporal crossroads. His body though restored retained visible evidence of his past suffering. Nevertheless, his bodily reformation offered Job a new present, a chance to begin anew.

The common *topoi* of the triumph of good over evil, physical revivification, and the promise of reward to the pious fuse with the apocalyptic language of plague narratives in a manner reminiscent of both Christian and Morisco prophecies. The Black Death inspired a movement of fourteenth and fifteenth-century prophetic accounts as Medieval Christians understood the disease to be the culmination of apocalyptic events leading to “the second coming of Christ to judge the world” (Horrox 98-99). The Moriscos, as described in the first chapter of this study, also prophesied the end of a series of calamitous events that would ultimately lead to the return of Islamic power to Spain. Luis del Mármol Carvajal records one such prophecy attributed to one Tauca el Hamema found in the *cueva de Castares* in the Alpujarras Mountains.

The Alpujarras was the site of two powerful uprisings by the Moriscos from 1499-1501 and again from 1568-71. The revolt of 1499 was ignited after Queen Isabella decreed that all Mudejars convert to Christianity or be expelled from Granada. Later, the mid-sixteenth century saw the rise of Ottoman power in the Mediterranean; a source of continual tension between King Philip II and the Moriscos, whom he feared were providing aid to the Turks. Philip issued a decree in 1567 that ended all toleration for Arab customs and traditions. This in turn led to the outbreak of the Second Revolt. The suppression of this rebellion in 1571 was followed by the forced relocation of all Granadan Moriscos to Castilian lands. For the Moriscos forced to leave behind the last vestiges of their ancestral lands, this was a devastating blow. The prophecy of Tauca el Hamema found in the Alpujarras details a number of natural phenomena that signal the impending Final Judgment. One particular segment that bears mentioning with respect to the present study recounts the birth and rise to power of the Antichrist and his subsequent defeat by Jesus Christ:

Y luego nacerá el maldito viejo Antichristo, y se levantará. En este tiempo enviará Dios gradísima esterilidad, que durará siete años: en los cuales no parecerá pan, ni semilla, ni agua, si no fuere lo que este viejo maldito mostrare [...] Vereis las gentes tras de él en tanto numero, que no cabrán en los lugares con sus hijos y familias. Subirá en su cabalgadura de espantable hechura, y tenderá el paso tanto como alcanzare con la vista: y en siete días dará una vuelta á todo el mundo. [...] Entonces enviará Dios altísimo á Jesu Christo hijo de Maria, que le saldrá al encuentro en las tierras de Hexen, y en viéndole se deshará ante él como un cobarde afeminado: y dirán las piedras y lugares. Entrado ha el enemigo de Dios debaxo de nosotros; y quedará el guiador Christo, en cuya virtud el lobo andará con la oveja en amor. Los niños jugarán con las serpientes y viboras ponzoñosas, y no les empecerán, obligando á la ley de nuestro profeta, y juzgando rectamente en ella: y pondrá para las oraciones y horas una dignidad del linage de Mahoma perpetuamente, y en su tiempo todo herege se convertirá á Dios. (Mármol Carvajal 195-196)

For the Moriscos of Granada, victims to the religious fervor of King Philip II, prophecies such as this became escapist mediums. The coming of the Christ brought with it a utopian vision of social restoration, implementing the laws of the Prophet Muhammad and the governance of his legitimate heir. As evidenced by this example, the Moriscos used prophecy to fashion for themselves a reality that countered their own lived experiences.

We see similar negotiation with regard to the construction of Job's character in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento*. Through the relinquishing of his earthly ties and willing acceptance of the sacrifice of his physical body, Job alone defines the parameters of his devotion to Allah. With his subsequent "resurrection" and the reinstatement of all of his destroyed possessions, Job

is cast as a messianic figure akin to Jesus. Fashioned as such, the Morisco users of this text glossed Job within the margins of their own historical narrative commenting on their analogously persecuted existences. Nevertheless, Job was also raised as a potent symbol of human endurance in the face of pestilence, persecution, and even death.

CHAPTER 6 | The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de 'Īsā kon la kalavera*: A Morisco Understanding of Death and the Afterlife

Ché quello imperador che là sù regna,
perch' i' fu' ribellante a la sua legge,
non vuol che 'n sua città per me si vegna.
In tutte parte impera e quivi regge;
quivi è la sua città e l'alto seggio:
oh felice colui cu' ivi elegge!

For that great Emperor who reigns above,
because I was a rebel to His law,
will not allow me entry to his realm.
Everywhere he commands, from there he rules,
there stand his city and his lofty throne.
Happy the man He chooses for His house!
—Dante, *Inferno* Canto 1:124-129⁵⁶

The last Aljamiado legend that I will consider in this study, found in Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 16v-22v, is one in a series of extant versions of what Roberto Tottoli collectively refers to as “Jesus and the Skull” narratives.⁵⁷ This particular adaptation opens with the formulaic recitation of the *basmala* followed by an unspecific *isnād* referring to “los rrekontadorres pasados.” Following these formalities, the legend describes Jesus who, while walking one day through a valley, comes across a white skull. Instructed by Allah, Jesus purifies himself through ritual ablutions and performs two cycles of prayers after which he orders the skull, by God’s will, to speak. In the course of the conversation, the skull reveals to Jesus that he

⁵⁶ Translation by Anthony Esolen.

⁵⁷ Tottoli identifies two version of this legend contained in the eleventh-century work *Hilyat al-awliyā'* composed by Abū Nu‘aym (d. 1038 C.E.). Contemporary references also appear in the *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* by the eleventh to twelfth century Muslim theologian, jurist, and philosopher al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 C.E.) and the *Sirāj al-mulūk* written by al-Turtūshī (1059 – 1127 C.E.), a Muslim jurist from Tortosa in northern Al-Andalus. Later, in the late medieval and early modern periods, Tottoli identifies more than thirty unpublished versions of this legend, one of which is the Aljamiado legend studied here and published in transliteration by Vespertino Rodríguez (Tottoli “Story 229-242). Miguel Ángel Vázquez identifies a second extant example of this work written in Aljamiado and contained in the Escuelas Pías de Zaragoza Ms. 11 fols.

was part of a community that greatly angered Allah. As a result, Allah sent down the Angel of Death to gather the souls of the people.

What follows is a precise description of the agony suffered by the individual as his soul was literally ripped from his body and the trials and tribulations that affected both the body and the soul after the moment of death. As the soul experienced the frightful intimidation of the Angel of Death, the body was prepared for burial by the brothers of the deceased. Finally, heavy with the weight of his many sins, the body was interred.

The soul was then subjected to the interrogations of two menacing angels, Munkar and Nakīr, who ultimately determined the deceased to be guilty of infidelity and sentenced his soul to the torments of Hell. With this judgment, the grave collapsed around the corpse, crushing its bones and increasing its agony, while the soul was escorted to the first of seven gates of Hell. At each of the doors of *jahannam*, the soul witnessed a distinct form of torture that was suffered by a specific set of individuals for equally specific offenses. After experiencing the fate of being cast into the flames, Jesus gave the skull the unique opportunity to demand of him one merciful act. The skull asked that Jesus pray on his behalf for the salvation of his soul, allowing him a chance to return to his former life to perform acts of good. Allah complied with Jesus' supplication and the deceased was resurrected to this world where he lived an additional twelve years in service to Allah. The *hadīth* concludes with the simple moral, “y-él [Allah] nos adereçe en todo lo k-él sea kontento i pagado de nosotros i de todos los muçlimes i muçlimas kereyentes i kereyentas” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 22v).

Preparing for Ritual: The Importance of Water

Of the legends considered in the present study, the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de 'Īsā kon la kalavera* provides the most complete account of a single theme of Islamic dogma. Before examining the process of death as narrated in this legend, a few words must be said regarding the identity of the narrator. Having experienced death first hand, the skull's words carry an authoritative weight that is cannot be conveyed by a living narrator. As we will see, contextual indicators in the skull's discourse suggest that during its lifetime the skull was that of a Muslim male. In the narrative present, however, explicit references to the human identity of the skull – gender, ethnicity, social status, or religion – are wholly absent. What is more, we are provided with the single geographical detail that Jesus encountered this skull while walking through a valley. Thus, the dialoguing pair seems to exist in a kind of spatial, temporal, and hierarchical vacuum. Each of these layers of ambiguity speaks to the role of death as the great equalizer. The multiplicity of human discourses that shape earthly identity is defeated by the discourse of death. Yet, as this *hadīth* will illustrate, the continued testing of the soul after death creates the potential for multiple discourses even in death. As a result, we must understand that the narrative account provided by the skull represents merely one strain of this conversation; a fact that will come to bear on our understanding of how this text shaped and was shaped by its Morisco context.

The skull begins its retrospective journey by describing a period of seven years, seven months, seven weeks, and seven days prior to its death during which Allah caused rain to fall down upon the people of the community. Water is an element of great literal and symbolic importance in the Qur'ān. We are told, for example, “And He it is Who created the heavens and

the earth in six periods; and His Throne of Power is ever on water that He might manifest (the good qualities in) you whoever of you is best in deeds” (11.7). Noted Islamic scholar and commentator Maulānā Muhammad ‘Alī expounds upon this verse: “Man is the highest developed form of life, and life is due to water. The great power of God which is manifested in the creation of man is thus connected with water” (440). We can extrapolate from this that water quite literally contains the life force of God through which all things are brought into being. From an esoteric standpoint then, bathing oneself is an act of rebirth or reinstatement of divine creation.

Martin Lings understands the above verse to insinuate the existence of two distinct waters: “one above the Throne and one beneath it” (112). The lower waters are the literal manifestation of water within the earthly realm; that which is tangible and can be felt and utilized by human beings. The waters above the Throne of God are held to be “the original substance of all creation” (Lings 111). We can understand this to refer to the divine presence contained within water itself and, by extension, within all created things. This water is the invisible, but ever-present life force that surrounds and penetrates us all. Lings’s separation between two distinct waters is derived from a verse slightly later in the Qur’ān that reveals, “And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We send it not down but in a known measure. And we send the winds fertilizing, then send down water from the clouds, so We give it to you to drink” (15.21-22). The “treasures” mentioned here are understood by Lings to be both physical water (“We give it to you to drink”) and mercy (“We send it not down but in a known measure”). Thus, as the treasury containing these two elements is itself the Divine, physical water is inseparable from those qualities most commonly attributed to God in Islam: mercy and

comprehension. Lings affirms in this regard, “water is a symbol of knowledge as well as of mercy” (111).

Returning to the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*, the rains that Allah sent down upon the people carry both literal and metaphoric significances. In the first case, the physical act of water pouring over the body calls to mind the Islamic practice of ritual purification through ablutions. The Qur’ān specifically dictates that one must be in a state of ritual cleanliness in order to touch or recite the holy text (56.79). Indeed, authorities have extended this mandate to any important devotional act. As I mentioned briefly in the second chapter of this study, there are two types of ritual ablutions involving the use of water: *ghusl* and *waDū’*. In the case of the former, no part of the body is to remain untouched by water. The bather undergoes an extensive process of washing each limb, the torso, face, and even the nape of the neck, ears, and nostrils in order to assure that every part of the body is ritually prepared to stand before God.⁵⁸ It bears noting as well that as the body is purified by water, tradition holds that it is not only cleansed but also regenerated. We saw an example of this in the previous chapter when Job was bathed in the fountain of water on Mount Tursīnā and restored to his earlier human form. Islamic mystical interpretations hold this regeneration to be as much spiritual as corporeal (Schimmel 95-96). The brief description of rainfall in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de ‘Īsā kon la kalavera* thus pulls together these various streams of interpretation. Rainfall soaks the entire body, symbolically streaming impurities away from the people and leaving them in a state of ritual

⁵⁸ As Glassé notes, *ghusl* removes the impurities (*janābāt*; sing. *junub* or *janābah*) that result from: “intromission; ejaculation; menstruation; childbirth; contact with a corpse. [...] *Ghusl* is also performed by a convert before being formally received into Islam, after the washing of the dead, major blood letting, and before putting on *ihrām* for pilgrimage” (157). Drawing from Aljamiado sources, Longás Bartibás lists that according to *sunna*, *ghusl* is also obligatory “todos los viernes; los días primeros de Pascua de Ramadán y de Carneros; por motivo de arrepentimiento; al entrar en la Meca” (18-19).

purification. The fact that Allah caused the rains to fall in increments of seven units of time⁵⁹ further contributes to the symbolic potency of this image. The result is a contextual foreshadowing of events of particular ritual importance.

With regard to the correlation between divine mercy and water, Lings goes on to explain that one should not consider the falling of rain without also bearing in mind the idea of Revelation. The Arabic term “tanzil,” commonly translated as “Revelation,” literally means “a sending down.” Therefore, “the Revelation and the rain,” writes Lings, “are both ‘sent down’ by God the All Merciful” (111). ‘Alī supports Lings claim stating “And as physical life grows out of water, so spiritual life grows out of revelation, which is so often compared with rain or water” (440). In the Morisco text, then, rain is a vehicle for communicating the intentions of Allah to the people. In so doing, the divine entity is revealed to the people in a physically tangible form. The result is a cyclic penetration of the earthly realm (the aforementioned lower water) by the divine (the upper water) through which Allah continually reaffirms His presence and power to His creations.

The regenerative power of rain also holds an important place in eschatological theories associated with the resurrection of the dead for Final Judgment. To this end, let us consider the following verse from the Qur’ān:

O people, if you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then surely We created you from dust, then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you. And We cause what We please to remain in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain you maturity. And of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who

⁵⁹ From a numerological standpoint, the number seven is abundantly significant in Islam, most notably associated with the days of creation. Also of significance are references to seven levels of heaven, the seven gates of hell, and the seven times that pilgrims circle the Ka’aba during *hajj*.

is brought back to the worst part of life, so that after knowledge he knows nothing. And thou seest the earth barren, but when We send down thereon water, it stirs and swells and brings forth a beautiful (growth) of every kind. (22.5)

This lengthy verse exemplifies three distinct classifications of birth: the birth and death of human beings; the annual cycle of seasons and the corresponding birth, death, and rebirth of earthly flora; and the final birth that comes with the Resurrection. In the case of the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*, it is to this final birth that we will now turn.

The Agony of Separation

At the end of the seventh day, the “cleansing” rains ceased and the people were prepared to begin the ritual of death. On the eighth day, the Angel of Death (‘Azarayaīl, or ‘Izrā’īl) descended from heaven wielding a flaming whip with which to snatch the souls from the bodies of the people. As Miguel Ángel Vázquez writes, the Angel of Death is mentioned by name only once in the Qur’ān (*Desde* 23). In said passage we are told: “Say: The angel of death, who is given charge of you, will cause you to die, then to your Lord you will be returned” (32.11). This verse tells of nothing of the Angel’s identity other than the fact that he is a servant of Allah sent to collect the souls of the people. The development of Islamic eschatological writings, however, greatly amplified the representation and role of this character. Generally, the Angel of Death is depicted as powerful and intimidating in form. A passage from the *Kitāb al-mawt wa kitān al-qubūr* written by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, a ninth century Baghdadi scholar, paints a particularly horrific portrait of the Angel of Death. Vázquez translates from the Arabic, “Y corre a él el Ángel de la Muerte en la más repugnante figura que nadie ha vista jamás; con doce ojos y

llevando una broqueta de fuego llena de púas y acompañado de quinientos ángeles que llevan humo, ascuas del Infierno y látigos de fuego llameante” (*Desde* 31-32). He also cites a passage from the *Kitān dhikr al-mawt* (*The Book of Remembrance and Death*) by Al-Ghazālī in which Abraham faints at the sight of the Angel of Death. In this work, the Angel is described as “a black man with hair erect, evil smelling and garbed in black, from whose mouth and nostrils sparks and smoke were issuing forth” (Al-Ghazālī cited in Vázquez, “Alejo” 482).

Following suit, the Aljamiado texts of both Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 and Escuelas Pías de Zaragoza Ms. 11 further exaggerate the immense size of this figure. The former reads, “el tiyene la ‘una mano en sol saliye / i la ‘otra en sol poniye i sus piyede- / -s debaxo de los abismos de la tierra sete- / -na de l-adduniya i los ke son en-el son ente- / -re sus ojos komo un garano de mostasiya” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 19r). More importantly, the description of his hands atop the celestial spheres lends physical representation to the role of the Angel of Death as the Regulator of Human Time. With a simple movement of his hands he is able to stop time (and by extension, life) or allow it to continue unhindered.

According to Arabic eschatological writings, the frightful image of the Angel of Death thus far described is not a universal portrait. Al-Ghazālī, for example, affirms that though the Angel appeared to Abraham in an alarming form, he would visit those observant of Allah’s law in “the best and most beautiful of forms” (Al-Ghazālī cited in Vázquez, “Alejo” 482). From this, we must understand that the Angel’s physical form is a direct, external reflection of the piety or sinfulness of the souls that he collects. With that, let us move away from physical form to assay the performance of the Angel of Death. Vázquez writes, “Both traditional texts and Aljamiado manuscripts agree that the Angel of Death’s sole task is to remove or separate the soul of the dying from the body” (Vázquez, “Alejo” 483). Just as the Angel’s appearance reflects the souls

of the faithful or the condemned that he collects, so too does the method of extraction. This belief is derived from two passages in the Qur’ān. Chronologically, the first reads, “And if thou couldst see when the angels cause to die those who disbelieve, smiting their faces and their backs, and (saying): Taste the punishment of burning. This is for that which your own hands have sent on before, and because Allāh is not in the least unjust to the servants” (Qur’ān 8.50-51). The second is a brief and ambiguous set of two poetry verses that read, “By those yearning vehemently! And those going forth cheerfully!” (Qur’ān 79:1-2). Comparatively, Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translation of these verses offers a more explanatory interpretation: “By the (angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked) with violence; by those who gently draw out (the souls of the blessed)” (Ali 1679). The severity of the Angel of Death’s appearance and the gruesome nature with which the people in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* are brought to their ends paint a clear image of the condemnation awaiting this population. The skull offers Jesus the following description to this end:

rrecibiyo nuwes- / -toros arrūhes kon muy garan saña i saqo // de mi a mi arrūh de
 konjuntura en konjuntura / i de vena en vena fasta ke lo turuso a la gargar- / -ta i sako una
 masa de fuwego muy espantib- / -lle i rrecebiyo kon-ella mi arrūh i senti de su /
 sakamiyento tal dolor komo senbalante / si me ubiyesen eskorchado siyendo vivo.

(Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 18r-18v)

I should first point out that this detailed account of the soul being dislodged from the throat is common among Islamic accounts. Vázquez explains, “se considera al espíritu como una sustancia adherida al cuerpo y parte del mismo que no es fácil de extraer” (*Desde* 32). In this Aljamiado account, the soul appears rooted deep within the body and must be extracted part by part, through the joints, veins, and many passages of the body, until it is finally caught in the

throat. This specificity is important in that it exemplifies the duration of the action. The soul is not simply ripped instantaneously from the body, but is done so slowly and, as the text seems to suggest, is felt throughout the entirety of the body. Furthermore, the pain and deliberation does not stop once the soul has reached the throat. A final blast of fire and agony are required to separate the two parts of the being. The composite elements of brutality (“saña”), prolongation (“konjuntura en konjuntura”), and fire (“fuwego”) foreshadow the punishments that await the condemned after death.

Vázquez raises the important point that Morisco authors focused almost exclusively on the agonizing separation of the soul and the body (*Desde* 73). I posit two possible reasons for this preference. The first is the didactic function through which the author emphasizes the negative repercussions of not complying with Islamic practices in order to sway his audience toward Islam. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw an increase in preaching throughout Spain, thanks in large part to the efforts of the Dominican order (Solomon 29). The Mudejars too followed suit as more and more preachers took up the call to spread the messages of their faith to their coreligionists. One of the greatest arguments among Mudejar preachers was that intermingling with Christian populations had caused the people to become too lax in their Islamic practices (Miller 144). To this end, preachers took up arms in a “scholar’s *jihād*” to instruct their communities to embrace morality and rid themselves of evil; a practice that continued throughout the Morisco period as well. The very existence of Aljamiado texts is mute testament to the efforts of Mudejar and Morisco religious leaders to defiantly preserve at the very least the central pillars of their religious devotion in order to prevent them from becoming memories. As the severity of this task grew – responding to progressively more stringent restrictions on religious practices and increased efforts by Spanish authorities to stamp out all

vestiges of Semitic presence from the country – so too did the severity of the preachers’ messages. Let us consider the following description by Miller:

The forced conversions in the early sixteenth century, for example, gave birth to some sermons of the narrative or storytelling (*qasas*) genre, which underlined the consequences for those who yielded to Christian pressure: admonitions concerning heaven and hell, eschatological in tone, seem common in the published aljamiado texts dating to the Morisco period. In one case a Mudejar writer directed his message to those Moriscos who had lapsed in the practice of their faith. Descriptions of judgment day and eternal fire were intended to intimidate those who had strayed from the community of believers.

(149)

The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* fits precisely within this classification of sermons. It is important to clarify that works of the *qasas* genre did not, as Miller seems to suggest, come into being in response to sixteenth century politics, but had been in continual use among Muslims and Mudejars from the Early Middle Ages. I believe that Miller’s emphasis is rather on the fact that the genre had been altered to accommodate the shifting needs of those communities that employed it. Morisco authors overwhelmingly drew from the *qisas al-anbiyā*’ collections those tales that impressed upon their readers the negative consequences of noncompliance with Islamic doctrine. By reorganizing these individual selections into cohesive collections – such as Madrid, BNE Mss. 4953, 5305, and 5313 – readers were bombarded with repeated references to such eschatological and intimidating images that Miller describes. Similarly, Vázquez writes in the conclusion to his study on Morisco eschatology, “Parece que los mudéjares que tradujeron y copiaron estos textos escogieron intencionadamente los textos más dramáticos con las imágenes más espantosas, tratando precisamente de apelar al temor de los musulmanes para que no

pensaran en separarse del islam” (*Desde* 114). In a Morisco context, continually threatened by opposing influences, it was hardly uncommon to consider the impact of such difficulties on one’s future. I am reminded particularly of Job who, as we saw in the previous chapter, acknowledged that the benefits of Paradise far outweighed the earthly wealth that was taken from him. This ideology extended even to the deaths of his children, whom he assured Allah were better off in the World to Come.

The emphasis of “scholar’s *jihād*” extended beyond educating the Morisco communities in religious doctrine. To be sure, it encompassed an entire worldview in which negativity and suffering became weapons of resistance and preservation. According to this philosophy, suffering in all of its forms for the sake of Islam or the preservation of one’s Islamic identity was an integral – and indeed welcomed – component in this struggle. Hawkins and Miller both devote pages to this specific form of Holy War against Spain’s Christian populations.⁶⁰ To this end, the Moriscos developed a significant corpus of anti-Christian polemics. Through these texts, Morisco leaders took up arms, so to speak, through their literary productions.

The second reason for the Morisco inclination toward agonal portrayal is directly related to this first. That is a deep-seated, subconscious refusal to disavow oneself of the negative. This cultural paradigm, characteristic among victims of oppression or violence, serves a twofold purpose. On the one hand, as Perry speculates with respect to the historical memory of the Moriscos, “violence generates a more persistent memory” than peace (179). This is certainly the case in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de ‘Īsā kon la kalavera*. As the skull explains to Jesus, even three hundred years after its soul was taken “nunka se me a tirade l-ama- / -rgura de mi

⁶⁰ Hawkins states to this end, “to practice and to teach one’s children Islam within the Christian kingdom is to wage Holy War on the Christian unbelievers” (208). Miller, writing on the earlier Mudejar period, places the beginnings of such inner *jihād* in the writings of al-Ghazālī. Following his teachings, the Mudejars were offered the choice between “material flight” to North Africa or “spiritual struggle” within Christian Spain (Miller 147).

garganta del sakamiyento / de mi arrūh ni el teremolamiyento de mi / qorazon ni de mi[s] konchunturas del miyeddo / iy-espanto” (Madrid, BNE Ms.5305 fol. 18v). Manuela Manzanares de Cirre cites a similar passage from the *Libro del Samarqandi* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 4871) that reads, “ke e muerto tiyenpo á de setenta años i siyen años i la amargura de la muerte no se á ido de mi fasta aora” (605). Both of these passages demonstrate the residual trauma that was the byproduct of extreme violence. In fact, the trauma of memory is every bit as potent in these two texts as the initial experience of violence itself. Neither text indicates that the passage of time had, in any way, softened the effect of suffering, nor do they reflect on the past event as though it were a memory. The skull, for example, still tastes the bitterness of death and feels its accompanying pain as though its body were still intact. This brings to light an important difference between Muslim and Christian understandings of the agony of death. Vázquez explains that within a Muslim context, agony is an overwhelmingly physical experience, which is manifest in the believer’s body. Christian eschatology, in contrast, understands agony as an emotional and psychological manifestation. The Christian believer experiences extreme fear of condemnation and the torments exercised by the Devil. Agony is therefore a self-manifested response to these fears, rather than to death itself (Vázquez 480).

Burial Rites in Christianity and Islam

Rituals associated with death and burial are developed in large part in response to biological necessity. In other words, the universal inevitability of death necessitates the presence of rituals that allow us to come to terms with the natural occurrence of death. As such, the structural parameters of these rituals are common through the human socio-cultural and religious

gamut. The descriptions of burial rites in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de 'Īsā kon la kalavera* occupy less than a single folio page of the narrative. As a result, the reader is provided with a bare-bones schematic of burial customs that are – for their lack of specificity – considerably neutral with regard to religious or ideological leanings. This section of text reads:

kisiyeron mis ermanos ballarme a mi i / decendiyeron sobre mi almalakes del-asamā / de
los almalakes de la saña y-echoron sobre / mi de la cenisa de la kasa i de sus basuras / i
kuyddaban mis ermanos ke me bañaban / i por akello kede por bañar y-envolviyeron- / -
me mis ermanos en la mortalla y-ella se / defendiya de mi i deziya ke yo no era digno //
para ella. I levaronme mis ermanos allana‘as iy-el ke deziya: —Tirate de mi, yā
‘esfeuzado / de la piyadad de Allah. I levaronme mis ermanos a en- / -terror i yo tan
pesado para ellos komo un monte / muy garande por el amuchecimiyento de mis pekado-
/ -s i pusiyaeronme en la fuwesa i enterraronme. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 19r-19v)

On its surface, only the Arabic lexicon suggests an Islamic context for this specific burial paradigm. However, as we begin to fill in the details of the individual practices at work in this description, they assume a more apparent Islamic character.

Before delving into the ritual components listed in this segment, we should not overlook the fact that this particular interment is narrated to Jesus by the dead itself. Or, rather, the skull demonstrates an awareness of the events that affected it *post mortem*. This detail signals a common belief outlined in Islamic eschatological manuals that for a period of time after death the spirit/soul of the dead maintains a residual connection with the body. Though it exists outside of the body, by virtue of the death of its “host,” it nonetheless does not immediately relinquish its position within the body. Because of this, it is believed that the dead body is perceptive to the activities affecting it. “This is coordinate,” write Jane Idleman Smith and

Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, “with those *hadīths* which suggest that at least for a brief period of time the dead are sensitive to the affairs of the living.” These two scholars go on to cite a particular passage from the *Bushra al-ka’ib bi-liqā’i al-habīb*, written by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī according to whom “The dead person knows who washes him and carries him and who wraps him [in his winding clothes] and who lowers him in his grave” (Smith and Haddad 51). Thus, the skull’s ability to narrate these events points to a mundane consciousness, or memory, that is produced and retained by the soul after death through its lingering attachment to the corporeal realm.

Through its recollections, the skull reveals four components of the burial paradigm: washing the body of the deceased, shrouding the body, carrying the dead on the funeral bier to the place of burial, and interment. Through a close reading of each of these processes, we can begin to comprehend to what extent this narration is indicative of Islamic rather than Christian burial customs. The way in which a corpse is prepared for burial, for example, is encoded with specific methodological criteria and symbolic meaning that in turn situate this act within the framework of a specific religious tradition. In an Islamic setting, purification through ablutions is a necessary precedent to any important ritual practice, including burial. Customarily, “the washing of the body was performed by those nearest to the dead” (Tritton 653). For example, in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* the skull tells Jesus that his brothers wished to bathe him. Islamic tradition also holds that this practice should be entrusted to someone of the same gender as the deceased. A. S. Tritton explains that despite this caveat, ninth-century Syrian jurist Sahnun ibn Sa‘id ibn Habib at-Tanukhi (c. 776-854 CE) ruled in his compendium of law, *al-Mudawwana*, that a widow is permitted to wash the body of her deceased husband (653).

Like most death rituals, individual accounts differ with regard to the type of ablution or ritual purification that should be performed. Generally speaking, Arabic and Aljamiado accounts are consistent in identifying two stages of the cleansing process: the bathing of the entire body and ablutions that follow. The use of the term “bañar” in the Aljamiado text suggests a full-body purification in the form of *ghusl*. Cyril Glassé supports this claim affirming that the deceased is “given a ritual ablution, the *ghusl*, an uneven number of times, which may be followed by a *wudū*” (151). Hughes likewise describes the careful washing of the corpse as it is turned onto each side and onto its back, thoroughly washing the individual limbs and abdomen and removing any filth. “After this they wash and clean it well, so that no offensive smell may remain. They never throw water into the nostrils or mouth, but clean them with wicks of cloth or cotton. After that they perform *wuzū*’ for him, *i.e.* they wash his mouth, the two upper extremities up to the elbows, make *masah*⁶¹ on his head, and throw water on his feet” (Hughes 81). Thus, both Glassé and Hughes recognize the actual washing of the body as *ghusl*, while the minor ablution that follows is *waDū*’.

Longás Bartibás, drawing from various Aljamiado manuscripts, posits, “era purificado éste, ‘bañándolo como cuando se baña el vivo con su *alguado*’ [*waDū*]. A este fin, era colocado en alto para que el agua se escurriese por todo el cuerpo y éste quedase limpio, de tal manera que solía repetirse la limpieza hasta siete veces, si era necesario” (285-286). Similarly, Boronat y Barrachina, quoting from an Arabic text outlining the protocols of Moorish ceremonies, writes “Cuando algún moro muere, lo primero es lavarle todo el cuerpo y cabeza y pies con agua y esto es por la ceremonia del goado” (1.517). Amalia García Pedraza expands on these two statements adding, “era bañado lo mismo que el vivo en su *alguado* por una persona que se hubiera

⁶¹ This constitutes an act of touching the head, or turban, of a deceased person, “drawing the three central fingers over the [...] turban at once” (Hughes 328). It is believed that after this action is performed, the person is considered ceremonially clean.

purificado previamente mediante la tahor” (340). There appears to be a fundamental confusion of nomenclature in the Aljamiado texts. Longás Bartibás includes in his study a clear description of two types of ritual purifications. The description of the first, which the Morisco writings from which he draws the label “tahor,” corresponds to Glassé and Hughes’s descriptions of *ghusl*. According to classical Islam, however, “tahor” is the generic term used to refer to purification in general. Within the wider category of “tahor” are a number of specific types of ablutions including *ghusl* and *waDū’*. The second form of purification mentioned in Longás Bartibás is a hispanicization of the Arabic *waDū’* often spelled either “alguado” or “guadoc.” Despite this distinction, Aljamiado sources refer almost exclusively to *waDū’*. In fact, the syntax of the above citations from both Longás Bartibás and Boronat y Barrachina suggests that “alguado” and “goado,” respectively, refer back to the act of bathing and are, in fact, not distinct from it. This preferential use of “alguado” in Aljamiado texts also seems to advance the idea that the Moriscos indiscriminately employed the term “alguado” to refer generally to all forms of ablution and purification. Such a case also exemplifies the depletion of the Moriscos’ knowledge of Islamic practices.

Another distinctive feature of Morisco/Muslim observances is the repetition of ritual acts, usually in odd-number increments. With respect to the purification of the dead, repetitions of three to seven are the norm. Tritton records a more specific custom of bathing the body “once with [pure] water, once with water in which acacia leaves had been steeped, and once with water and camphor.” Camphor was also often used to wash the head of the deceased (Tritton 653). Selections from medieval compendiums of Islamic ceremonial traditions included by Borronat y Barrachina in his invaluable study of the Moriscos offer similar description of scenting the body either during the act of purification or after being wrapped in the shroud. One such text instructs,

“póngale olores Buenos entre su mortaja y cuerpo y lugares del acuchux” (Boronat y Barrachina 1.518).

Medieval Christianity saw purification of the body as intimately linked to questions of healing. “The Christian perspective,” Paul Binski explains, “saw the body as a sign of the soul; in curing the soul of sin the body too was cured” (30). For this reason, priests rather than doctors visited sick parishioners whose illnesses were severe or believed to be life threatening. This *ordo visitandi* was an effort by priests to cure the bodies of their patients by providing them absolution of their sins. Amalia García Pedraza describes a similar *ordo* among Moriscos directed toward enduring the agony of death. “En este duro trance se colocaba al moribundo en actitud de orar y se requería la ayuda espiritual del alfaquí quién, junto a sus más allegados, le animaba a recitar reiteradamente diversas profesiones de fe como: ‘No hay más Dios que Alá, y Mahoma es su mensajero’” (339). In contrast to Christian efforts to heal, however, the role of the *alfaquí* was simply to aid the soul of the dying in its inevitable passage from the body; a practice that the Church in Spain was quick to prohibit. Islam had adopted from pre-Islamic Arabia the concept of *ajal*, which is the understanding that each human life – and indeed humanity as a whole – is assigned a lifespan predetermined by God (Smith and Haddad 5). Thus, in Islamic dogma, attempts to cure the body with the intention of prolonging one’s *ajal* are futile. We have seen this concept in play previously with regard to plague and other epidemics.

When it became apparent that death was inevitable, the priest performed the last rites of confession, extreme unction, and communion. The body of the deceased, paralleling Islamic custom, was then washed and prepared for burial. It is useful to note that in Christian traditions, the washing of the corpse was less ritualistic than in Islam and more a matter of showing respect for the deceased. As such, there were no rules regarding who was permitted to wash the body or

in what order the parts of the body were to be cleansed. In fact, the task of washing and preparing a corpse for burial was usually relegated to women. Binski rationalizes that such “so-called ‘gestures of despair’ were a feminine attribute, and it is usually women who are seen as mourners on Spanish medieval tombs” (52). In the *Hadīth i rrekontamiyento*, the fact that the brothers of the deceased bathed and prepared the corpse reveals two clues as to the identity of the latter. The brother’s gender points to an Islamic rather than Christian burial. In that case, we can deduce that the deceased was also male since Islamic law held that the corpse should be bathed by someone of the same gender as the deceased.

Having completed the purification of the body, it was then wrapped in a simple shroud. Islamic law is again vague with regard to the type of clothing appropriate for burial. Strictly speaking, the *kafanūn*, as the burial shroud is called in Islam, is a simple length of clean, white cloth which is wrapped around the body two or three times. In a letter sent by inquisitors from Valencia to the Inquisitorial Counsel in 1583, inquisitors describe in significant detail the observances of Morisco burial. With respect to the burial shroud we are told, “Assi parece que es ceremonia de moros amortajar con lienzo blancos limpios y que los lienzo no sean pares, sino nones: tres, cinco, o siete y no se require que el lienzo sea Nuevo, y que el amortajarse no sea en seda ni en oro” (Borronat y Barrachina 1.516). In addition to, or in place of, the *kafanun*, however, the wearing of everyday clothing is considered by most sources to be acceptable. Tritton records a number of sources that state that two garments are considered sufficient for clothing the dead, though other sources note the use of three. The Prophet Muhammad, his son-in-law ‘Alī ibn Abī Tālib , and the Sunni scholar al-Bukhārī (810-870 CE) were all buried in three white garments (Tritton 654).

Though treated with relatively scant importance in classical Arabic sources, the choice of burial garb was of extreme importance in Morisco societies. With the Catholic Church mobilized in the war against heretical practices in Spain, authorities relied heavily on visual clues and observation as indicative of religious difference. To illustrate this point, Carlos M. N. Eire, writing on sixteenth-century Christian practices in Spain, observes that “Throughout the sixteenth century, lay people could elect to be dressed in one of three ways: in a linen shroud, a habit from a religious order, or a confraternity tunic. Secular clergy were normally buried in their vestments, the members of religious orders in their habits” (105). Despite the linen shroud being a viable option for Christian burials, after reviewing a number of Christian wills from Castile, Eire found that between 1520 and 1599 the Franciscan habit had become the garment of choice above all others and that the white, linen shroud had all but fallen out of use (105).

Given the fact that the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de ‘Īsā kon la kalavera* is estimated to date to precisely the same period in which Eire’s wills were written, we might postulate that the Aljamiado text represents a practice clearly atypical to Christian burial customs of the time. That said, we know that Arabic versions of this narrative circulated in both oral and written form throughout the early Middle Ages before being set in a more or less consistent form, likely during the twelfth century, according to Roberto Tottoli (“Story” 255). From the twelfth century onward, the narrative continued to undergo minor motivic modifications and elaborations into the early modern period. Consequently, it is possible that the simple white shroud is little more than an example of motivic carryover from its early formative period, during which time this garment was prominently used among each of the Abrahamic faiths. Still, the presence of the burial shroud in an Aljamiado text inspires the curiosity of the modern reader cognizant of the political and religious tensions at work in sixteenth-century Spain. Did the Morisco author

simply borrow from earlier versions of this legend or was the election of this garment intended as a subtle act of asserting one's religious traditions in the face of Christian authority?

According to Islamic tradition, once the corpse had been properly prepared for burial it was carried atop a simple funeral bier to the place of burial. This is referred to in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* by the Arabic term “allana‘as” (نعش). The carrying of the funeral bier is a custom of great importance and is often an obligation of mourners. Tritton notes that if possible, “the mourners should take it in turns to carry” (Tritton 655). The early Islamic funeral procession must have been a seemingly haphazard spectacle as mourners pushed and shoved for a chance to carry the bier. The data presented by Tritton does not suggest any specific processional order. He does, however, mention that Muhammad and the early caliphs walked before the bier (656). Borronat y Barrachina provides a translation of an Arabic text that states, “al llevar el difunto es mejor que vaya la gente delante” (1.519).

Despite the apparent disorderliness of the movement involved in carrying the bier, excess noise during funeral processions was strictly forbidden. For this reason, most jurists ruled that women should not attend funerals for fear that they would wail with sadness. Mālik ibn Anas (c. 711-795 CE) – whose code of law became the standard for Al-Andalus and, consequently, for the Moriscos – did, however, permit women to process in the funerals of relatives (Tritton 655-656). In this case, it became acceptable for women to follow in the rear of the procession, which was expected to move as quickly and directly as possible from the home to the place of burial.

Christian dead were similarly transported via funeral bier to their places of burial. However, Christian tradition included two distinct processions. The first wended its way from the home to the local church for the performance of the *Ordo defunctorum*. Unlike the haunting silence of the Islamic procession, the Christian equivalent was accompanied by the recitation or

chanting of prescribed psalms and responsorials (Rutherford 47-48). Additionally, Christian processions were far more ritualized and orderly than those of Muslims. Consider, for example, the following description by María de los Ángeles Rodríguez Álvarez of a burial procession in the form of a large cross: “hasta adelante iba un acólito con el acetre de agua bendita y el hisopo; después, un subdiácono con la cruz; en medio de dos acólitos con ciriales encendidos y detrás del cuerpo, la comunidad en silencio, al último, el prelado con el diácono a la izquierda” (90). Following the performance of the two services that collectively formed the Order of Death – the Requiem Mass and the *Absolutio* – during which congregants prayed for the forgiveness of sins on behalf of the deceased hoping to spare them the horrible torments that would otherwise await them after death, the body was again purified by holy water and incense and prepared for a second procession to the place of burial (Binski 55; Rutherford 63).

Tritton identifies two additional characteristics of Islamic funeral practices that are of particular importance to our understanding of the Moriscos’ approach to burial. First, he identifies night burials as especially favorable because Muhammad was himself buried at night (Tritton 655). Islamic law dictates that Muslims should be buried in the shortest amount of time possible following death; usually within twenty four hours. So, if a person were to die in the morning, they should ideally be interred by the evening of the same day. Additionally, Tritton states that Muslim funerals are traditionally private affairs. Damian Fonseca speaks to both of these stipulations in his account of a Morisco funeral that took place in the village of Estivella, north of Valencia, in 1594. The deceased was one Montàrri, a wealthy Morisco whose family sought to conceal his death from the local priest. Two days later, informed of the death by another villager, the priest ventured to Montàrri’s house. Let us consider the scene that followed the priest’s arrival:

tocò a la puerta de la casa, y viendo que no se la querian abrir, la saco de sus quicios, y entrando dentro hallò 200 Moriscos alrededor del cuerpo muerto alumbrados con sola la claridad de vn poco de fuego, y vio debajo del cuerpo, vn grande brasero encendido, y en otro aposiento mucha cantidad de vasos de tierra llenos de aguas de laurel, de naranjo, y de romero, con las quales auian lauado supersticiosamente al difunto. (Fonseca 141)

This brief description nonetheless raises a number of relevant points. By the time the priest had received word of Montàrri's death, for example, the latter had already been dead for two days without being interred. Physical spaces also play a prevalent role in shaping our approach to this excerpt. The house forms a visible barrier dividing space between the interior and the exterior, the private and the public. As we saw in the case of Job, the home is the space of religious practice. Ablutions, prayer, and rituals of death all took place behind the protective concealment of the walls of the house. In the public realm, on the other hand, Job was subjected to the harsh ridicule of those who found his personal practices to be contrary to their understanding of religious devotion. Similarly, the home in Fonseca's description was the ideal space in which the Moriscos could ensure the privacy required for Islamic funerals while also safeguarding the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the community that might otherwise be threatened by Christian authorities. As the door to the Morisco home is opened, the entrance of the priest signals the merging of public and private spaces into a single homogenous entity. This isolated act is a microcosmic representation of the ambitions of the Spanish monarchy in the early modern period. The dominant power of the public realm (the Catholic priest) invades the private space of the marginalized (in this case, the Moriscos) taking note of, and no doubt subsequently eliminating, visible markers of difference.

Fonseca's description of the scant light illuminating the corpse recalls the preference of night burials among many Muslims. As Morisco communities adapted to the changing religious climate of the sixteenth century, burial was not the only observance that took place after nightfall. In the *fatwā* issued in 1504 by the *mufti* of Oran, the Moriscos were advised to dissimulate their Islamic practices by any means possible. Particularly, if they were unable to pray during daylight hours, then they should do so instead under the concealment of night (Carr 105). Perry identifies just such a case in Seville in the early seventeenth century in which "Joan Valenciano was accused of leading Muslim prayers at night in his home, where both family and friends gathered" (79).

Returning to questions of medieval Christian interment, having reached the site of burial, the corpse was often removed from the bier or coffin in which it was transported and placed directly into the earth as were Muslims. Unlike Muslims, however, Christians gave no consideration to the idea of burial in virgin soil. In fact, Christian grave sites were often "sites of recycling." That is to say, when the buried flesh had had sufficient time to decompose, the bones were then exhumed and stored in a charnel house. The newly emptied grave was then "recycled" for use by another (Binski 55). This custom of graveyard "recycling" flies directly in the face of Islamic doctrine which dictates that the deceased must always be buried individually in virgin soil (García Pedraza 341). For Muslims, this condition of the interment process is directly related to the aforementioned connection that remains between the soul and the body for a period following death. Those entrusted with the tasks of preparing the body for burial and interring the corpse were expected to treat the body with extreme respect and to be vigilant of the comfort of the body while being placed in the grave. Smith and Haddad elaborate on this concept as follows:

Not only are the dead usually understood to be cognizant of the degree to which they are missed and of the ways in which their personal affairs are being carried out, but the carelessness of the washers and those who prepare and wrap the body in its shroud has been seen by some to cause anguish to the departed. Many anecdotes indicate that disrespect for the area in which the body is buried as well as failure to care for the grave itself properly can cause extreme discomfort to its occupant. (59)

The role of the living as caretakers of the dead is of central importance. In fact, Smith and Haddah directly attribute the anguish of the deceased to the action of the living. Curiously, however, the unsettling burial in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* is attributed not to the actions of others but to the self-condemning sinful behavior of the deceased himself. That is, the disruptive efforts of the “*almalakes*,” “*mortaja*,” and “*allana‘as*” are responses to the behavior of the individual prior to death. This marked shift in perception, holding the departed accountable for his own anguish, deemphasizes the role of those who act upon the corpse after death. Instead, the living are guided to be mindful of their religious devotions during their lifetimes in order to find comfort in the World to Come.

Muslim graves were also constructed with the physical and spiritual comfort of the dead in mind. Traditionally, they are quite narrow, since the corpse is interred on its right side facing the *qibla* in Mecca. Aside from this specification, sources again provide little uniformity concerning the size and shape of the grave cavity itself. García-Arenal, commenting on the burial practices of Moriscos, writes, “*cavaban unas sepulturas muy hondas, con el fin de encontrar tierra virgin y firme, que no hubiese sido nunca movida ni nadie enterrado en ella*” (*Inquisición* 63).

Christian interment differed most notably from both Jewish and Muslim traditions in the choice of burial location. Originally, Christians were permitted to bury their dead in any consecrated grave. Over time, however, Church officials began to favor burial within individual churches. Typically, according to Binski, Christians were inhumed in their parishes of birth (55). Evidence suggests that this latter point was of particular importance in sixteenth-century Spain. As government policies moved ever steadily toward ridding the country of Semitic influences, edicts were issued with the goal of exposing Morisco practices and punishing those who participated in them. Perry describes an edict passed in Seville in 1548 that “required Moriscos to follow the burial practices of Old Christians” in addition to living observant Catholic lives (69). In like fashion, a decree issued by the provincial Church Council of Granada in 1565 determined that Christians should not continue to be buried in consecrated cemeteries, despite longstanding custom, but should instead be buried exclusively within churches. “This rule,” Eire explains, “sought to prevent Moriscos (Moorish converts) from holding their own Islamic funeral ceremonies in unguarded cemeteries” (92).

A number of additional inquisitorial records attest to an awareness among Christians of Morisco burial practices. Cardaillac chronicles two such cases. First, the Junta of Madrid, meeting in 1587 and presided over by Philip II, decided that “*todos los moriscos sin excepción deberían recibir sepultura eclesiástica, y que habrían de ser enterrados en los mismos cementerios que los cristianos.*” Second, he records a case in Castile in which inquisitorial officials acknowledged that Moriscos were in fact interred in “*campo santo,*” though they preferred “*la tierra virgen.*” For that reason, this record states, “*pedían al enterrador, sobre todo si era Morisco, que cavara las tumbas lo más profundas posibles, para que el cadaver quedara así cubierto por tierra no bendecida*” (Cardaillac 39). As evidenced by these examples, Christian

authorities had more than a passing knowledge of Morisco customs. They were in fact able to cite specific details of burial customs that defied Catholic law. This in turn led the Spanish Crown and Church officials to increase pressure to insure Morisco compliance with Catholic doctrine by removing those formalities that appear congruous between Christianity and Islam. Burial in hallowed ground, for example, can easily be adapted to fulfill the legal requirements of either religion, as Cardaillac's second quotation proves. This obstacle is abated, however, by altering the parameters of Christian tradition, replacing burials in cemeteries with church burials.

Vázquez attributes the significant textual reduction in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* – minimizing the many intricacies of Islamic burial to four basic acts – to the resistance of the shroud, the bier, and the interment itself to the very idea of providing the deceased with an Islamic burial. Due to the continued disruptions to ritual, “el efecto de los ritos mortuorios acaba por ser truncado” (*Desde* 75). This truncation in turn results in an unavoidable ambiguity that destabilizes the authoritative position of the text inasmuch as it is representative of Islamic or Christian eschatological theories. Those distinctive elements elaborated in the preceding paragraphs that would otherwise paradigmatically situate the text within a specific religious institution are stripped away. What is left is a certain level of religious neutrality, often characteristic of Morisco writings.

By glossing over questions of religious specificity, the text directs the reader toward the traumatic suffering of the deceased as a result of his own earthly sins. More than this, the moments of dramatization in this eschatological narrative foster the exposition of a specific exemplary point. This is observable in the whimsical, and in some cases anthropomorphic, chaos that accompanies each of the four burial customs. As the brothers wash the body, angels pour ash and garbage upon it. The burial shroud struggles against the brothers' attempts to dress

the deceased, offering the simple remark “no era digno para ella.” Similarly, the bier declares the deceased ““esfeuzado de la piyadad de Allah,” and the deceased himself explains that the brothers struggled to inter him due to the weight of his sins. At no point, however, does the reader become privy to precisely the nature of the deceased’s infractions, nor does such specificity appear to be of any importance to the development of the narrative. Thus it is nearly impossible to discern the exact nature of the moral lesson in this segment of text. Rangar Eklund sheds some light on this dilemma explaining that within Islamic narratives of tradition,⁶² “punishment in the grave is used as a threat in general without any particularization” (4). Hence, the text speaks to an overarching preoccupation with death characteristic of the age in which it was composed. As this background of human thought is brought to the forefront in many Morisco texts, specific didactic themes, such as those elucidating the causes of suffering in the grave, are overshadowed.

Munkar and Nakīr: Inquisitors in Death

The two angels charged with interrogating the soul of the deceased in the grave are among those features of the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* that provide the modern reader some insight into the origins of this particular variation of the “Jesus and the Skull” narrative. In his thorough study on the development of this tale in Arabic sources, Roberto Tottoli indicates that during the formative period of Islamic thought – lasting from the death of Muhammad in 632 C.E. until approximately the middle of the tenth century – only one of the six canonical collections of Sunni *ahadīth* mention the names “Munkar” and “Nakīr”: the *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidī* of

⁶² Eklund is unspecific with regard to his definition of “narratives of tradition.” Based on his citations, they generally refer to the major collections of Sunni *ahādīth* written approximately two hundred years after the death of Muhammad. These include the *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* and *Sahīh Muslim*, as well as the *Musnad* of ‘Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

Imām al-Tirmidī (824-892 CE) (Macdonald 57-58). In fact, the entire “Jesus and the Skull” narrative is wholly absent from the earliest of qur’ānic commentaries as well as from most collections of *qisas al-anbiyā*’ including that of al-Tha’labī, considered to be the hallmark of this genre (Tottoli, “Story” 229). Tottoli goes on to identify two versions of the story contained in the *Hilyat al-awliyā* of Abū Nu‘aym al-Isbahānī, which presumably dates to the eleventh century. In the longer of the two versions, Al-Isbahānī includes an *isnād* leading back to the well-known Jewish convert to Islam, Ka‘b al-Ahbār (d. 656 C.E.) (Tottoli, “Story” 229). It is likely, given this *isnād*, that the story as a whole was grafted into the Islamic canon from Jewish sources. That said, the story is still markedly underdeveloped in al-Isbahānī’s text, omitting a number of elements that appear in the Aljamiado legend including the presence of Munkar and Nakīr. Following al-Isbahānī, the story again seems to disappear from Arabic works for roughly a century (Tottoli, “Story” 232). It was the late medieval and early modern periods that witnessed a resurgence of this narrative. A number of texts contemporary with Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 all seem to share a “substantial stability of the plot” and “reliance on the same elements,” which Tottoli suggests is indicative of the coalescence of the story into a more or less finalized form (“Story” 242). It was during this later period as well that Munkar and Nakīr became commonplace characters. Vázquez confirms that although Munkar and Nakīr were present in the *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidī*, they did not appear to be as elaborately developed as they are in the Morisco manuscripts. “Para la época en que los originales árabes fueron traducidos en aljamía ya la tradición habría tenido oportunidad de madurar y acumular las hipérboles que hemos visto” (Vázquez, *Desde* 79).

The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de ‘Īsā kon la kalavera* exhibits a more comprehensive range of eschatological elements representative of this latter period, including the names and

descriptions of Munkar and Nakīr. Scholars continue to debate the exact meanings of these two names. Macdonald tells us that both names, derived from the Arabic root *nkr*, mean “unknown” or “disguised” (74). These terms speak to the notion held by a number of theologians, among them al-Ghazālī, who acknowledged that the soul need not see Munkar and Nakīr, but need only comprehend them through verbal or other forms of communication (Gianotti 75). However, those texts that include references to these characters tend to sketch them in the most menacing fashion. Generally, they are of black or dark blue complexion with eyes that resemble lightning. Their voices boom like thunder and their movements shake the foundations of the earth.⁶³ Using slightly simpler terms, the Aljamiado author describes Munkar and Nakīr as follows:

I yo kede / penado en mi fuwesa por mi poqa obra. I yo esta[n]do / ansi veos ke
viniyeron sobre mi otros / dos almalakes muy fiyeros feos ke la / tierra fazi[ya]n tinbalar
debaxo de sus / piyedes i era su nonbere Munkarun / wa Nakirru. I en mano de ellos una
massa de fiyerro / ke si por ventura se chuntasen / los hallekkados⁶⁴ de personas i aljinnes
/ para levarlo no abriyan poder para ello y-era / en su mano komo un garano de
mostaciya. (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 20r)

The Aljamiado text is consistent with earlier narrative versions with regard to both the ferocity and the imposing immensity of these characters. No doubt for the fearful soul awaiting interrogation, the menacing appearance of these figures foreshadowed the full torment of the punishment that awaited them in the grave.

Customarily, in the early Arabic narratives, Munkar and Nakīr would prompt the body of the dead to sit upright in the grave. Afterward they proceeded to test the fidelity of the deceased

⁶³ For comparative descriptions of the physical forms of Munkar and Nakīr see Eklund 37; Macdonald, “Twilight” 80; Smith and Haddad 41-42; and Vázquez, *Desde* 35.

⁶⁴ This is a Hispanicized term meaning “creations” or “creatures” derived from the Arabic verb *khalaqa* (خلق) meaning “to create.”

with three fundamental questions: Who is your God? What is your religion? and Who is your Prophet? The angels' reactions to the answers provided portend the destiny of the soul leading to the day of resurrection. If the answers are correct, Munkar and Nakīr fashion an opening in the grave – either a window in the top of the grave or a door-like opening to the right side of the body – through which the soul may view Paradise and experience the gentle breeze of the heavenly realm. The soul is instructed to make itself comfortable and to await the final resurrection and judgment. Differing narratives respond to incorrect answers in a number of ways. “Most,” write Smith and Haddad, “omit detail about the fate of the unfortunate” (42). Others will include references to a door being opened to allow the intense heat of Hell to fill the tomb, or descriptions of the dead being prodded or beaten with iron rods. This latter practice can be traced to another pair of verses in the Qur’ān. The first is that previously cited with regard to the Angel of Death: “And if thou couldst see when the angels cause to die those who disbelieve, smiting their faces and their backs, and (saying): Taste the punishment of burning” (8.50). The second verse begs the question, “But how will it be when the angels cause to die, smiting their faces and their backs?” (47.27). Later traditions presumably interpreted the instrument with which the angels strike the condemned to be an iron rod. The Aljamiado text also insinuates the use of these instruments, referring to “una massa de fyerro” that the angels held in their hands.

Arabic renditions of this narrative generally sort souls into comparatively black and white categories. Those who respond correctly to interrogations prove themselves to be faithful Muslims. Conversely, individuals who respond falsely are classified, to varying degrees, as infidels. This clear distinction is complicated in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de ‘Īsā kon la kalavera* by the emotional response of fear. “Es- // -panteme d-ello, yā annabī de Allah,” the

skull explained to Jesus, “i dixe a e[l] – Por Allah / no abe a mi señor sino tu ni alimān⁶⁵ ni alqibla / sino tu” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 20r-20v). Clearly the soul responded falsely to interrogation, thereby condemning itself to punishment in Hell. More than this, however, the soul committed the most grievous of sins in Islam: that of *shirk* (شرك).⁶⁶ *Shirk*, which is the sin of identifying any individual as equal to God, is considered so abominable that it is the only sin traditionally defined as unpardonable.

Underlying the fallaciousness of his answers, however, is a current of fear. The placement of the verb “espanteme” as an immediate precursor to the committal of a sinful act adds a strain of dialogue that incontrovertibly confuses the otherwise conveniently simple delineation between infidelity and piety. That is, to merely label the soul of the deceased as unfaithful or blasphemous is to dismiss the possibility that the emotional response of fear altered the intentionality of the soul’s responses to interrogation.

To be sure, the skull acknowledges its own sinfulness on other occasions. When asked by Jesus to identify itself, for instance, the skull responds, “yo era del-a- / -luma ke se ayro Allah sobe[re] ella” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fol. 18r). The cause of God’s anger, however, is never divulged. Instead, the skull embarks on a detailed description of the devastation that befell his community and its subsequent death. At the individual level, both the burial shroud and funeral bier rebelled in an attempt to evade contact with the deceased. Again, no specific justification is provided for these actions. The burial shroud states simply that the corpse “no era // digno para ella.” The protests of the bier offer little more information to this end, branding the deceased as

⁶⁵ This term as it appears in the *Aljamiado*, ending in the letter “nun” (ن), can be read either as the Arabic term “imān” (إيمان) meaning “faith,” or the Romance “imān” corresponding to the Arabic “imām” (إمام), which refers to an Islamic religious leader. From the context of Munkar and Nakīr’s three questions, it is likely that the latter is the intended meaning.

⁶⁶ Hughes defines *shirk* as “idolatry; paganism; polytheism” or any means by which plurality is ascribed to the deity (579).

“esfeuzado / de la piyadad de Allah” (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 19r-19v). Even the skull itself contribute a self-incriminating thread to this discourse explaining that his brothers struggled to bury him due to the weight of his perpetually mysterious sins. From these examples we can deduce only that sins were committed not only by the deceased in question, but by his community as a whole. However, no specific indication of *shirk* is present in the text prior to the soul’s interrogation. If this is indeed the case, the unintentional nature of this self-condemnation, though not undermining the severity of *shirk*, does produce a modicum of sympathy or pity on the part of the listeners or readers of this text, as indeed is exemplified through the eventual intercession of Jesus and the pardon of the condemned soul.

It is important to note as well that the criticisms made by the burial shroud and funeral bier precede the interrogations of Munkar and Nakīr. Their characterization of the deceased body as unworthy of the burial shroud and undeserving of Allah’s mercy suggest that the individual in question should not be buried according to Islamic custom; a judgment that points to infidelity earlier on in the deceased’s history. Again, this point is never made clear. Furthermore, we are unable to discern from the evidence presented in the text the manner in which the accusers became privy to the unidentified sinful acts. Did the accusers visually witness the performance of acts that went against prescribed Islamic doctrine, for instance? Or, did they overhear proclamations of blasphemous speech?

Despite our inability to answer these questions, the evidence that we are provided points to a considerably more complex problem than the cut and dry act of committing the sin of *shirk*. This is not to downplay in any way the severity of this sin, but rather to propose that there is a greater web of conflict at work in this text. The deceased is caught between two opposing viewpoints. On the one hand are his brothers, who intend to bury the deceased according to

Islamic customs. On the other hand, the deceased is deemed an infidel by the burial shroud, the funeral bier, Munkar, and Nakīr. The result is a conflict of interpretation and opinions within a religiously homogenous community.

These fictional descriptions of internal conflict overlap with the Moriscos own lived experiences. Many Moriscos found themselves rejected by both Christians and Muslims. Harvey attempts to explain the failure of Christian authorities to successfully integrate the Moriscos into their new faith community:

Perhaps the most important flaw in the Christian missionary endeavor was that there was an unresolved contradiction between, on the one hand, the desire that these new converts should be assimilated, made a part of Christian society [...], and, on the other hand, reluctance to fully accept former Muslims, a continuing desire to *exclude* them from Christian society, a conviction that these ‘converts’ were insincere. (*Muslims* 108-109)

Criticism from former Muslim coreligionists came from both inside the Iberian Peninsula and abroad. On the one hand, those Mudejars who resisted conversion saw the Moriscos as traitors to Islam. A similar view was projected within Morisco communities. As Bernabé Pons explains, “muchas comunidades moriscas van integrándose en la sociedad cristiana y van tomando parte de las realizaciones culturales de ésta” (15). For this reason, those Moriscos who dissimulated their Islamic practices came to resent, in many cases, those Moriscos whose conversion was in fact genuine.

This last point again brings to the forefront of conversation the practice of *taqiyya*⁶⁷ and its contribution to Morisco identities. As stipulated in the Oran *fatwā* of 1504, Moriscos were granted legal permission to abstain from external Islamic practices under the proviso that intention of their hearts, or *niyya*, did not betray the fundamental precepts of Islam. The dual

⁶⁷ For a more in depth consideration of *taqiyya*, see chapter three of the present study.

identity produced by dissimulation is brought out in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* through the performance of sin. In a general sense, sin, as it exists in each of the Abrahamic traditions, is an inevitable byproduct of the human condition. We all, as fallible beings, are endowed with freewill that in turn guides us toward the performance of acts that are deemed acceptable or sinful within established dogmatic parameters. This is exemplified in the Aljamiado text by the fluctuation between recognizing Jesus as a prophet of Islam and admitting to sinful behavior, being prepared for burial according to Islamic tradition, yet committing the sin of *shirk* in the grave. It is precisely the severity of *shirk*, however, that causes us to step beyond the parameters of human fallibility to call into question one's general fidelity to Islam. Despite the reader's ability to conceive of the conflict in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*, the text stops short of explicitly identifying the deceased as Muslim or infidel. Thus, the deceased, like the Moriscos, is crafted as a dual entity who adapts orthodox Islam to suit his present condition. He becomes a palimpsestic figure whose Muslim identity to varying degrees remained perceptible beneath a newly-adopted façade.

Initially guided by the belief that compassion and understanding would attract the newly-converted Moriscos to sincerely embrace Christianity, Catholic authorities permitted the Moriscos to freely negotiate their own religious identities, openly maintaining many of their Islamic practices. As Bernabé Pons points out, however, this relative calm that existed for more than half a century following the conquest of Granada in 1492 rapidly changed following the succession of Philip II to the throne in 1556. At that time, a number of political factors contributed to increased paranoia among Spanish Christians, including the intensified threat of Turkish invasion. Moriscos were widely cast as conspiring with the Turks against Spain. The immediate results were the outright repression of all evidence of Islamic practice and culture and

mandated participation in Catholic religious life. In 1564, for example, “the Valencia Inquisition set out to reassert its authority with a stern proclamation that ordered all Morisco adults and children over the age of seven to attend mass regularly and obliged parish priests to test their Morisco parishioners on their knowledge of the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Credo, and other rote passages” (Carr 125).

Bernabé Pons acknowledges the often overlooked fact that “Los moriscos, como en general todos los musulmanes, conocen mucho mejor el cristianismo que no a la inversa” (94). Islam, as the last of the revealed religions, is meant to perfect and complete the previous two revealed laws in the form of the Torah and the Gospels. Therefore, Muslims recognize and understand the importance of the prophets of Judaism and Christianity, which include Jesus of Nazareth. For Muslims, however, Jesus is identified in the Qur’ān as “an apostle born miraculously to the Virgin Mary and who, as a prophet, performed many miracles, as had other prophets and messengers” (Chejne 68). A fundamental problem for Moriscos, then, was open recognition of the Christian Trinity. Acknowledgment that God could exist as a plurality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost undermines the firm Islamic belief in the unity of a single God as proclaimed in the *shahada*. Thus, recognition of Jesus’ divinity constituted an act of *shirk*. For this reason, Moriscos continually sought ways to negotiate with this caveat of their adopted faith. Cardaillac identifies Morisco opposition to belief in the Trinity as the most frequently cited accusation in inquisitorial documents (208). Both Cardaillac and Deborah Root point to the example of one María de Molina who was brought before inquisitors and asked to “define the nature of God.” She proceeded to identify the Trinity using the Arabic terms “Mahoma, Allah y Vizmillah” (Cardaillac 210; Root 128). The two scholars have put forth differing explanations for Molina’s response. Cardaillac labels Molina’s understanding of the Trinity “una visión muy

imprecisa que manifiesta una cierta confusión entre ambas religiones” (210). Rather than reiterating Cardaillac’s judgment, Root instead looks to Molina’s response as evidence of encoding her dissimulated Muslim beliefs within an existing Christian paradigm, thereby avoiding the performance of *shirk* (128).

Having considered the dominant Muslim understanding of the trinity, let us link this understanding back to the performance of *shirk* in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*. Consider the following conclusion reached by Cardaillac regarding the representation of the Trinity in Morisco polemics:

Los manuscritos aljamiados en particular, dirigiéndose, probablemente, a un público muy popular, apelan muy a menudo al sentido común. Hay un empeño por demostrar lo irracional del tema de la Trinidad insistiendo sobre la imposibilidad del ‘meskalamiyento’ de elementos tan diferentes como ‘la palabra kon el kuwerpo de ‘Īsā en el viyentre de Maryam.’ (231-232)

The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* likewise exhibits the polemical tone described by Cardaillac. As previously mentioned, the words “Por Allah / no abe a mi señor sino tu ni alimān ni alqibla / sino tu” can logically be ruled irrational by virtue of the fact the reference to fear that immediately precedes them. Hence, this example demonstrates to the attentive audience that the performance of incorrectly responding to the interrogations of Munkar and Nakīr is the direct result of an external stimulus, rather than a legitimate belief in the words spoken. The words themselves can thus be discarded as meaningless, just as Aljamiado polemics discarded other such references to the Trinity.

Punishments in the Grave: To Hell and Back

Punishment for the sin of *shirk*, is of course inevitable, regardless of the intentionality of the crime. Consistent with Islamic eschatological tradition, the soul of the dead is escorted by two angels to the first of seven entrances to Hell. At each door, the soul witnesses the punishment of a particular group of inhabitants for equally specific offenses:

	Descriptions of the punishments suffered in Hell	Those destined to suffer each of these punishments
Door 1	“vide onberes / ke llos mordiyantas kullebaras i los / alaqarabes, i les entaraba el fuwego i les es- / -pedaçaban sus karnes”	“Para tu, yā enemigo de Allah, i par-ad-ake- / -llos ke komen el-algo de los guwerfanos / en akesta aduniya ⁶⁸ ”
Door 2	“vide onberes ke salliyan el fuwego / de entere sus manos”	“Para tu / i par-ad-akellos ke testemuñan i churan / el nonbere de Allan en mentira en-e[l] aduniya”
Door 3	“veos kon onberes ke balaban sen- / -balante de los karneros del-aladāb ⁶⁹ ke teniyan”	“Para tu i para kiyan / bebera el vino en-akesta aduniya”
Door 4	“vide on- / -beres ke entara el fuwego por ensimas / i salliya por debacho de ellos”	“Para tu i para akellos ke komen / lo harām ⁷⁰ en la kasa del-aduniya”
Door 5	“veos kon mucheres ke estan / kolgadas de sus lenwas en-el // fuwego ke rregalaban sus karnes / komo el rregalamiyento de la niyeve”	“Para tu i a toda mujer ke andara kon des- / -mindar i tornan sus ojos ayrados / a sus maridos”
Door 6	“vi mucheres kolgadas de sus piyedes i dentaraba el fuwego / por sus boqas i saliya por debaxo”	“Para tu iy-a toda mucher ke andara o hara / azinā ⁷¹ ”
Door 7	“vi un rriyo de se dize Alfalaq i vi, yā annabbī / de Allah, aladāb el kuwal no podriyan sen- / -balçar ni konperender senbalaçadore- / -s i vi, yā annabbī de Allah, chentes ke se / rrevolkaban en-el komo el rrevolqami[ye]nto // de los endiyablados de la fortaleza i fuwerte / aladāb ke teniyan”	

Fig. 5: The condemned and their corresponding punishments in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de Īsā kon la kalavera* (Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 fols. 21r-22r)

The above details, though seemingly specific, are actually comparatively simplistic when considered within the larger continuum of Islamic eschatological writings. The division of Hell into distinct layers or levels, writes Nerina Rustomji, is a concept present in the Qur’ān itself. In

⁶⁸ دنیا – the Arabic term for “world”

⁶⁹ عذاب – the Arabic term for “punishment”

⁷⁰ حرام – This term refers to that which is “prohibited” or “unlawful” by Islamic law.

⁷¹ زنا – the Arabic term for “adultery” or “fornication”

the fifteenth *surah* we are told, “It has seven gates. For each gate is an appointed portion of them” (15.44). Early traditions of Sunni *ahādīth*, such as *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* and *Sahīh Muslim*, employ sex as a vehicle for stratification. This technique is echoed in the Aljamiado text which places “onberes” in the first four layers of Hell, while sections five and six are reserved for “mucheres” and the seventh door reveals the river “Alfalaq” in which “chentes” writhe about in agony. The earlier traditions also describe rewards or punishments specific to men and to women depending on their faithfulness, knowledge, and practice of Islam. The two sexes, however, do not necessarily achieve the complete separation into distinct spaces that we observe in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*.

An additional method of stratification common to the early traditions of al-Bukhārī and Muslim is the sorting of “believers” and “unbelievers.” Later collections such as al-Qadi’s *Daqa’iq al-akhbar fi dhikr al-janna wa-l-nar* (c. 1100 C.E.) and al-Ghazālī’s twelfth-century *Kitāb al-durar al-hisan fi al-ba’th wa-na’im al-jinan*, amplified existing eschatological materials into more cogent manuals focusing on the development of individual aspects of the eschatological timeline (Rustomji 100). These two philosophers, for example, were among the first to refine the structural parameters of Hell dividing the fires into individual named sections designated for specific sinners and equally particular punishments. Also, for the first time the condemned were sorted according to specific religions including Jews, Zoroastrians, Christians, and Muslims, always with the intention of preferencing Islam above all others.

The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*, however, does not entirely conform to any one of these models. No mention is given of specific religions or of believer and unbelievers. Hence the polemical tone characteristic of al-Qadi and al-Ghazālī is lacking in this section of narrative. Neither does the Aljamiado text exhibit any of the rich detail and additional characters, in the

form of angels and demons, epitomized by these later collections. This comparatively stripped down version of the “Jesus and the Skull” narrative more closely resembles the pre-ninth century paradigms of al-Bukhārī or Muslim.

There are two principle points that we must consider as we approach the specific sins enumerated in this Morisco work: 1. An understanding of the motivation behind a particular hierarchical ranking of sins is dependent upon an awareness of the definitions of sin within an Islamic context; 2. The multiple versions of the “Jesus and the Skull” legend do not exhibit a uniformity with regard to the sins included in each. Turning to the first of these points, the Qur’ān makes a singular distinction between major and minor sin: “If you shun the great things which you are forbidden, We shall do away with your evil (inclinations) and cause you to enter an honorable place of entering” (4.31). From this verse, scholars have deduced that only the committing of major sins – what ‘Alī translates as “great things” – results in punishment in the Fire. Yet, as Smith and Haddad rightly note, a consensus has never been reached as to what acts constitute major or minor sins, since the Qur’ān itself does not make this point clear (23). Because each of the sins enumerated in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* lead to punishment in Hell, we can understand each as a major sin.

What, then, is the significance of the particular selection of major sins in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*? Roberto Tottoli has examined at length multiple extant versions of the “Jesus and the Skull” narrative written in Arabic and Aljamiado. From these investigations he has determined that each individual text, though possibly bearing some degree of resemblance to other versions, is an autonomous rendition of this tale. As such, our understanding of any particular text must always be rooted in the specific socio-historical context that gave it shape and in which it was utilized. In the case of the Moriscos, their understanding of major sins was

necessarily precipitated by their subjugated position within Spanish society. Having become at least nominally Christian, Aragonese Moriscos were able to continue many of their Islamic practices for decades after their Castilian counterparts were forced to abandon them. All of that would change by the middle of the sixteenth century. In light of the edicts banning Islamic cultural and religious practices in Spain, it perhaps made more practical sense for the author of the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*, who was likely an *alfaquí*, to hold the common Morisco accountable for those actions that more accurately defined the bulk of his quotidian interactions. Chejne summarizes, however generally, that the Moriscos abided by a system of moral conduct predicated upon avoiding a particular set of mortal sins:

not believing in Allah; disobedience to parents; killing a fellow Muslim; eating dead animals; eating blood; eating pork; committing adultery; gambling; usury; acting as procurers for unbelievers; false testimony; lying; falsehood; drinking wine; usurping orphans' property; doubting God's mercy; and cheating fellow Muslims. (66)

Not surprisingly, several of these practices echo those listed in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*. In fact, each of the six major sins catalogued in this work, though encoded with Islamic law, speak to specific questions of moral and ethical conduct.

Like the performance of the text itself, the importance of moral behavior was an aspect of Islamic faith that transcended the boundaries of religious education, economic status, language, and other barriers that could otherwise divide a community. "Even the most ardent believers had other obligations," writes Matthew Carr. "If they were Muslims, they were also subjects of Christian rulers, vassals of Christian lords, members of their communities, neighbors, and family members, whose horizons were often limited to the immediate world in which they lived" (Carr 46). The preservation of the Moriscos as a people was predicated on the survival of the

community. It was through the collective efforts of the community, for example, that the knowledge contained in Aljamiado manuscripts was preserved and disseminated. In fact the text of the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* itself underscores the role of this narrative within a group context of recitation or performance. The start of folio 17r, for example, reads, “I fuwe rrekontado por los rrekontadorres / pasados ke ‘Īsā, ‘alayhi ilsalām, pasando / un diya por un val ve‘oos ke viyo / una kalavera balanka echada sobre la tiyerra.” The term “ve‘oos,” which appears in various inflections in this and other Aljamiado texts, invites a plural audience to engage with the narrative. More than this, the skull and the Morisco audience are carefully linked by the alternating conjugations of “ver” found in the skull’s descriptions of what he witnessed at each door of Hell. As evidenced by the abovementioned figure, the narrative voice oscillates between the first person singular forms “vide” or “vi” and the second person plural imperative “veos.” This juggling between the two subjects blurs the separation between the skull and the Morisco audience. Thus, the Morisco audience is no longer permitted to passively absorb the colorful story of the skull’s tribulations. They are now forced to become active participants in the story by ultimately bearing witness to their own destinies.

Vázquez describes this world as “un espacio de preparación para el más allá” for the Moriscos (*Desde* 49). Carr explains this “preparación” as the diligent adherence to those protocols of right conduct that would pave the way for the Moriscos to take their places in the hereafter (49). My perception of “hereafter,” or “más allá,” is twofold. First, both terms speak to Morisco preoccupations with the future. Whether steered by their prophetic hopes for a renaissance of Islamic Spain or overcome by feelings of hopelessness as they saw the impending death of Spanish Islam, Morisco texts abound with references to future events. At the macro-cosmic level, the “hereafter” refers precisely to the life that awaits each Morisco in either

Paradise or Hell. In both cases, Morisco didactic literature portrays a people who were imminently aware of the transitory nature of their existences. “In spite of despondency and despair,” Chejne explains, “the Morisco had the conviction that his trials and tribulations were part of a divine plan beyond human power to alter or control” (25-26). The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento* is no exception. As the skull described to Jesus, his soul suffered for the sin of *shirk*, being punished in not one but each of the seven levels of Hell. Yet, at no moment in the text does the soul cry out against its punishment or question the severity of its suffering.

The life force of the skull exists in the spatial realm of the hereafter; a plane of existence unperceivable by human beings. Our Modern Western understanding of the timeline of human existence places the hereafter in an equally unknown future, while our lived experiences in the visible, terrestrial plane constitute our past and present. The *Hadish i rrekontamiyento*, however, identifies the present with the physical shell of the skull. The tangible bones that remain are reminders of an individual, or perhaps a civilization, whose history had ceased to exist and was, thus, relegated to the past. In contrast, the soul that had departed from this skull crossed into the future of the hereafter. Having subsequently endured the endless tortures of Hell, the soul was summoned anew by Jesus to be reborn into present. At that moment, past, present, and future are converge on the same place of existence. This revivification of the soul after death is indicative of the impending Final Judgment in Islam.

In closing, let us spend a few moments with the seemingly contradictory pardon of the soul and reincarnation of the deceased to live an additional twelve years in the service of God. How is it possible that Allah pardoned this individual despite having committed the unpardonable sin of *shirk*? Vázquez posits that this final act of pardon “ofrece al lector un final inesperado que a la vez llenaría de esperanza la atormentada consciencia del lector morisco que

se sentía pecador por practicar, si bien a regañadientes y protegido por la doctrina de la *taqiyya*, el catolicismo” (Vázquez, *Desde* 82). I would add to this statement that Allah’s pardon speaks to the involuntary and uncontrollable nature of the soul’s sin due to its fear. In the same vein, the Moriscos were not to be held accountable for those practices that were out of their own control. Moreover, through his “rebirth,” the individual was offered a second chance to live and die as a Muslim in the service of God; a hope shared by the Moriscos whose family members had already died as Christians and those who might not otherwise live to see the return of Spanish Islam.

CHAPTER 7| Conclusions

In keeping with the established practices of medieval literary composition, the Aljamiado legends contained in this study overflow with thematic content. Often these themes appear disjunctive or unrelated. By way of example, let us consider the thematic content of the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* that began this study. This text at once appears an adventure narrative as Abraham sets off on his journey to observe Allah's miracles. Abruptly, however, we are confronted with geographical changes; a multiplicity of characters including human, animals, and supernatural beings; the bizarre inability of these characters to move from their positions; religious rituals; historical remembrances; and so on. Yet despite this flood of information, each of these individual threads contributes to a unified, flowing narrative about the merits of religious observance and the impending liberation and redemption of a people. This clustering of thematic material mimics at the microcosmic level the seemingly miscellaneous structure of the larger manuscript collections in which these legends are contained.

Each of the five narratives through which we have journeyed conveys moral and religious guidelines to which Morisco readers and audiences may have sought to aspire. Often the manner in which these behavioral models are exposed is as diverse as the thematic content itself. By way of example, we are told on numerous occasions that many of the characters prayed, yet little explanation is provided as to the exact nature of these prayers. Similarly, during his conversation with Jesus the skull divulged in great detail the physical description of the Angel of Death, yet said comparatively little about the process of his burial, summarizing the entire process in a single paragraph. In a way, the vagueness with which religious practices are

described in these works echoes the concealed nature of the Moriscos' own lived experiences as crypto-Muslims. Just as inquisitorial officials were left to puzzle out the extent to which a religiously ambiguous act could be considered Islamic, so too are readers, both sixteenth and twenty-first century, left to fill in the missing details of religious performances. This last point hints at a number of questions the answers to which remain largely speculative. To what extent, for example, was the average Morisco gathered for the recitation of one of these narratives able to understand the sparsely detailed accounts of religious observances? Are we to assume that he would have had a working knowledge of these practices and would, therefore, have understood the general descriptions that he was hearing? Or, perhaps, would the *alfaquí* or other official reciting these tales have paused periodically from reading to elucidate the precise nature of these observances to the largely illiterate masses?

In any case, the lack of minute details relating to individual Islamic observances underscores the importance of the overarching messages provided by the manuscript collections when viewed in their entirety. As Vincent Barletta examined at length through his "activity-centered approach" to Morisco texts, when contextualized within the specific parameters of social and religious use, these miscellanies exhibit certain thematic commonalities. With this in mind, let us turn briefly to consider the contents of Madrid, BNE Mss. 5313 and 5305.

According to Guillén Robles, the former manuscript, which he catalogues as Ms. XLVII, commences with an abridged version of the Qur'ān consisting of select chapters and verses that were believed to be of particular importance to the Moriscos. The remaining contents of this manuscript are as follows:

2. *Las ocho cuestiones de Hatim Alazán, escolano de Xakik Albalí*

3. *Los Castigos (Consejos) de Alhaquim á su fiyo*

4. *Relación de lo que sucede en el sepulcro á quien observa ó abandona la azzala*
(oración)
5. *Recontamiento muy bueno que aconteció á partida (varios) sabios zalihes (santones)*
6. *Historia de Ise (Jesús) y del hijo de una vieja*
7. *Alhasis (leyenda) de Guara Alhonorati*
8. *Alhadis de un medico con Alí*
9. *Alhadis de Ibrahim (Abrahán)*
10. *Recontamiento de la doncella Carcayona*
11. *Alhadis de Silman Alferesio*
12. *Rogaria de la nube*
13. *Recontamiento y alhadis del Castillo del Cuervo*

If we consider the thematic content of this collection, we find that texts one through three provide answers to a number of moral and religious questions. Text four, as the title suggests, elucidates certain consequences for not observing prayer. The remaining nine legends and prayers all deal with a return to Islam, either through repentance or conversion, and the miracles of Allah. Thus, these texts form a coherent compendium of instructional materials meant to convince those who used it of the rewards of following Islam teachings and the punishments for not doing so. We should also note that these texts repeatedly speak of conversion or other means of returning to Islam. That is to say, this is not a collection of laws directed toward devout Muslims. Instead, it is a primer for those who have in some way strayed from their religious path, encouraging them to once again uphold the meritorious practices of Islam.

Madrid, BNE Ms. 5305 similarly exemplifies the miracles of Allah and the merits of Islamic practices. Numbered Ms. CLXXVIII, this collection contains:

1. *Alhadits de Musa con Jacó y lo que pasó entre ellos*
2. *Omar y Hodaifa*
3. *Aparición de un devoto después de su muerte, á su compañero de penitencia*
4. *Estoria que aconteció en tiempo de Isa*
5. *Alhadits de Isa con la calavera*
6. *Estoria de Job*
7. *Estoria de la ciudad de Al-latón y de los alkamkames de Salomón*
8. *Profecía de Fr. Juan de Rocasia*
9. *Recontamiento de Suleimán*

As evidenced by the four legends analyzed in this study, this manuscript uses prophetic texts to convey a number of moral lessons that ultimately teach obedience of Allah and the reward of redemption from suffering. Though it is true, as Hawkins has noted, that these lessons are often depicted through the lens of victimization or oppression, the texts in general do not end on this sour note. Rather, as I have argues in the present study, there is an inherent optimism and hope for freedom, restoration, or Paradise that pervades each of these narratives.

With this in mind, I will end this work by considering how it began. The significance of the title of this study, *Speaking Through the Prophets*, is twofold. On the one hand, it speaks to the Western religious position held by the prophets as intercessors between common human beings and God. This representation is certainly observable in the legends that I have studied. Abraham intercedes to beg for pardon on behalf of the angel trapped between heaven and earth. Similarly, Allah speaks through Jesus to grant the departed soul of the skull its wish of being restored to its human form.

On the other hand, the parts played by the prophets in these narratives are overall quite passive. That is to say that, with the possible exception of Solomon, the principle role of the prophets is to observe. The main focus of these narratives is thus directed to the behaviors and lessons learned and shared by the other characters. The *‘abid*, the frog, the birds, the “mancebo negro,” and the angel in the *Hadīth de Ibrahīm* are each prompted by Abraham to share their histories, while he coaxes specific details through interrogation. In the *Hadith de Mūsā kon Yaku el karnicero*, it is Jacob, not Moses, who embodies the virtues of love of Allah and endless devotion to his parents that result in his companionship with Moses in Paradise. In the *Rrekontamiyento de Sulāymān*, the daughter of the king of Iram decides of her own accord to convert to Islam and to defy her father’s orders by proposing marriage to Solomon. Rahmah demonstrates her unconditional devotion to her husband in the *Estoriya i rrekontamiyento de Ayūb*. Finally, the skull undergoes a period of self-examination, acknowledging the nature of its suffering as the inevitable consequence of its own sinful life in the *Hadish i rrekontamiyento de ‘Īsā kon la kalavera*.

Thus, the dominant voices speaking through the prophetic guise of these texts are not the prophets themselves, but the common people with whom they interact. These ordinary characters, then, act as powerful symbols of the human capacity to acknowledge one’s faults and to strive to reconcile their naturally flawed relationships with God. At the same time, they are enduring reminders that regardless of historical circumstances, dissimulation of faith, sinful behavior, or even death, redemption is possible for those who pursue it in their hearts. The Moriscos who had access to these texts no doubt found in these simple men and women glimpses of themselves as they were met with similar challenges to their lives and faith. These legends offered the Moriscos spaces in which to escape from their daily lives and to negotiate the

development of their own narratives as human beings seeking redemption in this world and the next.

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