

Moriscos and the Sacralization of Stories in Early Modern Spain  
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Moriscos, those Muslims and their descendants who had to convert to Christianity if they wanted to remain in the lands of Spain after 1502, offer a significant global link in the study of culture and religion. Originally coming to the Iberian Peninsula from the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, they raise several questions about sacred and devotional objects. How, for example, could these people preserve any remnants of their Muslim faith after Christian rulers prohibited not only their religion, but also their culture, and unleashed a very powerful Inquisition to prosecute false converts and Muslim traditions? How did their stories become sacred to Moriscos and even help them grow in faith? And most puzzling of all, why did they risk their lives to save stories of non-Muslim origins, such as those about Jesus, the Hebrew prophet Job, and a handless maiden named Carcayona?

Fortunately, historical records provide important help in finding answers to these questions, for they reveal a context for Moriscos, their experiences, and their stories. At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Fernando and Isabel decreed that Muslims remaining in the lands of Castile must convert to Christianity or leave the Hispanic homes where many had lived for generations.<sup>1</sup> Thousands chose to leave Spain, but many others stayed and converted to Christianity, whether voluntarily or by force. Known as Moriscos, or “Moor-like,” these baptized Muslims became viewed as “false Christians” who followed the longtime

Muslim tradition of *taqiyya*, which counseled the faithful to conform externally to the religion of an oppressive regime while internally remaining faithful to Islam.<sup>2</sup>

Although some Moriscos became “good Christians,” and even entered religious orders or intermarried with Old Christians (those without Jewish or Muslim ancestors), many other Moriscos resisted assimilation. They could preserve few sacred objects of their faith, however, as Christian authorities prohibited them and exiled or killed their Muslim leaders, closed or shattered their mosques. Bonfires had already destroyed countless copies of the Qur’an and most of their religious writings in Arabic, the language they revered as that in which the word of Allah was written.<sup>3</sup>

However, Moriscos found ways to preserve their stories and hide Arabic writings, even as inquisitors prosecuted thousands for concealing and reading and passing on to one another the prohibited Arabic writings. In Jaén, for example, an official entered the house of Elvira Hernández, believing that she was hiding some papers, but she quickly passed a large bundle to Isabel de Aranda, who hid the writings in her skirts. As the official caught sight of her, Isabel de Aranda passed the bundle to another Morisca, Isabel de Silva, who concealed the papers in her skirts and swiftly moved to another room to hide them beneath a woven grass mat—all of this recorded as evidence against them.<sup>4</sup>

Yet inquisitors were not able to find all the hidden writings. Two and three centuries later, workmen discovered some of them as they pulled down ancient buildings in which Moriscos had once lived. Evidently concealed in hollow pillars

and walls, false ceilings and floors, the writings that spilled out included those in both Arabic and *aljamía*, a Spanish dialect written in Arabic script.<sup>5</sup> Although some of the concealed papers preserved secular accounts such as bookkeeping records and marriage contracts, many of them were religious writings, including copies of the Qur'an, sayings of Muhammad, and legal interpretations of the *shar'ia*. Certainly objects of veneration for those Moriscos who were able to read and hear them in early modern Spain, they may have been an important source of inspiration when they could be taken out of their hiding places without fear of discovery.

In addition to the traditional sacred writings of Islam, however, the concealed writings included stories that I believe became important objects of faith for Moriscos. For generations these tales had been passed on orally by storytellers, but at the end of the fifteenth or in the early sixteenth century they had been written down in *aljamía*. By this time many Hispanic Muslims and Moriscos wanted to preserve the sacred Arabic script that had been used to record the Qur'an, especially as they lost their facility with spoken Arabic.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps they sacralized this loss of spoken Arabic as a "felt absence," similar to Desdemona's handkerchief in Richard McCoy's analysis of Shakespeare's *Othello*.<sup>7</sup>

Several of these stories became inspirational for those Moriscos attempting to preserve their own faith and culture in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In addition, they became sacred not only to those resisting Christian conversion, but also to two other groups of Moriscos: those

who wanted to explore the possible syncretization of Islam with aspects of Judeo-Christian traditions, and those who simply intended to assimilate as Christians. For each of these groups, Morisco stories became even more sacred as Christian authorities prohibited them so that Moriscos had to preserve them in secrecy. Morisco stories of Job, Jesus, and a handless maiden named Carcayona have particular significance, I believe, in demonstrating how Moriscos used stories to preserve or hybridize sacred beliefs even though they did not originate as tales to preserve their faith in Islam, nor to instruct Muslims to resist religious oppression, nor to make other faiths more acceptable to Muslims.

#### Context and Evidence

In proposing that Moriscos converted some of their stories into sacred “objects,” I want to acknowledge both the particularities of their historical context as well as the limitations of available evidence. Moriscos continued to live in the Spanish kingdoms during the sixteenth and early sixteenth century in an environment of growing mistrust and increasing oppression that undercut their efforts at assimilation. They lost their Muslim names when Christian clerics imposed new Christian names in baptism. A royal decree of 1508 banned their Arabic writings, and a series of royal mandates in the 1510s and 1520s prohibited much of their traditional clothing, food, festive dances and other elements of their culture that religious officials considered evidence of continuing allegiance to Islam.<sup>8</sup> From the 1530s, the Inquisition imprisoned thousands of suspected Muslim apostates, subjecting them to seizure of family property,

humiliating public penitence, lashings, penitential service and—when the accused did not request reconciliation with the Church—execution.<sup>9</sup>

After years of increasing oppression, Moriscos in Granada declared an armed rebellion in 1568. For two years they held off the proud armies of Philip II and his loyal nobles, but they had to accept defeat in 1570. The crown ordered the forced relocation of all Moriscos of Granada and their dispersal in distant parts of Castile. Some 50,000 Moriscos suffered very difficult journeys into this internal exile, more than one-quarter of them dying along the way from exposure, disease, and hardship. Those who survived faced suspicious new neighbors and stringent restrictions carried out by local ecclesiastical and lay authorities.<sup>10</sup>

Finally in 1609, convinced that Moriscos would never assimilate in Spanish Christian society, Philip IV ordered that they be expelled from his kingdoms.<sup>11</sup> With the exception of only the small percentage of Moriscos who had managed to integrate themselves into the power structures of the dominant society, the overwhelming majority of Spain's Moriscos were forced into exile between 1609 and 1614. Christian authorities decreed that Moriscos could not take with them precious metals or jewels or, in many cases, their children younger than seven years who had been baptized. When expelled Moriscos left the port of Seville in 1610, officials placed in warehouses some 300 Morisco children they had taken from their parents. Here the children waited for Christian parents who would agree to raise them as "good Christians."<sup>12</sup>

In this tragic context, we find no evidence for how many Moriscos had access to their own stories or history. Inquisition cases against Moriscos

accused of attempting to hide Arabic or Aljamiado writings provide some specific examples, but they tell us nothing of those Moriscos who escaped prosecution by the Holy Office. In some cases, the reports do not even show that the prosecuted Moriscos had read the writings nor that they knew what the writings contained. It is likely that the majority of Morisco women, in particular, could not read.<sup>13</sup>

Inquisition records in themselves are problematic as evidence. They have the limitation of reflecting better what inquisitors wanted to hear than what Moriscos might have believed was true. Moriscos subjected to questioning by inquisitors knew that these men had the power of life and death over them and their families. Inquisitors not only phrased the questions to elicit particular responses; they also recorded the Moriscos' answers. The testimonies in these cases read more as a form of ventriloquism carried out by inquisitors than an honest statement by witnesses free to speak openly in the search for truth.<sup>14</sup> Presenting much more clearly what those in power sought to establish than the direct voices of Moriscos, these records could easily be dismissed as evidence of an "imperialist gaze" by a powerful elite that looked down upon a despised "Other."<sup>15</sup>

It is likely that many of the Morisco stories were passed on orally, especially after Inquisitors succeeded in finding the written versions that Moriscos had attempted to hide. Even if we agree that many of the Morisco stories had been spoken, however, we have no information about the storytellers nor about the particular version that each told of the story. We do not know

which tales the storytellers used to simply entertain and which had a more didactic purpose to instruct and preserve Islam. Often when I work with Moriscos I long to hear their stories as they told them in their own places and times, note their inflections and the responses of their listeners, their quiet decisions to disguise words that might too easily betray them to suspicious eavesdroppers, their admonitions to keep the stories from children who might inadvertently repeat fragments that would incriminate the adults. Unfortunately, we have not yet invented that super-mega-ear that could pick up the vibrations of voices from 5 centuries ago that might still surround the Earth in the outer reaches of our universe.

However, we do have some scholarly help in analyzing the little historical evidence that we have. Just a moment ago, for example, we used the work of post-colonial scholars to help us understand some of the limitations of Inquisition records as an elitist “imperialist gaze.” With the insights of additional literary scholars, we can deliberately read historical records “against the grain” as “discourse” that involves power relations.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, we can look to the analytical work of sociologists and anthropologists who have studied peoples attempting to survive in very difficult situations. Hank Johnston, for example, is a sociologist who studied the people of Catalonia under the Franco regime and learned how they preserved their Catalan language and culture through oral stories, jokes, and traditional songs that they had to keep secret.<sup>17</sup> Anthropologist James C. Scott has written two books about peasants and the very poor in Malaysia, which show how these

people develop strategies such as “hidden transcripts” and “weapons of the weak” in order to resist domination.<sup>18</sup>

But how do we really know that Moriscos “sacralized” the stories? Here the writings of William James, Emile Durkheim, and Joseph Campbell can help to clarify what we mean by the verb, “sacralize.” For each of these thinkers, human beings—no matter when or where they live—yearn to know more of a powerful transcendent being, to experience an encounter with this being, to learn more of the universe that this divinity has created, and to empower themselves through connecting with this divine power.<sup>19</sup> As we consider Morisco stories, then, I suggest that we look especially at how they describe a divine being, a human encounter with the divinity, and the empowerment of people through this divinity.

### Morisco Stories

Elsewhere I have analyzed two Morisco stories that do not appear to have originated with Muslims. In my recent book I present “The Story of the Maiden Carcayona, Daughter of King Nachrab, with the Dove” as a metaphor of the Morisco experiences of wounding and exile, of hope and faith.<sup>20</sup> To me, Carcayona is a tale that could both empower and comfort Moriscos in early modern Spain. This Morisco version of the story of an archetypal handless maiden probably originated in Asia long before Muslims adapted it as a didactic tool for instruction in Islam.<sup>21</sup>

In contrast, the Morisco story of Job appeared in Hebrew Scriptures centuries before Muhammad heard the words that would include Job in the Qur’an.<sup>22</sup> Clearly recognizing the close connection of Allah with his people, the

Morisco story of Job presents Job and his wife Rahma as exemplars of suffering, faith, compassion, and love. In my judgment, this could have provided Moriscos both inspiration and hope, as they suffered the loss of identity and faith, family and home in early modern Spain.<sup>23</sup>

Here, however, I want to focus on one section of another Morisco story, “The Birth of Jesus.”<sup>24</sup> Because it seems to be based on the stories of the Christian gospels, we might wonder why Moriscos hid this story from Christian authorities. Note, however, that because it was written in Arabic or *aljamia*, it would have been burned. Moreover, it presents a story of Jesus and his mother, Mary, that differed significantly from the dogma and teachings of the Catholic Church in Spain at this time. For Moriscos, this story may have helped as they tried to accept the Christianity imposed on them. Perhaps, also, the stories held out some hope to those Moriscos who hoped for a synthesis of Islam and Christianity. In addition, there is the possibility that the story could have encouraged them to hold on to the faith revealed in the Qur’an, which recognizes Jesus as born of a miraculous birth to become a prophet for Allah.

Although “The Birth of Jesus” may seem an unlikely source of empowerment or reassurance of the divine for Moriscos, this story presents an example of divine power to infuse its spirit into those who are born as mortal beings. In fact, it is about Allah’s divine power infused into very unlikely human beings, such as a timid Hebrew maiden who conceives a child outside wedlock, and her ridiculed fatherless son who performs miracles to bring the healing and compassionate love of Allah to those who suffer. In my judgment, these are

clearly two characters with whom Moriscos could identify as they struggled to survive under a very oppressive ecclesiastic-political regime. More than simply a tale of suffering, “The Birth of Jesus” holds out the hope of healing and wholeness through the intervention of a loving divine power.

The particular role of Mary in this story raises a question about why divine power so frequently works through women, even though, or perhaps *because*, they were frequently disdained by their patriarchal societies. In this respect, Mary resembles the miracle-working Constance in Chaucer’s *The Man of Law’s Tale*, which Sarah Stanbury analyzes in another essay in this volume.<sup>25</sup> Mary also reminds us of the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine, whose conversion to Christianity changed Roman history. Thanks to the work of Diliانا Angelova, we realize that later accounts of Constantine and Christianity omitted the story that it was Helena who discovered the remnants of the True Cross that played such a key role in the spread of Christianity.<sup>26</sup>

The Morisco story of “The Birth of Jesus” begins with a focus on the Hebrew maiden, Mary. Tracing the genealogy of Mary to her forefather Solomon, it tells how her long-barren mother Anne prayed aloud in the temple that whether she conceived boy or girl, she promised to give the child to the temple for service to the Lord. When she gave birth to a daughter, she named her Mary and told her brother-in-law Zachariah, a priest in the temple, of her pledge. He was not impressed, however, when she presented her infant daughter to him. “Women are not good for serving in the temple of the Lord,” he told her, “better that they look after the younger children.”<sup>27</sup> Then, just as Anne

turns to leave in disappointment with her infant daughter, Zachariah tells her to come back and show him the baby's face. When Anne uncovers the infant's face, it shines "as the moon." Allah casts great love for Mary in the heart of Zachariah as he sees her beauty. "Oh, Anne," he tells her mother, "leave her in my power, and carry out your promise."<sup>28</sup>

Zachariah now takes over the rearing of the child Mary, placing her in a locked and enclosed house where she can live in purity to learn to serve the Lord. As Mary grows into puberty, Allah sends Gabriel to her, and he brings her fruit from Allah. "Eat," the angel says, but she turns her face away and "hid it from fear because she thought he was *taquiye*, he who was believed to cause women who looked at him to be seized by love."<sup>29</sup> Gabriel assures Mary that he is not a man who wants to seduce her, but a messenger from Allah who sent him to bring her "the fruit of paradise and to tell you that you will have a spotless son . . . for Allah has chosen you above all the women of the world and has purified you."<sup>30</sup> Astounded, she asks how she can have a child, for she has not been with a man. Gabriel assures her that this is the order of her Lord who wants it to be a marvel among people.

Mary protests that people of her tribe of Israel will kill her when they find she, an unmarried maiden, is pregnant. However, Gabriel points out that Allah has honored her and will protect her so that they will not be able to kill her. Mary insists that the Israelites will stone her, but Gabriel assures her that "their hearts are in the power of Allah."<sup>31</sup> As the angel continues to calm each of her concerns, Mary suddenly feels the baby stir within her. Gabriel smiles then and

assures her that this is by the will of the “Lord of the world.”<sup>32</sup> However, after the angel leaves her and Mary tells Zachariah of his visit, she realizes that he does not believe her story and thinks, instead, that someone got into her locked enclosure—perhaps with her assistance--and seduced her.

Later, when she knows the baby will soon be born, Mary flees from her enclosure “for fear of Zachariah and those of the tribe of Israel.”<sup>33</sup> In an “unpopulated place,” she finds refuge under a date palm that seems dry and barren.<sup>34</sup> She places herself in a hollow in the tree and Gabriel now comes to her, urging her not to feel sad, but to notice that Allah has provided here a bed for her in the hollow of the tree.<sup>35</sup> Although Mary has seen no fruit on the tree, the angel tells her that dates will nourish her, falling to her when she simply fixes her eyes on the fronds of the tree.

Here in the nurturing shelter of the date palm Mary gives birth to Jesus, “salvation be to him,” as the story says, adding that this is “the best of births for any for the daughters of Adam.”<sup>36</sup> At the moment of birth, Allah opens the “gates of the heavens and sends down to earth seven tiers of angels and a pillar of splendor that illuminates the earth and the heavens, by the power of the Lord of the world.”<sup>37</sup> The baby, as he leaves the womb, declares, “There is no Lord but Allah, and Jesus is the spirit of Allah and his word.”<sup>38</sup> Hearing this, Mary praises and gives thanks to Allah for this baby.

However, back at Mary’s enclosure, Zachariah shouts an alarm when he cannot find her. Others from the tribe of Israel hear him and join in a search for her, and so does Iblis, the devil who is disguised as an old man. They meet a

shepherd running towards them white with fear. When they stop him, he gasps that he has “seen a thing that I have never seen before in my life. . . .”

Questioned by the disguised devil, the shepherd goes on to say that he “saw the gates of heaven open and seven tiers of angels descend from heaven to the earth.” He saw a “pillar of splendor” illuminating the heavens and earth that stopped before a woman giving birth, and he saw leaving the womb a boy child who said, “There is no Lord but Allah; I am Jesus, spirit of Allah and his word.”<sup>39</sup>

Hearing all this, the devil returns to Zachariah and his group, and twists the shepherd’s story. Declaring that the shepherd had confirmed Mary’s evil, Iblis says that she has given birth to a child that she had conceived with the shepherd. Iblis incites Zachariah and the men to believe that she must die for this, and he convinces them that they must stone her. The search party finds her in the hollow of the date palm, but when they accuse her of adultery, she does not flinch. “I have not come with evil, nor did I sin in any way,” she declares, “but ask the child, for he will tell you the truth, whether he is legitimate or illegitimate.”<sup>40</sup>

Note two important developments in the story. First, the devil appears in disguise with supernatural powers of evil. In contrast, the Christian gospels tell of the evil threatened by a mortal king, Herod, who feared the newborn babe. Perhaps Moriscos’ experience of evil in their own lives led them to give a greater role in their story to the more powerful devil, particularly one with supernatural powers infused into human form.

Second, we see a major change in Mary from that frightened maiden who first turned away from Gabriel and ran to hide when she could not convince Zachariah of Gabriel's message of her divine pregnancy. Now, after the birth of her child, she has changed from child to mother, from frightened lamb to fierce lioness. She refuses to flee or weep when the angry men come to stone her and the baby. Instead she defies those who accuse her of evil, and she challenges them to learn the truth about her from the child--for she has heard the child speak as it leaves her womb. Perhaps this miraculous revelation of Allah's blessing of her child has most transformed her from demure girl to strong woman? Perhaps her story now becomes one of hope and reassurance that Allah directly intervenes in human lives, even in those who have been despised and defeated--such as the Moriscos who were suffering the loss of Islam and their Muslim culture? In this sense, the story could easily appeal to, and even empower, Moriscos attempting to resist Christian authorities.

However, it is also possible that the story could reassure those Moriscos who favored some sort of synthesis of the two faiths, as well as those who were trying to adapt themselves to Christianity. On the one hand, this *aljamiado* version of the birth of Jesus seems very similar to the story contained in the Qur'an in sura XIX.<sup>41</sup> In addition, several scholars see the possibilities of Marian devotion for attracting Moriscos to Christianity.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, the veneration of Mary had been growing in early modern Spain from a popular form of religious enthusiasm into an acceptable teaching of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>43</sup> Note, however, that the

Morisco version does not say that Mary's son was the Son of God, a fundamental Christian doctrine. Neither does it state that Mary had been born without original sin, nor that she remained an eternal virgin after the birth of Jesus—two doctrines increasingly taught by the Spanish Catholic Church in this time, as well as by the Eastern Orthodox Church. Yet as a symbol of purity and compassion, she offers the appeal of both the nurturing mother and a loving Creator who moves in human lives—two archetypes appearing in Jewish and Muslim, as well as Christian traditions.

Moriscos who heard the story of “The Birth of Jesus” recognized an account of a human encounter with the divine that millions have found in countless variations around the world. Clearly, they could have heard in this version the movement, images, and message of love that Julian of Norwich found in her visions in medieval England.<sup>44</sup> In their own lives of struggle and tragic expulsion, the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus and the transformation of Mary must have touched many Morisco hearts longing for comfort and healing. We cannot know with certainty that Moriscos regarded their story of “The Birth of Jesus” as a sacred object. Yet there is no question that the story tells us more about these people, their longings and needs, their hopes for redemption, their belief in a divine power that speaks through words and reaches down to mere mortals with love and compassion.

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<sup>1</sup> For the rebellion and terms of capitulation, see Luis del Marmol Carvajal, *Historia de la rebelión y castigo de los moriscos del reino de Granada* (orig. 1600), in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* (Madrid: Atlas, 1946) XXI:146-150. An excellent chronology of this increasing oppression of Moriscos is in Mercedes García Arenal, *Los moriscos* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1975) 15-17. The 1502 decree of conversion or exile is discussed in Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos: Vida y tragedia de una minoría* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1978) 17-21.

<sup>2</sup> Most scholars believe that *taqiyya* originated with Muslim Shi'as living under Sunni domination, particularly those dissenters who joined the secret societies of Isma'ilis, Nusayris, and Druses. See, for example, H. Lammens, *Islam. Beliefs and Institutions*, trans. Sir E. Denison Ross (London: Methuen & Co., 1968) 168; *The Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, eds. H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1961) 561-562; Alvaro Galmés de Fuentes, *Los moriscos (desde su misma orilla)* (Madrid: Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos, 1993), 108-113; Louis Cardaillac, "Un aspecto de las relaciones entre moriscos y cristianos: polémica y taqiyya," in *Actas del coloquio internacional sobre literatura aljamiada y morisca*, Madrid: CLEAM, 1978), III:107-122; and surah 16:106 of *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. and comm. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Hafner Publishing Co., 1946) 1:685. Note that not all Muslims accepted taqiyya, and some leaders believed that living under the rule of non-Muslims would dilute their faith because they could not express their faith outwardly; see Domínguez Ortiz, and Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos*, 134-135.

<sup>3</sup> Bonfires destroying Arabic writings are described in José Capdevila Orozco, *Errantes y expulsados. Normativas jurídicas contra gitanos, judíos, y moriscos* (Cordova: F. Baena, 1991), 111-112; 19-21; Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos*, 19-21; and in A. R. Nykel, *A Compendium of Aljamiado Literature* (New York and Paris: Macon, Protat Freres, 1929), 27-28.

<sup>4</sup> These cases are presented in Rafael Gracia Boix, *Autos de fe y causas de la Inquisición* (Cordova: Diputación Provincial, 1983), 272.

<sup>5</sup> For more on these concealed writings and their discovery, see Nykel, *A Compendium*, 29-30; Luce López-Baralt, *Islam in Spanish Literature. From the Middle Ages to the Present*, transl. Andrew Hurley (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992) 171-174; Julián Ribera and Miguel Asín, *Manuscritos árabes y aljamiados de la biblioteca de la junta* (Madrid: Junta para Ampliación de Estudios é Investigaciones Científicas, 1912) v-xviii, 138, 156-157; Gerard Wiegers, *Islamic Literature in Spanish and Aljamiado* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1994). Note that Luce López Baralt, *Islam in Spanish Literature* describes an earlier discovery of hidden aljamiado and Arabic writings in 1728 in Ricla, 172.

<sup>6</sup> Important insights about *aljamia* are discussed in López-Baralt, *Islam in Spanish Literature*, 171-174, esp.; Diane E. Sieber, *Historiography and Marginal Identity in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Nottingham: University of Nottingham Monographs on the

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Humanities, vol. XII, 2002); and Gerard Wiegers, *Islamic Literature in Spanish and Aljamiado* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1994).

<sup>7</sup> See Richard McCoy's essay in this volume, "The Tragedy of the Handkerchief."

<sup>8</sup> For more on assimilation of Moriscos, see David Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada: Society and Religious Culture in an Old-World Frontier City, 1492-1600* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); and James Tueller, *Good and Faithful Christians: Moriscos and Catholicism in Early Modern Spain* (New Orleans: University Press of the South, 2002). Increasing oppression of Moriscos is detailed in L.P. Harvey, *Muslims in Spain, 1500—1614* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); and in Mary Elizabeth Perry, *The Handless Maiden: Moriscos and the Politics of Religion in Early Modern Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> Two excellent sources for the Spanish Inquisition are Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); and Edward Peters, *Inquisition* (New York: The Free Press, 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Mármol Carvajal, *Historia del rebelión*, published much important information about this rebellion some 30 years after its defeat; for more firsthand information about the relocation of the Moriscos of Granada, see the letter of Nov. 3, 1570, from Cristóbal del Aguila to Philip II, in AGS, Cámara de Castilla, legajo 2157.

<sup>11</sup> *Declaración del Bando que se publicado de la expulsion de los Moriscos* (Seville: Alonso Rodríguez Gamarra, 1610) n.p.

<sup>12</sup> For the children left in warehouses in Seville, see Archivo General de Simancas, Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas, legajo 415, no. 60, part 2. A longer discussion of the decision to leave these children is in Perry, *Handless Maiden*, pp. 147-158 and 172-174. Very important work on this topic is presented by François Martínez, "Les enfants morisques de l'expulsion (1610-1621)," in *Mélanges Louis Cardaillac*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi, pp. 499-539 (Zaghouan: Fondation Temimi Pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1995).

<sup>13</sup> Illiteracy of Moriscas is discussed in Bernard Vincent, "Las mujeres moriscas" 589; but note that some Moriscas may not have "understood" or signed their names to Inquisition statements out of resistance rather than illiteracy. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale U.P., 1990), suggests that subordinated people can pretend not to understand nor to read as a form of resistance; see xxi-xxvi, 29, and 37, esp. It is misleading to conclude that none of the Moriscas were educated; see, for example, Bernard Vincent, "50,000 moriscos almerienses" in *Almería entre culturas siglos XIII al XVI*. Coloquio Almería Entre Culturas (Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 1990), 504; L. P. Harvey, "El Mancebo de Arévalo y la literatura aljamiada," *Actas del Coloquio Internacional Sobre Literatura Aljamiada y Morisca* (Oviedo: Editorial Gredos, 1972) 21-41; and Julián Ribera y Tarragó, *La enseñanza entre los musulmanes españoles. Bibliófilos y bibliotecas en la España musulmana* (Cordova: Real Academia de Córdoba, 1925).

<sup>14</sup> For more on ventriloquism and confession, see Mike Hepworth and Bryan S. Turner, *Confession: Studies in Deviance and Religion* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1982).

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<sup>15</sup> Lee Edelman, *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), 47; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds* (London and New York: Methuen, 1987), esp. 197-211; and Paul Julian Smith, *Representing the Other: 'Race,' Text, and Gender in Spanish and Spanish American Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 18.

<sup>16</sup> For example, see Annette Kuhn, "Passionate Detachment," in *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 15; and the anthology edited by Elaine Showalter, *The New Feminist Criticism: Women, Literature and Theory* (New York: Pantheon, 1985).

<sup>17</sup> Hank Johnston, *Tales of Nationalism, Catalonia, 1939-1979* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1991).

<sup>18</sup> James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1985); and his *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Flight of the Wild Gander: Explorations in the Mythological Dimensions of Fairy Tales, Legends, and Symbols* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990), 16-33, esp.; Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Carol Cosman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1001, orig. 1912), 160, 170-171, and 241, esp.; and William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Modern Library, 1999), 265-267, and 381, esp.

<sup>20</sup> Perry, *Handless Maiden*, esp. 27-37 and 133-156. F. Guillén Robles, *Leyendas moriscas . Sacadas de varios manuscritos existents en las bibliotecas Nacional, Real y de P. de Gayangos*, Estudio preliminar por Maria Paz Torres (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1994, 3 vols., includes the story of Carcayona at I:181-221. This scholar states in the preliminary discussion that the aljamiado version was a Muslim adaptation of an earlier Christian tale of piety, at 42, but the story presented describes Carcayona's father as "king of the romanos who lived in India" (rrey de los rromanos, que vivía en el Hind—en la India), 182.

<sup>21</sup> Handless Maiden tales have been classified as type 706 in Antti Aarne, *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography*, translated and enlarged by Stith Thompson (Helsinki: Helsingin Liikekirjapaino Oy, 1961) 240-241. Some other versions of this tale are entitled "The Handless Bride," "The Orchard," and "Silver Hands." Clarisa Pinkola Estés, *Women Who Run With the Wolves* (New York: Ballantine, 1995), discusses the tale in Chapter XIV, 387-455. For more on analysis of fairy tales, see Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Feminine in Fairy Tales* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1972); and Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, trans. Laurence Scott (Austin and London: U of Texas P, 1979).

<sup>22</sup> The Morisco version of the story of Job is in Guillén Robles, *Leyendas moriscas .* I:225-263; and also in Antonio Vespertino Rodríguez, ed., *Leyendas aljamiadas y moriscas sobre personajes biblicos* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1983) 272-299. Job is in the Qur'an, at suras XXI:83-84 and XXXVIII:40-44.

<sup>23</sup> For more on the significance of the Morisco version of the story of Job, see Mary Elizabeth Perry, "Patience and Pluck: Job's Wife, Conflict and Resistance in Morisco Manuscripts Hidden in the Sixteenth Century," *Women, Texts and Authority in the Early*

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*Modern Spanish World*, eds. Marta Vicente and Luis R. Corteguera (New York and London: Ashgate, 2003, 91-106; and Perry, *The Handless Maiden*, 123-125.

<sup>24</sup> This story is in Guillén Robles, *Leyendas moriscas*, I:117-58. All subsequent quotes are from this version of the story.

<sup>25</sup> Sarah Stanbury, “Chaucer’s Constance: Translations of a Roman Relic.”

<sup>26</sup> See her essay, “The Empress Helena and the Finding of the True Cross,” in this volume.

<sup>27</sup> “Las mujeres no son buenas para servir las tales casas del Señor, mas costríne—cuida,” 119.

<sup>28</sup> “Y tornóse Ana con María, y descubrió su cara, y estaba como la luna. Y echó Allah amorío grande en el corazón de Zacarías sobre María . . . . Pues cuando miró Zacarías á su hermosa (á la de María), dixo: ‘¡Oh Ana! déxala en mi poder, y complirse ha lo (que has) prometido.’” 119-120.

<sup>29</sup> “y ella escondió su cara de temor, porque pensaba que era taquiye—el que tenía el prestigio de arrebatar en amor, á las mujeres que miraba.” It is possible that Moriscos may have associated the term “taquiye” with their own practice of taqiyya, for the danger and dissimulation implied in both terms suggest a warning that Moriscos should be aware of the risks of pretense and be very clear about their own faith. Perhaps it also warned them to guard the virginity of their women.

<sup>30</sup> “fruta del paraiso en presente . . . y tea nuncio que tendrás un fijo limpio . . . pues Allah te excogió sobre las mujeres del mundo, y te alimpió.” 123.

<sup>31</sup> “Los corazones dellos son en poder de Allah.” 124.

<sup>32</sup> “el señor del mundo.” 125.

<sup>33</sup> “por miedo á Zacarías y de los de beni Yçraile.” 126.

<sup>34</sup> “y fuese á un lugar despoblado; y allegóse á una tagilera—á una palmera—seca, de sin fruta, ni verdura. . . .” 126.

<sup>35</sup> Perhaps the hollow in the palm tree can be seen as a holy place, such as the wells that Catherine McKenna describes in her essay, “Gone to Ground,” in this volume.

<sup>36</sup> “Despues María parió su preñado á Jesús, sobre él sea la salvación, en la mejor de las pariçiones, que nunca parió fija de Edam—de Adam.” 127.

<sup>37</sup> “abrió Allah las puertas de los çielos, y baxaron á la tierra siete . . . filas de ángeles y un pilar de claredad, que resplandecía con él la tierra y los çielos, por el poderíodel señor del mundo.” 127.

<sup>38</sup> “Y al punto cayó Jesús del vientre de su madre, y salió diciendo: No hay señor sino Allah, y Jesús es . . . espíritu de Allah y su palabra.” 127

<sup>39</sup> “Yo bí las puertas de los çielos abiertas y ví siete filas de ángeles que baxaban del çielo á la tierra; y bí un pilar de claredad, que deslumbraban con él los çielos y la tierra; y bí una mujer que parió lo de su biente, debaxo de una datilera; y bí el pilar de claredad delante della, y bí los ángeles delante della; y bí un niño de fuera de su vientre, que decía: no hay señor sino Allah; yo soy Jesús, espíritu de Allah y su palabra.” 128.

<sup>40</sup> “Yo no he venido con maldad, ni haze pecado ninguno, empero preguntadlo al niño, él nos dirá la verdad, si es . . . legítimo ó . . . ilegítimo.” 129.

<sup>41</sup> Mary and the birth of Jesus are in Sura XIX.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Francisco Márquez Villanueva, *El problema morisco (desde otras laderas)* (Madrid: Prodhufi, 1991), who discusses the possibilities of syncretism between

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Islam and Christianity through the figure of Mary, and finds in Cervantes' writings a belief that the expulsion of the Moriscos abruptly ended the assimilation of Moriscos that was already in process, 181; and José María Delgado Gallego, "Maurofilia y maurofobia, dos caras de la misma moneda?" in *Narraciones moriscas* (Seville: Editoriales Andaluzas Unidas, 1986), 22-30.

<sup>43</sup> For more on devotion to the Immaculate Conception, which dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, see Suzanne Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); and A. Katie Harris, who discusses popular and religious movements in Granada in *From Muslim to Christian Granada: Inventing a City's Past in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

<sup>44</sup> See Dame Julian's Revelation 86 that Elizabeth Robertson so movingly analyzes in her essay in this volume.