

**Broken Boundaries: Developing  
Portrayals of Iberian Islam in  
Castilian Texts of the Fifteenth and  
Sixteenth Centuries**

BY

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### **Note on Translation**

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from sources are mine. In the footnotes, I have kept the spelling of most words as it was in the source, but in a few instances I have changed it for the sake of clarity if the meaning would not be immediately apparent. Within the text, names of people or places that have a common spelling in English have been rendered according to that spelling, so for example Castilla is written as Castile and Felipe as Philip. Also, I have kept the spelling of individual names as they appear in the sources, except where there is a clear preference for an alternative spelling in the majority of modern sources. For instance, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza's spelling Abén Humeya, for the first leader of the Morisco revolt, is changed to Abén Humaya.

## Introduction

The year 1492 looms large in the history of the Iberian Peninsula. In January the city of Granada, the last remaining outpost of Islamic political power in Iberia after eight centuries, surrendered to the armies of the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. In March, those same monarchs issued from the magnificent palace of the erstwhile Muslim rulers of Granada, the Alhambra, a decree which ordered that all Jews in their realms either convert or leave, ending an even longer presence in the land. Finally, in October Columbus landed in the Caribbean, and though his royal sponsors would not learn of his discoveries until the next year, symbolically it marks the beginning of Castile's age of world empire.

These momentous developments are a great deal to fit into one twelve month span, and in reality the situation was far more complex, fitting into longer lasting trends. The capture of Granada did not mark the end of an unceasing holy war, but rather was the latest stage in series of wars interrupted by periods of peace. Furthermore North Africa, at some points within sight of Castile's southern coast, remained in Muslim hands and was viewed as a potential arena for further conquests. As for the expulsion of the Jews, although it may seem rather abrupt, it had antecedents going back at least to the end of the fourteenth century. This decree, moreover, was not the end of the issue, with the *conversos* continuing to be a suspect group for many years to come. Columbus's discoveries, finally, sprang from ongoing efforts to find new ways of reaching Asia by sea, and were in themselves only the beginning of a much larger process. As is well known, contemporaries at first were not even sure what these lands were, and it would be decades before major conquests were consolidated and profits realized.

This project will focus on another development associated with 1492, though it unfolded over a number of years. The fall of Granada and the end of Islamic political power in the Iberian Peninsula greatly impacted the depiction of Iberian Muslims and Islamic culture in Castilian literature. The historical conditions which had formed the context of pre-1492 portrayals of Muslims in Castilian texts underwent rapid evolution in the years following the conquest. As a result the ways in which authors portrayed Muslim figures underwent significant change after 1492, particularly in how these representations related to the actual situation of contemporary Iberian Islam.

Returning to Granada, although the city and the surrounding kingdom of which it had once been capital were conquered, its Muslim population remained. According to the surrender agreement reached with Ferdinand and Isabella, Granada was now politically attached to the Crown of Castile, but its inhabitants would be allowed to continue practicing their religion and customs as they had before. Alternatively, they could emigrate beyond the sea to Muslims lands. This arrangement was not unusual, since for hundreds of years in Iberia minority religious groups could be found living within states controlled by rulers of other faiths, though legally they were not equals and often were subject to special restrictions and taxes. In Christian lands, Muslims in this situation were known as *Mudéjars*. Ferdinand's realm of Aragon had many of these while Castile had comparatively fewer, meaning that after the conquest its *Mudéjar* population was concentrated in its new Granadan territories.<sup>1</sup>

Based on the surrender terms, there seems to have been a great deal of continuity between the terms of 1492 and those which Christian Monarchs had made

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714: A Society of Conflict* (Harlow: Pearson, 1983), 37.

with conquered Muslims for centuries. A new *Mudéjar* community, it would appear, had come into being. This, however, was not to be. In 1501, in the aftermath of a revolt brought on by repressive policies in contradiction of the surrender agreement, all Muslims in Granada were ordered to convert. These converts were often called Moriscos or "New Christians." The next year, that conversion order was extended to all of Castile. Aragon, where nobles protected their lucrative *Mudéjar* vassals, held out longer, but in 1526 a similar order was issued there.<sup>2</sup> In that same year the government, though there had been some sporadic regulations before, issued a comprehensive decree banning a number of Islamic cultural practices which it was claimed were signals of secret Islamic belief. This was suspended for forty years in return for a payment, but in 1567 these and more restrictions were finally promulgated. This helped instigate another revolt in Granada which began at the end of 1568 in the Alpujarras Mountains south of the city. In the aftermath of this uprising, in 1571, that kingdom's Moriscos were expelled and resettled throughout Castile in order to encourage their assimilation. In the eyes of some factions at court, this dispersion of the *Morisco* population did not work. Though the decision was hardly unanimous and was implemented over furious protests, all Moriscos, though officially Christian, were expelled beginning in 1609.

For Iberian Islam, 1492 by no means marked a complete break between two separate histories, but the suddenness of its rejection and the rapidity of policy change toward it nonetheless is quite striking. In 1492, 781 years had passed since Muslim forces first arrived in 711, bringing with them their faith. In Castile, Islam was officially proscribed within ten years of the fall of Granada. In the whole peninsula,

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<sup>2</sup> James Casey, *Early Modern Spain: A Social History* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 225. *Mudéjars*, because of their second-class legal status, were often subject to additional payments which went to their seigniorial lords.

Islam was banned in a little over thirty. Although change did not come overnight, it had indeed come quickly.

Adding another layer of complexity to this question, however, is that despite these policies the historical and cultural legacy of Islam remained very strong within Castile. Over the centuries numerous aspects of material culture, architecture and social customs, to name a few, had been influenced by this interaction. Sometimes these had become so engrained into Castilian culture that contemporaries did not even regard them as Islamic, but rather simply Iberian.<sup>3</sup> Other such influences, however, were used and enjoyed in the full knowledge of their Islamic origin even as their use among Moriscos was suppressed.<sup>4</sup>

One area, though, where this influence was particularly strong was in literature. Relations among Christians and Muslims on the fifteenth century frontier have been described as an "amiable enmity" or a situation in which "public enmity, private amity" prevailed.<sup>5</sup> Literature from the period, often quite reflective of reality, acknowledges this by frequently portraying Muslims as respected adversaries, social counterparts and even friends, while also being the bearers of an admired culture.<sup>6</sup> Despite the repressive policy developments mentioned above, these characterizations continued into the sixteenth century. They were not the only view, as anti-Muslim and Morisco writings certainly existed, but they were significant and in many genres dominant. Interestingly, as time went on and repression and rejection increased, many authors continued to celebrate the Islamic past and attendant culture. This

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<sup>3</sup> Contemporaries would likely not have thought of their culture using the word "Iberian." I use this term to indicate that fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Spaniards may not have viewed these cultural elements as connected with Islam, but rather part of local culture.

<sup>4</sup> Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 6.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Devaney, "An Amiable Enmity: Frontier Spectacle and Intercultural Relations in Castile and Cyprus," (PhD. Dissertation, Brown University, 2011): 19.

<sup>6</sup> Colin C. Smith ed., *Spanish Ballads* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1964), 42.

culture was both romanticized and exoticized in a literary phenomenon known as Maurophilia.

It is from these seemingly contradictory developments that this project arises. It will examine and compare selected Castilian literature from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The project's purpose is thereby to gain a better understanding of what textual portrayals of Muslims, Moriscos, and Iberian Islam contribute to understanding attitudes toward those three connected subjects in Castilian society during these years. These textual attitudes will also be placed in their historical context. This contextualization will shed light on factors that may account for the contradictions between rapid changes in the status of peninsular Islam and literary developments following the end of Islamic political power in Iberia after 1492. More specifically, it proposes to interpret ways in which authors conceived of the Iberian Muslim, Islamic culture in the peninsula, and their "place" there. At the same time, it will gauge how these portrayals reflect the realities of the relationship between Christian and Islamic Iberia both before and after 1492. By comparing changes in both literature and historical context over time, it demonstrates ways that attitudes expressed in texts toward Islam and Muslims evolved. Those attitudes, this project shows, were determined by boundaries that govern how the text places and engages with Muslims.

I will argue that in the fifteenth century a number of political, religious and social boundaries governed the portrayal of Iberian Islam in much of Castilian literature, and that these textual boundaries were grounded in real experience. Depictions of Muslims were often ambivalent, and at times quite positive. In the aftermath of the fall of Granada Castilian literary attitudes toward Iberian Islam did not closely reflect those suggested by the state's repressive policies against Islamic

practice and culture. When it comes to Iberian Islam, literature remained heavily concerned with subjects before 1492, thus placing its portrayals behind another frontier, this one of time, which allowed for the continued presence in text of the boundaries which had lost much of their relevance in real life.

The degree to which these positive depictions depended on being placed in that historical context, however, becomes evident when writers return, in the mid sixteenth century, to portraying contemporary peninsular Muslims. The portrayal of Muslims and Islamic culture in this later context is much more negative, in part because the boundaries that were conducive to more positive portrayals in historical settings were not present in texts describing more current events. Positive portrayals set in the past, however, did not stop. This literature, thus, suggests that many Castilian were quite willing to remember and even celebrate past the Islamic role in the peninsula, but when it came to its status in the present their views could be less indulging. Remembrance did not require presence, helping to explain how positive literary attitudes and attitudes displayed through repressive policy could coexist with one another.

There is, as was mentioned above, a rich supply of texts in which these portrayals of Iberian Muslims are found. The nature of the sources used in this project will be discussed in further detail later, but these writings will briefly be introduced here. A very important type is the ballad, a popular genre both today and in the period in question. Ballads are especially relevant due to their frequent concern with events from Iberian history and frontier life. Chronicles which present history while following the actions of prominent individuals, frequently kings or other powerful political figures, will be featured as major sources chiefly in discussions of the fourteenth century. Closely related to these are more proper historical works,

which are a major source for the sixteenth century, especially from the time of the Alpujarras revolt. Both chronicles and histories, despite their differences from ballads, nonetheless also contain literary elements and characterizations of Iberian Muslims. Finally, a selection of other documents, mostly correspondence, local government records, and legal decrees dealing with Iberian Islam and the Granadan frontier will appear at various points throughout.

### **Historiography**

Neither this history nor this literature is unstudied. There is a great body of work, dating back to the nineteenth century and before, which engages with these texts because they were, at that time, seen as essential elements of national character and identity.<sup>7</sup> In the twentieth century, a famous debate raged between Claudio Sánchez Albornoz and Américo Castro surrounding this very subject. Sánchez Albornoz saw the roots of modern Spain in the Visigothic and Roman past while Castro emphasized the influence of the medieval period's cultural pluralism. Both, however, held that Spain had a unique history which set it apart from other European states.<sup>8</sup> In the service of nationalism and ideological struggles between, broadly, liberals and conservatives, many scholars sought to define a Spanish nation. These earlier scholars aspired to find that nation's true expression through its literature and its self-identification through the rejection of "others" in the form of, for one, the Moriscos. In more modern times, especially since the mid twentieth century, scholars have moved on from these tantalizing yet illusory notions of firm, identifiable and

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<sup>7</sup> Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 18.

<sup>8</sup> Yuen-Gen Liang et al., "The Spain North Africa Project and the Study of the Western Mediterranean," in "Spanning the Strait, Studies in Unity in the Western Mediterranean," ed. Yuen-Gen Liang et al., special issue, *Medieval Encounters* 19, no. 1 (2013): 13.

universal national characteristics. Nonetheless, they have continued to work on these subjects from newer points of view and understandings about identity and engagement with the "other".

However, scholars tend to heavily focus their perspective on either the literary or historical approaches to this question. Those who focus on the history of relations between Islam and Christianity look toward the Spanish monarchy's increasingly repressive policies regarding Moriscos and the often acrimonious debates surrounding them, as well as the perceived rejection by Castilian society of its Islamic past and influences. When positive depictions of Muslims in literature are mentioned, they are rendered relatively insignificant, cast as only a fad, a harmless fascination with a bygone era. In this view, conclusions about general attitudes are often found in policy decisions which most often in the sixteenth century were not favorable toward Moriscos or Islamic culture. Those focusing on the literature, while they certainly bring in and engage with historical context, ultimately do not often bridge the gap between positive literary attitudes and highly negative developments in the life conditions of contemporary Moriscos. Frequently, positive texts are said not to have had an impact on general attitudes, or else that these attitudes are purely for enjoyment and do not have to translate into real life attitudes about the Moriscos in Castile.<sup>9</sup>

Some authors, notably Barbara Fuchs, do relate more fully the literature with the history. Fuchs' work demonstrates the enduring influence of Islamic culture in Iberia even as Christians can be concerned about the meaning of that influence. She and Yuen-Gen Liang engage with this question, among other considerations, in their work on Spain's continuing contact with Islam in nearby North Africa even after the

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<sup>9</sup> Barbara Fuchs, "In Memory of Moors: Maurophilia and National Identity in Early Modern Spain," *Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies* 2, No. 1 (2002): 120.

fall of Granada in 1492.<sup>10</sup> In other works Fuchs challenges the notion that literary Maurophilia is simply a historical fantasy, arguing instead that it is intended to advocate for the inclusion of Islam in national historical memory.<sup>11</sup> There is still much room for further bridging of this gap between positive literary depictions and discriminatory policies, however. This project will look at the two attitudes being represented not as an exclusive dichotomy, but as two portions of a larger intertwined discourse on identity, self and other.

Another divide in much of the current scholarship which this project will also account for is a chronological one. The date 1492, as has been mentioned, often serves a dividing line between the medieval and the early modern in scholarship about Iberia in general and in particular Castile. As such, many studies, of many different types, establish that date as the approximate beginning or end point. In so doing, however, they divide each side of the "line" of 1492 from its immediate historical context. The result is that there appears to be a very abrupt shift from a relatively more tolerant and accepting fifteenth century and an increasingly intolerant sixteenth. By including significant engagement with the years on either side of 1492, it is possible to see a more continuous trend of change.<sup>12</sup>

## **Concepts and Structure**

Therefore, this project spans a period of a little more than one hundred years. It begins in the mid fifteenth century, at a time of frontier contact and occasional conflict, but just before a general resurgence of interest in "holy war." The project's

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<sup>10</sup> Barbara Fuchs and Yuen-Gen Liang, "A Forgotten Empire: The Spanish-North African Borderlands," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 12, no. 3 (2011): 264.

<sup>11</sup> Fuchs, "In Memory of Moors," 120.

<sup>12</sup> Fuchs and Liang, "A Forgotten Empire," 264.

timeframe extends to approximately 1571, when the final large revolt of Moriscos in Spain was overcome by loyalist forces. In effect, it ends with the final war on the Granadan frontier. This confrontation occurs in very different circumstances than military encounters the fifteenth century. Therefore, a comparison between the revolt and previous conflicts can be instructive regarding the ways in which intervening events reshaped attitudes toward Islam and the conception of its place in Spain among the writers surveyed. The chronological span thus places the events of 1492 in the center of the narrative rather than the beginning or end, so that they can be incorporated as a part of the process of change. Moreover, by not extending to the ominous, looming final expulsion, it avoids the tendency to craft a teleological narrative which is found in many works about the subject, as to how the Moriscos reached their inevitable end. This is not to suggest that this unfortunate resolution is an entirely separate matter, but rather a reflection of the objective of the project. The project does not seek to explain how, over the course of the sixteenth century, Spain went down the path of expulsion, but rather how, in the aftermath of 1492, textual representations of Iberian Islam changed.

This objective raises two important points about the concepts and structure of this project. First, the term attitudes can be admittedly rather vague. Yet, this word, especially the fact that it is in the plural, is appropriate given the fact that there was no single "attitude" toward Iberian Islam, Muslims or Moriscos at any time during the period under review. People held a range of opinions, and sometimes even the same individuals could hold seemingly contradictory views depending on context. There are, however, ranges of attitudes, or discourses, within which individual perspectives can be found. In Castile during the sixteenth century for instance there was considerable debate in ecclesiastical, court and local Granadan circles about what

should be "done" about converting and assimilating the Moriscos. Some, favored a highly aggressive approach, while others were in favor of leaving their culture largely alone and hoping for a gradual integration.<sup>13</sup> A voice calling for permitting the Moriscos to resume open practice of Islam, however, would have been very lonely. This project cannot give a definitive or comprehensive view of what Castilians thought, but rather it can offer insight into the ways this issue was framed, presented and understood. Despite differences, many authors and works share essentially similar conceptions of important issues, even if the specifics and nuances of their positions may differ.

Second, the focus of this work will be on Castile and Castilian literature. Despite the political union, if not unity, of Castile and Aragon after the 1470's, the nature and history of Muslim presence within the Crown of Aragon is just one among many ways in which the two realms were quite different. To include the Aragonese perspective would dilute the attention paid to each. Instead, I chose to focus on Castile and engage with that literary context more extensively. Moreover, in the fifteenth century Castile was the only Christian realm on the Peninsula bordering Granada and thus it had the most direct contact with the last Islamic political power in the peninsula. As such, it was the source of much of the literature from that period regarding interactions between Christians and Muslims on the frontier. Later, the territories of Granada were incorporated into Castile. Though not sealed off from other Christian Iberian states, Castile is the most directly involved region in the issues discussed here. Moreover, the imperial activities of Castile in the New World were often portrayed at the time as a kind of continuation of the recently effectuated Reconquest. New World encounters between Castilians and indigenous cultures

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<sup>13</sup> Anwar Chejne, *Islam and the West: The Moriscos, a Cultural and Social History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1983), 16.

formed part of a wider discourse, along with considerations of Muslims and Jews back in Europe, regarding the determination and formation of Spanish identity.<sup>14</sup> This discussion, however, will be included more as context than as a central piece of analysis, to show how imperial activities stimulated thought about self and other. Though again they cannot be absolutely separated, the focus here is on the effects of the loss of the old frontier not the encounter with a new one in the New World.

The nature of interaction between Christians and Muslims in Iberia in the medieval frontier period is a much studied subject, especially in recent years, and over time a number of important frameworks for understanding these relationships have developed. In the specific context of this project, by the fifteenth century Granada was overwhelmingly Muslim, so its dealings with internal religious minorities was relatively small.<sup>15</sup> In the Christian realms, however, significant minorities of Muslims and Jews continued to live their lives, though with technically inferior legal status, within these policies. Barriers remained between the different groups, though they were by no means impenetrable, that served to set the terms of interaction between the communities.

One of the most enduring and influential conceptions of this practice is known as *convivencia*, a term coined by Américo Castro meaning, roughly, "living together." It was meant to describe a period in the medieval Iberian past when Christians, Muslims and Jews lived together in a state of relative tolerance.<sup>16</sup> Speaking specifically of Muslims and Jews under Christian rule religious minorities were generally allowed to practice their faith and participate in economic life, though their

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<sup>14</sup> Max Harris, *Aztecs, Moors and Christians: Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000); Karen B. Graubart, "De qadis y caciques," *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Études Andines* 37, no. 1 (2008): 2.

<sup>15</sup> L.P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain: 1250 to 1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 14.

<sup>16</sup> Johnathan Ray, "Beyond Tolerance and Persecution: Reassessing our Approach to Medieval 'Convivencia'," *Jewish Social Studies, New Series* 11, no.2 (2005): 5.

legal status was officially inferior to that of Christians.<sup>17</sup> Beyond legal toleration, however, stood a continuous interaction between adherents of the three Iberian faiths. Castro held that this phenomenon was the defining factor in the formation Spanish culture, which grew out of this pluralistic history.<sup>18</sup>

Though the idea of *convivencia* still has influence, much recent work has laid aside this framework as overly simplistic.<sup>19</sup> David Nirenberg revealed a very different conception of the period, noting how in fact violence, though it sounds paradoxical, was stabilizing and helped to define and reiterate the boundaries which regulated the interaction of the groups.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, although peaceful relations could indeed endure for long periods, violence against religious minorities could break out unpredictably. A key component of new ways for approaching interfaith relations in Iberia is to deemphasise overarching frameworks and focus instead on more specific local contexts.<sup>21</sup>

Attending this idea is the notion of "acculturation without assimilation," describing the ways in which different cultural groups can interact with, influence and borrow from one another while nonetheless remaining distinct.<sup>22</sup> In a specifically Castilian context, it is used to explain how so many cultural influences from Iberian Islamic traditions were incorporated into Castilian practice, while at the same time not bringing about a full meeting and mixing of cultures. Despite the blurring and even crossing of boundaries at times, essential differences between the three major faith groups remained. Both of these concepts underscore the importance that socially

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<sup>17</sup> Richard Fletcher, *Moorish Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 137.

<sup>18</sup> Fuchs and Liang, "A Forgotten Empire," 12-13.

<sup>19</sup> Liang et al., "The Spain North Africa Project," 19.

<sup>20</sup> David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> Liang et. al, "The Spain North Africa Project," 19.

<sup>22</sup> Angus MacKay, "Ballad and Frontier in Late Medieval Spain," in *Love Religion and Politics in Fifteenth Century Spain*, ed. Ian MacPherson and Angus MacKay (Leiden: Brill, 1998): 14.

constructed and negotiated boundaries had in ordering the relationships among the faiths, or laws, in the peninsula.

Additionally, this project uses religious designations to differentiate between different groups, but some attention must be given to what these identifying terms mean in this context. Though religion was not the only means of identifying people and religious barriers were not insurmountable, they were hugely significant, particularly in the texts which are studied here.<sup>23</sup> These designations refer, in everyday contact and certainly among significant portions of the rural and less literate sectors of the population, to sets of practices rather than necessarily official, orthodox beliefs. It was through action and custom that people demonstrated their religious identity, well into the sixteenth century and beyond in many areas. Castile is no exception. Even if, however, people may not have been well or in some cases even at all versed in the official beliefs of Christianity, they were at least aware of religious distinctions and identities when enacted through practice.<sup>24</sup> An important qualification here, though, is that scholars like Stuart B. Schwartz have noted a degree of religious relativism among Castilians, expressed in the statement "each person can be saved according to his or her own law."<sup>25</sup> This sentiment does not however mean that the social significance of boundaries can be discounted. Though not insignificant, this degree of relativism was by no means ubiquitous.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, elites tended to have access to more religious instruction and a greater sense of beliefs as well as practices, and most of our perspectives come from such people.<sup>27</sup> But, for

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<sup>23</sup> Liang et. al, "The Spain North Africa Project,"20.

<sup>24</sup> Henry Kamen, *Imagining Spain: Historical Myth and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 77.

<sup>25</sup> Stuart B. Schwartz, *All Can be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 34.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>27</sup> Teofilo Ruiz, *Spanish Society 1400-1600*, (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), 232.

the most part, religious friction was not based on a kind of fundamentalism in the modern sense, but on more tangible concerns.

Despite this history however, a powerful line of historical argument holds that in the sixteenth-century Spain sought, in the aftermath of the reconquest and its move onto the stage of European powers, to reject and root out its Islamic cultural legacy. Instead, it would present itself as a pure Christian champion of faith as justification for its imperial mission to convert the New World, stand against Islam in the form of the Ottomans the Mediterranean, and confront heresy in Europe.<sup>28</sup> Some literary scholars strongly dispute this, as was mentioned before, arguing that the texts show a message of inclusion or at least remembrance. Moreover, closer examination shows that the ways in which Castilians chose to reject or embrace aspects of this legacy were more selective, with the situation and the agents involved greatly influencing their response. But what is agreed upon is that these years were marked by much concern over the definition and development of notions of the self against the "other." Literature often serves as an important representation of this process.<sup>29</sup>

The sixteenth century saw a number of literary developments, but one which has special significance for the expression of attitudes toward Iberian Islam is Maurophilia. This literary convention involves the portrayal of Iberian Muslims in a highly romanticized and positive light, assigning them chivalric traits and virtues. That does not mean, however, that every positive portrayal of Iberian Islam in the sixteenth century can be attributed to this genre. It is impossible to identify an exact moment when Maurophilia emerged, but one of the earliest and most often cited examples is *La Historia del Abencerraje y la Hermosa Jarifa*, which dates from

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<sup>28</sup> Fletcher, *Moorish Spain*, 168.

<sup>29</sup> Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam and European Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4.

around the year 1560. Maurophilia did not really gain strength as a genre, however, until later in the century.<sup>30</sup>

To simplify greatly, one characteristic which differentiates Maurophilia from previous positive depictions of Muslims is its attention to magnificent descriptions, in fact celebrations, of Islamic aesthetics. Muslims here are often gorgeously attired and their story plays out in beautiful and slightly exotic settings. This kind of scene description was not common in more traditional forms, and especially earlier ballads, which tended to focus more on characters' actions and minimize background information. Another quality of Maurophilia is that the terms of interaction between Muslims and Christians are very often peaceful and amicable, whereas before conflict was a frequent means by which they came together. Though characters from different faiths may have respected one another before, it was often respect as an adversary or political ally. Both of these developments have precedents in earlier literature, and not every work that contains a magnificently attired Muslim or a peaceful interaction can be considered part of the genre. But, the fact that traditional positive depictions remained popular and even more celebratory forms were in development gives rise to the consideration that problems with Islamic culture and practices did not necessarily lie with those practices in themselves.

### **Sources and Methods**

Returning to the discussion of sources, since the aim of this project is to gain a better understanding of Castilian textual attitudes toward Iberian Islam and Muslims as the fifteenth century moves into the sixteenth, I will principally examine literature

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<sup>30</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 6.

and historical texts with literary elements in order to discern what attitudes toward Islam and Muslims in Iberia are displayed in them. Supplementing them will be other documents from the period which relate these sources to more utilitarian texts whose depictions of Iberian Islam may not be as consciously shaped for literary purposes. However, since such a reading would be impossible without an understanding of the historical context, secondary scholarship has been used to lay out the relevant historical developments and background. Retelling the history of these years is not the objective of this project, but rather it is to look at historical developments and literary ones together. Within these texts, I look at the manner in which Islamic culture and Muslim people are represented and portrayed, how they are referred to, the situations in which they are found, and the ways in which they relate with Christian characters to gain insight into how their authors viewed them and conceived of them in their work.

The primary sources consist of several types. First among these, and the thing which first drew me into this project, are the famous ballads, or romances. Ballads have many subjects, but the ones studied in this project depict episodes from Spain's history, the Reconquest, and the frontier. It is in these three categories that representations of Islam and Muslims are most often found. Ballads rose to popularity in the fifteenth century and continued to be composed and reworked into the sixteenth, when they also were influenced by new literary trends. As a result, they became longer, more sophisticated and occasionally adorned with classical elements.<sup>31</sup> Ballads also are by no means expressions of mere fantasy; as Angus MacKay and others have shown in the fifteenth century they often are, if not wholly

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<sup>31</sup> Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 256-7.

accurate, then at least based on and reflective of real events and situations.<sup>32</sup>

According to Ramon Menéndez Pidal, this realism also consists of "conceiving the poetic ideal very close to reality."<sup>33</sup> It is important to note that they are frustratingly difficult to date and before the sixteenth century are nearly all anonymous. This is because the oldest were originally circulated orally long before being printed and are frequently found in several variations.

Nonetheless, there are some things which can be deduced about their authorships.<sup>34</sup> In the fifteenth century and earlier, they were often the products of poets and musicians whose work grew out the oral culture of earlier epic traditions. Ballads frequently were fragments extracted from those long epics, focusing in on scenes of particular dramatic impact.<sup>35</sup> The exact process of how this was done is open to debate. However, it is generally agreed that ballads initially had a single redactor or composer who either arranged the ballad from an epic fragment or in the case of ballads about Castilian politics or events on the frontier created a new one based on more recent events.<sup>36</sup> Key in the process were figures known as *juglars*. *Juglars* were, so to speak, professional entertainers. They had a large repertoire of acts with which to amuse their audience, among which were ballads. Since before the middle of the fifteenth-century ballads were a largely popular art form, their compositions were geared to the popular taste. After all, a *juglar's* livelihood depended on the success of his act. Clearly, these performers were situated in an oral tradition, as they had access to a trove of stories and songs on which they based their

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<sup>32</sup> Angus McKay, "Los Romances Fronterizos como Fuente Histórica," in *Relaciones exteriores del Reino de Granada. IV Coloquio de Historia Medieval Andaluza*, ed. Cristina Seguro Grafiño (Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 1998): 283.

<sup>33</sup> Juan Luis Alborg, *Historia de la literatura española*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Editorial Gredos: 1972), 21.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 1-23.

<sup>35</sup> Alborg, *Historia de literatura española*, 403.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 408-409.

presentations.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the fact that some appear to have used written notes for reference, though not while performing, shows that at least some were literate. Still, ballads were fundamentally an oral art form. They were not at this time read, but sung or recited publicly.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover not all ballads were inspired by historical events since some of them were composed, perhaps under the commission of important military and political figures, to spread news of important deeds or political messages. This is especially true of ballads about the fifteenth century frontier, and also those with celebrating or attacking participants in Castile's frequent late medieval civil wars.<sup>39</sup> These were evidently intended to get their message to the general ballad listening public. A consequence of this oral transmission however is that just as ballads could reach a wide audience, they could also be modified by a wide array of people. Once the initial composer created his work, it was essentially out of his control and could be and often was altered.<sup>40</sup> This helps to account for the many versions of ballads which exist today. Thus the problem of identifying the author of a work is not only that the name is not known, but also that for much what has come down to us from the early years today, there may not be a single author responsible for ballad in its entirety.<sup>41</sup>

The late fifteenth and early sixteenth century saw major changes for the ballad for two reasons. One is that they came to be appreciated by "high culture." Indeed, so-called court poets during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella tried their hand at altering existing ballads by incorporating renaissance influences.<sup>42</sup> Another

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<sup>37</sup> Felipe B. Pedraza Jiménez and Milagros Rodríguez Cáceres eds., *Manual de literatura española*, vol. 1 (Tafalla, Spain: Cénlit Ediciones, 1981), 76.

<sup>38</sup> Alan Deyermond, *Edad Media*, ed. Francisco Rico, vol. 1, *Historia y crítica de la literatura española*, (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1980), 39.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 16-17.

<sup>40</sup> Alborg, *Historia de la literatura española*, 408-409.

<sup>41</sup> Felipe B. Pedraza Jiménez and Milagros Rodríguez Cáceres eds., *Manual de literatura española*, vol. 1 (Tafalla, Spain: Cénlit Ediciones, 1981), 74.

<sup>42</sup> Alborg, *Historia de la literatura*, 517.

characteristic of their intervention is a trend for shortening and streamlining ballads which would last into the sixteenth century. These poets likely came from the class of *letrados*, university educated men who were coming into prominence in fifteenth-century Castile.<sup>43</sup> Ferdinand and Isabella especially encouraged these men and the university education they received.<sup>44</sup> They were not exclusively poets, but also often had government or ecclesiastical careers as well. As we will see when authors are named in the next century, writers often served as diplomats, administrators or soldiers in addition to their literary endeavours. The second change is the advent of printed ballads. These circulated at first on *pliegos sueltos*, unbound broadsheets which could be made in large numbers and sold cheaply. Even in print, ballads remained a popular art form.<sup>45</sup> Printing represented more than just a change in medium of distribution however. It has been suggested that printers, in order to arrange the ballads within the space they had available, had some of them altered.<sup>46</sup>

In the sixteenth-century incorporation of renaissance and classical influences into the traditional form of the ballads continued.<sup>47</sup> This period also saw the further expansion of printing, until soon not only *pliegos sueltos*, but also substantial bound volumes were produced.<sup>48</sup> These books often combined ballads drawn from older traditions along with newer works by the compiler of the collection. Unlike the fifteenth century, however, when the wildly popular and widely disseminated ballads were often a way to spread news from the frontier, these later ones seldom deal with "current events" in that way. The later versions nonetheless provide an important link

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<sup>43</sup> Pedraza Jiménez and Rodríguez Cáceres, *Manual de literatura española*, 72.

<sup>44</sup> B. W. Ife, "The Literary Impact of the New World: Columbus to Carrizales," *Journal of the Institute of Romance Studies*, no. 3 (1994-95), 66.

<sup>45</sup> Pedraza Jiménez and Rodríguez Cáceres, *Manual de literatura española*, 563.

<sup>46</sup> Deyermond, *Edad Media*, 254.

<sup>47</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 14.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

between two periods, helping to demonstrate how attitudes and representations changed within this genre.

Other sources are chronicles and, later, more sophisticated histories of the Morisco revolt of 1568-71. These, since there are fewer examples and more is known about their authorship, will be considered in more detail as they arise. Therefore, only a few general comments will be made here. Those used in this project come mostly from the fifteenth century. This period saw several developments in the composition of Castilian chronicles. One such is that authorship passed from royal chancelleries focused on recording the events of a given reign. Many authors, often *letrados*, wrote their own accounts<sup>49</sup>. Moreover, there was a new fashion for writing about the lives and deeds of individuals, mixing chronicle with biography.<sup>50</sup> Often, these were commissioned or composed by prominent individuals and their supporters to reflect the image of themselves and of their deeds which they desired to promote. The histories, coming from the mid sixteenth century, display like the ballads the influence of the Renaissance and classical traditions.<sup>51</sup>

For the purposes of this project, these works contain narratives in which Iberian Islam and Muslims are portrayed by their authors. They are also designed to tell stories. Several of them are composed with literary considerations in mind, such as *Guerra de Granada* by Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, whose historical work is also shown to contain a literary structure.<sup>52</sup> Chronicles and histories therefore have value not only in their relation history, but also as a source of representations of peninsular Islam in addition to the ballads.

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<sup>49</sup> Pedraza Jiménez and Rodríguez Cáceres, *Manual de literatura española*, 753.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 754.

<sup>51</sup> Alborg, *Historia de la literatura*, 991.

<sup>52</sup> Bernardo Blanco-González, introduction to *Guerra de Granada*, by Diego Hurtado de Mendoza (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1970): 66

One more point which needs to be addressed about these works is their audience. As we have seen, ballads had a substantial audience which eventually included all levels of society. Being part of an oral tradition, even after the advent of printed ballads, ballads did not require their audience to be literate. Even so, though the rate is low by today's standards, literacy was not rare in sixteenth century Castile. Most of the data which points to literacy rates comes from near the end of our period, beginning in the mid sixteenth century. Often, it comes from Inquisition records. Essentially, the records suggest that rates of at least basic literacy ranged from a quarter to more than a half of the male population, increasing over the course of the sixteenth century.<sup>53</sup> Rates in urban areas were highest, but literate rural dwellers were found as well. With numbers this significant, although elites likely had much higher rates, literacy was by no means limited to a select few. People from all classes claim to be able to read in the Inquisition sources.<sup>54</sup> This is perhaps attributable to the emphasis placed on developing primary and secondary education by Ferdinand and Isabella, in order to prepare students for university study.<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, from 1570 the Inquisition began to collect data on book ownership for those who came before the tribunal. Many people, even low status ones, reported owning at least a few books. And given the fact that books were often resold, it is possible that at other times they had access to different titles.<sup>56</sup> The most frequent types recorded were often devotional literature, and presses spent a good deal of time with this, though ballads and other poetry were also popular.<sup>57</sup> So, although the chronicles and histories studied here were likely not "mass market," access would not

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<sup>53</sup> Sara T. Nalle, "Literacy and Culture in Early Modern Castile," *Past & Present*, no. 125 (1989), 66-70.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>55</sup> Ife, "The Literary Impact of the New World," 66.

<sup>56</sup> Nalle, "Literacy and Culture," 78-79.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

have been restricted to only an elite few. Indeed, scholars note that much early Castilian literature was intended to be accessible to a fairly general audience.<sup>58</sup>

One type of source which I have not engaged with directly from original documents are theological works which deal with Islam as a religion. Sixteenth century documents produced mostly by Church and sometimes government officials relating to the state of the conversion and assimilation of Moriscos, the prospects of success in that endeavour, and the methods of bringing conversion about are also not studied directly. This discussion and debate, it is true, has significant influence on what ended up happening to the Moriscos and their culture. I survey these ideas through the medium of secondary sources, but the texts in which they are found most often talk about rather than portray Muslims. I am more focused on how Iberian Islam and Muslims are represented in sources or what can be revealed by looking at portrayals within a given work rather than what is simply stated outright.

Another limitation in the scope of the sources is that most of them are concerned with Granada and the former frontier area. This is less true of the ballads, whose subject matter can range all over the peninsula and beyond. However, the situations in which Muslims and Islam are most often portrayed are in the context of a frontier where battles, diplomacy and meetings among social equals can take place. *Mudéjars* and, until the revolt, humbler Moriscos are much less present, meaning that the texts also tend to favor people higher on the social scale. The perspective of Iberian Islam is on the whole one of its higher culture. These geographic and social status limitations in the sources no doubt influence the image which they will provide, but they also are among the richest sources so it is necessary to work with them.

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<sup>58</sup> Alborg, *Historia de la literatura*, 18.

## Chapter Summary

The analysis of the sources discussed above unfolds in three chapters. In the first chapter, the focus is placed on the fifteenth century, a time of both frontier warfare and more peaceful engagement as well. The chapter's scope extends the final conquest of Granada in 1492. It examines the ambivalent, and often positive, portrayals of Muslims in fifteenth-century texts, and identifies many of the boundaries that governed the interactions between Christians and Muslims. It argues that these boundaries, which reflect many of those in contemporary life, have the potential to both divide and unite Christian and Muslim characters. This potential is a major contributing factor to why these depictions can be so positive.

The second chapter looks at the immediate aftermath of the fall of Granada and the quick collapse of the surrender agreements into coercion, rebellion, and forced conversion. The chapter continues through roughly the reign of Charles V, when it also discusses the many changes which Castile underwent as it became the center of a world empire. It furthermore compares the literary output of this period with that of the frontier era, looking for ways in which the end of the frontier had changed representations of Iberian Islam. This change is seen both in terms of the portrayals found and, even more, in their relationship with the historical context. Therefore, the chapter observes the many ways in which textual depictions and historical conditions diverge when compared with pre-1492 work. The chapter argues that much of the positive literature, since its settings remained in the past, effectively added a new boundary, that of time, which placed its engagement with Iberian Islam at a temporal distance. These writers remained enthusiastic about depicting the Islamic legacy on

the peninsula, but this enthusiasm did not have to extend to the prospects for its future.

The third chapter opens, roughly, with the ascension of Philip II and afterwards contains a discussion of some of the new types of literature emerging at this time. Then it looks at the increasingly repressive policies enacted by the government against Islamic cultural practices among the Moriscos in an attempt to assimilate them, something that was instrumental in inducing these subjects to revolt. Accounts of this rebellion are examined to see how the intervening developments in Castile, the loss of the old frontier, and other attendant boundaries, had impacted the evolution of attitudes toward contemporary Islam in the peninsula. It shows just how dependent positive textual attitudes were on those historical boundaries which, after the fall of Granada, had been disrupted in real life. Without them even sympathetic writers, when they engage with Iberian Islam in the present, display doubts as to its continued place in the peninsula.

This project looks at literary and historical developments so as to gain a better understanding of attitudes held by Castilians toward Islam and Muslims in Iberia and to understand their evolution in the context of a time of great historical change. When looked at separately, the literature on one hand and historical developments on the other seem at times contradictory. Nonetheless, these did exist at the same time within the same society, and looking only at one or the other, or treating them as separate, leaves an incomplete picture of the many ways in which Castilians thought about this long lived and often contentious issue. In the aftermath of the conquest of Granada, many of the boundaries which had governed the interactions between Christians and Muslims were erased or transformed. This change, coupled with other

influences both within Castile and from abroad, prompted intense consideration of Castile's historical engagement with Islam and its contemporary relevance.

## Chapter 1: Bounded Interaction: Christians and Muslims in Literature from the Fifteenth Century Frontier

By the fifteenth century, the Iberian Peninsula had been divided between Christian and Islamic states for seven hundred years. Since the thirteenth century, when Christian forces overran most of Andalusia, the last remaining of these Islamic states was found in the mountainous southeast. Centered around the city of Granada this small but densely populated realm was ruled, often tumultuously, by the Nasrid dynasty. Meanwhile the Kingdom of Castile, the main beneficiary of those thirteenth century conquests, had risen to become the largest and most powerful of the Christian states. It dominated the center of the peninsular landmass and now possessed the only land frontier with the Nasrid realm.

This border zone was much more than a simple line on a map and had remained fairly stable for over a century despite a few Castilian gains during periodic conflict. Interaction across the frontier, however, was much more varied than conflict alone. Moreover Muslims and Christians did not only interact across the frontier, but lived in proximity to one another on the same side as well. Throughout Castile communities of *Mudéjars*, Muslims who remained even after Christian forces conquered surrounding territory, could be found. Though relations among the groups could be tense, even violent, they were also familiar. The phenomenon of *convivencia*, describes the way in which Christians and Muslims, as well as Jews, were able to live alongside each other in relative peace. *Convivencia* was accompanied by "acculturation without assimilation," whereby different religious groups became accustomed to each other while nonetheless remaining distinct. Both occurred over long centuries of contact. A crucial corollary to coexistence, however, was the maintenance of boundaries between groups. These boundaries were not static

or impenetrable by any means, yet they still allowed for people to know "where they stood" in situations where religious difference could be accommodated, but rarely forgotten.

This chapter examines the portrayal of Iberian Muslims and peninsular Islamic civilization in fifteenth century Castilian texts, and the nature and terms of their relationships and interactions with Christians. Despite the underlying tension of religious difference and sometimes religious conflict, writers are often ambivalent, and at times quite positive, in their portrayals of Iberian Muslims. As will be demonstrated, however, these texts are firmly grounded in the world they describe. This does not mean that every detail is correct and every character realistic, but nonetheless the textual relationship of Christian and Muslim is governed by boundaries in the same way that real relationships were navigated. It will also examine the boundaries which could define and limit, but also manage and facilitate the interactions between them. Care will be taken to maintain some distinction between more general cultural attitudes and specific policies or decisions. These individual decisions may be in response to a specific event or be issued in a particular context, so looking at portrayal over a long period will reveal continuities that survive momentary disruptions.

My argument focuses less on the events described in the text and more on the ways in which the Iberian Muslims and Islam are depicted. This emphasis will show how boundaries present in the text and closely bound with real experience determine these portrayals. Though boundaries divide, they also define. Each individual has a "place" from which they can understand themselves, and see a corresponding reflection in the distinct yet well-known "other." I argue that the intimate connection between this frontier society and its texts, and the boundaries that run through both,

explain how Castilians writers could be so ambivalent about the familiar "other" of Islam, across their frontier and even in their midst. The capacity to understand Muslims and their culture as "other" is consistently undercut by similarities, instances where Castilians are found on the same side of a boundary with Muslims rather than across it.

### **Frontier and Society**

Throughout the former frontier zone between Castile and Nasrid Granada hilltops are still crowned with the remains of *atalayas*, or watchtowers. Today these are picturesque monuments, but they were designed to provide warning of raids and incursions from hostile forces, allowing time for the mobilization of countermeasures. In the fifteenth century, with Castile distracted by internal dissention and international disputes elsewhere, most warfare along this frontier was limited to raids and counter raids, with the occasional seizure of a fortress or town. Over time, this developed into something of a routine. Both sides, adapting to each other, shared similar tactics and equipment. Though Granada was often forced to pay tribute to the Castilian kings and accept a nominal vassal status, it remained an independent political force.

There were many things, however, that the *atalayas* did not keep watch for. Common aesthetic sensibilities and social customs could be found on both sides of the border. In times of relative peace, trade and merchants flowed back and forth, along with diplomatic missions and envoys. By now there were even officials, *alcaldes entre moros y cristianos*, whose role it was to try to find a just and peaceful solution to cross border disputes. The creation of this position represents an attempt to limit the violence of raids and counter raids which, as personal vendettas, continued even in

times of official peace.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, potential adversaries were not found only across the frontier, as border towns and border lords could often find themselves at odds with others on their own side or the distant royal government. People on both sides of the frontier often knew each other, in some cases even building personal relationships.

Though the frontier was often a world apart, interaction was not limited to that confined area. The same sharing of material cultural elements could be found throughout Castile, especially in elite circles where "Moorish" styles often set the standard for luxury.<sup>2</sup> Political refugees in disfavor at home often could find safety at the court of the other realm, and frequently were able to fit in quite well. After so many years of contact, the people were not strangers to each other nor were their respective lands so strange. On a more serious note, these realms met on the battlefield not only as adversaries but as allies. Each was involved at various times in the internal conflicts of the other and also combined against external rivals, whether they were the other states of either religion in Iberia or Islamic ones in North Africa.

Castile's communities of *Mudéjars*, moreover, retained their own distinctive culture, laws and traditions. Though they in many ways remained distinct they did not, however, form a group completely apart. It is true that under the law they faced many restrictions and discriminatory regulations, but it is also important to emphasize that these written statutes are not always reflective of lived experience.<sup>3</sup> *Mudéjars* interacted regularly with wider society, sometimes playing important economic roles. Interaction occurred on a more social level as well, and accounts even exist of Christians bringing Muslim friends to Mass and hiring *Mudéjar* performers to enliven

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<sup>1</sup> Juan de Mata Carriazo, "La Guerra de los Moriscos vista desde una plaza fronteriza," in *En la frontera de Granada*. (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1971): 87.

<sup>2</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Fletcher, *Moorish Spain*, 143.

long church ceremonies.<sup>4</sup> Finally, though these Castilian groups made up only a small portion of the population, in some Christian ruled areas of the peninsula, notably in the region of Murcia and in the Crown of Aragon, they were a significant presence.

Despite these interactions, we cannot paint an idyllic picture of the interactions between Christians and Muslims in Iberia. Even if members of the respective groups could often get along, important differences remained. Key among these differences was religion, which in this time meant not just personal belief but also a whole set of attendant cultural practices. Additionally, despite many instances of peaceful interaction, war and conflict remained a common way for Christians and Muslims to interact on the frontier. Internally, the fifteenth century saw several attempts, though inconsistent and fragmented, to impose restrictions on the *Mudéjar* population and the practice of their Islamic religion and culture in Castile.<sup>5</sup>

As the fifteenth century wore on, a number of factors came together to hasten the final demise of Islamic state power in Iberia. The marriage of Isabella of Castile to Ferdinand of Aragon united two significant Christian realms in the peninsula, removing a political division which Granada was frequently able to exploit in its own diplomatic manoeuvrings. Meanwhile, Islamic advances in the eastern Mediterranean refocused attention on high stakes religious conflict. In 1481, Christian led forces mainly from Castile began an almost continuously sustained ten year assault on the Emirate of Granada. Nasrid territory was finally reduced to only the city of Granada itself which finally surrendered in early 1492.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 143.

<sup>5</sup> O'Callaghan, *Medieval Spain*, 607.

## Sources

A number of textual sources from the period were used to develop this chapter, but most fall into the categories of either ballads or chronicles. The former are among the most well known examples of Spanish poetry, famed for their emotional impact and focus on personal, human concerns.<sup>6</sup> Among these is a subgroup called *fronterizo* ballads, which recount events in the borderlands and deal extensively with Iberian Muslims and their interactions with Christians. Ballads were produced for several centuries, beginning as an oral tradition by at the latest the fourteenth century. They have undergone many alterations over time and can frequently be found in several versions. I have therefore utilized those which scholars of the subject generally agree originated in the fifteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Chronicles, likewise, contain strong literary elements. They are not, and were not intended to be, what we would now call an objective account. Rather, the ones I examined were designed to promote the people whose lives and deeds they describe. Their subjects become not just historical actors, but protagonists in a story about their own virtues and accomplishments. Some additional sources were also utilized, such as civil records regarding dealings with peninsular Muslims and reports from officials on the frontier to the court, supplementing the more literary sources with texts whose purpose was more prosaic.

From these texts emerge portrayals of Muslims which betray many centuries of contact and interaction. Collectively or individually, they rarely are stock characters or caricatures serving as foils for a Castilian protagonist. Indeed, many

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<sup>6</sup> Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Flor Nueva de Romances Viejos* (Madrid: 1928).

<sup>7</sup> Menéndez Pidal, *Flor Nueva de Romances Viejos*; Smith, *Spanish Ballads*; Roger Wright ed., *Spanish Ballads* (Warminster, UK, Aris & Phillips, 1987); Agustin Duran ed., *Romancero General*, vol. 10, *Biblioteca de autores españoles* (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1945).

times in ballads Muslims provide the viewpoint themselves. Iberian Muslims are not strangers, nor are they monsters, but rather familiar and in many ways even quite similar people. Interacting with them, whether peacefully or in battle, is a natural activity. Authors show a marked degree of understanding and respect toward Muslims and are able to, as many ballad scholars note, find emotional sympathy with them as shared humanity trumps more partisan concerns of winning and losing.<sup>8</sup> But, even more than this, authors show Iberian Muslims as actors with interests and motivations of their own and seem to see where "the other side" (though divisions were often much more complicated) is coming from. Although conflict remained an important aspect of the relationship, the texts view this conflict, and its participants, in a much more complex and nuanced way than us vs. them or good vs. evil.

Of course, there is no single portrayal of the Iberian Islam or Muslims that is universal in the texts studied. Both as individuals and as a culture Muslims appear in so many contexts and situations that their description and textual role can vary quite greatly. This is by no mean an exhaustive study of every way a Muslim in fifteenth century literature could be described, nor an exhaustive study of real life attitudes. Much of the material is set in a frontier setting, with much less attention to *Mudéjar* communities deeper in the realm. Moreover, the vast majority of the literature's subjects are situated in the upper reaches of society. However, the texts do show that authors could and did show sympathetic, proactive Muslims based in the reality of fifteenth century experience.<sup>9</sup> Realism does not require that every passage describe an historical event, but rather that a depiction, given contemporary conditions, is plausible either in their direct content or as reflections of authorial sentiment. The fact that authors are portraying rather than just describing how Christians interact with

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<sup>8</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 42.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 42.

both Iberian Muslims and their culture is a very important aspect of these texts.

Authors are depicting as well as simply telling their understanding of Iberian Islam and their relationship to it.

But, for all that, sympathy, respect and understanding do not equal sameness. Boundaries and differences are, in fact, one of the key factors which govern the relationships between Granadans and Castilians in the text. Most notably among these is, unsurprisingly, the barrier of faith, but there are other important ones as well. These barriers are not impenetrable, nor are they only found between Muslims and Christians. However, they do give Muslims and Christians their respective places from which they can interact and understand one another. Without them, the relationship dynamic built up over the centuries, and reflected in the text, would not exist. Though they often meet, in the text they do not transcend their differences altogether. However, whether at peace or at war, whether in praise or condemnation, and whether highlighting similarities or illuminating boundaries the moors in the text are taken from life. The Castilian writers and poets are not constructing a fictional view of Muslims, but are rather writing about how they understand them and their relation to them.

### **Culture, Appreciation, and Inclusion**

Much of the Castilian literature surveyed is concerned, in one way or another, with warfare and conflict between Muslims and Christians. This confrontation of course provides great emotional and dramatic potential for ballads. In chronicles meanwhile war is the premier venue for the subjects, or heroes, to perform great deeds. Christians and Muslims, however, exchanged much more than physical blows

and met in ways other than on the field of battle. Their longest and most sustained interaction may have been a cultural one, and this too shows up in the texts. In fact the presence of this cultural interaction, despite not being the main focus of most texts, helps to underscore the degree of contact between the religious groups. No specific effort on the part of the author is required for evidence of cultural affinity to manifest itself. Writers display a marked degree of appreciation for the culture, aesthetic sense and perceived wealth of their Muslim neighbors.

This appreciation is shaded, however, with realism and restraint in authorial depiction of Iberian Muslims that indicates that the texts surveyed remain connected with real life experience. With this appreciation in mind, texts can frequently envision victory over Islamic rule in Granada and elsewhere not as an opportunity to expel its culture and followers from the land, but to bring about their integration into the realm. True, this occurs in the aftermath of military victory, and often also assumes eventual conversion to Christianity, so this inclusion would occur on Castilian terms. Nonetheless, victory over Granada is not conceived of as equivalent to its destruction.

In later centuries, influenced by the *Maurophilia* phenomenon, Castilian authors peppered their texts with descriptions of the sumptuous, luxurious lifestyle lived by Iberian Muslims, especially the nobility. They often appear bedecked in fine clothes and dwelling in a beautiful realm, performing deeds which seem ripped out of the pages of chivalric romance.<sup>10</sup> But returning to the time under consideration, although echoes of what we might now call "oriental" tropes occasionally appear, in general the engagement with culture is in a much more subtle and seemingly more authentic way. Some of this may be simply stylistic, as many ballad scholars note

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<sup>10</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 73.

that these earlier compositions are famously concise, focusing on action instead of scene setting.<sup>11</sup> Chroniclers, having the luxury of more space to write, do include such description, though it is not too common and is hardly restricted to Muslims. This does not mean that fifteenth century authors do not engage with culture, but for them it is rarely singled out as an exotic fantasy.

For the Castilian writers whose works appear in this project, Muslims and their Emirate of Granada did indeed appear quite wealthy. Frequently, its rulers were able to pay off Castilian armies to avoid further conflict. In the fifteenth century ballad "Abenámar, Abenámar," King Juan II (reigned 1406-454) leads a military expedition to Granada and, when the action starts, has just come within sight of the city. After negotiations fail, Juan launches an attack, and his forces do quite well. Dismayed, the emir of Granada proposes terms and King Juan agrees to lead his army away in return for three carts of gold and the promise of more.<sup>12</sup> In fact material gain of this kind was the objective, rather than destruction or conquest, of many forays from both sides.

Even without direct confrontation, Granada could be a source of rich gifts in the context of diplomacy or friendship. Juan's successor, King Enrique IV (reigned 1454-1474), found himself the recipient of such presents later in the fifteenth century, according to his chronicler and chaplain Diego Enríquez del Castillo.<sup>13</sup> Enrique was a contentious figure, and his reign saw much internal discontent. Castillo was a firm supporter and certainly that colors his account, but he was also not an uncritical

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<sup>11</sup> Menéndez Pidal, *Flor Nueva de Romances Viejos*, 28.

<sup>12</sup> Roger Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 106.

<sup>13</sup> Diego Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, ed. Aurelliano Sánchez Martín, (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1994): 209, 325.

observer.<sup>14</sup> His limited criticism, however, does not extend to accepting gifts from Granada.

Granada's wealth, however, was not manifested in silks or gold or jewels adorning the persons and palaces of exotic moors, but in one of its real sources, the land.<sup>15</sup> Densely populated and with a shortage of fertile land, Granada employed sophisticated agricultural techniques to make the best of the situation and achieved much higher yields than under-populated Castile, and the difference showed.<sup>16</sup> What impressed the writers most is not glitz and glamour, but the prosperity of Granada's towns and their surrounding countryside, describing their well kept "vineyards and gardens and olive groves" with as much relish as their presents and precious metals.<sup>17</sup> Even as he directs a Castilian raid against the area in the 1430's, the *Adelantado* Diego de Ribera reports to King Juan that the Granadan frontier town of Íllora is "very well situated," surrounded by "fields of grain and vineyards and irrigated gardens, which in this place were as beautiful as I have ever seen."<sup>18</sup> Commanders like de Ribera may have considered it in their best interest to report such wealth since, as he observes this scene, his troops are beginning to loot and burn those fields and vineyards. The *Adelantado* has thus delivered a major blow to a very wealthy area of the rival state. Still, demonstration of Granada's prosperity is not just a literary device meant to please the senses and set an exotic scene. The writers are impressed, but not mystified or dazzled. The wealth that they see is a very practical kind of wealth.

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<sup>14</sup> Cayetano Rosell, Introduction to *Crónica de los Reyes de Castilla*, ed Cayetano Rosell, vol. 70, *Biblioteca de autores españoles* (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1953): vii.

<sup>15</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 13.

<sup>16</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society*, 102.

<sup>17</sup> Diego Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, 153: "...viñas y huertas y olivares..."

<sup>18</sup> Juan de Mata Carriazo, ed. "Cartas de la frontera de Granada," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 45: "e llegamos a Ilorra, una villa vien fuerte e muy vien asentada,...talando panes e viñas e guertas, que en este logar avía tantos y tales e tan fermosos como yo nunca vi." An *Adelantado* was a kind of frontier governor and military leader.

Granadan styles and aesthetics still do, however, find their way into the text. Castilians in the fifteenth century appreciated these fashions, with one scholar saying that they formed the "gold standard of luxury."<sup>19</sup> The wedding celebration, and several subsequent festivals, put on by Miguel Lucas de Iranzo, for a time Constable of Castile and later governor of Jaén in the mid fifteenth century, included performances involving large numbers of people dressed up as Iberian Muslims.<sup>20</sup> These descriptions are found in a chronicle known as the *Hechos del Condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*. The author of this very positive account of the constable's deeds is not known for sure, but it is attributed to Pedro de Escavias, *alcaide* of the town of Andújar near Jaén and an ally of Iranzo.<sup>21</sup> The chronicler expands at length on the fine and brightly colored clothing, all in imitation of Moorish style, worn by these performers. They are "dressed in a very novel and splendid manner and, to give a better idea, in a very fine pale green cloth."<sup>22</sup> The celebrations go on for days, involving processions in the streets, religious ceremonies, and banquets for distinguished guests.

Iranzo was from relatively humble origins, but had risen to prominence under the reign of Juan II. He held on to this position for a time under the reign of Juan's successor Enrique IV. Enrique was famous, or infamous, for his allegedly excessive appreciation for Islamic culture. Due to the political machinations of his rivals, Iranzo was transferred to the frontier city of Jaén in 1459, to oversee the defense of its

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<sup>19</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Officially, the Constable of Castile was charged with commanding military forces in the absence of the king.

<sup>21</sup> Juan de Mata Carriazo, Introduction to *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, ed. Juan de Mata Carriazo (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1940), xxv.

<sup>22</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 48: "...vestidos de muy nueva y galana manera, es a saber, de un fino paño muy mucho menos que verde."

sector of the frontier.<sup>23</sup> Fresh from a career setback and with a humble past to live down, the Constable was very concerned with how he portrayed himself to the inhabitants of his new post.<sup>24</sup> He constructed a magnificent new palace whose design, like many Castilian edifices, included inspirations from Islamic architecture and interior decoration, along with less commonly noted French influences. Iranzo celebrated his wedding shortly after his reassignment to Jaén, and in numerous subsequent spectacles held under his patronage performances featuring Granadan costumes were a recurring feature. Even at Mass, he could appear "dressed in a riding tunic of fine yellow wool over a crimson doublet, and a blue cap whose hood was dyed with cochineal: all done up as a Morisco, and very nicely too."<sup>25</sup> Islamic cultural influences were evidently something he felt he could make use of in his own image making efforts.

Even the terse ballads cannot completely resist inserting some of these cultural and aesthetic elements. In an anonymous fifteenth-century ballad "Helo, Helo, por do Viene," inspired by tales of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, or El Cid, the foremost hero of Castilian epic, a Muslim ruler identified as Búcar rides up to the walls of Valencia. This was formerly a Muslim city which the Cid had taken and then ruled as his own in the eleventh century. Búcar, feeling the loss of the city acutely, declares that soon he will defeat the Cid, capture his family and return the city to Muslim control. The challenger wears Moroccan boots and holds a spear and shield. His only embellishment is golden spurs.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Teofilo Ruiz, "Elite and Popular Culture in Late Fifteenth Century Castilian Festivals," *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe*, ed. Barbara Hanawalt and Kathryn Reyerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994): 300.

<sup>24</sup> Devaney, "An Amiable Enmity," 227-9.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>26</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 81.

Christian protagonists also can be found described, though again in a concise and muted way, in fine gear of their own. An earlier episode of the Cid's life, in another fifteenth-century ballad "En Santa Gadea de Burgos," describes his exit from the court of King Alfonso of Castile after the monarch had exiled him. The Cid rides out with his knights, who "all carry a lance in their fist, the iron well polished, and they each carry shields, with bright red tassels."<sup>27</sup> This shared muted description does not mean that writers can see no significant difference in clothing styles or culture more generally. As we saw above with Iranzo, there is an identifiable Moorish style from the Castilian view. For people used to interacting with this culture and style however, it may not be much cause for comment to see it worn by those to whose culture it belongs. It may be luxurious, but it is not terribly strange or noteworthy.

Perhaps one of the most striking demonstrations of the admiration and affinity which Castilian authors could show toward aspects of Moorish culture can be found when King Juan II of Castile enters Granadan territory and lays his eyes upon the city itself. In the fifteenth-century ballad "Abenámar, Abenámar" recounting the events, the monarch is amazed by what he beholds once the city of Granada comes into view. Admiring the scene Juan asks his Muslim companion Abenámar, who will one day become king of Granada himself but is at the moment Juan's prisoner, "what castles are those? They are tall, and glistened." Abenámar answers saying "The Alhambra, my lord, and the other was the mosque, others still are the Alixares, marvellously wrought."<sup>28</sup> In a nod to the city's image of wealth, Abenámar notes also that the man who worked on the magnificent and beautiful adornments of the Alixares received a hundred gold coins every day for his effort. The city as a whole he calls "Granada the

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<sup>27</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 80: "...todos llevan lança en puño y el hierro acicalado, y llevan sendas adargas con borlas de colorado;..."

<sup>28</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, Vol. 16, 79: "¿que castillos son aquéllos? altos son, y reluzían.' El Alhambra era, Señor, y la otra a Mezquita, los otros los Alixares labrados a maravilla..."

noblest, of many knights and bowmen."<sup>29</sup> Enraptured Juan symbolically asks the city to "marry" him, thus joining his domain, offering the cities of Seville, Córdoba, Jerez and much more in exchange. The personified city politely but firmly rebuffs him, saying "I'm married, King Juan, I'm married, not a widow. The Moor who holds me would well defend me."<sup>30</sup> Undeterred, the king decides to attack instead but is eventually bought off, taking with him some of the city's wealth if not yet incorporating it into the realm. It is significant that the king's intention is to "marry" the city. Time and again, Castilians in literature display objectives that do not involve the destruction of Iberian Muslims or their civilization. Instead their intentions are to overcome, but also incorporate them. Granada is not necessarily to be wiped out, but "married."

In another fifteenth century ballad, this one set however in the eleventh century, King Fernando of León grants his daughter, Urraca, rule of the city of Zamora. Urraca had been quite upset because she had previously thought that she was to receive no inheritance at all. Without any property with which to support herself, she colorfully threatened her father saying that she would be forced, "like a fallen woman," to "give up my body to whoever fancied me, to Moors for money and to Christians for free."<sup>31</sup> This course of action, however, would not be necessary. The king notes in fact that Zamora has a *morería*, or "Moorish" quarter, which he describes as "a very precious thing."<sup>32</sup> This is somewhat ambiguous, as precious has in this case a prosaic, monetary connotation, but it shows the desirability of having, from a Christian view, *Mudéjars* within one's domain. Also, it is an example of

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 79: "la otra era Granada, Granada la noblescida, de muchos cavalleros y de gran ballestería."

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 79: " Casada so, el Rey Don Juan, casada so, que no biuda, el moro que a mí me tiene bien defenderme quería. "

<sup>31</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 90: "...como una mujer errada, y este mi cuerpo daría a quien se me antojara, a los moros por dineros y a los cristianos de gracia."

<sup>32</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 90: "...de la otra la Morería, una cosa muy preciada."

somewhat unsentimental realism, as these Muslim quarters could indeed be valuable centers of tax revenue and economic activity.<sup>33</sup> The attraction of *Mudéjars* to rulers was closely bound with the vulnerability of such minority communities to demands for revenue.<sup>34</sup>

Similarly the ever active Miguel Lucas de Iranzo, despite his many forays against Granada, does not express a desire to destroy the city and its people according to his chronicler's portrayal of him. Instead, he hopes "Granada might soon be joined with and in the embrace of these kingdoms of Castile and León." Indeed he wishes this not only for the small Emirate of Granada, but also that "the pagan kings across the sea (in North Africa)," might be "vassals and tributaries of the king our lord."<sup>35</sup> Part of this involves a desire to bring about their conversion however, so the chronicle does advocate a complete acceptance. In fact, towards promoting this goal of conversion, Iranzo stages a pageant in which "Moorish" visitors from Morocco, played by Christians in costume, visit Jaén at the request of their king and offer to convert to Christianity if the warriors of the city can defeat them in a *juego de cañas*. This game is itself a military practice exercise of Islamic origin. Iranzo plays his part and agrees, and Jaén's warriors emerge victorious. The visitors, accompanied by their erstwhile adversaries, then proceed to be baptized. This acceptance of Christianity is paired by another symbolic act, a rejection of Islam, when an effigy of Muhammad holding the Quran is thrown into a fountain. By accepting Christian baptism and rejecting Islam, the "Moroccan" visitors have, through their action, removed the major point of difference between them and the Christians of Jaén. The new converts, for

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<sup>33</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 64.

<sup>34</sup> John Boswell, *The Royal Treasure: Muslim Communities under the Crown of Aragon in the Fourteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 405.

<sup>35</sup> Mata Carriazo., *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 85: "...mas los reyes paganos de allende fueran y servían vasallos y tributarios de rey nuestro señor."

instance, did not need to change into "Christian" garments to symbolize conversion. The act of baptism was enough.<sup>36</sup>

Like at Iranzo's wedding, however, this pageant's actors are not real Muslims, but Christians dressed in costume. Interestingly, it is in these descriptions that the most sustained depictions of Islamic costume are found in this chronicle. When the chronicler describes actual Granadan nobles visiting Jaén on a diplomatic mission, though they are honored with a grand procession, banquets, and other demonstrations,<sup>37</sup> he takes no similar trouble to describe their attire, nor does he when describing Moorish hosts in battle.<sup>38</sup> The chroniclers of the lives of other figures display a similar pattern. It would come as no shock to readers that noble Granadans would be dressed in fine garments. There is, given the degree of familiarity, little need to affirm that. When the constable does so however, such as when he appears at mass in a "Morisco" garment, this showcases the image conscious constable's deliberate use of "high fashion," casting him as a man of taste, and given the information we receive from the description, great wealth.<sup>39</sup> In the case of actual elite Muslims, however, this could be an unnecessary detail given that their status was already affirmed by identifying them as the Alcaide de Cambil with his attendant "*caballeros*."

There are, however, other dynamics at work here as well. These festivities and spectacles were indeed a major element of urban life. They were a way through which those in power demonstrated that social order to their subjects, though the lower orders did not always interpret that message as intended.<sup>40</sup> For Iranzo, the use of Islamic culture was thus a major part of spectacles designed in part to display his

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<sup>36</sup> Devaney, "An Amiable Enmity," 239.

<sup>37</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 110.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 109.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 48.

<sup>40</sup> Ruiz, "Elite and Popular Culture," 298; Devaney, "An Amiable Enmity," 203.

authority. This was not uncontested, as his personal desire to seek distinction through military activities may have clashed with the desires of Jaén residents, who saw more profit and less risk in an economic rather than belligerent relationship with Granada.<sup>41</sup> A spectacle like that involving the "Moroccan" visitors could show that victory in war would bring about conversion, but not destruction, limiting the disruptions faced by Jaén residents.<sup>42</sup> This vision also implied, however, that the only barrier to inclusion for these new converts was the religious one which they had just left behind.

But, as we will see, conversion did not always mean acceptance. Despite the inclusive messages contained in the texts presented above, suspicion of converts grew in late fifteenth-century Castile. Even if one went through the ceremonies of conversion, they may not have been enough to wipe out the remnants of a previous religious allegiance. Religious identity was thus not necessarily a choice, but an inherited condition. A convert thus might maintain, or be perceived to maintain, allegiance to an ancestral faith. Iranzo's entertainments explicitly denied this view, but their message may have fallen on at least some deaf ears, since the constable was killed in 1471 during a riot targeting *conversos*, Christians whose recent ancestors had converted from Judaism or who themselves had converted. Still, the potential for inclusion shown in Iranzo's chronicle and in several fifteenth century ballads illustrates that such hostile views were not universal, but one of a range of opinions.

Castilian writers were familiar with and looked favorably upon the wealth and aesthetic sense of their adversaries, and hoped to bring about their inclusion within the realm. In their mind the goal of conquest was to bring about the absorption of the Granadan emirate into the realm, and the conversion of peninsular Muslims. Far from destroying an Islamic legacy, the texts examined in this chapter often see instead a

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<sup>41</sup> Devaney, "An Amiable Enmity," 237.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 239

future in which it is co-opted and incorporated. This of course would mean engaging with it on Castilian terms, but it is not a rejection. The authors appreciated and to a degree understood the civilization of their rivals. They were impressed by its wealth, but it was wealth in the sense of prosperity, not decadence. Moorish culture, for its part, was in some ways understood to be distinct, yet it was not strange. It could in fact even be modelled. When Castilian writers of this era reflect on Iberian Islamic culture, they do it not as wondering outsiders looking at something that is mysterious.

### **Terms of Engagement**

Just as Moorish culture is often portrayed in balanced and realistic terms, so is warfare between Castile and Granada. It is, of course, a serious matter and the combatants fought to win, but writers do not express war as an epic, clash of civilizations void of compromise. Though Granada frequently was *an* enemy, it was not singled out as *the* enemy. Indeed, depending on circumstances, Castilians and Granadans could find themselves fighting alongside one another, and Castilian writers do not shy away from depicting the frequent warfare between Christian groups. The range of ways in which writers define and understand instances of conflict with Muslim enemies and also Muslims as belligerents show their engagement with the realities of frontier warfare.

The writers of this chapter's sources are generally quite open about the causes and motivations for fighting between Muslims and Christians. Sometimes authors will bring in religious causes and justifications for war, asserting, as Diego de Valera tells King Ferdinand in one of his series formal "suggestion" letters, that it is right and just to take back the land which peninsular Muslims are accused of usurping. He also

calls it a Christian duty to make it come to pass that in that land where "God is decried, blasphemed and disserved," He will instead be "lauded, adored and feared."<sup>43</sup>

De Valera, a noted fifteenth-century writer and historian who also served as a diplomat and as a soldier, was writing in the 1480's.<sup>44</sup> Thus, his statements were made in the context of the final war with Granada and its eventual conquest where rhetoric about reconquest and Crusade, though not universal, was running high.<sup>45</sup>

Earlier in the century, in the *Chronicle of Enrique IV*, King Enrique proclaims lands usurped by "Moors" centuries earlier from the Visigoths must be reclaimed.<sup>46</sup>

Generally, however, warfare has comparatively prosaic causes.

These grand principles may be an underlying cause for potential belligerence, but individual military efforts had more mundane roots. An expedition could be a response to an enemy raid or attack. Raids and counter raids were common, but larger actions did sometimes occur. The fifteenth century ballad "De Antequera partío el moro" describes how a Muslim messenger escapes from the Granadan city of Antequera, which is kept under close and increasingly desperate siege by Fernando, regent of Castile. The messenger reaches the king of Granada and informs him of the dire straits, where "hard fighting ceases neither by night nor by day; the food that your Moors eat, is baked cow leather."<sup>47</sup> The Granadans marshal a force to oppose the attack, and a battle follows in which they are unable to save the town. Alternatively, military campaigns could serve as a show of force. Álvaro de Luna, a favorite of King Juan II and Constable of Castile until his downfall in 1453, is shown quite

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<sup>43</sup> Mosen Diego de Valera. "Epístola suya al rey, nuestro señor....," in *Prosistas Castellanos del Siglo XV*, Vol. 116, *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, 27: "e porque allí donde agora es Dios vituperado, blasfemado e deservido, allí sea loado, adorado e temido."

<sup>44</sup> John Edwards, *The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 131.

<sup>45</sup> O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 667.

<sup>46</sup> Diego Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, 146.

<sup>47</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads* 102: "fuertemente la combate sin cesar noche ni día; manjar que tus moros comen, cueros de vaca comida."

openly expressing his wish to enter Granada and cause harm to the enemy without any more specific objective or goal beyond this.<sup>48</sup>

Often, simply a desire and opportunity for potential gain in the form of plunder, captives and reputation is enough to cause action. In 1447 the *Crónica del halconero*, covering parts of the reign of Juan II, reports that "sensing the divisions that were the season in this kingdom of Castile, the Moors of Granada, according to them incapable of being resisted, decided to enter the land of the Christians."<sup>49</sup> There is, furthermore, no indication on the part of the Castilian author that the raiders had any explicit religious motivation. In this account, Granadan forces take advantage of internal turmoil in Castile to pillage and burn, in this case in the neighborhood of Murcia on the eastern end of the border zone. But, whatever the specific reason, causes for belligerence in texts are generally fairly sensible and commonplace. Sometimes these reasons may be masked or augmented by appeals to carry out one's duty to the faith or to restore "lost" territory. These higher purposes may justify conflict, but given that raids and retaliation were a normal part of existence on the frontier, they does not explain it.

Whatever the cause, once a battle has commenced writers employed a wide array of terms to refer to the enemy. In ballads the simple and direct "Moor" is most commonly used, although sometimes the characters are identified by name or, in the case of large groups, the lord or realm they serve. This is also true in other texts such as chronicles, although in these writers will often use "enemies" and, less frequently, "enemies of our holy faith" or "infidels." Sometimes, they will hurl a sterner name at Muslim adversaries, like "that pagan people" who, with "unfaithful perfidy" occupy

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<sup>48</sup> Juan de Mata Carriazo, ed., *Crónica de don Álvaro de Luna* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1940): 65.

<sup>49</sup> Juan de Mata Carriazo, ed., "Cartas de la Frontera de Granada, 35: "Sintiendo los moros de Granada los voliçios e divisiones que eran a la sazón en este reino de Castilla, según los cuales non podían ser resistidos, acordaron de entrar la tierra de cristianos."

the lands of Castile, though incidents such as this stick out precisely because they are rare.<sup>50</sup> As for Christian enemies, of which there were plenty, whether in the form of other peninsular states or rebellious Castilian vassals, they too were generally referred to by name, by what lord or what kingdom they serve, or less frequently as "enemies." When a battle is in the context of a civil war, when the subject of the chronicle is on the side of the king as they are in this chapter, opponents also can be the recipients of some abuse. Certain nobles who turn on King Enrique IV are berated for their "false disloyalty" among many other related faults in Diego Enríquez del Castillo's chronicle of the king's reign.<sup>51</sup> Writers, then, were depicting a variety of adversaries, and when referring to them use fairly similar terms and formulas. Some which highlight religious division are, unsurprisingly, reserved more for Muslim opponents while those decrying disloyalty to one's rightful lord often are directed at rebellious Christians. But, although Iberian Muslims may not be looked at in exactly the same way as other enemies, they are not unduly singled out either.

As for more personal qualities and military skills, Iberian Muslims are often, though not always, praised. They can be brave, honorable and active opponents, rarely pushovers. *Fronterizo* ballads contain some especially direct references to these qualities. At the count of Niebla's siege of Gibraltar, for instance, they are said to have little fear of Christians other than the count himself.<sup>52</sup> At the Castilian siege of Baza, meanwhile, they pledge to fight to the death before yielding their fortress.<sup>53</sup> This last example has added significance since, despite its late setting in the 1480's, it holds both this admiring sentiment and is told from a Muslim point of view.<sup>54</sup> More than just steadfast, Iberian Muslims can also be skilled in battle. In one of the many

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<sup>50</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Crónica de don Álvaro de Luna*, 441.

<sup>51</sup> Diego Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, 151.

<sup>52</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 108.

<sup>53</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 40.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 139.

ballads about the deeds of the Cid, "Por el Val de las Estacas," Rodrigo demands that a Muslim king pay tribute to Castile. If the king does not comply, the Cid will turn his skill with the lance against him, essentially threatening to use force. The ruler, however, reminds the Cid that he also has a lance which he is well able to use, promising effective resistance if the Cid carries out his threat.<sup>55</sup> Rodrigo, however, is not deterred.

When it comes to actual combat, Iberian Muslims in the texts studied are quite capable of holding their own. Whether in the field or defending fortresses, they are not foes to be trifled with. At times though, they can be underhanded. When besieging Álora the Castilian commander, Diego de Ribera, is killed by an archer even though the defenders are proposing a truce in order to surrender.<sup>56</sup> Muslims are, however, not alone in their capacity for deceit as Christian figures such as Vellido Dolfos do less than perfect deeds as well. In one of the ballads featuring him, "Rey Don Sancho, Rey Don Sancho," he murders King Sancho in cold blood. After having gained the King's trust, Vellido Dolfos stabs him in the back and then flees the scene.<sup>57</sup>

The example of Antequera echoes another side of Iberian Muslims we see in Castilian depictions. Not only are they strong, but they are also, as Iranzo's chronicler describes them, shrewd, sharp, and quick witted.<sup>58</sup> This could be interpreted as backhanded praise, giving an impression of sneakiness, but still it is further admission that peninsular Muslims are an opponent to be wary of. Sometimes, writers even acknowledge it is wiser to avoid engaging Granadan forces altogether, as Enrique IV's *Chronicle* notes that they, in their own territory at least, are more "industrious" than

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<sup>55</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, Vol. 10, 491.

<sup>56</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 107.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 72.

<sup>58</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 497.

the Castilians and often ended up inflicting more casualties than they received.<sup>59</sup>

This, however, was not a common view, and Enrique was subject to much criticism for his perceived reluctance to come to blows with the Moors.<sup>60</sup>

### **Into Battle**

When depicting peninsular Christians and Muslims going to war with, and less commonly, alongside each other, writers once again show a degree of realism in their depictions. Also, though they are frequently and quite openly partisan, authors do not write about Muslims merely as a faceless opponent to be defeated or a diabolical foe who must be stopped at all cost. At times, some more literary elements do creep their way into depictions of combat, making them seem a little less believable or grounded in real experience. But, this is not directed at the Muslims alone, for Christian opponents are also swept up into this slightly stylized version of combat. There is as much room for drama and emotional turmoil in the struggles among Christian rulers that marked the birth of the Castilian kingdom, or the civil wars of the fourteenth century which brought the Trastámara dynasty to the throne. Moving forward again to the fifteenth century, a generally turbulent time in peninsular politics, Castile faced civil wars as well as conflicts with its Christian neighbors. The last section focused on more general conceptions of why instances of conflict with Iberian Muslims occurred and also the personal characteristics of peninsular Muslims in combat. This section will look instead at depictions of what happens when forces actually meet in battle.

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<sup>59</sup> Diego Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, 151.

<sup>60</sup> O'Callaghan, *Medieval Spain*, 568.

Most of the descriptions of battles in fifteenth-century texts involve sieges, raids, small skirmishes, or ambushes. This kind of fighting was suited to the mountainous terrain and many fortifications of the borderlands. Most ballads that describe combat deal principally with sieges. Furthermore, the authors do not depict war as simply charging into glory. Nor do they present, at least on a large scale, war as a chivalrous set piece in their texts. Additionally, Muslims are not simply included in the text simply to serve as antagonists, but are active and rational opponents. Through effective tactical manoeuvres, they often could gain the upper hand when confronting Castilians. For example Miguel Lucas de Iranzo, in a foray into Granada, is obliged to turn back when he realizes the element of surprise, on which his strategy had depended, was lost due to effective scouting and use of terrain on the part of his Granadan opponents.<sup>61</sup> With prudence if not glory, he decides to abandon the attack.

Still, it is most frequently Muslims who are on the losing end of these battles in fifteenth-century ballads. This is not just a consequence of Christian authors whitewashing the truth. Instead it reflects the fact that except for some instances when the Castilian kingdom was weakened by internal conflict, they really did have the upper hand militarily at this time.<sup>62</sup> As we have seen, Granada was frequently forced to pay tribute. Accounts of Christian victory also predominate, however, in texts based on events farther in the past, such as the deeds of the Cid or Pelayo, hero of the early reconquest. So, when considering the positive depictions of Moorish fighting qualities in the previous section, they are in a context in which the Castilians were generally victorious. Writers, perhaps, could afford to be gracious and, of course, defeating a competent and strong enemy is more glorious for the heroes than beating a weak one. In any case, just as Granada's wealth was not mythical but rooted

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<sup>61</sup> Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 448.

<sup>62</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 9.

in a known source, the writers here also knew and showed that victory was not inevitable. The outcomes of the battles they depict do not lie entirely in the hands of providence or in the bravery of its participants, but are the result of making war with prudence and skill.

Perhaps the most frequent activity of all in textual portrayals of warfare, more so than actual direct combat, is the raiding and plundering of the enemy's lands. This is an enterprise which features prominently in all conflicts, regardless of the enemy's identity. It involves looting, burning crops and towns, and the taking of captives. Of course Castilian authors expressed regret when their enemies inflicted this upon their lands, and it was lamented, but their texts do not present it as an unusual outrage or as a display of wanton cruelty. Chronicles highlight several such expeditions to Granadan territory while ballads, though they do not describe the process of looting itself, include plunder as a happy result of many expeditions.

Raiding is by no means confined to the Granadan frontier, since Christians are shown engaging in similar behavior when fighting each other throughout the peninsula. Chroniclers, it is true, were more uncomfortable with this and take time to justify it. Álvaro de Luna is described as reluctantly ordering raids and destruction in the realm of Aragon, but ultimately having to do so according to the customs of war, to satisfy the desire for plunder felt by his soldiers, to make sure that the name of his king is feared, and finally that that the power of his enemies are decreased.<sup>63</sup> Actions of this kind against Granada, however, inspire no such justifications or expressions of regret. Moreover, in wars with Christians, the taking of civilian captives is not mentioned, while on the frontier with Granada they frequently are. Once again in

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<sup>63</sup> Carriazo, *Crónica de don Álvaro de Luna*, 91.

Álvaro de Luna's *Chronicle*, Christian captives are described explicitly as combatants.<sup>64</sup>

One of the few instances in which a chronicler drummed up some genuine outrage is when recounting how a Granadan raiding force sacked a church during an attack on a village near Jaén. The account describes how this and another village were "entered and robbed and burned everywhere, and captured or killed the men, women and children that were in them." Though some who sought refuge in a tower escaped, the attackers "did not spare some men and women that retreated into the church, nor a cleric in his vestments; so many and so great were the wounds they gave them on their faces and over all their bodies, that there was nobody who could recognize them when they saw them."<sup>65</sup> The depiction of this atrocity, like the denunciations earlier, sticks out because it is so rare in textual accounts. Iberian Muslim conduct in wartime is most often not portrayed as especially heinous, nor are they unduly condemned for fighting. When they are enemies their successes are lamented, but they are depicted following common practices of war shared by both, and are not usually made out to be monsters with an excessive thirst for blood or lust for destruction.

But there is one area where the Castilian texts, in their treatment of warfare, do depart from their usual credibility. Due to the rarity of such departures, it can be rather jarring. Generally speaking, their descriptions of battle itself, meaning actual engagement between two forces, are rather vague, especially in ballads where space is at a premium. Most authors focus on the preparation for or aftermath of combat, and make only vague references to the actual course of battle. Sieges will sometimes earn

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 157

<sup>65</sup> Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 468: "Los cuales fueron entrados y robados y quemados de todo punto, y presos y muertos los ombres, mugeres, y niños que en ellos avía..." "Y no perdonaron alguons ombres y mugeres que a la yglesia se retrayeron, ni a un clérigo que revestido estaba; que tantas y tan grandes feridas les dieron en las caras y por todo el cuerpo, y no era persona que a la ora los vido ninguno pudiese conosçer."

a little more description, like following the capture or loss of specific towers or portions of the wall, or the tactics used. A ballad entitled "Cercada tiene a Baeza" describes an attack on that Castilian town during in the fourteenth century. In this case, the Granadan attackers are in alliance with Castilian King Pedro, who is at the time fighting for his throne in a civil war. Told from the perspective of the defenders the ballad reveals, after the signal for the besiegers to advance is given, "by the gate of Bedmar the fighting begins. They place ladders on the walls and begin to conquer, a tower is taken, they cannot be stopped." This shows an attacking force progressing step by step as they scale the walls and begin to overwhelm the defenders. But, at this grim moment for the defenders, reinforcements arrive, the attackers are driven back, and eventually defeated in turn.<sup>66</sup> But, for the most part writers either do not know, or choose not to show, much detail on the movement of forces once engaged.

Authors do, however, apply some fairly common formulae to give readers a sense of the importance they assign a given battle or to the role of leading figures in it. One common device is to create an absurdly lopsided casualty count or reckoning of the size of the army. To indicate great victories or, depending on perspective, defeats, they will note that thousands of the enemy fell compared with only a handful of casualties on the "good" side. In a ballad about the capture of Antequera, the Castilians lose 110 men to the 15,000 lost by Granada.<sup>67</sup> Or, they might say that a small band of troops managed to triumph over a large host of the enemy which, like in the case of Rodrigo de Lara who is said to have defeated 5,000 "Moors" with 300 men, seems exaggerated.<sup>68</sup> These are likely meant more to show the magnitude that

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<sup>66</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 99: "por la puerta de Bedmar la empieza de combatir. Ponen escalas al muro, comiéndanle a conquistar; ganada tiene una torre, non la pueden resistir..."

<sup>67</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 118.

<sup>68</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, Vol. 10, 440.

the authors wish to grant a particular victory, or else the praiseworthiness of the achievement of the hero.

Another common formula, used especially in chronicles where there is more room for description and explanation, is to reduce battles to essentially a sequence where the armies meet, fight, and then the defeated side flees. In fact, Granadan forces are put to flight quite frequently in these texts of the fifteenth century. But, this dynamic is deeper than simply cowardly Moors being driven off by the avenging armies of the Castilians. First, Christian enemies are put to flight as well, though less often. When looking at the specific contexts of these encounters, it becomes clear that their primary purpose is not to disparage the foe, whether Muslim or Christian. Instead, they are designed to make the "hero" of the text shine. One common scenario is that the main figure, through some form of action, is able to force the enemy to flee through his personal intervention. This happens in the ballad of the siege of Baeza mentioned above. When the Christian reinforcements under Rodrigo Fernández de Ribera arrive, Ribera defeats the enemy leader, Audalla Mir, in single combat. After this setback, Audalla Mir's army runs away, and the city is rescued.

A third device shows that a "hero" can, because of his skill and courage, bring about the defeat of a previously unvanquished foe. For instance, Miguel Lucas de Iranzo vanquishes the proud knights of the Granadan city of Guadix, who "because of some great defeats which they had inflicted at various times on certain knights from the cities of Baeza and Úbeda and other areas they had entered to raid, were very haughty and presumptuous."<sup>69</sup> Iranzo, however, is able to overcome them. The flight of Granadan forces, like the flight of the Christians who also, though less often, figure in these scenarios, is not the result of some great failing of character particular to

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<sup>69</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 450: "...por cabsa de algunos destroços y desbaratos que avían fecho en diuersas veces en çiertos caualleros de las çibdades de Baeça y Ubeda y de otras partes que avían entrado a correr, estaban muy soberuios y presuntuosos."

them. Their retreats are instead portrayed as the result of overwhelming greatness of the hero.

### **Degrees of Enmity**

The conduct and consequences of warfare, whether against Muslims or Christians, except for the aspect of captives comes across much the same in the texts. Nevertheless, the authors can display a more uncomfortable attitude when making war against their coreligionists. The texts sometimes depict leaders telling their forces that, when facing Christians, they should fight them "as if against the Moors" or "as if against enemies."<sup>70</sup> This can be taken in two ways. On the one hand, it acknowledges that in its effects, warfare really will not be that different against either side, reflecting the realism that pervades the rest of the text. But, it also betrays the fact that writers are keen to maintain a distinction. Warfare against Christians can be like that against Muslims, but it is not quite the same. As we saw before, raiding Christian settlements can require special moral justification while raiding those of Muslims does not. Moreover, in actual combat itself, when fighting Christians verbs like "*pelear*" (fight or struggle) and others tend to appear often while "*matar*" (kill) is used more frequently with Muslims. Use of either term is by no means exclusive to one context or the other, but there is a correlation which often creates a different tone in the description of the battles depending on whether the enemy are mainly Christian or Muslim.

Most importantly however, this warfare is not between artificially constructed characters, but between realistic opponents who were still often depicted in quite

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<sup>70</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Crónica de don Álvaro de Luna*, 72, 85.

similar ways. Scholars note that by this time the frontier warfare, at least until the final push in the 1480's and 90's, had settled into a kind of routine, and that the potential adversaries had adapted to each other in equipment and tactics.<sup>71</sup> So, though war with Iberian Muslims undoubtedly contained danger and chances for distinction, it held few mysteries or outright terrors. The enemy, known so closely for so long, was no monster. Nor was war with Granada made out to be chivalrous play, a joust writ large fought for honor, God or a damsel in distress. It was a messy, violent and at times frustrating business, more likely to involve burning crops than slaying a foe in personal combat. Writers also acknowledge, however, that for fortunate individuals it could be a chance to gain riches through plunder or distinction through victory. Though individual writers have their own motivations for portraying these encounters, they most often give a plausible depiction of their belligerent interactions.

### **A Granadan Mirror**

Having seen how the Castilian texts portrayed Iberian Muslims in both peaceful, political interactions and in more bellicose ones, we will turn to Castilian understandings of their neighbors on a more personal level. Iberia's Muslims are not simply objects for Castilian characters to act upon, but have discernable, rational motivations for their actions. Rather than being sinister or acting out of malice or sheer antipathy to Castile and Christians, their motives are conceived of as quite familiar and understandable. Indeed, the Moors in these texts often find themselves in positions to which a Castilian could relate and would act in much the same way. As people with understandable interests and obligations, Muslims are shown to act on

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<sup>71</sup> Elena Lourie, "A Society Organized for War: Medieval Spain," *Past & Present*, no. 35 (1966): 69.

them accordingly. This moves beyond simple emotional sympathy for human experiences to a deeper affinity, since some writers understand Iberian Muslims through the lens of their own experiences. In many respects the Granadans in the texts are the counterparts of the Castilian figures involved. Being from opposite sides (though this oversimplifies the situation), their interests are frequently not the same and so could possibly lead them into conflict. But, the enemy is not condemned for doing his duty as Castilian authors understand it. Differences remained, but there were other factors, like long cultural contact and also a perception of similar political roles, that could serve as a basis for mutual understanding.

Granadans in text often had similar roles, obligations and duties in their own societies to the ones which are ascribed to Castilians.<sup>72</sup> The term *caballero* is used, for instance, to refer to high status mounted warriors, whether Christian or Muslim, as both a battlefield presence and a social group within their respective societies. Granadan elites also are accorded titles of rank and royalty along lines similar to those used Castile, recognizing the nobility of their opposite numbers. They are also seen as having honor which they treasure and desire to preserve. In 1482, Castilian forces took the Granadan town of Alhama in a surprise attack, in the process sparking the war which would lead to the destruction of the Nasrid emirate in 1492. In a ballad composed to mark the occasion, the king of Granada sends a messenger to the disgraced commander of the fortress, who was interestingly away attending a wedding in a nearby Castilian-held town when the attack occurred, informing him that he is to be executed for his failure. Before being taken away the commander replies "to have once held Alhama, now lost, is a weight upon my soul; but if the king has lost his land, I lost my honor and reputation. I lost my children and wife, the things I love

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<sup>72</sup> O'Callaghan, *Medieval Spain*, 593.

most."<sup>73</sup> Though a disaster for the realm, for the commander personally the loss impacts both his personal honor and, through his family's capture, his lineage as well. The concerns he expresses would be quite recognizable to Castilian noble contemporaries. Most of the Muslims we meet in the literature, at least the ones that are prominently featured, are in fact from the nobility or higher echelons of society unless it is a story of captivity. So, the textual Granadan is often also a nobleman.

As such, writers ascribed to Granadan nobility, as we saw above, roles and attitudes similar to their own. As one chronicler notes, knights have a responsibility to defend what is theirs.<sup>74</sup> He was referring to Castilians, but Granadans are frequently seen doing this as well. At the fall of Alhama, the Granadan king lapses into a fit of despair: "he puts his hands to his hair, and tears at his beard,"echoing a pattern of showing strong emotion, on both sides but more often among Muslims, in reaction to great setbacks.<sup>75</sup> It is used again, even more strongly, in the ballad about the fall of Antequera discussed earlier. Here, a different Granadan king, upon hearing the news of that city's loss, "fainted in grief, making great sorrow he spilled many tears."<sup>76</sup> Though portrayal of intense emotional responses in these situations of loss has been interpreted as a way for an author to feminize Muslims by making them seem weak, in ballads it is often a common way to show that the receiver of the bad news feels the seriousness of the situation.<sup>77</sup> This seems more likely, since the king in both cases soon recovers and marshals a force to retake the city. These efforts fail, but although the Castilians may take pride in their victory, they are not showing contempt for their enemy. Granada's ruler was not unwilling or afraid to carry out

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<sup>73</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 112: "De averse Alhama perdido a mí me pesa en el alma; que si el rey perdió su tierra, yo perdí mi honra y fama. Perdí hijos y mujer, las cosas que más amava..."

<sup>74</sup> Mata Carriazo ed., *Crónica de don Álvaro de Luna*, 117.

<sup>75</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 114: "...echó mano a sus cabellos y las sus barbas mesava."

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, 102: "...de pesar se amortecía, haziendo gran sentimiento muchas lágrimas vertía..."

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, 238.

what his position and its requirements demanded of him, though due to the determination of the Castilians doing the same thing from their perspective, he is unable to do so.

Lesser figures too find themselves forced into action due to their obligations to their liege. Muslims following these commands, such as the ballad figure Reduán who must comply with the Granadan king's order to take Jaén or face exile during a period of warfare in the early fifteenth century.<sup>78</sup> Though upholding such obligations may lead to conflict with Castilians, Muslims are not personally blamed for doing so. Loyalty is prized and understood. A ballad of the capture of King Boabdil of Granada speaks of the great lengths to which the residents of Granada, due to their loyalty to him, were willing to go to raise the necessary ransom money. When they hear the news the city's residents "wept for their good king, so loved and held dear, they promise all their jewels so he may be ransomed."<sup>79</sup> They are acting as subjects should. Muslims who are faithful to their duty, as they see it, are respected even if they still must often be opposed. Christians who are disloyal, from the perspective of a given chronicler or ballad composer, are rebuked. Chroniclers take the time, on several occasions, to condemn traitors in terms to which Granadan opponents are never subjected for doing their duty.

This affinity, moreover, is not something which writers only view from afar. The literature is full of relationships between the leading figures on both sides. Muslims and Christians are even depicted fighting, when political circumstances dictate, on the same side. Abenámar, as described earlier, rides with the king of Castile against Granada. In the aftermath of a civil war in Castile, the chronicler of Miguel Lucas de Iranzo notes that some Castilians who were on the losing side had

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<sup>78</sup> *Smith, Spanish Ballads*, 116.

<sup>79</sup> *Wright, Spanish Ballads*, 116: "...lloravan por su buen rey, tan amado y tan querido, prometen todas sus joyas para que sea redemido..."

sought refuge in Granada.<sup>80</sup> Writers, indeed, are sensitive to the political situations of their neighbors, and nobles are able to move and act on both sides. We see Christians and Muslims who know each other, like in Iranzo's chronicle. During an expedition in 1462, Miguel Lucas de Iranzo knows the commander holding Guadix against him, a man named Alatar, who is described as "a good knight from Loxa."<sup>81</sup>

Sometimes, this similarity allows for good working relationships. A series of letters from the city authorities of Jaén to officials in Granadan territory show them to be in frequent contact. This is not without tension, but they are able to resolve many cross border disputes amicably.<sup>82</sup> In some cases, texts even show Castilians and Granadans as friends. One ballad shows Castilian Pedro Fajardo sitting down with the king of Granada to play chess, the stakes being the ownership of a frontier town. Their friendship in the ballad is so strong that the king is said to love Fajardo.<sup>83</sup> Though it is likely that a game such as the one described did not take place, it is interesting to see the writer portray the two men sitting and playing a shared aristocratic game from both sides of the border. They engage and interact as equals as well as familiars. When Fajardo loses, he does not relinquish the town he had wagered, but that does not seem to disrupt the friendship, as the King still refers to Fajardo as a "*buen caballero*."

The writers surveyed, as we can see, engage in descriptions of the great similarities they see between the situations and roles of the noble Muslims and Christians who populate their texts. Their conflicts frequently arise not because they are irreducibly different, but because both Muslims and Christians of noble status

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<sup>80</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 441.

<sup>81</sup> Mata Carriazo, *Hechos del condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo*, 81: "Por capitán de los cuales estaba el Alatar, un buen cabuallero de Loxa.."

<sup>82</sup> Mata Carriazo, "Los Moros de Granada en las actas del Concejo de Jaén," *En La frontera de Granada*, 280.

<sup>83</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 110.

have several comparable obligations, only to different lords and different lands. The two sides do indeed have cultural and religious differences, but culture here is more a venue for appreciation and exchange rather than conflict. Religion, though it does add an additional edge to conflict with Granada, marking it as at least conceptually distinct, rarely is cited as the primary cause for events and does not stop cooperation. And, as the numerous incidents of warfare with Christians in all forms of text should show, religious differences were hardly necessary for two sides to look upon one another with enmity. Moreover this similarity indeed often facilitates contact, as the two sides are engaging on common ground, and are able to move from one side to the other with apparently little difficulty. Finally, authors seem to portray Moors as active characters with understandable and rational motives. This portrayal is in part possible because in many cases they understand their shared social role as fellow nobles. This understanding, however, is based in many ways on the presence of the frontier in the text, and other boundaries which are related to it.

### **Intersecting Boundaries**

Boundaries, though they may at times be blurred or pushed to the background, are never absent from the text. Despite a great degree of understanding of Iberian Islam, textual figures negotiate dividing lines in ways that echo if not always imitate real life. The most obvious of these is, unsurprisingly, religious. But, alongside this divide, the relationship between Muslims and Christians is influenced by the textual representation of other boundaries as well. Sometimes, Christian and Muslim figures find themselves on opposite sides, but in some situations they in fact appear on the same side. This potential for common ground even in the face of difference helps to

explain the ambivalent attitudes toward Iberian Islam and Muslims in these fifteenth century texts.

Religion, as we have seen, is a major distinguishing factor in how the writers conceive of warfare. Even if the effects are much the same, Granadans when at war are not only enemies, but can be enemies of the faith. Although they take pains to justify destruction wrought in Christian lands, Muslim lands can be ravaged with a clear conscience. And, even though Castilians may appreciate the culture of Granada and even adopt some of their aesthetics, they have little good to say about their faith.<sup>84</sup> Although religious difference is not a major theme in many of the works of studied, the significance of this boundary can come roaring to the forefront whenever this boundary is crossed.

Renegades, those who converted from Christianity to Islam, are a major source of discomfort for writers. Even at late stages of the final war, Castilian soldiers suffering at the siege of Málaga are said to have deserted the army and crossed over to the defenders. Castilian writers framed this action as a case of "light headed men with corrupt desires" endangering their souls.<sup>85</sup> In another interesting case, the "pagan" Bobalías, leading a Muslim force near Seville, is described in a ballad as having changed faiths multiple times. He adopted Islam and Christianity seven times each and, "deluding himself with sin," he leaves Christianity once more and becomes a Muslim for the eighth time.<sup>86</sup> It is one thing to find Castilian and Granadan figures fighting alongside one another as circumstances may lead, but personal conversion goes too far, eliciting condemnation. Captives, especially female ones, are furthermore a great dishonor, to both sides in fact. Antonio Duque notes the

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<sup>84</sup> see Ana Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude Towards Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain*, (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

<sup>85</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 297.

<sup>86</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, Vol. 10, 1: "Engañólo su pecado, que dejó la fe de Cristo, la de Mahoma ha tomado."

importance in border societies of maintaining the integrity of one's own cultural and religious group.<sup>87</sup> Freedom for captives is a frequent condition imposed, when possible, in truces between Castile and Granada.

There is much of this theme in literature, and it has been amply studied. It is included here to show the limits of understanding and the persistence of boundaries. Moreover, it underscores the way in which writers keep their portrayals of Muslims and Christian Muslim interaction within the boundaries of what would be realistic at the time. They show, and can even celebrate in cases like the Cid, Christian figures who find themselves for one reason or another entering into service with or for Muslims. Such actions may simply be a result of the course of events, or even personal interest. But, even though secular political considerations may lead one into the other camp, conversion is too great a betrayal. Religious barriers do not have to keep people apart, and as such can sometimes in the literature fade to the background, but crossing them personally causes a reaction in the texts which provides a quick reminder that it has not been forgotten.

But though this particular boundary helps to define the limits of contact and assimilation, there are other boundaries that are in fact crucial to maintaining the dynamics of contact, appreciation, and understanding which manifest themselves in the texts. The first of these divisions is in fact a "class"<sup>88</sup> boundary. The Granadan Muslims in these texts are largely elite figures, indeed are the Castilians with whom they interact. This dividing line, instead of separating Muslims and Christians, places at least these prominent individuals most commonly dealt with in the text on essentially the same side of one. Texts frequently conceive of Granadans in similar

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<sup>87</sup> Antonio Duque, "Sex and the Border: Byzantine Epics and the Spanish Frontier Ballads." *The Medieval History Journal* 14, No. 213 (2011): 217.

<sup>88</sup> In quotes because this term is a bit anachronistic in this time, but is nonetheless descriptive for us, representing different social stations.

roles, fulfilling similar obligations and with similar motivations as their own nobility. The texts also reflect the appreciation of and familiarity with "Moorish" culture on the part of these elite Castilians. Frequently, as we have also seen, nobles from either side are able to live and work with those on the other side, forming working relationships and even living among them and their culture. Regardless of whether these perceptions of similarity were accurate, authors see echoes of themselves in the "other."

Indeed, in one ballad the Cid places upon King Alfonso a dramatic curse stating what he hopes will happen to the king if he had any part in the death of his brother.<sup>89</sup> He wishes that Alfonso should be killed by peasants, not nobles, and proceeds to list all of the undignified things these lowborn assassins will do to him. They will kill Alfonso with farm implements, wear rough clothing as they do so, and ride donkeys. This rustic equipment contrasts with the weapons, armor and horses used by the nobility, which were apparently far better ways to be killed. The Cid's curse is, to say the least, intended to be a bad death. The Granadan nobles in the texts surveyed, however, often share with their Castilian counterparts the same weapons, armor and horses which the ballad sets up as the antithesis to the peasants' equipment. More to the point, the Granadan nobility's position and role in society makes them appear in many ways more similar to the Christian nobles than those nobles are to fellow Christian peasants, when these lowly folk even take a major role in these texts at all. In material terms, in terms of life experience, and in terms of more secular values and concerns, the Granadans and Castilian nobles have quite a lot in common with each other in these texts.

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<sup>89</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 78.

Another crucial boundary governing interaction and portrayal in the text is a political one. Castilians can see, in some degree, the Granadan as their opposite number. Just as they are of Castile, the "Moors" are "of Granada" or "of the kingdom of Granada." On the surface, these are simple descriptive terms that serve merely as quick and clear identifiers, but they allude to the political boundary, the frontier, that separates the realms. Granadan Muslims are part of the structure, of a legitimate and recognized realm. Vassal status though occasionally forcibly reaffirmed, was often nominal.<sup>90</sup> Muslims had a place, their own land in the peninsula, the "land of the moors," where they properly belonged for the moment.

Depending on the circumstances, of course, these boundaries might be crossed and people of either faith could be found at times serving alongside those of the other. Still, there existed a clearly Islamic realm in the peninsula. This did not only apply to cross border relations, moreover, since scholars note that their existence extended a degree of protection to the *Mudéjar* communities in Castile. Often, this was in the economic interests of rulers anyway, but the added threat of retaliation against Christian captives, they argue, added a further check on Christian action throughout their realm. The presence of the Moors in the peninsula as a cultural and political presence fostered contact and exchange as well as tension and conflict. But, though this political presence was a cause of this tension, it also gave rise to a situation where Christians and Muslims engaged each other as equals.

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<sup>90</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 54.

## Closing

As the fifteenth century drew to a close, time was also running out for Granada and with it the frontier. After 1481, in a decade of concerted effort Christian forces, their internal differences in abeyance for the moment, overran the emirate and ended nearly eight hundred years of Islamic political power in Iberia. In January 1492, the city of Granada itself surrendered. Even then, the terms of the city's capitulation bore great resemblance to a long series of others which had been negotiated over the centuries.<sup>91</sup> Prominent among these terms was a guarantee that Castile's newest Muslim subjects would be able to continue the practice of their religion, which had been a part of Peninsular society since 711. This situation, however would not last. As the status of Iberian Islam and Muslims, soon to be Moriscos, stood on the edge of rapid and significant change, so too did the nature of their representation in Castilian literature.

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<sup>91</sup> Fletcher, *Moorish Spain*, 166.

## Chapter 2: Continuity and Change: The Sixteenth Century and Frontiers in Time

The year 1492 is a significant marker in Castilian history, the momentous date which saw the fall of Granada and the end of independent Muslim rule in the peninsula. The next few decades would see further dramatic changes for all of Castilian society. These developments would particularly affect Castile's Muslim and, as we will see, soon to be Morisco inhabitants. Throughout the Granada War and culminating in the final surrender of the city itself, Ferdinand and Isabella followed a long tradition regarding political settlements with defeated parties in the peninsula. They granted terms to those cities that surrendered to their forces, which usually allowed for the continuation of Islamic worship and culture in exchange for submission and taxation.<sup>1</sup> For places which opted for resistance instead, such as the city of Málaga, a more terrible fate awaited if that resistance proved ineffective. After Málaga fell, thousands of its residents were enslaved by the victors.<sup>2</sup> Based on this continuity with tradition, it may have appeared that the monarchs intended to continue the policies which had allowed Muslims to live within their realms as *Mudéjars*. Despite challenges, arrangements of this nature had stood in one form or another for centuries. This, however, was not to be. Over the next forty years, a series of decrees signalling a major shift in policy were issued by the crown. As was outlined in the introduction, both Jews and Muslims through the realms of Castile and Aragon soon were faced with a choice between conversion to Christianity or exile.

This degree of change over such a short historical timeframe appears both rapid and radical. In reality, there were some threads of continuity. For instance, the

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<sup>1</sup> Fletcher, *Moorish Spain*, 166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

ability of three religious groups to exist alongside one another in Castilian society, never an easy situation to manage, began to show more serious signs of fraying during periods of repression in the after the end of the fourteenth century.<sup>3</sup> By the 1470's, moreover, scholars note a resurgence of the "crusader" ideal which had an influence on, among other things, attitudes towards the continued existence of the Emirate of Granada.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, after these conversion orders many of the new converts, who were now called Moriscos or "New Christians" in general use, were often seen as being Christians in name only.<sup>5</sup> They continued in many cases to be treated in law and in society as a group apart, subject in practice to different expectations and treatment than so called old Christians.<sup>6</sup> Still, the end of the toleration of multiple religions among Spanish subjects through the official prohibition of Islam and Judaism does represent a major conceptual change. Although policies can be changed quickly, on paper at least, by decree, everyday reality and individual attitudes may not have been so quickly or easily manipulated.

This chapter will attempt to reconstruct some of those attitudes by continuing to look into the portrayal of Iberian Muslims and Moriscos in Castilian texts of the last decade of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century, ending roughly with the abdication of Charles V in 1556. These will include, once again, ballads, which continued to be composed and reworked through the sixteenth century, as well as chronicles and selected documents. As in the previous chapter, this one does not provide a comprehensive survey of Castilian attitudes towards Iberian Islam in the new century. Nonetheless, the continuing positive sentiments often expressed in these

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<sup>3</sup> The most significant of these outbreaks occurred in 1391, when riots in cities across Castile and in Aragon led great violence against Jewish communities, leading many Jews to convert to Christianity in an effort to avoid such treatment.

<sup>4</sup> O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 667.

<sup>5</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society 1400-1600*, 106.

<sup>6</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 47.

works do represent part of the range of opinions circulating at the time. Their survival in the face of rapid government policy change raises the question of how these apparently divergent attitudes coexisted. In this era of great change and expansion for the realm of Castile, the chapter will also consider how debates over the place and integration of Moriscos in society evolved, placing the literary developments in proper context.

Whatever the result of this debate, the literature considered in this chapter demonstrates persistent enthusiasm for portraying the Islamic past. In its treatment of Iberian Islam and Muslims, Castilian literature was, like the rest of society in so many areas, adapting to major changes. Reflecting the uncertainties and contentions of the time, there were multiple approaches to and opinions on this subject. But the literature shows that, despite policies designed to suppress Morisco practice of their ancestral culture, Castilians were not necessarily engaged in a large scale effort to reject the Islamic past. By continuing to set so much literary work in that past, the authors considered in this chapter were able to maintain in their texts the boundaries which we saw in the last chapter governed textual portrayals of Iberian Islam. In doing so, however, these authors created another frontier, this one in time, which separated their textual portrayals of Iberian Islam from contemporary context. I argue that for this reason sixteenth century textual depictions of Islam could diverge greatly from more negative attitudes suggested by changes in policy toward Moriscos.<sup>7</sup>

Although the discussion over the future of the Moriscos featured a range of opinions, from fear and rejection to calls for patience and assimilation, that discussion does not impose itself on all literature. Chronicle and documentary depictions of

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<sup>7</sup> Another change has a great impact on the terminology used in this chapter. That is the union of Castile and Aragon, brought about by the marriage of their individual sovereigns, Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. As a result, this chapter will begin to use the term Spain when referring to actions taken by the monarchy that governed, to use John Elliott's term, the two "composite kingdoms." But, the textual perspectives will remain Castilian.

Iberian Muslims and Islamic culture fall off sharply. Like *Mudéjars* in the fifteenth century, their presence in contemporary texts is much less felt. North African Muslims instead take their place as the next Muslim power across what is now a more distant frontier.<sup>8</sup> Ballad sources also do not engage deeply in this period with the contemporary Morisco experience, as writers remain wedded to the past. Popular stories from the frontier of the fifteenth century and the earlier history of Castile continue to be reprinted and modified. Although some new "exotic" or religious elements crept in that would not have been found in earlier stories, the textual portrayals of Iberian Muslims surveyed in this chapter did not change considerably when compared with ones from the fifteenth century. The actual status of the Moriscos and their relationship with Castilian society, however, had evolved a great deal.

Contemporary debates involving the Moriscos focused on how quickly they should be converted and made subject to the same religious strictures as the rest of society. A main point of contention was whether conversion was simply a matter of changing religion or if a deeper hereditary predisposition toward Islam would prevent Moriscos from becoming full believers on equal terms with "Old Christians."<sup>9</sup> Even if religious conversion was possible, writers still contemplated to what degree Morisco cultural practices that were not explicitly religious, like clothing styles or music, should be accepted. This uncertainty was intensified by the fact that many practices of this type had become integrated into Christian culture as well.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Domínguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain*, 61.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Carr, *Blood and Faith, The Purging of Muslim Spain* (New York: The New Press, 2009), 120.

<sup>10</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 6.

## The Rapid Fall of *Mudéjar* Granada

After the surrender of Granada in January 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella made provisions for the government of their new city and territory. In the Alhambra, they installed prominent aristocrat Íñigo López de Mendoza, second Count of Tendilla as governor. The episcopal throne was granted to Hernando de Talavera who had previously served as confessor to Queen Isabella and may have had a *converso* background.<sup>11</sup> Also posted to the city was Fernando de Zafra, royal secretary to Ferdinand and Isabella, who remained behind to keep the monarchs informed about affairs in Granada. Letters between Zafra and his royal employers will serve as important sources of information describing the rapid changes which occurred in Granada over its first post-conquest decade. These would, furthermore, have a major impact on Islam throughout the peninsula. At the end of this decade, many of the social and religious boundaries that had defined the relationship between Christians and Muslims in the world of the fifteenth-century frontier, and were reflected in literary works from that era, underwent major disruption and even obliteration. This changed the relationship between texts following fifteenth century models and contemporary reality.

In the early years after the conquest, the capitulations were largely honored by the crown and local authorities. For a time, Granada had a functioning city government with new *Mudéjars* as members, as provided for by the surrender agreement.<sup>12</sup> Archbishop Talavera, for his part, pursued a mild policy toward the conversion of Muslims, hoping to guide them into the faith through persuasion, a reflection of views he expressed in a work on religious teaching which he composed a

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<sup>11</sup> David Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada: Society and Religious Culture in an Old World Frontier City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

decade earlier.<sup>13</sup> After all, the capitulations prevented him from using force. Talavera initiated efforts to teach Granadans the tenets of the Catholic faith, and in an effort to better relate to the community made a valiant if ultimately unsuccessful attempt to train clergy who spoke Arabic. He even reportedly tried his hand at learning to speak it himself though with little effect.<sup>14</sup> But, Islam still held sway. In 1494 German traveller Hieronimus Münzer recorded his experiences while visiting the city of Granada and wrote of the vibrancy of Islamic worship there. He described the call to prayer ringing out from minarets while devoted Mosque-goers spilled out into the streets.<sup>15</sup>

But, things were changing in Granada. As provided for in the capitulation agreements setting the terms of surrender, large numbers of the old Granadan elite, the same prominent people who featured so frequently as the counterparts to the Castilian nobility in the texts of the earlier fifteenth century, began to pack up and leave for lands still under Islamic control.<sup>16</sup> Since they possessed the means to do so, they were disproportionately represented in this group. Even the erstwhile Emir Boabdil left behind the estates he was granted in the Alpujrras and took ship for Morocco in 1493 where, according to North African historian Ahmed Muhammad al-Maqqari, he died in 1533. Though some of the old elites did remain and were able to integrate themselves into the Castilian ruling class, most notably members of the Zegrí, Venegas and Córdoba clans, the Muslims of Granada were gradually losing those who had been the most prominent members of their society.<sup>17</sup>

As these notables were moving out, however, Christians from the north were moving in. They settled in both town and countryside, but in the city of Granada

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<sup>13</sup> Carr, *Blood and Faith*, 53.

<sup>14</sup> Edwards, *The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs*, 239.

<sup>15</sup> Carr, *Blood and Faith*, 55

<sup>16</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 328

<sup>17</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 41

itself their numbers swelled so rapidly that by 1498 the city was divided into Muslim and Christian sections. The Muslims, in fact, received the geographically smaller portion of the city, centered in the hilly, densely populated district known as the Albaicín. Though in practice the division was not absolute, it does represent a departure from the spirit of the capitulations. But, it would be a mistake to see this only as a symbol of their breakdown. The final agreement was not simply imposed on the Muslims by the Christians, but was negotiated, and in fact received support from substantial numbers of the city's Muslims as a way to preserve their own traditions in the face of new immigrants.<sup>18</sup> Viewed in this way, it represents more of an adaptation of the agreements than and outright rejection.

Although some historians argue that Ferdinand and Isabella viewed the capitulations as merely a pragmatic measure that would be overturned as quickly as possible now that the Reconquest was complete, there is much evidence to suggest otherwise.<sup>19</sup> They certainly hoped to convert the populace to Catholicism and conversion, in theory, would make many of the capitulations' provisions irrelevant with time. The suggestion of urgency, however, emerges mainly with hindsight. Firstly, although the capture of the city was recognized as an important milestone, with writers celebrating it as the end to eight hundred years of occupation, it did not mean that Spain no longer had Muslim neighbors.<sup>20</sup> The coast of North Africa, where a string of Muslim-ruled polities sat as potential rivals or allies, targets for conquest and for continued trade, was only a short voyage away. From the towering Rock of Gibraltar and much of the coastline bordering the famous Strait, Africa was even within sight. Much more stood between the Catholic Monarchs and a peninsula free of Islamic influence than converting the defeated Muslims of Granada.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 54.

<sup>19</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 325.

<sup>20</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 37.

Recognizing this, steps were taken to extend the recently completed reconquest of Iberia into a conquest of Africa. At the least, the seizure of important ports would promote Spanish hegemony, as well as defend against possible raids. In fact, the subject of defense appears frequently in letters sent between Zafra and the Catholic Monarchs in the 1490s. The secretary kept the king and queen abreast of the status of the city, and the rulers wrote to Zafra about their concerns. Though plagued with delays and lack of funding, completion of "*castillos de la mar*," fortifications to guard the coast, was a significant priority. The fortresses featured in a string of Zafra's letters, beginning as early as August 1492.<sup>21</sup> In September, he reported that "The fortifications of sea are worked on continuously, although not as much as I would like."<sup>22</sup> A few months later, in February 1493, Ferdinand and Isabella replied saying "And regarding the work on the castles of the coast, because for these works it seems there is great necessity and it already is the time to work on them, we ordered Juan Daza to despatch eight hundred thousand maravedis."<sup>23</sup> The letter then goes on to describe additional funding, so these construction projects had the attention of the crown.

On a more active level, Castilian forces were soon expanding their role on the African continent. In 1497, the monarchs commanded the duke of Medina Sidonia, Juan Alfonso Pérez de Guzmán, to take Melilla on the Moroccan coast, beginning a

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<sup>21</sup> Fernando de Zafra to Ferdinand and Isabella, Granada, 22 August 1492, in *Colección de documentos inéditos para la Historia de España*, ed. Martín Fernández de Navarrete, vol. 11 (Madrid: 1847): 487. [http://books.google.es/books/about/Colecci%C3%B3n\\_de\\_documentos\\_in%C3%A9ditos\\_para.html?hl=es&id=6qeDr6denZMC](http://books.google.es/books/about/Colecci%C3%B3n_de_documentos_in%C3%A9ditos_para.html?hl=es&id=6qeDr6denZMC).

<sup>22</sup> Fernando de Zafra to Ferdinand and Isabella, Granada, 22 September 1492, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 11:489: "En las fortalezas de la mar se labra continuamente, aunque no tanto como yo querria..."

<sup>23</sup> Ferdinand and Isabella to Fernando de Zafra, Barcelona, 26 February 1493, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 11:512: "Y quanto á lo de las obras de los castillos de la costa de la mar, porque destas obras parece que hay mas necesidad y es ya buen tiempo para labrar en ellas, mandamos consignar en Juan Daza ochosientos mil maravedís..."

long Spanish presence there. On her deathbed, in fact, Isabella urged her husband to "wage war unremittingly against the Moors" in North Africa.<sup>24</sup>

Zafra's letters, however, also contain much about the situation of the Granadan Muslims in these post conquest years. In general his portrayal of Granada's Muslims is quite positive, though it should be borne in mind that such a depiction also reflects well on him as an official in the region. He takes great pains to stress their loyalty and peacefulness, stating for instance in one of his many reports to the Catholic Monarchs, this particular document dealing principally with the prominent Muslims who were leaving, that "these moors (of Granada) are quite tranquil and very much at the service of your highnesses, such that it appears no people in the world could be more so."<sup>25</sup> Another letter from August of 1493 describes the *Mudéjars* living in the Alpujarras in similar terms, though as we will see they would not stay that way for long. On one occasion, Zafra writes "Of this place (Granada and environs) there is nothing else to tell your Highnesses other than that the more I see of this land, the better it seems to me; and since I saw the Alpujarra and her produce, I gave and still give many and greater and more thanks to our Lord for the fortunate result he granted your Highnesses in this holy conquest," extolling the virtues and prosperity, rather than the difficulties, of the still overwhelmingly Muslim populated kingdom.<sup>26</sup>

The old Granadan nobility, much of which was moving out in this period, is described respectfully in the texts. Their exodus and their distinction from the masses are captured again by Zafra in a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella from the end of 1492.

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<sup>24</sup> Carr, *Blood and Faith*, 72.

<sup>25</sup> Fernando de Zafra to Ferdinand and Isabella, 22 September 1493, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 11:491: "...estos moros estan muy sosegados y mucho á servicio de vuestras altezas, y tanto que gente del mundo non pueden ser mas á lo que parece..."

<sup>26</sup> Fernando de Zafra to Ferdinand and Isabella, October 1493, *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 11:553:"De acá no se ofrece otra cosa que decir á vuestras altezas sino que cuanto mas veo esta tierra, tanto me parece mejor; y desde que ví al Alpujarra y ví las cosas della, tanto dí y doy muchas y muchas mayores y mas a gracias á nuestro Señor por el buen aventurado fin que á vuestras Altezas dió en esta santa conquista..."

He predicts with a degree of exaggeration that "by summer, there will not remain here nor, I believe, in the Alpujarras anyone except for laborers and craftsman, since as I see it all the rest are on the road."<sup>27</sup> As for Boabdil, he continued to be accorded the title of king, acknowledging his former sovereign status.

Those of more humble birth, most of whom remained behind, also feature in the correspondence. Unsurprisingly, disputes arose over the interpretation of the capitulations, particularly in regard to property rights and tax payments which were sometimes difficult to determine since the traditional rights of the Granadan *Mudéjars* were based more on custom rather than written law or contracts. As a result of this confusion, in 1493 Bishop Talavera reported to the sovereigns that Zafra mounted a painstaking catalog of property in the region, "house by house and vineyard by vineyard," in order to determine the correct level of taxation under the agreement.<sup>28</sup> Zafra himself frequently wrote to the sovereigns, asking for their judgment on the matter based on the terms they had conceded. This shows Granadan and royal authorities working within the capitulations, referring to them and making decisions based on those terms. Their aim was not necessarily to find the first excuse to overrule or circumvent them, but interpret their proper meaning as effective governing documents.

Still, of course, we cannot ignore the fact that Isabella, impatient with the slow pace of conversion under Talavera's watch, sent to the city in 1499 the zealous and apparently tactless Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros. Cisneros was Isabella's former confessor before he was named Archbishop of Toledo. Soon after his arrival, the

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<sup>27</sup> Fernando de Zafra to Ferdinand and Isabella, December 1492, *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 11:504: "...venido el verano no quedarán aquí, ni aun creo que en el Alpujarra sino labradores y oficiales, que á lo que veo todos los mas estan de camino..."

<sup>28</sup> Hernando de Talavera to Ferdinand and Isabella, 1493, *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 11:525: "Fernando de Zafra tiene hechos y sacados todos los libros del Alpujarra, casa por casa, y viña por viña..."

archbishop overruled Talavera and Tendilla's moderate policy and proceeded to try bribes and, when that failed, employ heavy handed tactics in order to browbeat the Muslim population into conversion. Arabic books were burned, and prominent *Mudéjars* were imprisoned in the hopes that this would wear them down and bring about conversion. One prisoner, of the Zegrí clan, was kept locked up in harsh conditions for nearly three weeks before he finally relented and was baptised as Gonzalo Fernández Zegrí.<sup>29</sup> This naturally upset the *Mudéjars*, who considered it a direct affront to their religion and culture as well as a flagrant violation of the capitulations made less than a decade before. Cisneros' hammer blows fell hardest, however, on the *elches*, or Christians who had converted to Islam before 1492 and had gone to live in Granada when it was still a Muslim-ruled city. This is not terribly surprising, as even in the fifteenth century literature we have seen how the issue of renegades was a particularly sensitive one. In post-conquest Granada, in which thousands of Muslims remained from a Christian perspective stubbornly true to their ancestral faith, the presence of Christians who had not done so must have been particularly galling to the zealous. Conversion was supposed to run in the other direction.<sup>30</sup>

These repressive violations of the capitulations pushed the Muslims of Granada into revolt in late 1499. Those that rose in the city itself were put down rather quickly.<sup>31</sup> Outside the city other Muslims, after hearing of events in Granada, revolted as well in 1500. Contemporary chronicles and a few ballads, in addition to continuing reports from Zafra, tell the story of what happened. In these texts, we can begin to see some of the continuities and the changes that the textual Iberian Muslim would experience as Castile entered the sixteenth century. They remain a potentially

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<sup>29</sup> Carr, *Blood and Faith*, 58.

<sup>30</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 330.

<sup>31</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 138.

brave and dangerous opponent, still able to use the land and maneuver in a realistic way, retreating toward their strongholds in the mountains and then falling on Castilian forces in a ambush. They, however, no longer served a rival state, but rather were in rebellion against the Catholic Monarchs and were explicitly identified as members of a *levantimiento* (uprising), or simply a *rebelión*.<sup>32</sup> Iberian Muslims have a new identity as belligerents, one who retains the "enemy of the faith" characteristic of the last century's texts, while adding disloyalty to the crown as well.

One particularly illustrative example of textual continuities, and by far the main subject of texts about this relatively short conflict, is the death of Don Alonso de Aguilar. Aguilar was a famous Castilian nobleman and veteran of the last war with Granada, but in 1501 his forces were routed by rebels in the Aplujarras Mountains south of the city. The *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* by Andrés Bernáldez, a cleric and historian who was chaplain to the Archbishop of Seville during the time of the revolt, recounts that while advancing into rough and mountainous terrain Aguilar pursued a rebel force, and although initially successful his forces were eventually surrounded and decimated. Some fled, but became lost in the unfamiliar landscape, "at times going in circles, because they did not know or see the entrances and exits and pathways of the said mountains."<sup>33</sup> Aguilar, the great Christian captain, remained to fight it out. In an anonymous ballad written later in the sixteenth century, he struggles "like a lion" against rebel forces, despite the fact that he is "wounded in a thousand places, unable to move his sword, because of the blood he has lost."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Letter, autor unknown, date unknown, "Relación del caso de Granada," in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 36:442.

<sup>33</sup> Andrés Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, in *Crónicas de los reyes de Castilla*, ed. Cayetano Rosell. Vol. 70, *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, 697: "...á las veces rodando, como no sabian ni vian las entradas y salidas y veredas de la dicha sierra..."

<sup>34</sup> Agustín Duran ed., *Romancero General*. Vol. 16, *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1945): 102: "En mil partes ya herido no puede mover la espada; de la sangre que ha perdido..."

Regardless of his tenacity, Aguilar is eventually killed and the Castilian troops suffer a major reverse.

Both ballad and chronicle show, as they had in the frontier ballads, an awareness of the on the ground reality of campaigns in this mountainous land and the great impact that proper use and knowledge of terrain could have had. Aguilar's unfortunate fleeing soldiers became lost without all important guides. Moreover, although the rebels did have the advantage of terrain their defeat is not explained a way as the result of trickery but acknowledged as the result of rebel efforts and skill. Furthermore, the rebel forces wage a "cruel and bloody battle," so they are given some degree of the martial respect which their frontier predecessors were previously accorded. After an initial setback, they rally and come at the Christians "suddenly with great fury."<sup>35</sup>

These rebels, however, are nonetheless different than the warriors who fought in the service of the former emirate. With the departure of the nobility, there are no "Moorish" heroes such as those who featured so prominently as counterparts to the Christians in earlier texts, whether nobles or at least individuals, to give the enemy a face. The vanquishers of the great warrior Aguilar are an anonymous crowd, in both chronicle and ballad only described as "muchos." They have no identifiable leader, especially unusual for ballads, and overwhelm Aguilar and his men through their numbers and are given no individuality or personality.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, they are portrayed exclusively from a Christian viewpoint. We see Aguilar's agonizing death in great detail, but given the absence of a rebel figure of comparable stature, the Muslims are silent characters. Assuming the perspective of a Granadan elite, as occurred many times in *fronterizo* ballads of the fifteenth century, may be a worthy literary exercise.

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<sup>35</sup> Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, 697.

<sup>36</sup> Duran, *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, 16:102.

Getting inside the head of mostly lowborn rebels is apparently not.<sup>37</sup> These ballads and chronicles are not strictly contemporary with the events they describe, but they do help show how the position of Moriscos in literary texts was beginning to change. Between the combatants, there is no longer the commonality of a similar noble identity that emerges even in the face of religious difference.

Despite Aguilar's fate, however, the rebellion was suppressed later in 1501. Beginning in the city of Granada, Muslims were required to convert to Christianity as part of a royal pardon for their collective disloyalty. As other regions were pacified, this order was extended to the whole of the old emirate's territory. In Granada, in one day, thousands came to be baptized. Cisneros' dream was accomplished more quickly than even he likely could have hoped, but the manner in which it was done laid the foundations not for unity and peace, but even more difficult problems and uncertainties to come. But for now, those consequences were in the future. Eager to preserve and expand upon this great gain of souls, Isabella promulgated a second decree, in 1502, commanding all Muslims within the kingdom of Castile, meaning those outside of Granada, to convert or to leave. Now that the Granadans had been converted, the order reasoned, having other Muslims potentially living near by would serve as a reminder of their old ways and tempt them into "apostasy."<sup>38</sup>

### **Early Sixteenth Century Developments**

This order represents a major in change in the legal status of what were now officially the former Muslims of Castile as well as the legal conception of society.

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<sup>37</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 116, 127, 134.

<sup>38</sup> "The Expulsion of Muslims from Castile and León: Royal Edict of Muslim Expulsion," in *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim and Jewish Sources*, ed. Olivia Remie Constable (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011): 535.

The conversions themselves, though significant, are not in themselves so unexpected. After all, they were in the aftermath of a revolt, and there is precedent for settlements being revoked or altered in cases such as this. In the thirteenth century, for example, Fernando III, famous as the conqueror of Cordoba, Seville and the rest of Andalusia, made agreements with towns and regions as he advanced, allowing native Muslim inhabitants to stay if they surrendered. But following a major revolt in these regions shortly afterward, the new *Mudéjars* were expelled from the urban areas and much of the countryside.<sup>39</sup> Fernando's measures, however, did not include forced conversion. In 1500 and 1502, although exile was offered as an option, it was at terms restrictive enough to ensure that the overwhelming majority of the population would have to stay and, it was hoped, be assimilated through conversion.<sup>40</sup> This is a far cry from the expulsion of a century later.

As the sixteenth century dawns, we will expand beyond Granada and take a broader look at Castilian society to gain a sense of the context in which, in the wake of these rapid changes, representations of Iberian Muslims and their culture evolved in Castilian literature. This will involve looking at critical factors influencing views toward Moriscos and Islamic culture in the early sixteenth century, as well as the historical context in which these developed.

After these conversions in 1502, the Muslims of Castile became Moriscos, the term used to describe the newly converted to distinguish them from the "Old Christians." Despite this blanket term, however, there was considerable diversity among them. The majority of Castile's Moriscos, perhaps 200,000 were unsurprisingly concentrated in the lands of the former Granadan emirate, and there were also large populations in the provinces of Murcia and in some areas of

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<sup>39</sup> O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 365.

<sup>40</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 39.

Extremadura.<sup>41</sup> Many of these were rural dwellers who were mostly poor if not destitute.<sup>42</sup> In the north, the Morisco population was more sparse.

Although there were many prosperous Moriscos, and even some noble families who stayed behind and remained substantial land owners, the popular perception was that most Moriscos were poor and humble.<sup>43</sup> They would have resembled much more closely the peasants featured in the ballad "En Santa Gadea de Burgos" in the last chapter, who according to the Cid's curse will kill King Alfonso if he had hand in his brother's death, than with the noble Granadans of the frontier ballads.<sup>44</sup> This does not mean that Moriscos were illiterate or culturally stagnant however. Morisco communities continued to produce works such as the Aljamiado literature, a mixture of Arabic script with romance languages.<sup>45</sup> Despite these areas of vitality, authors note that the Moriscos were only weakly connected with much of the Islamic world, and the work of those who continued to follow Islam in secret focused more strongly on preserving their Islamic traditions in a difficult environment than embarking on new cultural movements.<sup>46</sup>

Within the wider society of Castile, even after their conversions Moriscos frequently remained a group apart. They were subject to specific laws and regulations, and often were required to pay additional fees and taxes to the government and local authorities even though they had been nominally converted.<sup>47</sup> Indeed the conversion complicated matters for the Moriscos and for Old Christians a great deal. Writings from the period show that important acts like baptism, which

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>42</sup> Domínguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain*, 168.

<sup>43</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 38.

<sup>44</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, 78.

<sup>45</sup> Kathryn Miller, *Guardians of Islam: Religious Authority and Muslim Communities in Late Medieval Spain* (New York: Columbia, 2008), 78.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 106.

<sup>47</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 182.

Moriscos were required to undergo, were imparted with real significance in themselves by theologians considering if forced baptisms were valid.<sup>48</sup> As sacraments, they were not just outward symbols of inner belief, but had actual power to bring about spiritual change. Someone who underwent this process and continued to practice non-Christian beliefs was in theory not just a hypocrite, forced though that hypocrisy would be, but a heretic or apostate, an even more serious problem.

In practice, most religious and secular authorities were more reasonable at first, recognizing that people could not possibly be expected to understand and practice a new faith overnight.<sup>49</sup> Though this did not in the end materialize, there was to be a period of instruction for the new converts, in which clergy would instruct them and their children in their new faith.<sup>50</sup> In fact, much of the first half of the sixteenth century ended up being somewhat of a legal transition time. Charles V conceded that for decades after the conversions Moriscos would not be subjected to the Inquisition, and for most of this period Morisco customs were allowed to stand. In 1526, an ecclesiastical council convened in Granada did promulgate restrictions on these customs. Repressing these practices was apparently not a matter of great urgency for the crown however, since Charles agreed to postpone their implementation for forty years in exchange for a payment.<sup>51</sup>

The practices targeted were varied, ranging from clothing to the celebration of traditional festivals to dietary customs. Even though such a ban may seem indiscriminate and heavy-handed, an expression of an unequivocal desire to make

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<sup>48</sup> Benjamin Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2006), 17.

<sup>49</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 119.

<sup>50</sup> Casey, *Early Modern Spain*, 225.

<sup>51</sup> Dominguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain*, 169.

Spain "Spanish," in reality the situation was more nuanced.<sup>52</sup> There is mention, for instance, of Christian women adopting similar dress to their Morisca counterparts.<sup>53</sup> As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Islamic inspired style and aesthetics continued to be popular, especially among elites. Foreign visitors often remarked on the "moorishness" of Spanish customs.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, it caused problems at times. When Spanish and English ladies interacted at court, brought together due to the marriage of Philip II with Mary Tudor, neither was used to the customs of the other. Spanish ladies, for instance preferred to sit on cushions as Iberians of both faiths had done for centuries, rather than in northern European chairs.<sup>55</sup> This is just one example of a host of traditions, personal styles and architectural conventions that harkened back to the Islamic past and displayed its enduring influence. There is even some debate among scholars as to the degree to which their Castilian practitioners would have recognised these traditions as Islamic in origin, since after so many years they had been adopted as simply Spanish or, maybe more properly, Iberian.<sup>56</sup> Attitudes, as has been said, may not be so quick to change as policies can be.

Even if these practices may have not been viewed explicitly as Islamic, however, there were some traditions that were fully recognized as "Moorish" and yet still were employed by Spanish elites in specific contexts. *Juegos de cañas*, also a frequent activity in the fifteenth century, remained popular among the Castilian nobility well into the sixteenth. Nobles would even dress in costumes meant to be Islamic, in order to participate in a game which they knew to be Islamic in origin. It

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<sup>52</sup> By "make Spain Spanish" I mean emphasizing Christian and European influences and rejecting Islamic ones.

<sup>53</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 70.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. Use of the term "Iberian" does not imply that sixteenth century Spaniards would have conceived of such a cultural identity, but rather that they would not necessarily have viewed some practices of Islamic origin as being foreign, due to their long integration into Christian culture as well.

has been suggested that Spain's Islamic past had become, as it developed into a major European power, something of an embarrassment that the suppression efforts hoped to expunge.<sup>57</sup> Of course the survival of some elements does not disprove this idea. After so many centuries, it would likely be impossible to exterminate this legacy entirely even if that were a goal, and certainly not within a few decades.

Yet, the way in which customs like *juegos de cañas* were practiced suggests that even this was not an objective, not even for leaders who were likely most aware of and sensitive to foreign opinion. *Juegos de cañas* were not some secret pastime that Castilians kept to themselves, but were proudly and publicly proclaimed as one of their traditions even knowing its Islamic roots.<sup>58</sup> For instance when future King Philip the Fair who was from Flanders in northern Europe visited the realm for the first time in 1501, he was treated to just such a display as part of the welcoming ceremony.<sup>59</sup> At this time Philip was still only Duke of Burgundy and husband to Ferdinand and Isabella's daughter Juana, heir to the thrones of Castile and Aragon. This certainly does not seem like an action that would be taken by someone trying to hide an Islamic past.

The incident described above is by no means the only example of Castilians enjoying Iberian Islamic culture. Morisco dances were, on special occasions, included as part of ceremonies in which Moriscos participated. To welcome Charles V and his wife Isabella of Portugal in 1526 Granadan organizers, though it is uncertain exactly who, included a troupe of Moriscos performing these dances in the welcoming festivities.<sup>60</sup> This was the same year in which Charles would order the conversion of Aragonese Muslims, and also have to be paid in order to prevent the

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<sup>57</sup> Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*, 107.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>60</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 122.

implementation of repressive ordinances against Morisco culture (though not the dances, which were not included in the 1526 restrictions).<sup>61</sup> The customs themselves were not, possibly, the real problem. In appropriate and relatively official settings, they could be quite popular, adding color to festivities and representing a long, but now thanks to the reconquest subdued, Islamic heritage. However, practiced independently by the descendants of these Muslims, they could instead be viewed as a symbol of deliberate resistance to assimilation and conversion.

Still, policymakers and many figures writing about current affairs continued to debate the Morisco situation and what the best policy should be. Nobody advocated allowing converts to return to Islam or continue practicing it in secret, but nonetheless there remained significant differences of opinion. Educating the Moriscos and bringing them into full participation in the faith remained a goal, but its implementation was always problematic. Continuing to treat Moriscos as a separate and suspect people after conversion certainly did not help, but on a more basic level the ecclesiastical infrastructure in many Morisco areas was poor.<sup>62</sup> This was a more acute problem in Aragon, but Castile also often had difficulty finding priests to staff the Morisco parishes who were willing and able to do the job effectively. One of the most formidable barriers was linguistic, since the Romance speaking priest and his Morisco parishioners often literally could not understand each other.<sup>63</sup>

This debate, moreover, went beyond simply discussing the best way to convert. Another issue raised was whether the Moriscos should be regarded as Spaniards who, by virtue of their long presence in the land, deserve a place in the kingdom. Related to this was the question of whether the only obstacle to full inclusion was conversion, or if Moriscos were in fact descendents of the invaders of

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>63</sup> Casey, *Early Modern Spain*, 225.

711. If so, that would make them more African than Iberian, with blood that would forever incline them to resist conversion and assimilation into a Christian society.<sup>64</sup> Also debated was whether Morisco cultural practices were merely that, and would not undermine their ability to become Christian, or were they in fact inextricably bound with Islam. If linked to Islam, prevailing opinion held that those practices must be proscribed in order to sever Islamic connections.<sup>65</sup> Another fear was that Moriscos could serve as a potential fifth column, aiding potential Muslim invaders from the Mediterranean, and thus a danger, while others cited their economic benefits instead.<sup>66</sup>

It is important to note however that these debates were not constant throughout the period, but rather ebbed and flowed. Naturally, they were particularly pertinent in the 1520s, around the time when the final conversions were taken place, though those were outside of Castile. This was also the time when Charles had to be paid to suspend the first set of laws prescribing many, though not all, Morisco cultural practices which were associated with Islam. Then, while those ordinances were put on hold, discussion died down again for a time, only to pick up again toward mid century. At that time, the Ottoman threat from the Mediterranean and Spain's engagement with Protestantism in Europe made it more conscious of its internal security and religious self image.<sup>67</sup> The Morisco issue did not exist in a vacuum, but rather responded to the world around it.

That world underwent important changes in the early sixteenth century. Not only the Moriscos, but the entire realm of Castile was embroiled in historic and large scale change in this era. Just as it is important to bear in mind the new situation of Moriscos and their culture within sixteenth century Castile, we also need to

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<sup>64</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 186; Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 117.

<sup>65</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 122.

<sup>66</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society 1400-1600*, 106.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 254.

understand how circumstances had changed for Castile itself. The most prominent change was the expansion of Castile's political world. In the fifteenth century, it had been a peninsular state. Its great struggles, aside from occasional peripheral involvement with the French and English Hundred Years' War, were between itself and Granada, its Christian neighbors and its relatively frequent civil wars. Due to conquests in the New World, and even more importantly the accession of Charles V, already ruler of extensive Habsburg lands, Castile was thrust into the center of a huge polity. This was not a unitary state, of course, but nonetheless historians agree that Charles relied disproportionately on the resources of Castile, which was the most secure and directly governed of his realms.<sup>68</sup>

Though this represented an immense burden, it also meant that Castilian attention, along with that of its writers, could be pulled in many different directions. We have already seen how the fall of Granada did not mean an end to political engagement with Islamic states, through diplomacy, war and of course, economics, in the south. Now the north, west and east were factors as well. America, the Low Countries, Austria, Germany and Italy and were pulled in, while the Mediterranean increased in significance as the Turks reached out from the east. In fact, as we will see, chroniclers and ballad-smiths who before focused so much on Iberia now found a wider array of subjects to document and dramatize than the subjected Granadans and their fellow ex-Muslims. So, Castile's elimination of the last Islamic state on the peninsula was, in this view, just one of the earliest in a string of changes that would create a radically altered world for sixteenth century writers from that of the fifteenth.

Another event which shook the whole of Europe and reverberated in Castile was the Reformation. Castilian resources and also manpower were heavily involved

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<sup>68</sup> Domínguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain*, 57.

in fighting Protestant powers as the century unfolded. Protestantism itself, though there were some small groups that emerged, simply never obtained much of a foothold in Castile or Iberia as a whole.<sup>69</sup> The Castilian church underwent a reform of its own beginning in the late fifteenth century designed among other things to reduce corruption and improve the quality an education of the clergy.<sup>70</sup> Interestingly, a leading figure in this movement was Cardinal Cisneros, who could be just as uncompromising with Christians who did not measure up to his standards as he could with Muslims unwilling to convert.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, although this process was just beginning in the first half of the sixteenth century, Castile came to identify itself as the foremost defender of Catholicism.<sup>72</sup> All of these changes had implications on the course which the development of Castilian textual representations of Iberian Muslims and their culture.

### **Continuity in Text, Change in Life**

Now, it is time to shift our discussion to Castilian literature of this period that deals with Iberian Islam. The focus here will rest on texts less directly connected with the debates mentioned above, so as to have the benefit of a wider perspective. Nevertheless, awareness of those debates is necessary to demonstrate the divergence between positive literary depictions of Muslims and Islamic culture and their actual status in early sixteenth-century Castilian society. Literature does not hold all the answers, but it does show that Castilians could express a wider range of attitudes than those suggested by the realm's newly emerging policies. Thus, it helps us to

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<sup>69</sup> Stuart B Schwartz, *All Can be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 24.

<sup>70</sup> John Edwards, *The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 220.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.

<sup>72</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 7.

understand additional ways in which authors related to Iberian Islam. In this section we will begin to see what happens to the portrayal of Muslims in these texts after the end of the peninsular frontier and the conversion of the kingdom's Muslims, nominally at least, to Christianity. Despite the significant changes in the status of Moriscos and in Castile's political situation, there are many continuities with the fifteenth century in the ways that Castilian authors engage with Iberian Islam in texts. The historical context in which they are produced, however, has been greatly altered. In this sense, sixteenth-century literary depictions of Iberian Islam more often diverge from its contemporary situation when compared with the fifteenth century.

According to Ramón Menéndez Pidal ballads were the most popular, and certainly most printed, form of literature in sixteenth century Spain.<sup>73</sup> The traditions of the fifteenth century, if anything, gained steam as the sixteenth dawned, as poets and writers incorporated classical influences into this popular literary form.<sup>74</sup> In the early years of the century ballads circulated on printed broadsheets called *pliegos sueltos*, but by mid-century they were being collected and printed in bound editions. It is from these volumes that most of the ballads known today have been preserved, besides some collected directly from oral tradition in rural Spain or Sephardic diasporas in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>75</sup> It is also from these books that the ballads examined in this chapter are drawn. I have selected those which scholarly consensus has dated to the early to mid sixteenth century.<sup>76</sup>

Chronicles in this period, unfortunately, begin to lose some of their usefulness for providing insight into attitudes toward Islamic culture and Moriscos in sixteenth century Castile. After the fall of Granada, Iberian Islam lost its connection with a

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<sup>73</sup> Menéndez Pidal, *Flor Nueva de Romances Viejos*, 39.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>75</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 124.

<sup>76</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, vols. 10 & 16.

significant political entity. Wars, alliances, and diplomacy which often provided subject matter for chroniclers no longer involved peninsular Muslims. Iberian Muslims had all become subjects of Christian realms. Due to the exodus of elites, they were often fairly humble ones as well. After 1502 in Castile and 1526 in Aragon, moreover, there officially were no Muslims at all. *Mudéjar* subjects had not featured prominently in chronicles focusing on high politics and the affairs of rulers and important figures, so it is not surprising that Moriscos should suffer a similar fate. They had lost agency or significance, but their story is frustratingly not of the kind that is often recorded by chroniclers. Other kinds of prose writers, however, help to fill in some of this gap. Recorders of history instead of contemporary events also showed an interest in Iberian Islam in this period. The anonymous author of a short chronicle, about the history of the Emirate of Granada under Islamic rule which originates from the middle of the century, was one of these figures.

In many ways, the literature of the period remains quite similar to that which came before. Indeed, even the subject matter from which ballad writers drew is often similar, the stories of King Rodrigo and the Muslim invasion of 711, Fernán González and Castile's birth, the Cid, the Infantes de Lara, and the fifteenth century frontier to name a few. In these tales Muslims and Christians, especially nobles and heroes, continue to do battle with one another.

Dealing with the semi mythic past in the aftermath of the initial Muslim invasion a mid-century ballad by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, an author from an important family of Seville, describes the battle of Covadonga. This encounter is credited in epic tradition as the first Christian victory of the reconquest. Sepúlveda is a significant ballad author of the sixteenth century, and his work will appear again in this chapter. Specifically, his ballads are drawn from a collection which he published

in 1551, *Romances Nuevamente Sacados de Historias Antiguas de la Crónica de España*. In the prologue to this work, Sepúlveda lays out his intention to present his ballads, drawn from existing stories, as an example of great deeds.<sup>77</sup> He also announces that he has tried to emulate the style of *romances viejos*, meaning those ballads which originate from the fifteenth century and earlier.<sup>78</sup> Quite consciously, he is claiming a connection with the literary past.

Returning to the ballad, it begins with the hero Don Pelayo pushed back into the mountains of Asturias after the invasion. With his few followers, he is surrounded in a hideout by a host of Muslims led by a commander named Almazán. Pelayo is urged to surrender, promised great riches in return if he complies. He angrily refuses and, putting his trust in God, steels himself to resist. Though his foes were many, Pelayo charges out with his small band and sweeps all before them, scattering their adversaries. The author, employing a tried and true device to illustrate the importance he wishes to attribute to the victory, reports Pelayo's men killing an improbable twenty thousand of the enemy.<sup>79</sup>

Muslims, likewise, are still shown taking an active role, raiding the Christian realms as they had for centuries before the conquest of Granada. In an anonymous ballad about the ever popular Cid included in Sepúlveda's 1551 publication, the author describes a highly successful raiding party led by five Muslim kings. "With great boastfulness," the rulers penetrate deep into Castile. No one had been able to stand against them so they head, "successful and rich," back to their own lands. Behind them follows a mournful train of captives, "many men and women, and also girls and

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<sup>77</sup> Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, *Romances nuevamente sacados de historias antigua de la crónica de España*, (En Casa de Pedro Bellerio: 1580): 1.  
[http://books.google.es/books?id=5tIjqNt2sYgC&dq=sepulveda+romances+nuevamente+scados&hl=es&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.es/books?id=5tIjqNt2sYgC&dq=sepulveda+romances+nuevamente+scados&hl=es&source=gbs_navlinks_s)

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>79</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 10: 411.

boys." Hearing of this, the Cid, though only a young man with a few companions, rides out and defeats the enemy force. He frees the captives and captures the five kings in turn. Though this encounter may not have the legendary significance of Pelayo's stand, once more a lopsided victory is used to single out the virtues of the hero, who is the only person who has been able to stop a hitherto victorious foe.<sup>80</sup>

This kind of stylization, however, is not the only way to tell of a battle. In the year 1280, the king Mahomad Mir Almuz Lemin, second Nasrid ruler of the city, gathered his men for war. Near the Muslim city of Moclín, they lay an ambush in which the Granadan force overwhelms Gonzalo Ruiz de Girón, the master of the Order of Santiago. From the author's terse account, we learn that Gonzalo is killed, along with 2,800 other soldiers who were with him.<sup>81</sup> Making use of the terrain and their local knowledge, the Muslims win a significant victory under the leadership of their ruler. This episode is found in an anonymous history of Granada published in the mid sixteenth century and, unlike many of the sources consulted so far, its author was likely not from a region near the frontier, given his unfamiliarity with local geography.<sup>82</sup> It was not a famous work, but it shares many similarities with another history of Granada by prominent sixteenth century historian Esteban de Garibay.<sup>83</sup> The same chronicler describes another similar encounter taking place many years later, though this time the unfortunate Castilian is the master of the Order of Alcántara.<sup>84</sup> These battles reflect the realism found in so many fifteenth century accounts, where terrain and sound tactics play an important role in textual depictions of military success.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 485.

<sup>81</sup> Mata Carriazo. "Historia de la Casa Real de Granada," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 157.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 177.

Positive, or at least neutral, depictions of Muslims similar to those of the last century also continue to appear. They do not lack for martial skill or courage, and are almost never trifling foes. Defending the town of Jerez against Muslim forces in another ballad by Sepúlveda, this one set in the thirteenth century, "a very honorable knight" named Garci Gómez de Carillo and a few other men stubbornly hold out in the town's fortress. The Granadan attack is so fierce that "they have not stopped fighting, days as well as nights," and in the end the defenders are overwhelmed.<sup>85</sup> There are however certainly plenty of counter examples where Muslims do not acquit themselves so well, especially in those set towards the end of the emirate when Castile began once again to make a string of significant gains. According to an anonymous ballad, an expedition which set out from Ronda under the command of its Muslim lord Albohacen was put unceremoniously to flight. Upon confronting the enemy, the Christian leader Rodrigo Ponce de León exhorted his troops to battle, after which they "Unfolded their banners, wounded the Moors vigorously, made great slaughter among them."<sup>86</sup> A degree of triumphalism is understandable in this late context of what was, in hindsight, the eve of a great victory.

As to more personal descriptions of Iberian Muslims, here too there is bravery and valour to be found, and honor as well. For instance Juan de Timoneda, who published a ballad collection in 1573 which drew together popular ballads, some of which he reworked, includes a ballad depicting a confrontation between the Cid and a Muslim ruler. The Cid challenges the Muslim ruler, Abdalla the King of Seville, to battle. Each warrior arrives bedecked in his fine arms and armor, the Cid shouts to Abdalla not to show cowardice and fight him. To this, Abdalla responds "there is no man born from whom I would hide, for since my childhood I always shunned

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<sup>85</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 16:20: "De combatir no han cesado los dias, tambien las noches."

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 16:95: "...sus banderas descogian. Hirieron recio en los moros, en ellos matanza hacian."

cowardice."<sup>87</sup> In the end, the Cid kills his rival and emerges victorious, but certainly being defeated by the Cid himself was no great dishonor. Identifying terms also do not undergo much alteration. Iberian Muslims are still often referred to in the neutral way of identifying them as being "of Granada," or some other peninsular town. They have a place and belong in these texts, even as the nature of that place in the present was being debated. On the other hand, they also continue to be infidels, "enemies of the faith," and occasionally pagans. But in the historic setting dealt with by sixteenth-century authors, unlike in post-conversion Castile, it was possible to be both.

Perhaps most interestingly, some authors also continue to maintain a distinction between Muslims of Africa and those of Iberia. It would appear that distance in time and the danger of coastal raids did not erode this understanding in all texts. This is significant, since as was mentioned above part of the debate over how to treat Morisco culture involved discussion as to the origins of the Moriscos as a people.<sup>88</sup> Cleric and polemicist Bernardo Pérez de Chinchón, from a town near Madrid, identified the Moriscos with "the Arabs of Barbary" and "the Moors of Africa" in a 1530s work denouncing the "errors" of Islam.<sup>89</sup> So, some Castilians did express opinions that Moriscos were essentially a foreign element, originating in Africa rather than the peninsula. But, other writers show that the "Moors" could be understood as a group with internal differences, those in Iberia being different from their coreligionists across the sea. The anonymous chronicler of Granadan history calls Aben Hut, a thirteenth century ruler of Andalusia, "the most powerful of the

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<sup>87</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*. 10:493: "...porque no hay hombre nacido de quien yo me esconderia, porque desde mi niñez siempre hui cobardia."

<sup>88</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 117.

<sup>89</sup> Carr, *Blood and Faith*, 98.

Moors of Spain," and identifies him as the enemy of the clearly distinct "sect of the Almohad Moors," who had crossed over from Africa.<sup>90</sup>

Until now, most of the interactions among Christian and Muslims examined have involved warfare. This as we have seen, however, was by no means the only way in which Muslims and Christians interacted in Iberian history. Authors continue to reflect that fact in the literature. The anonymous mid-century history of Granada for instance, as it tells the history of that state following its rulers reign by reign, does not shy away from the numerous diplomatic contacts between the two realms and between individuals within in them. An account of the beginning of Jucef Aben Amet's reign, from 1333 to 1354, shows him entering into an agreement with Castilian lords Gonzalo de Aguilar and his brother Fernán González. The pact is directed against King Alfonso XI of Castile, and the two Castilian nobles are said to become Jucef's "vassals."<sup>91</sup>

In a less cloak and dagger sense, we also see the North African King Abenyuya giving aid to Alfonso X in a ballad by Sepúlveda. After Alfonso is reduced to severe poverty through his efforts against rebels, including his own son, he is forced to pawn his crown to the Muslim king. Thus made aware of the dire straits in which Alfonso found himself, Abenyuya resolves to help. He tells his nobles, called his "*caballeria*," that "a great desire comes to me to go forth, to help this good king," a sentiment with which they wholeheartedly agree.<sup>92</sup> Abenyuya raises his forces and crosses the straits to Iberia and insists, upon arriving at Alfonso's court, that he be seated in a place of less honor than the Castilian monarch, "in order to be more

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<sup>90</sup> Mata Carriazo, "Historia de la Casa Real de Granada," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 153: "...era el más poderoso de todos los moros de España, a quien todos reconocían por superior, grande enemigo de la secta de los moros almohades..."

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 164

<sup>92</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 16:25: "Voluntad grande me viene de ir, y hacerlo queria a ayudar á ese buen rey..."

courteous."<sup>93</sup> These men thus interact as equals and are highly concerned with being courteous to one another. Indeed at this meeting "both of them affirm their friendship."<sup>94</sup>

These interactions however are underpinned, made possible by, and saturated with a shared noble affinity. Echoing the dominant trend in fifteenth century literature involving Muslim and Christian interaction, the main characters tend to be aristocratic in these ballads. The history depicted is largely political, military, or in a court setting, which gives noble actors pride of place. As an example, in an anonymous ballad from Sepúlveda's collection telling the story of a meeting between Pedro the Cruel and the Granadan king, the Granadan visitors take part in a *juego de cañas*. This activity, common to both Castilians and Granadans, was engaged in during meetings between representatives of either realm. A *juego de cañas* featured in the *Crónica de Miguel Lucas de Iranzo* for instance. Though it functioned as a way to demonstrate to visitors who might in the future be potential rivals the skill at arms of the warriors involved, it also was a shared practice that both sides could relate to. The tone of this particular meeting is ruined however when the much maligned Pedro betrays the Granadan king, using the opportunity of the *juego de cañas* to launch a lance at him, resulting in his death.<sup>95</sup>

Our anonymous historian of the Granadan kings meanwhile used terminology which continues to cast Granadan Muslims, at least those in the past, as fulfilling roles which correspond to Castilian noblemen. Sons of Granadan kings for example are sometimes called "infantes," like Jucef the younger son of the first king, Mahomad Aben Alhamar.<sup>96</sup> Ballads, for their part, can use similar terms. One, which Pérez de

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 26: "...por hacer mas cortesía..."

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 26: "...ambos firman su amistad..."

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>96</sup> Mata Carriazo. "Historia de la Casa Real de Granada," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 155.

Hita included in his late century *Guerras Civiles de Granada*, though it was written earlier and not by him, refers to "Granadan knights, though Moors, hidalgos."<sup>97</sup>

These examples are by no means a comprehensive treatment of every possible textual portrayal of Iberian Muslims in ballad or historical literature of the period. They do however show the great continuity between these depictions and those which are found in similar types of writing from the fifteenth century. Still, there are differences. The authors of these works are now engaging almost entirely with the past. Even if authors of the last century also told stories about Iberian Muslims through history, they did so in a context where "descendants," though not necessarily in a biological sense, of these earlier figures still existed and were a major focus of Castilian attention and consciousness. Though ballad writers and historians may continue to write about Iberian Islam after it has dropped out of the chronicles, they do so in the past. They do not engage with the sixteenth century condition of the Moriscos and their culture during these early decades. That is left to political and theological debates. So, the place of the Muslims in this literature is now determined by yet another barrier, that of time. Indeed, the making of new ballads about contemporary events in general declines after the conquest of Granada, though it does not stop entirely. Ballads detailing feats of arms and the actions of great leaders in North Africa, Italy, Germany, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Low Countries and even the Americas do appear. Their numbers though are relatively few when compared with those which modify, expand upon and refine long popular subjects from history.<sup>98</sup>

Some of this, no doubt, is due to the fact that the condition of early sixteenth century Moriscos did not lend itself well to the kind of heroic and dramatic themes

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<sup>97</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 16:88: "Caballeros Granadinos, aunque moros, hijosdalgo..."

<sup>98</sup> Wright, *Spanish Ballads*, viii.

that have predominated in the ballads which we have seen so far. This, however, was not the only way to make a ballad. Although they would not reach the height of their popularity until later in the century, other genres of ballad called *novelesque*, and later *pastoral*, instead deal with much more humble people, stories of love and chivalry, and the beauty of nature.<sup>99</sup> These are not necessarily or only very loosely based on real events. Even in these types, in the early sixteenth-century *Moriscos* and *Muslims* do not often appear and are almost never the subjects. Later in the century, they began to take their place in these situations as well, but that reaches beyond the chronological scope of this project.

The persistence of and, indeed, the enthusiasm for new versions of ballads on themes from the history of the reconquest, and history in general, suggest that *Castilians* were not trying to downplay or even dismiss their Islamic heritage and past. In this literature at least, it continued to feature quite prominently. That heritage nonetheless is placed firmly in the past. To borrow two common phrases from documents of the fifteenth centuries, the "land of the Moors" was conquered and the "time of the Moors" was over. These texts suggest that Spain's Islamic past could be something to be remembered, appreciated and even admired.

The debate over what to do about the *Moriscos* nevertheless continued. Unlike the noble Muslim figures in past settings, contemporary descendents fell under the control of Castile. As suspected heretics and possible internal security threats, their assimilation and absorption did not have to contradict remembrance of older times. The past became problematic, however, when it intersected with its most direct descendents in the present, the *Moriscos*. Among them, the survival of this legacy was often taken for a sign of their continued allegiance to Islam despite their

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<sup>99</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 22.

conversion. Texts, which moved away from depicting contemporary Morisco experience, nonetheless, remained enthusiastic about portraying past engagement with Muslims and Islamic culture in Iberia. In choosing the past, these texts retained the boundaries which had governed this relationship in the days of the frontier. Literature set in that world displayed, in the early sixteenth century, many continuities with the literature that had actually originated there.

### **Changing Texts**

Even if authors do stay in the past in subject matter, and even if there is much continuity in the way Muslims are portrayed, the contexts in which they appear and their relationships with Christians, there are some notable changes as well. Though we have seen that the literature suggests Castilians were not trying to erase the Islamic past even as they were dissenting over what to do with its legacy in their present, that literature also does not fit with the "Maurophilia" phenomenon that would develop later in the century. These depictions also take place mostly in the past; a fanciful, richly described past of chivalry and honor.<sup>100</sup> Numerous scholars of literature have studied this phenomenon, and it is sometimes set up as counterpoint, and counterargument, to the repressive measures and expulsion that Moriscos faced later in the century.<sup>101</sup> At the very least, it advocates for the inclusion of the Islamic past within the national memory. These later sixteenth century authors, however, are not the first to do this. The earlier literature is less exotic, though some signs of these developments are beginning to appear, but in general it has far more in common with

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>101</sup> Sizen Yiacoup, "Remembering Cultural Differences in the Castilian Frontier Ballads," *Anglo Spanish Society Quarterly Review*, no. 221 (2009): 5-13.

the more muted fifteenth century than later "Maurophilia." Iberian Muslims are not always exoticized or idealized in order to feature in Castilian historical memory.

Nonetheless, there are some changes appearing at this time which in hindsight at least foreshadow what was to come. They reflect the switch from writing about a people that continued to exist just beyond, and in many cases on the Castilian side, of an active frontier, to those who become strictly historical figures, more open to manipulation to meet the tastes and desired messages of authors.

One feature that rises to much greater prominence in sixteenth century texts, especially the ballads, is the role of religion and divine intervention. Although these did appear in earlier ballads, calls for divine aid and expressions of thanks in the wake of victory increase in frequency. Often, these take the form of one or two-line verses dedicated to God, or the Virgin Mary. Interestingly, the role of the legend of Santiago, the warrior patron saint who helped Christian Spaniards in the reconquest, seems if anything to grow as the century goes on. He is not only mentioned, alluded to or called upon, but actually appears, magnificently attired and attended by retinues of knights. In a ballad by Sepúlveda, Fernán González, legendary founder of Castile, finds himself surrounded and on the verge of defeat in a hard-fought and bloody battle against "Almanzor, the pagan king." Desperate, González calls to God for aid and, marking the more "supernatural" elements of the new style, receives an audible response. Santiago appears and "a great host of knights accompany him, attired with fine arms" which are emblazoned with great crosses. Almanzor, suffice to say, is soon defeated.<sup>102</sup>

The divine presence is also used much more often to explain the course of events. We have already seen how in the ballad above the deciding factor was

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<sup>102</sup> *Duran, Romancero General*, 10:466: "...Vido á Santiago, el Apóstol, que junto á él ha llegado; gran gente de caballeros lo vienen acompañando, ricas armas traen vestidas, cruces grandes en su lado..."

unambiguous divine intervention. The realism and lack of the supernatural which scholars note in the fifteenth century thus would seem to be undermined.<sup>103</sup> This manifests itself not only an abstract conception that "all things are according to God's will," but as a specific and visible kind of help. Whether or not the reader or author is actually supposed to believe the story, the direct association of divine intervention and victory is made clear by the author.

Iberian Muslims themselves are also associated with supernatural forces. In one anonymous ballad published by Juan de Timoneda in his *Rosas de Romances*, an obviously wealthy old man named Espinelo is lying ill in his sickbed. This piece of furniture is a quite extravagant construction of gold and silver, covered in a blanket sown with pearls. Espinelo recounts the story of his life to his mistress who sits beside him. The old man, we discover, is the son of the king of France. But he was born a twin and his mother feared, reflecting a superstition at the time, that giving birth to twins would lead to an accusation of adultery against her. The author writes that the mother sought advice as to what she should do, and significantly she immediately turned to "a captive Moorish woman, wise in the black arts."<sup>104</sup> Though this scene takes place in France, the author inserts a Muslim to possess the wisdom and, though it is not clear how it factored into this particular situation, occult knowledge to provide unique counsel. Her advice is for the mother to cast Espinelo out to sea in a jewelled box. He is eventually found by sailors and is presented to the sultan of Syria who adopts him, and since, Espinelo says, "the Sultan is now dead, I have reigned as the Sultan."<sup>105</sup>

Ignoring the question of how Espinelo would know all this if it happened when he was an infant, it is also striking how this Christian cast away is able to play

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<sup>103</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 40.

<sup>104</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 10:177: "...a una captiva mora, sabia en nigromancia..."

<sup>105</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 10:177: "...el Soldán agora es muerto, yo por el Soldán regía..."

the role of Muslim ruler. In fact, until the end we do not know with certainty who or where Espinelo is. This blurring of the distinction between "self" and "other" is discussed by Barbara Fuchs in *Mimesis and Empire*, where she identifies it as a key concern in Spanish literature at the time.<sup>106</sup> It is part of, and a great challenge in, the process of building and defining a Spanish identity, especially given the desire to reconcile assertively Catholic early modern Spain with its long multi-faith past.<sup>107</sup>

Associating Iberian Muslims with prophecy and magic departs from the tradition of more strict realism that had prevailed in the fifteenth century. Muslims are by no means the only people shown to have these powers in sixteenth century texts, but compared with the fifteenth century it marks a significant development.<sup>108</sup> Choosing to give Muslims connections to the supernatural serves to exoticize and differentiate. Others from marginal groups, like gypsies or many of the people accused of witchcraft (though this was far less of an issue in Castile than in northern Europe), were similarly associated with supernatural power which could potentially be dangerous.<sup>109</sup> Such powers were not always sinister, and indeed early modern Iberia was filled with people believed to have supernatural connections, some with good forces and others with darker powers.<sup>110</sup> In the ballad of Espinelo above, however, the advice is explicitly in "black arts," specifically *nigromancia*. Moreover, association with this sometimes suspect trait may be an indication of authors reflecting in texts contemporary suspicions of Moriscos and their potential disloyalty.

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<sup>106</sup> Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*, 99.

<sup>107</sup> Though this multi-faith past was not characterized by equality between those faiths.

<sup>108</sup> Richard Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams: Politics and Prophecy in Sixteenth Century Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 37.

<sup>109</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society 1400-1600*, 106.

<sup>110</sup> Kagan, *Lucrecia's Dreams*, 37.

Although Maurophilia was a somewhat later phenomenon, some elements that would mark it are beginning to make their appearance in the texts. With printing and the switch to more erudite authors, ballads tend to get longer than they had been in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.<sup>111</sup> Fifteenth century ballads had focused on the action, indeed to the point where the rest of the scene almost disappeared, but by the mid sixteenth century authors often would fill in more surrounding detail. By late century writers like Ginés Pérez de Hita would give, in ballad terms, truly extensive descriptions.

For most of the sixteenth century, however, this was not the norm. There is nonetheless a trend among authors to include more detailed and lavish description of their characters and settings. For instance, in an anonymous sixteenth century ballad a group of Christian knights sets out from Jaén on an expedition against Granada. Only three hundred strong, they encounter a force of six thousand Granadans. The author describes the sobering sight with which they are confronted, saying "they see drums beaten, they see pennants waving, they see squadrons drawn up, men on foot and on horse, they saw a thousand young Moors, and many a red burnoose; they saw many a peach colored mare, and many a chestnut stallion, many a two pointed lance, many a cutting sword, many a blue pennant, with crescents worked in silver, with shields before their breasts, all were in good armor."<sup>112</sup> Though still based on martial implements, the sparse details of weaponry and armor from fifteenth century texts has been greatly expanded upon.

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<sup>111</sup> Smith, *Spanish Ballads*, 28.

<sup>112</sup> Stanley Applebaum, ed., *Spanish Traditional Ballads: A Dual Language Book* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003), 49: "Ven tocar los atambores, ven pendones campeando, ven poner los escuadrones, los de pie y los de caballo, vieron mil moros mancebos, tanto alborno colorado; vieron tanat yegua overa, tanto caballo alazano, tanta lanza con dos fierros, tanto del fiero acerado, tantos pendones azules y de lunas plateados; con tanta adarga ante pechos, cada cual muy bien armado."

Christian figures also can be very richly described, so this general growth in the use of descriptive imagery is not something which is associated only with Muslims. But, in their specifics they do nonetheless contain details that serve to show differences between these cultural groups. The "burnoose" is a translation of *albornoz*, which was a term for a kind of cloak worn by Iberian Muslims, while the blue pennants with silver crescents invoke Islamic symbolism. In a historical literary setting, these serve to mark Muslims and help the reader or listener to imagine that past. But the fact that these items can serve as markers also singles out Muslims. In real life, the continued attachment of Moriscos to their traditional styles could also be an identifier.<sup>113</sup> In sixteenth century Castile, however, it was often interpreted, in the spirit of the cultural suppression edicts, as resistance to assimilation and Christianity rather than a convenient way to associate a character or situation with Islam, safely located within a literary past. Celebration in text does not have to cross over into acceptance in daily life. Still, it is striking that at the same time as church and state authorities were urging the suppression of Islamic cultural practices among the Moriscos, some writers were expanding the representation of these things in their texts.

Another instance of the separation of textual representation of Islamic culture from actual Muslims can be found in the way that authors describe Islamic cities captured by Christian rulers. In the anonymous mid-century history of Granada which was referred to earlier, the author begins his story by telling his readers about the city's geographical setting, physical appearance, and ancient history. He attributes its origins to the Romans, and his first mention of an Islamic role in its shaping is that the city grew in part because of the destruction which the invading eighth century

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<sup>113</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society*, 106.

forces caused in other nearby towns. The text also expressed the elegance and agricultural abundance of the city and its "vast and beautiful *vega* very abundant with a great diversity of produce," which is not uncommon, but he does not connect these with the Muslim builders and shapers of this city and landscape.<sup>114</sup> Later in the history he does provide the story of the construction of the Alhambra by the city's Muslim rulers. It is notable, however, that in writing the introduction to a history of the Muslim ruling house of Granada, the city which most recently served as the center of Iberian Islam, the author makes almost no mention of Iberian Muslims. This dissociation will factor once again in the works examined in the next chapter.

In ballad form, meanwhile, there are more explicit examples of sites which have a long Islamic legacy being disassociated with that past. In an anonymous ballad dating from the first half of the sixteenth century, published later in the *Cancionero de Romances*, we hear a Muslim seer predicting the loss of Valencia to the Christians. He describes the city, its high towers and its strong walls, its gardens and its fountains, and how all of it will be lost to the Muslims.<sup>115</sup> Instead, Christians will take over and enjoy the possession of this wonderful city. So, we can see again that there is less contradiction between celebration of the culture and being uncomfortable with the presence of real Muslim descendents in Iberia than may at first appear. That legacy does not need actual Muslims in order to be appreciated.

Finally, there are some texts which truly do approach the requirements for Maurophilia, with visually stunning prose and highly romantic plotlines. One such text is a ballad telling of the chivalrous deeds attributed to Rodrigo Tellez de Girón, a grand master of the Order of Calatrava, in the fifteenth century. In 1482 he lost his life in the service of the Catholic Monarchs during the Granada War. This ballad

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<sup>114</sup> Mata Carriazo, "Historia de la Casa Real de Granada," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 152: "Tiene al rededor una hermosa y espaciosa bega muy abundante de diuersidad de fructas..."

<sup>115</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 10:534.

comes from the collection *Rosa Española* compiled by Timoneda, so it is a little later than those which have primarily been focused on so far. The story opens with Don Rodrigo riding in full armor, apparently alone, across the Vega of Granada, his lance dripping with the blood of the challengers he had killed along the way. He comes up to the very gates of the Alhambra, and the queen's ladies in waiting notice his arrival. After they inform the queen of Rodrigo's arrival her reaction, interestingly, is simply to send a servant outside to see what he wants. Rodrigo, who calls this servant "my friend," says that he wishes to challenge a Granadan knight "to come drive me from the vega," "in order to be of service to the ladies (of the palace)."<sup>116</sup>

One man, Barbarín, takes up this challenge and rides out to meet Rodrigo. Though the challenger has promised the queen that he will kill Rodrigo, once outside he tells the Christian that if he surrenders he'll let him live, and thus presumably collect ransom money. Rodrigo is appalled at this contemplated breach of faith, and calls on Barbarín to uphold his oath to the noble ladies. They fight, and through his great skill at arms Rodrigo wounds Barbarín, who, "desperate," proceeds to run away. Rodrigo curses him shouting "Coward wait! You will insult the ladies if you don't keep your promise," and as Barbarín flees Rodrigo hurls his lance at him, which makes contact and sends Barbarín to his grave. Rodrigo then returns to the gate and informs the Queen's servant that her unworthy champion had not been able to fulfil his oath to defend her honor and that of the ladies of her court. But, he also commands him to tell the Queen that he is willing to serve her instead, fulfilling the role which the Granadan champion is unable to fill.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 16:112: " 'Amigo, dezí a Su Alteza que si cavallero moro huviere que lo merezca, que por servir a las damas me venga a echar la Vega.' "

<sup>117</sup> Duran, *Romancero General*, 16:112: " 'Covarde, ¡espera! que te affrentarán las damas si no cumples tu promesa.' "

This summary is rather long, but this ballad contains excellent examples of important themes which can be found in period texts about Iberian Muslims and their customs. We have seen how they can be competent and courageous fighters, even if they are often overcome by Christians in the end. When they are defeated en masse, like when Pelayo or the Cid is able to cut down thousands with a small band, the defeated are mostly faceless and serve as literary devices more than full-fledged depictions of Iberian Muslims. Here, though, we get a more complete picture which turns out, in the end, not to be very complimentary. The characters are still assigned similar roles, Rodrigo and Barbarín are both knights, while the noble ladies of the Granadan court are just as worthy of chivalrous protection as Christian ones would be.

But, Barbarín's characterization shows signs of the "feminization" of Iberian Muslims that is found in some texts.<sup>118</sup> The legend of "the Moor's last sigh," is illustrative of this. Boabdil, as he leaves for exile, turns back atop the last rise that, once he descends, will obscure Granada from his view forever, and sheds a quiet tear. His step-mother upbraids him for this saying, "what you weren't ready to defend as a man, don't cry about like a woman."<sup>119</sup> Barbarín too, ultimately, is unable to defend the ladies it is his duty to protect. He is ineffectual and, in the end, cowardly. Not to mention, he is also faithless, since he offers to ransom Rodrigo instead of killing him as he pledged. In the end, it is the victorious Castilian nobleman who offers to take on the role that his defeated opponent failed so miserably to carry out.

Still there is another more hopeful element to this as well. The result of victory in this text is not destruction or expulsion, but the assumption of responsibility. Rodrigo assumes the role of defender of the women that the Granadan

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<sup>118</sup> Jan Gilbert, "The Lamentable Loss of Alhama in Paseabase el Rey Moro," *The Modern Language Review* 100, no.4 (2005)1000-1014.

<sup>119</sup> Mata Carriazo, "Historia de la Casa Real de Granada," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 192: "que pues no abía sido para defenderla como hombre, que no llorase como muger."

Barbarín failed to protect. This is reminiscent of the previous ballads about Christian appropriation of the cities they took from their rivals. The virtues of the places themselves, mostly the result of Islamic work at the time of their capture, are celebrated. The former rulers are driven out, but taking over the government of the magnificence left behind is a source of pride for the victors, not shame that it was ever built in their land to begin with.

### **Closing**

The fall of Granada and the furious cascade of policy changes that followed did not bring about so quick a change in attitudes toward Iberian Muslims in Castilian texts. Indeed, far from trying to forget and expel the Islamic past, these writers celebrated it and continued to use it as a basis for their writings. Still, their use of this legacy remained firmly in the past, their depictions separated from contemporary Moriscos. Attention to contemporary Moriscos and their culture in fact is scant in this literature. These aspects, now that the Moriscos were subjects, were dealt with in political and theological debates. Just as political and class boundaries once helped allow for understanding and relating to Muslims in terms that were much more varied, nuanced and reflective of real experience than simple religious enmity, so also did this frontier of time allow for sixteenth century writers to deal with Islam's historical legacy in the peninsula. This engagement occurred even as the future of that legacy was threatened by conversion efforts and the suppression of traditional practices among Moriscos. Moreover, we can see the beginnings of new textual styles with the dawn of Maurophilia.

With the passing of the mid-century mark, the reign of Charles V also came to an end. The accession of his son Philip II saw the "Morisco question," which had simmered after 1526, take on new life. The consequences of Philip's response would lead to a great upheaval which would briefly bring contemporary Iberian Islam back into the spotlight of literary concern.

### Chapter 3: Moriscos in Revolt: New Portrayals on the Old Frontier

For most of the first half of the sixteenth century, discussion and debate regarding converted Iberian Muslims and their culture within Castilian society was expressed in texts of a religious or legal nature. In these texts, the possibilities regarding the conversion and assimilation of Moriscos into the desired religious and social order of Castilian authorities was debated. Moriscos were a subject of government and church policy deliberations. For most Castilian authors and historians, we have seen that the experience of these now mostly lowly, subject people were not rich sources of material. Instead, in those works portrayals of Muslims and Islam remained in the past, before the Reconquest. Though not rejected, this history was in effect cordoned behind a frontier in time. Islamic cultural legacy may have continued to influence customs, styles and language within Castile but these were to be judged based on their compatibility with the practices of a culture that was Christian.

In late 1568 and early 1569, however, a convergence of events would lead to a massive revolt of disgruntled Moriscos in the territory of Granada, centered in the rugged Alpujarras mountain range. Casting aside their submission to both the Spanish crown and the Christian faith, the avowedly Muslim rebels sought to defend their religion and distinctive customs, in effect their identity, against Christian encroachment and proscription.<sup>1</sup> This conflict would rage for more than two years, bringing the issue of Islam in what was supposed to have been, for several decades, a Christian land back to the public gaze. Once again, Castilian soldiers went into battle

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<sup>1</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 182.

on the peninsula urged on by the old rallying cry of "Santiago!"<sup>2</sup> More importantly, all parties to the conflict found themselves having to negotiate a complex political situation with imperfect religious boundaries. Writers would record these events, portraying contemporary Iberian Muslims and Islam.

The work these authors produced demonstrates the critical importance of boundaries in governing the textual relationship of Iberian Muslims and Christians. In the fifteenth century dividing lines of class, political allegiance and religion all played a role in determining the frequently ambivalent and even fairly positive attitudes toward Iberian Muslims found in many Castilian texts. These divides were reflective, if not exactly imitative, of real life experience, particularly on the frontier between Castile and Granada. In the sixteenth century, there was great continuity in the depiction of Iberian Islam in Castilian texts as another frontier, a frontier of time, intervened when authors set their works mainly in the past.

By doing so, however, they did not engage directly with the increasingly restrictive and repressive policies being enacted against former Muslims and their culture in Castile. Textual accounts of the Alpujarras revolt, however, show Castilian authors engaging once again with contemporary Peninsular Islam and Muslims. The ways in which authors portrayed the revolt, depicted the rebels, and evaluated the place of Islam within Castile are very different from literature set primarily in the past. These portrayals are far more negative, and the continued place of Islam, I argue, is far more doubtful. This difference is the result of the absence of those boundaries which previously governed textual depictions of Iberian Islam. Authors concern themselves not with anachronistic visions of the past, but with a troubled present.

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<sup>2</sup> Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, ed. Bernardo Blanco-González, (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1970), 145.

Before continuing, a point about terminology in this chapter should be cleared up. Though the personal religious views of Moriscos were in some cases complicated and genuine converts existed,<sup>3</sup> rebellious Moriscos will be referred to as Muslims. Despite the complexities and nuances of the situation, Christian writers often believed that the practice of Islam was, "universal among the common people."<sup>4</sup> This certainly does not mean that it was, but the perception of this existed. That perception is especially important in this case since the source of the quotation above was Luis del Mármol Carvajal, author of one of the principal texts analyzed in the chapter.

In a sense, this chapter complements the first, which dealt with Castilian textual portrayals of Iberian Islam when a frontier still existed between Granada and Castile. This third chapter similarly focuses on the textual representations of Iberian Muslims and Islam. Much like the earlier accounts, these are written in a context in which the two groups, though internally diverse, interacted across boundaries. These interactions were often but by no means solely confrontational, and occur in the same frontier area that was for so long a site of contact, contestation, and accommodation.

Of course, despite these apparent similarities, in reality the two situations are very different. The intervening eight decades had seen extensive change in historical context in general, and within the Kingdom of Granada in particular. However, this provides a golden opportunity to compare the texts of this time with those preceding them, in order to gauge how the political, cultural, and religious developments which swept the realm in the aftermath of 1492 influenced Castilian views of Iberian Muslims. In the process, this comparison may shed light on how and why a society

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<sup>3</sup> Katie Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada: Inventing a City's Past in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 21.

<sup>4</sup> Luis del Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo de los Moriscos del reino de Granada*, in *Historiadores de sucesos particulares*, ed. Cayetano Rosell. Vol. 21, *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1946): 63.

that produced literature celebrating Iberian Islam in the past would institute policies against its practice, which drove its adherents to revolt.

Two critical sources for this chapter will be Diego Hurtado de Mendoza's *Guerra de Granada* and Luis del Mármol Carvajal's more ominously titled *Rebelión y Castigo de los Moriscos del Reino de Granada*. Though they share the same historical subject each work certainly has its own character. Mendoza's is more story-driven and literary in character, while Mármol Carvajal's is a much longer chronicle.<sup>5</sup> Each text thus contributes a unique perspective. Mármol Carvajal's account provides a more comprehensive view of the historical events, showing ways in which Muslims were placed within them. *Guerra de Granada* gives insight into how Mendoza constructed Muslim characters, and what that might say about his view of Islam and Muslims in his native land.

These were composed shortly after the events in question by persons with firsthand experience of the conflict. *Guerra de Granada* originates from the early 1570s, since Mendoza died in 1575, though it would not be published until 1627 due to the withering criticism of several contemporary figures which it contained. Nonetheless, it did circulate in manuscript form before its publication. Indeed, Mendoza himself sent a copy to a friend, so he did not intend to hide his message completely even if it was not initially disseminated widely.<sup>6</sup> After all part of his purpose in writing was to criticize what he thought were severe problems in government, especially the eclipse of the nobility by bureaucrats.<sup>7</sup> The date of *Rebelión y Castigo* is less certain, but still fairly soon after the revolt. Though the

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<sup>5</sup> Cayetano Rosell, introduction to *Historiadores de Sucesos Particulares*, ed. Cayetano Rosell. Vol. 21, *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, xiii.

<sup>6</sup> Spivakovsky, *Son of the Alhambra*, 394.

<sup>7</sup> Blanco González, "Introduction," *Guerra de Granada*, 68-69.

earliest published edition arrived in 1590, it is believed to have been completed at least ten years prior to that date.<sup>8</sup>

Diego Hurtado de Mendoza was a member of a powerful noble family in Granada, the son of Íñigo López de Mendoza, Count of Tendilla II. Tendilla was appointed governor of the Alhambra by the Catholic Monarchs after the city's fall. At the time of the revolt, the author had been essentially exiled from court and had returned to live in his native city after having served as a diplomat between 1537 and 1554 in England and Italy.<sup>9</sup> His work is filled with criticism of those he saw as political rivals or opponents, and although caution is warranted, that does not necessarily mean his observations do not hold some validity.<sup>10</sup> In any case, we gain from him a perspective of a Christian nobleman from a family of long standing in Granada. The Mendoza family, moreover, was known to have been an advocate for Moriscos and their rights. This support was for political reasons in part, but perhaps was also due to long established personal relationships.<sup>11</sup> Mendoza was present in Granada for almost the whole course of the rebellion, having arrived three months after its beginning. As a consequence of this presence and because of his ties to the city, Mendoza had access to information and personal insights on the Moriscos based on more than stereotypes and polemics.<sup>12</sup>

Our second author, Luis del Mármol Carvajal, was from humbler origins, but also a native of Granada. He served as a soldier in Italy and North Africa, and was imprisoned there for eight years before being ransomed. He later turned to writing

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<sup>8</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Blanco González, "Introduction," *Guerra de Granada*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>11</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 76.

<sup>12</sup> Erika Spivakovsky, *Son of the Alhambra: Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza 1504-1575* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 394-95.

history, of which *Rebelión y Castigo* is but one of his several extensive works.<sup>13</sup> He was familiar with Arabic, and may have used this knowledge to produce one of his most famous works, the *Descripción General de África*.

This chapter will begin with a short overview of the historical events which led up to the rebellion and the wider context of Spanish cultural and political life of the period. Next, it will examine the immediate origins of the revolt and provide an overview of its course and nature. Lastly, it will delve more deeply into specific textual depictions to determine how the fall of Granada and the suppression of Islam had changed Castilian attitudes towards these once robust features of peninsular life.

### **Historical Contexts: Empire, Faith and Philip II**

In 1556, as the typical story goes, Charles V, old, ailing and worn down by a long and tumultuous reign laid down his burdens and retreated to a quiet retirement at the monastery of Yuste in Extremadura. In reality he continued to correspond and take an interest in the affairs of his family, but the responsibilities of government he left, in his Spanish realms and their associated territories, to his son Philip.<sup>14</sup> A change of ruler does not bring about instant societal change, but nonetheless historians identify several distinguishing factors between the reigns of Charles and his son.<sup>15</sup> Philip had been born in Spain and soon after assuming the throne he, unlike his mobile father, chose to govern his empire from this center. One defining aspect of the new government was a fresh emphasis on religious uniformity. This emphasis did not arise simply from a dynastic turnover but it nonetheless helped, as time went on, to increase pressure on Moriscos due to their retention of allegedly Islamic customs.

<sup>13</sup> Rosell, introduction to *Historiadores de sucesos particulares*, xii.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 94.

<sup>15</sup> Blanco González, "Introduction," *Guerra de Granada*, 59.

Though the Austrian Habsburg lands were now separated from the Spanish crown, Philip still ruled over a vast empire in Europe including large parts of Italy and the Netherlands, not to mention territories overseas. This vast domain was hardly secure however, as continuing though weakened threats from France, revolts in the Netherlands, and increasing Ottoman power in North Africa and the Western Mediterranean persisted. Indeed, this period saw the first of Hapsburg Spain's many bankruptcies as imperial strain exhausted the state's coffers. This new Spain was self consciously a powerful and dominant player in Europe and in the world. Authors laud their monarch as the greatest sovereign on earth, ruling over the strongest empire in history. Suggestive of this sense of international prominence, Charles V's motto *Plus Ultra*, "further beyond," was in some representations now "upgraded" to *Orbis non Sufficit*, "the world is not enough."<sup>16</sup>

This power was coupled with a new mission. Spain was not only fighting to increase its worldly empire but, in the eyes of many including its new king, to uphold the cause of God and the true faith, called by Geoffrey Parker an ideology of "Messianic Imperialism."<sup>17</sup> This is not unique to Spain in this period, but it was nonetheless a consideration which impacted royal policy. Not everyone, of course, was swept up in this vision. Spain's armies, recruited from many lands but with a strong Spanish presence in the ranks, frequently mutinied or deserted when their pay was too long in coming. Whatever they may have thought of Spain's mission, they were not willing to carry it out for free.<sup>18</sup> The duke of Alba, the prominent military commander facing the Dutch rebels at the same time as the Morisco revolt, often took a somewhat wry, cynical view toward divine considerations in military planning.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 88,136,165.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

There was, however, trouble in this bastion of faith that was Spain. Many of the debates regarding religious identity from the previous decades continued, while new ones emerged regarding questions of proper faith. *Limpieza de sangre*, or purity of blood, was again a topic of serious discussion in mid-sixteenth century Castile. Blood purity was never a universally accepted concept, and prominent voices spoke against it. However the persistence of this issue, though statutes demanding it were principally directed against converts from Judaism, speaks to one of the key aspects regarding treatment of the Moriscos as well.<sup>20</sup> The question of whether, in effect, religion and "race" were linked had critical implications for the prospects of converting the Moriscos in fact as well as in name.<sup>21</sup> But, it is important here to stress that in this, as in so much about the definition of identity, there was discussion and uncertainty. We cannot speak of a particular view, but of a discourse.

Furthermore, in the late 1550s Spain experienced its first widespread exposure to Protestantism within its borders. Until this period, the Reformation had almost always been a foreign issue.<sup>22</sup> The Inquisition had hitherto largely concerned itself with *conversos*. The Holy Office now however uncovered several groups, many of them connected to universities or religious houses, that were engaged in study of Lutheran texts and doctrines. The number of Protestants found by the Inquisition was never that large, and certainly no mass movement developed. The discovery of these groups, nonetheless, caused a swift and strong response by the authorities who tried to uncover Protestants and keep their religious texts out of faithful hands. The discovery of Protestant groups in Castile unsettled Charles V, then nearing the end of his life in retirement. He had opposed the Reformation for much of his life, but now saw

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<sup>20</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 241.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

"heresy" emerging in what had until now been one of the most secure Catholic bastions.<sup>23</sup> Charles' faithful son Philip was also disturbed by these developments.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to spiritual concerns, which were in most cases quite genuine, political considerations also drove this desire for uniformity and the suppression of deviant religious practices, whether Jewish, Muslim or Protestant. When Ferdinand and Isabella expelled the Jews in 1492, their expressed motivations were explicitly religious.<sup>25</sup> They feared that exposure to practicing Jews encouraged converts and their descents to relapse into their former faith traditions.<sup>26</sup> Half a century later Philip certainly could make zealous and self-sacrificing statements like this, such as when he solemnly told the pope that "rather than suffer the least damage to the Catholic Church and God's service I will lose all my states and a hundred lives if I had them."<sup>27</sup>

Other writers added a practical dimension to this commitment by taking into account the role of religion in the stability of the realm. Observing the disturbances brought about by the Reformation in Germany, and in the mid-sixteenth century beginning to impact France as well, a consensus developed among Castilian statesmen that religious differences were inherently destabilizing.<sup>28</sup> They recognized the passions that religious conviction carried with it and felt that these simply would not be manageable. Of course, what exactly constituted religious difference was, unsurprisingly for early modern Castile, also a subject for debate, which will be discussed in more detail when the time comes to look at the specific context of Granada in the years leading to the revolt.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>24</sup> Parker, *Grand Strategy of Philip II*, 92.

<sup>25</sup> J.N. Hillgarth, *The Mirror of Spain 1500-1700: The Formation of a Myth* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 162.

<sup>26</sup> Constable, *Medieval Iberia*, 353.

<sup>27</sup> Parker, *Grand Strategy of Philip II*, 93.

<sup>28</sup> Schwartz, *All Can be Saved*, 42.

### Literary Portrayals of Iberian Islam: Mid Sixteenth-Century Developments

As these political and ideological developments played out, mid-sixteenth century writers continued to put pen to paper. Castilian literature continued its growth and development, as more traditional forms were supplemented by classical conventions.<sup>29</sup> Iberian Muslims, especially contemporary ones, did not yet hold much of a place within this tradition. Outside of the ballads, they entered public discussion through policy debates about their conversion and integration in the realm. As peasants and people of modest means, on the whole, they would not have appeared in most forms of literature. Later, this would change, but for now the more exalted characters of chivalric romances graced pages in far greater numbers than more humble pícaro.<sup>30</sup> These noble protagonists, almost by definition given perceptions about Moriscos as laborers and peasants, were not contemporary Iberian Muslims.<sup>31</sup>

One outstanding piece of literature that merits and certainly receives special mention in this period is the *Historia del Abencerraje y la Hermosa Jarifa*, published anonymously in 1560. It is perhaps the first of the *novelas moriscas*, literature celebrating the bygone Islamic Kingdom of Granada and the frontier world. Barbara Fuchs, in the course of an analysis of the work, speculates that its anonymity may be the result of a transgressive message. One early edition of the work in fact was dedicated to an Aragonese noble who protected, like many of his peers, the Moriscos on his estates against the interference of the Inquisition.<sup>32</sup> This genre would not begin to develop fully until after the revolt of Granada had ended, but this first example shows that Maurophilia was emerging while the Morisco question was still very much

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<sup>29</sup> Domínguez Ortiz, *The Golden Age of Spain*, 248, 256.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 256.

<sup>31</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 43.

<sup>32</sup> Fuchs, "In Memory of Moors," 112.

unsettled. Maurophilia on the one hand involves extensive engagement with and celebration of the aesthetics of Iberian Islamic culture and portrays its Muslim characters, very often, as honorable and noble. However, it also tends to exoticize and orientalize the figure of the "Moor." As such, though it takes Iberian Islam as its subject, it does so on Spanish terms. For instance the honor and nobility attributed to Muslims in these texts, including the *Abencerraje*, is not the result of an appreciation of actual Islamic conceptions of these values. Rather, it is a projection of Spanish notions onto the characters.<sup>33</sup> The *Abencerraje* itself has been the subject of a great deal of study by scholars, and as a result is subject to a wide variety of interpretations.

The story opens with a young Muslim warrior named Abindarráez, a wrongly exiled nobleman of the Abencerraje clan, riding out from Granada to the Islamic city of Coín to marry a beautiful young lady, Jarifa. The action is set during the early fifteenth century, about 150 years before the actual date of writing. The young warrior is richly attired and of noble appearance, but along the way to Coín he encounters five Christian knights who ambush him. He fights them off, but is wounded and once the Castilian noble Rodrigo de Narváez arrives, the young Moor surrenders to him after single combat. Both of these men are highly virtuous, fierce in battle but gracious toward a defeated enemy, and generally ideal chivalric knights. When Narváez learns what Abindarráez was on his way to do, he takes pity and offers to give his captive three days to complete his marriage as long as he swears to return afterward. Abindarráez goes to marry Jarifa, and she urges him not to return to Narváez, instead saying that she will pay his ransom. This, however, Abindarráez refuses to do since it would mean reneging on his word.

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<sup>33</sup> Richard F. Glenn, "The Moral Implications of El Abencerraje," *Modern Language Notes* 80, no.2 (1965), 209.

Unwilling to be parted, Jarifa then resolves to go with him back to Álora, the Castilian city of which Narváez is the governor. On the road, they hear a story from a fellow traveler about how Narváez had once been madly in love with a beautiful woman, but she was married. They consider engaging in an affair, but once Narváez heard that the lady's husband had complimented him, he cannot go through with it because it would be dishonorable. The newlyweds are surprised but also very impressed by this story and what it says about Narváez's virtue. They soon are back at the Narváez's castle, and tell him that they had married without permission of Jarifa's father and fear what he will do. They ask Narváez, since he is known to have a good relationship with the king of Granada, to write to the Muslim monarch and convince him to insist that Jarifa's father accept the marriage. This is done, and the newlyweds return to their home. Narváez refuses to accept a ransom for letting them go free, and the three remain friends for the remainder of their lives, religious and political differences notwithstanding.

The previous paragraphs were a very bare bones summary of the work. It contains several descriptions of the depth of friendship and respect that the three share, as well as the esteem in which the king of Granada holds Narváez. Particularly surprising is the suggestion that Narváez and the newlyweds should be friends despite differences in religion, which is very explicitly set out in the text.<sup>34</sup> All, moreover, are equally virtuous and amiable, according to the expectations of their noble stations.

Though, as we saw above, this nobility is defined in Castilian terms. It should be noted however that while Narvaez's virtue is at first expressed in terms of his skill at arms, Abindarráez's is said to stem from his gentility and refinement even though the text also implies that he is a skilled fighter. The terms used to describe the

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<sup>34</sup> Francisco Lopez Estrada and John Esten Keller eds. *El Abencerraje*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964): 81.

nobility of each character are thus different, maintaining some distinction between the qualities and expectations of each.<sup>35</sup>

Generalizing slightly, Fuchs identifies three important readings of the *Abencerraje* which interpret it as a safe historical fantasy, a subtle demonstration of Christian dominance over Muslims, or an attempt by the author to argue for the inclusion of Moriscos and their Iberian Islamic cultural legacy.<sup>36</sup> The first, proposed by Israel Burshatin, presents it as a message of superiority over a defeated opponent. The next view, as articulated by Claudio Guillén, sees it as a constructed memory of a romanticized past created for enjoyment. The last interpretation offered, to which Fuchs subscribes, grants the story a much more urgent role, as something to inform the present and argue that it expresses "a profound notion of advocacy for the Moors in the construction of a national imaginary."<sup>37</sup> For the purposes of this project, however, its importance should not be overstated. In this period, it is a rather isolated example of a historical romance in prose about Christians and Muslims interacting, for the most part peacefully, with mutual respect and even friendship. Many similar sentiments can be detected in ballads of this period and the immediately preceding decades, though in the *Abencerraje* they are developed and stated more explicitly.

Barbara Fuchs casts the *Abencerraje* as a plea for the inclusion and preservation of Islamic cultural heritage in Iberia, noting that the story shows successful coexistence.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the end of the story is not victory or defeat for one side or the other, but rather a lifelong friendship. There does not have to be a resolution of the tale in which the "other" is extinguished. We cannot forget however that although by far the majority of the relationship between Christians and Muslims

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<sup>35</sup> Glenn, "Moral Implications," 206.

<sup>36</sup> Fuchs, "In Memory of Moors," 112-113.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

in the text is peaceful and friendly, their initial encounter is, though over quickly, a hostile one. Even while fighting Narváez admired the qualities of Abindarráez, and this enmity is overcome with great rapidity, but the two men first came into contact through violence.

As has been suggested in readings of this tale, in many ways this violent encounter and its result sets the terms of the remainder of the story. Scholars have noted that the friendship between the protagonists, however warmly the author may portray it, is not on equal terms.<sup>39</sup> Throughout, Narváez is invested with superior authority, even if he does not exploit it. He sets Abindarráez free and treats him with courtesy, but only after defeating him. From the beginning he is in the position of power and Abindarráez subsequent actions are, in effect, by permission of Narváez. Abindarráez is placed in a subordinate role and denied agency.

Moreover it is Jarifa, not Abindarráez, who through her suggestion that she would arrange the ransom of her betrothed seeks to reclaim that agency by putting an end to his captivity. This is illustrative of a sixteenth-century perception that gender roles among Moriscos were inverted, suggested by Mary Elizabeth Perry, in which men were feminized and women viewed as taking on too many masculine roles.<sup>40</sup> Though this story is set in the frontier past, this feminization may represent the influence of contemporary debates over the role of Moriscos in society. So, although relations between the characters may be warm, Islamic culture celebrated, and religion explicitly set aside, a power relationship in the Christian character's favor still pervades the work.

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<sup>39</sup> Israel Burshatin, "Power, Discourse and Metaphor in the Abencerraje," *Modern Language Notes* 99, no.2 (1984): 197.

<sup>40</sup> Mary Elizabeth Perry, *The Handless Maiden: Moriscos and the Politics of Religion in Early Modern Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 56.

Though the distinguishing factor is not religious, the Christian and his Muslim friends are not quite equals. Furthermore, the argument Fuchs makes for considering the tale a plea for inclusion within historical memory does not mean that attitudes toward contemporary Islamic culture and its Morisco practitioners in the peninsula had to be so idyllic. Although the story does not advocate for the destruction or expulsion of Islamic culture or its practitioners from Iberia, it does present a view in which a friendly relationship is based on subordination. Only after Abindarráez loses his agency through capture, and then declines to reassert it by refusing ransom, is their relationship cemented.

This story moreover is set in an increasingly distant past, safely behind a frontier of time. The noble and chivalrous Muslim knights and beautiful ladies, along with the more peripheral Granadan lord and king, are a far cry from the largely more humble Moriscos who were for the most part in fact, and almost certainly in popular imagination, of a much lower station. In her article, Fuchs presents and criticizes this argument. Given the large body of literature similarly divorced from contemporary experience, in what their authors choose to portray at least, this temporal distance should not be deemphasized.<sup>41</sup> Setting works in the past in this way allow authors to reconstitute class and political boundaries that had been superseded after the fall of Granada.

Ultimately, the *Abencerraje*, like so many other early to mid sixteenth-century Castilian literary works returns to the well traveled route of the old frontier. Warfare and reconquest are deemphasized here more than in most works from the period, but such treatments are not unprecedented in ballad forms. Looking back with nostalgia on a romanticized past did not necessarily conflict with a contemporary drive for

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<sup>41</sup> Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*, 112.

uniformity and suspicion of the "other." Moriscos bore little resemblance to the Muslims which authors tended to portray. Contemporary literature into the 1550s and 60s at best only indirectly engaged with contemporary Moriscos, and for the most part not even that. There was certainly no shortage of interest in Iberian Islam, but it is frequently presented as something past.

### **Towards Revolt in Granada**

From this general overview of the times and literature, we now move on to the Kingdom of Granada itself in the years leading up to the Morisco revolt. All was not well in this land. In the wake of the discovery of Protestant groups in some Castilian cities growing unease, fear, and intolerance of difference, though it was not held by all, were more clearly exposed.<sup>42</sup> The Inquisition, in somewhat of a lull since the *converso* persecutions of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, revived with the possibility of heretic infiltration.<sup>43</sup> Soon, they turned their attention to Granada as well.

Still, a general fear of heterodoxy is insufficient to understand why the government adopted the policies which it chose to institute in Granada, nor why the Moriscos revolted in response. One set of problems arise from the fact that though Granada had been under Castilian rule for nearly eighty years the monarchy still did not feel secure in its hold on the region, even though it was geographically very close to the "heartland" of the Spanish realm.<sup>44</sup> In the 1550s and 60s, the Ottoman Empire and the North African corsairs operating to varying degrees under Ottoman influence posed a major threat in the Mediterranean, on whose shores lay the coast of the

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<sup>42</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society 1400-1600*, 106.

<sup>43</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 199.

<sup>44</sup> Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*, 147.

province of Granada.<sup>45</sup> Spanish arms found scant success in this period, and in fact suffered a number of reverses like the loss of the North African outposts of Bugia in 1555 and Tripoli in 1551. On a less official level irregular forces, sometimes in quite substantial numbers, could be found prowling the Mediterranean waves.<sup>46</sup> These freebooters sailed from both Christian and Muslim lands, and were manned by sailors of many identities.

Nor were they content to limit their depredations to shipping. Even as Castile stood at the center of the largest empire in the world, its own coasts were vulnerable to raids by corsair forces. Attackers struck several times during the mid sixteenth century, both in Granada and on the much longer coastline of the neighboring Kingdom of Valencia in the Crown of Aragon. Raiders took captives, sacked towns and, more insidiously, spread fear and suspicion among the authorities toward the Moriscos. They were suspected of helping the invaders and of being ready to serve as a fifth column in support of any larger invasion attempt by the Ottomans themselves, should they try to take advantage of weakened Spanish defenses.<sup>47</sup> In this situation, cultural markers could be taken not only as reluctance to assimilate, but as an open statement of defiance and potential threat.

The actual number of cases where Moriscos helped raiders is not known for certain. Although there was no evidence of a large conspiracy, fears still persisted, and occasionally bordered on paranoia. For instance even as continued adherence to traditional Morisco customs could be interpreted as disloyalty, those Moriscos who did try to assimilate were sometimes accused of being exceptionally sneaky, doing so

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<sup>45</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 183.

<sup>46</sup> Andrew Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier: A History of the Sixteenth Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 171.

<sup>47</sup> Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*, 152.

only to better hide their treasonous intent and allay suspicion.<sup>48</sup> But, whether too Christian or not Christian enough (or at all), Morisco cooperation with enemies from the sea remained a disturbing possibility.

Added to this were social tensions in the city of Granada itself. By now, the population of most towns in the kingdom had a Christian majority due to the settlement of "Old Christian" immigrants from elsewhere. The overwhelmingly rural Morisco population, however, was still the majority in the kingdom as a whole.<sup>49</sup> Regardless, the newcomers held the reins of power and Moriscos complained of a number of abuses from both secular and religious authorities. Like elsewhere in the kingdom Granada's Moriscos, though converted, had never been properly evangelized and despite their nominal Christian status were still subject to financial burdens which their old Christian neighbors did not share. Their rulers continued to treat them as if they were still Muslim, even though conversion was supposed to remove the legal distinctions between the groups.<sup>50</sup> Moriscos were in effect an underclass and, in light of coastal security fears, a potentially suspect one as well. On the Christian side, older veterans of the Granadan war, like the Mendoza family, often favored a more moderate policy toward Moriscos and protected them. Recent immigrants, however, whether out of unfamiliarity and fear or out of a desire for material gain at Morisco expense, tended to favor harsher policies.<sup>51</sup> By now these newcomers, especially the royal bureaucrats, were gaining significant influence in local government.<sup>52</sup>

To make matters worse, the end of the forty year grace period granted by Charles V, which suspended the suppression of many forms of Morisco culture, customs and language was fast approaching. In 1564 Granada's bishop, Pedro

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<sup>48</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 114.

<sup>49</sup> Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 182.

<sup>50</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 115.

<sup>51</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 67-8.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

Guerrero Logroño, returned to his city from the Council of Trent and convened a council in his see.<sup>53</sup> The council recommended tough new measures be taken against the Moriscos, effectively banning the vast majority of cultural practices that could mark them as Islamic.<sup>54</sup> These included dress, language, dances and song, celebrations, domestic customs and Arabic script, to name a few. Violators would be punished. These provisions were approved by the government in Madrid in November of 1566. Seventy years, forced conversion and intermittent attempts at evangelization had proved unable to bring about the assimilation of the conquered. The government's patience, especially in the face of threats in the Mediterranean and its own self identification as a bastion of true religion, had run out.

When authorities in Granada heard the royal confirmation of the council's suggestion, the response was mixed, and certainly not all Old Christians agreed.<sup>55</sup> Moriscos, naturally, were greatly upset. Francisco Núñez Muley, a member of the Morisco elite with high standing in the community composed a lengthy reply, refuting the notion that the customs in questions were markers of Islamic identity inextricably linked with the practice of religion.<sup>56</sup> For instance, he notes that within Christendom, and even within Spain, different regions had distinctive dress. Differences in clothing style, he contends, did not mean any one group is more or less Christian than the other.<sup>57</sup> These cultural traditions, he said, were Granadan, not Muslim. Of course, as subsequent events would show, Núñez Muley was being somewhat disingenuous when he compared the Moriscos with other Christians. He also objected to some provisions on common sense grounds. One rather outlandish demand ordered

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 179.

<sup>55</sup> Sabine MacCormack, "History, Memory and Time," *History and Memory* 4, no. 2 (1992): 57.

<sup>56</sup> Vincent Barletta, introduction to *Memorandum for the President of the Royal Audiencia*, by Francisco Núñez Muley, ed. and trans. Vincent Barletta (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007): 9-10.

<sup>57</sup> Francisco Nuñez Muley, *Memorandum for the President of the Royal Audiencia*, 70.

Moriscos to leave their doors open on Fridays, to discourage them from holding secret Islamic worship in private. This, he protested, would invite thieves, while the directive to stop using Arabic in favor of Castilian within three years was also portrayed as unreasonable.<sup>58</sup> Núñez Muley's plea for the culture and identity of his people, however, fell on deaf ears. The new laws were officially announced on January 1, 1567, to take effect one year after that date.

As Núñez Muley penned his protest, Moriscos from a range of social backgrounds, from the remnants of the Muslim nobility to bandits, aware of what was coming, began making preliminary preparations for rebellion. Their numbers were at this stage rather small, and they by no means encountered a Morisco population ready to universally back their aspirations, with Moriscos in the towns being particularly reluctant.<sup>59</sup> By December of 1568 however, the rebels were ready to launch their insurrection.

### **The Alpujarras Rebellion**

On Christmas Eve 1568, in a dramatic gesture, rebellious Moriscos under the command of a leader named Farax Aben Farax infiltrated the city of Granada and rode through the Albaicín, the city's Morisco quarter. They encouraged the populace of the district to revolt in unison with fellow Moriscos in the countryside.<sup>60</sup> Despite their daring and the commotion caused by the rebels, the Moriscos of the city, much to their disappointment, refused to heed this call. Nonetheless the fires of rebellion spread across the rural areas of the kingdom, especially through its many rugged

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 81, 93.

<sup>59</sup> Anwar Chejne, *Islam and the West: The Moriscos, a Cultural and Social History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1983), 19.

<sup>60</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 44, 182.

mountain ranges such as the Alpujarras which loomed to the south and east of Granada. Often, though not always, Castilian observers report that these risings were initially accompanied by brutal treatment, even massacres, of old Christian immigrants if they lived in the area. The desecration of churches is also a frequent Castilian complaint, as smoldering resentments built up over decades were avenged by aggrieved Moriscos.<sup>61</sup> The loyalist forces could, on their part, be equally brutal in their actions against the rebels, committing massacres of their own and enslaving captives.

This was a war without set borders or, for the most part, large consolidated areas of control by one force or the other.<sup>62</sup> Not all Moriscos areas rose at once, with fresh outbreaks of rebellion continuing even up to the end of the larger conflict, while other areas might be brought back in line or reach a settlement individually.<sup>63</sup> In this unforgiving terrain, the often brutal struggle raged, as both sides, with hastily raised, untried and undisciplined forces, sought advantage. The underdog Moriscos used guerrilla tactics against local and later royal forces struggling to return the territory to obedience. Time and again, sources show rebels striking when the terrain favored them, and melting away when faced with overwhelming force or the threat of encirclement.<sup>64</sup> The Moriscos stuck mostly to the mountains that many of them knew well and where natural defenses improved their odds. Rarely did rebels try to take fortified towns, but instead tried to isolate the Spanish forces by closing off the routes between their outposts. Many marching columns fell victim to ambush, and in many areas any movement had to be made in force.<sup>65</sup> Adding to the complexity was that, not only did not all Moriscos rise, but many were to be found living within the

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<sup>61</sup> Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada*, 24.

<sup>62</sup> L.P. Harvey, *Muslims in Spain: 1500-1614* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 219-220.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

Christian held towns.<sup>66</sup> They often served as porters accompanying royal troops to transport supplies. In this war, notions of self and other did not necessarily correspond with those of friend and enemy.

Both sides, moreover, were far from united in their own ranks. In the midst of rebellion the Moriscos' initial leader Abén Humeya, a former member of the Morisco elite whom they chose as king, was overthrown and killed.<sup>67</sup> He was replaced by a new chief named Abén Aboo. The Christian side, on the other hand, at first suffered from divided authority, with many separate commanders operating at once.<sup>68</sup> Infighting and inefficiency also plagued its bureaucracy, leading at times to shortages of supplies.<sup>69</sup> Even after Philip II sent his half brother, Don John of Austria, to take overall charge in April 1569, followed by veteran troops from Italy who were instrumental in turning the tide, problems of discipline and command persisted.<sup>70</sup> Authors decry the lack of discipline among the Castilian troops, while Don John writes his brother in frustration over the fact that his leadership is not being respected as he thinks it should be.<sup>71</sup>

The resolution was also unsurprisingly messy, with a mix of reprisals, amnesties and surrender agreements combining to return rebels to obedience. The second rebel leader, Abén Aboo, was killed in March 1571, and this is often seen as the end of the revolt. Yet, given the dispersed nature of Morisco forces, especially in the later stages, this was more symbolic than actual. By the end of 1570, Castilian forces had already suppressed most resistance.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Chejne, *Islam and the West*, 19.

<sup>67</sup> Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*, 221.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

<sup>71</sup> Don John to Philip II, Granada, 25 October 1569, in *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, vol. 28 (Madrid: 1856): 34.

<sup>72</sup> Andrew Hess, "The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column," *The American Historical Review* 74, no. 1 (1968): 17.

With the revolt defeated a policy of deporting Moriscos from the territory of Granada, which had begun in secure areas like the city of Granada itself while the rebellion was still ongoing, could be expanded to those areas under renewed control. Initially the crown hoped to remove potential supporters of the rebellion and demoralize those who remained in revolt. It was reasoned that expelling non-rebellious Moriscos would destroy any hope rebels may have had for expansion of the war and of reinforcements.<sup>73</sup> These measures further added to the dislocation and suffering of the times.

General opinion in Castile seems to have held that the revolt was unfortunate and unnecessary. Indeed, Mendoza laments that until the end finally saw victory for Spain, "sometimes it was doubtful if it was us or the enemy who God wished to punish."<sup>74</sup> It would appear that in the end, the policies designed to promote security and improve Spain's Christian image had backfired, setting in motion a major rebellion which held down vital forces and resources for over two years and served and proved embarrassingly difficult to suppress. Likewise, although major help from Muslims abroad did not materialize, there was very real fear among decision makers that foreign forces, especially the Ottomans, would step in.<sup>75</sup> Though this likely would come as small consolation to the victims of the conflict, the revolt did however bring sixteenth century Spanish writers to once more take contemporary Iberian Islam as a principal subject of their works.

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<sup>73</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 182; Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada*, 24.

<sup>74</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 95: "...que alguna vez se tuvo duda si eramos nos o los enemigos, los a quien Dios quería castigar."

<sup>75</sup> Hillgarth, *The Mirror of Spain*, 206.

## Writing about Revolt

Texts written about the Alpujarras Revolt provide important insight into where Castilian views of Moriscos stood at mid-century. Castilian literature, we have seen, had largely passed over this group since Granada's fall. Given the ongoing debate over their conversion, however, the issue was certainly not dead. It is therefore suggestive that when portraying Iberian Islam and culture writers did so mostly from a distance, looking back in time. The contemporary discussion about how to assimilate the Moriscos and how much of their culture they should be allowed to retain was at best addressed only indirectly if, as Fuchs and other argue, some authors intended these positive depictions of the past to influence minds in the present. This debate was itself rooted in broader discussions of the nature of "Spanish" identity.<sup>76</sup> A central question asked was if Moriscos, through virtue of history and geography, were to be considered Spaniards or if a new more limited and religiously orthodox identity preclude them from belonging in sixteenth century Spain. Geographic origin, a common if contentious history, and traditions of coexistence, seemed to bind the Moriscos to Spain. Divides of religion and perhaps more significantly in daily life its attendant practices, as well as questions of political allegiance, nonetheless set them apart.

This discussion is important and provides clues to the range of opinions on the subject present in Spanish discourse. However, the explicit policy debate largely speaks of the Moriscos in aggregate and rather abstract terms. It describes the customs in question, as well as the nature of this group, but missing are the characterizations present in literary forms. These characterizations are an important

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<sup>76</sup> Ruiz, *Spanish Society*, 4.

resource when considering attitudes. Of course, any writing can be heavily influenced by the individual author's own biases. But as was discussed in chapter one and has been argued by several scholars much literature, especially ballad literature, did reflect contemporary reality in the fifteenth century.<sup>77</sup> Its departure from that reality, at least where Moriscos are concerned, signals change in the sixteenth century, but we will see that that connection returns again with the outbreak of the revolt.

The principal sources for the following sections are Mendoza's *Guerra de Granada* and Mármol Carvajal's *Rebelión y Castigo de los Moriscos del Reino de Granada*. Though historical these texts also constitute stories, particularly in the case of *Guerra de Granada* which has been identified as having a distinct literary structure. Its sections each serve narrative purpose in the telling of the whole story, which is reflective of contemporary literary techniques.<sup>78</sup> They are often akin to chronicles of the fifteenth century, but in many ways more complex, drawing in historical context and analysis to a higher degree. Mármol Carvajal, for example, discusses the distant origins of the city of Granada to open his work, carrying his readers back to the ancient world, to Visigothic times, and through the long centuries of Islamic rule.

The authors, moreover, reconstruct scenes for the reader in their books. This is particularly evident, as an example, in episodes describing the internal deliberations and dissensions of the rebel commanders. Obviously, neither Mendoza nor Mármol Carvajal was invited into the confidences of Abén Humeya or Abén Aboo. To reconstruct these scenes as scripted conversation in their text, they must use second-

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<sup>77</sup> Angus McKay, "Los Romances Fronterizos como Fuente Histórica," *Relaciones exteriores del Reino de Granada. IV Coloquio de Historia Medieval Andaluza*, ed. Cristina Segura Grafiño, (Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 1998) 283.

<sup>78</sup> Blanco González, introduction to *Guerra de Granada*, 66.

hand information combined with conjecture.<sup>79</sup> This leaves considerable room for them to shape their depiction of events, consciously or not, according to their own viewpoints.

Much has been said about a return to a degree of realism and engagement with present conditions in this literature as compared to the immediate past. First, some of this may be due to the genres of most of the works at this time. There were few ballads produced about the revolt. Some were made later, notably by Ginés Pérez de Hita in *Guerras Civiles de Granada*, but those date to a time after the expulsion had already occurred. Indeed he laments it in the book, so his perspective looks back from a distance and after great upheaval. Mendoza and Mármol Carvajal cleave more closely to history. Mendoza, for instance, was in Granada for much of the revolt, making plausible his insistence that his account is based on his own experiences as well as personal contact with documents, and most importantly, individuals involved.<sup>80</sup>

Societal attitudes can be hard to pin down, but as was discussed before, in many ways that idea can be an oversimplification of a situation in which many people voiced differing opinions. An individual may even view similar situations differently in different contexts. Literature has the virtue of originating from this discourse, but portrays rather than simply talks about people and situations. At times, it even gets down to individual levels of analysis and characterization rather than more abstract group viewpoints. In some ways of course, the rebellion was an exceptional situation. Passions between the combatants ran rather high. Still, the revolt was what got the contemporary Morisco back into Castilian literature.

No single place or person can be selected as fully representative of the "spirit of the times," and as in the years leading up to the revolt, there was disagreement in

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<sup>79</sup> Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*, 214.

<sup>80</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 96.

Granada and in Madrid over how best to respond to and conceptualize the situation. Two additional sources utilized here are a series of letters dating from 1568 to 1570 between Don John and the king or government officials, as well as records from council proceedings in the town of Quesada, which lay in the vicinity of Jaén. Though just outside the borders of the kingdom of Granada proper, the settlement's hinterlands nonetheless were the target of rebel raids and the residents were required to contribute to the war effort.<sup>81</sup> These sources will be used to supplement the longer works by Mendoza and Mármol Carvajal, to see how the viewpoints of those two authors relate to those expressed in other texts.

It would be extremely space consuming to list every way in which the histories and documents, from nearly the same time, correspond. Therefore, two themes that show how the histories present a similar sense of many aspects of the situation, as presented by observers at the time, will be expanded upon. Each author has his own perspective and biases. The historians, for instance, come from Granada, while Don John is an outsider thrust into the situation, and the councillors of Quesada are viewing the conflict from the near periphery. Mendoza, for his part, has major scores to settle with court enemies, while Mármol Carvajal seems less hostile to the authorities. He, for instance, lauds Don John, and though he may lament problems, does not attribute them to the dysfunction of the government and its functionaries as Mendoza does.<sup>82</sup>

One area of agreement is in the nature of the conflict. We get the sense of hit and run tactics on the part of the rebels, a challenging situation in which territory is difficult to secure. Quesada, for instance, is plagued by Morisco raiding parties, so much so that the council meeting on May 23, 1570 provides an armed escort for

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<sup>81</sup> Mata Carriazo, "La Guerra de los Moriscos vista desde una plaza Fronteriza," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 555.

<sup>82</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 107.

message carriers since enemies had been sighted only a league away from the town.<sup>83</sup> Still this is an improvement from the winter before when the tense council, which had just recently begged the government in Granada not to be required to send more men away for the war effort, lamented in December that "the Moors come every day to raid the lands of this village and take captives and plunder."<sup>84</sup> Don John, meanwhile, in March of 1570 received a message from his brother the king, who had been made aware of the problems of organization in Granada, saying "to think of achieving good results with people so badly directed and disciplined, is outside of all reason."<sup>85</sup> The remedy he suggests to Don John is to increase the discipline of his subordinate commanders, since they deserve the most blame for the problems. At this time, it is true, Don John's forces had only weeks earlier suffered, as he called it, a near disgrace in an engagement with the rebels near the town of Serón, so perhaps he was looking to redeem himself. The conduct of the troops there, fleeing from the enemy and focusing more on collecting what plunder could be found than following commands, would seem to support a need for corrective action.<sup>86</sup>

More directly related to the issue of attitudes, all sources share similar terminology when referring to both the war as a whole, what its end will imply, and its Morisco participants. One significant terminological aspect is the distinct uses of the terms "Moro" and "Morisco." *Moro* refers to those in revolt while *Morisco*, sometimes specifically *Morisco de paz*, refers to those who are not. The distinction is not perfect, but it almost always applies. In Quesada's records, for instance, we can

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<sup>83</sup>Mata Carriazo, "La Guerra de los Moriscos vista desde una plaza Fronteriza," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 583.

<sup>84</sup>Mata Carriazo, "La Guerra de los Moriscos vista desde una plaza Fronteriza," in *En la frontera de Granada*, 573: "...esta villa es muy frontera del reino de Granada y los moros bienen cada día para correr el término desta villa y llevarse cavtivos y ganados..."

<sup>85</sup> Philip II to Don John, Córdoba, March 3 1570, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 28:64: "porque pensar hacer buenos efectos con gente mal gobernada y deciplinada, es fuera de toda razon."

<sup>86</sup> Don John to Philip II, Caniles, 19 February 1570, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 28:50.

see a shift, as it becomes clear after the first few weeks that the uprising was on a considerable scale, from almost exclusive use of Morisco to the increased prevalence of *Moro*. It would seem that once they threw off any pretence at Christianity and denied loyalty to the crown Morisco rebels, once again, were identified as the long dormant Granadan foes of the past. Don John, for his part, writes to Philip in June of 1570 that clerics in the realm were preaching against granting, as was royal policy, terms to rebels in order to induce them to return to obedience. He complains that such conduct is not proper in clerics and in any case would be too harsh, since in his view most of the rebels only "sinned" through ignorance.<sup>87</sup> This is suggestive of differences in vision over how to treat defeated rebels which Mendoza especially informs us of. In other words, despite their differences in perspective, the authors featured in this chapter continue to share a common set of words and terms which they use to understand the situation. Moreover, Mendoza's accounts of dissention over policy are shown not to have been exclusively a product of his anger over being exiled from court, leading him to cast the authorities in a bad light. Other contemporaries like Don John report it as well.

### **Textual Attitudes toward Moriscos: Framing the Revolt**

In their descriptions of Moriscos the texts do not present one overarching Morisco "type." Nonetheless, depictions usually fall within a range of fairly common representations, encompassing their personal qualities, their role in the text, and their relationship to Christians and Castilian society. Important differences here emerge compared with texts from the frontier era or set on the frontier but written in the

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<sup>87</sup> Don John to Philip II, Andarax, 7 June 1570, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, 28:101.

sixteenth century. To some degree, this is not surprising given the passage of time and the changes which took place in those intervening years. When authors directed their attention, in the wake of the rebellion, onto Islamic Granada once again, they glimpsed a very different situation. The boundaries which had governed and conditioned the view of Muslims in earlier times and texts had fallen, and these later writings show some of the results of that fall. The Morisco rebels did not have the shared elite identity or political legitimacy which fifteenth century Muslims did. Furthermore at this time works detailing the revolt did not retain these factors, since their authors were dealing with current events and could not set their texts in the past. This had, in the texts of Mendoza and Mármol Carvajal, ominous consequences for views of the Moriscos and Islamic culture in Iberia. This section will look at the "big picture" of the rebellion, in the way that Mendoza and Mármol Carvajal understand the nature of the conflict, the identity of the rebels, and the role of the Islamic past and Islamic cultural legacy in Granada.

The authors reach back quite far in establishing the context of their accounts. Both, but especially Mármol Carvajal, make clear the long association of the Moriscos with the lands on which they are now rising. They acknowledge the well-known and often exalted past of the old kingdom, and its rulers, nobles and wars. Mendoza, in fact, paints the reign of King Bulhaxix, in the early fourteenth century, as a kind of golden age for the city, when it enjoyed great prosperity.<sup>88</sup> In only his second chapter, Mármol Carvajal includes a description of many of the prominent old Muslim lineages of the Nasrid emirate, such as the Beni Tumi, a family which he asserts was one of the original invaders in the eight century.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 99.

<sup>89</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 134-5.

However, Mármol Carvajal wove another thread into his narrative which has the potential to, even as he remembered the undeniable Islamic past, undermined its legitimacy. His history of Granada before the revolt begins long before the arrival of Islam in the peninsula, going back to the Romans and the Visigoths, as well as the city's early Christian history, noting that the "primitive church" had a bishop appointed there.<sup>90</sup> The Romans and especially the Visigoths, intriguingly, were part of a longstanding Castilian sense of their own origins, who often saw themselves as the historical heirs of the two ancient peoples.<sup>91</sup> Although Granada may have an extensive Islamic history, and that history is not derided but is admired,<sup>92</sup> Mármol Carvajal sets the basis for an even older claim, to which the Castilians would be the legitimate heirs. Having conquered the land, they have reclaimed what long ago belonged to their forebears and to Christendom. So, although the Islamic presence is a significant part of the history, it is not the only or the pre-eminent part. There is, this suggests, nothing inherently Islamic about the land of Granada. That past, even if remembered, need not determine the future.

Throughout, the Granadan Moriscos as a group are assigned a somewhat ambiguous relationship with the rest of Spain. They are often referred to as a distinct people, such as when Mendoza describes the Moriscos as a "*nación belicosa*," when laying out some of the difficulties of the war.<sup>93</sup> Mármol Carvajal, alluding to the expulsion, said that "God did not wish that the Morisco nation remain in that realm."<sup>94</sup> True, sixteenth-century Spain was no more homogenous culturally than it was politically, but other regional groups were not subjected to such attempts to suppress

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<sup>90</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 127-9.

<sup>91</sup> O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 38.

<sup>92</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 132.

<sup>93</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 96.

<sup>94</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 252.

their identities and cultures. There is a sense here of there being one land but two peoples, the Moriscos being politically subject to Castile yet set apart from their fellow subjects. Mendoza may have opposed the oppressive measures taken against the Moriscos, but even he alludes to separateness in his writings.

But, the issue has more sides than religious practice and attendant cultures alone. It also involves Morisco identity. They are personally native to and connected with the Iberian Peninsula to be sure, but nonetheless their separateness remains. For Mármol Carvajal, their culture in many ways sets them apart. His text accepts their customs as symbols of continued Islamic belief. In his history he occasionally notes that the kings of Granada consciously modelled themselves after and borrowed from Africa. The Alhambra, although he acknowledges its beauty, is here described as an imitation of or at least inspired by the Muslim rulers of Fez in North Africa. In fact, Mármol Carvajal says "the kings of Granada always were imitating those of Fez, and the cities in setting, climate, buildings and government, and in all the rest, were very similar."<sup>95</sup> The Moriscos are in a sense presented here as an outpost of Africa in Iberia.

Mendoza seems less troubled by the "otherness" of the Moriscos, and remains convinced that overzealous attempts to assimilate them were, in a sense similar to that represented by Núñez Muley, unnecessary. Yet, even he never argues that there were not distinctions between Moriscos and their culture and those of Christian Iberia. For him too, old Granada and its Islamic identity remained something, no matter how used to it people may have become, fundamentally foreign to the Castilian conception of the peninsula. He speaks with pride of the "great exaltation of the Christian faith" which was represented in the fall of the city to Ferdinand and Isabella after 774 years

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<sup>95</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 133: "...los reyes de Granada siempre fueron imitando á los de Fez, y las ciudades en sitio, aire, edificios y gobierno, y en todo lo demás, fueron muy semejantes."

of struggle, and of how Boabdil was "dispossessed of his kingdom and city," and "returned to his true homeland beyond the sea."<sup>96</sup>

Both authors, when speaking of the expulsion, look on with sympathy at the plight of those Moriscos forced to leave their homes. They thus acknowledge that for Moriscos personally, there was a connection with this land of their birth and they had a reasonable and justified desire to remain on it. Moreover, Islamic cultural influence was very great in Castile. Whether it was consciously appropriated and displayed, in the case of *juegos de cañas* or, as Barbara Fuchs says, "sometimes so deeply ingrained and longstanding that the influences would not even have been recognized as Islamic in origin", much of the "foreign" had become "Spanish."<sup>97</sup> The suppression of these practices, moreover, occurred in a context in which they were believed to be inextricably linked with Islamic religious belief, markers of a more significant divide. Given these qualifications, the sense of foreignness toward Islamic customs should not be read as rampant and uncompromising xenophobia and a quest for cultural purity. But, it is illustrative of how the loss of the political frontier behind which sat an acknowledged Islamic state, and a contemporary trend toward, in theory at least, religious uniformity for spiritual and political reasons, leaves this culture vulnerable to suspicion and, now, effective suppression by its new rulers.

These themes together speak to a serious problem for Moriscos in Castile. Castilian writers here and throughout the century acknowledge the history. This is not just history of combat and reconquest, but one of friendship and coexistence as well, though combat does remain a significant medium through which Iberian Islam appears in text. Despite this fascination for the history, however, their right to be Spaniards remains questioned. The Moriscos' often highly doubtful potential to

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<sup>96</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 99-100: "...que vimos al rey último Boaddeli, (con grande exaltación de la fe cristiana), desposeído de su reino y ciudad y tornado a su primera patria allende la mar."

<sup>97</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*, 17.

become genuine converts to the Christian faith is a major stumbling block. On an individual level Moriscos are understood to have their homes in Iberia and are Spaniards by virtue of this personal connection. Indeed one inquisitor stationed in Valencia a decade after the suppression of the Alpujarras Revolt says of the Moriscos that "they are Spaniards like ourselves."<sup>98</sup> Nonetheless their collective presence can be seen as an African intrusion.<sup>99</sup> These views can be held simultaneously by the same person, giving an idea of the difficulty and uncertainty that dogged government policy and attitudes toward the Morisco population. It does not follow that such a conception means that the cultural influence or historical memory must be expunged, and many did not believe this. It does however show how the loss of a political refuge and legitimate religious boundaries, along with zeal for religious uniformity, undermined prospects for a living legacy of Iberian Islam.

The majority of old Granada's nobility, we have seen, emigrated from their city in the aftermath of its fall. Though some remained behind, and some new figures rose in status, most of the Moriscos that remained were on the whole perceived to be of lowly origin. The revolt itself is initially referred to by Mendoza in the introduction to his work, in which he lays out his interpretation of events, as in the beginning only "a rebellion of bandits, a cabal of slaves, a peasant riot."<sup>100</sup> Although some nobles did join in as leaders, most notably Abén Humeya and Abén Aboo, many others did not.<sup>101</sup> Mármol Carvajal, taking Mendoza's more neutral observations a step further, calls the Moriscos of the rural Alpujarras "barbarous people, untameable and so prideful that only with difficulty could the Moorish kings

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<sup>98</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 228.

<sup>99</sup> Kamen, *The Disinherited: Exile and the Making of Spanish Culture, 1492-1975* (New York: Harper Collins, (2007): 56.

<sup>100</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 95: "...rebelión de salteadores, junta de esclavos, tumulto de villanos,..."

<sup>101</sup> Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada*, 47.

deal with them."<sup>102</sup> Here, indeed, we see how the differences between the Muslim nobility and the common people can influence Spanish attitudes. Rebels, of course, are not generally liked, but in these texts we see, compared with works produced about the Islamic past at approximately the same time, a change in the image of the textual Muslim. Far from being the chivalrous counterpart of Christian nobles, like Abindarráez with Narváez, the rebels made up something of a mob, held in general contempt. If shared nobility was once a path for texts to attempt to understand Muslim counterparts by placing them in familiar roles, this is no longer the case in these texts. The enemy, though dangerous as before, is now also often despised in a way which he rarely is when placed in the past.

The terms *Moro* and *Morisco* came to have two different meanings in the context of the Aplujarras revolt, with *Moro* signifying those in revolt and *Morisco* those at peace. This is illustrative of complex situation writers were trying to capture, in which "sides" were not homogenous groups. For instance we saw how the rebels included descendents of nobility in their ranks alongside peasants from the rugged mountains, while *Moriscos* were employed supplying the government forces. But whether from high station or low, the "Moros" were identified as rebels, traitors, heretics and, in a throwback to a common designation of their forebears, "enemies of our holy faith." The intervening years had seen attempts at conversion and integration, however. Unlike in the past, their belligerency could now be seen as subversive. No longer were Iberian Muslim opponents fighting in the service of their lords, but from Castilian eyes against them. When the Marqués de Mondéjar, a leading Castilian commander and nephew of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, receives the submission of the former rebels from Albuñuelas in the Lecrín Valley near Granada

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<sup>102</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 189: "...gente bárbara, indómita y tan soberbia, que con dificultad los reyes moros podían averiguarse con ellos..."

he welcomes them back to "royal favor and protection."<sup>103</sup> They also are once again referred to as Moriscos. Though a return to royal protection sounds generous, its unspoken corollary is that they have returned to obedience to that royal power.

Rebels are seldom well regarded in texts written from a loyalist perspective, so this terminology is in many ways not surprising. Its use does have interesting impacts though. The first three terms, rebels, traitors and heretics, imply a degree of transgression or betrayal of a previous allegiance. In effect, it acknowledges them as having been rightfully part of the realm and, theoretically, part of the Christian faith community. This kind of belonging however seems hardly to their benefit. Nonetheless, as part of the realm, the resolution of the conflict is seen not as destruction or conquest, but pacification, and reincorporation. The objective is to ultimately bring the province and its people back to obedience, though there is debate over the degree of hardness or leniency to employ. Granadan authorities, Mármol Carvajal tells us, debated what the solution to the revolt should be. According to him, "Some found it in moderation, others in the full rigor of justice."<sup>104</sup>

Mendoza makes his feelings on the subject plain, saying that after the initial outbursts, a little restraint could have ended the revolt quickly. However, the harsh treatment the Moriscos received at the hands of soldiers, even when not directly in revolt, led them not to trust the promises of the government.<sup>105</sup> He may be exaggerating here, since afterwards he questions subsequent government policy, speculating that kings may feel a need to punish rebellion even if a milder policy would be more prudent. But, whether or not there was a prospect for peace, his opposition to what he sees as unnecessarily severe tactics is seemingly genuine, given the frequency with which he makes such calls.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 224: "...la protección y amparo real..."

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 207: "Unos se hallaban en la equidad, otros en el rigor de la justicia..."

<sup>105</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 98

But, ultimately harsher policies carried the day. Perhaps one of the most drastic consequences of the rebellion is the expulsion of Moriscos from Granada and their dispersion in Castile. This was not presented as some kind of grand plan to purify. It was, in the first instance, most often referred to simply as a war measure. Mármol Carvajal says that "his majesty and those of his council resolved that all the territories of "*moriscos de paz*" be depopulated," so that "the rebels may lose the hope they have in them."<sup>106</sup> Secondly, they note that it should be a way to stop them from combining in rebellion again while also making it easier for them to be assimilated culturally. The fact that the exiles could not go to Valencia is illustrative of this, since that land already had an extensive Morisco population of its own.<sup>107</sup>

Both authors, recounting harrowing scenes of Moriscos being rounded up and forced out of their homeland, of women who had proudly run households being forced to quickly sell off everything which they could not carry with them into exile, express sympathy for the human tragedy of the situation. They differ, however, over the consequences of the expulsion. Mármol Carvajal writes in his conclusion that for Granada "the reward of the labors and of so much Christian blood spilt in her, was to banish the Morisco nation that had remained in it. O what a happy hour it was for you, illustrious city of Granada, when the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella removed you from the subjection of the devil."<sup>108</sup> After many years, their descendent Philip has completed the work they started in 1492 by now expelling the Moriscos, so Mármol Carvajal tells Granada that it now is "free and unburdened of

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<sup>106</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 342: "...para que los alzados acabasen de perder la esperanza que en ellos tenían..."

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 360.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 365: "el premio de los trabajos y de tanta sangre cristiana como en ella se derramó, fue a desterrar la nacion morisca que habia quedado en él. ¡Oh cuán felice hora fué para tí, insigne ciudad de Granada, cuando los católicos reyes don Hernando y doña Isabel te sacaron de la sujecion del demonio!"

that nation, so you may better enjoy a Christian populace."<sup>109</sup> The city home to the Alhambra and former heart for over two centuries of Iberian Islam is praised, with the removal of this population constituting a great improvement. It is the perfection of Ferdinand and Isabella's conquest decades earlier.

Mendoza takes an alternative view in his conclusion, decrying a land "depopulated and destroyed."<sup>110</sup> He notes that settlers have begun to come from all over Spain to take over the former homes and farms of the Moriscos. Curiously, he chooses to end his story by describing the fate of Francisco Barredo, a figure whose role, quite small in the work if bigger in its effects, was to arrange the death of Abén Aboo at the hands of Morisco assassins looking for leniency. Barredo, he says, is given a stipend to live on, taken from goods seized from Moriscos, and also a house formerly owned by a Muslim. Both these passages fall at the end of their respective works, so the exuberance with which Mármol Carvajal celebrates the expulsion and the simple yet sobering way in which Mendoza laments it may be designed to leave an impression of the reader. Both, though coming to different conclusions about the meaning of the expulsion, share a common theme. Whether it be the "illustrious city" in Mármol Carvajal's writing or the abandoned Morisco homes and goods which Mendoza reveals the newcomers appropriate and with which they support themselves, both are physical legacies of the Moriscos. These legacies remain even when the Morisco people are gone. In both cases, the story and life of Granada will go on in their absence, though infused with their influence.

These examples speak to the ways in which the conflict and, more broadly its Morisco participants and their place in Iberia, could be conceived in the two most significant and contemporary accounts of the rebellion. They show that this role was

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., , 365: "...libre y desembarazada de aquella nacion, para que mejor te goces con el pueblo cristiano."

<sup>110</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 403: "Quedó la tierra despoblada y destruida."

by no means agreed upon, and the authors have many points of disagreement which, given the contentious nature of this subject over the decades preceding their work, is not surprising. The old system of religious, social and political boundaries which helped to enable and manage interactions on the old frontier and are present in its literature have, when texts shift to mid-sixteenth century history, broken down. Still, these texts convey a sense that the Granadan Moriscos, despite being natives of the land, nonetheless are representative of an "other" from beyond the Peninsula as conceived from a Christian's historical perspective. Moreover, we see that their legacy and their physical presence can be separated by authors, suggesting that appreciation of the one does not necessarily require acceptance of the other.

### **Portraying the Rebels**

On a more particular level than the broader concepts discussed above, contemporary Moriscos also appear extensively in text once more when authors write about the Alpujarras Rebellion. Here, we have the benefit of more individualized portrayals rather than Moriscos presented in the abstract. Of course, we must account for author biases and the fact that such portrayals often must be tailored to fit in with the overall story and message which the author is communicating. All these works are, after all, primarily focused on the progress of the rebellion and its suppression, not a biography or a "character driven" story. This can be a great benefit because it gives an idea, albeit imperfect, of how Moriscos may be viewed personally, as opposed to placing greater focus on big picture questions about the place of Iberian Islamic culture in early modern Spain. These can be treated as two related though separate questions. After all, great richness of personal interaction had historically

been a feature of relations between Christians and Muslims in Iberia. These texts can give us insight not only into conceptions of Islamic culture and Moriscos in a broad view, but also into conceptions of people who claim that identity.

First, due to the frequent descriptions of Muslims in battle with Christians in the earlier literature we have surveyed, this section examines how the authors present this in their works on the rebellion. As we have seen this war was in several ways understood quite differently than those earlier conflicts. Moriscos continue to be ferocious fighters, often brave and capable of inflicting crushing defeats. Still, as ever they are not invincible and face Christians opponents who can have similar qualities and can have similar military successes. Despite the changed circumstances, the personal qualities and capabilities which combatants are assigned have not on the whole undergone similar alteration.

The rebels' frequent victories, though certainly won through their effective use and knowledge of the terrain, also require courage. In one poignant example, soldiers from the town of Inox march out to make a foray against Moriscos, including women and children as well as fighters, occupying mountains near the town in the vicinity of Almería. As they advance, the attackers encounter fierce resistance, especially once the Moriscos, using the terrain to their advantage, retreat to a mountain refuge. There, "the enemies fought like men determined to lose their lives for the freedom of their women and children," for which purpose they stood their ground "and resisting valiantly our soldiers' assault, they killed some and wounded more than two hundred."<sup>111</sup> Ultimately, however, Christian forces pressed their attack and overcame this resistance, though with many casualties, and captured many of the Moriscos who had taken refuge there. Even among rebels and heretics, there are qualities to admire.

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<sup>111</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 214.

Sill, the Morisco soldiers and their frontier forefathers are separated by one critical factor. In accounts of the fifteenth century frontier, cavalry was often crucial for the fast paced action of the ballads and for delivering decisive blows in the chronicles. Horsemen in this rebellion, however, are not as great a factor, and certainly no longer a common factor to both Muslims and Christians. Part of this reflects changes in European warfare generally,<sup>112</sup> but the problem is particularly acute in Granada because many of the battlegrounds are poorly suited to horses. The Moriscos, being mostly humble people, were rarely mounted fighters. "As footmen without pikes (who) feared cavalry," they had every reason to be wary of Castilian horsemen, and thus sought protection from them by selecting suitable terrain.<sup>113</sup> In May 1569 at Berja, a village south of the Alpujarras, however, the Marqués de Velez was able to lay a trap and bring this cavalry to bear in open country. For a time the mounted warriors were able to have a great impact and force the rebels to retreat. Once they reached rougher terrain, however, the rebels were able to regroup since the cavalry could no longer effectively attack them.<sup>114</sup>

Mármol Carvajal for his part explains that the rebels defeated a column led by Diego de Quesada toward Tablate, south of Granada. They pursued but were forced to stop after a while, "not daring to go further," since the terrain ahead of them was good for cavalry which they could not counter.<sup>115</sup> This imbalance in the way in which each side could fight was not, until the final conquest of Granada at least, something present in writings about the past. There in fact the combatants similar the tactics and equipment, the result of years of adaptation to each other. In mounted warfare the

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<sup>112</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 24.

<sup>113</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 253: "...como gente de pie y sin picas recelaban la caballería..."

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 150-151.

<sup>115</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 213: "...y de allí se volvieron, no osando pasar adelante, por ser tierra donde era superior la caballería."

rebellious Morisco commoners were no match for their Castilian opponents, a very different situation from the fifteenth century when writers often understand the Granadan nobility through many of the same chivalric standards to which Castilian knights should aspire.

Of course, no discussion of the war would be complete without that of the atrocities which were, if reports are to be believed, at times truly appalling. Both sides were responsible for their fair share of brutality, but instances of Castilian brutality appear about as often in Mendoza's text as outrages for which Moriscos are to blame, while Mármol Carvajal includes more about Moriscos. His text is much longer and more comprehensive with regard to recording events, and he has several chapters in which he describes the uprising of region after region and the "great sacrileges and evil deeds, without respect to anything human or divine" of the rebels against churches, clergy and at times the old Christian population in general.<sup>116</sup> Mendoza sometimes pushes a greater understanding, at times even sympathizes with those reasons. In his view, the consequence of the abuses of the preceding decades was to make the Moriscos lose faith in their future under Castilian rule, and seeing no hope of improvement, sought revenge instead. Nonetheless, both authors are horrified by these sacrileges, showing a degree of righteous indignation that is very rarely observable in earlier texts, since there are so few instances of actions like this recorded. Victims are said "to suffer myriad forms of martyrdom."<sup>117</sup>

But, underscoring the fact that this was not a situation which pitted all Old Christians settlers against all Moriscos, consisting of two mutually exclusive sides, Mármol Carvajal includes the story of Catalina de Arroyo. Arroyo was, it would

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 198: "...grandísimos sacrilegios y maldades, sin respetar á cosa divina ni humana."

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 189: "...y á muchos hicieron padecer diversos géneros de martirios."

seem, a genuine Morisco convert who chose death rather than renouncing her faith.<sup>118</sup> She is, however, a rather isolated example and, based on his later approval of the expulsion, seems not to have had for him any redemptive effect on the rest of her people. Mendoza, for his part, takes special care to mention the massacre of a column under the incompetent Marqués de Favara in the pass of La Ravaha in the Alpujarras. Among the dead, he notes, were many Morisco porters in service with the Castilian forces.<sup>119</sup> They, too, could be made to suffer by the rebels. Another episode serves to remind us that personal interactions, even in a time as highly charged as this, continued to play out in variety of ways not following the dominant narrative. Diego Ramírez de Rojas, a Castilian official in the Alpujarras, encounters a group of Christian settlers heading for safety in the town of Oria in the early stages of the uprising, who had been warned in advance by Morisco friends that they may not be safe.<sup>120</sup>

The textual portrayal of interaction between Iberian Muslims and Christians in Granada differs in these later works. In war, the two sides are no longer so similar, and the degree of equality conferred by their analogous roles is gone. On the other hand a new religious hatred is not only rhetorical, but transferred into direct action, whether in the form of Castilian suppression or Morisco vengeance. However, beneath this there remained the potential, battered though it may appear, for better relations on a more personal level. Whatever their frequency in real life, their portrayals in these texts have become few and far between.

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>119</sup> Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada*, 225.

<sup>120</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Rebelión y castigo*, 215.

## Closing

For many years in the sixteenth century, Castilian literature on Iberian Islam and contemporary policy debates over its role were largely divorced. With the outbreak of rebellion amidst the disgruntled Moriscos of Granada in December 1568, literary depictions and contemporary conditions collide once more. The result is messy, since the social, religious, and political frontiers which had governed interaction and encompassed identification with the other in the world of the old frontier had been eroded. In the context of rebellion, the ambivalent and even admiring attitudes of the past were infused with the urgency of concerns of loyalty and identity in a very new context. This, moreover, must be coupled with continuing developments in Spain's international position and its own self perception. With those old frontiers gone, the question of Iberian Islam was very much open.

There was in literature, even within the writings of the same author, no single view of the Moriscos, just as there was disagreement in political and theological discussions of their place. Even writers such as Mendoza and Mármol Carvajal, who were familiar with this Morisco Spain, displayed trouble reconciling their perceived otherness and foreignness with their evident attachment and association with Iberia. Now that Iberia had no legitimate Muslim space, and all its former Muslim were subjects who were, moreover, supposed to be Christian, finding an accommodation for Islam was difficult. *El Abencerraje* and a host of other writings do so by placing Iberian Islam behind a chronological barrier which keeps it away from present arguments. Writing about current events, however, makes this more difficult. Even sympathetic Mendoza does not fully reconcile personal origins in Iberia with differing cultural and religious identities on the part of the Moriscos. Reflecting on the recent

rebellion, but before the literary onslaught of *Maurophilia* and suggestion of outright expulsion in earnest, these authors provide us with extensive, if not comprehensive, insight into Castilian views on the Islamic legacy of their homeland in what was now supposed to be an exclusively Christian society.

## Conclusion

When Luis del Mármol Carvajal closed his history of the Alpujarras Rebellion, he celebrated the expulsion of the Moriscos from the city of Granada and portrayed the event as the culmination of Ferdinand and Isabella's conquest almost eighty years before.<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Monarchs had captured the city from Muslim control, while the expulsion removed the lingering Muslim presence. But, to whatever extent that removal applied in Granada, Moriscos remained elsewhere in the realm. Indeed, the dispersal of this large population throughout Castile brought Moriscos to regions where they had been few or even nonexistent.

Undoubtedly, the Moriscos of Granada suffered in their expulsion. Once forcibly resettled however, they went on with the work of rebuilding their lives.<sup>2</sup> This reprieve would prove short-lived. In 1609, Philip III, who had come to the throne after his father Philip II's death in 1598, ordered the expulsion of all Moriscos, approximately 300,000 people, from his realms. This order was carried out over the next five years. The Crown of Aragon, especially Valencia, where Moriscos constituted a large minority, felt a deep impact from this population loss. Despite the resettlement of Granadan exiles however, Moriscos still comprised only a small percentage of Castile's population. The expulsion's economic and demographic impact in areas with a sparse Morisco population was generally much less significant than in Aragon.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless symbolically this act would seem to represent the ultimate rejection by Iberian Christians of the peninsula's Islamic legacy, the culmination of more than a century of repression.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 365.

<sup>2</sup> Hillgarth, *The Mirror of Spain*, 206-207; David E. Vassberg, *The Village and the Outside World in Golden Age Castile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 35.

<sup>3</sup> Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*, 365.

As we have seen however, focusing too heavily on policy outcomes obscures the great diversity of attitudes and viewpoints that can exist in the background. Looking deeper, the road to expulsion was by no means smooth. Proposals for such a measure had occasionally come before the court several times and had been rebuffed.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, only a few years before the expulsion order, elements of the Church hierarchy and the government were exploring the possibility of a renewed effort to convert and assimilate the Moriscos.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, when the decision to expel the Moriscos was reached, not even the entire court was in agreement and certain segments of the population were furious. Aragonese nobles had to be granted concessions in order to secure their agreement. Additionally some towns, church officials and nobles in Castile peppered the court with protests when they learned of the order, not wanting to lose their Morisco citizens, parishioners or tenants.<sup>6</sup> Afterwards, even many supporters expressed feelings of regret about expelling the Moriscos. And, despite this drastic policy, cultural trends sometimes painted a different picture. In literature, we have noted that the decades leading up to the expulsion also saw the flourishing of *Maurophilia*, which presented idealized and romanticized Iberian Muslims in the past even as their actual descendents were on the eve of expulsion.

These examples remind us that behind policies are a much more complicated web of opinions, and that rejection and remembrance can be compatible. Sixteenth century Castilian literature can reflect these principles. Even as Castile forced Muslims to convert, enacted increasingly repressive laws against Islamic practice, and confronted a violent rebellion among its Morisco population, its writers continued to produce and its people enjoy literature that remains filled with Muslims and Islamic culture. Within these depictions, relations between the religious groups can be

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>5</sup> Casey, *Early Modern Spain*, 224-225.

<sup>6</sup> Carr, *Blood and Faith*, 248-252.

violent, but also amiable. Boundaries in these texts once reflected boundaries in life. Though Castilian and Granadan figures in text often met in hostile circumstances, the association of Granadans with a recognized political entity, or put another way the recognition of a political boundary, gave that belligerence legitimacy. Moreover, although the two sides may have been set apart by religious differences, authors also conceived of many cultural and social similarities between them. By assigning elite Granadans similar social roles to those played by noble Castilians, the authors place both within the bounds of a shared social category.

After the fall of Granada and certainly the forced conversions however, authors' placement of their Castilian and Granadan characters according to these old boundaries no longer reflected actual historical conditions. Nonetheless, these boundaries continued to govern many positive depictions. They were supplemented by a new boundary, a frontier in time which kept these portrayals set in the past. In effect, positive literary depictions of Iberian Muslims sidestepped the Morisco question by maintaining temporal distance. When that temporal frontier is breached however, we see that the others remaining in the text crumble as well. Political boundaries to legitimize hostility and social boundaries allowing for understanding are gone. With authors looking not to an increasingly distant past but a troubled present, textual representations of the Moriscos were far more negative.

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