

THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE IN FIVE ALJAMIADO NARRATIVES

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By

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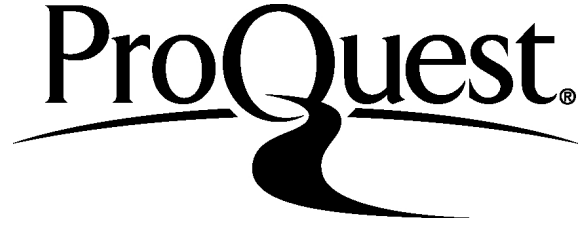
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation points at where the scholarship on Aljamiado-Morisco literature falls short and remedy what I believe is a problem. Viewing the entire corpus of literary production of a Muslim diaspora that lived under Christian rule after being forcibly converted, as being entirely religious with few profane exceptions is anachronistic. It corresponds to an imposition of modern standards on medieval texts. When approaching Mudéjar and Morisco texts, this study shows that an *either* sacred *or* profane approach is not appropriate, for it prevents the reader from accessing a myriad of other possible readings there is to a given story. I believe every text is unique and reflects the sociocultural and linguistic realities of a given group of Moriscos, realities that are not shared by all. The only way to enter the mind of this authors and copyists is through their manuscripts and the literary treasures they hold. Since these Mudéjares and Moriscos were the first sizeable Muslim community living under Christian rule, their literary creation had to go through a process of cultural negotiation that adapted previous stories to their cultural reality. Critics have been approaching their texts with the previous knowledge of the Morisco future expulsion. However, in order to fully explore the intentionality of a text and conjecture about the possible hopes and angsts experienced by the authors of the story and their audiences, we have to let go of our own socio-historical and geopolitical contexts as it blinders our critical eye.

The five narratives analyzed in this study *La estorya de la çibdat de cobre*, *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella*, *El ḥadīz de la serpiente*, *El ḥadīz de Bishr y Hind*, *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* present a side of the Mudéjar and Morisco literary production that is still understudied. These authors used their knowledge and the tools that were at their disposition

to create a new genre, compounding series of stories, some entertaining and amusing, others gloomy and dreary, but almost always didactic and hortatory. These stories use non-religious figures and protagonists to promote Islamic tenets and appropriate behavior, in a sophisticated and literary way that sets them apart of the more official and orthodox material used by religious officials in Islamic centers. These stories are a window into the hopes and fears of the Morisco authors and their community and my aim in this study is to bring some of them to light.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background.....	3
1.2 Aim of the Study.....	20
Chapter 2: Clandestine Messages in a Hostile Land: the Study of Mudéjar and Morisco Homiletic Storytelling.....	25
2.1 The Moriscos.....	27
2.2 Compartmentalization of Aljamiado-Morisco Literature.....	29
2.3 Stepping Away from Binaries.....	35
2.4 Search for Self and End of Times.....	51
Chapter 3: Didactically Religious or Entertainingly Profane: Study and Analysis of a Chapter of the MS 8 of the Fondo Documental de las Cortes de Aragón <i>Estorya de la çibdat de cobre</i>	63
3.1 The Manuscript.....	65
3.2 Background of the Story.....	69
3.3 Summary of the Story.....	74
3.4 Analysis.....	76
Chapter 4: Qur'ānic Authority and Morisco Imagination in Two Morisco Pseudo-Hadiths and a Cautionary Tale	92
4.1 <i>El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella</i> (BN MS 5.305 63v-51v).....	95
4.2 <i>El ḥadīz de la sierpe</i> (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 180r-181v).....	108
4.3 <i>El ḥadīz de Hindi y Bišri</i> (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 107r-111r).....	112
Chapter 5: Reevaluation and New Approach to the study of a Cautionary Tale <i>El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab</i>	122
5.1 An Either/Or Approach: Why Not <i>Sic et Non</i> ?	123
5.2 The Origin and Evolution of <i>El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab</i>	128
5.3 The Dichotomy of Profane versus Religious	132

5.4 <i>'ilm</i> , Knowledge, Wisdom.....	140
5.5 Structure of the Text and its Didactic Purpose.....	142
Afterword.....	151
Appendices.....	154
Appendix A - La estorya de la çibdat de cobre – Summary and Transliteration.....	154
Appendix B - <i>El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella</i> (MS 4953 of the BNE, ff. 128r-140r).....	172
Appendix C - <i>El ḥadīz de la serpiente</i> (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 180r-181v)	180
Appendix D - <i>El ḥadīz de Bishr y Hind</i> (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 107r-111r)	184
Appendix E - <i>El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab</i> (Modernization based on the Aljamiado Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón ff. 133v-139v as Transliterated by Corriente Córdoba).....	191
Appendix F - <i>El ḥadīz de 'Alī el de Bagdad</i> (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón ff. 140r-146v).....	207
Bibliography.....	215

List of Figures

Figure 3.1.	A Folio from the Aljamiado Codex MS 8 Written in Arabic.....	66
Figure 3.2.	A Page from the 1481 Codex Version of ‘The City of Brass.’.....	66

List of Tables

Table 2.1.	Passages Emphasizing That the Qur’ān Was Revealed in Arabic.....	31
Table 2.2.	Instances of the Concept of “Sacred” in the Qur’ān.....	45
Table 3.1.	Examples of Corrections, Translations and Marginalia Indicating the Author’s Romance Language Knowledge and the Translation Process.....	68
Table 3.2.	The Marvelous as a Textual Signal within the Narrative.....	86
Table 4.1.	Basic Arabic Terms and Arabisms Found in the Aljamiado-Morisco Narratives.....	105
Table 4.2.	Similarities between the Morisco and Arabic Version of <i>The Story of Hindi and Bishr</i>	116

Systems of Transliteration for Arabic

Consonants

ء	ط
ب	ظ
ت	ع
ث	غ
ج	ف
ح	ق
خ	ك
د	ل
ذ	م
ر	ن
ز	هـ
س	و
ش	ي
ص	ة
ض	ال

Vowels

<i>Long</i>	ا or ي	ā
	و	ū
	ي	ī
<i>Diphthongs</i>	أو	aw
	أي	ay
<i>Short</i>	-	a
	ـ	u
	ـ	i

Systems of Transliteration for Aljamiado

Consonants

ب	b,v		ص	s
پ	p		ض	d
ت	t		ط	ṭ
ث	z̄		ظ	ẓ
ج	j		ع	‘
جھ	ch		غ	g
ح	ħ		ف	f
خ	ħ		ق	q
د	d		ك	c ^{ao} , qu ^{ei}
ذ	ḍ		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
رّ	r-, -rr-		ن	n
ز	z		نّ	ñ
س	c ^{ao} , ç ^{ei}		ه	h
ش	s		و	w
شّ	x		ي	y

Vowels

Long

ا or ی

e or à

و

ō, ū

ي

ī

Diphthongs

أو

a^w

أي

a^y

Short

ـ

a

ـ

o, u

ـ

i

Chapter 1

Introduction

*Tikshbīla tiwlīwla,
ma qetlūnī mā hyāwnī
bdīk lkās li ‘ṭawnī*

[You will take again the road to Seville;
they didn't kill me, nor did they bring me to life
with the glass they made me drink.]

--Popular Moroccan children's song

Walking around the *medina* (the old city center) in Rabat, Morocco, you might hear children playing in circles and loudly singing this refrain. They most certainly do not know the origin or interpretation of the lyrics, nor did I when I first heard it. This refrain was sung by the Morisco refugees who had been expelled from the Iberian Peninsula by Philip III at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and who sought a new haven in Morocco. The link between Rabat and those refugees is quite strong, as the Moriscos actively participated in building the city.¹

The first Almohad sultan, ‘Abd al-Mūmen (1133–1163), constructed the city's *ribāṭ* (“fortress”) and renamed the city *Ribāt* (Rabat) instead of Mahdiyya, the name previously given in homage to the creator of the Almohad unitary doctrine, al-Mahdī ibn Tummert. Ya‘qūb al-Manṣūr is said to be the real founder of the city and, under him, the city took the name of *ribāṭ al-Faṭḥ* (“camp of victory”) as evidence of the king's military successes against

¹ For a more detailed treatment of the question, see Monqid.

Christian Iberian kingdoms (such as his victory of Alarcos in 1195 over the Crown of Castile). But after his death, the city lost its appeal and sacred importance, becoming deprived of a light that the Muslim refugees of Muslim Iberia, al-Andalus, would eventually bring back.

Even before the edicts of Morisco expulsion of 1609, some Muslims left the Iberian Peninsula and settled in Tetuan (in the northern part of Morocco), Fez and the left bank of the river *Abū Raqrāq* (which passes through today's Rabat). Known as Hornacheros, these devout Muslims were fluent in Arabic . Because of their wealth and the city's abandoned condition, the Sultan Mulay Zidān (1604–1606) allowed them to settle in Rabat, in the hope that they would enrich and protect the city. His decision proved fruitful, as they eventually rebuilt and revived a moribund city, now Morocco's capital.

During the period of forced expulsions from the Iberian Peninsula (1609–1614), a second wave of refugees settled near Rabat, in a place later called “the new Salé.” These refugees did not speak Arabic, nor did they share the habits and customs of their Muslim neighbors. Called Moriscos, they were the group originally responsible for the popular Moroccan song cited above. These Muslims, who had been forcibly converted to Christianity and then evicted from their homeland, were desperately longing to return.² They settled across the entire North African littoral, facing a very uncertain future. Unable to become *bona fide* Spanish in their homeland, they would confront many more obstacles in their adoptive lands.

² In their adoptive land of Morocco, Moriscos were actually called *al-andalusiyūn*; the arabization of the term “Moriscos,” *al-muriskiyūn*, has only recently appeared in scholarship.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 From al-Andalus to Christian Kingdoms: A Brief Overview of the (Re)conquest

Almost three centuries after the beginning of the conquest of Iberia by Arab-Islamic armies in 711, Christian powers began to gain control over the Peninsula at the turn of the millennium. Al-Andalus or Islamic Iberia, the western part of the Islamic world, had established itself under the Umayyad Caliphate as an independent yet well integrated part of the Islamic world. Its religious scholars, thinkers, and artists were renowned across *dār al-Islam*, “the land/realm of Islam.” In 1031, however, al-Andalus disintegrated into smaller kingdoms known as Taifas (*tā'ifa*, plural *ṭawā'if*), such as the Taifas of Toledo, Badajoz, Seville, and Granada. In 1085, Alphonse VI of Castile and León conquered Toledo, and this defeat pushed the remaining Taifas into the arms of the Almoravids, a Berber imperial dynasty from Morocco that had won a major victory in the Battle of Zallaqa in 1086. However, after that, Christian conquests followed one after another: Zaragoza (1118), Lisbon (1147), Tortosa (1148), and Lérida (1149). Toward the end of the twelfth century, the Almohads, yet another Moroccan Berber Muslim movement, took over the former Taifas after the Battle of Alarcos in 1195.

The thirteenth century saw the conquest of most of the Peninsula by Christian forces. In the area of Guadalquivir, Baeza fell in 1226, followed by Úbeda (1233) and Cordova (1236). In Extremadura, Badajoz fell in 1229, and Mérida in 1231. In the East, the Balears were taken in 1228–1235 and Valencia in 1238. Losses of Murcia (1243–1266) and Jaén (1246) were soon followed by the Almohad capital, Seville in 1248. The western littoral was conquered last, including Guadix (1260), Jerez de la Frontera (1261), and Niebla (1262). On the other hand, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries marked a pause in the Christian advance as the Peninsula experienced its share of catastrophes: famine between 1310 and 1346, the plague (1348), economic crises due to demographic decline, and political conflicts such as the

war of the two Peters (1356–1375). But after the union of Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon in 1469, the Christians advanced again; Alhama fell in 1482, Ronda in 1485, Málaga in 1487, Almería in 1489, and Granada in 1492.

Critics have noted the problems inherent in referring to the “Reconquest” of Spain.³ Spain as a nation did not even exist at the time of the so-called Reconquest, and the idea of a Reconquest of originally Christian territories inhabited by “foreign” Muslims is incorrect.⁴ The Muslims who remained in the newly conquered territories were not foreign at all:

The neo-Muslims, mostly of Spanish stock and known as Muladíes (Ar. *Muwalladūn*), constituted the bulk of the Muslim population of the Peninsula preserving Islamic values and culture. They were the ancestors of the Mudejars and Moriscos, whether of Spanish, Berber, Jewish, or Black ancestry. (Chejne 7)

I am reluctant to use the word *Spanish* as it is anachronistic, but Chejne rightly points out that these Muslims were as much “Hispanic” (from *Hispania*) as their neighboring Christians, since a substantial portion of the Iberian population had in fact converted to Islam over the centuries and had common ancestors with the Christians who were now conquering their cities. Achieving a nuanced understanding of this medieval historical situation is essential for

³ The literature about the so-called Reconquest is extensive. Good starting points would be O’Callaghan’s *Reconquest and Crusade*; Glick’s *From Muslim Fortress to Christian Castle*; Lacarra’s “La Reconquista y repoblación;” and Reilly’s *The Contest of Christian and Muslim Spain*.

⁴ Catlos reminds us that “whereas there certainly was a conquest of Iberia that began in the early eighth century and rapidly brought most of the peninsula under Islamic rule, the Muslims of *al-Andalus* (at least by the eleventh century) were hardly foreigners. The armies that crossed over the Straits of Gibraltar in 711 ce with their families and dependents numbered perhaps a few thousand. It was a force of troops and families, overwhelmingly North African of origin, many of whom were scarcely Islamicized, all under the leadership of a small cadre of Arab Muslims. After mid-century, there was no significant Arab immigration to the peninsula, and relatively little Berber settlement” (18-19).

our study because it sets the stage for our approach to the literary production of the Muslims who lived under Christian rule after the gradual Christian conquest of their cities.

The medieval myth of the loss and restoration of Spain originates in the Alphonsine cycle of chronicles.⁵ The *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, composed in the 910s but drawing on a text from the 880s, speaks of the “restoration (*reparatus*) of the army of the Gothic people” and the “recovery (*recuperatione*) of Church, people, and kingdom.”⁶ This idea, though not the word “reconquest” itself, can be traced back to the late ninth century and is traditionally symbolized by the victory of Pelayo at the battle of Covadonga.⁷ The word *Reconquest* began to dominate the literature in the nineteenth century, communicating the idea that throughout the entire Middle Ages, Christians were driven continually to oppose the Muslims as enemies of the faith. But what of the political and religious heterogeneity of the medieval period that resulted in struggles between people of the same faith and sometimes in alliances with people of the other faith?⁸ As Brian Catlos puts it, “The complicated and ever-shifting alliances among Muslim and Christian powers of the area defies [sic] the myth of a coherent and unified program of Christian ‘reconquest’ ” (*The Victors and Vanquished* 13). Examples of

⁵ See Espino Nuño (22–23) for more on the origins of the “Reconquest.”

⁶ Cited in Kosto (95).

⁷ Pelayo established the first Christian kingdom in Asturias (718–737). Kosto asserts that the idea of a reconquest also has roots in Muslim thought: “ ‘Abd Allāh, an eleventh-century king of Granada, famously recorded in his memoirs the claim of Count Sisnando: ‘Al-Andalus originally belonged to the Christians. Then they were defeated by the Arabs [...] Now that they are strong and capable, the Christians desire to recover what they have lost by force’ ” (95). In the actual text, ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Buluggīn talks about the Christian “policy” of conquest and mentions that he “was fully aware of his policy because his *wazīrs* had informed [him] of it. [He] was told as much by Sisnando in the course of this campaign. He said to [him] face to face [...]” (Ibn Buluggīn 90), after which he went on to make the statement quoted by Kosto. There is no evidence at all in the text that the king was in agreement with Count Sisnando’s assertion. The latter was, after all, a *mozárabe* who believed in the idea of reconquest, and his thoughts say nothing about the king’s.

⁸ See Hertel’s chapter, “Islam as a Historical Enemy: The Middle Ages as Portrayed in the Historiography” (n.p.).

such “ever-shifting alliances” are numerous: Rodrigo Díaz, Ibn ‘Ammār, Sisnādo Davídiz, Geraldo Sem Pavor, and Pedro Fernández de Castro.⁹ For two hundred years, Muslim Taifas turned to their Christian neighbors for help, and Christian rulers returned the favor.

Although the term *Reconquest* is historically incorrect in assuming the notion of a unified Christian Spain, I use the term due to the lack of existing alternatives. Nevertheless, I approach the narratives in this study precisely from the point of view of the Muslims that this term alienates, the Morisco Muslims that did not feel any more foreign than their Christian counterparts.

1.1.2 Muslims under Christian Rule: Mudéjares and *Convivencia*

The concept of *convivencia* or coexistence underlies the discussion of whether the presence of multiple faiths in medieval Iberia created a sense of broken harmony following the Reconquest. Two antipodal approaches to this supposed coexistence of the three religious groups in medieval Iberia, represented by a pair of Spanish scholars, shaped perceptions of the issue more than fifty years ago. On one hand, Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz believed in an eternal Spanish character forged by Catholic Spain’s conflict with Muslims and Jews. On the other hand, Américo Castro praised what he considered an interrelationship of the three faiths (or castes as he called them) at the origins of modern Spanish culture.¹⁰ These two views clashed but both were essentializing, and they minimized class and economic considerations. In this study, I approach the selected narratives from the vantage point of the authors and audience and try to steer away from any essentialization or broad generalization. Even after the expulsion of the Jews in 1492, the coexistence of various cultures did not come to a

⁹ See Kosto (96) for a brief overview of these military leaders’ battles and alliances.

¹⁰ Literature on this topic is extensive; a good summary can be found in Robert Ignatius Burns’s “Mudejar Parallel Societies: Anglophone Historiography and Spanish Context.”

complete halt in the Peninsula—at least not immediately.¹¹ Muslims of the newly conquered territories and those already living under Christian rule were allowed to stay.

1.1.2.1 Mudéjares: from *Thesauri Regii* (“Royal Treasures”) to “Fifth Column”

Mudéjares refers to Muslims who remained in the Peninsula after the Christian conquest and lived under Christian rule. The word comes from the Arabic *mudağğan*; the root *d ġ n* means “to remain.”¹² Contemporary sources, however, refer to them as *ahl al-da[ğ]n* or *al- da[ğ]n* (Wiegers 3). From the Christian monarch’s perspective, the Mudéjares could remain, but Islamic law was adamant in declaring that emigration (*hijra*) was an obligation in such circumstances.¹³ Given their unprecedented situation as the first sizable Muslim community living under Christian rule, many questions emerged, not only among them but also among religious scholars in the Islamic world; and as a result, an important number of *fatwas* were issued. *Fatwas*¹⁴ are legal opinions pronounced by a *mufī* (“jurist”) who is well versed in *Sharī’a* (Islamic law). However, they are only opinions and do not carry the force of law.

Islamic jurisprudence distinguishes two distinct territories: *dār al-Islam* (the land or realm of Islam), which is a territory subject to Islamic law, and *dār al-ḥarb* (the land or realm

¹¹ In *Muslims in Spain 1500 to 1614*, Harvey (15–21) provides valuable insight on the Portuguese conversions of 1497 and their relevance to Spain’s later conversions.

¹² Defined in Ibn Mandhur (1331). Al-Wansharisī also uses the term *mudağğan* in his collection of fatwas *al-Mi’yar al-mu’ib wal-jāmi’ al-mugrib ‘an fatāwā ahl Ifrīqyā wa-l-Andalus wa-l-Magrib* (145). Al-Maqqarī (vol. 4, 524) uses the term as well.

¹³ See “The Concept of *Hijra* (Migration) in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib” in Verskin (31–60) for a thorough analysis of views on the issue at the time.

¹⁴ See Cheddadi’s article “Émigrer ou rester? Le dilemme des morisques entre les fatwas et les contraintes du vécu,” and Molénat (397).

of war), or territory not under Islamic law.¹⁵ Based on the *sīra* of the Prophet (his biography) and the Qur’ān 4:97–100, Muslims should remain in *dār al-Islām*.¹⁶ The Qur’ān suggests emigration if one cannot practice the Muslim faith without relocating, but the powerless and those unable to emigrate are exempt. In 1491, most likely before the siege of Granada, the *mufī* of Fez, al-Wansharīsī (d. 1508), issued a *fatwa* emphasizing the obligation to immigrate.¹⁷ He expressed concerns that Muslims would commit apostasy and lose their identity, rightly anticipating what would happen to the Mudéjares. In a second *fatwa*, al-Wansharīsī clearly stated his fear that the terms offered for surrender would later be violated (137–41).¹⁸ In general, all *fatwas* issued by Muslim jurists in *dār al-Islām* advised Muslims living in *dār al-ḥarb* to immigrate. Their authors believed that “grasping materialism—the unwillingness to sacrifice lands and property in Christian Spain—and a lack of trust in God was behind the Mudejars’ decision to stay in dar al-harb” (Miller 34). For instance, Ibn Miqlash, a *mufī* active in Oran during the fourteenth century, issued a *fatwa* clearly faulting the Mudéjares who chose to remain on Christian territory: “he who lives in Christian lands

¹⁵ Cheddadi, in his *Maqāsid al-Sharī‘a al-islāmiyya wa makārimuhā* (217–220 and 266–268), mentions *dār al-Kufr* and a third type of territories (identified by contemporary theoreticians such as ‘Allāl al-Fāsi): *dār al-Solh* or *al-‘Ahd*, territories that have a treaty with *dar al-Islām*.

¹⁶ ⁹⁷ When the angels take the souls of those who have wronged themselves [by choosing to stay in a place where they are unable to practice their religion], they ask them, ‘What circumstances were you in?’ They reply, ‘We were oppressed in this land,’ and the angels say, ‘But was God’s earth not spacious enough for you to migrate to some other place?’ These people will have Hell as their refuge, an evil destination,⁹⁸ but not so the truly helpless men, women, and children who have no means in their power nor any way to leave—⁹⁹ God may well pardon these, for He is most pardoning and most forgiving. Anyone who migrates for God’s cause will find many a refuge and great plenty in the earth,¹⁰⁰ and if anyone leaves home as a migrant towards God and His Messenger and is then overtaken by death, his reward from God is sure. God is most forgiving and most merciful” (Q 4:97–100, emphasis added).

¹⁷ This *fatwa* is included in his *al-Mi‘yār al-mu‘rib wa-l-jāmi‘ al-mugrib ‘an fatāwā ‘ulamā ifrīqiya wa-l-andalus wa-l-magrib* (119–136).

¹⁸ For a more detailed analysis of this *fatwa*, see Cheddadi’s “Émigrer ou rester?”

does not care for what is sacred. He turns from guarding the faith because he mingles in the feasts of the infidels and openly worships images” (qtd. in Miller 35). According to the Muslim jurists, the Mudéjar *faqih*s (religious experts) were equally to blame, as they failed their community by failing to “enjoin the good and forbid evil” (Miller 35).

Regardless of these views of the perceived obligation to leave a non-Muslim land, many Mudéjares who could have emigrated chose to remain and were initially granted permission to remain on Christian territory and openly practice their faith, a fact that is documented in the terms of surrender of the various cities conquered. The terms of the *capitulaciones* of Santa Fe, for instance, were generous.¹⁹ Pere the Ceremonious, king of Aragon, wrote the following to the Muslims of the town of Asp on November 25, 1366:

We, Pere, etc., desiring to provide a means by which our locale of Asp, situated within the Kingdom of Valencia, in which many Muslims used to live, and which was greatly depopulated as a result of the war with Castile, may be repopulated quickly, at the request of you, the *alaminus*, the elders, and the *aljama* of the said locale ... grant full license in perpetuity that you may, legally, without fear of incurring any penalty, call the *çala* [*'adhān*], and pray openly within the mosque of the said locale, at the sound of the trumpet or the *nafil*, just like the Muslims of the city of Valencia and Xátiva. (Boswell 474)

¹⁹ “An amnesty was announced for combatants and prisoners, security and freedom of movement for all Muslims were granted, Islamic law in its broadest possible sense—judicial, fiscal, administrative—was to be preserved, property titles including grants made by the Naşrids were to be considered legitimate, and the visible signs of Christian dominion were to be minimized. Clauses regarding freedom of emigration and facilitating the sale of property and estates were clearly aimed at encouraging the military elite and their families to depart” (Catlos 213).

However, these terms, on which Granada had surrendered, would soon be violated despite the Catholic Kings' promise to respect them *para siempre jamás*.²⁰

Furthermore, different kingdoms had different laws, so that depending on their location, the Mudéjares experienced different realities. There were, however, some constants and commonalities. The Mudéjares lived in *aljamas* (not to be confused with a *morería*, a Muslim city quarter) and had their own social organization with their own *faqih* (religious expert), *qāḍī* (judge), and so on. In exchange for the right to practice their religion, these *aljamas* were severely taxed. Christian monarchs protected their Mudéjar subjects officially and publicly through charters of protection and *fueros* (i.e., laws or legal codes). Therefore, the Mudéjares were referred to as “royal treasures” and were under the direct sovereignty of their Christian kings.²¹ On September 16, 1366, for instance, Pere the Ceremonious of Aragon wrote to the Muslims of Xàtiva, demonstrating his determination to protect them:

Since it is expected of the power of princes to protect subjects from future danger, and defend the weak and unarmed from the artifice of men, so that by such a provision offence may be withheld from those striving with good purpose, and free them from the oppressions of the wicked, it is proper for Us to constitute the Muslims settled in Our cities, towns and other places, amongst others of those peoples of Our realms, under Our general and special protection ... for they all pertain to the greater treasure of the king.²²

²⁰ Similarly, Isabel had stated in 1477 that “all the Jews of [her] kingdoms are [hers] and are under [her] protection and shelter, and it [was her] responsibility to protect, shelter, and maintain them in justice” (qtd. in Ladero Quesada I, 160). But, as Swartz says, “what the ruler could grant, the ruler could also limit or take away, and being the monarchs’ protected wards also made Jews and Muslims targets in struggles between royal power, noble factions, and local communities” (46).

²¹ See, for example, the *Fuero General* of Navarre in García Arancón (497).

²² ACA (Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó in Barcelona), C., reg. 913, ff. 33r-v, cited and translated by Catlos (177).

Nevertheless, tensions ran high between Christians and Mudéjares in conquered cities such as Valencia whose proximity to *dār al-Islam* and large Muslim population added to the fear already looming in the Christian imagination, especially after the *Guerra Sarracenorum* of the 1200s. In Valencia, in early 1360, Çilim led an important Mudéjar revolt that lasted two years and at the end of which he and his followers were burned at the stake. However, the rural seigniors still adopted a “philo-Muslim” approach, whereas the clergy and urban classes viewed Muslims as threats (López Coca de Castaner 644). Christian-Muslim relations were extremely unstable, and the disconnect between laws and social realities resulted in attacks on *morerías* (Muslim quarters) and dreadful consequences for this minority.

1.1.3 Conversions: Moriscos Are Born²³

In 1499, Cardinal Francisco Ximénez de Cisneros took over the campaign of evangelization that had been led up to that point by the Archbishop of Granada and Isabel’s confessor Hernando de Talavera (popularly known as *santo alfaquí* among the Mudéjares). Cisneros took harsher measures to ensure the rapid conversion of all Mudéjares, and his plan of forced

²³ Harvey’s discussion of the risks inherent in using the term *Morisco* to refer to crypto-Muslims of late medieval Iberia is a good example of how hindsight can blind critics and how they project their modern beliefs and knowledge onto the work they analyze: “The word *Morisco* illustrates particularly clearly the dangers inherent in vocabulary. [...] [B]y employing this term *Morisco* (rather than *Spanish Muslim*, say) we are tacitly accepting and approving of the forcible reclassification of this group of Muslims as something other, although all the documentary evidence indicates that most (not all) of them continued until the end to be crypto-Muslims who would have rejected the conversion if they had been at liberty to do so. The very use of the word seems to signify assent to the marginalization of the people so designated. Not to use it, is to court misunderstanding, as it is a standard part of the Spanish historical vocabulary” (*Islamic Spain* 3). I do not believe that the use of the word *Moriscos* expresses assent to their marginalization as Harvey implies; on the contrary, it underscores and asserts the continuing existence of the Moriscos’ own Islamic culture, more locally defined but still attached to Islamic centers, as I will show in Chapter 2.

conversions sparked revolts.²⁴ Moriscos rebelled in December 1499, and the revolt spread to the Alpujarras Mountains. Following Cisneros's advice, Isabel made baptism a condition for her royal pardon.²⁵ Many Muslims able to leave Spain did so; those who remained were forcibly converted. Devastating events for the Mudéjar community of Castile unfolded quickly; by 1502, all Mudéjares of the kingdom were required to either convert or emigrate. In the Crown of Aragón, however, Ferdinand honored his word and allowed the Mudéjares to freely practice their religion until his death in 1516.²⁶ Only after the revolt of the *germania* ("the brotherhood") in the early 1520s in Valencia did Charles V, in November 1525, order the forced conversion of all Mudéjares on his territory. The *germania* revolt was a popular and revolutionary movement directed at the Valencian nobility. The latter turned to armed

²⁴ Non-forced conversions occurred before 1499, among illustrious Muslims who received land and money but also among artisans and farmers. Most of the Muslim elites collaborated with the Christians but did not convert. In 1491, the soldier Cidi Yahyā al-Nayār took the Christian name of Alonso de Granada Venegas, and Ibrahīm, son of Abū 'Abd Allah Muḥammad's (Boabdil's) last *wazīr*, became don Juan de Granada. Two hundred eighty cases of baptisms were documented. See Pérez Boyero.

²⁵ Harvey makes an interesting observation regarding the unplanned nature of that decision, especially in light of the conversions and expulsions that took place in 1497 in Portugal at the request of Castile and as part of Isabel's wedding negotiations (*Muslims in Spain* 15–21). Also interestingly, the expelled Jews in Portugal were not allowed to take their children with them, whereas Muslims were not separated from their families. Damião de Gois, a Portuguese chronicler, explains as follows: "the King had the Jews' children seized, [...] the children of the Moors were not, [...] it must be borne in mind that no harm could result to Christians if they took away the children of the Jews. Jews are scattered all over the earth, and have no country of their own [...], so they lack the power and authority to execute their will against those who do them harm and injury. The Moors, on the other hand, have [...] been permitted by God to occupy the greater part of Asia [...] and in these places where the Moors have empires [...] there live many Christians [...]. It would have been very prejudicial to all these peoples to take away the Moors' children" (Harvey, *Muslims in Spain* 19). Fear of retaliation was the only motivator behind the decision to spare the Muslim children; once that fear had disappeared, there was no reason to spare anyone. A little more than a century later, Moriscos' children would be seized in order to be "saved."

²⁶ When rumors of forced conversions began circulating in Aragón, Ferdinand was quick to reassure his Muslim subjects that "our holy Catholic church in the conversions of the infidels admits neither violence nor any force, but [only] complete freedom and devotion" (qtd. in Meyerson 92). Regardless, Mudéjares of his realm were still greatly impacted by the forcible mass conversions in Castile, as their freedom of movement was severely restricted.

men to repress the rebels, and among these fighters were the many Muslims working on the seigniors' land. But regardless of how they fought as Harvey points out, "they were to be the losers" (*Muslims in Spain* 92). The rebels sacked the Mudéjars' quarters and decided that a good way to get rid of the competition that these Mudéjares represented was to bring them to the same level. So they "baptized" them.²⁷

In 1526, Charles V agreed to suspend for forty years, in exchange for a considerable amount of money, the ban on practicing Morisco customs. When the Morisco grace period expired in 1566, however, all the suspended measures came back into effect. Barred from using Arabic, wearing their traditional clothes, or bathing or eating as they wanted (among other prohibitions), the Moriscos of Granada rebelled in 1568. This second rebellion of the Alpujarras would last a little more than two years, at the end of which the Moriscos of Granada were deported and resettled in other parts of Castile.

No longer permitted to practice their own religion, these *crisianos nuevos de moros* (new Moorish Christians) now fell under the jurisdiction of the Tribunal of the Inquisition, which had no authority over them as long as they were Muslims. Moriscos were as Spanish as their Old Christian neighbors (*crisianos viejos*), but the "Islamicate" aspects of their identity were severely restricted and eventually prohibited through repressive royal ordinances.²⁸

Other Moriscos converted to eventually become "real" Christians, such as Gonzalo Fernandez

²⁷ These conversions were rushed, to say the least. Harvey describes their pace and form: "christenings might be affected on occasion by aspersion from a bucket filled from an irrigation ditch, although in other cases priests were found to carry out the baptisms (if indeed one may use that solemn word to describe an act inflicted upon a nonconsenting adult)" (*Muslims in Spain* 93).

²⁸ *Islamicate* is a term coined by Marshall Hodgson that "refers not directly to the religion, Islam, itself but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims" (vol. 1, 59). I believe this term to be much more accurate in dealing with a community whose cultural characteristics were stripped, because it eliminates the wrong assumption that all crypto-Muslims were devout Muslims. As I demonstrate in this study, the various Morisco communities were not monolithic and had different degrees of acculturation and of religiosity.

de Negri, whom Cisneros recruited to help in catechizing other Moriscos; Francisco Nuñez Muley, who served as a page in the household of Hernando de Talavera and later worked to protect Granadan Moriscos from increasing repressions that went against the terms of the *capitulaciones*; Pedro de Alcalá, a Morisco of the Order of Saint Jerome; Ignacio de las Casas; and Juan Albotodo, a Jesuit Morisco.²⁹

In contrast to these apparently sincere converts, the authors of the texts examined in this study were crypto-Muslims, meaning that they had outwardly converted to Christianity but maintained a deep attachment to Islam. Critics are quick to assert that these crypto-Muslims publicly denied their faith, even while still practicing it in covert gestures. They often refer to the concept of *taqiyya* (i.e., authorized lying), which I will discuss in greater detail in chapter 3. I believe that this term must be used with caution since, contrary to widespread belief, *taqiyya* is not “the outward denial of the faith and dissimulation of unbelief [which] originates in the Qur’ān” (Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval* 282), but a practice common to Shiite Muslims who conceal their Shiite adherence when living among Sunni Muslims. It is not a denial of faith by any means, nor does the Qur’ān sanction it. The Moriscos’ circumstances were exceptional and unprecedented, and the *fatwa* by the *mufī* of Oran, which provided a group of Moriscos with a practical solution for an impossible situation, had no force of law.³⁰

A plan of expulsion was discussed as early as 1582 but was deferred for pragmatic reasons, including depopulation and the potential loss of revenue. Eventually, in 1609, Felipe III (1598–1621) ordered all Moriscos to leave the Peninsula. Estimates vary greatly, but as many as 300,000 Moriscos departed between 1609 and 1614.

²⁹ See García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano (70–71) for more on Gonzalo Fernández de Zegrí; Bernard Vincent, “Algunas voces más” (93–94), for more on Francisco Nuñez Muley; and El Alaoui, “El jesuita Ignacio de las Casas.”

³⁰ See chapter 2.

1.1.3.1 Aragonese Moriscos

Different geographical locations meant different dates of conquest and, as a result, different degrees of acculturation among the Moriscos. For instance, Granadan Moriscos were far more Arabized than Moriscos from Castile; those living in Toledo were native speakers of Castilian and were far more acculturated than those of Valencia, whose first language was still Arabic even at the time of the expulsion. In this study, I focus on five narratives written in Aragón during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The kingdom of Aragón's administration was peculiar, as the poet and chronicler Luperco Leonardo de Argensola (1559-1613) stated: "*las leyes deste reyno no se parecen a las de otros*" (2). Here, the kings had sworn an oath to always protect their Muslim subjects. However, the Moriscos of Aragón were vassals and in the center of conflict; the sociopolitical system had changed and the Inquisition, brought to Aragon in 1484 against the will of the entire population, could eventually scrutinize their every move. Moreover, the higher level of integration and sociolinguistic acculturation of these Mudéjares made their forced conversions all the more unexpected. In a rare Muslim account of these events, Bray de Reminjo, the *alfaquí* of the village of Cadrete, described his reaction upon hearing from his friend, a Carmelite friar, Fray Estebán Martel, the news of the forced conversions that were taking place: "He said to me: 'Bray, Sir, what do you think of all this upheaval, and of the un-Christian way in which you are being used? For my part, I say, and it grieves my heart and soul to do so, that they have done you a great wrong. I replied that I was horrified that His Holiness had given his consent to any such thing and decreed it'" (qtd. in Harvey, *Muslims in Spain* 95). These *cristianos convertidos de moro* had their official identity washed away by forced conversion. Some edicts decreed they could choose between exile and conversions, but in most cases there was

really no practical option. The children were baptized and given Christian names.³¹ Youssef El Alaoui rightly describes the incident as “ethnocide.”

On the other hand, the Moriscos who eventually made it to *Berbería* or North Africa, whether by choice or under duress, suffered a double crisis of identity. López-Baralt rightly speaks of two violent processes of acculturation:

su cultura islámica les fue [...] arrebatada a la fuerza en la España renacentista y, cuando al fin estaban en pleno proceso de asimilación a la hispanidad “oficial,” fueron obligados a aculturarse una vez más: en sus nuevas patrias adoptivas tuvieron que reaprender el árabe y obtener un conocimiento profundo del Islam, que ya habían comenzado a olvidar. (“La literatura secreta de los últimos musulmanes” 445)

However, one should again be cautious about speaking in such general and essentializing terms. There were various degrees of acculturation among the Moriscos, depending on their location and also on their personal circumstances. They reconciled love for their faith and love for their land in their literary productions, as we will see in this study. Their Islamicity was textualized through the pen of *alfaquíes*.

³¹ Bernard Vincent in “Les morisques et les prénoms chrétiens” presents evidence based on his extensive research on the Moriscos of Albaicín in Granada: their new names were almost never linked to their old Muslim name. The new names corresponded to the trend of the time in that they are similar to those of the “old Christians.” Amalia García Pedraza reaches the same conclusion in *Actitudes ante la muerte* (445–457). Luis del Mármol Carvajal, however, indicates that the Christian sacrament that the children received through baptism was literally washed away as they returned home: “quando habían bautizado algunas criaturas las lavaban secretamente con agua caliente para quitarles la crisma y el olio santo, y hacían sus ceremonias de retajarlas, y les ponían nombres de Moros” (n.p.). The Inquisition representatives were very much aware of this practice, as they banned in 1526 the use of Muslim names and surnames in Granada: “así somos informados que algunos de los nuevamente convertidos se llaman nombres y sobrenombres de moros; mandamos que de aquí adelante no se lo llamen, y si alguno de ellos tiene agora nombre o sobrenombre que suene a moros, lo quite y no se llame más y tome otro nombre de Cristiano” (Gallego Burín and Gamir Sandoval 171). Bernard Vincent in “Ser morisco en España en el siglo XVI” shows that some Moriscos did not even know their Christian name and might never have known it (157). For a more detailed analysis of Moriscos’ imposed identity, see Lecerf.

1.1.3.2 Aljamía and Aljamiado Literature³²

Between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, Muslims in Castile and Aragon progressively lost the use of Arabic as their primary language, instead adopting *aljamía*.³³ This term comes from the Arabic *'ajamiyyah*, meaning “foreign.” It was first used by the Andalusian Arabic-speaking Muslims to refer to the Romance language. Later, in the territories reconquered by Christians, the Mudéjares eventually learned that “foreign” language, and the Muslim Romance dialect itself became known as *aljamía*.³⁴ *Aljamía* was consequently born from the “partial interference” of the language spoken by the Mudéjares at the moment of the Christian conquest and the Romance spoken by the conquerors.³⁵

³² The research on Aljamiado-Morisco literature is overwhelming. A good starting point would be Montaner Frutos’s “La literatura aljamiada” and López-Baralt’s *La literatura secreta de los últimos musulmanes de España*. This linguistic phenomenon is not unique to Christian Spain; a parallel can be found in the *alhamijado* or *aljamijado* literature written by newly converted Muslims in Europe under Ottoman rule. Works were produced using Arabic script in Turkish, Persian, Greek, Serbian, Polish, and Belarusian. *Alhamijado* was also used in schools, and books were even published in this language. For more on the use of *alhamijado* in Muslim Europe, see Hafiz.

³³ As stated above, different regions experienced different realities. Whereas Mudéjares in Castile progressively lost command of Arabic, in Valencia they did not; in fact, the Valencian Muslims had a good command of it when the decree of expulsion was issued. The excellent work of Carmen Barceló and Ana Labarta, *Archivos moriscos. Textos árabes de la minoría islámica valenciana*, shows to what extent the degree of acculturation of the Muslim communities of medieval Iberia actually varied. Barceló and Labarta concentrate on Valencia and conclude that Moriscos of that community should not be considered crypto-Muslims but Muslims, because they never really transitioned from being Mudéjar to Morisco.

³⁴ The Mudéjares were tributaries to the Christian kings and were guaranteed freedom to practice their religion. An Arabic-Latin dictionary of the sixteenth century translates the term *mudéjar* as *tributarius*. See Dozy (425); Corominas and Pascual (179).

³⁵ “Partial interference,” a term used by Bouzineb in “El valor exacto” to describe this dialect, is more accurate than the one used by Hegyi (“hibridación”), because, as Montaner rightly points out in “La aljamía: una voz islámica en Aragón,” “salvo la limitada acción del sustrato andalusí en la fonología y el léxico, la aljamía sigue siendo netamente una lengua romance, incluso en sus textos más arabizados, sin que se llegue en absoluto a una criollización ni a ningún tipo de *pidgin*” (100 note 2).

In the fifteenth century, a Castilian Mudéjar *faqih*, Yça of Segovia, also known as ‘Īsā b. Jābir, decided to provide the Muslim community with much-needed translations of the Qur’ān and other fundamental religious materials in the language that they now spoke. In the preface to his *Brevario Sunni* (1462), Yça of Segovia explains why he composed these translations:

Dijo el honrado sabidor muftí y alfaquí del aljama de los moros de la noble y leal ciudad de Segovia, que se llama don ‘Īçā b. Jābir: “compendiosas causas me movieron a interpretar la divina gracia del Corán del árabe al romance [...]. Y porque los moros de Castilla con gran sujeción y muchos tributos y grandes fatigas y trabajos han descaecido de sus riquezas y han perdido las escuelas y el árabe, y a causa de su carecimiento, muchos amigos míos [...] me rogaron que en romance yo copilara una tan buena escritura de nuestra ley y Sunna de todo aquello que todo buen moro debía saber y usar [...]”.³⁶

His community was clearly preoccupied with losing their “ley y sunna” and wanted to ensure their continuing faithfulness to proper orthodoxy. Sunna refers to “the body of Islamic custom and practice based on Muḥammad’s words and deeds” (*Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*).

After the forced conversions in Aragón, another famous Aljamiado author, El Mancebo de Arévalo (The Young Man of Arévalo), composed a manual in response to the drastic changes of circumstances in collaboration with Bray de Reminjo, the *alfaquí* of the village of Cadrete mentioned above. Through Bray de Reminjo, we know that the Young Man of Arévalo was “un mancebo escolano, castellano, natural de Arévalo, muy experto y doctrinado en la lectura arábica, hebraica, griega y latina, y en la aljamiada muy ladino y que

³⁶ This modernization is mine, based on Wieggers’s transliteration (236–237).

decía que su madre fue cristiana veinte cinco años.”³⁷ Together they composed *Brebe compendio de nuestra santa ley y sunna*. The Young Man de Arévalo traveled across the Christian kingdoms, collecting and writing down the teachings and traditions of his religion, as he like the other *alfaquíes* wanted to avoid losing touch with proper Muslim orthodoxy. This endeavor of the *alfaquíes* did not go unnoticed by the Inquisition. In January 1579, the Aragonese religious authorities wrote to the chief inquisitor, suggesting that the *alfaquíes* should be taken into custody:

Hemos dado cuenta a vuestra señoría de quan al descubierto viven estos convertidos de la secta de Mahoma y de los libros que tienen por enseñarla y sospecha grande de que tratan con otros moriscos y aun con los de Argel; y el remedio que parece más conviene es prender a los alfaquíes y principals dellos.³⁸ (B.N.M. ms 18731, n° 43, f. 399)

The Young Man de Arévalo not only transmitted Islamic knowledge, but also demonstrated familiarity with the Christian literature of the time. María Teresa Narváez demonstrates in “El Mancebo de Arévalo, Lector Morisco de *La Celestina*” that The Young Man of Arévalo had read and cited *La Celestina*. According to her, this “figura cumbre de las letras aljamiadas del siglo XVI, este autor es un buen ejemplo de hibridismo cultural” (260). I am reluctant to go as far as Narváez in referring to The Young Man of Arévalo’s “hybridity,” however, as it implies an almost equal knowledge of Christian and Muslim sources, which he did not have.

Critics, as I will discuss further in chapter 3, refer to the hybridity and “in-betweenness” of the Aljamiado corpus. I seek to avoid such generalizations, as I believe that every text or manuscript is unique and reflects the sociocultural and linguistic realities of a

³⁷ This modernization is mine, based on Harvey’s transliteration in “Un manuscrito aljamiado” (65).

³⁸ Cited in Fournel-Guerin (241).

given group of Moriscos, realities not shared by all of them. As Alphonse Dain puts it: “en cualquier circunstancia, el ideal es saber cómo las cosas han sucedido. La psicología de los copistas de los manuscritos que podemos estudiar, y mejor todavía la de los escribas de manuscritos perdidos, debería estar en el orden del día de los futuros trabajos de los filólogos” (50).

The only way to enter the mind of these authors and copyists is through their manuscripts and the literary treasures they hold. These stories are a window into the hopes and fears of the *alfaquíes* and their community, and I hope to bring some of those hopes and fears to light.

1.2 Aim of the Study

Through a detailed and thorough case-by-case analysis, rather than the overly broad generalizations referenced above, I aim to show that not all Aljamiado-Morisco narrative is religious and that not all non-religious stories are ultimately profane. I seek to deconstruct the false dichotomy on which researchers and critics have based their own approaches to this broad corpus. Through a close reading of the narratives covered in this study, I expose the variety of meanings contained in these stories, which go far beyond either a strictly religious or profane repertoire. I believe that modern readers tend to approach Mudéjar and Morisco texts with a prior knowledge (of their subsequent expulsion history) that can cloud our understanding. This history causes us to associate all texts produced by the Mudéjares and Moriscos with their struggles and religious resistance. We must avoid this tendency, for the Moriscos did not know what was about to become of their communities. If anything, they lived in a complete state of uncertainty. Their lives were in limbo, but they confronted their anxieties and textualized them to infuse their lives with hope. The resulting texts that I include in this study all belong to a new genre that I refer to as Aljamiado homiletic storytelling.

In chapter 2, “Clandestine Messages in a Hostile Land: the Study of Mudéjar and Morisco Homiletic Storytelling,” I focus on the importance of avoiding the anachronistic dichotomy of religious versus profane by showing how the critics’ approach to Aljamiado literature written by both Mudéjares and Moriscos imposes modern notions of sacred and secular onto medieval narratives. I offer an alternative approach by exploring the Islamic tradition of sermon and devotional literature, showing how the Mudéjares and Moriscos elevated the genre of storytelling by using it for didactic purposes. The resulting stories in this genre can be either entertaining or dreary, but they are not monolithic. More importantly, they present the reader with an interplay between sacred and secular elements that defies any binary classification. The sacred aspects of these narratives do not act in opposition to the secular ones; rather, the intertwining of both concepts gives shape to the message that the story aims to convey. That message may be about Islamic tenets, women’s propriety, or children’s safety.

In the following chapters, I analyze five Aljamiado narratives that critics have overlooked. I dismantle the common belief among modern critics that almost all Aljamiado literature is religious and consists of pure translations of Arabic texts with only a few non-religious, profane exceptions (which these critics dismiss as anomalies). I draw from theological and literary sources to analyze and interpret these narratives, which, as already noted, do not conform to sacred-secular dichotomizing. These narratives are important because, although they do not belong to any canonical corpus, they elucidate an intellectual facet of an important historical problem, the “Morisco problem.” Only by thoroughly analyzing the intentionality of their narratives can we understand the angst and hopes that shaped the everyday lives of these writers and their communities. The authors, the *alfaques* or guardians of their community, took their role very seriously and endeavored to ensure both the safety and ultimate salvation of community members. Some narratives might have been

directly translated from the Arabic into Romance, but that fact should not obscure the process of cultural negotiation undertaken by the author or copyist of the story. Moreover, the thorough analysis of each narrative allows us to observe what Jocelyn Dakhliā (19) calls an articulation between a global and a local culture, as well as the integration of a leitmotiv in a cultural context more locally defined. Through use of the vernacular culture, the authors reached their audience and transmitted to them knowledge, ideas, and doctrines while also entertaining them. I approach these texts as literary creations that support and reflect the intentions of their authors in a way that legal and notary documents cannot. I explore the literariness of these narratives because they are unopened windows within the minds of the authors and their audience.

In Chapter 3, “Didactically Religious or Entertainingly Profane,” I analyze a late fifteenth-century Mudéjar narrative that many critics cite but none has ever studied. This story is located within a manuscript in which most of the chapters deal with legal and religious matters. One critic even concluded that the narrative was exclusively religious like the rest of the material. But a closer look uncovers a sophisticated metafiction whose protagonist is a secular persona associated in the Mudéjar collective memory with glory and victory: Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, the governor-general of the Muslim provinces of *Ifrīqiyā* (North Africa) during the conquest of Iberia under the Umayyad caliph al-Wālid ibn ‘Abd al-Malik.³⁹ This narrative, representative of a homiletic genre, features a secular character who seeks knowledge and who relentlessly follow the mission assigned to him by his king, regardless of the obstacles. I contend that the story line embodies a textualization of *sūrah* 87 of the Qur’ān, “The Most High.” This Meccan *sūrah* was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad to urge him to continue his mission, reassuring him that God would help him. By exploring the complex interplay of this secular image with the many sacred elements present in the story, I

³⁹ Even his name, Nuṣayr is reminiscent of the word *naṣr* (victory).

aim to uncover the possible messages of the *alfaquí*, guardian of both the narrative and his faith.

Chapter 4, “Qur’ānic Authority and Morisco Imagination in Two Morisco Pseudo-Hadiths and a Cautionary Tale,” would seem to challenge my thesis, as the protagonists are secular figures with no apparent historical or sacred value. Nevertheless, through their textual association and juxtaposition with sacred elements of Islam, including the Qur’ān, the Prophet Muḥammad and Mecca, they become central elements in the didactic process of homiletic storytelling. In *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella*, the narrator creates a pseudo-hadith around verses 8 and 9 of *sūrah* 81, “The Rolling Up,” which deal with the pre-Islamic custom of burying little girls alive and which the Aljamiado narrator inserts verbatim in the text. Through elements of the fantastic, the plot of infanticide becomes a backdrop for the Prophet’s supernatural power, invested in him by God. The little girl herself, a secular element in the story along with her father, becomes invested with the sacred power of God through the disheartening infanticide of which she is a victim. The story reflects the angst and hope of the Moriscos, who were experiencing a similar process of ethnocide at the hand of their fatherland. Their hope was that God would invest them with His power and grant them salvation for the sufferings they were going through. Their profane status would then, just like that of the little girl, be elevated to the sacredness of God.

In chapter 5, “A Reevaluation of and New Approach to the Study of a Cautionary Tale,” I analyze the story of the bath of Zaryeb, which critics have generally seen as entirely profane. Here again, I show that this story should not be explored through an either/or lens but using a *sic et non* principle. The story is reminiscent of popular frame-narratives such as the *One Thousand and One Nights* or cautionary tales such as “Little Red Riding Hood.” It is also reminiscent of wisdom literature and *fabliaux*. Critics have overlooked these cultural

repertoires and intertextualities precisely because of their exaggerated focus on the anachronistic and false dichotomy of profane versus religious.

Chapter 2

Clandestine Messages in a Hostile Land:

the Study of Mudéjar and Morisco

Homiletic Storytelling

“Y os mando apretadamente que mentengáis el addin del Alislam,
y que mandéis a los que llegaran a la edad de vuestros hijos.

Y no hayáis miedo que por aquello habrá mal y escándalo
sobre vosotros por saber vuestros enemigos aquello.

Pues buena ventura para los algaribos aquellos que adobaran
sus vidas con server ad Alá—*¡ensalzado sea!*—, cuando viene la perdición
de las gentes y el que servirá ad Alá—*¡cuán poderoso y magnífico es!*—
entre los negligentes es como el vivo entre los muertos.”⁴⁰

Fatwa of the *mufti* of Oran Aḥmad ibn abī Jum‘a

During or soon after the conquest of the Nazarí kingdom of Granada, a group of Granadan Muslims emigrated to Oran in the hope of finding refuge in *dār al-islām*. There, however, they found themselves rejected, and they soon decided to return to their homeland. Aḥmad ibn abī Jumu‘a issued the so-called *fatwa* of Oran specifically for them—the *gurabā* as he called them, strangers in all lands, who later carried the *fatwa* back to Iberia.⁴¹ There

⁴⁰ Edition of Rubiera Mata.

⁴¹ There is evidence that Aḥmad ibn abī Jum‘a was in fact active in Fez (where he died) at the time and must have issued the *fatwa* there. I refer to him as the *mufti* of Oran, even though he did not seem to have any official authority there, because the evidence is inconclusive and other scholars refer to him in this way. See Stewart.

they were forcibly converted and no longer able to openly practice their religion. In a world where one's religion was one's identity, these Moriscos had been ripped of their sense of self.⁴² The Aragonese *gurabā*, Moriscos who authored (and I will elucidate my use of this term shortly) the narratives under study, developed a literature textualizing the angst that they felt when faced with the disturbing loss of their identity, and they empowered it with unprecedented value.

This angst is subtly reflected in their literary creations, which correspond to a genre of homiletic storytelling written with the goal of transmitting values and reminding themselves of who they were. The scarcity of canonical and doctrinal works available to them caused these Moriscos to turn toward more unorthodox texts and infuse them with meanings and values. The interplay of profane and sacred that these narratives set forth takes us to the center of the Moriscos' angst. These are not doctrinal or dogmatic texts but, rather, entertaining and popular stories. Nevertheless, they reflect the Islamic values of their authors in ways so subtle that literary scholarship has overlooked four of the narratives studied here and has treated the fifth as a purely profane anomaly within what they have viewed as an almost entirely religious literary corpus. In this chapter, I address the false dichotomy of sacred and profane that has dominated prior scholarship and provide a theoretical groundwork for the analysis of the rich and multifaceted aspects of Morisco homiletic storytelling. I also contend that the Moriscos' loss of identity left them with deep existential issues that scholarship has failed to address.

⁴² Isabelle Poutrin (5–6) draws an interesting analogy between the act of baptizing Moriscos and citizenship. According to her, becoming baptized at a time when no formal civil status existed meant changing one's juridical status. Just as it is not necessary today for someone to love France in order to acquire French citizenship, the Moriscos did not have to have faith to be baptized. This analogy, however, fails to account for the issue of will, which is paramount to the study of the individual members of this community.

2.1 The Moriscos

2.1.1 Aljamiado-Morisco Literature

What do we mean by Aljamiado-Morisco literature? In the introductory chapter, I insisted on referring to the narratives under study as “Mudéjar and Morisco narratives” because some of them precede the Morisco period; they were written by Mudéjares for their coreligionists and were passed on to future generations. As Montaner Frutos reminds us, the term *Aljamiado-Morisco* is problematic for various reasons:

en los estudios sobre este tema, la expresión ‘literatura aljamiado-morisca’ suele abarcar un ámbito por una parte demasiado vago y por otra excesivamente limitado. La vaguedad deriva de que [...] lo que se ha editado y estudiado bajo dicha etiqueta es, de hecho, todo el conjunto de la producción escrita de la comunidad islámica hispánica bajo sujeción cristiana, tanto durante la etapa de cierto reconocimiento de su diferencia cultural y libertad de culto (período mudéjar) como en la fase de su intento de asimilación mediante la conversión forzosa al cristianismo (período morisco). La limitación procede del hecho de que por *aljamiado* se entiende hoy básicamente lo que está escrito mediante caracteres árabes en lengua romance [...] a la vez que dicha producción se atribuye a los moriscos, sin tener debidamente en cuenta ni lo escrito en caracteres latinos ni la etapa mudéjar. (“Literatura Aljamiada” 45)

Given the heterogeneity of the content of a given manuscript in which a story, a prayer guide, and a magic recipe can all be compiled in one work, “es comprensible que por *literatura* se haya entendido, en general, simplemente el conjunto de esta producción escrita” (Montaner Frutos “Literatura Aljamiada” 47). Therefore, in this study, I approach Aljamiado-Morisco literature as the literary product of both the Mudéjares and the Moriscos, and I focus on a particular undetected genre within their literary production—their homiletic stories—in an

attempt to uncover the intentionality of the texts that critics have been quick to call “entertaining” or “profane” and leave aside. This second epithet stands in opposition to another one that, according to critics, characterizes the almost the entire aljamiado corpus: “religious.”

2.1.2 The Question of Authorship

The narratives under study are most likely renditions of tales prepared by the *alfaquíes* of a given Morisco Aragonese community to instruct and entertain their crypto-Islamic communities. As Martínez de Castilla Muñoz reminds us, “parece que en buena parte de los casos, el destinatario o demandante era un alfaquí, imam o ulema que necesitaba de un determinado tipo de materiales, dependiendo de la ocasión, para poder explicar una serie de conocimientos a su comunidad” (26). I refer to the person who wrote the text down as an author in the pre-modern sense of the term *auctor*, thereby giving full agency to the person in charge of transmitting the only intelligible version of a story that was part of a disappearing heritage. An *auctor* was “at once a writer and an authority, someone not merely to be read but also to be respected and believed,” and “the writings of an *auctor* contained, or possessed, *auctoritas* in the abstract sense of the term, with its strong connotations of veracity and sagacity. In the specific sense, an *auctoritas* was a quotation or an extract from the work of an *author*” (Minnis 10). The Mudéjar *alfaquíes* responsible for the transmission of these texts were therefore not *auctores* per se but authoritative figures in the sense that they were in charge of educating their coreligionists. Although most authors of aljamiado literature were anonymous, with the exception of a handful of writers such as the *alfaquí* of Segovia, Yça de Gebir, and The Young Man of Arévalo, they carried recognized authority to transmit knowledge to others in their community.⁴³

⁴³ For a brief explanation of Yça de Gebir and The Young Man of Arévalo, see introduction.

The authors, even if only translators or copyists, bring in their own semantic and cultural background, which is reflected in how they choose to retell the story. In this way, the story gains a new—or renewed—significance. The reader or listener also participates in that creation of meaning, for he is located at the end of the trail of transmission and stands not only as a “*homo aestheticus* o como *homo politicus* separadamente, sino como persona en su integridad” (Montaner Frutos, “La literatura aljamiada” 53). In the final product, the narratives, the plot, the characterization of the protagonists, and the symbolism should be carefully analyzed, as all these features reflect the text’s intentionality and the audience’s expectations.

2.2 Compartmentalization of Aljamiado-Morisco Literature

2.2.1 Purely Islamic?

Critics often view the Morisco population as crypto-Islamic. Although they propose to approach its literary production as Islamic, they mostly analyze it using Western sources and theories. In 1981, Mikel de Epalza contended that these texts should be approached through an “islamologique” lens.⁴⁴ Epalza argues that Mudéjares and Moriscos should be viewed essentially and exclusively as Muslims, and he pinpoints the difficulty studying of the Moriscos “à partir d’une documentation chrétienne et d’une problématique sociologique espagnole” (from the perspective of Christian documentation and as a Spanish sociological issue). He goes so far as to call them “post-almohades” (post-Almohads) Muslims (Epalza 34). But he fails to take into account the cultural particularities of the Mudéjares and the Moriscos. In this regard, John Bowen and Richard Antoun’s studies prove particularly useful.

⁴⁴ Epalza also rightly reminds us that speaking of a Moorish or Muslim “Spain” is an anachronistic and partial expression, favoring instead the title “Hispania Islamizada.” I, however, prefer to use *al-Andalus* to refer to the geographically delimited territory of medieval Iberia under Muslim rule, and “the Christian kingdom” for the territories that were gradually conquered by Christian monarchs.

They “have focused on the means by which the Islamic message is handed down and reformulated by ‘cultural brokers’ in their particular environments, a process commonly termed the ‘social organization of tradition.’”⁴⁵ These intermediaries, the *alfaquíes*, bridge “the gap between textual tradition and local applications” (Miller 14). I believe, like Epalza, that the Mudéjares and Moriscos were Muslims of the Occident. As such, they should be viewed as Muslim in orientation, and their literary works should be understood within the broader context of Islamic literary production.

Maghrébins, Grenadins, mudéjares et morisques vivent un même Islam dans des structures idéologiques et sociales semblables. Seules les structures politiques extérieures sont différentes, ce qui n’est pas peu, mais qui ne doit pas nous cacher cette unité. (Epalza 41) (People of the Maghreb, Granadans, Mudéjares, and Moriscos live out the same Islam in similar ideological and social structures. Only the external political structures are different, which is not insignificant, but it should not hide this unity.)

With Epalza, I believe that this “islamique” approach would help us obtain “une vision plus profonde des morisques, comme sujets de leur personnalité musulmane et non seulement comme objets marginaux des études hispaniques” (41), but I also believe that the *rendition* of the Islamic tradition by these *alfaquíes* at the scale of their local communities deserves particular attention because it sheds light on issues that were particularly important to them, issues that the rest of the Muslim world at that time did not have to confront.

One obvious reason why *aljamiado* texts are seen as representing an ongoing attachment to Islam is the use of *aljamía*, which presupposes the development of an elaborated system of transcription, in that the written form of *aljamía* recorded Romance

⁴⁵ See Atoun and Bowen. Clifford Geertz’s study of “local Islams,” *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*, is also useful but does not take into account what I see as the crucial element of the different Mudéjar and Morisco communities, namely the *alfaquíes* as cultural brokers.

words using a modified Arabic script. Scholars generally presume this effort to have been religiously motivated since Arabic is, for Muslims, the language of revelation.⁴⁶ Table 2.1 lists some passages from the Qur’ān stressing that the Qur’ān was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad in his own language, Arabic. Because of the use of Arabic script and the existence of literary precedents for the vast majority of aljamiado stories, many scholars have contended that the aljamiado literature consists of little more than the translation of previously existing Arab-Islamic stories. García-Arenal, like Carmen Barceló, Ana Labarta, and G. A. Wiegers before her, takes this position, stating that the aljamiado literary corpus is entirely Islamic (García-Arenal, “Musulmanes arabófonos” 303; Wiegers; Barceló and Labarta). Even in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spain, she says, “la identificación de la lengua con la religión fue inquebrantable y no conoció excepciones” (García-Arenal, *La Inquisición* 58).⁴⁷

Table 2.1 Passages Emphasizing That the Qur’ān Was Revealed in Arabic

Q 13:37	“So We have sent down the Qur’ān to give judgment in the <i>Arabic language</i> .”
Q 12:1-2	“These are the verses of the Scripture that makes things clear— ² We have sent it down as an <i>Arabic Qur’ān</i> so that you [people] may understand.”
Q 19:97	“We have made it easy, in your <i>own language</i> [Prophet], so that you may bring glad news to the righteous and warnings to a stubborn people.”

⁴⁶ For a brief yet thorough explanation of the importance of Arabic in Islam, see Allen, “Qur’ān.”

⁴⁷ We must also realize that a Morisco who wrote in Castilian could still have been an adherent of Islam. García-Arenal mentions the case of Lope de Hinestrosa, a Morisco from Daimiel from whom the Inquisition confiscated in 1542 a polemical book written in Spanish (García-Arenal, *La Inquisición* 58).

Q 20:113	“We have sent the Qur’ān down in the <i>Arabic tongue</i> and given all kinds of warnings in it, so that they may beware or it may make them take heed.”
Q 41:3	“a Scripture whose verses are made clear as a <i>Qur’ān in Arabic</i> for people who understand”
Q 43:3	“We have made it a <i>Qur’ān in Arabic</i> so that you [people] may understand.”

In 1631, a generation after the final expulsion of the Moriscos between 1609 and 1614, commissioners of the Tribunal of the Inquisition visited a town called Pastrana and were told that, back in 1615 and 1622, two sets of Arabic books, which had belonged to the Granadan Moriscos who had lived there until their expulsion, had been found. For García-Arenal, this discovery proved that Arabic books were, in fact, read in Castile up until the final expulsion; moreover, she says, it shows “lo inextricablemente que está tejida la literatura aljamiada de la árabe adquirida, guardada y copiada por los musulmanes arabófonos (tanto mudéjares como moriscos) de la Península.” She concludes, “La literatura aljamiada es básicamente literatura traducida del árabe” (*La Inquisición* 60).⁴⁸ Although the importance of the use of Arabic script cannot be undervalued, for crypto-Muslim Moriscos, Romance as a language was also part of their identity and the process of rendering traditional texts into their Romance language is much more complex than these critics’ statements would lead us to believe. On the other hand, the familiarity of some Aljamiado authors with Christian texts is evident, but I believe a case-by-case study is necessary as the sociopolitical context of the

⁴⁸ The process of translation and adaptation itself is very revealing, however, especially in some mudéjar codices where the aljamiado text is inserted within the Arabic text, thus making it possible to notice the variations and substitutions made by the author. This is the case in *La estorya de la çipdat de cobre*, which will be analyzed in chapter 2.

various Mudéjar and Morisco communities depended greatly on their geographical location.⁴⁹ Additionally, the porosity of the borders of the Islamic world during the Middle Ages nurtured a literary culture and literary tropes that traveled from west to east and vice versa, whether due to pilgrimages to Mecca or people's search for knowledge. In the case of the Moriscos and Mudéjares, the new lingua franca they had to learn influenced them and shaped their literary production along with their Islamic cultural baggage. As the first sizable Muslim minority living under Christian rule, they had to redefine themselves over against a Christian majority and in accordance with their new circumstances. Some of them even developed a preference for the use of Romance in a literary context. The translator and adaptor of religious Aljamiado poems explains his use of Romance as follows: "púsele en 'ağami, según la tierra, porque mexor lo entiendan los mayores y los menores de Allah" ("I wrote it in Romance, in accordance with the tradition of this land, because that is how elders and children better understand it") and "Fuese sacado de 'arabī en 'ağamī porque fuse más placiente de la leír y escoitar en aquesta tierra" (I rendered it from Arabic to Romance because it is more pleasant to read and hear in this land).⁵⁰ The complexity of the literary production of these Moriscos deserve a more complete analysis, and the process of adaptation that some of the traditional tales underwent is crucial to our approach to these texts in the following chapters.

2.2.2 Religious/Profane, Sacred/Secular: False Dichotomies

Anwar Chejne's perspective on the aljamiado writings underscores an approach to these works that many subsequent scholars have followed. He considers the entire corpus as essentially religious, even the seemingly profane stories:

⁴⁹ For more on the literary influence of Christian authors on Morisco literary production, see Narváez.

⁵⁰ Fuente Cornejo (227, 281).

Even from a cursory inventory of available manuscripts, one is struck by the large number of *religious* materials. The Qur'ān, prophetic traditions, legal manuals, instructional materials directing the faithful to perform his religious obligations, catechisms, and religious admonitions could safely be said to constitute the bulk of Aljamiado literature. The religious perspective *permeates even profane stories*, such as those dealing with love and battles which, more often than not, draw a moral or show the role of God in human affairs. (47, emphasis added)

Luis F. Bernabé Pons is even more categorical in asserting the religiosity of aljamiado texts:

La inmensa mayoría de los textos aljamiados producidos, poseídos y consumidos por los moriscos es de carácter religioso islámico. Lo son asimismo los textos en caracteres latinos que los moriscos usan en la Península y, desde comienzos del siglo XVI, en su exilio magrebí. Se trata de una literatura islámica, hecha—traducida, escrita, copiada—por musulmanes y para musulmanes, primero en Aragón y después en Marruecos, en Argelia, en Túnez y, en mucha menor medida, en los territorios otomanos del Mediterráneo oriental. Aunque hay textos aljamiados y moriscos que escaparían quizás a esta naturaleza, su número es tan escaso que *apenas constituyen una excepción de entidad* dentro del fondo de las letras moriscas. La literatura de los últimos musulmanes de España apela ante todo a su condición de musulmanes que viven entre cristianos, coetáneos, coterráneos pero hostiles. (Bernabé Pons 7, emphasis added)⁵¹

⁵¹ Bernabé Pons must be referring to the chivalry novel *París y Viana*, translated into *aljamía* by Moriscos from an earlier Christian version. For more on this brief novel, see *Historia de los amores de París y Viana*.

The critics' desire to catalogue Mudéjar and Morisco writings resulted in a compartmentalization of this body of texts into religious stories on one hand and entertaining stories on the other.⁵² However, Morisco religious texts can, in fact, be entertaining and vice versa. A binary division of this body of texts is not productive and leads to a devaluation of vernacular and theological texts that would benefit from a more integrative approach. The dichotomy between the sacred and the profane must be broken down because it represents an imposition of modern thinking on medieval texts.

2.3 Stepping Away from Binaries

2.3.1 Understanding Our Bias: The Religious and the Secular in the Modern World

Contemporary perspectives on Islam further illustrate the ongoing complexity of the religious-secular relationship. The notion of the secular as understood today, with all its political ramifications for the functioning of modern states, would be anachronistic if applied to the aljamiado narratives, but it does help to explain the biases of modern critics. In contemporary discourse, our understanding of the secular is usually situated within a political context. Principles of government are secular when, as Talal Asad puts it in his *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, they “deal solely with a worldly disposition, an arrangement that is quite different from the medieval conception of a social body of Christian souls each of whom is endowed with equal dignity—members at once of the City of God and of divinely created human society” (24). Asad clarifies that “the ‘religious’ and the ‘secular’ are not essentially fixed categories”; that “there is nothing *essentially* religious, nor any universal essence that defines ‘sacred language’ or ‘sacred experience’”; and that “the sacred and the secular depend on each other” (24).

⁵² See Galmés de Fuentes, “El interés literario en los escritos aljamiado-morisca”; Bouzineb; and Montaner Frutos, “Aproximación a una tipología de la literatura aljamiado-morisca aragonesa.”

Debates over the possibility of a separation between state and religion, however, are raging in Islamic political thought. Bernard Lewis argues in *The Political Language of Islam*:

In classical Islam there was no distinction between Church and State. ... In pre-westernized Islam, there were not two powers but one, and the question of separation, therefore, could not arise. The distinction between church and state, so deeply rooted in Christendom, did not exist in Islam, and in classical Arabic, as well as in other languages which derive their intellectual and political vocabulary from classical Arabic, there were no pairs of words corresponding to spiritual and temporal, lay and ecclesiastical, religious and secular. It was not until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and then under the influence of Western ideas and institutions, that new words were found, first in Turkish and then in Arabic, to express the idea of secular. (2–3)

In *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*, Lewis states that “there is no sense at all in which one can speak of a laity among Muslims” because of the “absence of a native secularism” and “the widespread [...] rejection of an imported secularism” (100). Furthermore, Edward Said declares that one could not have “addressed Arabism without also addressing Islam. ... There is simply no way of disassociating the two, even though the new debate about secularism (*al-‘almanah*), a relatively unfamiliar word in Arabic, has been gathering momentum here and there in the Arab world” (389–90). Said also grants that “Western polemicists about Islam—and this includes some venerable Orientalists—have emphasized the conjunction in Islam between religion and state (*din wa dawla*), as if the various Koranic precepts suggesting their correspondence with each other were somehow absolute” (390). But in actuality, as Said notes, the concept that political leaders followed Koranic principles consistently “is a textual fiction, since throughout Islamic history rulers generally acted like rulers everywhere else and

not according to some endlessly consulted text” (390). Said’s contention that rulers in Muslim lands were acting independently from Islamic mandates echoes Ira M. Lapidus’s 1975 statement:

The prevailing view among Islamists is that Islamic society does not distinguish between the religious and political aspects of communal life. The Caliphate was both, the religious and the political leadership of the community of Muslims, whose individual believers and subjects belonged to a polity defined by religious allegiance. This view of the seamless web of Islamic political and religious institutions has its basis in the experience of the Muslim community of Medina under Muḥammad’s leadership. Since Muḥammad was the Prophet who revealed God’s will in all of life’s concerns, belief in Islam entailed both, loyalty to a chief whose authority derived from his religious position, and membership in the *umma*—the community that he led. In this case, religious and political values and religious and political offices were inseparable.

After Muḥammad’s death, the Caliphate preserved this fundamental idea. As successors to the Prophet, the Caliphs were obliged to preserve his religious and political legacy in its moral, religious, and legal aspects. ... The Caliph was the very person of the *umma*.

This seems to be beyond dispute. Yet, despite the origins of Islam and its own teachings about the relationship between religious and political life, Islamic society has evolved in un-Islamic ways. In fact, religious and political life developed distinct spheres of experience, with independent values, leaders, and organizations. (Lapidus 363–64)

The Mudéjares were allowed to remain on Christian territory and to apply their own laws as long as no Christian party was affected. The Moriscos, as new converts to Christianity, were subject to both Christian law and the Inquisition. These aljamiado-writing Muslims lived in *dar al-ḥarb* (“the realm of war” as opposed to *dar al-Islām*, “the realm of Islam”) and had to constantly seek ways to reinforce and reinterpret their self-definition as part of the *umma*, the Muslim community. They lived in a place geographically and politically removed from the rest of the Islamic world. As their experience demonstrates, even in medieval times Islam as *dīn wa dawla* (religion and state) was an ideal state that could not always be preserved as an actual political reality. In the case of the Mudéjares and Moriscos, a new sociopolitical body, until then unknown in the Islamic world, emerged: the *aljama*, from the Arabic root *j-m-*, which means “to unify.” This was a concept previously foreign to Islam, as Epalza reminds us:

Mudéjares et morisques [...] vivent sous un gouvernement non-musulman, ce qui est entièrement anormal aux yeux de l’Islam et du droit islamique, surtout au Moyen Âge. La perte du pouvoir politique est un problème islamique d’une extrême gravité, que le christianisme ne connaît pas avec ce dramatisme, car celui-ci est né et s’est développé sans un pouvoir politique propre et il se conserve toujours avec ses structures ecclésiastiques plus ou moins liées aux sociétés où il vit, mais indépendantes. Par contre l’Islam a dès ses débuts une vocation essentielle de pouvoir politique suprême. (38) (Mudéjares and Moriscos [...] lived under a non-Muslim government, which was completely abnormal in the eyes of Islam and Islamic law, especially in the Middle Ages. The loss of political power was a problem of great severity for Islam, one that Christianity does not experience in the same depth, because the latter religion was born and developed without a political power proper to it and is still

preserved through with ecclesiastical structures that are more or less linked to the societies in which it exists, but independently of them. By contrast, Islam has, from the beginning, had an intrinsic goal of pursuing supreme political power.)

Mudéjares and Moriscos present a unique case in which Muslims had to reevaluate how, despite the restrictions imposed by a Christian government, they could stay loyal to both their Islamic faith and local traditions. Through these reevaluations, a unique relationship between the sacred and the profane emerged in their textual production. The fascinating results of this reorientation will be highlighted in the following chapters.

2.3.2 The State of the Question in the Literary Field

Barbara Newman states in the opening sentence of *Medieval Crossover: Reading the Secular against the Sacred*, “The relationship of sacred and secular in medieval literature is not a new problem” (1). The debate that raged among medievalists for thirty years because of the “exegetics movement” provides ample proof of that truth. However, the scholars arguing for or against the claims of this intellectual movement relied strictly on Christian sources. Aljamiado texts from medieval Iberia have yet to receive the same attention. I contend that the first step toward a more accurate understanding of the narratives studied here resides in defining the terms *secular/profane* and *religious/sacred* from an Islamic point of view. Only then can we accurately determine the possible relation between the sacred and the profane in these Islamic popular stories. Are the writers trying to fictionalize faith as the *quşşāş* used to do, or are they sacralizing the secular in a context of religious practice?

According to Alberto Montaner Frutos,

las *qışaş al-‘anbiyā’* están bien representadas en la literatura aljamiada
justamente en este modalidad más legendaria, impropia de un *mağlis al-ḥikma*,

y aparecen mezcladas en los códices con relatos propios del repertorio de los *ruwāt* o ‘cuentistas.’ [...] A juzgar por los textos conservados, la formación teológica de los responsables de la comunidad islámica, al menos durante la clandestinidad del período morisco, no parece haber sido suficientemente alta como para rechazar este tipo de materiales legendarios como apócrifos y ni siquiera para separarlos claramente de la exposición o la práctica de los preceptos religiosos. (“La literatura aljamiada” 52)

I believe, however, that a deeper issue is at the crux of the problem, grounded in the lack of clear demarcation between the religious and the profane, both in the Arab-Islamic world in general and the aljamiado literary corpus in particular. For instance, some scholars see *El hadīz del baño de Zariab* as a form of religious practice, others as a secular production intended to entertain.⁵³ Can we reconcile both interpretations? I do not mean to suggest that these stories can be intentionally religious and secular at the same time. Rather, I believe that the relationship between the sacred and the profane is not clearly defined, even though—or perhaps precisely because—the two seem difficult to differentiate in Islam. Abdallah Cheikh-Moussa argues in “Adab Literature in the Classical Period”:

Between the sacred and profane, the temporal and spiritual, there is hardly any contradiction or incompatibility which could allow *adab* writings to be distinguished from those described as religious and which deal with the same subjects or related themes. Furthermore, the *interpenetration of the religious, of whatever persuasion, and the profane* was so complete in the minds and culture of the period that it would be at best artificial, if not anachronistic, to try to separate them clearly. (161, emphasis added)

⁵³ Barletta (“Aljamiado-Morisco”), for example, sees in it a form of religious practice, unlike Boumehdi Tomasi and others mentioned above. A more in-depth discussion will be provided in chapter 5.

The modern critics' approach to Aljamiado-Morisco literature, i.e. their division of it into two distinct categories—one putting forward sacred elements of the faith, religious, and another antonymic, opposite, which deals with profane and secular issues—is based on the bias that two such concepts, binary opposites, sacred and profane, cannot exist together. Until recently, the projection of postmodern binaries onto Morisco studies was not limited to sacred and profane categories, but permeated other aspects of analyses as well. Critics saw the Moriscos as either crypto-Muslims or “real converts,” either Muslims or Christians. Recent studies, however, have uncovered the hybridity of their culture, both Hispanic and Arabic at the same time. Antonio Vespertino Rodríguez sees a bridge between Arabic tradition and Hispanic topics (Rodríguez 93). Touría Boumebdi Tomasi identifies a “symbiosis” of Christian and Islamic elements that shows the Moriscos' interpretation of their cultural situation (161–62). This concept of symbiosis parallels López-Baralt's theory of “hybridization,” which she sees as the driving force behind the aljamiado literary production (197), and María del Mar Rosa-Rodríguez's notion of “hybrid,” “in-between,” and “in-transit” identities (1). However, the bias still persists with regard to the content of their literature, i.e., whether it is religious or profane. To deconstruct this remaining binary concept, Arkoun's notion of “opposition *existentiales*” provides a good starting point. He states:

La complexité des contenus, des fonctions, des fins, des devenir possibles introduits par le Coran est telle que les sociétés investies par un tel phénomène [...] vont organiser leur espace conformément à des oppositions *existentiales* (qui structurent et dynamisent l'existence humaine) dans le cadre ontologique de l'Alliance primordiale. (Arkoun 242) (The complexity of the content, functions, endings, and possible developments that the Qur'ān introduces is such that the societies invested with this phenomenon will organize their space

according to *existential* oppositions (which structure and galvanize human existence) within the ontological frame of the primordial Alliance.)

Arkoun then introduces the axial oppositions that still influence the thought, sensibility, and action of the people living in societies informed by the Book:

Le *sacré* et le *profane* dont la correspondance coranique est *dīn/dunyā*, “religion/monde.” Cette opposition centrale se développe en plusieurs autres qui finissent par ordonner l’ensemble de la réalité: ainsi, il y a un avant et un après de la Révélation ultime; un espace anémique (*islām/jāhiliyya*, *dār al-islām/dār al-ḥarb*); le bien et le mal, le vrai et le faux, le Salut éternel et la damnation, etc. (242) (The Qur’ānic equivalent for the *sacred* and the *profane* is *dīn/dunyā*, “religion/world.” This central opposition develops into many others that end up arranging the entire reality: there is thus a before and after the final Revelation; an anomic space (*islām/jāhiliyya*, *dār al-islām/dār al-ḥarb*); good and evil, right and wrong, eternal salvation and damnation, etc.)

Arkoun’s approach is essential in explaining why critics have imposed these binary oppositions upon Morisco narratives, but the authors and copyists of these works did not live in a world that called for definitions and categorizations and order like ours. Their world was undergoing a profound change of rules, resulting in dynamics that left the Moriscos uncertain of their future. They were in the process of transitioning from one state of being to the next. Their prior, taken-for-granted identity was no more, and this loss is reflected in how they carried out religious teaching through what critics today call “entertaining literature.” The critics who read these narratives through the grid of modern sociopolitical arrangements have detached themselves from the spiritual reality of the Mudéjares and Moriscos.

Arkoun's approach is crucial in that it sheds light on the process of our own analyses of Mudéjar and Morisco texts, which is tainted by the binary oppositions inherent in our modern society:

The supposedly universal opposition between "sacred" and "profane" finds no place in premodern writing. In medieval theology, the overriding antinomy was between "the divine" and "the satanic" (both of them transcendent powers) or "the spiritual" and "the temporal" (both of them worldly institutions), not between a supernatural sacred and a natural profane. (Asad 32)

Asad's approach tends to explain the evolution of the sacred as a distinct cognitive category that evolved through time. However, late medieval crypto-Muslims had no awareness of it and were in no position to theorize. Again, applying our modern view of secularism and secularity to late medieval Morisco writings is anachronistic. However, determining whether the Morisco authors could have separated the sacred realm from the profane is essential to our reading of their literature. I contend that the sacred-profane separation is not clearly delineated in the Qur'ān either. In this sense, Comstock's Durkheimian approach is more helpful: "the sacred, as a kind of behaving, is not merely a number of immediate appearances, but a set of rules—prescriptions, proscriptions, interdictions—that determine the shape of the behavior and whether it is to count as an instance of the category in question" (632). Moreover "the sacred can be understood primarily in terms of what people externally do, not in terms of what they internally feel" (632).

2.3.3 Sacred and Profane in Western Sources

The opposition between the sacred and the profane is a relatively recent phenomenon in anthropology and theology. Durkheim declared in his classic 1912 work, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*:

All known religious beliefs, whether simple or complex, present one common characteristic: they presuppose a classification of all the things, real and ideal, of which men think, into two classes or opposed groups, generally designated by two distinct terms which are translated well enough by the words *profane* and *sacred* (*profane, sacré*). This division of the world into two domains, the one containing all that is sacred, the other all that is profane, is the distinctive trait of religious thought; the beliefs, myths, dogmas and legends are either representations or systems of representations which express the nature of sacred things, the virtues and powers which are attributed to them, or their relations with each other and with profane things. (37)

Likewise, Mircea Eliade, in *The Sacred and the Profane*, argues that religious men live in a world that is always capable of becoming sacred: “Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane” (11). As William Robins and Robert Epstein remind us, “For Eliade, this categorical distinction is, above all, something experienced by members of religiously oriented societies, yet it also, in the second instance, enables Eliade to differentiate between the existential conditions of *homo religiosus* on the one hand and modern man, living in a desacralized world, on the other” (4). This dichotomy, however, has been criticized for its universalizing tendency and its dependence on the context of European religious traditions, especially Christianity (Robins and Epstein 4).

Barbara Newman refers to medieval Europe in terms reminiscent of Eliade, as a place “saturated with religion” and “dominated both intellectually and institutionally by the Church” (7). Living in such a space, she contends, impacted every person’s imagination, regardless of his or her personal level of devotion. She adds, however, that this premise “does

not mean ... that every allusion to the sacred needs to be assessed at its full theological weight” (Newman 7). Mudéjares and Moriscos, indeed, were also living in a place saturated with religion, including both the dominant force of Christianity and the preaching of the *ulema* who worried about the forced process of de-Islamization. However, the relationship between the sacred and the secular that emerges in the aljamiado narratives is radically different from that identified by Newman in medieval Christian narratives, where she finds a “principle of both/and.” This *sic et non* principle, as Newman puts it, is reflected in those Christian texts where “opposing terms remain present, equally valid, as they interact in a potentially creative tension that neither dismisses nor suppresses either one but forces us to deal with the paradoxical combination of both” (Bruckner 18–19). Robins and Epstein express the sacred-profane relationship with another interesting image: a Mobius strip and its obverse sides. They suggest that as the sacred and the profane are “strictly opposed to each other yet occupying the same space, they also turn into each other” (10).

2.3.4 Islamic Sources: The Sacred and the Secular in the Qur’ān

Table 2.2 Instances of the Concept of “Sacred” in the Qur’ān

Q 2:194	“a <i>sacred month for a sacred month</i> : violation of sanctity [calls for] fair retribution”
Q 2:217	“They ask you [the Prophet] about fighting in the <i>sacred month</i> . Say, ‘Fighting in that month is a great offence, but to bar others from God’s path, to disbelieve in Him, prevent access to the Sacred Mosque, and expel its people, are still greater offences in God’s eyes: persecution is worse than killing.’ ”
Q 5:2	“So, you who believe, do not violate the sanctity of God’s rites, the <i>Sacred Month</i> , the sacrificial animals, including the garlanded, nor those going to the Sacred House to seek the bounty and pleasure of their Lord—but when you have completed the rites of pilgrimage you may hunt. Do not let your hatred for the people who barred you from the <i>Sacred Mosque</i> induce you to break the law: help one another to do what is right and good; do not help one another towards sin and hostility.”

Q 5:97	“God has made the Ka’ba—the <i>Sacred</i> House—a means of support for people, and the Sacred Months, the sacrificial animals including the garlanded: all this. Know that God has knowledge of all that is in the heavens and earth and that He is fully aware of all things.”
Q 9:36	“God decrees that they are twelve months—ordained in God’s Book on the Day when He created the heavens and earth—four months of which are <i>sacred</i> : this is the correct calculation. Do not wrong yourselves in these months—though you may fight idolaters at any time if they fight you—remember that God is with those who are mindful of Him.”
Q 9:37	“Postponing sacred months is a further [act of] disbelief by which those who disbelieve are led astray: they will allow it one year and <i>forbid</i> it in another in order outwardly to conform with the number of God’s sacred months, but in doing so they permit what God has <i>forbidden</i> . Their evil deeds are made alluring to them: God does not guide those who disregard [Him].”
Q 14:37	“Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in an uncultivated valley, close to Your <i>Sacred</i> House, Lord, so that they may keep up the prayer. Make people’s hearts turn to them, and provide them with produce, so that they may be thankful.”
Q 20:12	“I am your Lord. Take off your shoes: you are in the <i>sacred valley</i> of Tuwa.”
Q 22:30	“All this [is ordained by God]: anyone who honors the <i>sacred ordinances</i> of God will have good rewards from his Lord.”
Q 27:91	“[Say Prophet], ‘What I am commanded to do is to serve the sustainer of this town, which He has <i>made inviolable</i> . Everything belongs to Him; I am commanded to be one of those devoted to Him. I am commanded to recite the Qur’ān.’”

When we see to define terms in a language different from that of the studied text, we are soon confronted with a basic problem of translation, not only of words, but also of concepts. Lutz Wiederhold (n.p.) speaks of a “meta-language,” meaning the language of the “scholar examining a particular system of belief,” and the “object language,” or “the language of the people whose religion is the object of study,” or Arabic in our case.

To fully understand the complexity of the concepts of sacred and profane in the Arab-Islamic literary milieu, we must go back to the text that guided the development of Arabic

grammar and syntax, the Qur’ān. In this book, words derived from the roots *h-r-m* and *q-d-s* have been understood as transmitting the meaning of “sacred” (Wiederhold n.p.). There exist some nuances, however. Some places mentioned in the Qur’ān, such as particular mosques, are described as *ḥarām* or *ḥaram*, which means that believers can enter those places only if they are in a state known as *iḥrām* (see Table 2.2). The notion of sacredness here is in fact defined by what the believer may do during the state of *iḥrām*. Ritual acts, such as prayers, represent a “sacred time” and require the *iḥrām*, which can be preserved only if one does not engage in any forbidden activity. Words derived from the root *q-d-s* also convey sacred meanings because they refer to the impeccable state of purity of a given element, “far removed from, or free of, evil, impurity, or imperfection” (Wiederhold n.p.). In Q 20:12 and 79:16, for instance, the valley of Tuwa is described as *muqaddas*, or sacred.

On the other hand, words derived from the root *h-l-l* are opposed to those derived from the root *h-r-m* and refer to what is permissible and lawful, but also to what is profane. For example, when a believer completes the ritual prayer, he or she returns to the *ḥalāl*, or profane, state. . Words derived from the root *d-n-w* also sometimes refer to profane things, such as the word *dunyā*, commonly understood today as signifying the present world in opposition to the hereafter. *Dunyā* can also refer to an activity not performed in the service of God and therefore profane, although the word also can refer to all acts performed by the believers including his or her ritual activities.

Trying to schematize the Qur’ān’s sacred-profane distinction is not simple, however. Some sacred phenomena are described with words not derived from the roots *h-r-m* or *q-d-s*, and not all profane phenomena are described using words derived from the roots *h-l-l* or *d-n-w*. Moreover, the Qur’ān’s instructions go far beyond what would normally be considered sacred activities, and they make a perceptible distinction between profane and sacred actions:

The Qur'ān contains rules that must be observed in profane, everyday life and that are not related to any ritual activity. Some of these rules, for example, the prohibition of usury (Q 3:130) or the regulations of inheritance (Q 4:11–12, 176) were later cited and explained in the chapters on worldly matters (*mu'āmalāt*) of the manual of Islamic jurisprudence, whereas ritual and religious observances were discussed in the *'ibādāt* chapters. The distinction between *'ibādāt* and *mu'āmlāt* may, therefore, be interpreted as expressing the distinction between the sacred and the profane spheres of life in the Qur'ān. (Wiederhold n.p.)

The semantic patterns in the Qur'ān show that Islam contains an identifiable distinction between the profane and the sacred realms, but this distinction escapes the processes of systematization and categorization that could clearly define how the two interact in every instance. By way of illustration, when Vincent Barletta (*Covert Gestures*, 19) develops his concept of “sacred spaces” in aljamiado literature, he refers to the opening passages of the *Estoriya Irrekontamiyento de Ayub* (“The Story and Tale of Job”), in which

[t]he invocation [of God in Arabic] is an integral part of the narrative as a whole insofar as it keys its lectoral performance and helps to shape the context of individual lectoral events. This context-building feature is signaled also by the various other Arabic formulae found in this brief passage, such as the blessings that follow the names of holy or enlightened figures, the Prophet Muhammad, and God. These formulae ... take on meaning through their power to situate the speaker and audience within a sacred Muslim space that in part fashions the very community that utters them. From a pragmatic perspective, these formulae are potent speech acts that link their speakers to a

world beyond their own and to a temporal framework beyond their historical circumstances.

Barletta's "activity-centered approach," which "places the agentive, eminently human processes of text and context formation at the center of investigative concern" (*Covert Gestures*, 23–24), is pertinent, but it fails to take into account in this particular instance the possibly formulaic nature of the phrases that he views as agents projecting both reader and listener into a sacred space. The invocation of God is very common in Arab-Islamic cultures, even in legal documents, and the blessings following names of holy figures have become automatic in many cases. This example demonstrates the importance of avoiding the systematic association of textual signifiers with acts of devotion.⁵⁴

To understand the sacred-profane relationship in aljamiado literature, we must apply the case analysis method, first detecting the apparently religious and profane elements of a given story and then tracing the history of those elements in the Arab-Islamic literary tradition. Only then can we recognize the function and intended relation of these elements. The sacred and the profane could be complementing each other, working against one another, or the obverse of each other because, to use Lutz Wiederhold's words, the "manifestation of the sacred (hierophany) and the profane (prophanophany) is the result of an intellectual process and is, as such, always artificial and subjective" (n.p.).

In the Islamic sphere, Lenn E. Goodman (47) speaks in similar terms about the interplay of the sacred and the profane:

Secular values raise their heads in the very heart of Islamic norms. They may rival religious values, offering a release from perfect earnestness and magnifying their intrinsic appeal through claims upon the love of freedom and the delicious delight of the forbidden. They may be coopted by religiosity, and

⁵⁴ Chapter 5 also deals with the systematic association of an invocation of God with a context of religious practice, which is dangerous and in most cases untrue.

they may exploit its energies in turn—from within, by turning religious projects to secular ends, and from without, by antipathy and mockery. What we must not ignore in these dialectics is the valuation placed on the secular by the faith itself, which prizes asceticism yet treats sensuous delight as a divine gift, which ascribes all power to God yet seeks mastery in God’s name, which denounces wine and gambling but promises wine in heaven and gambles this world for a heaven whose pleasures would be damnable on earth.

In referring here to “sensuous delight as a divine gift,” Goodman seems to suggest that the Islamic faith values the secular, but prohibits many of its expressions on earth and reserves them for heaven. He also notes that the Prophet Muhammad purportedly said, “Rest your souls from time to time; they rust the same as steel does” (Goodman 63). This concept of resting one’s soul from devotional acts is also echoed by the popular Moroccan saying “*shwiya l-‘rabbī w shwiya l-‘abdū*,” which literally translates to “dedicate some of your time to God and some of your time to His servant,” meaning the realm of mankind or the profane realm. This saying recalls Jesus’ injunction to “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21), which, for William Robins and Robert Epstein, “is emblematic of [the] gap [between the realm of divine transcendence and the structures at work in the temporal world] as theorized by Christianity, a gap which, after thousands of years of historical effects, eventually resulted in the modern affirmation of the secular realm as describable on its own terms without reference to religious ideals” (6).

In the *aljamiado* narratives, the sacred and the profane cannot be delimited in definite terms. Each narrative is different and offers the modern reader a fascinating and unique interplay between the two realms, one that calls for a more in-depth study of each narrative individually—especially because the authors’ sociopolitical circumstances were rapidly

evolving. There are myriad possible readings of the stories that go beyond determining the profane or religious character of the narrative and that reflect the hopes and fears of Mudéjares or Moriscos in very uncertain times. We modern readers, to understand these texts in their original context, must detach ourselves from our knowledge of how the story ends—with the expulsion of the Moriscos.

2.4 Search for Self and End of Times

2.4.1 Corruption of Faith

I approach and analyze these Mudéjar and Morisco writings in view of their apocalyptic content, which suggests the imminent end of time and a coming judgment. From the Moriscos' point of view, their forced conversions played a hermeneutical role in history as a sign of the end of time.⁵⁵ Essential to this idea of the imminence of Judgment Day, is the issue of "corruption of faith": "the corruption of the faith was understood to have eschatological significance as a patent sign of the End Times. The corruption of the faith, of course, had numerous descriptions and qualities. Specific manifestations of corruption could be identified in various contexts as a way of criticizing contemporary society" (Safran 126). Accordingly, any sign of the corruption of the crypto-Muslim Moriscos' faith would be, in effect, an expected sign of the end of time, or a fulfillment of the Islamic order of things. Ibn Habib (790–853), in his *Kitāb al-tārīkh* (155), provides an account of the end times and of how Muslims will eventually succumb to other faiths. According to him, "at the end of time the Muslim community will suffer misfortunes and fall into decline while the other religious communities flourish, such that some Muslims will become Jews and others Christians."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ For more on apocalypticism in Morisco textual production, see Alvarez and Green-Mercado.

⁵⁶ Cited in Safran (126).

Moreover, Ibn Waḍḍāḥ al Qurṭubī (815–900), in his *Kitāb al-bidā'*, speaks of a prediction that Muslims will “inevitably adopt the customs of the communities that preceded Islam” (41).⁵⁷

2.4.2 The Issue of Innovation

One problem that I faced when approaching these texts as genuine and candid expressions of crypto-Islamic authors, was the approach of modern critics who saw them, as we have already noted, as mere translations of traditional tales with no more literary value than that of a copied text. But even a copied text is an *adapted* text and bears the signs of the process of cultural negotiation in which its authors or copyists have engaged. In both Western medieval and Islamic traditions, authors' handled earlier sources in ways much different from our post-modern approach. The Western concepts of *inventio* and *imitatio*, along with the Islamic *bida'*, must have influenced the Mudéjar and Morisco authors in their rendering of traditional texts. *Inventio* in the sense of “invention” is

the technique whereby material is identified as suitable for treatment in the literary work; it also covers the adaptation of the material to authorial intention. It therefore includes both raw material (*material remota*) and authorial changes in, and adaptation of, that material (*material propinqua*). (Kelly 233)

The sense of *imitatio* in ecclesiastical Latin is defined by Jean de Ghellinck as follows:

C'est celui, non pas de l'imitation proprement dite d'un acte ou d'une personne, qu'on prend comme modèle concret, vécu, mais celui de la reproduction d'un modèle théorique, idéal, entrevu dans sa pensée, qu'on se propose soi-même de réaliser. Le modèle qu'on veut copier ou reproduire n'existe pas au concret: il n'a de réalité que dans l'esprit qui le conçoit et

⁵⁷ Ibid (127).

l'effort de l'“imitateur” tend à le réaliser concrètement, comme un artiste tâche d'exécuter l'idéal entrevu. (151) (It is not [the sense] of imitation of an action or a person whom we might take as a concrete and experienced model, but that of the reproduction of a theoretical model, ideal and glimpsed in one's mind, which we intend to realize on our own. The model that we want to copy or reproduce does not exist concretely: it is real only in the mind that conceives it, and the imitators' effort has the effect of realizing it concretely, as an artist endeavors to execute an envisioned ideal.)

I contend that the endeavors of Morisco authors reside in the execution of the act of imitating and inventing in the medieval sense of these words. Presumably, they still had to reconcile these positive processes with the negative connotation of the act of innovating in Islamic literary tradition, the *bida'*. “*Bid'a*: pl. *bida'* is an Arabic term charged with a negative meaning in Islam, as it disqualifies as novelties and innovations those beliefs, practices or customs that are alleged to lack any precedent in the Islamic tradition. As a technical term in Muslim legal and theological literature, it is applied to innovations in ritual and social practices (‘*ibādāt*, ‘*ādāt*), and to innovations of dogma” (Fierro 204). Censured innovations with regard to ritual were attributed to attempts to imitate Jews and Christians, such as not working on Friday in imitation of the Jewish Sabbath. Al-Wansharisi speaks of the practice of blowing the *shofar*, the Jewish ram's horn, at sunset during Ramadan as another corrupt practice that originated in al-Andalus.⁵⁸

On the other hand, the attitude of Muslim authorities toward innovation with respect to the Tradition of the Prophet evolved over time. Initially, it was completely forbidden as indicated by the following hadith: “the worst of all things are novelties (*muḥdathāt*); every novelty is innovation (*bid'a*); every innovation is error (*ḍalāla*) and every error leads to hell”

⁵⁸ Cited in Safran (126).

(Fierro 206).⁵⁹ Later, a more nuanced set of evaluative possibilities developed: “forbidden (*muḥarrama*), reprehensible (*makrūha*), indifferent (*mubāḥa*), recommended (*mandūba*) and obligatory (*wājiba*)” (Fierro 206).⁶⁰ Authoritative figures such as al-Jāḥiẓ frowned upon innovations in doctrine or popular practice that threatened the orthodoxy of normative religion. *Bida’* in this sense was related to Muslim orthopraxy and anything that threatened it. From the traditional point of view, the manipulation of hadiths or the creation of new hadiths was unacceptable, yet the Moriscos did create new hadiths, putting forward the sacred persona of the Prophet Muḥammad and infusing their texts with his authority. These powerful pseudo-hadiths take the form of entertaining narratives in which the sacred and the profane are intertwined, offering eloquent examples of Morisco homiletic storytelling.

2.4.3 Homiletic Storytelling: Upgrade of a Genre

Scholarship has paid almost no attention to the sermon literature of the Mudéjares and Moriscos of late medieval and early modern Iberia. Kathryn Miller, in *Guardians of Islam*, touches upon the development of a “rich sixteenth-century sermon literature” but admits that it is beyond the scope of her book (150).⁶¹ This sermon literature appears to date back to the Mudéjar period, as I will show in the following chapters.

⁵⁹ Hadith (from the Arabic *ḥadīṣ*) refers to “a narrative record of the sayings or customs of Muḥammad and his companions.” (*Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*). It means “tradition” and derives from the Arabic root *ḥ-d-ẓ*, which gives us the words *ḥadaẓa* (“to happen”) and *ḥaddaẓa* (“to speak of” or “to report”). *Hadith* then refers to the Prophetic tradition reported as a narrative.

⁶⁰ Cited in Fierro (205-06).

⁶¹ She mentions it, barely scratching the surface, but her comments sum up the state of the question in the scholarship: “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. [...] Descriptions of judgment day and eternal fire were intended to intimidate those who had strayed from the community of believers. Yet other

Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī (d. 940), an Andalusian writer and poet, reflects an early attitude of opposition to popular narratives in his commentary on Q 23:3, a verse that praises the believers who turn away from *al-laghw*. The word *laghw* can be translated as “futilities” or, according to Reynolds, as “idle talk” (253); the verse is usually interpreted as referring to singing and music. For Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī, however, it refers to a certain type of popular literature: “This verse was revealed only about people who were purchasing books of *siyar* [legendary histories] and tales of the ancients, and comparing these to the Koran, saying that they were better than it” (9). According to Reynolds:

The reference is to al-Nadr ibn al-Hārith who, according to early sources, scoffed at Muḥammad’s revelation as merely the retelling of the *asāfīr al-awwalīn* (stories of the ancients) ... and claimed that he personally knew better tales, specifically those of Rostam and Isfandiyar. This association of certain stories, particularly those of Persian origin, with early resistance to Islam constituted a potentially dangerous charge to be wielded by authors and religious reformers against genres of popular narrative, and it is telling that in some manuscripts of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih’s text, the term *akhbār al-samar*, “narratives from evening gatherings,” a much broader category, has been substituted for the term *siyar*. (253)

Medieval Islamic oratory is rich and complex, as shown by the “variety of terms used to label them: *khuṭba/khayāba* [speech], *wa ‘z/maw‘īza* [moral exhortation], *tadhkīr* [reminder], *qaṣaṣ* [religious narration], *waṣīyya* [spiritual testament], and *qirā’at al-kursī* [reading from the chair]” (Jones 15). The narratives under study, as retold by the Moriscos, were fundamental to inculcating morals and spreading Islamic teachings, but they did so in an entertaining way—

sermons and aljamiado literature that circulated among Aragonese Muslims during the same period struck a less threatening tone, offering a more optimistic scenario of Christian-Muslim engagement” (149).

which, interestingly enough, caused them to be discarded by later scholarship. The use of stories to promote Islam by educating the masses was in fact common in the early days of Islamic expansion, and *qaṣaṣ* included narrated stories (*qiṣaṣ*, sing. *qiṣṣa*) and other instructional activities.⁶²

I approach these Morisco narratives as *qiṣaṣ*, “homiletic stories,” since, as we will see, they clearly fulfill a didactic purpose directed at the Muslim masses. The preacher of each story was most certainly transmitting a spiritual message orally, privately, and clandestinely. I follow Jones’s lead in translating *qaṣaṣ* as “homiletic storytelling”; she considers this a scholarly consensus stemming from the definition given by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1200), an Iraqi hortatory preacher.⁶³ I also believe that these narratives belong to this *qaṣaṣ* genre of medieval Islamic oratory because they did not belong to any canonical collection of texts. The narrator of these *quṣaṣ*, the *qāṣ* (pl. *quṣṣāṣ*) or religious storyteller, is a figure that emerged in the first centuries of Islam. These *quṣṣāṣ* or *aṣḥāb al-karāsī* (“the keepers of the stands”), as they were also called, gradually became “infamous for conducting their activities on the roadways, in cemeteries, and other public places.”⁶⁴ Considered at one point as legitimate religious commentators, they initiated the genre of *qiṣaṣ al-‘anbiyā’* (stories of the prophets) of which the aljamiado corpus is replete. Their tendency to mix historical facts with apocryphal stories soon gained them a reputation as charlatans among the official religious authorities, yet their stories continued to circulate because of their popularity among the general public.⁶⁵ At the same time, however, not all *quṣṣāṣ* suffered a loss of reputation. Reynolds explains: “In his *Kitāb al-bayān wa’l-tabyīn* (The Book of Elucidation and

⁶² Athamina (59–60), cited in Jones (17).

⁶³ Swartz (96), cited in Jones (18).

⁶⁴ Ibn al-Ḥājj (13) cited in Jones (18).

⁶⁵ For more on these religious storytellers, see Pellat, “Ḳāṣṣ.”

Explanation), the ninth-century Basran author al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 868/9) provides a list of famous *quṣṣās* which includes a number of well-known religious figures, indicating that their activities had not yet taken on the negative reputation they were to acquire later” (248). Most Islamic authors, such as al-Jāḥiẓ, adopted an attitude of reticence toward the use of fictitious narratives if they were presented as if true. Al-Jāḥiẓ stated in his *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, “if these Arabs presented their stories as parables or fables, it could have been accepted, but to present them as *akhbār*, as real lived facts that they believe in, is unacceptable.”⁶⁶ Three manuals on *ḥisba* (public morality), written in al-Andalus and the Maghreb, portray storytellers as deviant and morally corrupt.⁶⁷ As Jones reminds us, however, “the very notion of ‘deviation’ is contingent upon the prevailing legal theory, the majority opinion within a given legal school, or whether an individual jurist favored or opposed certain acts.”⁶⁸ A *muftī* could always declare legal in new circumstances what had previously been condemned, such as when the *mufti* of Oran expressed support for the Muslims who continued to live under Christian rule, contrary to the view of all major Islamic schools of thought at the time.

It appears that through the praxis of these individual *alfaquies and quṣās* responsible for the transmission of Islamic morals, the Mudéjares and Moriscos constructed a new social system based on modifying a preexisting Islamic model to fit their new circumstances. In Islamic oratorical tradition, collections that served as models for professional preachers were common, although they were drawn from multiple sources rather than from a single respected preacher. Interestingly enough, in al-Andalus and the Maghreb, Jones located only one

⁶⁶ My translation from Geris 171 (“Si ces Arabes-là présentaient ces histoires comme des paraboles/fables, cela aurait pu être accepté, mais présenter ces *akhbār* comme des faits réels vécus et auxquels ils croient, c’est une chose non acceptable.”)

⁶⁷ Lévi-Provençal, cited in Jones.

⁶⁸ Jones also mentions Al-Wansharīsī’s book on juridical response, which illustrates the discrepancies that could emerge around various legal issues.

“manuscript of hortatory sermons by an individual preacher, an anonymous thirteenth-century Mudejar from Aragon, whose poignant reference to being ‘prey to the polytheists in this peninsula’ makes clear the *sitz im leben* of his sermons.”⁶⁹ Jones’s conclusion regarding Western Islamic preaching traditions is telling:

Manuscripts of Andalusī and Maghrebi collections of stories of the prophets as well as the diffusion in al-Andalus and the Maghreb of Ibn al-Jawzī’s preaching manual [...] and homiletic tales provide indirect evidence of storytelling activities in the Muslim West and offset the sparse and often pejorative references to the activities of storytellers recorded in the *fatāwā* and manuals on public morality (*hisba*). (28)

What Jones finds to be only sparse in the Arab-Islamic homiletic tradition materializes in the Aljamiado homiletic culture of the Mudéjares and Moriscos, where the best possible way to transmit religious morals and maximize the clandestine communities’ receptiveness was through homiletic storytelling (*qaṣaṣ*). Moreover, whereas the *quṣāṣ* in Arab-Islamic tradition did not occupy a well-respected position in the Mudéjar and Morisco communities, the content of their preaching—their stories—made it all the way into various codices alongside more authoritative material. The peculiar situation of the Moriscos, who preserved these stories and transmitted them as best they could in makeshift collections, prevents us from drawing too strict an analogy between how Arab-Islamic scholars understood the content of their literature and how Aljamiado authors approached their literary production. As Jones points out:

Not only did Andalusī, Maghrebi, and other Maliki Muslims differentiate between hortatory preachers and storytellers and their respective crafts, but

⁶⁹ Jones (27) citing J. Ribera and M. Asín (i–xxix, 255–56) and referring to the manuscript “Anonymous,” C n. 3, Biblioteca de la Junta, Madrid.

they also sometimes discriminated between them. Thus, while Ibn ‘Abdūn, a twelfth-century Almoravid legist, advocated that a learned *wā‘iz* [preacher] be assigned to preach exhortations in the mosque of Seville [...], *he associated storytellers with fortune-tellers and called for both to be banned*. Conversely, other Maliki jurists, among them, the Andalusī al-Ṭurṭushī and, following him, Ibn al-Ḥājj, argued that since both the *wā‘iz* and the *qāṣṣ* were innovations that had been introduced following the death of the Prophet, *their activities should be severely restricted, if not prohibited altogether.*”⁷⁰ (162–63, emphasis added)

Rather than prohibiting these innovations, the Moriscos welcomed them, not only because of their textual lightness, which must have ensured a better reception by the popular masses, but also because of the mnemonic strategies that they offered (as we will see in chapter 4). These authors were more concerned, quite understandably, with the *what* than with the *how*. Their concern was not for *ḥisba* but for somehow preserving an otherwise doomed culture, and they did so imaginatively, text after text, narrative after narrative. The power of the transmitted word pervades all these narratives, not just the patently religious ones. As Bourdieu reminds us:

Le pouvoir constituant du langage (religieux ou politique) et des schèmes de perception et de pensée qu’il procure ne se voit jamais aussi bien que dans les situations de crise: ces situations *paradoxales, extra-ordinaires*, appellent un discours extra-ordinaire, capable de porter au niveau des principes explicites, générateurs de réponses (quasi) systématiques, les principes pratiques de l’ethos et d’exprimer tout ce que peut avoir d’inouï, d’ineffable la situation créée par la crise. (63) (The constitutive power of language (religious or

⁷⁰ Citing Ibn ‘Abdūn (27–28) and Ibn al-Ḥājj (13).

political) and the schemes of perception and thought that it procures can never be seen as clearly as in situations of crisis. These paradoxical, extraordinary situations call for an extraordinary discourse, capable of bringing to the level of explicit principles, which generate (quasi-)systematic responses, practical principles of the ethos and capable of expressing all that is unimaginable and ineffable about the situation created by the crisis.)

The use and inclusion of these homiletic stories within a corpus composed of canonical texts is even better understood through Bourdieu's approach to heretical discourse:

Le discours hérétique doit non seulement contribuer à briser l'adhésion au monde du sens commun en professant publiquement la rupture avec l'ordre ordinaire, mais aussi produire un nouveau sens commun et y faire entrer, investies de la légitimité que confèrent la manifestation publique et la reconnaissance collective, les pratiques et les expériences jusque-là tacites ou refoulées de tout un groupe. (63) (Heretical discourse must not only contribute to breaking the adherence to the world of common sense by publicly asserting a rupture with the ordinary order, but it must also create a new common sense and include in it the practices and experiences that were tacit or repressed by an entire group up to that point until then and that are invested with the legitimacy that public manifestation and collective recognition confer.)

The *quṣaṣ* were considered, in a way, heretical and unorthodox by authorities in medieval Islamic centers, yet among the Aragonese Morisco community that authored the texts under study, these *quṣaṣ* gained legitimacy through the collective recognition accorded to them by their community. The cultural brokers of the Moriscos, the *alfaquies* treated their invented *quṣaṣ* with considerable attachment, as if, in their efforts to salvage and pass on the remnants of their civilization, every single expression of faith was equally invaluable. Although these

narratives all reflect a process of storytelling used to promote popular religious values, the degree to which they incorporate vernacular culture through entertaining plots blurs the line between the sacred and profane elements, the interplay of which will be uncovered in the following chapters.

2.4.4 Existentialist issues

Critics do not seem able to truly put themselves in the Moriscos' shoes. As noted above, they approach this literature retrospectively with the 1609 expulsion from the Peninsula in mind, whereas our pre-1609 authors and copyists were undergoing an existentialist crisis with their audiences and trying to find a way to live with new realities. The process of *taqiyya*, which most critics translate as "hiding one's faith" and so readily take for granted, is in fact completely unorthodox in Sunni Islam; for the Mudéjares, who adhered to the Maliki *madhab*, one of the most rigid schools of thought in Islam, such behavior was heretical and unacceptable. As Rubiera Mata explains:

La mayor parte de los investigadores que tratan sobre los moriscos han aceptado la idea de que éstos seguían la doctrina islámica de la *taqiyya*, que les permitía negar su fe en caso de peligro, teoría procedente del investigador Louis Cardaillac [...]. Es necesario matizar este concepto, porque el ocultamiento de una creencia ante el peligro de la vida es una doctrina sectaria chií y se refiere al ocultamiento de la pertenencia a esta secta en un medio sunní u ortodoxo, pero no el ocultamiento de la fe musulmana, que comparten chiíes y suníes.⁷¹ (n.p.)

The Aragonese Moriscos who requested the *fatwa* from the *mufī* of Oran made very practical use of it, as shown by the number of extant manuscripts describing how to perform one's

⁷¹ See Cardaillac.

ablutions and prayers without being noticed, but the whole process must have existentially very painful. These people could no longer operate in the sphere to which they had been accustomed or according to the set of laws to which, in their belief system, the universe was supposed to answer. They were paradoxically expected to convert so as to become supposedly integrated into the surrounding society at the same time as they continued to experience segregation by that society. The refrain that I quoted at the beginning of the introduction, now part of a children's game in Morocco, was first sung by the dislocated seventeenth-century Moriscos who settled there: "You will return to the road of Seville; they didn't kill me, nor did they bring me to life with the glass they made me drink." These words expressed the bitterness of those Moriscos who were "given the glass" of conversion but were still unable to find a place in Spain. The conversions did not kill them, but neither did they bring them to life. Their lives were, in effect, thrown into a vacuum in which they were neither allowed to be themselves nor to integrate into the sphere of the other. They projected this anxiety onto their texts. The Moriscos were nothing and nowhere within the world, and "the obstinacy of the 'nothing and nowhere within-the-world' means as a phenomenon that the world as such is that in the face of which one has anxiety" (Heidegger 31). They recovered a sense of meaning by producing cultural artifacts that reminded them of who they were. They found new solutions, new ways of *being* in the world, and their process of doing so is strikingly evident in the narratives they transmitted, in a form of homiletic storytelling that other Islamic authorities despised. They had to elevate this genre to an unprecedented level of respectability because their situation called for it. Such ingenious work hardly deserves to be marginalized as "profane" or "apocryphal" simply because it does not seem to fit with the rest of the Morisco literary corpus. Rather, these narratives mirror the Moriscos' existential struggles, as secular objects acquired sacred value and became intertwined in a fascinating way that intensely reflects the anxiety that they were experiencing.

Chapter 3

Didactically Religious or Entertainingly Profane:

Study and Analysis of a Chapter of the MS 8

of the Fondo Documental de las Cortes de Aragón

*Estorya de la çibdat de cobre*⁷²

Seeking to reconstitute the social life and hardships that the Mudéjares endured before their forced conversion early in the sixteenth century, critics have made a considerable effort to decipher and analyze the religious texts from this culture that have survived. Eschatological and apocalyptic texts have been duly researched, to the detriment to other texts that seemed inconsequential or fortuitous. Yet the wealth of information that these other, largely overlooked texts provide about the people involved in their transmission deserves more attention.

This chapter provides a close reading, analysis, and partial transliteration of an unedited version of a story that permeated the Arab-Islamic imagination during the Middle Ages: “The City of Copper” or “City of Brass.” I will use elements of reception theory and apply a sociolinguistic approach to explore how this story was structured to educate a community functioning as a religious minority. This particular version, despite the fact that it offers themes that shed great light on the Mudéjares and the Moriscos who made later use of it, has surprisingly never been edited or studied.⁷³ The actual process of translation, which

⁷² My approach to this manuscript aims to be thematic rather than codicological, as this story is essential to my broader analysis of the relationship between the sacred and the profane in Aljamiado narratives. I intend to produce an edited edition of this story as a subsequent publication. There does exist some scholarly work on “The City of Brass” and its many versions, even though the work has been more often cited rather than actually studied. See Gerhardt (195–235), Hamori (9–19), Rubiera Mata (63–68), Weber (43–81), Kilito (86–103), and Dakhliya (17–36) for the most pertinent analyses.

⁷³ María José Cervera Frías (147 fn 5) mentioned in 2005 that she was working on an edition of the manuscript containing this version of *La Ciudad de Cobre*, but she has not published it,

remains transparent to us, and the elements of the narrative itself provide unique insights into the didactic process carried out by the *alfaquí* responsible.

In 1481, when the manuscript that contains this story was compiled in Aragon, Granada had not been conquered yet; Mudéjares in Aragon were living in what seemed to be a “stable coexistence” with their Christian neighbors, and there was no sign of imminent change in their situation. Their main concern was therefore to provide their increasingly Romancized community with a literary and cultural inheritance strong enough to allow them to practice their minority faith in a country that they considered their home even after it had fallen into the hands of Christians. Interestingly enough, to promote and protect their religious values, they resorted in this instance to an apparently secular legend that even made its way into *One Thousand and One Nights*. The interplay between the sacred and secular in this Aljamiado-Mudéjar narrative is complex and should be studied in depth, because doing so reveals in fascinating ways how the desires and cultural repertoire of that community were reflected in their literature and literary system. In this aljamiado version of “The City of Brass,” translated from an Arabic original that corresponds to the version of the story as it appears in *One Thousand and One Nights*, the author-translator aimed to use this entertaining tale as a didactic tool to promote religious orthodoxy among members of his community.

In the first part of this chapter, I will analyze the translation process carried out by the author/copyist of the original Arabic text and its Aljamiado translation. In doing so, I will illuminate important details about his translation methodology and his audience. In the second part of the chapter, I will analyze the main textual elements to which the author resorted in order to promote religious orthodoxy among members of his community: the *exempla* and a mysterious male figure named ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad. These textual elements contribute to creating

and no other study, codicological or otherwise, has been written about this particular version of the story.

an entertaining and enticing story that is much more complex than the “fundamentally legal and religious” text Maria José Cervera Fras believes it to be.

3.1 The Manuscript

The version of “The City of Brass” under study here occupies folios 73v to 123r of the miscellany of Calanda, otherwise known as the MS 8 of the Fondo Documental de las Cortes de Aragón, where the story is titled *La estorya de la çibdat de cobre*.⁷⁴ The manuscript contains 162 folios and consists of seventeen parts or chapters. Our story corresponds to the twelfth section and is located between a *hadīz* about Salmān al-Farisī, the first Persian converted to Islam, and a prayer in Arabic by the Prophet Muḥammad. The content of the codex is almost exclusively religious, with the exception of the present version of “The City of Brass.” Maria José Cervera Fras, however, still treats it as “jurídico-religioso” when describing the miscellany of Calanda: “Los temas, como viene siendo habitual en los fondos de libros aljamiados, son fundamentalmente jurídico-religiosos: textos coránicos, oraciones, prácticas de culto y similares. Parece tratarse de la biblioteca de un alfaquí morisco escondida en el momento de la expulsión”⁷⁵ (166). Although the narrative’s message is in fact religious, its author’s method of introducing sacred messages into an entertaining story is much more complex that this statement would lead us to believe.

The copyist of the Arabic original was Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Qalahūrri as-Sinhājī, who completed the codex on Tuesday, July 1481 (886 H). The codex consists of

⁷⁴ All transliterations from *La çibdat de Cobre* presented in this study are my own, followed when necessary by my own Spanish modernization. The codicological analysis of this manuscript goes beyond the scope of this study but will be at the center of my planned edition of this manuscript.

⁷⁵ I believe that the *alfaquí* might have forgotten to take the manuscript with him and was not intending to hide it during the expulsion, as there would have been little reason to hide a manuscript that he almost certainly would never have been able to come back for.

chapters in Arabic (see Figure 2.1) and others, like the one under study, showing an interlineal translation of the text into Aljamiado as depicted in Figure 2.2.

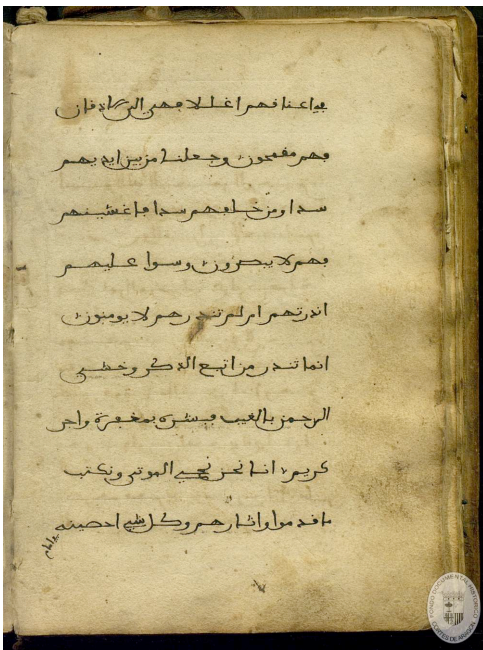


Figure 3.1
A Folio from the Aljamiado Codex MS 8
Written in Arabic

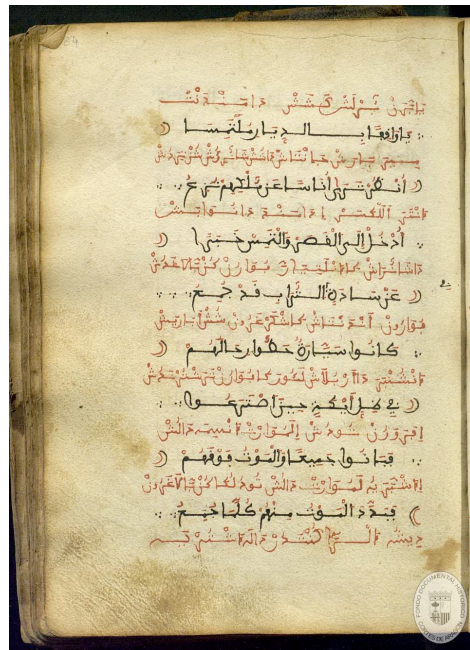


Figure 3.2
A Page from the 1481 Codex
of "The City of Brass."

The first figure shows a folio of a different chapter without the Aljamiado translation, which the *alfaquí* presumably did not have time to or chose not to complete. The *alfaquí* used two different colors of ink: black for Arabic consonants and red for Arabic vowels, the Aljamiado text, occasional corrections, insertions, and marginalia. The folios show a perfect correspondence between the Arabic lines and the Aljamiado lines (one exception being f. 80r, where the *alfaquí* skipped an Arabic line and had to remedy it), indicating a possible desire to use it as a tool for teaching Arabic to his increasingly Romancized community. There is also an evident desire to provide a complete translation of the Arabic original. Despite the presence of a considerable number of literal translations and Arabisms, the *alfaquí* translates every single word, and the result is a complete Romance translation of "The City of Brass," unlike subsequent versions of this story a century later in which many Arabic phrases and words were inserted. The thoughtful process underlying this effort to create an integral

translation is evident through his word substitutions, additions, and corrections, as shown in Table 3.1.

Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes mentions in his preface to *El libro de las batallas: narraciones épico-caballerescas* that we can identify three characteristic features of Aljamiado-Morisco literature: its archaism, as it is much more phonologically and lexically conservative than Christian texts of the same time period; its dialectalism, as it does not follow the norms of the Castilian language; and the abundance of its Arabisms, which reflect the identity of its authors (II, 9). However, the number of Arabisms varies depending on the text, its author, and the surrounding circumstances. In the case under study, it was evidently important for this *alfaquí* to provide his audience with an exclusively Romance version of the story. This need to render the Arabic text in *aljamía* is best illustrated by the following statements made by a Morisco author: “fuese sacado de ‘arabī [árabe] en ‘ağami [aljamía] porque fuese más placiente de la le’ir y-eskoitar en akesta tierra” (qtd. in Fuente Cornejo 227) and “pusele en ‘ağami según la tierra porque meşor lo entiendan los mayors y los menores de Allah” (281).⁷⁶ The version created by our *alfaquí* was most likely intended for students who wanted to learn Arabic, as demonstrated by the explicative marginalia and the effort to provide a Castilian equivalent for every single word even if the result turns out to be completely repetitive (see Table 3.1).

⁷⁶ “I rendered it from Arabic to Romance because it is more pleasant to read and hear in this land” and “I wrote it in Romance, in accordance with the tradition of this land, because that is how elders and children better understand it.”

Table 3.1. Examples of Corrections, Translations and Marginalia Indicating the Author's Romance Language Knowledge and the Translation Process

Corrections	
"el cuydar del di'ablo" f. 105r	corrected to "el art del di'ablo"
"rrespl ^a landi ^y entes" f. 105r	corrected to "f ^e restejantes"
"una to ^w rre" f. 105v	corrected to <i>dos torres</i>
"po ^w dero ^w so" f. 114r	corrected to "ordenador"
"las maravilas" f. 83r	corrected to "las est ^a rañezas"
"y es" f. 90v	corrected to "y era"
"que no es" f. 90v	corrected to "que no había"
Translations	
"no pu ^w di ^w ero ^w n sobre aquello" f.96v	Arabic calque translation
"considramos en-el geña" f. 97r	Arabic calque translation
"yā"	translated as "oh" unlike later versions where <i>yā</i> is kept
"qamāqim"	often kept in Arabic in other later manuscripts, it is here translated as <i>estujes</i> or <i>estuches</i>
"Allāh"	usually kept as such here except f. 88v: " <i>corre la ordenaçi^yones ordenadas del señor</i> "
"wazīruhu"	translated as <i>su al-wazī^r</i> with the double use of article in the aljamiado, "alguacil"
"nuḥās"	translated first as <i>cobre</i> but in f. 96r becomes <i>latón</i>
"amīr"	<i>visorrey</i> or <i>virrey</i> used interchangeably
"kabbarū" f. 106v	translated as " <i>disi^yeron Allāh akbar</i> "
"lūḥ"	Usually translated " <i>tabla</i> " becomes " <i>un allūḥ</i> " in f. 108v
"ti ^y erra que rrespl ^a landía con las flores y rrespl ^a landía con las flores" (f. 80v)	The Arabic is richer: "arḍin talūḥu bil-anwār wa tartajju bil-azhār" which in modern Spanish would be "tierra que resplandecía de flores y vibraba de rosas "
Marginalia	
"C ^a lamolos Allāh y rrespondi ^y eronle y k ⁱ ridoles y libraronse o atemaronse" f. 99v	He added the last verb because he was presumably unsure of the correct translation of the Arabic <i>anfādū</i>
"santificado el señor de los angeles e de l-espíritu (qui ^y ere dezir Jibrīl)" f. 114v	Marginalia adding a name that was not in the Arabic text
"consu ^w élate a virrey que yo esk ⁱ rivo con si ^y et plumas (qui ^y ere dezir que sabía si ^y et lengu ^w ajes)"	Marginalia adding information that was not in the Arabic text

The other Morisco manuscripts containing the story “The City of Brass” are as follows:

1) In Aljamiado

- a. Ms. Biblioteca Nacional Española (BNE) 5305: *Estoria de la ciudad del allatón y de los alqanqames de Çilaymān* (ff. 41–61), chapter VII. The end is missing.⁷⁷
- b. Ms. BNE 5238: *Leyenda de la ciudad de latón*. Fragment.
- c. The Aljamiado-Morisco manuscript of Urrea de Jalón: *Al ḥadīz de la ciudad de latón* (ff. 147r–167r).

2) In Arabic

- a. Ms. CSIC J27: *ḥadīz madīnat an-nuḥās* (ff. 51–70); folio 69 is missing.
- b. Ms. BNE 4998 (ff. 40.43)

The linguistic differences between our version and the one found in the Aljamiado-Morisco manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, for example, are striking, as the version found in Urrea is replete with Arabic words and long Arabic sentences. The motivation of the author/copyist of Urrea must have been different and less centered on linguistic issues, whereas the twofold mission of our *alfaquí* was to teach the Romance vernacular to his audience and to promote the tenets of his religion. The literal translations suggest that his command of Castilian was not optimal, a fact that makes his linguistic efforts all the more evident.

3.2 Background of the Story

The myth of the City of Brass has crossed many Arab-Islamic literary genres, from chronicles to geographical texts and fantastic tales. In the version in *One Thousand and One Nights*, which is similar to the one used by our *alfaquí*, Mūsā ibnu Nuṣayr is asked by the king

⁷⁷ Published by Eduardo Saavedra in “La historia de la ciudad de alatón.”

of Damascus, ‘Abd al-Malik ibnu Marwān, to search for the vessels where Solomon used to imprison the jinns who disobeyed him. Accompanied by his men, the king’s minister (Ṭalib ibn Sahl), and a sheikh called ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad ibn Maṣmūdī, Mūsā goes on his journey and encounters numerous distressing realities along the way: a magnificent but deserted castle where he can find only graves and mysterious inscriptions about the glorious days of people now reduced to ashes; a copper knight; a jinn imprisoned for eternity; and the city of brass that seems impenetrable. Eventually, they find the vessels of Solomon and bring them back to Damascus.

The oldest version of the story is found in an anonymous ninth-century manuscript kept in the Oxford library: *Ta’rīḥ ibn Ḥabīb*.⁷⁸ Unlike more recent versions, it narrates only Mūsā’s journey in search of a copper fortress that he is incapable of penetrating. In all early versions, Mūsā fails to enter the city. Ibn al-Faqīh (d. 903) combines the vessels of Solomon with the city of brass, and the conjunction of these two stories is also found in *One Thousand and One Nights*. Tabarī (838–923), the famous Muslim historian and exegete, even includes the story of the city (without the vessels of Solomon) after his explanation of verse 12 of *sūrat as-Saba’* in the Qur’ān:

And [We subjugated] the wind for Solomon. Its outward journey took a month, and its return journey likewise. We made a fountain of molten brass flow for him, and some of the jinns worked under his control with his Lord’s permission. If one of them deviated from Our command, We let him taste the suffering of the blazing flame. (Q 34:12)

Mas‘ūdī (896–956), another famous historian and geographer, includes the story in his description of the Magrib al-Aqṣā in his *Kitāb murūj ad-ḍahab* [*Book of the Meadows of Gold*]. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406) seriously doubts the authenticity of the

⁷⁸ See Weber’s “La ville de cuivre, une ville d’al-Andalus” for a more detailed account of these early sources.

story and considers it worthy of inclusion in *One Thousand and One Nights*, therefore indicating that its integration within that collection of stories must have been late (73–74).

The story as used by our author is therefore a conjunction of multiple stories that converged to create a single narrative. Studying the resulting product can enable us to observe what Jocelyne Dakhlia calls an articulation between a global and a local culture, along with the integration of a leitmotiv in a cultural context more locally defined (19). The plot of this narrative corresponds to the late Egyptian recension of *One Thousand and One Nights*, but it differs considerably from the other Morisco versions.⁷⁹ Although the story was very popular among that minority, the *maniement* of each version is unique. Even the titles of the different versions present considerable variation: *Estoria de la ciudad del allatón y de los alqanqames de Çilaymān*, *Al ḥadīth de la ciudad de latón*, or *Estorya de la çibdat de cobre*.

One Thousand and One Nights as a whole can hardly be viewed as an overtly didactic text, even if by the tenth century it reputedly came from a respected literary tradition, the moral tale, which included canonical works such as *The Book of Kalīla and Dimna*. The reason for the decline of *One Thousand and One Nights* and its isolation from a more refined type of literature is well explained by André Miquel:

Arabian Nights [was] moving toward the status of second-rate literature, far from scholarly literature, that of the *honnête homme* (*adīb*). Three reasons might argue for this isolation. First is the oral, popular tradition of the tales and their teachings: what they teach might not always have complied with official moral standards. Here we are [...] in an area of freedom which (in order to be free) operates outside official literature. Second, if the separation

⁷⁹ Interestingly enough, critics do not usually view *One Thousand and One Nights* as didactic, echoing the view of the Muslim bibliographer Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad ibn Is’ḥāq al-Nadīm (d. 995) in his *Fihrist*. He mentions *Hazār Afsān*, which is according to him “the first book to be written with this content” (i.e., the story of Shahrāzād) and then goes on to describe the collection of tales as “truly a coarse book, without warmth in the telling” (qtd. in Dodge 713–14).

between the lesson to be delivered and the art with which it was delivered, between seriousness and pleasure, was then clearly held to be the golden rule of any exposition, the tale weighed strongly in favor of pleasure and so set itself outside the rules. Last, far from the literary cenacles, very important persons, and *beaux-esprits*, the tale, unconcerned with social hierarchy, presents and lets speak (without distinction) the rich and the poor, the powerful and the humble, the elites and the nonconformists—a reason for mistrust by the political and intellectual authorities, one must admit. (8)

One Thousand and One Nights, however unsophisticated, managed to survive through the centuries and across borders. André Miquel associates the survival and flourishing of the text alongside the more scholarly literature to

the immense moral crisis that shook the Arabo-Muslim world with the advance of the Turks in the eleventh century and of the Mongols in the thirteenth, which destroyed Baghdad and the Abbasid caliphate. Islam, more exactly Arabic Islam, owed its unity to the stability of this symbol at the head of a community of believers who, after the year 1000, saw it quiver little by little, then disappear: politically speaking the Muslim community had gone. (9)

In Miquel's view, there was a particular fervor to record everything that could serve as a testimony to how great the Arabo-Islamic civilization once was. It is interesting to consider the similar survival of "The City of Brass" alongside canonical and scholarly texts in the Mudéjar manuscript containing this particular version. The text, despite its popular nature—reflected in the story's fantastic components and the level of language used—resonated among the Mudéjar community. Although its language disqualified it from being included in the Arab *belles-lettres* repertoire, it still contained elements that echoed a traditional Islamic

message very much in accord with other homiletic tales that flourished among Muslim populations. Along with the overtly moral message inscribed on various surfaces in the narrative, as will be discussed below, various “nonverbal narrative properties” in this tale also accentuate the Islamic character of the text. These properties are defined by Muhsin al-Musawi as “icons, images, codes, paintings, magic, and food” (250), and they are as functional as loquacity. Additionally, when taken independently, some tales do include a discussion of didactic themes, such as the story of the slave Tawaddud, told on nights 436 to 462.⁸⁰ Taking a different approach to the structure and content of the present narrative allows us to further explore the relationship between this “popular” genre and Islamic precepts and principles.

Describing the nature of Aljamiado literature in 1925, Miguel Asín Palacios declared that

casi toda la literatura aljamiada es obra de traducción o, al menos, de adaptación de originales árabes, orientales en su mayor parte. Cuando se trata de originales árabes, profanos o religiosos, pero de literatura amena, especialmente narrativa, ya el traductor se transforma en adaptador, aunque sin permitirse grandes libertades en la alteración del modelo. (377)

Thus, the process of both adaptation and transmission of knowledge occurring here takes center stage and includes the valorization of sacred tenets through non-sacred elements. This process allowed our *alfaquí* to reach out to his audience on not only a linguistic but also a cognitive and emotional level.

⁸⁰ Research on the slave girl Tawaddud is extensive; see Brémond, Francomano, Talmon, Gerresch, and Rogers.

3.3 Summary of the Story

This story recounts the journey of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr in search of the vessels of Sulaymān (Solomon) at the request of the Muslim king ‘Abd al-Malik. Mūsā is accompanied by an army and by two characters in particular: Ṭālib, the king’s vizier, and the mysterious Sheikh ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad. The journey lasts more than a year and takes them to the City of Copper. Mūsā and his army follow a path revealed to them by the Sheikh, who seems to have access to a divine source of knowledge inaccessible to his companions. They travel for months before discovering a dark land and a magnificent iron castle. Not a single living soul is present, and every door of the castle bears an inscription written in Chaldean that only the Sheikh can read. This narrative scheme is repeated throughout the story along with Mūsā’s emotional response to the messages inscribed on the various surfaces of the story: doors, graves, steles, and even a horse’s teeth.

In that first castle, they see sumptuous belongings but no living people—only graves—and they learn from the inscriptions that all these material things were of no use in the face of death. The fleeting nature of life, the certainty of death, and the corrupting beauty of material things are themes that recur throughout the story like an incantation. When the entourage eventually reaches the City of Brass, again only the Sheikh’s knowledge enables them to enter. Inside the main chamber of the city, they find a gorgeous woman who seems alive but is in fact dead. She is wearing mesmerizing jewelry, and guards stand on each side of her. The woman holds an inscription advising whoever visits the city to take whatever they fancy except the jewels she is wearing. Mūsā respects her wishes scrupulously, but Ṭālib ignores them and is eventually cut in half by one of the guards. Mūsā continues his journey with the rest of the expedition and discovers a tribe who had been converted to Islam by Khidr. The king of the tribe helps him find the vessels of Sulaymān, and Mūsā eventually returns home to tell his adventures to King ‘Abd al-Malik.

This story textualizes in a sophisticated and entertaining way *sūrah* 87, “The Most High,” of the Qur’ān, a Meccan *sūrah* revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad to reassure him that God would help him and to urge him to continue his mission. The revelation reminded the Prophet of the temporary nature of this world through the image of a green pasture that later becomes dark debris. The *sūrah* states:⁸¹

¹ [Prophet], glorify the name of your Lord the Most High, ² who created [all things] in due proportion; ³ who determined their destinies and guided them; ⁴ who brought out the *green pasture* ⁵ then made it dark debris. ⁶ [Prophet], We shall teach you [the Qur’ān] and you will not forget— ⁷ unless God wishes; He knows both what is open and what is hidden— ⁸ We shall ease you towards ease. ⁹ *So remind, if reminding is useful.* ¹⁰ Those who stand in awe of God will heed the reminder, ¹¹ but it will be ignored by the most wicked, ¹² who will enter the Great Fire, ¹³ where they will neither die nor live. ¹⁴ Prosperous are those who purify themselves, ¹⁵ remember the name of their Lord, and pray. ¹⁶ Yet you [people] prefer the life of this world, ¹⁷ even though the Hereafter is better and more lasting. ¹⁸ *All this is in the earlier scriptures, ¹⁹ the scriptures of Abraham and Moses [Mūsā].* (Q 87, emphasis added)

The constant warnings found on every surface in the story are a reminder, “if reminding is useful,” in the sense of “whether or not the warning will help” (Q 87:9). Accordingly, he who ignores those reminders or warnings will enter the Great Fire, like Ṭālib who was struck down by a dead guard after ignoring the reminder inscribed on the stele. The concepts of scripture, writing, recording, learning, and transmitting are all weaved into the journey of Mūsā, whose very name echoes the last verse of this *sūrah*.

⁸¹ Qur’ān 10:24 and Qur’ān 18:45 refer to the same image, but only this *sūrah* combines all the Islamic principles included in the Aljamiado story.

My analysis will indicate the sophisticated way in which this story transmits the sacred message of the *sūrah* through an incredibly entertaining story, deconstructing the paradigm according to which religious Aljamiado-Morisco narratives cannot be entertaining. The protagonist of the story is a secular persona who symbolizes the lost glory of al-Andalus and guides the Mudéjar and Morisco audience through the tenets of their faith. The *alfaquí* could have chosen to simply recite the Qur’ān, but instead he delivers his lesson through a process of homiletic storytelling that takes shape in the example and characterization of Sheikh ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad.

3.4 Analysis

The *alfaquí* reaches out to his audience at the cognitive and emotional level, providing his readers with cultural clues that allow them to identify and then assimilate essential religious tenets: the power of the sacred word, the fleeting nature of this life, and the importance of the next. By using non-sacred elements in the text, such as the inscriptions on the graves and the steles, the *exempla*, and the characterization of Sheikh ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad, he allows the audience to identify with those textual elements and assimilate their overt function, which is to confirm the sacred power of God and His word. Therefore, the study of the sacred and profane in this 1481 version of “The City of Brass” unavoidably places us in the center of the debate revolving around the Robertsonian exegetical hermeneutic “whereby *all* fictional narratives, no matter how secular, were read as moral allegories, ultimately revelatory of Christian *caritas*” (Evans 7).

In the context of crypto-Islamic narratives, the key question is whether all narratives should indeed be read through a Qur’ānic lens, with a focus on the oneness of God, the fleeting nature of life, and the greater value of the next world. I believe that only a case-by-case analysis can lead us to a better understanding of the social and even personal realities of

these *alfaquies* and their audience. This particular narrative should not be approached one-dimensionally as legal-religious or simply an explanation of Islamic tenets; it is a sophisticated metafiction that uses a secular persona dear to the Mudéjares and Moriscos, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, to transmit the Qur’ānic message. This methodology would seem amenable to a Robertsonian approach. However, it also enables us to advance the discussion of whether all Aljamiado-Morisco texts can be catalogued as religious and extend it to the realm of Morisco crypto-Islamic literature. Despite belonging to the *One Thousand and One Nights* repertoire, this story calls for application of a Qur’ānic exegetical hermeneutic, according to which all the protagonists’ fears and questions can be answered by one of the articles of the Islamic faith: the uniqueness of God as creator of all things and beings. I do not wish to argue that all Morisco literature must be read through this lens, but, rather, that individual case-by-case study is needed to assess the degree of religiosity of a given text. In “The City of Brass,” the figures of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr and the Sheikh Adb aṣ-Ṣamad, an otherwise unknown character, serve as triggers that allow the establishment and valorization of the sacred word. In this sense, this story fits the genre of homiletic storytelling described in chapter 2.

3.4.1 *Exempla*

To my knowledge, scholarship on “The City of Brass” has yet to consider the readily evident parallels between Mūsā’s journey and wisdom literature. The inscriptions on the graves and steles that Mūsā encounters in his journey tell stories about their authors and offer lessons to be learned. For instance, when the expedition reaches the first castle, Mūsā is taken by what he sees and even more so by what he *reads*:

*y era mi cuydar [pensar] que no había ad-aquelo derroisión [destrucción]
dekía que saposentó con nos el derroidor [destructor] de las sabores y de las
vidas y el rrapador de los niños jicos y los puro onb^eres ancí^yanos aquellos*

*que no ap^vada a pobre por su pobreza ni rrico por su rriqueza y éramos en-
aqueste alcáçar seguros y con-el esp^eleitantes dekía que s-aposentó connos el
judgo del señor de las jentes y tomonos el-apeli^vdo de la verdat dec^alarada y
éramos que cada día moría de nos una conpañã. (f. 90v)*

Seeing this inscription that the deceased king had his scribes write “*por-amonestación y a tomar en senp^olo*” causes Mūsā to cry and lose consciousness. This sometimes violent reaction corresponds to Mūsā’s assimilation of a lesson to be learned; upon regaining consciousness, he writes it down “*pu^wes mandó eskⁱribir aquello*” (f. 99r). The knowledge that he has just acquired must be transmitted, and this transferability of knowledge—and the necessity of transmitting it—are reminiscent of wisdom literature and the concept of *translatio studii*. Bonium, in *Bocados de Oro*, follows the same process:

Aquí comienza el Bonium a escribir todas las cosas que oyó decir [...] . E éste le hobo luego recabdo, e consejóle que pues había sabor de aprender que pugnase de poner por escrito las palabras de los sabios filosofos, que supiese de cierto que en todo tiempo que las quisiese ver y oir o leerlas por sí, si leer las sopiese, que muy grand pro sacaría dellas. (20)

The *exempla* present in the text have both intratextual and extratextual functions, which can be overt or covert:

The overt function is often spelled out by the authors themselves and recognized by their public as well. However, the exemplum can also have a function which is not always readily perceived. The covert function, either unconscious or deliberately disguised by the author, is more difficult to identify but no less real than the overt one. Less conspicuous than the ostensible reasons usually given, covert motivations for telling exempla are often rooted deep in the teller’s and audiences’ subconscious. Often, as in the

case of the joke and the bawdy tale, their *raison d'être* is also determined by their social and political backdrop. (Kaufmann 117)

The intratextual covert function reveals more about the author's possible intentions. In the example cited above, the king's experience functions as an empirical proof that allows Mūsā to understand the futility of this material life and the inevitability of death. The intertextual or, rather, the *intercultural* covert function is thus crucial.

The intercultural intertextuality of the inscriptions and *exempla* takes into account the socio-historical and cultural codes that have shaped their production, therefore giving the audience access to a culture with which they might not be familiar with but with which they still share a common experience.⁸² The interculturality in question here can be apprehended through the concept of *contemptus mundi* (contempt for the world), which permeates the story, and it is also strikingly reminiscent of another *exempla* found in a medieval English compendium: *The Blickling Homilies*. In this latter source, in the homily titled "The End of the World Is Near," the anonymous author uses the *exemplum* called "The Man and His Best Friend's Ghost" to underscore the perishable nature of worldly things and the permanence of the next world. In the *exemplum*, the spirit of the dead tells his friend:⁸³

Behold dust and dry bones where thou before didst see limbs, after flesh's kind, fair to look upon. O my friend and kinsman, be mindful of this, and convince thyself that thou art now what I was formerly, and after a time thou shalt be what I now am. Remember this, and know that my riches which I had yore are all vanished and come to naught, and my dwellings are decayed and perished. (112)

⁸² In her preface to *Crossing Borders: Love Between Women in Medieval French and Arabic Literature*, Sahar Amer speaks of an "expansion of the notion of intertextuality" that "invites henceforth a consideration not only of the linguistic and textual context (the intertextual), but also the sociohistorical and cultural codes inscribed within each text (the intercultural)" (xi).

⁸³ Also cited in Kaufmann (120).

Similarly, before entering the city, Mūsā comes across seven steles. On the first one, the inscription reads:

*oh fī^yjo de Ādam qué negligent eres de los fechos y yel vaso de las mu^wertes
senb^araño y tú dekía po^wco sarás cortado pu^wes mira por tu per^esona oh
hermano ante de la fīⁿ y yante del p^elegamen [llegada] de tu su^wert y de las
de su benedición y pecaños te deti^yen donde son los rreyes de sali^yen [oriente]
aquellos qu-enseñorearon las villas y forçaro^wn los servidores y farawaron
[construyeron] los castillos y manteni^yeron las huestes [ejércitos] y yestoles
deçendi^yó con-ellos pora Allāh el dezaidor de las sabores y yermañor de las
posentaç^yones y poblaños mudaronse de la sanp^olora de los alcaçares a l-
angosteza de las fuesas.*

The similarity of the two messages shows the cross-cultural nature of wisdom literature and the porosity of frontiers as far as the transfer of that literature is concerned. The lesson of our story reinforces both *contemptus mundi*, which is clearly spelled out in the text as “*pues no te engane el mundoy su abelimen [adorno]*” (f. 89r), and the omnipotence of God. Upon hearing from the various *exempla* whom he encounters, Mūsā unequivocally assimilates the message and the world suddenly grows smaller in his eyes (“*apokeç^yósele el mundo en sus ojos,*” f. 85v).

The use of *exempla* in the present story should be no surprise, as it reminds us of other works of wisdom literature that have been assimilated in and transited through medieval Arab-Islamic literature, such as *Sendebār* and *Kalīla wa Dimna*. It also fits well with the fact that *‘ilm*, to which the closest parallel term in English would be “knowledge,” is even sometimes equated with Islam itself. As Rosenthal reminds us:

There is no branch of Muslim intellectual life, or Muslim religious and political life, and of the daily life of the average Muslim that remained

untouched by the all-pervasive attitude toward “knowledge” as something of supreme value for Muslim being. *‘Ilm* is Islam, even if the theologians have been hesitant to accept the technical correctness of this equation. The very fact of their passionate discussion of the concept attests to its fundamental importance for Islam. (2)

The complexity of the text under study resides precisely in the entertaining nature of the text (an expedition in search of Solomon’s vessels, treasures to be found and taken home) and the sacred values that it simultaneously promotes. Dakhliya even speaks of a surcharge of meaning that discourages any unequivocal interpretation (17). But I find the message of the various *exempla* in the story to be consistently clear, centered on the transience of this life, the importance of the next life, and the power of God. Moreover, the use of precise names and historically identifiable ancestors allows the author to invest the text with authority. The beautiful queen appearing to be alive on her deathbed is Farwa, daughter of Šadād and granddaughter of ‘Ād. The people of ‘Ād, a tribe of antiquity who was annihilated because of its impiety, is frequently cited in the Qur’ān (Arié 250). Our Morisco scribe attributes the wisdom of the written word to a past civilization, the Chaldeans. Before they go on their journey, Ṭālib refers to the description of the city of brass in a book written by a certain al-Muṭālib: “*dī’so el virrey Mūsā a Ṭālib fī’jo de Sahli qué son aquestos fu’egos dī’so a él aquesta es la çibdat de llatón tal-e su senb^alança en-e-libro de al-muṭālib,*” just as Cervantes, a little less than two centuries later, would attribute the authorship of the second part of *Don Quixote* to Cide Hamete Benengeli. The name of this fictitious author, al-Muṭālib, is also very telling, as it is constructed from the same root as the name Ṭālib, the latter meaning “seeker” and the former meaning “claimer.” Although the name is common and thus one must hesitate to conclude too much from its use, the desire to invest authenticity into the narrative permeates the work.

The *exempla* also have two extratextual functions: an overt one, which is didactic, and a covert, cathartic one. All the authors of the inscription are dead; even Ṭālib dies after failing to follow Queen Farwa's injunction not to touch anything that is on her ("*no tome nada de lo que ha sobre mí quello es p^oroviçión del mundo,*" f. 111r), immediately executed by the two deceased slaves. Mūsā and his men, on the other hand, are very much alive and enjoy the treasures that they take back with them to the king of Damascus. Mūsā even changes his way of life for the better as he retreats from the world to adore God: "*se admeti^yó con su per^esona de los k^ereados y quedó que adoraba a Allāh dekía que le vino la çerteficçión*" (f. 117v).

3.4.2 *Exempla* and the Marvelous

The marvelous, as a means of introducing supernatural elements, seems to be at the center of the narrative, because the plot itself is based on the quest for the vessels at a location where Sulaymān imprisoned the jinns who disobeyed him. At the very beginning of the narrative, the reader learns of the existence of the vessels and what is inside them: a blue smoke and strange "*más imposible*" beings, the jinns. For a Muslim, such jinns exist as authenticated by the Qur'ān, but they belong to an unseen world. Moreover, as Weber puts it:

Pour une conscience arabo-musulmane de l'époque classique, le merveilleux était facilement intégré dans la réflexion religieuse. Le croyant ou le savant ne voyait pas de contradiction ni une atteinte à la logique des choses en parlant d'animaux, de plantes ou de réalisations humaines appartenant au merveilleux. Tout être, toute chose, tout événement qui pouvait émerveiller l'homme était considéré comme un signe qui pouvait conduire sur le chemin de la reconnaissance de la grandeur et de la puissance divine. (57) (During the classical period, the marvelous was easily integrated within the religious reflection of an Arab-Muslim consciousness. Neither believer nor scholar saw

it as contradictory or illogical to speak of animals, plants, or human achievements pertaining to the realm of the marvelous. Every being, every thing, every event that could amaze people was considered a sign showing the path to the acknowledgement of the divine greatness and power.)

The jinns themselves are not a threat to the concerned believer of the time; they are in fact part of God's creation, rendered invisible to the human eye after the fall of man. The logic behind this perspective is similar to that one adopted by al-Jāhiz (776–868) in his *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* (*The Book of the Animals*) and Qazwīnī (1203–1283) in his *'Ajā'ib al-Maḥlūqāt* (*Wonders of Creation*): if God created the world and populated it with strange phenomena, it was because he wanted men with reason to decipher these signs and recognize God's greatness (Weber 58). Qazwīnī even gives the following definition:⁸⁴

L'émerveillement, c'est la perplexité qui s'empare de l'homme par suite de son incapacité à connaître la cause de telle chose, ou la façon d'agir sur elle (l'ambiguïté des pronoms autorise aussi la traduction: la façon dont la chose agit sur lui). [...]

L'émerveillement tombe à cause de la familiarité et de la vision fréquente. [...] L'étrange (*gharīb*) est tout phénomène merveilleux qui arrive rarement et s'écarte des habitudes connues et des spectacles courant. (31, 35, 38) (Amazement is the perplexity that seizes men when they are confronted with their incapacity to find the reason behind something, or the way to affect it (the ambiguity behind the uses of the [Arabic] pronouns [in Qazwīnī's quote] also allows the following translation: or the way it affects them). [...]

The amazement decreases because of the familiarity and the

⁸⁴ Translated from Arabic to French by Akroun in *L'Étrange et le merveilleux dans l'Islam médiéval: actes du colloque tenu au Collège de France à Paris*.

frequency of the vision. [...] The strange (*gharīb*) is any marvelous phenomenon that happens rarely and shifts away from known customs and common spectacles.)

These jinns within the narrative, therefore, merely represent an incentive to follow the right path so that we can avoid the jinns' fate, which they brought upon themselves by their own disobedience. In a fashion quite similar to how monsters were used in travel literature, these jinns are there to *dissuade*. Monsters did not exist, but they could have existed. In medieval Islamic iconography, monsters were used to deter travelers; there was no encouragement to learn more about those supernatural beings. Monstrous races were meant to valorize the center of authority as the legitimate source of truth, represented in the narrative through the caliphs, the travelers, and the heroes (Caiozzo 63). As Aristotle said, the monster is counter to "most cases" but not against nature taken in its totality (Kappler 207). In the same way, the *'ifrīt* (jinn) here goes against anything Mūsa and his crew have ever seen, but it does not go against God's creation in its totality.

The marvelous is present in the text itself and is linked to the assimilation of the *exempla* by Mūsā. It is therefore a textual marvel, a signal. As Dubost puts it:

Le mot *merveille* joue d'abord le rôle d'un signal. Il annonce ou commente certains passages de l'histoire narrée qui résistent à l'épreuve de vérité, à ce contrôle qui double en permanence l'acte de lecture sans que le lecteur en prenne pleinement conscience. L'entrée du signal *merveille* a pour premier effet de suspendre provisoirement une certaine disposition, celle de la lecture, ou de l'écoute, référentielle. [...] Terme important du métalangage de la narration, le mot *merveille* peut marquer un retour de l'énonciation sur l'énoncé destiné à signaler que les événements ont changé de nature. [...] Le mot *merveille* signale très nettement après coup le passage à une autre série

événementielle dans laquelle la causalité humaine est inopérante. (64) (The word *marvelous* first plays the role of a signal. It announces or comments on some parts of the narrated story that resist the test of truth, and the control that continuously accompanies the act of reading without the reader knowing about it. At first, the input of the *marvelous* signal temporarily suspends a certain referential disposition in the reader or the listener. [...] As an important term belonging to the metalanguage of narration, the word *marvelous* can represent an expression intended to indicate that the nature of events has changed. [...] The word *marvelous* clearly signals that what follows is a series of events in which normal processes of human causation are not operative.)

Table 3.2 shows the instances where the word *maravilla* (“marvelous”) is used in this text. In most of these cases, the term is associated with Mūsā and his cognitive and emotional processes, and this connection has extratextual repercussions for the reader or listener’s own emotions. The reader or listener will therefore completely identify with Mūsā when the latter reaches the acme of his amazement (“*y se maravilló el cabo de la maravi^ylla,*” f. 102v) after reading the inscriptions on the seven steles. The messages and lessons of the *exempla* are more marvelous in Mūsā’s eyes than the *‘ifrīt* himself: the latter tells him, “*mi estoria es maravi^ylla y mis nu^wevas es est^arañeza*” (f. 94r), but his story fails to have the intended effect, and the expedition just asks for directions and travels on. The marvelous in the text therefore allows the author to place even more emphasis on the content of the steles, the *exempla*, and the didactic goal of displaying the greatness of God and the sacredness of his word.

Table 3.2. The Marvelous as a Textual Signal within the Narrative

<i>“gentes que no entendían nuestro hablar y su formamen era maravi^yla”</i> (f. 74v)	when Ṭālib ibnu Sahl narrates the tale of his adventures
<i>“en-ela habe kabila alta cu^wando la vi^yo el virrey Mūsā maravilose de lo el cabo de la maravi^yla”</i> (f. 81r)	when they arrived near the first castle that resembled smoke yet was made of iron and copper and had a tall dome
<i>“apost^yéntate coñas en-aqueste lugar que no nos mudaremos dekía que hayamos mirado las est^arañezas y sus maravilas”</i> (f. 83r)	when they are about to enter the castle
<i>“diso a él el puro onbre si ent^arases en-l-alcáçar verías maravi^yla”</i> (f. 85v)	just before entering
<i>“mi estoria es maravi^ylla y mis nu^wevas es est^arañeza”</i> (f.94r)	the <i>‘ifrīt</i> imprisoned by Sulaymān
<i>“miraro^wn a ella y quedó el visorrey Mūsā pensoso maravillado en su vazíeza de los abitantes y su so^wleđat”</i> (f. 98r)	overlooking the city of copper
<i>“y se maravilló el cabo de la maravi^ylla”</i> (f. 102v)	after reading the seven steles
<i>“Y paróse el virrey pensoso maravillado del fecho dellos”</i> (f. 107v)	after seeing the lifeless city of copper full of dead people who appeared alive
<i>y maravillose el visorrey della el fi^yn de la maravi^ylla.</i> (f. 108v)	when he meets the deceased queen on her bed

3.4.3 Sheikh Abd aṣ-Ṣamad

The second non-sacred element in this story that promotes the value of the sacred tenets of Islam is Sheikh Abd aṣ-Ṣamad. He is described in the text as a *“vi^yejo anti^ygo que ya habe experimentado todo peligro y no ha cesado que demostr^ara to^wda carrera y a él habe coneçenç^ya con los caminos”* (f. 77r) and *“un vi^yejo anti^ygo en-el diyen que ya conoçía los años y los días”* (f. 77v). But this *viejo* is referred to throughout the narrative as “shaykh” in

Arabic, which our *alfaquí* consistently renders in Aljamiado as “*puro onbre*.” In the manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, he is called “viejo” or “sheikh.” I contend that this use of “*puro onbre*” by our *alfaquí* is not fortuitous; rather, it allowed the translator or adaptor to create an intertextual association between this wise and mysterious character and another one, Khidr.

Khidr is a mysterious figure who made its way into Qur’ānic exegesis, the prophetic tradition, and the stories of the prophets (*Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā’*). He is mentioned in the Qur’ān, though not by name, in *surat al-Kahf* (18:60–82) as having access to knowledge that unavailable even to the prophet Mūsā (Moses). He is described as “one of Our [i.e. God’s] servants—a man to whom We had granted Our Mercy and whom We had given knowledge of Our own” (18:65). Early exegetes gave him the name “al-Khidr” because of his ability to revive things and make them green, or *akhḍar* in Arabic (Omar 168).⁸⁵ In similarly miraculous fashion, at the start of the journey toward the city of copper, Sheikh ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad admits not knowing where they are but expresses confidence that God will eventually show them the way: “*y dī’só no sé mas enpero andemos par-aventura Allah nos-adereçara y nos gui’ara al camino por su potentat*” (f. 80v). His intuitive knowledge is reminiscent of the unnamed companion of the Prophet Mūsā in *surat al-Kahf*.

The similarities between the journey of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr and the journey of the Prophet Mūsā in *sūrat al-Kahf*, though never noted previously, are quite intriguing. Indeed, they may well be one reason why our *alfaquí* decided to include this narrative in his collection, even though it was part of the *One Thousand and One Nights* collection of tales. The portion of the *sūra* to which I refer reads as follows:

⁶⁰ Moses said to his servant, “I will not rest until I reach the place where the two seas meet, even if it takes me years!”⁶¹ but when they reached the place

⁸⁵ For a more detailed analysis of the figure of al-Khidr, see Omar, “Khidr in the Islamic Tradition,” and Wolper, “Khidr and the Politics of Place: Creating Landscapes and Continuity.” For an account of Moses’ encounter with Khidr, see Johns, “Moses in the Qur’ān: Finite and Infinite Dimensions of Prophecy.”

where the two seas meet, they had forgotten all about their fish, which made its way into the sea and swam away.⁶² They journeyed on, and then Moses said to his servant, “Give us our morning meal! This journey of ours is very tiring,”⁶³ and [the servant] said, “Remember when we were resting by the rock? I forgot the fish—Satan made me forget to pay attention to it—and it [must have] made its way into the sea.” “How strange!”⁶⁴ Moses said, “Then that was the place we were looking for.” So the two turned back, retraced their footsteps,⁶⁵ and found one of Our servants—a man to whom We had granted Our mercy and whom We had given knowledge of Our own.⁶⁶ Moses said to him, “May I follow you so that you can teach me some of the right guidance you have been taught?”⁶⁷ The man said, “You will not be able to bear with me patiently.⁶⁸ How could you be patient in matters beyond your knowledge?”⁶⁹ Moses said, “God willing, you will find me patient. I will not disobey you in any way.”⁷⁰ The man said, ‘If you follow me then, do not query anything I do before I mention it to you myself.’” (Q 18:60–70)

They go on their way and get into a boat, but the man makes a hole in it. Moses reacts with surprise, to which the man replies, “Did I not tell you that you would never be able to bear with me patiently?” (Q 18:72). They then meet a young boy, whom the man kills. Moses cannot tolerate this behavior and questions the man again, but he replies in the same way as previously. Moses, feeling sorry, tells him that if he ever questions him again, the man can banish him from his company. They travel on to a town where they ask the inhabitants for food; the request for hospitality is denied, but as they leave they see a damaged wall that the man repairs. Moses again speaks up, telling the man that he could have been paid for that work. The man responds that the two must part ways, but first he explains his strange behaviors. He says that the boat belonged to needy people who depended on it, and that it

would have been seized by a king had he not made it less than perfect. He further explains that the dead young boy was going to grow up and make his parents suffer, and that the wall needed to be repaired because underneath it was a buried treasure that the father of two orphans had left for them to use when they were older. This intuitive knowledge of the wise man, referred to in the Qur'ān as *'ilm al-kitāb* (knowledge of the Book), was greater than that of Moses, who had been given the law, a different kind of knowledge..

Similarly, Mūsā in our story is a believer but has limited knowledge, unlike the “*puro onbre*” who intuitively knows that God will show them the way and perceives how to enter the impenetrable city. For our translator, the sheikh is *pure*, i.e., in the proper state for gaining access to sacred knowledge or performing sacred acts such as praying, touching the Qur'ān, or fasting during *ramaḍan*.⁸⁶ Moreover, the Prophet Moses in the Qur'ān is limited and cannot stop himself from questioning the wise man, just as Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr in our story repeats the same action again and again when confronted by the content of the inscriptions. In an interesting approach that he himself describes as incongruous, Jean-Patrick Guillaume applies Georges Dumézil's trifunctional system to the plot of “The City of Brass,” seeing Sheikh 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad as the “administration du sacré” (administration of the sacred) who communicates with sacred beings such as the jinns, whereas Mūsā interacts with humans and occupies the warrior function in Dumézil's pattern (Dumézil 526). Guillaume himself finds the “sacredness” of the jinn difficult to define, but Guillaume's detection of an administration of the sacred in the text and its association with the sheikh character is very pertinent (110). There is indeed a link between the non-sacred figure of the sheikh and the sacred, but it resides in the sheikh's ability to use his intuitive knowledge, not his ability to speak to the jinn. God bestowed upon him this intuitive knowledge (“whom We had given knowledge of Our own”), and he uses the name of God to penetrate the impenetrable.

⁸⁶ On the definition of the sacred in Islam, see chapter 2.

Our *alfaquí* and his audience were very familiar with the figure of Khidr. In fact, the text mentions him by name as the person responsible for converting the last tribe whom the expedition meets, the one whose king shows them the vessels of Solomon. The king says to Mūsā that “*sale a nos de aquesta mar en cada ora una per^esona de ferosa fegu^wra y sobre-l rropas ferosas y-el queba [camina] sobre l-agu^wa y dī^yze oh fī^yjos de Ādam dezi^yd lā ilāha illa Allāh Muḥammad rrasūlu Allāh*” (f. 113v), and when asked the name of that person, the king says, “*al-ḥaḍīr [Khidr] sobre-l sea la salvación.*” But he also tells Mūsā that this person never came back. There is therefore a strong possibility that he could also be the person accompanying Mūsā and helping with the latter’s own conversion. This multitude of connections, which appeals to the mind’s associative power, makes the figure of the “*puro onb^ere,*” even though profane, a powerful communicator of the sacred.

3.4.4 The Sacred Word

The sacred words that ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad pronounces, “*en-el nonb^ere de Allāh el g^arandísimo honrrado en-el nonb^ere de Allāh el pī^yadoso de la pī^yedad*” (f. 104v), grant him success where everybody else has failed, and he penetrates the impenetrable. This particular site, the city, is not the usual enchanted or cursed castle that the knight in shiny armor can liberate by fighting monsters or demons.⁸⁷ Rather, it presents an invisible and unforeseen shield that must be overcome by understanding the power of the word of God, a power given only Sheikh Abd aṣ-Ṣamad in this story.

A few verses from the Qur’ān are cited in the text and translated by our author, such as “*paraventura en que-squivaréis cosa y es mechor a vosotros y paraventura en que amáis cosa y es mala para vosotros*” (f. 82r), which our Aragonese *alfaquí* uses as a translation of the

⁸⁷ Such a plot was not unknown to the Moriscos; see “El-alḥadīz del ‘Alkázar del Oro,’ I la estori^ya de la kulu^webra kon ‘Alī ibnu Ṭalib,” edited by Galmés de Fuente in *El libro de las batallas*.

verse 216 of *sūrat al-Baqara* (The Cow) in the Qur’ān: “You may dislike something although it is good for you, or like something although it is bad for you” (2:216). Sacred figures, Sulaymān (Solomon) and Nūḥ (Noah), are also mentioned. Sacred numbers, three and seven, are used repeatedly. Wherever they go, they are greeted and hosted for three days before moving on; after failing to find a door to the city, they rest for three days; to open the door to the city, the sheikh has to twist the copper knight’s fingers three times; the black king hosts them for three days before giving them the vessels. The sheikh knows seven languages (“*esk^lriv[e] con sⁱ’et plumas,*” meaning “*que sabía sⁱ’et lengua^wajes*” f. 83v); while Mūsā is lost in his thoughts on the mountain near the city, he suddenly sees seven steles; Farwa and her subjects spent seven dreadful years before passing away. Peter Chelkowski explains the importance of the number seven in Islam: “In Islam, seven is called the first perfect number. Combined of three and four, it is geometrically expressed as a triangle and a square. Traditionally there are seven seas and seven climes or geographical areas” (113). Yet all these sacred elements are symbols, and their intratextual and intertextual functions are not as extensively elaborated as the two non-sacred elements noted previously, the *exempla* and the *puro onb^ere*.

The complex interplay between sacred and secular in this Aljamiado-Mudéjar narrative reflects the desires and cultural repertoire of the community that made use of it. The version of “The City of Brass” that our *alfaquí* used corresponds to the one found in *One Thousand and One Nights*, which is far more elaborate and fanciful than earlier versions. The explanation for this choice could be, of course, that he did not have access to any other version. Nonetheless, the fact that this version belonged to an imaginary collection of tales did not prevent him from using it for didactic purposes, as he could rework this entertaining story into a narrative that addressed the religious needs of his community and promoted its most sacred values: the importance of the afterlife and the power of the word of God.

Chapter 4

Qur'ānic Authority and Morisco Imagination

in Two Morisco Pseudo-Hadiths

and a Cautionary Tale

The practices of any group of religious believers can be fully understood only if they are studied within their own geographic and historical context. The Islams that the Moriscos practiced, often referred to as crypto-Islam, allowed them to both represent the sacred figure of the Prophet and modify it at will to promote values that were important to them. As we will see, the liberties that Morisco authors took in characterizing the Prophet are striking. They reveal a familiarity, ease, and confidence very different from the reverential fear that some twenty-first-century Muslims have chosen to adopt when dealing with the Prophet's figure. Morisco authors revisited—or, more precisely, manipulated—historical events and reinvented parts of the life of Muḥammad in a way that is foreign to many modern Muslims, who would condemn such treatments as blasphemy.

These Moriscos went so far as to invent pseudo-hadiths recounting fictitious events from the Prophet's life. The characterization of the Prophet in the second pseudo-hadith studied in this chapter even goes against what we know of his personality. We are therefore observing a Morisco attitude toward the Prophet that is almost diametrically opposed to that adopted by their twenty-first-century coreligionists.⁸⁸ Such an attitude is in fact reminiscent of that of the *quṣṣāṣ* who were involved in originating the *qiṣāṣ al-anbiyā'* (Stories of the Prophets) and who were respected as commentators on the Qur'ānic narratives about the

⁸⁸ For more on these representation of the Prophet, see Nef and Van Renterghen's *Muhammad*, Naef's *Ya-t-il une question de l'image en islam?* and Gruber's article "Between Logos (Kalima) and Light (Nur): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting."

prophets. These voices, however, soon lost their credibility precisely because of their tendency to combine Qur'ānic passages with apocryphal traditions about the Prophet.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the preservation of such fictitious accounts by Mudéjares and Moriscos alongside the official canon shows an attachment to these stories that suggests that their value was higher than that of mere entertainment. Montaner Frutos reminds us:

Apartados de las mezquitas, los *quṣṣāṣ* fueron adornando paulatinamente esos relatos piadosos con elementos anecdóticos y maravillosos, atractivos para el public indocto, pero taxativamente rechazados [por] los alfaquíes rechazados o doctores de la ley islámica, lo que llevó al rechazo oficial de sus actividades, que llegaron a prohibirse, aunque infructuosamente (“Literatura Aljamiada” 52)

Our Morisco *alfaquíes*, far from denigrating these stories, elevate them to the level of a didactic tool, used to teach what they considered essential to their faith, just as the *quṣṣāṣ* did before them. The sacred images of the Prophet and the Qur'ān are intertwined with fictitious stories and secular characters to create vivid images in the mind of the audience, images that they could much more easily memorize.

The Aljamiado-Morisco narratives titled *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella* and *El ḥadīz de la sierpe*, analyzed in this chapter, manipulate the sacred figure of the Prophet and intertwine it with fictional and secular characters (a little girl, a woman, and a snake) to expose, negotiate, and deal with popular issues. The authors of these two stories simultaneously rework and reinvent history by wrapping their faith in accounts of fictitious

⁸⁹ See Montaner Frutos, “La literatura aljamiada” (51) for a brief discussion.

events.⁹⁰ They draw on the authoritative power of the traditional hadiths to infuse their narratives with power.

As Aisha Musa reminds us in the introduction to her *Hadīth as Scripture: Discussions on the Authority of Prophetic Traditions in Islam*:

Hadīth are revered by the vast majority of Muslims as the second revelatory source of law and guidance in Islam. Written collections of *Hadīth* date from the late second and early third centuries after Muḥammad's migration from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE. The *Hadīth* are the only vehicle through which, according to the vast majority of Muslims, we can access the Prophetic Sunna: that which Muḥammad said and did, and of which he approved or disapproved. As such, these stories have been instrumental in shaping the development of Islam as we know it in its various forms. (1)

The *alfaquíes* draw on their cultural repertoire of the sunna of the Prophet and use its power over Islamic audiences to transmit values that correspond to their own socio-historical context. Moreover, as we will see, Morisco authors not only showed innovation in their literary production, but could also censor previously existing texts. To demonstrate these processes, I will also analyze a narrative that surprisingly has received no attention from critics, even though its story line echoes literary topoi that have crossed cultural frontiers during the Middle Ages, such as unrequited love, go-betweens, and witchcraft. This narrative, titled *El ḥadīẓ de los dos enamorados*, was transliterated by Federico Corriente Córdoba in his *Relatos píos y profanos del MS. Aljamiado de Urrea de Jalón*. Rather than following Corriente Córdoba's editorial choice of a title, here I will refer to the narrative as *El ḥadīẓ de Hindi y Bishri*, using the names of the two protagonists. The text itself makes no reference to

⁹⁰ I have based my modernization of *El ḥadīẓ del árabe y la doncella* on the transliteration of Hegyi and my modernization of *El ḥadīẓ de la sierpe* on the transliteration of Corriente Córdoba. I also include the modernization of all the narratives used in my study in appendices A-F.

enamorados, and in fact the love was unrequited in our version and therefore it would be misleading to use this term in the title.

4.1 *El ḥadīṡ del árabe y la doncella* (BN MS 5.305 63v-51v)

4.1.1 Summary of the Story

While the Prophet Muḥammad is sitting outside a mosque, the angel Gabriel appears to him and instructs him to have one of his knights travel two leagues from the city. The next day, the Prophet asks Bilāl (first muezzin and loyal companion) to find Silmān (the first Persian convert to Islam) and request that he ride two leagues from the city to bring him a man whose story includes “marvels.” As agreed upon, Silmān rides away, and two leagues from the city he sees the man in question: “un árabe muy grande, largo, recio, espaldudo, grueso de muslos; tenía una mirada tan espantable que parecía de las compañías de ‘Ād, su espada desenvainada corriendo sangre.” Silmān, as soon as he sees the man, becomes frightened and rushes back to the city. On his way, he meets ‘Alī ibnu abī Ṭālib (cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet), who asks him whether he has fulfilled his mission. Silmān tells him about the fearsome man, and ‘Alī goes to meet him. Not frightened at all, ‘Alī engages in a long battle with the man, but as he is about to kill him, Silmān intervenes and tells him that his story holds marvels and that ‘Alī must take him alive to the Prophet. Once in the presence of the Prophet, the man tells his story.

He came from a town of unbelievers called Ṣṣagurakā, where it was customary to kill a male firstborn with a sword and to cut the throat of a newborn girl. He married a cousin of his and they had a little girl; he wanted to cut her throat in accordance with tradition, but his wife begged him to wait until her seventh birthday. One day, however, the little girl approached him and started asking him a series of questions about her “lord,” her mother’s lord, and her father’s lord. When he told her about their idol, Alāta wa al-‘uzzā, she inquired

about who was *the idol's* lord. When the man failed to answer her, she went on to explain to him that he had been living a lie, that their idol had no power whatsoever, and that their real lord was God. Baffled, the man went to see his wife, who instructed him to take their daughter far away, cut her throat, and bring back her heart and liver, as she had become a threat to their religion.

The man grabbed his daughter and rode with her to a deserted place. Upon arriving, he set the little girl down near him and started digging her grave. As he was sweating from the physical effort, the little girl leaned on him and wiped the sweat away. She then told him that she knew that he was digging her grave and that he wanted to cut her throat. The man still went on with what he was doing, cut her throat, and buried her. On his way back to his house, however, he became caught in the middle of a great fire with no possible escape. Suddenly, he heard a man shouting to him that if he wanted to save himself from the fire, he had to go to Muḥammad and convert to Islam. The man swore in his heart that he would go to the Prophet and become a Muslim, and the fire disappeared.

Having completed his story, the man then turns to the Prophet, tells him that he has come with the intention of converting, and pronounces the declaration of faith: “no hay más divinidad que Dios y Muḥammad es el enviado de Dios.” The Prophet suggests that he visit his daughter’s grave, to which the man answers that he no longer knows its location. The Prophet tells the man to come with him, and—to the man’s great amazement—they and ten other men go directly to the gravesite, with no other guide than God. Upon arriving at the grave, the Prophet knocks on the ground above the grave three times with his foot and God causes water to spring forth. The Prophet performs his ablutions and a prayer. He then knocks on the ground again, and the earth starts to rip open as if it were a mother’s womb. When the Prophet knocks on the ground a third time, the little girl appears. The Prophet resuscitates her, and she stands up and greets him after shaking the dust off her hair. The Prophet, surprised,

asks her how she knows his name; and she answers him that she heard all about him in the Lord's kingdom. The Prophet then asks her to absolve her father from the sin he has committed. She consents to do so only if he pronounces the declaration of faith. After received assurance that he has in fact already pronounced it, she forgives her father. The Prophet then asks her if she would like to live with him again. She refuses, as she would not want to trade the glory of paradise for the pleasures of this world. The little girl returns to her grave and her father remains amazed at what he has just witnessed, all of which only confirms his belief in God. They return to the city. The story is seen as revealing the meaning of a passage from the Qur'ān: "when the baby girl buried alive is asked for what sin she was killed" (Q 81:8–9).

4.1.2 Authority in the Making

The only critic to have included this story in his analysis of Morisco literature is Hossein Bouzineb in his "Culture et identité morisques," where he labels it as belonging to the genre of entertaining literature but also describes it as moralizing in content and presenting Islamic principles (125). Other critics have mentioned the story since then, but only in reference to Bouzineb's article, in which he also underscores the similarity between the didactic dialogue of the little girl and her father in the *Hadīz del árabe y la doncella* and the discussion between Carcayona and her own father in another Aljamiado story, *La doncella Carcayona*.⁹¹

The *Hadīz del árabe y la doncella* begins with the mention of Ibnu al-Ḥusain al-Basarī, who heard from Zaydi ibn Khālid, who in turn heard from Ibnu 'Abbās the story about how that particular passage from the Qur'ān ("when the baby girl buried alive is asked for what sin she was killed, Q 81:8–9) had been revealed to the Prophet. This introductory part of

⁹¹ See Valero Cuadra, *La Leyenda de la Doncella Carcayona: estudio y edición crítica*.

the narrative constitutes a *isnād* (from *sanad*, meaning support), which corresponds to “the chain of authorities attesting to the historical authenticity of a particular hadith.”⁹²

The *isnād* mentioned in the story (or rather pseudo-*isnād*, as this narrative is fictitious and the three persons cited, Ibnu al-Ḥusain al-Basarī, Zaydi ibn Khālīd, and Ibnu ‘Abbās, are hardly recognizable) has two intratextual functions, both overt and covert. The overt function is easily identifiable and corresponds to the introduction of a story about the Prophet Muḥammad. However, the covert function invests the narrative with the authority of traditional and more authentic hadiths that had by then become part of a collective body of knowledge. In this regard, the author mentions some real and renowned historical Islamic figures in addition to Muḥammad to give a solid foundation to his *hadith*. These include the Prophet’s companions Abū Bakr as-Ṣiddīq, ‘Umar ibnu al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān ibnu ‘Affān, and ‘Alī ibnu abī Ṭālib, plus Salmān al-Fārsī (*Silmān al-Fārāsī* in the text), the first Persian convert to Islam, and Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ or ibn Ḥamāma (*Bilāl ibnu Khamām* in the text), first muezzin and loyal companion to the Prophet.

It must be noted that considerable controversy surrounds the authenticity and reliability of the hadiths in general, given the difficulty of verifying the accuracy of the chain of transmission. Therefore, only some hadith collections achieved a canonical status—e.g., the *Ṣaḥīḥān* (“the sound ones”) of Muslim and al-Bukhārī—and only forty popular hadiths, known as the *al-arba’īn an-nawawīya*, are widely accepted as indisputably authentic.⁹³ Accordingly, many hadiths that have come down to us have most likely been modified to a degree that reduces their validity.⁹⁴ Interestingly, the Moriscos use this very term *ḥadīz* to

⁹² “Isnād,” *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.

⁹³ See an-Nawawī and Brown. There are four other “sound” collections: those of Abū Dā’ūd (d. 889), Ibn Māja (d. 887), al-Nasā’ī (d. 915), and al-Tirmidhī (d. 892).

⁹⁴ For a more in-depth analysis of this issue, see Musa. On the lack of concordance or authenticity of the hadiths, see Siddiqi (31–36, 124–25).

refer to anything from a tradition to a narration or story, and all the Morisco narratives under study here are titled *ḥadīz*. However, when a narrative puts the Prophet himself at center stage, as is the case here with *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella*, the reader or listener is bound to consider the narrative as representative of a possible or even probable reality, as it will echo in their mind the collective and authoritative body of traditional hadiths shared by their community.

The most obvious sacred element of the story, in addition to the Prophet Muḥammad, is the verses of the Qurʾān on which this story is supposedly based and to which it gives meaning: verses 8 and 9 of *sūrat* 81 of the Qurʾān, *sūrat at-Takwīr* (“The Rolling Up”). The author of the narrative actually pretends to provide his audience with the literary reenactment of a supposed *ḥadīz* that gives life to and explains these verses. “The Rolling Up” is a Meccan *sūrah* that deals with the judgment day and events that will take place then:

¹ When the sun is rolled up, ² when the stars are dimmed, ³ when the mountains are set in motion, ⁴ when pregnant camels are abandoned, ⁵ when wild beasts are herded together, ⁶ when the seas boil over, ⁷ when souls are sorted into classes, ⁸ when the baby girl buried alive is asked ⁹ for what sin she was killed, ¹⁰ when the records of deeds are spread open, ¹¹ when the sky is stripped away, ¹² when Hell is made to blaze ¹³ and Paradise brought near: ¹⁴ then every soul will know what it has brought about. ¹⁵ I swear by the planets ¹⁶ that recede, move, and hide, ¹⁷ by the night that descends, ¹⁸ by the dawn that softly breathes: ¹⁹ this is the word [spoken by] a noble messenger, ²⁰ who possesses great strength and is held in honor by the Lord of the Throne, ²¹ obeyed there and worthy of trust. ²² Your companion is not mad: ²³ he did see him on the clear horizon. ²⁴ He does not withhold what is revealed to him from beyond. ²⁵ This is not the word of an outcast devil. ²⁶ So where are you

[people] going? ²⁷ This is a message for all people; ²⁸ for those who wish to take the straight path. ²⁹ But you will only wish to do so by the will of God, the Lord of all people. (Q 81, emphasis added)

The Morisco author cites the eighth and ninth verses, which refer to the pre-Islamic custom of burying newborn girls alive. The choice of topic could seem disconcerting, but it becomes logical if we analyze the verses using the exegetical apparatus that the Moriscos most likely used. The exegete Ibn Kathīr (1302–1373) provides the following exegetical explanation of verses 8 and 9 of *sūrat at-Takwīr*:

Les gens de paganisme enterraient le bébé fille, parce qu'on n'aimait pas avoir de fille. Alors, au Jour de la résurrection, l'enterrée vivante va être interrogée sur quelle faute elle aurait commise, pour être traitée de la sorte. Cela constitue une menace pour le tueur, car qu'en sera-t-il de celui qui lèse, quand le lésé est interrogé? Le Prophète (ﷺ), rapporte-t-on, a dit: "L'enterrée vivante ira au jardin." Ibn Abbās: Les enfants des associants iront au Jardin. Celui qui prétend qu'ils iront au Feu ment. (1512) (Pagans used to bury their female newborns because they did not like having girls. So, on Judgment Day, the girl buried alive will be asked what could she have done to deserve such treatment. This constitutes a threat to the killer, because what will come of the wrongdoer if the victim is asked? The Prophet (pbuh [peace be upon him]), we are told, said: "Those buried alive will go to the garden." Ibn Abbās: The children of unbelievers will go to the Garden. He who pretends that they will go to Hell is lying.)

The idea that the question posed to the little girl on Judgment Day will be a threat to her murderer compels us to ask who is on each side of this equation. Most likely, it is the

Moriscos and the Christian authorities, as we will see below. This practice of infanticide is also mentioned in the Qur'ān in verses 58 and 59 of *sūrat an-Nahl* (The Bees):

⁵⁸ When one of them is given news of the birth of a baby girl, his face darkens and he is filled with gloom. ⁵⁹ In his shame he hides himself away from his people because of the bad news he has been given. Should he keep her and suffer contempt or bury her in the dust? How ill they judge! (Q 16:58–59)

So the narrative technique of our Morisco author consisted of (1) taking specific elements of the Qur'ān and (2) infusing his own narrative with it. This technique enabled the Moriscos to invest their narrative with the authoritative power of the Qur'ān, on which the *Hadīz del árabe y la doncella* is supposed to be based. The method resembles Carruthers's description of "composition":

Composition is one of the two activities of meditation, and the complement to *divisio* in designing a memory for inventive recollection. As division is the mode of reading, as Hugh of St. Victor says, so composition—the placing together of pieces laid away by division and marking—is the mode of text-making, what we, imprecisely, call writing. The memorized chunks culled from works read and digested are ruminated into a composition—that is basically what an author does with authorities. (234)

This Morisco author placed together "memorized chunks" from the Qur'ān and the Tradition of the Prophet (specifically, the names of his companions) and "ruminated" them into a literary creation for an audience that lacked the apparatus to remember the official tenets of their faith. Moreover—and this is where authorship and authority meet—by using sacred images of Islam and, in this case, the Prophet, the Morisco writer thereby invested his literary invention with the authority of the Prophet. As Carruthers explains:

There are two distinct stages involved in the making of an authority—the first is the individual process of authoring or composing, and the second is the matter of authorizing, which is a social and communal activity. In the context of memory, the first belongs to the domain of an individual’s memory, the second to what we might conveniently think of as public memory. (234)

This area of “public memory” is where this text must have left a considerable mark. Of course, when we approach this text from our twenty-first-century vantage point, we are quick to categorize it as a inventive legend. However, for a culture familiar with considerable literature about the Prophet, this *ḥadīz* was one of many, and like other more authentic ones, it must have attracted considerable interest. Consuelo López-Morillas introduces her *Textos aljamiados: sobre la vida de Mahoma: El profeta de los moriscos* in this way:

La imagen que tenían de Mahoma los últimos musulmanes de España se nutre de los episodios más apasionantes de su vida—su nacimiento, milagros, ascensión al cielo, y muerte—y de sus sentencias sobre el Islam y la recta manera de vivir. Esta monografía trata de plasmar esa imagen. No edito aquí todos los escritos aljamiados sobre Mahoma, sino sólo ciertos textos que juzgo representativos. Algunos caen dentro del género de *sīra*, la biografía del Profeta, mientras que otros derivan del *ḥadīṭ*, los dichos tradicionalmente atribuidos a Mahoma. Los moriscos expresaban con estas narraciones la misma reverencia por Mahoma que habían sentido sus seguidores más inmediatos; y continuaban una tradición literaria que en sus tiempos contaba con casi mil años de existencia. (15)

However, these Morisco authors did not just *continue* the literary tradition, to use López-Morillas’s expression; rather, they were part of a Morisco literary tradition about the Prophet

that ran parallel to (but did not coincide with) the official canon and invested itself with its authority.

The process of textualization of the memories and life of Muḥammad took two official forms in the early centuries of Islam, the sunna and the *sīra*, but it also includes various later compositions that might not have influenced the Islamic community as a whole but did impact some isolated local communities. Such compositions include stories of his military expeditions, *maghāzī* and hagiographies, which shaped the image and mental reconstitution of the Prophet persona among the hearers of these stories.⁹⁵ The Moriscos then developed their own textualization of the life of Muḥammad, but based on their own interpretation of what it might have been. These pseudo-hadiths were in fact *authorized* by the very group they were addressing. Bourdieu's approach to this particular power of language helps to clarify the point:

Parce que tout langage qui se fait écouter de tout un groupe est un langage autorisé, investi de l'autorité de ce groupe, il autorise ce qu'il désigne en même temps qu'il l'exprime, puisant sa légitimité dans le groupe sur lequel il exerce son autorité et qu'il contribue à produire comme tel en lui offrant une expression unitaire de ses expériences. (Bourdieu 63) (Because every language that is shared by a whole group is an authorized language, invested with the authority of this group, it authorizes what it designates while also expressing it, drawing its legitimacy from the group over which it exerts its authority and which it participates in producing, as such giving it a unitary expression of its experiences.)

⁹⁵ See Ibn Sa'ad and al-Ṭabarī on the military exploits and Schimmel (33) on the hagiographies.

This Morisco version of a *hadith* was not a unique occurrence, as there are two known extant versions of this story: one in the MS 5.305 of the BNE and one in the MS of Urrea de Jalón. Our author's compositional process was therefore twofold: first, extracting from memory (or from the Qur'ān) the parts that were relevant to his and his community's sociological context, and then building around these various "chunks" a plausible narrative.⁹⁶

We are usually unable to determine the precise date of a particular manuscript's composition, but "in many cases it is possible to make a conjectural dating of the aljamiado manuscripts on the basis of deterioration of Muslim religious ideas in them and the Arabic they employ" (López Baralt and Hurley 245). In fact, the less fully the Moriscos had mastered Arabic, the more they tended to include it in their narratives in order to set it down in writing. The high number of basic Arabic terms and Arabisms in the *Ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella* (see Table 4.1) means that it was still being copied closer to the time of expulsion (1609–1614), when the Moriscos had lost the use of Arabic. I would propose that the choice of these particular verses, on the ignominy of infanticide and the justice that Judgment Day would bring, is born from the Moriscos' growing anxiety after a 1567 decree that washed away all the terms of their capitulations and another law that forbade the use of Arabic, Morisco dress and clothing, Morisco instruments, and baths, among other things.⁹⁷ These repressive measures, as noted in the introductory chapter, eventually resulted in an insurrection and the revolt of Alpujarras (1568–1570), which had devastating effects on the population of Granada in particular and the Morisco communities at large. The latter even inspired the words of Ginés Pérez de Hita: "Crueldad terrible, nunca vista en la española nación e indigna de pechos cristianos! ¿Qué furia infernal te incitaba a tanta ferocidad?" (125).

⁹⁶ For more on the Qur'ān and the Moriscos, see López-Morillas, *The Qur'ān in Sixteenth-Century Spain: Six Morisco Versions of Sūrah 79*, "El Corán romanceado: la traducción contenida en el manuscrito T235", and *El Corán de Toledo. Edición y estudio del manuscrito 235 de la Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha*.

⁹⁷ See "Memorial de don Francisco Núñez Muley" edited by Mercedes García-Arenal.

Table 4.1. Basic Arabic Terms and Arabisms Found in the Aljamiado-Morisco Narratives

b-içmi il•lahi ir•rahmāni ir•rahīm	in the name of God, the Forgiving, the Merciful.
‘alayhi içalām	peace be upon him
tabāraka wa ta‘alā	blessed and praised be
el-aççalām	peace/greeting
el-annabī de Allah	the messenger of God
rađiya Al•lahu ‘anhu	may God be satisfied with him
şşala Al•lahu ‘alayhi w-açal•lam	may God bestow peace upon him
lā il•laha ilā Al•lah	there is no God other than God
alhādiya	sacrifice
‘ami	uncle
annāqa	female camel
lā il•laha ilā Al•lah, Muḥammad raçūlu Al•lah	there is no God but God and Muḥammad is His Prophet
alwađđū	ablutions
a şşala	prayer
ar•rak‘as	inclinations
aljāri ^y ata	girl

Our Morisco author introduces Qur’ānic verses verbatim in his own pseudo-historical narrative in an attempt to associate it with the authoritative power of the Qur’ān. But he also includes details of the *sūrah*, which help to create a logical and recognizable setting for his narrative. In verses 19 and 23 of *sūrat at-Takwīr* (“this is the word [spoken by] a noble messenger” and “he did see him on the clear horizon”), both “noble messenger” and “him”

are taken as referring to the angel Gabriel. Accordingly, the author introduces Gabriel at the beginning of the narrative: he is the one who reports the *árabe*'s arrival to the Prophet.

Moreover, our author also reshapes the image of burying a baby girl in the dust as found in the previously cited verse from the *sūrat an-Nahl* (The Bees): "Should he keep her and suffer contempt or bury her in the dust?" (Q 16:59). The *árabe* in the narrative digs his daughter's grave, an image intensified by the dramatic and poignant gesture of the little girl who, in return, wipes his sweat away. The symbolism of the delayed infanticide, as the father waited seven years before sacrificing his daughter, echoes the fifty-year grace period after which all Moriscos were eventually forced to give up their culture and eventually their home. Their fate was inexorable, just as the little girl's death had only been postponed, never annulled. Also, the mother's explicit demand to have her daughter's heart and liver brought to her expresses the intensity of the equally disheartening situation in which the Moriscos were living.

This work is not the only one in which Moriscos resorted to fictitious events and secular characters to create a narrative grounded in a verse of the Qur'ān. The *Relato del nacimiento de Jesús* is another such example.⁹⁸ It narrates the life of Mary and the birth of Jesus, who enters the world affirming that "no hay señor sino Allah; yo soy Jesús, espíritu de Allah y su palabra" (Guillén Robles 128).⁹⁹ Jesus grows into an all-knowing boy with incomparable, God-inspired talent and healing powers. When Jesus asks a man if he would like to be resuscitated, the man, just like the *árabe*'s little girl, refuses: "¡Oh Jesús! No ruegues á Allah que yo vuelba al mundo, ni á su fortuna, pues el otro mundo es más amado a

⁹⁸ Transliterated by Guillén Robles in his *Leyendas Moriscas: Sacadas de Varios Manuscritos* and translated by Mason in her thesis "El relato del nacimiento de Jesús: A Translation and Study of the Aljamiado Story of the Birth of Jesus."

⁹⁹ For more on the religious syncretism of the *Relato del nacimiento de Jesús*, see Mason.

mí” (143). The narrative concludes with the king wanting to kill Jesus but mistakenly killing another man who looked like him:

Y puso Allah, ¡cuán alto es! La figura de Jesús al mançebo, y alcançólo la gente del rey, y tomaron al mançebo, pensando que era Jesús, y matáronlo: y por aquello deçían los de beny Yçrayle [Israelites] que ellos habían muerto á Jesús, fijo de María; y por aquello diçe Allah, ¡cuán alto és! En su honrrado Alcorán, *güa me catelóhu guame ççalabuhu gualequim xubihelhum*, que quiere decir: no lo mataron, ni lo crucificaron, empero semejóseles á ellos.
(157)

The Qur’ānic verse that the Morisco author used as a creative seed for his narrative was taken from *sūrat an-Nisā’* (The Women):

¹⁵⁷ and said, “We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of God.” *They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, though it was made to appear like that to them; those that disagreed about him are full of doubt, with no knowledge to follow, only supposition: they certainly did not kill him.*
(Q 4:157, emphasis added)

This constitutes yet another example of the Morisco authors’ process of *memoria rerum*. As Carruthers reminds us, “*memoria rerum* involves an adaptation of the original language for mnemonic and compositional purposes rather than its complete iteration” (234–35). These Morisco authors retained a particular doctrine from a particular sacred verse (or collection of verses) and then recomposed it using the linguistic and cultural apparatus available to them. The message, of course, had to relate to a strong article of faith, which celebrated their differences with the dominant culture and therefore provided them, through this recomposition of Qur’ānic discourse, with a psychologically satisfying outlet helping them endure the context of persecution in which they lived. The father in the narrative is

about to commit the most hideous crime: “Tomé la niña delante de mí y me fue con ella a un yermo de la tierra; y cuando llegué, descabalgué y descendí a la niña, y la asenté en la tierra; y empecé a hacer su huesa para enterrarla cuando la hubiese degollado.” The narrator at this point is the man recounting his story to the Prophet; as a first-person narrator, he does not know at that moment what is going on in his daughter’s mind. When she leans on him to clean his forehead, the audience’s own heart tightens: “el sudor me caía por la cara y por los ojos y se levantó la niña y me limpió el sudor de mi cara, y me compadeció por lo que trabajaba.” Her love for her father is unconditional, just like the love of the Moriscos for their fatherland, which makes it even more disheartening when she admits having known his plans all along: “Oh padre, como que veo que aquesta huesa es para mí, y que vienes a degollarme.” This little girl symbolizes all the Moriscos whose very own fatherland is in the process of stripping them of their identity. Yet they still love it the same way the little girl loves and forgives her father. The secular story of the little girl being sacrificed by her parents as in pre-Islamic Arabia becomes all the more powerful when associated to the authority of the sacred word written verbatim.

4.2 *El ḥadīṡ de la sierpe* (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 180r–181v)

4.2.1 Summary of the Story

The Prophet Muḥammad is in the company of the *Ansar* (the “helpers” who assisted the *Muḥāğirīn* or emigrants upon their arrival at al-Madina with the Prophet) and the *Muḥāğirīn*, pondering this world and the next. He suddenly begins to cry, and all his companions cry with him. He then tells them that they need to start trading with people so that God will trade with them and give them something that will never fail or end. Curious, they ask him what kind of trade they will be engaging in; the Prophet replies that they will be bringing peace to people and that people will bring them peace in return. Next, they ask him

what kind of trading they will do with God. He explains that if they find a slave, they should free him; if they find someone naked, they have to dress him; if they find someone lost, they must guide him; if they find someone in need, they must help him; and if they find a poor person, they have to feed him.

The Prophet then goes on his way and meets a little boy, crying as he walks down the street. When the Prophet asks him why he is crying, the boy says that his mother has died and he has no one to bathe or shroud her body. The Prophet directs Bilāl to go to the Prophet's wife 'Ā'isha ("mother of the believers") and ask her to take care of the deceased. Upon arriving at the house, 'Ā'isha discovers the mother's body with its face blackened, enlarged features and tongue, horrendous-looking eyes, and a snake wrapped all around her. Terrified, she goes to the Prophet and tells him what she has just seen. He responds that the woman is a sinner, but that 'Ā'isha must go back to the house, take his ring with her, and tell the snake to leave the woman alone until they have bathed and shrouded her. When the snake sees the ring, it rushes into a crack in the wall until the women have washed and shrouded the woman, and then it comes back. They bury the dead woman, after which the Prophet addresses all women, telling them that this horrible fate is the reward for the woman who looks at her husband with malice, infuriates her parents, wears makeup, denigrates others, disobeys or insults her husband, or bathes with a Christian woman. That type of woman will be slaughtered with fire, he declares. Once the woman has been buried with the snake on her chest, flames and smoke start coming out of her grave. The little boy then starts crying and begs the Lord to forgive his mother, saying that she was the only person who would ask about him if he was lost, would feed him if he was hungry and give him water if he was thirsty, and would cry for him if he got sick. The Prophet then intercedes in favor of the woman.

4.2.2 Sacred Ring, Domestic Sermon

This pseudo-hadith, albeit much shorter than *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella*, fulfills a similar function in that the author sends a message about a domestic issue, in this case the role of women. In doing so, he draws on the authoritative power associated with the figure of the Prophet through his sunna and the hadith mentioned above.

The author then sets the stage by providing a plausible description of the kind of conversation that the Prophet might have had with his companions about what a trade that never ends or fails would consist of (helping the needy, feeding the poor, freeing the slave, etc.). In a manner similar to that of the *Ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella*, the author invests his text with sacred authority by depicting Muḥammad as the spiritual leader of his community, offering a sermon on good deeds. The author further establishes Muhammad's divine power when the Prophet gives 'Ā'isha his ring, which forces the serpent away from the women and into a crack in the wall. Then, when Muḥammad speaks about the role of women, the audience already has identified him as a sacred figure to be revered and one whose words are to be followed. From that point on, each word carries the weight of the real, historical Prophet and therefore compels obedience. The sermon itself, however, sounds like an angry diatribe that contradicts what has come down to us from the Prophet's biographers and reliable historical sources:

O mujeres, éste es el galardón de la mujer que alza sus ojos con saña a su marido; éste es, O mujeres, el galardón de la mujer que enfureció a su padre y a su madre; O mujeres, éste es el galardón de toda mujer que maquilla su cara; O mujeres, éste es el galardón de toda mujer denigrante, que le meterán en ella un pilar de fuego por su boca; O mujeres, este galardón darán a la mujer que la clamará su marido a su servicio y no va; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la mujer que la manda su marido y no va a lo que le manda; O mujeres, este

galardón habrá cuando no le dice el marido nada, lo maldice; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la mujer que cuando sale su marido, lo maldice; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la mujer que esconde a la mujer del vecino en su casa; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la que no tiene vergüenza de su marido; y a cualquier mujer que lava sus carnes con cristiana, le sacarán el cuero de su cuerpo con fuego.”

In his last sermon, called the Farewell Sermon (in the year 632 CE), the Prophet Muḥammad mentioned women, but not in terms like these, and he specifically reminded Muslim men to treat their women well. Nevertheless, the pseudo-sermon quoted above must have sounded authentic to its audience, who had already associated it with the sacred image of the Prophet. The pseudo-sermon is also structured in a way that would remind listeners of the Farewell Sermon, in which the Prophet used a similar literary device, the anaphora, to address the crowd: “Now to proceed, *O people*, listen to me; I will deliver a message to you. [...] *O people*, verily your blood [lives] [...] *O people*, listen to my words and understand them” (89, emphasis added).

The characterization of ‘Āisha is also paramount, as she is one of the most important female figures in Islam and had a considerable impact on the Prophet’s life. Her name in the text is repeatedly followed by the expression “Dios esté satisfecho de ella,” a blessing always associated with the companions of the Prophet. She is reliable and the only person whom the Prophet needs to fix the situation. She lives up to his expectations: “cubrió su cabeza y se fue con el niño al lugar de las pompas fúnebres,” where she does as the Prophet asked.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Interestingly, the custom of covering Muslim women’s heads is yet another example of how the transmitted sacred word can be adapted and reworked to fit the authors’ agenda. Karen Armstrong rightly summarizes, “The hijab verses have become extremely controversial. They would eventually—about three generations after the Prophet’s death—be used to justify the veiling of all women and their segregation in a separate part of the house” (169–170).

The degree to which these pseudo-hadiths might have impacted their audience cannot be known with any certainty. But we do know that their authors felt the need to invent these stories and considered it morally appropriate to do so. Their *remaniement* of the figure of the Prophet hints at how the Moriscos went about practicing their faith within a local and vernacular culture. There was, however, a limit that could not be exceeded. The manipulation of a sacred figure was allowed as long as the new depiction did not completely contradict his historical characterization, as we will see in the analysis of the following narrative.

4.3 *El ḥadīṡ de Hindi y Bishri* (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 107r–11r)

4.3.1 Summary of the Story

Bishr al-Abid is a close companion of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (a companion of the Prophet and second caliph) and extremely pious. One day, as he is on his way to the mosque, a young woman from the Bani Juhayn falls in love with him at first sight. She tries to hide her love but cannot do so; instead, she writes him a letter, declaring her love and begging him to look at her, for she is fading away out of love for him. Bishr receives the letter and is amazed but he has no idea who the young woman is. He writes back, exhorting her to suffer and not to pursue what God and His Prophet have forbidden. He assures her that he would rather die than have a relation with another man’s wife and indicates that he will never visit her unless she is honorable and free. Upon receiving the letter, Hindi is extremely upset and writes to him a second time, asking him to tell her legends and expiatory sayings. He answers that suffering is helpful and that she should pray, read *sūrat yā’-sīn*, and rely on God. She then replies that this *sūrah* will never erase her love for him and that she wishes that he would be closer to her than he is to this *sūrah*. She adds that it would be a sin for him to allow someone who loves him die because of him.

At this point, Bishr swears that he will never answer her again. When Hindi hears this, she writes again, reiterating her endless love for him. Bishr does not succumb to her plea and rejects her again through an intermediary. She writes one more time, now berating him and wishing all sorts of diseases and hardships. Later, she regrets having sent such vindictive words, but meanwhile Bishr, frightened by her letter, has run off to Mecca. When she hears about his departure, she falls sick. Her husband becomes worried, and she assures him that the only way for her to recover is by going to Mecca. The husband, out of love for her, agrees to send her there.

Upon her arrival, Hindi buys a house worth one thousand *doblas* right next to Bishr's, and she watches him go back and forth to the mosque every day. She begins to feel better. One day, as she is watching him near the mosque; an old woman approaches her and asks her questions about her frail appearance. Hindi confides in her about Bishr, and the old woman replies that she will bring them together. The old woman then starts going to the mosque every day at the same time as Bishr, and eventually she asks him for some help. Impressed by her piety, Bishr responds favorably. She then tells him that she has a son in Iraq and that she would like Bishr to write him a letter on her behalf. Bishr stares at the woman for a moment, sensing that he has seen her somewhere before. Insisting that they have never met, she says that he must be under the influence of a spell, and she asks whether he has any idea of who might have done something to him. He mentions Hindi, and the old woman assures him that she will take care of the situation. She then goes to see Hindi and asks when her husband will be away; Hindi tells her Thursday. On Thursday, the old woman comes back accompanied by Bishr, whom she has lured under a false pretext; she takes him inside Hindi's house and, as soon as he has entered, she locks them inside. Hindi starts kissing and hugging him—and at this point the copyist abruptly ends the story, striking out the last paragraphs with no further explanation.

4.3.2 From Secularization to Profanation

Strangely enough, the story of Hindi and Bishr, unlike that of “Layla wa Majnūn” (Layla and the Madman), never made it through the centuries and across cultures, even though Ibn ‘Arabī (1165–1240) puts the couple in the same category as the notorious ill-fated lovers who are said to have inspired Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*:¹⁰¹

Though no one loves any but his own Creator, he is veiled from Him by the love for Zaynab, Su‘ād, Hind, Laylā, this world, money, position, and everything loved in the world. Poets exhaust their words writing about all these existent things without knowing, but the gnostics never hear a verse, a riddle, a panegyric, or a love poem that is not about Him hidden beyond the veils of form. (qtd. in Norris 79 and Chittick 181)

The love of Hindi and Bishr is

less idealistic. It is sensual and selfish. It seems more in keeping with a confused sense of standards [...]. Religious duties are stressed and contrasted with the acts that are a response to seemingly uncontrollable urges and passions within the body and the soul and in society at large. The death of the lovers is not so much a “sacrificial atonement,” but rather the predictable outcome of what is a potentially sordid affair; one which brings dishonor to the innocent, death to the deceitful, shame to those who are loyal and caring, and bitterness and enmity between extended families. (Norris 79–80)

As this quotation indicates, the traditional version of the story ended in the lovers’ death. In stark contrast, the Aljamiado version of this story has not come down to us in its entire tragic dimension, as the Morisco copyist of the story adapted it to his need and censored it. In the

¹⁰¹ For more on “Layla wa Majnun,” predating *Romeo and Juliet* by a thousand years but narrating a similar tragedy about two star-crossed lovers, see Guinhut and Khairallah.

introduction to Corriente Córdoba's *Relatos píos y profanos del manuscrito aljamiado de Urrea de Jalón*, María J. Viguera Molíns gives us a precise description of the state of the manuscript on these folia:

Historia de los primeros enamorados bajo el Islam: la esclava Hind se enamora de Bishr, quien la rechaza por motivos de piedad, hasta que ella con las argucias de una alcahueta logra introducirlo en su casa y abrazarlo. En este punto el copista, ante el cariz que toma la historia, desiste de continuar la copia e incluso borra varios renglones, privándonos así del final; aunque existe en versiones árabes, no parece haber otras aljamiadas, a pesar del gusto que esta literatura parece tener, en medio de todo, por temas amorosos, especialmente por los esforzados y dramáticos, y también por la virtud de la castidad. (48)

Our Aljamiado version of the story is very similar to one found in the Arabic manuscript A 240.4, most likely *maghribī*, held in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. The date of composition is unknown although, coincidentally, the same manuscript contains *The Tale of the City of Brass* (discussed in chapter 2 above). Although there is no way to determine whether this manuscript circulated in the Peninsula at the time, the resemblance between the two narratives is quite striking. In our aljamiado manuscript, Hindi starts by writing a letter to Bishr in which she describes the devastating effects that her love for him has had on her body. Table 4.2 shows the similarities between the two versions; any discrepancies are presumably due to errors in translation.

Table 4.2. Similarities between the Morisco and Arabic Versions of *The Story of Hindi and Bishr*

Aljamiado version	Copenhagen manuscript¹⁰²
Tú pasas por mi puerta y no sabes el mal que paso de mi gran deseo para ti y de mi gran dolor;	You pass by a gate yet unaware of the yearning and the longing of that ecstasy which I contend with, and which I bear toward you.
Tu pasas sin ningún pensamiento del dolor del amor en mi hígado y ya soy tan tornada de desplacer, y de muy fuerte tristura que no ha quedado en mi cuerpo sino los huesos y el cuero.	Yet you pass by without a thought of burning passionate love. There is naught left of my body save skin and bone.
Te ruego que mires hacia mi puerta una vez, que tú eres el más deseado de todas las gentes alrededor de mí,	I saw you. Cast your glance towards my door. Among men, you are the most desirable whom I yearn for.
y tendrás grande obra buena, que nunca se acabará su galardón;	You can cure the one who is sick with continuous cares. On this account, you requite them with gardens of Paradise.
y sanarás a un muerto que ha muerto de amor y tirarás de mi corazón grandes pensamientos que me persiguen y conseguirás el paraíso de deleites,	Bestow a bliss, the abundance of which will bring no hardship with it. You bring life to the one who is slain and whose death was caused by the pain of the ecstasy of love.
que en ti, O Bishr, es clemencia y el placer y el tiramiento del pienso, que tanto es que más no puedo; que por Dios que si por ello estás de venir por aquí y no pasas por mi puerta de buena mañana, seré muerta.	O Bishr, in you is my rest and my joy, and a release from such care as is too much for one to endure and to suffer.

The rest of the Arabic manuscript corresponds to the plot followed by the aljamiado version, but with many divergences. The go-between attracts Bishr differently; in the Arabic version, Bishr develops romantic feelings for Hindi. The aljamiado manuscript also presents descriptions of images or drawings that must have been included in the Arabic version that the Morisco copyist (or one before him) was reproducing, such as “*La figura de Bishri que*

¹⁰² The Arabic version of *The story of Hindi and Bishr* was published and translated into English by Norris.

leía la carta de Hindi.” Despite the differences, as we will see shortly, the Arabic version gives us the opportunity to identify a possible ending to the story that our Morisco copyist apparently did not want to reproduce.

The name of the male protagonist in our version is Bishri *al-‘Abīd*, meaning the “servant” [of God], which goes hand in hand with the depiction of Bishr as a chaste character much like the Prophet Yūsuf (Joseph) in the Qur’ān and subsequently in the popular Aljamiado *Poema de Yūçuf*. The Morisco’s familiarity with this sacred figure from the Qur’ān is evidenced by the number of Morisco manuscripts that include a version of his story:¹⁰³

1. MS 5.292 of the BNE (*Recontamiento de Yūsuf*, ff. 1–166)
2. MS Res. 247 of the BNE (*Poema de Yusuf*, ff. 1–50)
3. MS 11/9416 of the Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia (BRAH) (*Poema de Yuçuf*, 1.f)
4. MS 11/9409 of the BRAH (*Hadiz de Yusuf*, ff. 1–8)

In the Qur’ān, in *sūrat Yūsuf*, Yūsuf is described as an honest man who received both knowledge and good judgment from God. The wife of his master, later identified as Zulaykhā’, seeks to seduce him, but he rejects her advances out of loyalty to her husband:

²² When he [Joseph] reached maturity, We gave him judgment and knowledge: this is how We reward those who do good. ²³ The woman in whose house he was living tried to seduce him: she bolted the doors and said: “Come to me,” and he replied, “God forbid! My master has been good to me; wrongdoers never prosper.” ²⁴ She made for him, and he would have succumbed to her if he had not seen evidence of his Lord—We did this in order to keep evil and indecency away from him, for he was truly one of Our chosen servants. (Q 12:22–24).

¹⁰³ For more on the Morisco versions of the story of Yūsuf, see Menéndez Pidal, McGaha (229–278), and Barletta, *Covert Gestures* (145–55).

Yūsuf would rather go to prison, which he does, than succumb to the women invited by that Zulaykhā' to witness the extent of his beauty:

³¹ When [Zulaykhā'] heard [the women's] malicious talk, she prepared a banquet and sent for them, giving each of them a knife. She said to Joseph, "Come out and show yourself to them!" and when the women saw him, they were stunned by his beauty, and cut their hands, exclaiming, "Great God! He cannot be mortal! He must be a precious angel!" ³² She said, "This is the one you blamed me for. I tried to seduce him and he wanted to remain chaste, but if he does not do what I command now, he will be put in prison and degraded." ³³ Joseph said, "My Lord! I would prefer prison to what these women are calling me to do. If you do not protect me from their treachery, I shall yield to them and do wrong," ³⁴ and his Lord answered his prayer and protected him from their treachery—He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. (Q 12:31–34)

Bishr in our story also chooses seclusion and prefers to protect himself by retreating to Mecca, just as Yūsuf preferred prison. The similarity between the pious Bishr in the Aljamiado *hadīz* and the Qur'ānic Joseph was also noted by Norris, who stated, referring to the Arabic version found in Copenhagen and cited above:

[Bishr] is in fact an urbanized Arab and it is his almost "fundamentalist" devotion to the dictates of the *Sharī'ah* [Islamic law] which effectively controls his passions. He is likened above all to Yūsuf (Joseph) and his character here, as indeed does that of Hind in confusion with Zulaykā', owes more to the Koran than it does to the demented desert dwelling couple in the 'Udhri Tale. (82)

The Morisco authors must have made the same parallel in their mind, given their familiarity with the story of Yūsuf. Thus, I believe, it is not just “el cariz que toma la historia” (Corriente Córdoba 48) that pushes the copyist to erase the end of the story. Rather, the implicit profanation of a sacred figure (the prophet Yūsuf) and a sacred place (Mecca) cause the copyist to censor the original story. Indeed, in the Arabic version of the story, Bishr eventually succumbs to Hindi’s charms, is being caught with her, and blames her for the tryst, causing her divorce. She does not forgive him and he dies out of love for her, with Hindi perishing shortly thereafter. This unhappy turn in the story, which necessitated such drastic censorship by the copyist, consists in Bishr’s abandonment of his religious commitment and obligation, as well as the profanation of Mecca, the city where those acts take place. The possibility that the love scene itself could have occasioned the censorship is unlikely, as we find in the same manuscript a story titled *El ḥadīz de Alī de Bagdād*, which narrates the extraordinary adventures of a young man who fights witches, snakes, and malevolent spirits.¹⁰⁴ He saves a princess, marries her, and even makes a witch fall in love with him. In a particularly fascinating episode, Alī saves the king, whose daughter he had married, and the king also falls in love with him. The copyist has no qualms about narrating the details:

Y entonces llamó el rey su hueste y cabalgué con ciento mil caballeros o más, después fui al alcázar y fui al lugar que tenían cercado y los vencí, y envié un mensajero al rey, y salió el rey a recibirme y tuvo gran gozo conmigo y me creció en amorío y nunca se partía de mí de noche ni de día. Y después nos quedamos un mes que no salíamos de la ciudad hasta que un día me vino deseo de cazar. (n.p.)

¹⁰⁴ I include my modernization of *El ḥadīz de Alī de Bagdād* in Appendix F. The plot is similar to many tales from the *One Thousand and One Nights* collection but, interestingly, is not part of it. The magical journey of Alī deserves a thorough analysis, which is beyond the scope of the present study. In any case, the story is very useful in indicating the boundaries (or relative lack of boundaries) within which our copyist operates.

Thus, the copyist is clearly not reluctant to deal with matters of love; the discomfort with the ending of Bishr's tale was almost certainly related to the identity of the protagonist committing the actions and the place where the offending action was performed. Bishr has been described as the "acompañante de Umar Ibn al-Khattab" and "era con el presto en cada oración, y continuaba de ir a la mezquita." It must have been unacceptable for our copyist to have an extremely pious acquaintance of the Prophet's companions commit an illicit act in sacred Mecca. It is further intriguing that the prior version of the story—the one that our copyist was reproducing—had not been similarly censored. This fact clearly demonstrates the process of cultural negotiation performed by the authors (or, in this case, copyists) of the narratives under study. What seemed unacceptable for our copyist was not so for the one who had preceded him.

These three pseudo-hadiths illustrate the process of *remaniement* of a sacred figure carried out by our authors and copyists. In all three narratives, sacred elements of Islam, especially the Prophet Muḥammad and the Qur'ān, help to transmit a message that may or may not even be religious. The first narrative, *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella*, has all the external characteristics of a verified hadith. It opens with an *isnād* and narrates a supposed experience lived by the Prophet. Yet none of the facts narrated ever took place. The author of the story built his entire plot around two particular verses of the Qur'ān dealing with pre-Islamic infanticide that were relevant to the author's situation, in a manner that can be fully understood only if placed within his own historical context. The sacred figure of the Prophet and the sacred word of the Qur'ān are used to give voice to the struggle of the Moriscos, who were themselves enduring an "ethnocide" (to use Youssef Alaoui's word) just as the little girl had suffered an infanticide. The crime committed is in itself not religious or sacred, but neither is it profane, given its powerful juxtaposition to the Prophet and the Qur'ān. The fictitious nature of the story does not diminish the power it must have carried with its

audience, precisely because of the authoritative power of the sacred elements introduced in the plot. *El ḥadīz de la serpiente*, albeit less sophisticated, illustrates the same process of intertwining sacred figures with secular elements. The little boy's cry and the death of his mother are not religious *per se*, but when the mother's death is transformed into the driving force behind the Prophet's somewhat misogynic sermon, an interplay between the sacred and secular occurs. Finally, *El ḥadīz de Bishri y Hindi* is even more powerful as the story in itself seems profane and free from any religious content: it is, after all, a story of a married woman trying to seduce another man. However, through the characterization of the protagonist and his visit to Mecca, one of Islam's most sacred spaces, the copyist transforms the narrative into a didactic tool that warns against the vicious acts of perfidious women.

Chapter 5

A Reevaluation of and New Approach to the study of a Cautionary Tale:

*El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab*¹⁰⁵

El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab has received relatively scant critical attention. Miguel Asín Palacios determined the oriental origin of the narrative, Zachary David Zuwiyya approaches it as a historical testimony of urban Cordoban life, and Vincent Barletta suggests reading it exclusively in the context of religious practice. This chapter analyzes *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* as more than the mere product of the past Islamic zeitgeist, duly copied and transmitted through time. It is not simply the product of a community's conscious effort to overcome the darkness of the present by praising its past. Rather, this particular story of love, marriage, and the past splendor of al-Andalus provides sufficient differences from previous versions and sufficient literary innovation so as to offer insight into one particular aspect of the Aljamiado literature of the time that has been largely overlooked: the process of cultural negotiation in which its authors or copyists engaged. The story should not be categorized solely as entertaining and secular, in contrast to moralizing and religious; rather, it represents an instance of creative literary expression, blending the secular and the sacred components of a surviving community that did not yet know the extent to which its future was doomed.

Critics lean toward a religious as opposed to a secular reading of the story, but by doing so, they have failed to notice the intrinsic value of this text as an innovative literary creation, filled with drama, suspense, and twists and with a clear didactic purpose. I believe that the critics' overt focus on the religiosity—or lack of religiosity—in such texts has prevented them from seeing this story as the cautionary tale that it actually is.

¹⁰⁵ I include in Appendix E my modernization and English translation of the story. My English translation of the story is forthcoming in *Aljamiado Legends, the Literature and Life of Crypto-Muslims in Imperial Spain: a Critical Commentary on Religious Hybridity and English Translation*.

5.1 An Either/Or Approach: Why Not *Sic et Non*?

In the previous chapters, we have explored Morisco devotional writings. The orthodoxy of the first story, *La estorya de la çibdat de Cobre*, is rather blatant, but the aspects of innovation present in the second and third texts, *El ḥadīz del árabe y la doncella* and *El ḥadīz de la serpiente*, should be seen as a clear sign of the presence of creative license among the Morisco authors and scribes. Those texts offer subtextual commentaries on the precepts of the Moriscos' faith but use a vernacular language and apocryphal stories to do so. The authenticity of the events they describe cannot be verified, but they are still representative of what Nicholas Watson calls a "vernacular theology." Watson applies this term to even the most innovative vernacular writings composed in England before 1410, the date when a radically censoring document, the Constitutions, which drastically curtailed vernacular writings about religion, was produced by Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Arundel. Watson's comment on some of these English works can easily be applied to the texts under study:

While many of these works make use of an array of sources, most of them—like the religious poems of the *Pearl* poet and much not mentioned here—can in any terms be considered original vernacular compositions, some of them articulating distinctive, often daring theological ideas. (Watson 832)

Vernacular theology is "a catchall, which in principle could include any kind of writing, sermon, or play that communicates theological information to an audience" (Watson 823 n4). As I will show below, although critics have tended to approach this story from an either-or perspective, a richer interpretation results from a more integrative approach that is close to the abovementioned concept of vernacular theology.

All Morisco writings were produced in a clandestine and underground manner and thus were not reviewed by any official religious authority. They were shielded from any regulations or attempts at censorship, and thus the only factors that could constrain the creativity of these works were (1) whether they aroused interest in their prospective audiences and (2) self-censorship, as we have seen with *El ḥadīz de Hindi y Bishri* in the previous chapter. The story under study here did attract popular interest, as the number of extant versions shows. Ironically, the severity of the Inquisition encouraged such unorthodox texts to prosper among a community that was supposed to be converted. Specifically, by trying to curtail all Islamic theological writings, the Inquisition fostered an optimal climate for the production of a vernacular literature. The authors fought against the gradual disappearance of their religious literary heritage by creating their own heritage in secret.

The authors were most likely *alfaquíes* (or guardians of Islam, to use Kathryn A. Miller's term), but they must have had to adjust their expectations to the level of literacy and cultural features of their audience, much as Yça of Segovia ('Īḩā b. Jābir) adapted his teachings to the needs and abilities of his audience in his seminal *Brevario Sunni*.¹⁰⁶ As Harvey points out, when John of Segovia asked Yça to travel to Savoy to assist in his Qur'ān translation so that he could more effectively convert Mudéjares to Christianity, he caused Yça to realize that he could translate the Qur'ān into the vernacular for his coreligionists (Harvey, *Islamic Spain* 83). Most Mudéjares could no longer use Arabic, nor did they have access to their traditional religious materials; hence, the authors adapted to the situation, using innovative means to keep their audience in touch with its roots. The authors' mission was twofold: to maintain the Islamic faith among their community and to provide them with a cultural foundation of their own that would allow them to shape a sense of self.

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 2, 2.3.2 Aljamía and Aljamiado Literature.

The Moriscos were undergoing active persecution and were expected to adhere to the faith and practice of the Christian majority, yet they were paradoxically rejected by that very society. They were forced to define themselves against the majority, and they went about this task creatively in many of their texts and narratives. Thus we should approach each story as a unique attempt by a given author or scribe to define what he believed was a Morisco identity, which was not monolithic or constant but evolving and elusive due to constantly changing sociopolitical circumstances.

The Aljamiado adaptation of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* is a striking example of that search for self-definition among both the Mudéjares who redacted the Aljamiado versions of the present story and the Moriscos who preserved them. The creation of this narrative represents a process of cultural negotiation in which the author modified a traditional story to meet new demands.¹⁰⁷ The demands in question were not those of the community as a whole but, rather, those of the particular author/copyist, who was in charge of transmitting a message—a lesson—to a particular audience. The anonymity of the authors and the imminent danger that pervaded efforts to preserve these stories and their oral transmission prevent broad generalization about the stories. Every version of each story tells us more about that particular moment in time where there was a need for it to be (re)written and read aloud.

Asín Palacios refers to lack of originality as an inherent characteristic of the “literatura aljamiada prosaica.” Although *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* seemed to other critics to have been an exception and was regarded by both Saavedra who published it in *Mundo Ilustrado* (IV, 490) and Chabás who published it in *El Archivo* (III, 156) as a “fruto del ingenio arábigoespañol” (377), Asín Palacios contends otherwise:

[S]e puede demostrar que la parte principal de esa acción dramática, su núcleo primitivo, lejos de ser obra personal del ingenio hispanoárabe, no pasa de ser

¹⁰⁷ Taylor (38) makes a similar comment in discussing Oxford MS Digby but mentions the copyist as the main agent performing this action.

una adaptación de un relato ascético oriental, de un caso ejemplar, histórico quizá y localizado en Basra en los primeros siglos del Islam. (378)

Palacios does not place much importance on this process of adaptation, but it is in fact crucial to our understanding of the conscious effort of cultural negotiation carried out by the author or copyist of the story. Being inspired by a previous version—that is, strategies of *inventio* as *imitatio*—is typical of any literary production of the period and should not be viewed as proof of any lack of “originality.”¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the very term *originality* has no historical validity as far as medieval texts are concerned, as it anachronistically establishes certain connotations that cannot be applied there.

There are three known versions of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariyb* (*Alḥadīṭ del baño de Ziryāb*). The first is found in manuscript (A) of Urrea de Jalón (ff. 133v–139v), edited by Corriente Córdoba in 1990, which I have modernized for this study; the second (B) is in the manuscript CSIC Junta IV (ff. 182r–193r), edited by Gil, Ribera, and Sánchez in 1888 and transliterated by Chabás in 1889; and the third (C) is found in manuscript 11/9409 of the BRAH (ff. 42–45), edited by Saavedra in 1881. The three versions differ in various ways, linguistically and with regard to content. Yet the critics’ effort to determine the religious value (or lack thereof) of these texts has prevented them from approaching the works as literary creations worthy of analysis beyond their similarities to or differences from a previous version of the story. Montaner Frutos speaks of the origins of the story:

Al ser traducido en versión aljamiada, este relato pasó a formar parte de las escasísimas *narraciones profanas* transmitidas por dicha literatura. Por supuesto, es imposible que, a través del texto conocido, los mudéjares adivinasen el sentido prístino del apólogo. Es obvio que para ellos constituía *un relato de entretenimiento*, ya que el tema amoroso, aunque presentado junto

¹⁰⁸ See Chapter 2, p.52.

a motivos píos como la conversión o la castidad, era acogido de buen grado en el repertorio aljamiado. Sin embargo, el hecho de que los pocos textos sin ningún matiz piadoso aparezcan mezclados sin distinción con los otros materiales que componen las misceláneas, desde fragmentos del *Corán* hasta recetas de sahumeros, exige una explicación. (132, emphasis added)

Montaner Frutos does not really provide any answer to his question but simply adds:

Viguera (1990, 50) señala a este respecto que la costumbre de componer misceláneas se basa en “la reminiscencia de las antologías árabes de *adab* o Bellas Letras,” cuyo contenido se amplía “a casi todo su bagaje cultural.” [...] Por lo que hace al *Alḥadīth del baño de Ziriyāb*, esa atmósfera arabo-islámica se manifiesta en el mantenimiento de determinadas costumbres: el propio *ḥammām*, el matrimonio preferencial con la *bint al-’amm* (la hija del pariente más cercano por parte del padre), la indumentaria islámica representada por el *boço* o velo y los *alhilhales* o ajorcas, las ceremonias de boda, etc. Además, la evocación del pasado esplendor de Al-Andalús, a través de la grandeza de Córdoba y del poderoso ejército de Almanzor puesto en pie de guerra, no podía sino alimentar ese sentimiento de cohesión interna de la comunidad morisca que, como ha señalado Ojeda (1989), la literatura de ficción constituyese una importante pieza de la denodada resistencia política y cultural de los últimos herederos del islam andalusí.

Nevertheless, the question raised by Montaner Frutos deserves an in-depth answer. The inclusion of this apparently profane story within the composite codex becomes understandable once we step away from the religious-profane dichotomy and examine the cohesive agent of all aljamiado literature: its didactic purpose. I contend that this seemingly amusing story has an intrinsic didactic value that critics have completely overlooked and that

places it within the genre of Aljamiado homiletic storytelling. The critics' focus on cataloguing and labeling Aljamiado narratives as either profane or religious has prevented them from exploring other possible themes that the Mudéjares and later the Moriscos wanted to preserve and see transmitted, themes that go beyond this dichotomy. This story is neither simply profane nor simply religious, it is a two-edged sword.¹⁰⁹ It is both at the same time, but it is not sharp enough to cut in either direction.

5.2 The Origin and Evolution of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb*

El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb stems from a very short narrative used by Muslim ascetics in the eighth century to instruct sinners based on the teachings and sayings (hadiths) of the Prophet. The lesson to be learned was that

a la hora de la muerte y en el terrible trance de la agonía, al alma se le representa vivamente la imagen de las buenas o malas compañías que tuvo, de las personas cuyo trato frecuentó en vida, tanto las que le ayudaron a servir a Dios, cuanto las que les acompañaron como cómplices para ofenderle. [...]
Casi todos los escritores ascéticos del islam desarrollan este tema, basándose en la sentencia dicha de Mahoma, que seguidamente documentan con casos ejemplares de personas que, al morir, en vez de pensar en Dios y en la salvación de su propia alma, son víctimas de la obsesión del pecado habitual en que han vivido; de modo que, cuando sus familiares (o quienes les ayudan a bien morir) les exhortan a recitar alguna jaculatoria o la fórmula litúrgica del

¹⁰⁹ I borrow this term from Barbara Newman, who uses it to describe a phenomenon of *sic et non* in satirical speech. Her definition is as follows: “In a text of this kind, reading the satire as a moral critique of the speaker would be as mistaken as reading heresy into it. Interpretation depends on tone, and the author’s lightness of touch, here and throughout the text, takes the edge off his satire. So in this case, if we ask which way the sword cuts, we would have to say neither—it’s a blunted weapon. Though double-edged, it is meant to provoke a laugh or a wry smile, not serious thought” (172). I depart slightly from her intended meaning in applying her apt term to this particular homiletic story.

credo musulmán, sus labios no aciertan a pronunciar más palabras que las que su vida disipada les trae a la memoria. (Asín Palacios 381–82)

Bayhaqī transmitted the oldest version of this short narrative in his *Ši'ab al-īmān* and *Ithāf* (Asín 382). The story takes place in Basora, and the bath that it mentions is the famous Mingāb:

A un hombre de aquí, de Basora, le dijeron [al morir]: “Di: No hay más Dios que Dios.” Pero él se puso a decir: “¡Ah!, si yo encontrase a una mujer que, un día, fatigada, preguntaba: ‘¿Cuál es el camino para el baño de Mingāb?’ ” A este hombre le había pedido una mujer que le guiase hacia el baño, y él la guió hacia su propia casa. Y luego, a la hora de morir, dijo eso.¹¹⁰ (Asín Palacios 382)

Arab geographers also used this anecdote to describe the city of Basora, where the famous bath of Mingāb (named after the city’s founder, the general Mingāb b. Rāšid aḍ-Ḍabbī), was located. Yāqūt was the first to do so in his *Mu’ğam al-buldān* (in the thirteenth century) and that he took this information from Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d. 728). Yāqūt’s version is barely more elaborated than that of the abovementioned Bahhaqī, and the version of the story that presents the greatest similarities to our aljamiado version in terms of both length and content is that of Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Išbīlī (1116–1185), a Sevillian writer and author of the eschatological work *Kitāb al-‘āqiba*.¹¹¹

Y se le dijo a otro, cuando le sobrevénia la muerte:

– Di: no hay más Dios que Allāh.

Pero él comenzó a decir:

¹¹⁰ I have changed the punctuation and modified the spelling of the Arabic names in accordance with the ISO norm that I use. I also translate *allāh* as “Dios,” as no distinction is made in Arabic.

¹¹¹ See Montaner Frutos (125) or Asín Palacios (381) for a translation of Yāqūt’s version.

– ¿Cuál es el camino para el baño de Mingāb?

Y estas palabras tienen su historia: *un hombre estaba de pie frente a su casa y la puerta de ésta se parecía a la de un baño. Una hermosa mujer pasó por su lado preguntando por el baño de Mingāb y le dijo él que aquél era el baño de Mingāb mostrándole su casa. Entonces ella entró en la casa y la siguió él. Y cuando se vio a solas con él dentro de una casa que no era un baño, se dio cuenta de que la había engañado. Sin embargo, le manifestó alegría y contento por haberse reunido con él en aquel retiro y en aquella casa, y le dijo:*

– Conviene que tengamos con nosotros aquello con lo que resulte agradable nuestra vida y nos alegremos. Y él respondió:

– Ahora mismo te traeré todo lo que quieras y apetezcas.

Y salió dejándola sola en la casa. Y no echó el cerrojo, sino que la dejó libre como estaba. *Fue a comprar lo que necesitaban y volvió a casa. Entró y se dio cuenta de que la mujer había salido y se había escapado y no encontró de ella rastro alguno. Y el hombre se enamoró perdidamente de ella y se acrecentaron su recuerdo y su aflicción por ella, de modo que comenzó a vagar por calles y callejas, diciendo:*

– Ay, aquélla que iba diciendo, cuando se extravió: ¿Cuál es el camino del baño de Mingāb?

Y al cabo de unos meses pasó por cierta calle, mientras él, en el mismo estado, recitaba:

– Ay, aquélla que iba diciendo, cuando se extravió: ‘¿Cuál es el camino del baño de Mingāb?’

Y he aquí que la muchacha le respondió desde una ventana, diciendo:

– ¡Haber puesto, cuando la tenías en tu poder, un amuleto en la casa o un candado en la puerta!

Entonces aumentó su enfermedad de amor y se intensificó su excitación. Y así siguió hasta que sucedió lo que se ha contado.¹¹²

Asín Palacios and Montaner Frutos agree that there must be an intermediary version between this one and the Aljamiado one, because of the important differences between them. Indeed, the action in the Aljamiado version takes place in Córdoba, and it includes a prologue that allows for an extensive description of the magnificence of the Bath of Ziriyāb (not Mingāb); moreover, the story ends positively with a wedding celebration featuring a young man and his new bride.

The *terminus a quo* of the Aljamiado version is the mention of “pólvora de bonbardas” (gunpowder) (A. f. 134^r; B. f. 183^r), which was invented only around the beginning of the fourteenth century.¹¹³ All that we can say about the Arabic text used for the redaction of the Aljamiado version is that it was not written in the tenth century, as indicated by various anachronisms in the text, such as identifying Almanzor as the king of Córdoba and calling his successors Muḥammad b. Zayūn and Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir, both fictional characters. This now-lost Arabic source, which our aljamiado authors adapted, must have been composed between the twelfth and the early fifteenth century. It is important here to speak of an “adaptation” of the Arabic source, rather than a “translation” as Montaner tends to do:

Estos datos sugieren que la fuente árabe de la versión aljamiado se redactó en el reino granadino o, en todo caso, en el norte de África durante el siglo XIV y que un ejemplar del relato llegó a manos de los mudéjares aragoneses como muy tarde a principios del siglo XV, cuando lo tradujeron. (128)

¹¹² Montaner Frutos (125-27) included his own partial translation of the Arabic text provided by Asín Palacios (383). I added my own translation of the omitted parts (added emphasis).

¹¹³ See Montaner Frutos (127-28), Navareño (148-52), and Torres (213).

This quotation reveals part of the problem: critics such as Montaner and Asín Palacios view these works only as mere translations, dismissing the whole process of adaptation that is also taking place.

5.3 The Dichotomy of Profane versus Religious

In trying to determine the different genres that Aljamiado-Morisco literature comprises, modern critics take for granted the existence of known, implicit conventions and expectations shared by the authors and their audience, but the number of surviving manuscripts does not allow us to do more than speculate about such shared understandings. Without any extant manuscript attesting to these facts either, trying to categorize the extant Aljamiado narratives simply distracts us from approaching these texts as what they really are: adaptations of existing stories by *alfaquíes* and copyists who focused more on the actual *production* of literary texts than on theorizing about them. The process of translation into the vernacular, which was later followed by further linguistic transformations from Aragonese to Castilian, irrevocably turned the new story into a new work that became as authoritative as the “original.”

I will not approach this story as an entirely profane text and thus repeat Montaner Frutos’s and Menéndez y Pelayo’s assessments, because doing so limits our field of analysis and suggests that the content of the story is exclusively secular with no mention of religion.¹¹⁴ This is a dangerous assumption, as there exist other plausible readings that combine the two categories, reflecting the hopes and fears of some Mudéjares or Moriscos who did not know what their future held. As discussed in the introduction, we modern readers tend to approach these texts with a previous knowledge of the eventual Morisco expulsion that can cloud our understanding of how the texts functioned in their original context. In the specific case of *El*

¹¹⁴ See Montaner Frutos’s “La literatura aljamiada,” Menéndez y Pelayo, and Chejne.

ḥadīz del baño de Zariab, in which the different versions were certainly written during the fifteenth century, the Mudéjares and later Moriscos of Aragón had no reason to fear any immediate change in their situation. Version B was undoubtedly written in 1492, as its copyist clearly states that Granada fell during its production (Asín and Ribera 13–16). Version C is found in a miscellaneous manuscript, a section of which states that it was dated back to the mid-fifteenth century, according to Saavedra (490). Version A cannot be dated with any degree of certainty, but some linguistic features—that is, archaisms and the type of Aragonese used—clearly indicate that it would have been written during the first half of the fifteenth century (Montaner Frutos 122).

A policy of toleration toward Muslims lasted until the beginning of the sixteenth century as “the sizeable Islamic communities of Christian Spain were encouraged by a Spanish Crown eager to maintain the same infrastructure bequeathed to it by the retreating Islamic forces and to tap into the wealth and expertise of the Islamic society” (Ingram 11). Consequently, it is not my purpose to gauge the level of religiosity of the story but to determine the didactic themes that the Mudéjares and Morisco meant to transmit and preserve.

The codicological contexts of the extant versions of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* correspond to the usual structure of Aljamiado codices, which often consist of very eclectic material. However, one factor that binds all these texts together is their didactic purpose. Version C is in a manuscript found in Morés, buried and wrapped in a cleaning cloth in the mid-fifteenth century, which includes prayers, lives of the Prophets, and narrative fiction. Version B was found in a manuscript composed of prayers, supplications, traditions, historical accounts about the Turks and Muslim leaders such as Almanzor, and teachings and sayings of the Prophet. Of the two, the manuscript containing version C seems much less heterogeneous, as it mainly comprises fictional stories and historical ones, but it also contains traditional religious teachings that once again appear intertwined with the rest of the materials. The

inclusion of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb* in these collections seems anomalous only if one becomes trapped in a secular versus sacred dichotomy.¹¹⁵ Abboud-Haggar calls this story an adaptation of a tale from *One Thousand and One Nights* when there are no real similarities between this story and the famous collection of tales:

Así de tajante se mostró D. Miguel en sus apreciaciones a las que siguió como todo un razonamiento para demostrar que la novela aljamiada, “El Baño de Zariieb,” que había sido publicada por Saavedra y otros como “fruto del ingenio árábigo-español,” no era más que una adaptación de uno de los cientos de cuentos árabes de las *Mil y una noches*. (109)

Asín Palacios and Montaner Frutos also associate the story with *One Thousand and One Nights* because it is, according to them, reminiscent of the same genre. Neither critic grants any didactic value to the story, precisely because they seem to equate profane with entertaining.

Barletta, on the other hand, links the story to a completely religious framework:

Even the well-known *Alhadith del baño de Zaryeb*, an entertaining narrative set in medieval Córdoba, is linked to a religious framework through its juxtaposition with other, overtly religious texts with its manuscript context. Looking at Madrid, CSIC/Junta ms. 4, we find that a text listed as the *Alhadith del baño de Zarayeb* (ff. 182^r–93^f) is preceded by a wide range of texts dealing with prayers and religious matters. Furthermore, it is directly followed—on the very same folio, just below the end of the text—by two folios of invocations (“*diyāt*”; sing. “*du’a*”) in Arabic with a list of the dates that correspond to the phases of the moon in Latin characters (ff. 193^r–94^v). (5)

¹¹⁵ See Montaner Frutos, Asín Palacios, and Abboud-Haggar.

Barletta identifies the *du'a* that follows the *Alḥadīth del bañō de Ziriyāb* as “the same invocation of God’s blessing on the Prophet that is traditionally recited by Muslims before their Friday prayers” (5). The invocation in question is “*wa-alḥamdu lillāhi rabi al-ālamīna wa salla llāhu ‘alā Moḥammadin al-karīm wa ‘alā ālihi wa saḥbihi wa sallimū taslimā*” and means “Thanks to God the Lord of the two worlds, and God bless generous Moḥammad and his family and companions, and may He grant peace.”¹¹⁶ This invocation is not used exclusively in Friday prayers, but can be recited by anyone at any location, regardless of his or her activity. In fact, it is commonly recited at the end of a prayer, after a lesson, or after telling a story. The link established by Barletta between this *du'a* and the supposed religiosity with which it imbues the story with is far-fetched at best:

This interweaving of a communally-recited prayer and the closing of a seemingly secular narrative provides strong evidence of a significant link between the storytelling and devotional activities of Aragonese Crypto-Muslims (at least as far as these were carried out by *alfakies* and other local scholars), even if at the thematic, or semantico-referential, level the *Alhadith del bañō de Zaryeb* and traditional Islamic prayers seem to have little in common. (5)

Barletta’s desire to associate the reading of this story with a set of religious practices and to give it a devotional purpose is understandable because he frames the story in the context of the crypto-Muslim population of Aragón. However, the particular version of *El ḥadīz del bañō de Zariyb* (version B) that he analyzes has been indisputably dated to around the time when Granada was taken, and no forced conversions had yet taken place. In fact, in Aragón, forced conversions would not happen for another thirty years, and there would be no crypto-Muslims to speak of until then. The author or composer of the present manuscript must

¹¹⁶ I have adapted the transliteration of the *du'a* to the ISO norms that I use, and the translation is mine.

have been a Mudéjar in charge of transmitting knowledge and educating his coreligionists. Barletta's flawed conclusions only confirm the danger of focusing narrowly on the secular-sacred and profane-religious binaries:

The *du'a* that follows the *Alhadith del baño de Zaryeb* demonstrates the idea that even texts that have conventionally been categorized as "literary" (that is, "neither religious nor practical" according to the Harvey/Wiegers system) can be imbued with form and meaning through an explicit and unmistakably Islamic, even at times linguistically Arabic, framework. This framework shapes the written discourse of the Moriscos in far-reaching ways, and it strongly suggests the need to seek out means of categorizing *aljamiado-morisco* texts and dealing with issues of genre and meaning that do not depend so heavily on these texts' thematic features. ("The *Aljamiado* 'Sacrifice of Ishmael,' " 518–19)

On the contrary, I believe that the thematic features are the most important attribute of the *Aljamiado* texts, because they unequivocally reveal the themes that first the Mudéjares and later the Moriscos wanted to see preserved and passed on. Therefore, we should focus on the stories being told and how they are told. Considerable ink has been spilled to argue that classification of *Aljamiado* texts is necessary, despite their heterogeneity. Montaner Frutos argues, "Los criterios temáticos se prestan a confusión y a involucrar categorías no homogéneas entre sí, lo que, lógicamente, distorsiona la clasificación con ellas realizada" ("Aproximación" 314). He further adds that "los distintos elementos señalados por la crítica (contenido escatológico, referencias a Mahoma, tratamiento de problemas profanos, etc.), ni conllevan diferencias estructurales ni son excluyentes entre sí, por lo que imposibilitan una clasificación rigurosa de los textos" ("Aproximación" 314). The classification of these texts

could indeed be useful—if it does not take our focus away from the actual content and meaning of the texts, which it does in the particular case of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariyb*.

Zuwiyya, on the other hand, believes that “the story of Zaryeb’s bath undoubtedly survived because it preserved memory of Andalusian customs that were quickly disappearing or already gone from Castile and Aragon by the end of the sixteenth century” (32). But as we will see, his focus on a historical and (to use his own term) secular reading of the narrative prevents him from accessing its didactic value and results in various misinterpretations. Given all the inaccuracies and anachronisms in how Córdoba is described, the narrative could not have been preserved as a historical reference, as Zuwiyya seems to imply indirectly. He further affirms that “although the work originated in the city of Basra [...] located in what is presently Iraq, it provided its sixteenth- and seventeenth-century audience with a vivid representation of Andalusian society. This will ultimately explain why Aljamiado-Morisco authors included the *secular* tale in a corpus of *essentially Islamic* literature” (32–33, emphasis added).

Zuwiyya’s approach is problematic on two levels. First, the authors were most likely not Moriscos but Mudéjares. Zuwiyya frequently misuses the word *Morisco* and even wrongly paraphrases Montaner Frutos, saying, “The discovery of the manuscript in Aragón and its regional language and archaisms suggest to Montaner that it is a production of Aragonese Moriscos from as early as the beginning of the fifteenth century” (33). However, Montaner does not mention the Moriscos, and rightly so: as of the early fifteenth century and especially in Aragón, no forced conversions had yet taken place and most likely there were no Moriscos but only Mudéjares in Aragon.

I insist on using the correct term because considering whether the authors were Moriscos or Mudéjares helps us to discern the purpose that motivated the authors to reproduce and transmit these texts. The Mudéjares did not have to hide their religion and could openly

practice it. They lived in an environment that favored the production of works that were not exclusively dogmatic. On the other hand, the Moriscos who preserved the stories and compiled them in composite codices had their own reasons to do so, but qualifying all the works that they chose to preserve as essentially religious, with a few secular exceptions such as *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb*, would be misleading and anachronistic. Again, the problem is that critics tend to approach the Mudéjar and Morisco texts with the knowledge of their future fate in mind and therefore associate all Aljamiado texts with the Moriscos' struggle and religious resistance. Indeed, many of their texts were powerful tools of religious resistance, but approaching *all* their texts as "inseparable from the religious purpose of the literature," (49) to use Chejne's words, obscures the polyvalent nature of works such as *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb*.

All the texts that remain extant embodied a didactic purpose, including *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb*. As Anwar Chejne points out in his *Islam and the West*:

Besides being anonymous and untitled, Aljamiado manuscripts are frequently composites of a variety of unrelated items. This may have been not the original format, but a late combination of subjects under a single cover. This practice would lead one to assume that such composite manuscripts were owned by individuals who wished to have an encyclopedia of religious materials for performing daily ritual obligations and other needs. [...]

[Aljamiado authors] excelled in their purpose: instructing in simple, straightforward language rather than innovating. To fulfill this purpose, they exercised discerning selectivity of materials not so much for intellectual stimuli as for self-edification and regulating one's conduct in this world in preparation for the hereafter. These spiritual and pragmatic needs called for religious materials dealing with beliefs, religious observances, and legislation

pertaining to marriage, divorce, birth, burial, inheritance, and contractual obligations of all sorts. History, legends, stories, wisdom, sayings, poetry, divination, prophecies, astrology, and the like were ancillary to and almost *inseparable from the religious purpose of the literature*. (49, emphasis added)

This version of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* fits well within what Stephen Nichols and Sigfried Wenzel have called the “manuscript matrix,” according to which the processes involved in a manuscript compilation “can thus offer social or anthropological insights into the way its texts were or could have been read by the patron or public to which it was diffused” (2). The *alfaquí* who included this version of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* must have used it, like the rest of the stories compiled in this particular manuscript, as a didactic tool, for a myriad of possible reasons that deserve in-depth exploration.

Many works have themes explicitly linked to religion, as is to be expected since the whole Middle Ages were governed by and saturated with religion, but their didactic value should not be undermined. The disconcerting issue with *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* is that it does not explicitly deal with eschatological, theological, or spiritual issues, as do other legends such as *Tamīm ad-Dārī* or *La Doncella Carcayona* or those analyzed in chapters 2 and 3 of this study. This absence of explicit instructions and commands seems to push critics to see the work as purely entertaining, leaving a didactic purpose to more obviously religious texts and thus reinforcing the sharp secular-religious dichotomy.

Zuwiyya states that the secular nature of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* is “established from the outset when the author cites the source ‘Las krónicas de los reyes’ ” (34). But why would that make *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* a secular tale? There is evidence in that source, as Barletta points out (albeit too emphatically), of God and his Prophet, and very religious themes such as conversion and chastity are explicitly mentioned, so why deem it strictly secular? Zuwiyya also affirms that “Bouzineb is correct in observing that nearly all of the

texts, *except Zaryeb's legend*, serve some didactic purpose such as moral edification or celebration of the benefits of conversion to Islam” (35, emphasis added). But there *is* a didactic purpose in *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb*. It has simply been overlooked by critics because of their excessive focus on trying to categorize Aljamiado texts and make them fit into a binary system that contrasts secular and religious categories.

Montaner briefly mentions the similarities between the structure and content of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb* and traditional tales, but he does not highlight the similarities between this Aljamiado narrative and a very particular kind of tale, known as cautionary tales. The fact that this particular text does not offer guidelines on the strict observation of religious rituals does not mean that it cannot be seen as religious; it might very well have been religious, but this should not be the key question. Critics should ask themselves what a given text tells us about the possible reasons for its (re)production, not whether it corresponds to a certain set of expectations that modern readers, aware of the Moriscos' ultimate expulsion from Spain, bring to the text. In a world where all rules stem to some degree from a divine source, speaking of profane and secular texts is anachronistic. We should rather focus on what the story taught its audience.

5.4 *‘ilm*, Knowledge, Wisdom

According to a teaching of the Prophet, “it is charity to learn, to act accordingly and to teach.”¹¹⁷ The message of this hadith is echoed in the opening sections of this version of *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariieb*, as the protagonist places a clear emphasis on this basic precept from the beginning. The narrative begins as follows:

The king was known as Almansur and his name was Mhmmadu bnu ‘Abdi Allahi bnu Abi ‘Amir, may God forgive him. Under his reign, in Cordova,

¹¹⁷ Cited in Rosenthal (246) and taken from Abū Khaythamah, No. 138.

lived a young man called Muhammadu, son of al-Hajjaj. He was clever, sensible, knowledgeable, a man of honor, great fortune and wealth who had learned all science, of al-Muwatta and al-Bukhari, logic, philosophy, medicine, law, chronicles, and everything that can be written in black and white, to such an extent that he was an ore of wisdom and a house of knowledge and science. (n.p.)¹¹⁸

‘ilm (knowledge, wisdom) is a central precept in Islam, and its transmitter, *‘ālim*, is at the top of the cultural chain; hence the importance of referring to our Aljamiado author as an *auctor*, who possesses *auctoritas*. *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariyb* fits the purpose of educating the people, and the anonymity of the authors is also understandable from an Islamic point of view. “As a link in the chain of transmission, an author concealed his own personality behind the prestige of authority and the ranks of previous transmitters” (Lewis 154). The Mudéjar who redacted this version of the story was in possession of the authority conferred to him by two factors: his own knowledge and his willingness to share it with others. The outcome is similar to *adab*, that is, literature, which was defined during the classical period by al-Jāhiz (d. 869) as the result of adding the *‘aql* (wisdom) of others to one’s own wisdom: “*wa innama l-adab ‘aql ghairika tazīduhu fi ‘aqlika*” (6). The Mudéjar author therefore used literature as a tool, in accordance with al-Jāhiz’s recommendation: “*wa li anna l-adab innamā hiya ālāt taṣluḥu an tusta ‘mala fid-dīn wa tusta ‘mala fid-dunyā,*” meaning that “literature (*adab*) is but a tool to be used in both spiritual and worldly matters.”¹¹⁹ The secular and spiritual are often equated with profane and religious, respectively, in discussions of Islamic literature, and the two terms are often opposed to each other (as we have seen in our review of critical commentary on Aljamiado literature), but the spiritual and worldly matters mentioned by al-

¹¹⁸ Translations of the text of *The Story of Zaryeb* are mine.

¹¹⁹ Al-Jāhiz, vol. I (87–134); the translation is mine.

Jāhiz refer only to all that falls under God's dominion, which is everything. Cheikh-Moussa observes:

It should be noted that between the sacred and the profane, the temporal and spiritual, there is hardly any contradiction or incompatibility which could allow *adab* writings to be distinguished from those described as religious and which deal with the same subjects or related themes. Furthermore, the interpenetration of the religious, of whatever persuasion, and the profane was so complete in the minds and culture of the [classical] period that it would be at best artificial, if not anachronistic, to try to separate them clearly. (161)

I would go a step further and say that referring even to an interpenetration of the profane and religious in Aljamiado literature would be inadequate. In the late Middle Ages and in the worldview of the Mudéjar community, all things emanated from God and all Islamic literature served the purpose of enriching people's lives in accordance with divine ordinances. The first revealed word was the imperative *iqra'* (meaning "recite," "read," or "learn") and from it came the whole revelation. In this worldview, any attempt to distinguish secular from religious values would be misguided.

5.5 Structure of the Text and its Didactic Purpose

I read *El ḥadīz del baño de Zariab* as a two-part narrative with a clear didactic layout in which two different scenarios lead to two distinct outcomes: a positive set of protagonists experiences a positive outcome, and a negative set of protagonists passes through a negative ordeal before repenting and reaching a positive outcome. My approach differs from that of Asín Palacios, Montaner, and Zuwiyya, who divide the narrative into three parts—a description of Córdoba, construction of the bath, and Zaynab's story—thus making the didactic structure less apparent. I also depart radically from Asín Palacios and other critics

who view this narrative as forming part of the *Thousand and One Nights* collection of tales. In fact, I contend that this narrative represents a literature of exemplarity among the Mudéjares.

As Cheikh-Moussa explains:

[*Adab* texts] can transform a universal paradigm of ethics into a specific narrative, a particular story, or a fable, thus giving an illustration and example of the conduct or speech regarded as appropriate in a particular situation. Even the *nādira* and *mulḥa*, amusing narrative and witticism, where the intention to amuse and entertain would seem to be uppermost, involved the ethical-rhetorical dimension, and the emphasis is laid on the aesthetic and edifying value of the story or saying in question. It is indeed this ever-present ethical element which, for the learned tradition, distinguished *adab* from so-called popular literature and which leads to the exclusion from literature of stories like, for example, those of the *Thousand and One Nights*. (164)

This is not to say that Mudéjares did not indulge in reading popular literature—on the contrary, some of them must have done so—but the didactic dimension of the narrative clearly sets it apart from texts that aimed purely to amuse. The didactic lesson is twofold, praising the chastity of women and praising proper behavior that is in accordance with the Islamic precept of *ṣirāṭ mustaqīm* (“straight path”) as invoked in the first *sura* of the Qur’ān, “The Opening”:

¹ In the name of God, the Lord of mercy, the Giver of mercy! ² Praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds, ³ the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy, ⁴ Master of the Day of Judgment. ⁵ It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help. ⁶ Guide us *to the straight path*: ⁷ the path of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray. (Q 1, emphasis added)

The narrative allegorically demonstrates this “straight path,” showing what is gained or lost depending on the choices we make, which is a recurring theme in medieval Islamic Iberian literature. Thus, it functions as a cautionary tale for young women.

The tale’s didactic purpose unfolds in two parts. The first part of the narrative provides a brief historical overview and introduces the first protagonist of the story, who is also part of the “positive choice, positive outcome” scenario. Muḥammad, son of al-Ḥajjāj, is a “clever, sensible, knowledgeable man of honor and great fortune and wealth who has learned all science, logic philosophy, medicine, law, and chronicles. He [is] an ore of wisdom and a house of knowledge and science.” The very accomplished young man marries an equally accomplished young woman in a lavish and extravagant ceremony:

The recounter said: later, content, the old man sent him to ask for her hand, which was given to him. The dowry was given in the presence of witnesses, and the wedding was celebrated with a great party where cattle and cows were sacrificed. People were able to eat for a month in this celebration. Everyone in Córdoba was excited and spent great amounts of money. The young girl was found virgin and the wedding was such that the young groom did not go out for six months. (n.p.)

Later, the young man discovers that his young bride is still unhappy despite all the goods he has bestowed upon her:

When he came home to her he found her sitting and crying. He then asked her: “Why are you crying? You have abundant riches, great privilege, honor, inheritance, possessions, horses, orchards, tours, mills, pear trees, castles, open land, and if you wanted, I would build you a house or castle made of gold or silver.” But despite it all, she refused to face him. She then said: “You sent me to the bath yesterday with my maids. And while we were inside, women from

the house of the king's minister entered and everyone devoted their attention to them and forgot about me and there was such a rush in the bath that I came home with my hair still full of henna. I swore never to go to the bath again; I would rather wash my hair at home and do the best I can for as long as God may want. Well, if I were married to the keenest man of all Córdoba, I would have a bath in my own house." When the young man heard what the daughter of his uncle, his wife, had told him, he said, "Wait and see what I will do out of love for you." (n.p.)

Muhammad keeps his promise and builds the most beautiful bath his bride has ever seen. The symbolism of the bath is evident: it stands for purification and purity and echoes the culture of *limpieza de sangre* ("purity of blood") in which the Moriscos find themselves. In this story, the first pair of protagonists is pure and they live in great bliss, with which the first part of the narrative concludes. This happy ending supports of the norms of a patriarchal society that the couple respects, one in which the man is knowledgeable and provide for his bride.

The second part of the narrative is still more straightforward in its didactic message, depicting a young woman who is led astray from the *ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*, the "straight path." Zaynab, daughter of the Minister Muhammad who is the son of Zayun, hears about the bath and wants to go, but her father says no. She refuses to accept her father's decision and emotionally blackmails him until he gives in:

The young girl then said: "I would like to see that bath, but it does not please my father." The young girl started fading away, as she did not want to drink or eat, until she became sick with the desire to see the bath of Zaryeb. When the minister heard of it, he told the young girls: "Get her ready and take her to the bath and bring her back." (n.p.)

She makes the intensely desired visit but literally goes astray:

And with the number of people around, the young woman, daughter of the minister, got separated from the young maidens. She became upset, not knowing where to turn since the midday prayer. And as she wandered lost, she came across some very high and big doors with a young man sitting outside wearing a headcloth and shoes and with his right leg on top of his left one. (n.p.)

The description of the second male protagonist is directly opposed to that of the first:

His name was Muhammad son of Tahir. He was not wealthy or fortunate. Rather, he had swallowed and destroyed all his wealth in games, foods, and drinks, until he ended up with nothing, no lordship, just these houses and the clothes he had on. He had torn off the marble from the house and the bricks and the tiles, and he had converted his house into a chessboard where no one entered but players and gamblers. (n.p.)

He is the personification of the wrong suitor, guilty of debauchery and apparently unsuited for a young woman like Zaynab. At this point, the narrative takes a turn often found in the medieval Spanish *exempla*: the victim is trapped and the capture is made by deception.

The young lady passed by. She had never gone out of her palace and thought that that house, with its beautiful doors, had to be the bath of Zaryeb. So she asked him: “Sir, is this the bath of Zaryeb?” The young man thought to himself, “This young girl is lost,” and he answered her: “This is the bath.” The young woman then said, “Have young maidens and servants come in?” He said, “Yes.” And she went in. (n.p.)

Zaynab, however, is not a blameless victim, for she has blackmailed her way to getting what she wanted, contrary to her father’s wishes. When she finds herself in dire straits and in danger of losing her virginity—which is of paramount value to the patriarchal society that

provides the moral stage for the story—she finds a way to escape through deception, which should come as no surprise.

She then found the house empty and found herself tricked. She thought to herself: “Tragedy—if I scream, who will hear me?” and said to herself: “I have to be clever.” She took off her bag and tunic and threw them on a nearby myrtle and threw her gold and silver key-ring. The young man came and kissed her between her eyes, and she said: “You thought I was lost and that I did not know the bath of Zaryeb? Well, I went there ten times, but I have come to you, as I am very much in love with you and your beauty, and that is the reason why I came to your house, for I have never found a way to get out until today, and I want to win your beauty and I want you to win mine. Go now, bring us some mutton meat, bread, green fruit, dried fruit, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, sweet pomegranate, acorns, chestnuts, dates, grapes, citrons, sugar cane, sugar candy, and apples, because I do not want to get out of this house for at least two months.” (n.p.)

The deceiving man falls into his own trap in a common “*el burlador burlado*” sort of way, again a common motif in medieval Iberian literature, found also in *Calila y Dimna* where the person trying to poison another is himself poisoned (83), *Lucanor* (Nos. 26 and 43), *Disciplina* (No. 15), and *Enxemplos* (No. 92). In this way, Zaynab is in fact a perfect fit for the young Muḥammad ibn Tahir, and their consequent union should not be at all surprising.

On the other hand, the misogynistic tendency of the above-mentioned wisdom literature is somewhat suppressed here, as the woman ends up defending her honor and that of her father. After the young ibn Tahir leaves, she escapes, but not before giving him her *al-jiljal* (anklet) as payment for the goods she has asked him to retrieve. This element of the narrative certainly echoes other classic tales such as *Cinderella*. Also, Zaynab’s wittiness is

reminiscent of *La donzella Teodor*. Whereas the slave girl Teodor beats the men at their own challenging game, outsmarting them with her knowledge and wisdom, Zaynab here outwits the young man by showing greater ingenuity.

Upon returning to his house, the man realizes that he has been tricked and becomes mad:

He starts throwing and pouring everything he has brought and he starts complaining and ripping his clothes off and he goes out, out of his mind and heart, saying, “Who will show me the young woman who asked to be shown the way to the bath of Zaryeb?” Whoever sees him will say, “Poor man; poverty has made him lose his mind.” (n.p.)

That very *al-jiljal*, which the young man is carrying, catches Zaynab’s father’s eye, and he takes it back from the man, then returns home to confront his daughter. She explains what has happened and concludes, “And you know, father, if it had not been for this bracelet and my ruse, I would not have escaped his claws.” Her cleverness, highlighted in the story, is again no surprise, for women occupied a crucial place in the Mudéjar and Morisco community. Miller provides a clear description of female erudition during both the Mudéjar and Morisco periods. She mentions the existence of female *alfaquí* and the fact that women could engage in notarial affairs and commercial enterprises (76–77). On the other hand, the ruse of Zaynab is reminiscent of *fabliaux* in which “the two characteristics most often attributed to [...] women are deceitfulness and cupidity” (Lacy 70).

On the other hand, Zuwiyya’s approach to the characterization of the women in this narrative is influenced by a modern view on the matter. His critical lens diverts him from the second woman’s real function:

The enclosure of the Andalusian woman is central to the plot of the Bath of Zaryeb, as the chain of events leading to the second marriage is motivated by

the minister's daughter's ignorance of the outside world. The narrator tells us that she "nunca había salido de su alqasar" (Corriente Córdoba 217).

In fact when she asks her father if she may go to the Bath of Zaryeb, he grants her permission only after she stops eating, drinking, and sleeping, and begins showing signs of grave illness. When she finds herself in the street on the way to Zaryeb's bathhouse and the crowds separate her from her maidens, her inexperience in dealing with city life leads her to mistake a dilapidated older mansion for the new Bath of Zaryeb, and the broken gambler sitting in front of it for Zaryeb's doorman. The lurking figures of licentious men should have been recognizable even to the most innocent of maidens as they were common nuisance in Caliphal Córdoba: "vendedores ambulantes, compradores, paseantes, ociosos, mendigos importunos [estaban] estacionados sobre todo a las puertas de baños y mezquitas" (Torres Balbás 74). (39)

Zuwiyya seems to be giving too much historical credibility to the tale, but as Montaner Frutos points out, "La fuente árabe de la redacción aljamiada, aunque ambientada en la Córdoba califal, no se redactó allí. La topografía de la ciudad está tomada de uno cualquiera de los diversos geógrafos árabes que, copiándose unos a otros, perpetuaron descripciones más o menos fantaseadas de las capitales andalusíes" (127).

The ending of the tale smooths things over as Zaynab's damaged reputation is salvaged with a hasty marriage, which is the only way of restoring the social order. Zaynab has broken the rules of the patriarchal society in which she lives, but by marrying the young man, she ends up a winner. Zuwiyya does not seem to find the literary resolution convincing: "Despite his sinful gambling, drinking, and attempted rape, Almanzor remedies the man's illness by giving him enough money to marry Zaynab" (42). But Zuwiyya fails to see the message of this cautionary tale, directed at Morisco women and their guardians. In fact, given

the importance of women in the Morisco community, the story fits what must have been a crucial concern for Moriscos: teaching their women and children how to be safe. As already noted, women functioned as guardians of their religion, and some of them were even *alfaquíes*.¹²⁰ The tale is to be understood very much like *Little Red Riding Hood*, which was actually popular as early as the mid-eleventh century; both are cautionary tales illustrating what happens to young women who do not follow their parents' advice.¹²¹

The Mudéjares and Moriscos defined and viewed themselves through their literature, which served not only as a mirror of their lives but also, more importantly, as a tool helping them to preserve the honor of their community. The community needed to exercise individual initiative to defend its values and principles, since there was no official power in place that could do so. *El ḥadīṣ del baño de Zariab* is therefore much more than just an amusing *novelita*, as Asín Palacios suggests; it is a cautionary tale aimed at distinguishing the good from the bad for women, many of whom were pillars of the small Muslim community of medieval Iberia. It also gave parents, especially fathers, a didactic tool to use in protecting their daughters.

¹²⁰ See Miller (76).

¹²¹ See Wiolkowski.

Afterword

In this study, I have sought to identify where prior scholarship on Aljamiado-Morisco literature has fallen short and to remedy a resulting problem. Viewing the entire corpus of literary production of a Muslim diaspora, which lived under Christian rule after being forcibly converted, as entirely religious with a handful of profane exceptions is anachronistic. Such an interpretation imposes modern standards on medieval texts. My analysis of Mudéjar and Morisco texts has suggested that an either-or approach is not appropriate, for it prevents the reader from accessing other possible readings of a particular story. The challenge, of course, is that we find it difficult if not impossible to detach ourselves from our own socio-historical and geopolitical contexts. Accordingly, critics have approached these Mudéjar and Morisco texts with their knowledge of the Moriscos' eventual expulsion in mind. But to fully explore the intentionality of a text and conjecture about the possible hopes and fears experienced by the authors of the story and their audiences, we must let go of that prior knowledge, which blinds our critical eye.

I have shown that narratives that have received relatively critical attention deserve more in-depth analysis, as they reveal aspects of the Mudéjar and Morisco literary production that remain unappreciated. These authors used their knowledge and the tools at their disposal to create a series of stories, some entertaining and amusing, others gloomy and dreary, but almost all of them didactic and hortatory. These stories use non-religious figures and protagonists to promote Islamic tenets and appropriate behavior. They do so in a sophisticated and literary way that sets them apart from the more official and orthodox material used by religious officials in Islamic centers. These authors, moral guardians of their community, instructed in entertaining ways that did not contradict their religious message, but used an unorthodox way for their time period. These Mudéjares and Moriscos were the first sizable Muslim community to live under Christian rule, and their process of literary creation had to

go through a process of cultural negotiation that adapted previous stories to their new cultural reality as a minority.

A future step for further research would involve unearthing the remaining stories that belong to what I have defined as the Aljamiado homiletic storytelling genre. The most intriguing such story I have found so far is that of Alī el de Bagdād, which I mentioned briefly in chapter 4 and have modernized (see Appendix F), and which juxtaposes a multitude of themes around the mysterious Aladdin-like figure of ‘Alī. The story is set in the court of Hārūn al-Rashīd, who asks his vizier, Ja‘far, to tell him a story. The story takes the usual route of a frame narrative but becomes so complex that the reader almost loses sight of the main frames. The protagonist is taken across land and sea and meets fantastic creatures. The story is reminiscent of *One Thousand and One Nights*, although it does not belong to that famous collection of tales. One interesting part of the story exposes the amorous relationship between the protagonist and a king:

Y entonces llamó el rey su hueste y cabalgué con ciento mil caballeros o más, después fui al alcázar y fui al lugar que tenían cercado y los vencí, y envié un mensajero al rey, y salió *el rey a recibirme y tuvo gran gozo conmigo y me creció en amorío y nunca se partía de mí de noche ni de día. Y después nos quedamos un mes que no salíamos de la ciudad* hasta que un día me vino deseo de cazar y salí con una partida de los escuderos, y cazando se levantó delante de mí una gacela muy hermosa y dije a mi compañía que yo me la quería cazar, y fui detrás de ella hasta que me transpuse de mi gente, y llegué en una tierra sola donde no moraba persona y me alcanzó el perecimiento, y me puse a llorar y quedé turbado que no sabía qué hacerme ni qué carrera llevar. (emphasis added)

I believe that the Aljamiado-Morisco corpus still contains many hidden treasures, the discovery of which will help us to overcome the binary classifications that our own sociopolitical realities impose on us.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

La estorya de la çibdat de cobre **Summary and Transliteration**

The king ‘Abd al-Malik bnu Marwān is sitting one day in presence of his court. While its members are discussing the exploits of former kings, they mention that no one has ever been given the gifts of Sulaymān bnu Dāwud. ‘Abd al-Malik asks them if they know what Sulaymān used to do to the Djinns (*al-jiñes*) that angered him. The king’s minister, Ṭālib bnu Sahl then answers him by retelling the story of how he was once in an embarkation leaving Sicily by sea when it got caught in a great wind, and arrived to a great mountain: “*por lo que la tomó de los aires y andó [anduvo] camino cuytado [afligido] con aire g^arandísimo dekía [hasta] que vyno a un mont grandísimo*” (f. 74r) where they met people that were Muslims but did not speak Arabic. Their king then greeted them and explained to them that their ship had been victim of the wind, which brought it to his kingdom. The members of the crew felt scared but were quickly reassured by the king that they were not in harm’s way (“*y dist^yero^wn consolatvos [consolaos] que no a [hay] enpedimen [impedimento] sobre vosotros*” f. 74v). He hosted them for three days and one day that the fishermen went fishing, Ṭālib accompanied them and saw them bringing to the surface a copper container sealed with Sulaymān’s seal (“*un estuj [estuche] de cobre con-el silo [sello] de Sulaymān f^yjo de Dewud y era fegu^wra [tenía figura] de un onb^ere [hombre]*” f. 75r). Once the fisherman lifted it, the container broke letting escape a blue smoke which turned into the most impossible person that could be (“*y tornó per^esona la más imposible que pud^yese ser,*” f. 75r) who then uttered the following: “*rrepen^ti-yen a Allāh no tornare [volveré] a lo que era de mí jamás*” (f. 75r). When Ṭālib asked the king about him, he explained to him that “*aque^los so^wn los condamnado^ws aque^los*

que desobedeçian al-annabī [profeta] de Allāh Sulayman fījo de Dewud y que él los tomaba y los enp^eresionaba en-aques^ate estuj” (f. 75r).

Abd al-Malik (in the main narrative) then expresses his desire to see some of these containers. Ṭālib suggests him to write to “*el capitán Mūsā ben-Nuṣayre a las vilas de al-Qayrawān*” and ask him to go where the containers are, and bring him some. Abd al-Malik follows his advice: he writes a letter to Mūsā and hands it to his minister Ṭālib so the latter would take it to Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr. Ṭālib is also asked to go with Mūsā to where the containers are. Ṭālib acquiesces and says: “*lo-odençī^ya y la obedençī^ya a Allāh y ya su mesajero en pues al bⁱrinçep [príncipe] de los c^ereyent[es]” (f. 76v). He then goes to the Maghreb, “*las vilas de sol poniente*”, after being welcomed by the “*señor de las casas de Miṣre,*” in Egypt. Upon arrival to the Maghreb, Ṭālib hands over the missive to Mūsā, who reads it and shares the orders with his men who accept the mission like Ṭālib before them. One of Mūsā’s *privados* recommends him to use the services of ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Maṣmūdī “*que el es v^yejo anti^ygo que ya habe experimentado todo peligro y no ha cesado que demostr^ara to^wda Carrera y a él habe coneçençī^ya [conocimiento] con los caminos” (f. 77r). Mūsā sends for him and: “*veos un v^yejo anti^ygo en-el diyen que ya conoçía los años y los días” (f. 77v). Mūsā then explains to him that they were asked by Abd al-Malik to bring him “*alguna cosa de los es^utuches de Sulaymān aquellos que en-elos habe los maliknos [malignos] de los esbiritus enbⁱrisionados [encarcelados]” (f. 77v). ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad goes on explaining the difficulty of the task at hand and the time it would take them to carry it on – two years – and advises Mūsā to leave his son in charge during his absence.****

In preparation for the journey ahead, Mūsā is told to take

mī^yl camelos que lī^yeven [lleven] la p^orovisio^wn y mī^yl camelos que lī^yeven el-agu^wa que tú qui^yeres detalar [cruzar] desert anp^olo cu^wando los inbⁱlirás [llenarás] los vasilos pu^wes sī^yla [sellas] sobre sus bocas y cī^yerralas por que

*no los toque el-aire y toma con-tú mi'l camelos que li^yeven la p^orovision que tú
acaecerás en deserto. (f. 78v)*

They start their journey and travel three months until they arrive to a “*ti^yerra negra rrasa lu^wente [lejana] estendi^yda no habi-a en-ela per^esona que consolase ni sentido que se-nti^yese sino los condenados de los fi^yjos de Iblīs el maldi^ycho*” (f. 79.v). The land is deserted and arid except for “*la colicontida [coloquintida];*” whoever goes in is “*perdi^ydo*” and whoever leaves is “*naçi^ydo*”. They stay on that land nine months after which the old man admits not knowing where they are but he is confident God will eventually show them the way: “*y di^ysó no sé mas enpero [pero] andemos par-aventura Allah nos-adereçara [guiará] y nos gui^yara al camino por su potentat*” (f. 80v). They walk throughout the night and arrive in the morning to a “*ti^yerra que rresp^alandía con las flores y rresp^alandía con las flores*”¹²² (80v). The land is bursting with a myriad of plants and abundant water, but there is smoke coming out of some place high up in the sky. They get closer and realize it is a castle that is casting a light as if it were the moon. It is made of iron, its door of copper, yet it looks like it was made of smoke. Mūsā is amazed but soon discovers that the castle is deserted, not a single living soul to be found. Mūsā is taken by what he sees and says: “*no ha señor sino Allāh el perdurable enpués de la temamez [sic] de sus halekados [creados]*” while the old sheikh says: “*loor es a Allāh sobre lo cobios [copioso / la copia] de su merçe [merced] y de su honor y paraventura [porventura] en que-squivaréis [esquivaréis] cosa y es mechor [mejor] a vosotros y paraventura en que amaís cosa y es mala para vosotros*” (f. 82r). In response to Mūsā’s question about the reason behind the sheikh’s gratefulness, the latter goes on explaining to him that his own father was once there and that it took him about a year to get to “*la çibdat de cobre.*” He then explains that they have to stay near the sea and pass by springs and rivers that were dug by *ðu-al-Qarnayn*: “*no nos-apartemos de la mar y en la largueza de aqeste Carrera habe*

¹²² See Table 3.1, p. 68.

fu^wentes y ríos que los cabó ðu-al-Qarnayn cu^wando vino a sol poní^yente” (f. 83r). Mūsā then decides to first explore the strangeness and marvels of the castle: “*aposí^yéntate coñas en-aqueste lugar que no nos mudaremos dekía que hayamos mirado las est^arañezas y sus maravilas”* (f. 83r).

They get closer to the castle and on its door they see two domes (“*capí^ylas*”) with different colors. The door is open and leads to a magnificent hall. On the first door, they see an inscription written “*con-oro fí^yno.*” Mūsā is unable to read it but luckily, the sheikh informes him that he knows seven different languages: “*consu^wélate a virrey que yo esk^lrivo con sí^yet plumas”* (f. 83v). The sheikh then reads the verses written in Chaldean (“*caldeo*”):

sus rrastrros y lo que fizieron nos fazen a saber que nos a ellos
[somos seguidore[s]/
yā paran [sic] por las cosas demandant/
mí^yra verás gentes e sus señoríos son tirados/
ent^ara al-alcáçar y demanda de nu^wevas/
de señores que en la tí^yerra fu^weron compelegados/
fu^wero^wn andantes que-scargaro^wn sus aberí^yas/
en sonb^ara de árboles la-o^wra que fu^weron t^arastornados/
y farawaron to^wdos y la mu^wert ençima de los/
y [d]espar^ayo la mu^wert de los to^wdo lo que conpelegaro^wn (f. 83v-84r)

[Sus rastros y lo que hicieron nos hacen saber que somos de ellos

[seguidores.

Oh parado por las casas preguntándote!

Mira y verás gente y sus señoríos tirados.

Entra en el alcázar y pide noticias

de señores que, en la tierra, fueron congregados.

Eran andantes que descargaron su haberío
 en la sombra de árboles cuando fueron trastornados.
 Y todos tenían la muerte encima de ellos
 y se dispersó la muerte sobre todos los que congregaron]

After hearing the verses, Mūsā cries, gets closer and discovers a similar poem at the end of which, he cries again and loses consciousness: “y p^oloró [lloró] *el virrey dekía que se mortesi^yó [desmayó] sobre-l pues cu^wan[do] rrecordó de su amorteçimi^yento [desmayo] apokeçi^yósele [se le redució] el mundo en sus ojos” (f. 85v). The Sheikh then tells him that if he enters the castle, he will discover marvels: “diso a él el puro onbre si ent^arases en-l-alcáçar verías maravi^yla” (f. 85v). Mūsā then enters and sees four hundred graves made of marble belonging to the kings of the castle. He realizes that all their sumptuous belongings were of no use in the face of death. On one of the graves, he finds other verses about actions and consequences: “y oye y tú corazón decoran lo que oye y sab conque tú lo que senb^ararás de la temor o fueras de la pues ausegarás [conseguirás] aquello que senb^ararás” (ff. 86v-87r) and about the uselessness of regrets: “y contornarse han tus ojos de su estado e así son enfestilantes [fijados] o e así serán lagⁱrimantes pues si p^olorarás pues no te conf^elesará [complacerá] el p^olorar y si te esb^alasmaréas [espantas] pues no te abastará el-esb^alasmo” (f. 87r). On yet another grave he sees the following poem:*

*Cu^wantas de vezes has comido y cu^wantas de vezes has bebi^ydo/
 y cu^wantas de vezes has oído las cantaderas/
 y cu^wantas vezes has jogado y cu^wantas vezes has daído/
 y cu^wantas vezes has cabalgado los cabalos/
 y cu^wantas de vezes has feyto mandami^yento y cu^wantas vezes has
 devedado/
 y cu^wantos castilos devedantes/*

*los sityes y los enseñorees/
y rrobes en-elos las casadas/
y como que yo veo en tú que ya fu^w eses rrobado/
y fueses demandado de tu y fu^w ese dī^o to murió (f. 87v-88r)*

[Cuantas veces has comido y cuantas veces has bebido,
y cuantas veces has oído las cantadoras,
y cuantas veces has jugado y cuantas veces has dado,
y cuantas veces has cabalgado los caballos,
y cuantas veces has dado mandamientos y cuantas veces has
prohibido,
y cuantos castillos que prohíben,
los sitias y los enseñoreas,
y maltratas en ellos las mujeres castas;
y como veo que tú fuiste maltratado,
y se preguntó por ti y fue dicho de ti: “murió”]

They then walk toward the dome and come across eight doors “*de sandalos bermejios enc^alavadas con c^alavos de oro fī^v no est^ereladas con-est^erelas de p^alata gu^warnidas con-esmerakdas bermejas*” (f. 88r) where they find written another poem in similar regretful tone ending in: “*pues no te engane el mundoy su abelimen [adorno] y mī^vra a su obra con-el que-senb^alan y el vezī^vno*” (f. 89r). After reading these lines, Mūsā cries and faints and once he regains consciousness, he writes them down and moves on to the dome where he finds yet another magnificent grave: “*en pu^w es ent^oró en la capi^vla y veos en-ela esk^lribto [escrito] y en medio dela una fuesa [fosa] espantible g^arandísima sobre la una table de oro*” (f. 89r). The verses on the grave are meant for whoever passes by it, it describes the life of ostentatious

luxuries that the king led only to advise him to be aware of the brevity of life and the inevitability of death:

*y era mi cuydar [pensar] que no había ad-aquelo derroisión [destrucción]
dekía que saposentó con nos el derroidor [destructor] de las sabores y de las
vidas y el rrapador de los niños jicos [chicos] y los puro onb^eres anci^yanos
aqueos que no ap^yada a pobre por su pobreza ni rrico por su rriqueza y
éramos en-aqueste alcáçar seguros y con-el esp^eleitantes dekía que s-aposentó
connos el judgo [juicio] del señor de las jentes y tomonos el-apeli^ydo de la
verdat dec^alarada y éramos que cada día moría de nos una conpañía
[compañía]. (f. 90v)*

The author of those lines goes on explaining how he ordered his scribes to write these lines on the “*fu^w esa por-amonestación y a tomar en senp^olo [ejemplo]*” (f. 91.r), and asked his *t^eresoreros* to take all his wealth and try to buy him with it “*p^orovisión de un día o v^yda de día uno*” (f. 91.r). They were unable to do as he asked, which left him with no choice but to accept his destiny and surrender. He gives his name: Kawš son of Kan’ān son of Šarwān son of Šadād son of ‘Ād son of ‘Awš son of Nūḥ.

Mūsā cannot bear it anymore and starts disdainning (*esquivó*) life. They then see a table with a golden inscription saying that a thousand kings have eaten on this table and they are all gone. The following verses read:

*Sabed que el mun[do] e[s] como su^wño de dormi[do]
y que bien de v^yda que no es durable
cosidra cu^wando cosidrarás lo que desearás e así es tú sino
[como soñant
y no es la mu^wert sino p^eresen senb^alan de absen y torpe
[senb^alan de sabio*

pues quien enñorará dél pu^wes enñorado y quien dormirá dél

[pu^wes no es dormi^vdo dél. (f. 92r)

Sabed que el mundo es como el sueño de un dormido

y que el bien de la vida no es durable.

Considera, cuando consideres lo que desearás. Y así eres tú

[como un soñante

y la muerte no es sino un presente que parece ausente y un

[ignorante que parece sabio.

Y quien lo ignora no ignora y quien duerme no es dormido.

Mūsā then writes down the verses and they leave.

On the second day they come across a *caballero de cobre y debase* [debajo] *dél un caballo de cobre* with a message written on the teeth of the horse explaining to the travelers that if they wish to go to the *çibdat de cobre* they should turn the teeth of the horse that will show them the way. They then follow the way indicated and arrive near a mountain

e en su rreiz [raíz] una co^wsa enfi^vesta acostaronse con-un pilar de peña negra y-era for^a dado y-en-él una finest^ara [ventana] g^arandísima y-en-ella una fegura ferestica [feróstica] y-es encasado en-ella fasta su vi^vent^ere y a él dos alas y cu^watro manos dos dellos senb^alan de las manos de de fi^vcho [de hecho] de Adam y las dos otras como las manos de las fi^veras [monstruos] y-en-ellas un galas [garras] de fi^verro y-a él habe pelos como los pelos de caballo y-él habe dos ojos [ojos] bermejós como que fu^wesen la b^arasa de carrasca y en su f^ren [frente] un ojo rrosado rraísco que lança con fu^wego y el que k^ridaba [gritaba] y dezía tan bandito es qui^ven ordenó sobre mí con-aqueste lugar y-el torment dec^alarado la-ora que lo vi^veron volvi^veron fuyendo... (f. 93v)

The sheikh gets closer to the being and asks him “*oh tú malísimo g^arandísimo y-espíritu ferestico qué es tu nonb^ere y qué es aquello que ta [te ha] pu^westo a tú aquí en-aqueste lugar?*” (f. 93v). The “*malísimo g^arandísimo y-espíritu*”, or the ‘*ifrīt* [demonio] then gives them his name: *Ḍīqyus* (in Arabic translated as *Duqius* in Aljamiado), son of al-A’shā. He informs them that he has been imprisoned “*aquí en-aqueste lugar con la potestat [poder] y ligado con la g^arandeza fasta que qui^vera Allāh tan-alto es.*” (f. 94r)

Duqius goes on explaining that: “*mi estorya [historia] es maravi^lla y mis nu^wevas es est^arañeza*” (f. 94r) and starts telling his story: he used to talk to one of the “*rreyes de las islas de la mar*” through one of the king’s idol. This king had a daughter “*soberana en fermosura*” and one day Sulaymān, the prophet of God, heard of her and he wrote the king “*una letra con las cosaçión y la monestaçión y que querebase [quebrase] su idola y que lo casase con su f^vja y que adorase a Allāh tan-alto es*” (f. 94v). Upon receiving the letter, the king convoked his court and asked them for advice. They told him to resort to his idol. The ‘*ifrīt* then entered the idol driven by his “*eñorança [ignorancia] y-el poco de [su] seso*” and told him to wage war against Sulaymān, which the king did. Sulaymān’s army was composed of Djinnns, humans, birds, and f^veras and “*posentose [puso] sobre-l y mandó a los umanales [seres humanos] para los umanales y los espíritus a los espíritus y mandó a las aves que k^erevasen sus ojos y-a las f^veras que comi^vesen sus vi^vent^eres*” (f. 44). When the king went out to confront the army, he took the idol and the *ifrīt* along. Sulaymān’s commander of the Djinnns did not fail to notice the *ifrīt* and captured him. Sulaymān’s army won the war, killed the king, destroyed the idol and Sulaymān married the young woman and imprisoned the *ifrīt* in the tortuous state that he was now to be found.

After hearing his story, the travelers leave the *ifrīt* but not before asking him about the way to the city. On the third day they arrive to an incredible place where “*esc^alareçia al virrey Mūsā neg^oror g^arandísimo en-el fū^wegos g^arandes que s-ençendian y dī^vso el virrey*

Mūsā a Ṭālib fī'jo de Sahli qué son aquestos fū'egos dī'so a él aquesta es la çibdat de llatón tal-e su senb^alança en-e-libro de al-muṭālib" (f. 96r). They do not stop until they reach the city and all its splendor:

un castillo altísimo enfi^vesto [levantado] en-el-aire y la largeza de su muralla t^erenta estados y-en torno della vent [veinte] y cinco legu^was y ya ela habe vint y cinco pu^wertas que rresp^alandesen como que ellas fū^wesen fū^wego y la muralla t^oroç [tras] uno t^arabađa parti^vđa en partida. La-ora que p^elegaro^wn [llegaron] posentaro^wnse en-ella y yent^eremetiéronse en-alcoseguir a ella pu^werta y no pu^wdī'ero^wn sobre aquello y dī'so el virrey Mūsā a Ṭālib fī'cho de Sahli: 'no habe ađ-aquesta pu^wertas' y dī'so a él: 'no habe a ella pu^werta que se conoçka [abra] sino de dentro y a cada pu^werta dellas geño g^arandísimo. (f.96v-97r)

They then have to open it from inside. Mūsā is concerned by finding the way in: "*por dónde poyaremos ađaquesta muralla y que él muralla g^arandísima y-es voidađa de llatón y dī'so a él Ṭālib oh tú visorrey folgaramos [holgaremos] un día o dos días y considraremos en-el geña pora [la astucia] ella si querre Allāh*" (f. 97r). Mūsā then asks some of his soldiers to look for a point where the wall might be shorter. The soldiers do as they are told but find no lower point of access and no doors. They come back to Mūsā and ask him to stay put and not move. Mūsā then orders everyone to unpack their belongings and they rest for three days.

'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad then takes Mūsā's hand, walks with him to the top of the mountain, and look over the city: "*miraro^wn a ella y quedó el visorrey Mūsā pensoso maravillado en su vazleza [vaciedad] de los habitantes y su so^wleđat [soledad]*" (f. 98r). Mūsā is lost in his thought but when he turns around and

veos con sī'et [siete] tablas de mármol y ya s-abía depositado en-ellas hablar feroso y monestación palađī'na y dī'so el visorrey: "oh tú puro onb^ere qué

son aquestas tablas? Adevántose el puro onbre a ella y y liyó [leyó] dellas la table bⁱrimera y veos eskⁱribto en él oh fⁱjo de Ādam qué negligent eres de los fechos y yel vaso de las mu^wertes senb^ara^o y tú dekía po^wco sarás corta^o pu^wes mira por tu per^esona oh hermano ante de la fⁱn y yante del p^elegamen [llegada] de tu su^wert y de las de su bedençión y peca^os te deti^ven donde son los rreyes de sali^ven [oriente] aquellos qu-enseñorearon las villas y forçaro^wn los servidores y farawaron [construyeron] los castillos y manteni^veron las huestes [ejércitos] y yestoles deçendi^vó con-ellos pora Allāh el dezai^odor de las sabores y yerma^odor de las posentaçⁱones y pobla^os mudaronse de la sanp^olora [esplendor] de los alcaçares [alcázares] a l-angosteza [angustia] de las fuesas. (f. 98v)

The *tabla* has verses written in a similar tone and reminding them of the ephemeral characteristic of life and the mortality of mankind and how all the riches in one's life offer no guarantee for the next. There is no escape possible from one's fate. The emotional state of Mūsā is now critical as he weeps “y sus lagrimas que corían sobre sus masi^vllas” (f. 99r). Again, Mūsā makes sure the newly read verses are recorded and moves on.

The second *tabla* also contains a similar message dealing with the impossibility of man to decide their own fate: everyone ultimately all die, regardless of their wealth or rank. “Dónde es qui^ven pobló al-‘Iraq y yel rrey de las p^orovinças y de Sabā y de Horasān? C^alamolos Allāh y rrespondi^véronle y kⁱridoles y libraronse o atemaronse [se terminaron] pu^wes no les ap^orovejó lo que farawaron ni lo que fortificaron ni ha tornado dellos lo que ajustaro^wn y aparellaronse” (f. 99v). Mūsā cries and writes down the verses of the second:

a te permutado el mundo y tu fincança es la fu^wesa y tu corservaçión la temor y tu paraíso la sufrⁱença tu fⁱn la mu^wert aquella que-s judgada sobre to^wdo de [quien tiene] ánima y su siknaçión la rradukçión /

Ah cu^wanto el paraíso perpetual g^olorioso a cu^want el inf^yerno no es que si ya mate b^arasa pu^wes quién sera de iñorança pu^wes aquesta es su vía y cómo que no es en que no ser en su iñorança excusa (f. 100r)

then moves on to the third *tabla* where he finds the following verses (*coblas*) written:

Oh fi^yjo de Ādam debiédete tu seño^wr y tú capoçan [enfurecidos] en mar que es dolor to^wdo día sobre-l y su sonb^ara departi^yen de tú y su cobertura es tendi^yda sobre tú y tú gwañas [ganans] los pecaços y las desubedenç^yas y-olvidas el día del porparamen [demostración] y de la ent^erega e habe vergu^wença de quien te vea y no lo vees y no ðes al di^yablo sus deportes y ðeportes [finales] y tú porparado para las mu^wertes y al kⁱri^ydo de las mu^wertes pu^wes como que ya s-eslengase con tu el pi^yed [pie] y ya maneçeras p^olaran sobre lo que ta defallaç^ydo de la rrepentençia. (f. 100v)

Mūsā cries until losing consciousness and writes down the verses. He then moves on to the fourth *tabla*: “Dónde son aquellos que abitaro^wn en las çibdades y villas fu^weronse y y tornaron en la ti^yerra polvo. Cu^wantas de gentes fu^we yo que usaba çerca dellos y-ende demandado y disi^yeron muri^yeron” (f. 101r). And then the fifth:

Oh fi^yjo de Ādam qué es aquello que te enbⁱri^yaga de la obedenç^ya de tú seño^r y no sabes que él ha nudri^ydo con tú ji^yca [chica] y te ha dado a comer g^arande y te ha daço arrizke [sustento] y tú deni^yegas sos g^araç^yas y te vazias menos d-él [se vacian sin él] y no habe duda [debe] de yeri^yno mas amargo que la paçenç^ya y mas fu^wert sus pornas que la b^arasa pu^wes aparelate a lo que te salve de su k^eremor [fuego] y que cobre su b^arasa (f. 101v)

The sixth and the seventh *tablas* also deal with the ephemeral characteristic of life, the corrupting beauty of material things, and the importance of thinking about the afterlife before it is too late. Mūsā then cries again and “y se maravilló el cabo de la maravi^ylla en-pu^wes

dī^yso a su *alwazī*^r *Ṭālib ibnu Sahl y-al puro unb^ere* ‘*Abd aṣ-Ṣamad cómo veis el geño* [engaño] *en-el p^elegar a ella por mirar lo que-s en-ella de las maravi^llas y-est^arañezas y lo que-s en-ella de los algos [riqueza] que los que los aporemos al b^lrinçepe de los k^ereyentes”* (f. 102v). ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Maṣmūdī then suggests building a wooden ladder to climb the wall and look for the inside door. Mūsā orders his *catī*^yvos to go up the mountain and grab some wood to build the ladder. They spend three months building it after which time Mūsā asks one of them to go up. One of them does and “*cu^wando asomó sobre la çibdat levantose en pⁱed y-enfestiyó [investigó] con su vista una ora y k^ri^ydó un k^ri^yđo g^arandísimo y dī^yso ay y palmeó con sus manos y lançó con su per^esona de dent^oro”* (f. 103v). The second man climbs up the ladder, straightens up like the first one and bursts into laughter before jumping off the top of the ladder and inside the city. Three more men attempt it but endure the same fate. Mūsā then decides that no one should try it anymore and decides to give up: “*no habe a nos en-aqueste fecho poder”* (f. 103v-104r) to which ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad answers that “*no es para daqueste fecho çebto [excepto] yo y no es qui^yen espirimente los fechos como qui^yen [he forgot no] ha experimentado con-ello yo poyaré [subiré]”* (f. 104r). Mūsā is reluctant to the idea, as he knows that the sheikh is the only reason they made it this far and the only one who can take them to their final destination. Abd aṣ-Ṣamad insists and Mūsā acquiesces. The sheikh then says “*en-el nonb^ere de Allāh el g^arandísimo honrrado en-el nonb^ere de Allāh el pⁱadoso de la pⁱedad”* (f. 104v), climbs up the ladder and stays upright for one hour before starting to applaud. He seems to be taken by the desire to jump, Mūsā is terrified but the sheikh suddenly tells him:

albirçiotte que ya desb^yado [ha desviado] Allāh de tú el-art del dī^yablo y đī^yso a él el visorrey Mūsā qué es aquello que has visto dī^yso a él he visto donzellas f^lrestejantes vírgenes como que fu^wesen lunas que rresp^alandesen y dentadoras [luminosas] como que fu^wesen las gu^wardadas de la-ljanna no habe a ellas

*semellitut ni senb^alança si los vi^yesen to^wdo qui^yen es en la gu^west
escandalizarsía de la fermosura dellas y cada una dellas açeñaba y ðezía a mí
e envaçilose a mí que debase de mí mar baramant [agitado] y quise yo
enlançar con mí per^esona en-él estufi^yelas con el nonb^ere de Allāh y-
esvi^yaronse [se esquivaron] de mí y-aquellos nu^westros conpañeros ya san
esmenozado sus çervizes en-pu^wes que-l puro onb^ere ‘Abdu aš-Şamad nonb^oró
a Allāh tan-alto es y deçendió y-an^odó sobre la muralla. (f. 105r-105v)*

The sheikh then keeps walking until he arrives near two copper towers. There he sees a copper knight with an extended palm where he reads that he has to twist the fingers three times to open the door. He then opens it and sees the following: “*una-lmançaba* [vestíbulo] *con bancos y sobre-llos gentes mu^wertas que ya s-abía secado sellos los cu^weros y los gu^wesos y yellos lançados”* (f. 106r). The sheikh then deduces that one of them must have the keys to the city. He sees an old man and assumes he is the doorkeeper; he gets close to him, lifts up his clothes and finds the keys. He then takes the keys and opens the door. They suddenly all hear a frightening sound and say “*Allāh akbar*” before entering into the city and going down its streets.

They see shops and markets full of utensils and objects but absolutely no sign of food. The people that lived there are still around but they are in fact dead, “*loytados que ya s-abían secado dellos los cu^weros y los cu^werpos y s-abían ensogado los gu^wes[os] polvo”* (f. 106v). They then go to the palace and again, they see people sitting on gorgeously adorned benches looking alive but they are in fact not. “*Y paróse el virrey pensoso maravillado del fecho dellos”* (f. 107r). They find verses on the door almost identical to the ones they saw before on the graves of the castle at the beginning of their journey, reminding them of the uselessness of material riches in the face of death. Mūsā weeps and writes down the verses before entering the palace. There he finds

*asentaderos [salas] muchos g^arandes que acaraban [miran] parti^yda dellos
 enta parti^yda altísimos ensalçados y-ellos p^elenos con-oro y p^ala[t]a y-en^ere
 medio de aquello una g^araða g^arande y-enta sus costados cu^watro pilares de
 oro y sobre ellos una capi^ylla y-en medio de la capi^ylla un llecho [lecho] de
 anb^ere engastonado [engastado] con rrubí^ys bermechos entaocado [rodeado]
 con esmerakdas verdes y sobre el llecho una donzella como que ella fu^wese el
 sol rrep^alandí^yente no v^eyeron los v^eyentes más fermosa quella y sobre-lla una
 rropa de seda y sobre su cabeça una corona de oro y-un f^rontal de perla y-en
 medio della una pi^yedra p^ereçiosa oh que g^aran es de bi^yedra [piedra]
 p^ereçiosa que cuyda su rresp^alandor rrapar las vistas y-ella mi^yran a ellos con
 sus ochos [ojos] que continuba[...] el mi^yrar en-ellos y maravillose el visorrey
 della el fi^yn [extremo] de la maravi^ylla (f. 108v)*

Mūsā is taken by her beauty and even greets her (“*la salvación sobre tí*”) but Abd aṣ-Ṣamad soon tells him that she is dead. She is holding however a golden stele and standing by her side are two slaves, one black and the other white. The latter is holding a sword and the former an iron walnut. On the golden stele is written:

*En-el nonb^ere de Allāh el-ordenador de las ordenaçiones y de los judgos
 [jueces] en el nonb^ere de Allāh aquel que judgó y pasó en el nonb^ere de Allāh
 el fincan [eterno] el rrecorso [indivisible] en-el nonb^ere de Allah aquel que
 abrigó el judgo señor de los señores p^erençibiador de los p^erençibios
 [causativo de las razones] y yel-abⁱridor con la pi^yadad a las pu^wertas de los
 k^ereyentes y k^ereyentas. (f. 109r)*

At the bottom of the golden stele, they read another poem about the inevitability of death and futility of material things. Then, Mūsā sees what is on the other side of the stele:

yo soy Farwata fī^yja de Šadād y mi agu^welo era ‘Ād el mayor rrey de Salī^yent y de Ponī^yent enseñorī^yado lo que no señorī^yeron y-aparteme [cambié] como se apartaron y-éramos en lalcaçar seguros y con-él ayudantes dekía que deçendió sobre nos el judgo [juzgamiento] del señor de las gentes y sigui^yeronse sobre nos si^yete años pesebrantes [desamparadas] no deçendió del çī^yello go^wta ni naçió la ti^yerra sobre verdure y comíamos lo que era con ños en-pu^wes vendíamos lo que-ra en poder nu^west^oro de los arjiwes y algos [bienes y riquezas] y envíamos los catī^yvos [esclavos] y los f^rancos [hombres libres] que demandasen para nos la vivanda por las doblas y los dī^yneros y las perlas y los corales y las pi^yedras p[r]eçī^yosas y esmerakdas y turcases y perla menu^wda y rrubī^ys senb^alal por senb^alan y más de aquello y no t^orovaban nada y tornaron a nos denodados y çerramos sobre nos nu^westra çibdat y derrinkilī^yemos nu^westras per^esonas a su señor y muríemos de hanb^ere pu^wes quien vera a nos pu^wes paremi^ent^eres y no engane a nenguno aqieste mundo pu^wes quien ent^arará en-aquesta çibdat pu^wes tome de los algos [bienes] aquello que querrá y no tome nada de lo que ha sobre mí quello es p^oroviçión del mundo (f. 110v-111r)

Upon hearing Farwa’s instruction, Mūsā orders all his men to take as much as they can from the rest of the treasures, but as they are about to leave, Ṭālib ibnu Sahl decides to take all Farwa’s jewels and everything else they were advised not to touch as he sees in it a gift fit for the king ‘Abd al-Malik. Ṭālib ignores Mūsā’s injunction and proceeds to take the jewels but as soon as he gets closer to Farwa’s body, one of the slaves hits him while the other cuts him in half.

They leave the city and ask about the way to “la ti^yerra de los estujes.” They walk by the sea for a month until they suddenly find themselves in front of a mountain rising up in the

sky as if it were a cloud. They soon find out that the people living there are black and know how to recite the declaration of faith: “*no ha señor sino Allāh Muḥammad mesagero de Allāh*” (f. 113r). Mūsā then asks their king how they even learnt about Islam, as the Prophet never reached them, to which he answers:

dīʿzes verdat mas enpero sale a nos de aquesta mar en cada ora una per^esona de hermosa fegu^wra [figura] y sobre-l rropas hermosas y-el queba [camina] sobre l-agu^wa y dīʿze oh fīʿjos de Ādam deziʿd lā ilāha illa Allāh Muḥammad rrasūlu Allāh [no hay Dios sino Dios, Muhammad mensajero de Dios]. (f. 113v)

The king of the mountain explains that before that person came, they used to worship each other but they eventually believed in God. The king had asked the man who he was and he answered them “*al-ḥaḍīr [Khidr] sobre-l sea la salvación*” (f. 113v). Mūsā then asks the king if they ever saw him again after that, to which the king says “*no sino que nos veemos en cada no^wche de aljuma ‘a [viernes] sobre la cara del-agu^wa k^alaror que rresp^alandese y deziʿen que dīʿze g^olorificado e santificado el señor de los angeles e de l-espíritu (qui^yere dezir Jibrīl)*” (f. 114v). Mūsā is thrilled and says “*es por-Allāh es más amado a nos que to^wdo aquello que nos-a acaeḥī^ydo*” and writes it all down. The king of the mountain then inquires about the reason why they ventured out of their land and Mūsā explains to him that they were sent in a mission: to find the vessels of Sulaymān. He asks for the king’s help to which the latter gladly agrees. He hosts them in his palace for three days after which he asks his divers to fetch the vessels for Mūsā. They do as they were told and bring twelve vessels to the surface. Mūsā is ecstatic, he gives the king countless treasures and they all go on their way escorted by the king’s guides. They arrive safely to ‘Abd al-Malik’s palace and Mūsā tells him the tale of their adventures not without mentioning the fate of Ṭālib. The king Abd al-Malik then grabs a vessel and breaks it. A blue smoke comes out of it and the released ‘ifrīt says “*rrepenti^yen a*

Allāh no tornara a lo que era de mí jamay y maravillose de aquello el p^rinçepe de los k^ereyentes Abd al-Malik bnu Marwā” (f. 117r). The narrator of the story then informs the reader/listener that Mūsā “*se admeti^vó con su per^esona de los k^ereados y quedó que adoraba a Allāh dekía que le vino la çerteficçión*” (f. 117v). And this marks the end of the Morisco version of *The City of Copper*.

APPENDIX B

*El ḥadīṣ del árabe y la doncella*¹²³ (MS 4953 of the BNE, ff. 128r-140r)

En el nombre de Dios, el Clemente, el Misericordioso. Éste es el cuento del árabe y la doncella, fundado sobre “y si la doncella sepultada viva fuere preguntada ¿por qué delito fue matada?”, recontado por Ibnu ‘Abbās, apáguese Dios de él, que dijo:

Recontó Zaydi ibn Khālid, y por Ibnu al-Ḥusain al-Basarī, que estando el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, un día sentado en la mezquita, descendió sobre él el ángel Gabriel, la paz sea con él, de parte de Dios, Bendito sea y Ensalzado, y lo saludó. Se tornó el profeta de Dios, paz sea sobre él y le dijo el ángel Gabriel:

— Oh Muḥammad, te dice a ti tu Señor, que mañana al amanecer, si Dios quiere, que envíes uno de tus caballeros, y que se vaya camino de Siria y se aparte dos leguas de la ciudad.

Pues cuando amaneció Dios con la buena de su mañana, madrugó el mensajero de Dios, Muḥammad, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, con los de los emigrados y de los auxiliares, y con él Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣidīqī y ‘Umar ibnu al-Khaṭāb y ‘Uthmān ibnu ‘Afān y Sa‘īdi y Talkhaṭa y Azubayrī. Y se fueron con el profeta de Dios, bendígale Dios y dele salvación. Y se volvió el profeta de Dios y los miró y no vio entre ellos al-Fārāsī, que es un caballero que cuando salía a la batalla a caballo, se estimaba su valentía a mil caballeros, y a pie a quinientos. Y por esto el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, lo respetaba mucho. Y dijo:

— ¿Adónde está Bilāl ibnu Khamām? y le respondió él con mucha humildad y dijo:

— Oh profeta de Dios, mírame aquí delante de ti, mándame lo que querrás, ensálzate Dios!

Dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

¹²³ I modernized the narrative based on Hegyi’s transliteration (185-196).

— Oh Bilāl, por mi derecho sobre ti, que vayas luego en esta hora a casa de Silmān al Fārāsī, que venga aquí prestamente.

Pues, fuese Bilāl a casa de Silmān al Fārāsī, y tocó a la puerta muy livianamente y respondió Silmān:

— ¿Quién eres tú? ¡Que te apiade Dios!

— Soy Bilāl oh Silmān, el mensajero de Dios te llama.

Y respondió Silmān:

— Oigo y obedezco a Dios y, después, a su mensajero.

Y así se fueron los dos juntos hasta que llegaron a la mezquita del profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh Silmān, por mi derecho sobre ti, que luego vayas a tu casa y cabalgues en tu caballo dos leguas camino de Siria, y tráeme un hombre que encontrarás porque en su hecho hay maravillas.

Pues, volvió Silmān a su casa, y se armó de sus armas y cabalgó en su caballo, y salió camino de Siria. Y cuando estuvo a dos leguas de la ciudad, encontró a un árabe que venía a caballo sobre una camella y traía una polvareda tal que apenas se podía ver. Pues se acercó Silmān a él y vio a un árabe muy grande, largo, recio, espaldudo, grueso de muslos; tenía una mirada tan espantable que parecía de las compañías de ‘Ād, su espada desenvainada corriendo sangre. Pues cuando Silmān vio la grandeza de su estatura y su reciura, le tuvo miedo y se espantó de un espanto muy fuerte; y se volvió Silmān huyendo hasta la puerta de la ciudad.

Encontró a ‘Alī ibnu abī Ṭālib, el feridor con dos espadas, golpeador con lanzas, el barragán esforzado, señor de la batalla del día de Badri Ḥunayn, esté Dios satisfecho de él.

Dijo Alī:

— Oh Silmān, ¿A dónde está lo que te mandó traer el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación?

Dijo Silmān:

— Oh Padre de Ḥasan, no te apresures sobre mí en avergonzarme por cobarde, porque nuestro Señor es perdonador piadoso que no se apresura; que por Dios te juro, oh ‘Alī, que no hay corazón, por fuerte que sea, que no se espante, sino el tuyo que nunca temió a Dios.

Se fue ‘Alī, esté Dios satisfecho de él, por el camino hasta que se encontró con el árabe; y no lo espantó su grandeza ni tuvo miedo de él sino que se allegó a él y tuvo con él una batalla que duró larga hora. Se ensañó ‘Alī de saña fuerte y se juntó con él y le echó mano al cuello, y dio con él en tierra con furia muy grande como león sañudo, y subió sobre sus pechos y sacó su espada para degollarlo. He aquí un gritador que decía:

— Oh ‘Alī, no te apresures por matar al árabe, que en su hecho hay maravilla muy grande. Lígalo y tráelo como cautivo rebajado delante del profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación.

Pues, hizo ‘Alī, esté Dios satisfecho de él, lo que le encaminó el gritador, y lo ligó fuertemente, y lo trajo delante del profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación. Pues cuando lo vio el profeta de Dios, Muḥammad, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, le dijo:

— Oh árabe, dime de dónde eres, y cuéntanos tu hecho como es hasta el final.

Dijo el árabe:

— Oh Muḥammad, pláceme. Has de saber que yo soy de Aṣṣām de una villa que se dice Ṣṣagurakā, que hay en ella ochenta mil casas de incrédulos, que no hay en todos ellos quien diga “no hay más divinidad que Dios”, ni quien diga que tú eres mensajero de Dios. A lo demás que me preguntas de mi hecho, oh Muḥammad, has de saber que en aquella tierra tenemos de costumbre y práctica entre nosotros, cuando es casado un hombre y le nace hijo, lo sacrificamos con una espada; y así mismo si la primera es hija, la degollamos en sacrificio de ídolo. Por la cual te hago a saber, oh Muḥammad,

que yo casé con una prima, y quedé con ella doce meses; parió una hija muy hermosa, que nunca de mis ojos he visto más hermosa que ella de cara. Y la quería degollar conforme a la práctica del sacrificio de la espada, y me conjuró mi mujer, diciéndome: — Oh primo, por Alāta wa al-‘uzzā te ruego que no degüelles esa niña tan hermosa. Y la dejé oh Muḥammad, hasta que llegó a edad de siete años cumplidos.

Pues un día sentado en mi asiento, y la birreta sobre mi cabeza, me vino a mí la muchacha y me dijo:

— Oh padre, ¿quién es mi señor?

Y le dije:

— Oh hija, tu madre.

Y dijo la niña:

— Oh padre, ¿quién es el señor de mi madre?

Le dije:

— Oh hija, yo soy señor de tu madre.

Y dijo la niña:

— Oh padre, y de ti ¿quién es tu señor?

Le dije:

— Oh hija, de mí el ídolo mayor, Alāta wa al-‘uzzā.

Dijo la niña:

— Oh padre, y del ídolo mayor, ¿quién es su señor?

Oh Muḥammad, a esto no supe darle respuesta; y se tornó la niña y dijo:

— Oh padre, tú vives en el error y en la mentira, que el ídolo Alāta wa al-‘uzzā no tiene ningún poder ni saber ni provecho, ni daña ni defiende. Oh padre, mi señor, y el señor de mi madre, y tu señor, y el señor del ídolo mayor, es Dios, aquel que creó los cielos y la tierra, y creó la persona y todas las cosas.

Oh Muḥammad, cuando le oí aquello a mi niña, me fui a su madre y le conté su hecho, y me dijo:

— Oh marido, por Alāta wa al-‘uzzā, cabalga en tu camella y toma esa muchacha delante de ti, y vete con ella a los yermos de la tierra y degüéllala, y tráeme su corazón y su hígado; si no, ella destruirá nuestra religión.

Pues en ese momento tomé mi camella y cabalgué en ella, y tomé la niña delante de mí y me fue con ella a un yermo de la tierra; y cuando llegué, descabalgué y descendí a la niña, y la asenté en la tierra; y empecé a hacer su huesa para enterrarla cuando la hubiese degollado; y haciendo la huesa, el sudor me caía por la cara y por los ojos y se levantó la niña y me limpió el sudor de mi cara, y me compadeció por lo que trabajaba y me dijo:

— Oh padre, como que veo que aquesta huesa es para mí, y que vienes a degollarme.

Y yo, que nunca por todo esto había tenido piedad de la muchacha por lo que hacía o decía, cuando hube acabado de hacer la huesa, tomé la niña y la derribé en tierra, y saqué mi espada y la degollé, y le saqué el corazón y el hígado, y la enterré. Y yo cuando hube acabado, me quise volver a mi casa y he aquí que se preparó delante de mí un fuego chispeante y llamas muy grandes a mano derecha y a mano izquierda, y delante y detrás. Oh Muḥammad, no había amparo para mí de la grande quema de aquel fuego ni a dónde irme. Estando en esta tribulación casi perdido, desahuciado, he aquí un hombre que gritaba, y no veía su figura, y él que decía:

— Oh hermano de los árabes, si tú quieres salvarte de este fuego y ser salvo de él, vete a Muḥammad, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, y hazte musulmán en sus manos; y así te salvarás del fuego.

Pues, en ese momento tomé voluntad en mi persona de venirme a ti y hacerme musulmán en tus manos; y cuando hube tomado aquella voluntad, luego se desapareció el fuego, y se fue de mí, y no sentía calor ni fatiga ninguna. Pues, oh Muḥammad, mírame aquí que he venido para

hacerme musulmán en tus manos, y digo que no hay tropiezo para quien bien guía, ni descreencia después de creencia. Yo hago testigo que no hay señor sino Dios solo, sin aparcerero, y que tú eres Muḥammad, su siervo y su mensajero; y esto digo con mis carnes y mis huesos y mi sangre y mis lados y todo mi cuerpo.

Hace y dice certificadamente “no hay más divinidad que Dios y Muḥammad es el enviado de Dios”. En ese momento dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh árabe, ¿plácete ir conmigo a la huesa de tu hija?

Dijo el árabe:

— Sí, oh Muḥammad, mas ¿quién guiará para que sepa tornar y encontrar el camino de la huesa de mi hija? que con el espanto del fuego y la grande tribulación en que me vi, no sé por dónde me vine ni sabría tornarme allá.

Dijo Muḥammad, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Vente conmigo, oh árabe.

Dijo el narrador Zeydi ibnu Khalīd, que se fue el profeta bendígale Dios y dele salvación, y diez hombres honrados de su compañía, y el árabe con ellos, sin guía alguna que los guiase sino Dios tan alto es, que los guiaba con su potencia; y fueron hasta que llegaron a la huesa. Pues se maravilló el árabe de aquella maravilla muy grande; y así como llegaron, golpeó el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, en la tierra con su pie, encima de la huesa; y hizo manar Dios una fuente con muy perfecta agua, y tomó ablución cumplida, dos inclinaciones y rogó en ellas una rogaría, que no la detuvieron los amparos de los cielos, hasta que llegó a la potencia de Dios. Después golpeó una segunda vez con su pie en la huesa. Se abrió con un cuerpo como si fuese la criatura en el vientre de su madre. Después golpeó la huesa una tercera vez, y se abrió enteramente, hasta que apareció la niña. Y dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh muchacha, levántate sobre tus pies y resucítate, y h́ablanos con licencia de Dios y su potencia, aquel que resucita los huesos despúes de ser polvos menudos.

Pues he aqú que la doncella se levantó sobre sus pies, sacudiendo la tierra de sus cabellos y diciendo con voces altas y lengua muy paladina:

— Paz sea sobre ti, oh profeta de Dios, y su piedad y bendición.

Dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh muchacha, ¿de dónde sabes tú que yo soy Muḥammad, mensajero de Dios?

Dijo la niña:

— Oh enviado de Dios, Dios, tan bendito es y tan alto, te me ha dado a conocer a ti en el reino celestial, que él es aquel que nunca fenecerá, y no hay otro señor sino Dios.

Dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh muchacha, mira aqú a tu padre, absuélvelo del pecado que contra ti ha hecho.

Dijo la niña:

— Oh profeta de Dios, no perdonaré a mi padre sino que oiga testimoniar la palabra bendita, aquella que es de poco trabajo para la lengua y muy apesgada para el pecho, que se contenta con ella Dios el piadoso y se ensaña por ella satanás, aquella que es decir “confieso que no hay más divinidad que Dios”, y que otorgue que tú eres Muḥammad, mensajero de Dios.

Dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh muchacha, perdónalo, que ya lo ha dicho.

Dijo ella:

— Oh enviado de Dios, si es que lo ha dicho con lo intrínseco y lo pareciente, yo hago testimonio a Dios, y a sus ángeles y a sus profetas, y a sus elegidos, y a los llevadores de su trono, y a los moradores de los cielos, y pongo por testigo a ti, oh enviado de Dios, que yo lo perdono de todo pecado que contra mi haya obrado.

Dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh muchacha, mira si quieres vivir con tu padre y tornarte al mundo, rogaré a Dios que te dé en él vida larga con mucho descanso.

Y dijo ella:

— Oh profeta de Dios, ya fue llegado mi plazo, y ha pasado lo que Dios ordenó en la madre de la escritura [ummu al-kitāb] con lo adelantado de su saber; y ahora estoy en el paraíso, y moro en sus alcázares; y no trocaría la gloria del paraíso por el placer del mundo.

En ese momento dijo el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación:

— Oh muchacha, tórnate a tu lugar.

Dijo el narrador Zaydu ibnu Khālid: Y se tornó la muchacha dentro de la huesa, y se cerró con ella, con la potencia de Dios, aquel que resucita los huesos menudos.

Pues se maravilló el árabe de aquello, y afirmó su creencia en Dios y en todo lo que Dios hizo obligatorio sobre los creyentes, y siempre mantuvo el servicio de Dios hasta que murió, ¡apiádelo Dios! Amen.

Y se tornó el profeta, bendígale Dios y dele salvación, y los diez de su compañía con él hasta que llegaron a la ciudad. Todo esto fue por la bendición de nuestro profeta Muḥammad, bendígale Dios y dele salvación. Esto es lo que nos llegó de la declaración del versículo del Corán que dice “wa idhā al maw’ūdatu su’ilat bi ‘ayyi dhanbin qutilat”.

Se acaba el ḥadīth con la loor a Dios, que es sobre toda cosa poderoso y alabanza a Dios, Señor de los mundos.

APPENDIX C

*El ḥadīz de la serpiente*¹²⁴

(Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 180r-181v)

Nos llegó de parte de Dios el glorificado y el magnífico que el profeta Muḥammad, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda, era el mayor de las compañías de los Emigrantes y Ayudantes. Una vez empezó a pensar en la preocupación del otro mundo y de éste; lloró y toda su gente lloró fuertemente con él. Luego dijo el mensajero: “O compañías, vengan conmigo para mercadear con la gente y ésta con nosotros, y así mercadearemos con Dios una mercadería que nunca angustiará ni se acabará.”

Entonces le dijeron: “O mensajero de Dios, ¿qué mercadearemos con la gente y ésta con nosotros?” Dijo el mensajero, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda: “Traeremos la paz sobre la gente, y ella la devolverá sobre nosotros.” Entonces dijeron: “O mensajero de Dios, ¿qué mercadería mercadearemos con Dios, que nunca angustiará?” Entonces dijo el mensajero: “Si encontramos a un cautivo, hemos de quitarlo; si encontramos a un desnudo, hemos de vestirlo; y si encontramos a un errado, hemos de aconsejarlo rectamente; y si encontramos a un torcido, hemos de ayudarlo; y si encontramos a un pobre, le daremos subsistencia.”

Y el profeta, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda, en camino por las carreras de la ciudad, encontró a un niño chico que tenía las manos sobre sus rodillas y sus lágrimas corrían por sus mejillas. Dijo el profeta, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda: “¿Qué es aquello que te hace llorar?” Y le dijo el niño: “O mensajero de Dios, me hace llorar la orfandad.” Dijo el mensajero: “¿Cuánto tiempo hace que se murió tu padre?” Dijo el niño: “Hace doce días.”

¹²⁴ My modernization of this narrative is based on Corriente Córdoba’s transliteration (268-270).

Dijo el profeta, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda: “¿Qué ha hecho tu madre después de su muerte?” Dijo el niño: “Ha muerto hace tres días.” Dijo el mensajero: “No hay difunto alguno en la ciudad de quien no sepa yo.” Después le dijo el niño: “O mensajero de Dios, estaba mi madre sola, y no había con ella ninguno cuando murió, no había quien la bañase ni la amortajase”. Entonces se volvió el profeta a Bilāl ibnu Ḥamāma y dijo: “O Bilāl, vete a mi mujer ‘Āyishat, madre de los creyentes, y dile que vaya con este niño a la funeraria y que la bañe y la amortaje, después rezaremos sobre ella y la enterraremos.”

Y fue Bilāl a ‘Āyishat, que Dios esté satisfecho de ella, y le hizo saber aquello. Entonces, ‘Āyishat cubrió su cabeza y se fue con el niño al lugar de las pompas fúnebres, y en su camino, encontró en una carrera una compañía de mujeres de los Ayudantes que se burlaban y jugaban y reían y decían poemas. Dijo ‘Āyishat, que Dios esté satisfecho de ella: “Ay de vosotras, ¿dónde está la casa de las pompas fúnebres?” Le dijeron: “En aquella casa cerrada.” Dijo ella: “¿Por qué está cerrada la puerta?” Dijeron ellas: “Si te informamos, con su hijo, os hará espanto fuerte.” Entonces, ‘Āyishat abr[ió] la puerta y vio a la madre que se había hecho negra su cara y largos sus rostros y gruesa su lengua y feos los ojos, a causa de una sierpe que la tenía de las narices y revuelta en su cuello, y la volcaba de un costado sobre el otro, y cuando vio aquello ‘Āyishat, tuvo espanto fuerte, y la dejó y se fue al profeta, y le dijo el profeta: “O ‘Āyishat, ¿qué tienes tú que te has vuelto aprisa?” Y le dijo a él: “O mensajero de Dios, por aquel que te envió con la verdad, si vieses la gran cosa que yo he visto, sería tu tornamiento más apresurado que el mío.”

Cuando lo hubo descrito a él lo que había visto, dijo el profeta, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda: “Esta mujer es pecadora.” Dijo entonces: “Oh ‘Āyishat, toma mi anillo y vete con él a la sierpe y dile: “Este es el anillo de Muḥammad el mensajero de Dios.” Y dile a la

sierpe que se vaya de aquella mujer hasta que la hayamos bañado y amortajado, y si es mandado de parte de Dios aun volverás a lo que te mandó Dios.” Entonces se fue la sierpe y se metió en una grieta que había en la pared, y cuando la hubo bañado y amortajado, se volvió la sierpe alrededor de su cuello, y puso su boca en sus narices y la estremecía que la volcaba de un costado sobre el otro en la somnolencia espiritual. Entonces, clamaron al profeta por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda, y hizo la oración sobre ella y la enterraron.

Entonces dijo el profeta por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda: “O mujeres, éste es el galardón de la mujer que alza sus ojos con saña a su marido; éste es, O mujeres, el galardón de la mujer que enfureció a su padre y a su madre; O mujeres, éste es el galardón de toda mujer que maquilla su cara; O mujeres, éste es el galardón de toda mujer denigrante, que le meterán en ella un pilar de fuego por su boca; O mujeres, este galardón darán a la mujer que la clamará su marido a su servicio y no va; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la mujer que la manda su marido y no va a lo que le manda; O mujeres, este galardón habrá cuando no le dice el marido nada, lo maldice; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la mujer que cuando sale su marido, lo maldice; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la mujer que esconde a la mujer del vecino en su casa; O mujeres, este galardón habrá la que no tiene vergüenza de su marido; y a cualquier mujer que lava sus carnes con cristiana, le sacarán el cuero de su cuerpo con fuego”.

Y cuando fue enterrada aquella mujer y la sierpe sobre sus pechos, salían de su huesa llamas de fuego y humo, y entonces comenzó el niño a llorar y puso su cara sobre la huesa y comenzó a rogar: “O señor, O mi socorredor, O hacedor de los cielos, escucha mi rogaría, O carpidor del alba, obedece mi rogaría, O mandador de los aires, O quien es gran señor sobre todo señor, perdona a mi madre, aquella que si me perdía me demandaba, y si había hambre me daba de comer, y si había sed me daba de beber, y si me enfermaba me lloraba; O aquel

que hizo de su vientre un vaso para mí y sus pechos un amamantamiento y sus piernas un lecho, sálvala del infierno”. Dijo el mensajero, que la paz esté sobre él: “O quien creó la noche y el día, y hace correr los ríos y representó los creados sin semblanza, perdona a esta mujer; no se levantarán las gentes de sobre la huesa hasta que dentro de ésta socarrada su cabeza del fuego [...]

APPENDIX D

*El ḥadīz de Bishr y Hind*¹²⁵

(Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón, ff. 107r-11r)

¿Cuáles son sus nombres? Él es Bishri y ella Hindi. Fue mencionado, y Dios es más sabidor y con su secreto [...], que el primer enamorado que fue en los musulmanes era un mancebo de los árabes que le decían Bishri al-Abid y era acompañante de Umar Ibn al-Khattab, apáguese Dios de él, y era con el presto en cada oración, y continuaba de ir a la mezquita; y era que pasaba por una carrera donde había un gran casero de los de Bani Juhayn, y era que una doncella de ellos se enamoró de él por su hermosura y su beldad, y ella encerró su amor una gran temporada hasta que no podía sufrirlo mas, y se aquejaba mucho y se daba muy gran tristeza y no podía sufrir, hasta que un día ella le tuvo que escribirle a él estas palabras: "Tú pasas por mi puerta y no sabes el mal que paso de mi gran deseo para ti y de mi gran dolor; tu pasas sin ningún pensamiento del dolor del amor en mi hígado y ya soy tan tornada de desplacer, y de muy fuerte tristura que no ha quedado en mi cuerpo sino los huesos y el cuero. Te ruego que mires hacia mi puerta una vez, que tú eres el más deseado de todas las gentes alrededor de mí, y tendrás grande obra buena, que nunca se acabará su galardón; y sanarás a un muerto que ha muerto de amor y tirarás de mi corazón grandes pensamientos que me persiguen y conseguirás el paraíso de deleites, que en ti, O Bishr, es clemencia y el placer y el tiramiento del pienso, que tanto es que más no puedo; que por Dios que si por ello estás de venir por aquí y no pasas por mi puerta de buena mañana, seré muerta."

La figura de Bishri que leía la carta de Hindi.

Dijo: cuando había leído la carta, Bishri se maravilló de sus razones y de su bella lengua hacia él, sin saber quien será ni nunca la había visto ni conocido.

La figura de Bishri que hacía respuesta a Hindi.

¹²⁵ My modernization of the story is based on Corriente Córdoba's transliteration (183-188).

Y dijo: "Te ruego, O Hindi, con Dios, que no me digas tal cosa jamás," diciéndole: "Tienes que temer a Dios, O Hindi, y sufrir y confortarte; que el profeta, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda, nos ha impedido de comer lo prohibido. Sufre por el mandamiento de Dios y no te acerques a lo que ha vedado Dios y su profeta el honrado Muḥammad, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda; que, por Dios, no tomaría con mujer de musulmán amor jamás o antes moriría por miedo de no cremar en el infierno y que no sea leña para ella que se cremase en ella; y no hayas confianza ni esperanza que yo te haya de visitar, salvo que tu eres honrada y libre."

La figura de Hindi que leía la carta de Bishri.

Dijo: Cuando había leído la carta Hindi, conoció muy gran desplacer y se le estriñó el corazón, y estaba muy triste cuando no había hecho lo que le había rogado.

La figura de Hindi que tornaba a escribir a Bishr diciéndole - estas son las palabras -: "Me has mandado decir que teme a Dios y sufrir y a confortarme, y cómo lo haré, si más no puedo, y se podría sufrir mujer libre, triste, atormentada, con amor cargada; que por Dios no te demando, Bishr, por lo que tú te piensas, sino para que me narres leyendas y me digas expresiones expiatorias, así se me tirará el pensamiento de mi corazón y se mate la llama que se ha encendido en mi pecho y que sosiegue mi corazón de tu amor, que yo soy tornada de lo que pasó por ti, como que fuese puesta en rescoldo."

La figura de Bishri que leía la carta de Hindi.

Dijo: Cuando había leído Bishri su letra le escribió con el portador otra diciéndole: "Ya es vedada la visitación por miedo del pecado y el relato vano que dices, que miedo me hace el pecar por tus pecados que no se perdonarán, y habré dejado la religión de Muḥammad, por quien Dios intercede y a quien saluda, y tengo miedo que me vencerá mi voluntad y la muerte me alcanzará o recibiré la muerte por lo que haré. Sabe que el sufrimiento es mejor ayuda, sabe confortarte y defenderte frente de Dios, haz la oración cuando te vendrá algún

pensamiento y dirás: "me amparo con Dios," y cuando nombrarás a Dios todo aquello se te tirará y leerás y-ç, que ella te quitará el mal saber, y aquello tenlo acerca y no sigas el diablo, que te saldrá del camino."

La figura de Hindi que leía la carta de Bishri y le hacía respuesta.

Dijo: Cuando había leído Hindi su letra, le tornó a escribir y dijo: "Por tu vida, juro que y-ç nunca quitará el amor, que más querría que tú fueses cerca de mí y no a y-ç. Y deja estar a y-ç que no me valdría nada porque yo soy en una procupación muy fuerte y en gran tristeza.

Apartado te has de visitarnos que yo bien lo sé; y que sepas que es de los mayores pecados, y en visitarnos hay gran obra buena ante Dios: que no has de matar lo que te ama sin razón."

La figura de Bishri que leía la carta de Hindi.

Dijo: Cuando había leído su letra, Bishri juró que nunca leería letra suya jamás, ni nunca le tornaría respuesta. Dijo: Cuando lo supo Hindi que él había jurado, le dio muy gran displacer.

La figura de Hindi que escribió a Bishri.

Y le escribió Hindi con estas palabras diciéndole que la quería complacer, que por qué había jurado y que se fue impío, y le fue a enviar una esclava que sabía muy bien leer y dijo: "Haz satisfacción a tu jura y será perdonado tu pecado; no desistes a mi mensajero y hazle clemencia, que el mensajero no merece sino todo bien, que mandado es, y sabe que yo toda esta noche velo y mis lágrimas sobre mi mejilla, que nombrado tu nombre en mi tristura y en mi trabajo; y tú quien estás a tu placer y alegría, ten piedad de mi lloro, que te dé Dios el paraíso y te acuerdes de mí, que mi corazón está afortunado, que por Dios no puedo dormir la noche de congoja; y de esto no he yo hora de descanso."

La figura de la esclava que leía la carta a Bishri.

Dijo: cuando había leído la esclava todas aquellas razones, dijo Bishri a la esclava: "Vete a tu señora. Sino porque juré, ya le habría respondido; pero dile que se tire de mis nuevas y que no me envíe ninguna letra jamás, que por Dios no haré lo que ella quiere jamás."

La figura de Hindi que escribió otra letra a Bishri.

Cuando vio ella aquello, le envió otra letra denostándolo y diciendo: “Aquel que le he dado mi amor y lo atormenta a tan fuerte, no te conviene a ti que hayas tanto bien. He rogado a mi señor y he amanecido en cadenas de fortuna por amor de quien aun lo vea así como estoy, hasta que cates aquello que yo cato. Que te dé Dios fortuna, que demandes buen amor y que nunca lo encuentres; que te dé Dios fiebre y terciana, que no troves físico que te sane y que hierres el camino y que te pierdas en una gran montaña y que demandes agua y no encuentres quien te de a beber, ni nunca te veas alegre ni en placer, sino que te hieran saetas del diablo; como tú has estado el más duro de corazón, ruego a Dios que te dé galardón.”

La figura de Hindi que escribía a Bishri otra vez.

Después, Hindi se arrepintió de lo que había dicho y dijo: “No mande Dios que yo aparte a mi amor y que regase contra él con aquellas palabras.” Y dijo: “Y tan mal día me ha venido, ¿hasta cuándo he a sufrir aquella congoja? Soy enamorada de quien no me quiere y soy perturbada pues de quien no se perturba por mí: me arrodillo por la puerta de la cámara y las llaves perdidas, o qué gran fortuna de aquella torre cerrada que no puedo entrar a cara de aquel que yo amo. ¿Cuándo será el día o la noche que yo y él nos apartaremos entrambos; y a él no le placen mis nuevas?

La figura de Bishri que leía la carta de Hindi.

Dijo: Cuando hubo leído Bishri su carta, hubo miedo que lo turbase y le haga salir de seso, y por aquello se fue a Makka, y cuando supo Hindi que Bishri se había ido a Makka se dio muy gran displacer y tristura y enfermó una enfermería muy fuerte que no quitó la cama. Y entró sobre ella su marido y la encontró que estaba encamada y se puso a su cabecera y le dijo a ella: “O que mucho me pesa como te veo demudada de tu estado, O Hindi, y del demudamiento de tu color; dime si quieres que venga un meje para que te sane.” Dijo ella: “Que me valdrá el meje, que yo sé el mal que tengo mejor que el meje.” Le dijo su marido:

“¿Qué mal has tenido, O placer de mis huellas?” Le dijo ella: “Sabe que yo era un día en el baño y se me fue a demostrar un diablo y me dijo: “Nunca harás bien en nuestra vecindad, y si no te mudas de nosotros, te haremos enfermar y deshacer tu hígado. Y yo no te lo he querido decir hasta hoy, y por esto ha concluido en lo que ves, y he visto en mi sueño como un orador que me decía: ‘Si tu te vas en el término de Makka, luego serías sana’.” Dijo él a ella: “Leve es hacer eso, por amor de ti, O mi señora graciosa; deja pasar la noche y de buena mañana haremos todo bien.” Y cuando amaneció Dios con la buena mañana, cabalgó a su mujer en una camella y se metió en camino con ella hasta que llegó a Makka, y en aquel lugar que era Bishri, compró una casa por mil doblas allí donde más ella quería. Y después se tornó y le dijo a ella cómo había comprado la casa. Luego en aquel punto se mudó Hindi a aquella casa y se puso alto en una cámara sobre la puerta de la casa. Era la casa de Bishri cerca de la casa de Hindi, y cuando él iba a la mezquita, pasaba por la puerta suya debajo de la cámara, y cada hora que pasaba tarde y mañana, lo miraba de la cámara y sanó con ello hasta que no tenía ningún mal. Y así como ella se estaba un día posada, veos que entró un día una vieja de mucho años y se quedó con ella un poco, y así como razonaba con ella veos que pasó Bishri cerca de la mezquita, y cuando lo vio ella suspiró un gran suspiro que casi le partió su corazón, y cuando vio aquello la vieja vio que ella era enamorada muy fuertemente de Bishri, y por aquello pasaron entre ellas muchas razones y dijo la vieja: “Oh hija, ¿qué es que te veo flaca de carnes y perdido tu color? Si es enamorada de alguien, yo vos ajuntaré a una.” Y dijo: Y en aquella hora se puso a llorar Hindi y le dijo: “Por Dios, oh tía, no quiero sino a aquel mancebo que se llama Bishri.” Dijo la vieja: “No te preocupes, oh hija, que yo vos ajuntaré a una en una casa y yo lo haré, y veamos qué me darás.” Dijo: “Oh tía, si tú lo harás yo te daré todas las ropas que en aquel día me vestiré, de ropas y de perlas y de joyas.” Dijo: Luego en aquel punto se partió la vieja de Hindi y se fue a su casa, y se vistió de unas ropas de lana como los vestimentos de las esclavas, y en su mano un bastón, y vino en camino hacia la

mezquita allí donde hacía la oración Bishri. Y era Bishri el primero que venía a la mezquita y el más tardío que salía, y comenzó la vieja a entrar cuando él entraba y salía cuando él salía, y duró aquello tiempo de un mes hasta que se maravilla Bishri de su gran servicio y oración y de la gran honra que le hacía, tanto era que tiraba las piedras de la carrera delante de él, y decía la vieja: “Dios es más grande, Dios es más grande.” Y un día, fue Bishri que iba a la mezquita y se le paró la vieja en la carrera y le dijo a él: “Oh hijo, yo te necesito.” Dijo: Que se gozó Bishri, por conseguir su menester por lo que había visto en ella de su santidad, y se volvió delante de ella y le dijo: “¿Qué es tu menester, oh mujer buena?” Le dijo a él: “Oh hijo, yo tengo un hijo en tierra de Iraq, y él se ausentó hace un año cumplido y quiero que me escribas una letra para él, engrandezca Dios tu derecho.” Y dijo él: “Pláceme.” Y le vino ella la vieja luego con tinta y papel.

La figura de Bishri que escribía y la vieja dictaba.

Y lo comenzó a mirar la vieja en su cara una vez después de otra, hasta que se maravillaba Bishri de aquello y dijo en sí mismo: “Yo cuido que aquella mujer me conoce antes de ahora y me parezco a alguno.” Dijo: Y se volvió hacia ella un rato y le dijo: “Mujer buena, ¿me has conocido antes de hoy o me parezco en tu corazón a alguien?” Le dijo: “Por Dios, O hijo, no te conozco, ni te pareces a ninguno, pero creo que te han hecho malos hechos. ¿Sospechas a alguien en tu corazón, que yo te sanaré por tal que Dios me dé galardón?” Dijo: Y se maravilló Bishri de sus palabras y le dijo: “Por Dios, no tengo sospecha sino de una mujer de Bani Juhayn, que era que me enviaba letras de amor y yo no le he querido conceder su demanda.” Y le dijo: “O hijo, yo te he dicho tu dolencia, pero yo te sanaré.” Después se fue la vieja de allí y se fue a la casa de Hindi y le dijo: “O Hindi, mira aquí una letra de Bishri que ya me ha dispuesto Dios, dime cuando se irá tu marido.” Le dijo Hindi: “El jueves, si quiere Dios.” Dijo: Cuando fue el día de jueves, madrugó Bishri a la mezquita y encontró la vieja a la puerta de Hindi, y lo tomó de su mano y lo hizo parar a la puerta de Hindi y entró la vieja a

Hindi y le dijo: “O Hindi, mira aquí a Bishri a la puerta, pero arréglate bien que él es joven y no acostumbrado a las mujeres, y si por ventura te ve hermosa y con apostura y que si vas a punto, verás qué hará él.” Y dijo la vieja a Bishri: “O hijo, entra en la casa.” Le dijo Bishri: “¿Y si hay alguien contigo?” Le dijo la vieja: “No, por Dios, O hijo, no hay ninguno, que yo soy en esta tierra extranjera y extraña como tú.” Y la creyó Bishri y entró en la casa, y cuando hubo entrado en la casa de Hindi, saltó la vieja y cerró la puerta, y vino Hindi y le agarró a Bishri detrás de una cortina, y lo comenzó a abrazar y a besarlo en su mejilla y decía: “Loado es Dios que me ha cumplido mi deseo y allegado a lo que quería...”

APPENDIX E

El ḥadīṭz del baño de Zariyb

(Modernization based on the Aljamiado Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón ff. 133v-139v as Transliterated by Corriente Córdoba)

Se dice en las crónicas de los reyes que la isla de al-Andalus fue conquistada en el año de noventa y uno. La conquistaron Mūsa ibn Nuṣayr y Ṭāriq ibnu Ziyād, y después de la conquista fue ciento años yerma, y después se poblaron las ciudades y fueron edificadas Gibraltar y Algeciras y Huelva y Badajoz y Sevilla y Córdoba y Granada y Almería y Murcia y Zaragoza la blanca, la ciudad del vergel y Játiva. Y era la mayor ciudad y la más poblada Córdoba. Se encontraba en Córdoba nueve mil y seiscientas y cuarenta y nueve mezquitas y doce mil hornos y ocho cientos veinte y una parroquia, y había en ella cien mil casas [...], y cuando el rey quería cabalgar y hacer guerra con cristianos, tocaban el atabal y cabalgaban con él mil hombres de armas cada uno de ellos recibía cincuenta doblas cada mes, y cuando salía el rey Almansūr, andaban delante de él diez mil peones con paveses y diez mil con jaques y lanzas [...]y diez mil con ballestas de pasa y diez mil con ballestas planas, y llevaba con él siete mil mulos para llevar ropas y tiendas, y tocaban cuando cabalgaba mil atabales, y llevaba mil mulos con las cotas de malla sobradas, y mil mulos paveses sobrados, y mil mulos llevaban saetas sobradas, y mil mulos grilletes y alquitrán y pólvora de bombardas, y mil mulos llevaban los utensilios de cocina y la ropa de dormir y había mujeres, sirvientas y doncellas para cantar y cohabitar [...], y tenía esclavas para servir diez mil.

Era el rey Almansūr que le decían Mḥmmadu Bnu ‘Abdi Allahi Bnu Abī ‘Āmir, lo perdone Allah, y había en su tiempo un mancebo en Córdoba que se llamaba Muḥammadu hijo de Alḥajāj y era agudo, avisado, entendido hombre de honor y de gran fortuna y de gran riqueza que había aprendido toda ciencia, de Almuwaṭṭa y Albuḥari, y lógica y filosofía y los libros de medicina y de derechos y notarios y de toda cosa que puede ser escrita negro en blanco, tanto

que él era mena de sapiencia y casa de saber y de ciencia. Y se puso un día de los días con una compañía de maestros honrados hablando de los hechos del mundo y de sus riquezas y había con ellos un viejo de gran edad y de los mayores de Córdoba y se giró hacia el mancebo y le dijo: “Semblante que tú estás por casar teniendo tanto bien y riqueza que no lo podrían comparar y yo conozco a una muchacha que no hay en Córdoba más cumplida cosa que ella y de tan hermosa cara que cuando va al baño no se bañan las mujeres, mirando su apostura y lo que Allah le a dado de gentileza y hermosura, y es hija de tu tío y ya la han demandado grandes hombres y ministros y dice su padre que no, que es para un hijo de su tío de ella que la tiene si la demanda”.

Dijo el narrador: Luego, contento, lo envió a demandar su mano, y le fue otorgada y se hizo la dote, con testimonios e hicieron bodas y una gran fiesta donde degollaron ganados y bacas, y comieron las gentes un mes en estas bodas, que toda Córdoba se estremeció, y gastó grandes cantidades de dineros, y encontró la moza virgen doncella, y fue así su boda que no salió él seis meses.

Cuando salió, le compró unas sartas de mil doblas y una vestimenta de mil doblas y se la llevó, y cuando entró a ella la encontró sentada llorando, y cuando la vio el mancebo que lloraba le dijo: “¿Por qué lloras? Tienes fortunas abundosas y gran favor y honra, heredades, posesiones, caballos, vergeles, torres, molinos, perales, castillos, y tierra campal, que si quisieras, te haría una casa o castillo de oro o de plata”. Y ella con todo no se giraba hacia él. Le dijo: “Me mandaste al baño ayer con mis doncellas y cuando fuimos dentro entraron mujeres de casa del ministro del rey y se dedicaron a ellas y no se hizo caso de mí y había gran prisa en el baño, que yo vengo mi cabeza por lavar de la alheña, y yo he jurado de nunca más ir al baño sino que me lavaré la cabeza en casa como pueda hasta que quiera Allah, pues,

si yo fuese casada con el más sutil de toda Córdoba, baño tendría en mi casa para bañarme”.

Y cuando oyó el mancebo aquello que le dijo la hija de su tío, su mujer, le dijo: Espera y verás qué haré por amor de ti”.

Puso su birreta en su cabeza y puso sus zapatos en sus pies y salió a un lugar que tenía mozos y envió por menestrales de obras que viniesen y se sometieron a él y les dijo: “Yo quería hacer aquí un baño con cuatro casas, que haya encima de tierra cañones de cobre y de plomo, que entre el agua fría a la casa caliente, y salga el agua caliente a la casa fría, y que haya encima de cada cañón figuras con manantial de vidrio bermejo y otras figuras de alátón de aves que lancen el agua fría por sus bocas y otras figuras de vidrio que lancen agua caliente por sus bocas, que haya en las paredes clavos de plata blanca, y que tenga todo el baño títulos de oro y de plata con escritura hermosa, y que sean las piedras mármoles, puestas macho en hembra, y que haya en medio del baño un estanque con figuras de pavos reales y de gacelas y de leones de cobre y de mármol colorado que lancen el agua caliente dentro del estanque y otras que lancen agua fría, y que se pueda sacar el agua sutilmente del estanque, y que sean los lugares de la ablución ritual pintados y desposados con ladrillos y con oro y plata y azur con clavos de plata, de manera que se encuentre en el baño toda figura de los animales del mundo y que haya en el baño manzanas rodeadas de oro y de perlas y zafiros y esmeraldas, y que haya allí un crucero de bóveda con estrellas plateadas y un campo de azur cárdeno, y que haya una gran sala muy alta con un conjunto de ventanas de cuatro partes y palacios con grandes pórticos”.

Dijeron los maestros: “Nos lo tomaremos en la manera que has nombrado por veinte mil doblas a destajo”. Y se fue el mancebo una hora y vino con toda la cantidad, y comenzaron a obrar todos los maestros de Córdoba, y fue obrado el baño en que no miraba ni entraba

ninguno sino maestro o fustero o pintor o picapedrero, y eran los mayores de la obra cuarenta y partieron el baño a cada uno su parte y obraron a porfía unos por otros para ver cuál hacía mejor obraje, y después de dos años la obra fue acabada, y entró el mancebo a mirar el baño y se maravilló de la gentil obra, y quedó pasmado y mandó barrerlo y fregarlo con calcina y serraduras y ramos de rosal silvestre, y fue limpiado y escalfado y metieron sus cirios y blandones y esteras e puso a mano derecha del baño tiendas y a mano izquierda tiendas, y metió por sirvientes mozos que en cara no habían barbas y les dijo: “Cualquiera que venga, dadle greda y alheña y mondadientes y agua de rosas, y no tomad nada de paga de ninguno, si no yo colgaré su cabeza en la puerta del baño”. Y metió servidores de mandiles y de perfumes y les dijo: “Yo os daré a cada uno por mes cuatro dírhams, para servir y honrar a toda gente, y cuando será el atardecer adobad el baño”. E hizo pregones por toda Córdoba, toda la ciudad: “que toda persona venga al baño de Zariab y no pagará”. Y se cargaron la gente tanto que encima de los baños de Córdoba filaban las telarañas y duró la priesa de aquel baño seis meses.

Dijo el narrador: Llegaron las mujeres de la parroquia a la casa del señor del baño, y rogaron a la mujer que hablase a su marido para que él quiera dar tanda para mujeres, para que en aquel tiempo no entrasen los hombres. Les dijo ella: “cuando venga la noche, yo hablaré al hijo de mi tío, mi marido”. Y cuando fue de noche y hubieron cenado hizo solaz la mujer a su marido con el laúd y el rabel y el monocordio y el órgano musical y otros instrumentos, y después dijo al mancebo su mujer y le demandó de gracia que, como entraban las mujeres en otros baños, que se dé vez a las mujeres en aquel baño, e hizo gracia de un mes para las mujeres y se estremeció toda Córdoba de aquello hasta que llegó la nueva a Um Arriḏā, hija del rey Almansūr, y mandó el rey que fuese su hija allí con sus doncellas, y tenía el ministro Muḥammadu Bni Zayūn una hija más cumplida de hermosura que toda criatura que le decían

Zaynab. Y estaba entre sus doncellas como la luna entre las estrellas, y vino una de sus sirvientas, y le dijo las maravillas del baño de Zariieb y cómo se había gastado grandes fortunas allí y cuántos servidores había en el baño y cómo tenían las mujeres sus tandas. Y dijo entonces la doncella: “Yo querría ver aquel baño pero no place a mi padre”. Y se tornó la doncella a desecar, que no le aprovechaba comer ni beber ni dormir, y enfermó de deseo de ver el baño de Zariieb, y cuando oyó el ministro aquello, dijo a las doncellas: “Aparejadla bien y llevadla al baño y tornadla”. Dijeron las doncellas que les placía, y fue muy altamente aparejada con bolas de almizcle fino y fueron con ella así como la luna entre las estrellas y fueron las doncellas a mano derecha y a mano izquierda.

Córdoba tenía grandes carreras y llegaron a la plaza de Qurayš y encontraron allí una novia cabalgada y allí había dueñas y doncellas y grandes gentes que no podían ver lugar sino con las espadas sacadas, y con toda la gran espesura de la gente la doncella hija del ministro se perdió de las doncellas y quedó turbada que no sabía por dónde se había a tornar desde hora de la plegaria de mediodía. Y así como andaba perdida, he allí que llegó a unas grandes puertas muy altas y reales y a un mancebo sentado al banco de la puerta con un alfareme y unos zapatos y su pierna la derecha sobre la izquierda, y se llamaba Muḥammad hijo de Ṭāhir. No era de gran riqueza y de muchas fortunas, sino que lo había todo devorado y destruido en juegos y en comidas y bebidas, hasta que resultó que no tenía nada ni señoría, sino estas casas y la ropa que tenía por encima. Arrancó los mármoles de la casa y los ladrillos y azulejes, y convirtió la casa en tablero de escaques donde no entraban sino jugadores y tahúres.

Pasó por allí la doncella, y ella nunca había salido de su alcázar, y pensó que aquella casa por las bellas puertas que tenía era el baño de Zariieb y le dijo: “Señor, ¿es éste el baño de Zariieb?” Y dijo el joven en sí mismo: “Esta doncella va perdida”, y le respondió: “Éste es el

baño”. Le dijo la doncella: “¿Habrán entrado aquí doncellas y sirvientas?” Le dijo él: “Sí”. Y ella entró, y cuando fue dentro llegó a un surtidor de agua y allí encontró figuras y enrejados de hierro y eran viejas de gran tiempo, hasta que ella encontró la casa vacía y se encontró engañada y dijo en sí misma: “Desgracia, si grito, ¿quién me oirá?” Dijo en sí: “Aquí he de tener astucia”. Se tiró el bolso y el brial y lo lanzó sobre un árbol de murta que había allí y se tiró el llavero de llaves de oro y de plata, y vino el joven y la besó entre sus ojos y le dijo ella: “¿Pensabas que yo andaba perdida y que yo no conocía el baño de Zariieb? Pues fui allí diez veces, pero yo he venido a ti, que yo soy muy enamorada de ti y de tu beldad fuertemente, y por eso he venido hasta tu casa, que nunca he podido encontrar manera de salir hasta hoy, y quiero ganar tu hermosura y que ganes tú la mía; vete, tráenos carne de carnero y pan de candeal y frutas verdes y secas, nueces, almendras, avellanas y granadas dulces y bellotas y castañas y dátiles y uvas y ponciles y cañas de azúcar y azúcar cande y manzanas, porque yo no quiero salir de esta casa por tiempo de dos meses”.

Dijo el narrador que se maravilló el mancebo de aquello y le dijo: “Espera”. Y entró por una ropa nueva que tenía de las pascuas y le dijo ella: “¿A dónde vas?” Dijo: “Llevo esta ropa para empeñarla para lo que dices que hemos menester”. Dijo la doncella: “Espera”. Y tiró su ajorca de su pie, y era de plata y se la dio y dijo: “vete apuradamente y vuelve y que no se seque esta escupetina hasta que ya hayas vuelto”. Salió el joven apurado para comprar lo que demandaba, y cuando ella entendió que él estaba traspuesto se salió apuradamente de la casa, y fue demandando el baño de Zariieb hasta que llegó al baño, y entró y gritó a sus doncellas y sirvientas y las encontró allí, y la prendieron y la bañaron y la enjugaron y volvió con sus doncellas a casa de su padre el ministro. Y cuando volvió el mancebo con lo que había comprado, trajo la ajorca, que no la empeñó, que todo lo traía fiado, y cuando fue dentro gritó: “¡Señora!”, y nadie le respondía, y pensó que estaba arriba en las cámaras y subió arriba

y no encontró nada, y comenzó a lanzar todo lo que traía y a derramarlo, y comenzó a lamentarse y a romper sus vestidos y salió gritando fuera de seso y de sentimiento, diciendo: “¿Quién me mostrará una doncella que decía que le mostrasen la carrera para el baño de Zariab?” Quienquiera que lo veía decía: “Es mezquino: de la pobreza ha perdido el seso”. Y ya lo apedrearon los mozuelos y dormía por los bimbales, hasta que un día él se encontró con el ministro padre de la doncella, y lo reconoció y mandó a sus escuderos que lo llevasen delante de él y le dijo el ministro: “¿Por qué lloras? Porque yo te conocí rico”. Y lloró el mancebo y dijo: “No lloro por la pobreza mas lloro de gran deseo que yo tengo por la de esta ajorca”. Y cuando el ministro vio la ajorca dijo a sus escuderos: “Esta ajorca es de mi hija, de dónde la ha tenido este mancebo?” Dijeron: “Señor, en cualquier caño o cenia se podría haber caído”. Les dijo el ministro: “Obcecadlo y dadle otra de estaño”. La cambiaron, y cuando la vio el mancebo conoció que no era la suya, y gritó y lloró hasta que se amorteció, y lo dejó el ministro y se fue para su casa y encontró su hija sentada y sacó su espada y la puso sobre la gola de su hija y dijo la hija: “Padre señor, ¿por qué me quieres matar sin pecado?” Dijo el padre: “¿Esta ajorca no era tuya? Dónde la perdiste?” Dijo la doncella: “Padre, señor, no te apresures, déjame decirte”. Y le contó todo lo que sucedió con el mancebo y cómo la tenía en su casa. “Y sabes, padre señor, que si no fuera por esta ajorca y la astucia que pensé no habría escapado de sus garras”.

Y cuando oyó esto el ministro dejó a su hija y se fue a casa del rey Alamšūr, y le contó toda la historia y todo el misterio, y cuando lo oyó el rey hizo venir al mancebo delante de él y le dijo: “¿Eres en tu seso o no, mancebo?” Dijo el joven: “Señor rey, sí, bien”. Le dijo el rey: “Pues cuéntame todo el misterio de lo que te aconteció con la doncella de la ajorca”. Dijo: “Señor, quiero hacerlo de gracia”. Y se lo contó en una copla levantado en pies a manera de canción con hermosa voz y buen son y gesto. Y cuando hubo acabado se cayó amortecido

sobre su cara. Mandó el rey que le mojasen la cara con agua de rosas y lo mojaron hasta que despertó, y cuando fue bien despertado, le dijo el rey: “Mancebo, ¿y tú querías casar con ella?” Dijo él: “Señor, ¿de dónde tendría tanto bien, que yo soy hombre pobre?” Dijo el rey: “Yo te daré seis mil doblas para casarte”. Dijo [el narrador]: Cuando oyó aquello el ministro dijo: “Señor rey, por tu vida, yo se la daré por mujer y le daré una sirvienta”. Y luego felices hicieron testimonios y se hizo la dote y muy ricas bodas donde se estremeció toda Córdoba y tocaron atabales e instrumentos y entró con ella novia y la encontró moza virgen. Y cuando murió el ministro quedó todo lo suyo para este mancebo, y tanto lo quería el rey que lo hizo su ministro que mandaba y vedaba después del rey, y fue recordada la historia en la ciudad de Córdoba y puesta por escrito. Esto es lo que fue de la historia, Looor a Dios, Señor de los mundos.

STORY OF THE BATH OF ZARYEB

The Chronicles of the Kings say that al-Andalus was conquered in the year 91. It was conquered by Musa ibn Nusayr and Tariq ibnu Ziyad. For one hundred years, it was left barren but then cities started being inhabited and cities were edified: Gibraltar, Algeciras, Huelva, Badajoz, Seville, Cordova, Granada, Almeria, Murcia, Zaragoza the white, the city of the orchard, and Jativa. Cordova was the major and most populated city of all. There, one could find nine thousand six hundred and forty-nine mosques, twelve thousand ovens, eight hundred twenty-one parishes, and one hundred thousand houses. When the king wanted to ride and wage war against Christians, one thousand armed men would accompany him and play the drums. Each one of them would receive fifty *doblas* every month.² When the king Almansur stepped out, he would do so with ten thousand foot soldiers with shields and ten thousand with arms and spears walking in front of him, along with ten thousand soldiers with crossbows and ten thousand soldiers with longbows. He would also take along seven thousand

mules to carry clothing items and tents. One thousand drums would play while he rode and one thousand mules would carry a profusion of chainmail doublets, another thousand would carry a profusion of shields, another thousand a profusion of arrows, and another thousand chains, tar, and gunpowder, and another thousand would carry kitchen utensils and sleeping clothes. There were also women and servants and maidens for singing and cohabiting, and slaves to serve ten thousand people.

The king was known as Almansur and his name was Mhmmadu bnu ‘Abdi Allahi bnu Abi ‘Amir, may God forgive him. Under his reign, in Cordova, lived a young man called Muhammadu, son of al-Hajjaj. He was clever, sensible, knowledgeable, a man of honor, great fortune and wealth who had learned all science, of al-Muwatta and al-Bukhari, logic, philosophy, medicine, law, chronicles, and everything that can be written in black and white, to such an extent that he was an ore of wisdom and a house of knowledge and science. One day that he was in the company of honorable masters discussing the things of the world and its riches, an elder man, one of the greatest of Cordova, who was sitting with them, turned to the young man and told him: “It looks like you should be married given the unequaled goods and riches you possess, and I know a girl, no one in Cordova is more courteous than she is and she is so beautiful that when she goes to the bath, the other women do not bathe, they watch her posture and everything God has given her of graciousness and beauty. She is the daughter of your uncle and many great men and ministers have asked for her hand but her father has refused to give her to them affirming that she is to be given to a son of her uncle who can have her once he has proposed.”

The recounter said: later, content, the old man sent him to ask for her hand, which was given to him. The dowry was given in the presence of witnesses and the wedding was celebrated

with a great party where cattle and cows were sacrificed. People were able to eat for a month in this celebration. Everyone in Cordova was excited and spent great amounts of money. The young girl was found virgin and the wedding was such that the young groom did not go out for six months.

When he did go out, he bought her a necklace worth one thousand *doblas* and took it to her. However, when he came home to her he found her sitting and crying. He then asked her: “Why are you crying? You have abundant riches, great privilege, honor, inheritance, possessions, horses, orchards, tours, mills, pear trees, castles, open land, and if you wanted, I would build you a house or castle made of gold or silver.” But despite it all, she refused to face him. She then said: “You sent me to the bath yesterday with my maids. And while we were inside, women from the house of the king’s minister entered and everyone devoted their attention to them and forgot about me and there was such a rush in the bath that I came home with my hair still full of henna. I swore never to go to the bath again, I rather wash my hair at home and do the best I can for as long as God may want. Well, if I were married to the keenest man of all Cordova, I would have a bath in my own house.” When the young man heard what the daughter of his uncle, his wife, had told him, he said: “Wait and see what I will do out of love for you.”

He put on his hat and shoes and went to a place full of young people. He sent for skilled works. They came and he told them: “I would like to build here a bath with four houses. I would like cannons made out of copper and lead on the ground, and cold water flowing into the hot house and hot water flowing into the cold house. I want on top of each cannon auburn glass figures and brass figures of birds that throw cold water from their mouths, and other glass figures that throw hot water from their mouths. I want white silver nails on the walls and

beautiful golden and silver calligraphy everywhere in the bath. The stones have to be made of marble, male on female, and there must be in the center of the bath a pond with figures of peacocks, gazelles, and lions made of copper and colored marble that throw hot water into the pond, and other figures that throw in cold water. We should be able to subtly take water from the pond, and the places reserved for the ritual ablution have to be colored and joined with bricks, gold, silver, and dark blue, with silver nails, so that one can find among the bath figures all the animals of the world. There must also be in the bath apples surrounded by gold, pearls, sapphires, emeralds, and a transept of domes with silver stars and a field of dark purple. There must also be a large room with high ceilings and a set of windows with four parts, and palaces with large arcades.

The masters said: “We will do as you said for twenty thousand *doblas*, paid for the job.” The young man left for an hour and came back with the requested amount of money. And all the skilled workers of Cordova started working, and the bath was built during which time no one could watch or go in except the skilled worker or carpenter or painter or stonecutter. There were forty foremen and they divided the bath so each had their own area and they worked competing with each other to see who did the best work. After two years, the work was done and the young man went in to see the bath and he marveled at the fine work. He was amazed and requested the bath be swept and washed with cement, and locks and wild rose bush branches placed. The bath was cleaned and steamed and they placed large candles and large candlesticks and rugs and there were shops built on the right side of the bath and on its left side. He took as servants young men who had no beard on their faces and he told them: “Whoever comes, give them clay and henna and toothpicks and rose water, and do not take money from anyone, otherwise I will hang your head over the gate of the bath.” He dressed servants in aprons and perfumes and told them: “I will give each one of you four dirhams per

month, to serve and honor everyone, and in the evening, arrange the bath.” He made announcements throughout the whole city of Cordova: “everyone is welcome to the Bath of Zaryeb, no payment required.” So many people came that in all the baths of Cordova cobwebs started growing and the rush lasted six months.

The recounter said: Women came from the parish to the owner of the bath’s house and they begged the woman to talk to her husband so he would grant women a round during which time no men would be allowed in the bath. She told them: “When the night comes, I will talk to my uncle’s son, my husband.” When the night came and they finished their dinner, the woman relaxed her husband with the lute, the rebec, the monochord, the organ, and other instruments. Then the wife asked the young man a favor, that, given the way women were in other baths, that they would be given their turn in this bath. He agreed to give a month to the women in the bath and all Cordova was shaken until the news reached Um Arrida, the daughter of Almansur, and the king requested that his daughter go there with her maids.

The minister Muhammadu Bni Zayun had a daughter, more beautiful than any other creature and they called her Zaynab. She was among her maids like the moon among stars. One of her servants went to her and told her all about the marvels of the bath of Zaryeb, how great wealth had been spent there, about the number of servants in the bath, and how women had their own turn. The young girl then said: “I would like to see that bath but it does not please my father.” The young girl started fading away, as she would not want to drink or eat, until she got sick with the desire to see the bath of Zaryeb. When the minister heard of it, he told the young girls: “Get her ready and take her to the bath and bring her back.” The young girls said they were pleased, she got highly prepared with drops of fine musk, and they accompanied her like the moon among stars: the young girls surrounding her on her left and right hand side.

Cordova had large roads, they arrived at the plaza of Quraysh and there they met a bride riding a horse. There were ladies, young women and many people, and they could not see anything unless they drew their swords. And with the number of people around, the young woman, daughter of the minister got separated from the young maidens. She became upset not knowing where to turn since the midday prayer. And as she wandered lost, she came across some very high and big doors with a young man sitting outside wearing a headcloth and shoes and with his right leg on top of his left one. His name was Muhammad son of Tahir. He was not wealthy or fortunate. Rather, he had swallowed and destroyed it all in games, foods, and drinks, until he ended up with nothing, no lordship, just these houses and the clothes he had on. He had torn off the marbles of the house and the bricks and the tiles, and he had converted his house in a chessboard where no one entered but players and gamblers. The young lady passed by. She had never gone out of her palace and thought that that house, with the beautiful doors it had, had to be the bath of Zaryeb. So she told him: "Sir, is this the bath of Zariyb?" The young man thought to himself: "This young girl is lost," and he answered her: "This is the bath." The young woman then said: "Have young maidens and servants come in?" He said: "Yes." And she went in. When she went in, she reached a water fountain and found figures and iron latticework which were of very old age. She then found the house empty and found herself tricked. She then thought to herself: "Tragedy, if I scream, who will hear me?" and said to herself: "I have to be clever." She took off her bag and tunic and threw them on a nearby myrtle and threw her gold and silver key-ring. The young man came and kissed her between her eyes and she said: "You thought I was lost and that I did not know the bath of Zaryeb? Well I went there ten times, but I have come to you, as I am very much in love with you and your beauty, and that is the reason why I came to your house, for I have never found a way to get out until today, and I want to win your beauty and I want you to win

mine. Go now, bring us some mutton meat, bread, green fruit, dried fruit, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, sweet pomegranate, acorns, chestnuts, dates, grapes, citrons, sugar canes, sugar candy, and apples because I do not want to get out of this house for at least two months.”

The recounter said that the young man was amazed and said: “Wait.” And he went to get a new outfit he had gotten for Easter and she told him: “Where are you going?” He said: “I am going to pawn this outfit to get us what you said we would need.” The young woman then said: “Wait.” She removed her bracelet from her ankle. It was made of silver. She handed it to him and told him: “Go quickly and come back before this sputum dries up.” The young man left in hurry to buy what she requested, and when she was sure he had gone, she quickly left the house, and went asking for the bath of Zariieb until she found it. She then went in and called for her maids and servants and found them there. They adorned her and bathed her and dried her and she went back to the house of her father the minister with her maids. When the young man came back with everything he had bought, he brought the bracelet with him for he did not pawn it and got everything on credit. When he was in, he shouted: “Lady!” and nobody answered. He thought that she was upstairs in the bedrooms so he went up but did not find anybody. He started throwing and pouring everything he had brought and he started complaining and ripping his clothes off and he went out, out of his mind and heart, saying: “Who will show me the young woman that asked to be shown the way to the bath of Zaryeb?” Whoever saw him would say: “Poor him: poverty has made him lose his mind.” The lads stoned him and he slept near the osiers, until one day he came across the minister, the father of the young girl. The minister recognized him and asked his squires to bring him to him and he told him: “Why are you crying? Because I have known you rich.” The young man cried and said: “I am not crying because of my poverty but because of the desire I have for the owner of this bracelet.” The minister told them: “Blind him and give him another one made

out of tin.” They exchanged it and when the young man saw it, he knew it was not his. He screamed and cried and fainted. The minister then left him and went home and found his daughter sitting. He drew his sword and placed it over her neck and she said: “Lord, father, why do you want to kill me when I have not sinned?” The father said: “Was this bracelet not yours? Where did you lose it?” The young woman said: “Father, lord, do not rush, let me tell you.” And she told him everything that had happened with the young man and how he had her in his house. “And you know father, if it were not for this bracelet and my ruse, I would not have escaped his claws.”

When the minister heard this, he left his daughter and went to the house of Almansur and told him the whole story and all the mystery of it. When the king heard it all, he summoned the young man and told him: “Are you in your right mind or not young man?” The young man answered: “Lord, king, yes, well.” The king told him: “Well tell me all about your mysterious happenings with the young lady with the bracelet.” He said: “Lord, I would like to do it gracefully.” And he told him the story standing up and in verse in the form of a song sung with a beautiful voice and movements. And when he was done, he fainted and fell on his face. The king requested they wet his face with rose water and they did until he awoke. When he was fully awake, the king asked him: “Young man, would you like to marry her?” He said: “How would I have enough given the poor man I am?” The king said: “I will give you six thousand *doblas* to get married.”

The recounter said: When the minister heard the news, he said: “My lord, king, for the life of you, I will give her to him for wife and will give him a servant.” Later, happy, they married before witnesses, the dowry was given, and a beautiful wedding was celebrated during which all of Cordova was shaken. They played drums and instruments and he went with the bride

and found her virgin. When the minister passed away, everything that was once his became the young man's, and the king loved him so much, he made him his minister, who ordered and prohibited after the king, and the story was recorded and put in writing. This is what has become of the story, and praise to God, the Lord of the two worlds.”

APPENDIX F

*El ḥadīṣ de ‘Alī el de Bagdad*¹²⁶ (Manuscript of Urrea de Jalón ff. 140r-146v)

Y de lo que corrió sobre él de los espantos y milagros y maravillas, apáguese Dios de él. Dijo: nos recontó Ahmad hijo de al-Hamadhani hijo de Ibrahim hijo de Halaf al-Kindi hijo de Yahya hijo de Masdari y dijo: éramos un día posados en la ciudad de Al-Kufa que conversábamos de las nuevas pasadas, veos que nos contemos el cuento de Ali al-Bagdadi y lo que pasó de los espantos y de lo que vio de las maravillas con tres hermanas diablasas y lo que encontró de las fortunas en la mar.

Dijo Yahya hijo de Masdar: yo vos recontaré su cuento, si quiere Dios. Aquél es que el rey de los creyentes Harun ar-Rashid no podía dormir ni le aprovechaba ningún alimento que comiese ni bebiese y no cesó de bailar toda una noche hasta que amaneció Dios con la mañana, y el primero que encontró cerca de él fue su ministro Ja’far hijo de Barmak y lo halló de mala disposición y lo saludó y él lo volvió a saludar, y le dijo Ja’far: “O señor, ¿qué hay? que te veo pensativo.” Le dijo a él el rey Harun ar-Rashid: “Por Dios, O Ja’far, no puedo dormir ni me aprovecha comer ni beber ni me puedo alegrar, y yo querría oír cualquier cuento de alguien a quien se le ha pasado fortunas.”

Dijo: Y salió Ja’far por el mercado y por los callizos buscando si podría encontrar a alguien y no podía encontrar a ninguno por toda la ciudad de Bagdad, hasta que entró en la cárcel, y veos que halló allí un hombre con una gran barba que había estado en la cárcel bien quince años. Y cuando lo vio Ja’far, le dijo: “O hombre, ¿por qué estás de tan mal estado?” Le dijo a él: “Por una nueva extraña que me ha acontecido.” Entonces le dijo Ja’far: “Haz saber tu recontamiento al rey de los creyentes Harun ar-Rashid.” Le dijo: “Pues llévame delante de él, O Ja’far.” Entonces dijo Ja’far aquello: “Pues cámbiate con otra ropa más

¹²⁶ My modernization is based on Corriente Córdoba’s transliteration (220-227).

limpia que ésta.” Dijo el hombre a Ja’far: “Así como estoy, quiero que me lleves delante de él, O Ja’far.”

Dijo: Cuando lo vio Harun ar-Rashid, le dijo (al hombre): “Si lo haces por pobreza, yo te enriqueceré y te sacaré de la cárcel.” Le dijo él: “O rey, yo te recontaré un *hadith* extraño que nunca oí ninguno semblante a él.” Dijo el rey: “Hazme saber tu recontamiento, O hombre.”

“Dijo Ali al-Bagdadi al-Jawhari: “Era mi padre, apiádelo Dios, de los mayores de Bagdad y de los mayores mercaderes y tenía escuderos y esclavos y no tenía hijo sino yo y él tenía gran gozo por mí; y mi madre, apiádela Dios, murió desde me hubo parido, y mi padre me dio a criar hasta que llegué a tener cinco años, después me metió mi padre a leer hasta que sabía el Corán y muchos libros y la gramática y el conocimiento en las estrellas, y llegué a la edad de dieciocho años. Después, murió mi padre, apiádelo Dios, después tomé los bienes que me dejó y me lo gasté todo hasta que no me quedara de lo que me dejó mi padre ni poco ni mucho, hasta que ya hacía tres días que no comía alimento ninguno. Después me puse a llorar, O rey de los creyentes hasta que un día, fui a casa de una tía que tenía y le demandé que si tenía cualquier cosa que me dase. Dijo ella: “Por Dios, no hay en mi poder sino una dobla que he ganado a hilar.” Y me la dio y la tomé, y fui al cambio y la cambié, y me salí al mercado y veos que encontré un hombre que traía un capote y un cuchillo escrito con símbolos mágicos y ensalmos y me gustó aquel cuchillo y lo compré por media dobla. Y cuando vino la noche, pensé en salir y robar a quien pasase por la carrera, y yo era de fuerte corazón. Me puse el capote y me ceñí el cuchillo y salí hacia la partida de los derrocados y me escondí allí para robar a quien pasase. Y había cerca de mí un ahorcado, y aquella noche hacía luna, y yo estando así, veos, vino una doncella que resplandecía su cara como la luna llena en la noche. Y tenía vestiduras que nunca había visto tan hermosas, tenía mucho almizcle, y me aturdí de lo que veía y eché mi mano a mi cuchillo, y fui a ella, y me dijo a mí con buena

gracia y dulces palabras: “Espacio, espacio, O amigo de corazón; yo sé que tú no has salido de tu casa sino por menester, y aquel ahorcado que ves es mi hermano, me pongo sobre tu cuesta para que lo baje.” Y la puse sobre mi cuesta y ella bajándolo hasta que me enojé de tenerla sobre mí, y alcé mi cabeza y veos, que comía la cara del ahorcado; ella comiendo, y me espantó lo que vi, O rey, y sabía que ella era diablesa y saqué mi mano y arranqué el cuchillo, y la herí de un golpe y se cayó una ajorca de su cama, y gritó y no sé si la tierra la tragó o el cielo la subió, y tomé la ajorca y veos, que tenía dos perlas como huevos de paloma que resplandecía como la candela y la ajorca era de oro bermejo puro, y pensé en mi persona y dije: “No encontraré comprador a esta ajorca.”

Después me fui hacia mi casa y bailé toda aquella noche porque no podía dormir, hasta la mañana; cuando amaneció Dios con la mañana, tomé la ajorca y fui al de las perlas y le di la paz y me tornó la paz y me reconoció y me dijo: “No eres tú al-‘Abbas hijo de Ali al-Bagdadi?” Le dije yo a él: “Sí.” Me dijo a mí: “Pues necesitas que haga alguna cosa por amor de tu padre, apiádelo Dios?” Dije yo: “Sí.” Y me posé en el banco y me puse a su costado y me dijo a mí: “¿Qué necesitas tú?” Dije yo: “Mi padre me legó un alzado y querría que me lo cambies.” Y cuando lo vio se turbó, que vio cosa que nunca había visto tal. Me dijo a mí: “O hijo, no encontrarás comprador sino el rey de los creyentes Harun ar-Rashid, y todavía él no podrá comprarlo, y creo que deba ser del alcázar del rey; hazme saber de dónde te ha venido.” Le dije yo a él: “Y ¿a mí dices estas palabras y soy hijo de quien soy?” Me dijo a mí: “Pues si tú dices verdad, ¿dónde es su par?” Y me arrodillé aturdido cuando oí aquello y dije yo: “Acaeció en poder de mi padre en esta figura, y él decía que era de partida de las mujeres de los reyes tres: o de Balqiyas o de Fir’aun o de Labun rey de la India, y no cesaron los días de venir hasta que cayó en poder de mi padre, que Dios se haya compadecido de él, y su par es en poder de los mercaderes de la India.” Me dijo a mí: “No te escapará sino la verdad, que esta ajorca fue hurtada del alcázar del rey.” Y no cesó de pleitearme y yo a él hasta que pasó

por nosotros el ministro Ja'far, y se paró con nosotros; y dijo que qué habíamos y dijo: “Esta ajorca que quiere que le cambie.” Y cuando la vio el ministro dijo: “Esta ajorca fue hurtada del alcázar del rey y si no nos das su par, yo te ahorcaré.” Y me prendió y demandé garantía. (Y) mi tutor, aquél que lo legó mi padre, que Dios se haya compadecido de él, me dio garantía hasta un año, y “si no venía con su par en aquel año, que lo ahorcasen.” Después me dijo a mí mi tutor: “Mira en qué estado me dejas.”

Después me dio doblas para provisiones en el camino y le agradecí a él, y después entré en una fusta que quería ir a tierra de India y fuimos con aire bueno por cinco días. Después vi los de la fusta que decían “¡Dios es más grande!” y decían “¡No hay Dios sino Dios!” y rogaban a Dios y les dije yo a ellos: “¿Qué es vuestro hecho?” Dijeron: “O padre de Hasan, en este lugar hay una bestia maldita que tiene una mano de tres dedos como un hombre que le hemos de dar un hombre, y si no, la fusta es perdida.” Y echaron suertes cuál y lo arrojarían, y cayeron en mí, después las echaron otra vuelta y cayeron en mí, y las tornaron a echar tres vueltas y todas tres cayeron en mí. Después yo hice mis abluciones e hice mi oración y rogué a Dios y me despojé de mis ropas y les di a ellos las doblas que tenía para que hagan la limosna por mí; y me vestí el capote y arranqué el cuchillo, y después me fui al cabo de la fusta y miré al mar y veos, con una cosa muy espantable y dije yo: “no hay poder ni fuerza sino en Dios, alto y grande,” y me lancé en la mar y me carpí la mano con el puñal y se llenó la mar de sangre y pasó la fusta con el poder de Dios, y salí yo al cabo de la fusta y me llevaron en la fusta y hubieron gran gozo conmigo.

Y fuimos con buen aire y con buen tiempo por tres días, y cuando fui el día cuatro, se encontró la fusta con una peña y se carpió en dos partes y se hundió la gente y de donde no escapó ninguno sino yo con una tabla de la fusta, y fui y después cuando estaba cansado, me lancé en la mar hasta que tocó mi pie la arena y supe que yo era en la tierra, y me tiré el capote que era mojado. (Y) cuando amaneció Dios con la mañana y salió el sol, veos, con una

ciudad grande de grandes arboledas y deleites, y comencé a entrar por sus callizos; y no pasaba por lugar que no olvidase lo que había visto antes, tanto era la hermosura de aquella ciudad, y no encontraba a ninguno que me hablase ni yo a él, hasta que pasó un judío y me reconoció y me abrazó y yo a él y me dijo a mí: “¿Qué te ha traído aquí?” Y le narré mi hecho y me llevó a su casa y me dio a comer.

Después le demandé por el hecho de los de aquella ciudad y me dijo a mí: “Ellos son gentes que sirven al sol, que ellos no conocen a Dios, y ellos no hacen tuerto ni sinrazón a ninguno y no entienden sus lenguajes sino entre ellos, y yo soy el intérprete que habla a quien viene aquí, porque conozco todos los lenguajes y yo te sustentaré sin trabajo.” Y tomó una estera chica y me llevó a la puerta de un horno que había cerca de él y me dijo a mí: “Espera así el sustento de Dios.” Cuando fue la mañana, cocía el pan y metí a cocer una olla. (Y cuando fue cocida, vino y me dio de aquel pan y de aquella cocina, y no quedó nada chico ni grande que no me dase. Y fui en aquel estado gran tiempo hasta que compré ropas y justillos, hasta que un día yo estaba posado veos, vi a unos hombres y mujeres que lloraban, y dije yo al judío que por qué lloraban y dijo el judío: “ah, ah, O musulmán, sepa que en la fuente aquella que beben ha apoderado Dios una sierpe que sale por su boca llamas de fuego y sale cada año una vez; le han de dar una doncella moza y la han de afeitar así como la afeitan para su marido; y se la come, y después de habérsela comido, torna la fuente a su estado. Ahora llega a la hija del rey, y ella es muy hermosa y de gran seso, y por eso llora la gente, y el rey ha jurado a quien quiere salvar a su hija, que él se la dará por mujer.” Y dije yo a él: “¿Y haría eso el rey así como lo dice?” Dijo él: “Sí, y si tú la escapas, y la salvas yo te seré garantía que el rey te la dará por mujer.” Y dije yo: “Pues va al rey y dile que yo por ello, la salvaré y que tornará salva su hija.”

Y él fue al rey y le dijo de ello, y dijo el rey que él se la daría por mujer si él la salvaba de aquella sierpe. Y cuando aquello pasó, yo fui a la fuente y vi que salía de la fuente una

lengua de fuego y una grande oscuridad que oscurecía el mundo, y vi a la doncella hija del rey que estaba llorando, y yo comencé a confortarla, y estando así, yo vi que salía de la fuente un pilar negro de fea conservación y ella tenía dos ojos muy feos y una lengua de fuego, y vino hasta que se acercó de la doncella, y yo diciendo a la doncella: “No te mudes de tu lugar, ni tengas miedo”; y los gritos sonaban de la ciudad y el judío estaba gritando, y cuando fue fuera la sierpe, tomé el cuchillo y se lo arremetí y dije: “Muere con el poder de Dios,” y del golpe que le di se llenó la fuente de sangre, y sosegó su fuerza y se fue la oscuridad y tornó el agua clara como era antes.

Y creían los de la ciudad que éramos muertos perdidos yo y la doncella; después tomé la doncella y me fui con ella al alcázar del rey, salva de toda cosa, y entré cuando estaban llorando: tornaron en alegría y comenzaron a tocar timbales e instrumentos y tuvieron gran gozo. Después, el rey me hizo lo que había prometido y me casó con su hija, y dio a comer el rey tres días a los de la ciudad. Después entré con la doncella y quedé con ella un gran deleite y grande alegría por tres meses, y estando así veos que vino nueva que tenían cercado un lugar del rey y le dio al rey gran desplacer aquella nueva, y le dije yo: “O rey, no tengas desplacer que yo les saldré a pelear.” Y entonces llamó el rey su hueste y cabalgué con ciento mil caballeros o más, después fui al alcázar y fui al lugar que tenían cercado y los vencí, y envié un mensajero al rey, y salió el rey a recibirme y tuvo gran gozo conmigo y me creció en amorío y nunca se partía de mí de noche ni de día.

Y después nos quedamos un mes que no salíamos de la ciudad hasta que un día me vino deseo de cazar y salí con una partida de los escuderos, y cazando se levantó delante de mí una gacela muy hermosa y dije a mi compañía que yo me la quería cazar, y fui detrás de ella hasta que me transpuse de mi gente, y llegué en una tierra sola donde no moraba persona y me alcanzó el perecimiento, y me puse a llorar y quedé turbado que no sabía qué hacerme ni qué carrera llevar, y fue de poco en poco veos, que guardé y vi una tierra yerma y vi un

alcázar muy alto y de altas edificaciones y de gran patio cuya claridad creía que rapara mi vista y pensé y dije: “ Dios es más grande. Por Dios, yo iré a este alcázar, si y habrá cualquier alguno que duerma esta noche con él y por aventura que me guiará a mi alcázar.” Y fui y comencé a entrar por aquellas cámaras y pasé de cámaras en cámaras y de lugar en lugar, y no pasaba por cosa que no olvidase lo que había visto, hasta que llegué a una sala y veos que había allí un huerto con muchos arboledas, lo que sería largo a describir, y había ríos de agua que era más blanca que la ley y más fría que la nieve y más dulce que el miel, y en aquellas arboledas había muchos tipos de aves y me puse a rodear a mano derecha y a mano izquierda maravillándome de la hermosura de aquel alcázar, hasta que llegué a una corte muy amplia, y en medio de aquella casa había una tabla de plata parada llena de alimentos diversos, y yo había placer de comer y prendí de aquellos alimentos y me harté y tomé mi menester, y veos con una botella de vino llena que semejaba la lágrima, y tomé de él mi menester y me repuse del quebrantamiento de la carrera, y estando así veos, vi una cosa que venía con gran claridad y con muchos adornos y almizcle y ámbar que nunca vieron semblante a ella ni más hermosa cosa, que resplandecía su cara como la luna llena en la noche, y cuatro doncellas a mano derecha y cuatro a mano izquierda y cuatro delante de ella y cuatro detrás que le tiraban las faldas, y cuando vi aquello, voló mi seso de mí, y tomé por dicho que debía morir, y me levanté y me metí detrás de la puerta, y vino ella hasta que entró por aquella sala y se puso en su sitio; y cuando vio que los alimentos faltaban, dijo al cocinero: “Ay de ti, ¿quién se ha comido la comida esta noche, algún huésped nos ha crecido?” Dijo: “Reconoced el alcázar.”

Y fueron a mano derecha y a mano izquierda por todo el alcázar y no encontraron a ninguno. Entonces les dijo a ellas: “Hagan otra comida, que yo quiero convidar a mis hermanas esta noche,” y no había acabado de hablar que la comida ya estaba delante de ella, unos tipos de alimentos que no semejaban los unos a los otros y vinos como la lágrima, después le dijo a una doncella: “Va por mi hermana la moza.” Y no fue sino muy poco

tiempo, veos que venía con grandes adornos y toda llena de perlas bermejas, y cuando la vio le señaló que se posase, y se posó y le demandó por su enfermedad y le contó ello. Después dijo: “O hermana, si Dios te daba a ‘Alī al-Bagdādī, ¿qué harías?” Dijo ella: “Por Dios, si yo lo tenía yo lo cardaría con unas cardas: ¿podía hacer tan gran pecado en el mundo?” Dijo: “Y ¿cómo es aquello?” Dijo ella: “Fue una noche de las noches cuando yo vi a un ahorcado y me gustó y me vino deseo de comerlo, y el ‘Alī al-Bagdādī había salido a robar a quien quiera que pasase por la carrera y su cuchillo en la mano, y le di dos doblas para que me pusiese sobre sus cuevas y yo, cuando estaba comiendo del ahorcado, me dio una herida que me hizo caer la criatura que tenía en el vientre, y si no porque era escrito el puñal, yo lo habría matado.”

Y Alī al-Bagdādī lo escuchaba todo y vino la otra hermana diablesa y estuvieron con mucho placer con la buena comida y bebidas hasta que despidió a sus hermanas, y fue descubierto ‘Alī al-Bagdādī y conocido y le hizo la diablesa hermana mayor de las tres, gran fiesta hasta que se enamoró de él, y estuvo con ella muchos días hasta que no le quedaba del tiempo para cumplir lo de la ajorca sino un día y él hizo saber de aquello a la diablesa y que si no cumplía con llevar la ajorca, él era muerto. Y entonces, la diablesa enamorada entró a su casa del tesoro y sacó una ajorca par de la ajorca de su hermana, del cual su tutor había puesto garantía por él, y le hizo revolver y lo detuvo hasta que no le quedaba sino dos horas de tiempo para ir a tierra del rey Hārūn ar-Rashīd, y como fue la hora que yo por fuerza había de cumplir, entró la diablesa a una sala y vino con un ‘*ifrit* (genio malévolo), y en espacio de una ora vino conmigo en tierra del rey Hārūn ar-Rashīd que era una andadura de tres meses, y cumplí con mi palabra y me dieron mi ajorca y los bendije, y saqué a mi tutor de la garantía.” Y esto es lo que nos llegó del cuento de Alī al-Bagdādī, Looor a Dios, Señor de los mundos.”

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