



Faculteit Letteren & Wijsbegeerte

# *Dreaming al-Andalus*

*Nineteenth-century representations of Spain's Muslim  
and Jewish past*

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# Introduction

*La sombra de Pelayo* by Gaspar de Zavala y Zamora had its theatrical debut in Madrid on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1808, six months after Napoleon crossed the border into Spain and installed his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne. The date of the performance was no coincidence: it was the birthday of Spain's newly-crowned King, Ferdinand VII, who had just been deposed by Napoleon. *La sombra de Pelayo*, which Zavala refers to in his prologue as a “drama alegórico”, creates a parallel between the Muslim invasion of 711 and that of Napoleon in 1808. In the opening scene, an anthropomorphised Spain appears on stage in chains and declares:

Llanto, dolor, afrenta: de mi gloria, de mi grandeza, y esplendor antiguo, los restos son dolor, afrenta y llanto conmigo irán al postrimero siglo. Mis ínclitas hazañas, mi renombre, mi poder formidable, en hondo olvido cayeron por jamás. (3)

As Spain lies defeated, under French occupation, it mourns the loss of its past glories. The shadow of Pelayo, founder of the Christian Kingdom of Asturias in the wake of the Muslim invasion in 711, chides Spain for its resigned attitude. Pelayo's shadow reminds Spain of its glorious past of “adalides cristianos, que arrojaron del suelo Hispano, al Árabe atrevido” (5). He tells Spain: “Si, otro tiempo una Caba y un Rodrigo vendieron mi esplendor al Agareno, hoy al pérfido Franco, me han vendido otro Rodrigo, y otra injusta Caba” (6). Pelayo refers to the most famous legend about the Muslim invasion to suggest that, in the same way, Spain has now been betrayed and handed to the French.

As David T. Gies argues, the play “draws upon a deeply rooted dichotomy of Spanish history, that of the ‘infidel’ Moors against the embattled Christians” (44). Zavala casts the French invaders as the latest incarnation of Spain's ‘eternal’ enemy: the Muslims. Pelayo's shadow reminds Spain that it defeated the Muslims once before and that it must similarly fight against the French. *La sombra de Pelayo* illustrates how, in the opening years of the nineteenth century, the story of Spain's Muslim past is used as a metaphor for the country's contemporary ills—in this case, the Napoleonic invasion. Moreover, the history of the Reconquista—and its hero, Pelayo—becomes a patriotic rallying cry for national resistance against the invader.

Muslim rule, which lasted, in various configurations, from 711 until 1492, has had an enduring impact on Spanish culture. Strictly speaking, the term al-Andalus refers to

the medieval territories that were under Muslim rule. But al-Andalus is also useful shorthand for the entire history of coexistence between Christians, Muslims and Jews that Muslim rule—and its aftermath—entailed in Iberia<sup>1</sup>. Since the collapse of Nasrid Granada—the last Muslim territory in Spain—in 1492, al-Andalus has been central to the Spanish collective imagination and has held a powerful fascination for Spanish writers. Indeed, as *La sombra de Pelayo* shows, Zavala turns to the Muslim invasion as a historical metaphor for Napoleon, despite the time span of more than a thousand years that separates the two events.

In the wake of the Napoleonic invasion, Spain underwent an extremely turbulent period of major political change. The repeated (mostly unsuccessful) attempts to establish a liberal, constitutional form of government, the return of absolutism, the development of Spanish and peripheral nationalisms and the loss of empire in America all contributed to a re-evaluation of Spanish history and the country's relationship with its European neighbours. In the cultural sphere, the emergence of Romanticism as a powerful—and very contradictory—aesthetic movement further challenged traditional narratives of the past. Throughout the century, moreover, al-Andalus emerged as a major cultural and literary theme. Under the impetus of Romanticism and Orientalism, Muslim and Jewish characters fill the pages of the period's novels and short stories and populate the stages of its theatres, like never before. To give a few examples, Spain's first historical novel, *Ramiro, conde de Lucena* (1823) by Rafael Húmara y Salamanca, is set during the Christian siege of Muslim Seville. In *Aliatar* (1816), a play set in Muslim-ruled Aljama, the Duque de Rivas rehearsed some of the themes that would appear in his *Don Álvaro, o la fuerza del sino* (1835), arguably the first romantic drama in Spain.

In *La sombra de Pelayo*, we have seen that the rhetorical force of al-Andalus relies on the implicit recognition that Muslims are the essential and eternal enemy of the Spanish people. Hence, Zavala can call on Pelayo and the memory of the Reconquista to remind his audience of the need to fight the French. As the century progresses, however, writers begin to depart from this simplistic model. Spanish literary production not only confirms the tendency to portray contemporary events through the prism of al-Andalus. Writers also begin to question the cultural assumptions that Zavala takes for granted.

In 1840, for instance, in the preface to his translation of *The History of the Mommahedan Dynasties in Spain*, Pascual de Gayangos laments that “instead of being commended to the gratitude of modern ages, as they assuredly deserved to be”, the Muslims of al-Andalus were denigrated in Spain because of a “spirit of religious bigotry”

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<sup>1</sup> It is in this broader sense that I will use the term ‘al-Andalus’ in my discussions throughout. I refer not only to the historical period of Muslim rule, but also to the coexistence of Christians and Muslims after 1492.

(vii). Gayangos reminds the reader of the Arabs' contribution to learning through schools in Toledo and Córdoba, which transmitted the learning of the Ancient Greeks. He credits them also with the introduction of paper manufacturing to Spain. But between Zavala's unquestioning use of the Muslims as national enemy and Gayangos' attempt to celebrate their achievements, there lies a whole spectrum of literary responses to al-Andalus.

How are Muslim and Jewish characters portrayed in these texts? Why are they represented in these ways? What values and preoccupations did nineteenth-century writers project onto al-Andalus? And, how did they engage with Spain's Muslim and Jewish past? What role did movements such as Romanticism and Orientalism play in portrayals of al-Andalus? Finally, what role did the memory of al-Andalus play in the formation of Spanish national identity?

In this thesis, I set out to examine the representations of al-Andalus in nineteenth-century Spanish literature. I will argue (1) that representations of al-Andalus were shaped by the contemporary concerns and preoccupations listed above (2) that the memory of the past, in particular the forgotten and expelled Others, played an important role in shaping discourses of nationalism and national identity and in rehearsing anxieties around religious freedom and the emergence of peripheral identities, such as Basque nationalism.



In *España en su historia* (1948), the Spanish philologist Américo Castro introduced the term *convivencia* to describe the tolerant coexistence of Christians, Muslims and Jews during the Middle Ages. Castro argued that Spanish identity, was formed in the crucible of the centuries-long Reconquista, in a complex process of interaction—and opposition—to Muslim and Jewish culture (14). The historian Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz disputed Castro's concept of *convivencia*. In his book *España, un enigma histórico* (1957), he argues in favour of an essential Spanish identity, the roots of which can be traced back to the pre-roman Iberians. Roman and then Visigothic rule, he claims, created the unified state institutions that reinforced the primitive nation (99-112). For Sánchez-Albornoz, Muslim and Jewish culture had little impact on Spanish historical and cultural life.

The dispute between Sánchez-Albornoz and Castro continues to cast a shadow over discussions of *convivencia*. María Rosa Menocal's *The Ornament of the World* (2009), for instance, makes the case that the tolerant atmosphere of al-Andalus—unique in

medieval Europe—allowed a rich, hybrid culture to flourish. By contrast, Serafín Fanjul's *Al-Andalus contra España* (2002) and Darío Fernández-Morera's *The Myth of the Andalusian Paradise* (2016) attempt to debunk the 'myth' of al-Andalus. Far from tolerant, they argue, Muslim Spain kept its Christian and Jewish inhabitants subjugated under the status of *dhimmi*, a religious minority subject to legal and financial discrimination<sup>2</sup>. In recent years, however, scholars have begun to move beyond the dichotomies of the twentieth-century polemic. In *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (2015), for instance, David Nirenberg argues convincingly that we cannot apply anachronistic concepts of tolerance to the Middle Ages. He suggests, rather, that, both violence and peaceful coexistence characterised the interactions among religious groups in medieval Spain.

In the field of literary studies, also, there has been renewed interest in the legacy of al-Andalus on Spanish life. In *Exotic Nation* (2008), Barbara Fuchs explores how Spanish representations of Muslims and Jews in the early-modern period reveal a degree of ambivalence about the recently-vanquished enemy. She argues, moreover, that negotiating this ambivalence was instrumental in shaping national identity. In a similar vein, in *Disorientations: Spanish colonialism in Africa and the Performance of Identity* (2008), Susan Martin-Márquez examines how Spanish literary and cinematic production at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used the legacy of al-Andalus to define relations between Spain and the Muslim world. She argues that myths around al-Andalus were used to recast the history of Spanish-Muslim interactions as fraternal and positive in order to justify Spain's colonialist ambitions in North Africa.

In her article "Love, Politics and the Making of the Modern Subject: Spanish Romanticism and the Arab World" (2004), Jo Labanyi touches upon the representation of al-Andalus in Spanish Romantic literature in the early half of the nineteenth-century. She refers to this period as the "'black hole' in Spanish studies" (230) because of the scant critical attention it has received. In her own article, Labanyi takes only a cursory look at three nineteenth-century texts, all of which were written in the 1830s by some of Spain's most studied authors (Hartzenbusch, Martínez de la Rosa and the Duque de Rivas). Since she published the article, however, a number of noteworthy contributions have appeared in print. *El descubrimiento de España: mito romántico e identidad nacional* (2016) by Xavier Andreu Miralles traces the emergence of Spain's self-image through the myths of the romantic period. Andreu Miralles examines the ways in which the romantic myth of Spain, constructed largely outside the country's borders, shaped

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<sup>2</sup> *The Myth of the Andalusian Paradise* was published by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, an American conservative non-profit that seeks to advance a political agenda through academic publishing. Their interest in the subject, and the reception the book has received among right-wing commentators, who are very critical of contemporary Islam, reveals how much is at stake in debates on al-Andalus.

Spain's perception of itself in the nineteenth century. Part of his study also examines the reception of myths of al-Andalus. Yet Andreu Miralles is a historian and engages only briefly with Spanish literary portrayals of the Muslim past, which occupy only one chapter of the study. Moreover, his texts are also by the more famous authors of Spanish Romanticism: Hartzenbusch, Martínez de la Rosa, the Duque de Rivas and Zorilla. It is important to mention, also, Gonzalo Álvarez Chillida's *El antisemitismo en España. La imagen del judío 1812-2002* (2004), which offers a comprehensive portrait of attitudes to Jews in Spain through an analysis of political and journalistic texts. *El mito de al-Ándalus* (2014), by José Antonio González Alcantud, traces the emergence and development of al-Andalus as cultural myth in Spain. Yet both these studies do not engage specifically with works of literature. Álvarez Chillida is a historian, while González Alcantud is an anthropologist.

This, necessarily limited, survey demonstrates the continued relevance of al-Andalus for literary research. It also suggests, however, that there is still a need for a comprehensive study that is specifically focused on the representation of al-Andalus in Spanish literary production of the nineteenth century. There is a significant amount of material to research, some of which has barely been studied by previous scholars. It is important to look beyond the handful of famous names of the period, if we are to gain a better understanding of the ways in which Spanish writers of the nineteenth-century created, co-opted, transformed and challenged the myths and assumptions around Spain's Muslim past.

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The title of this study (Dreaming al-Andalus) was suggested by Umberto Eco's essay "Dreaming of the Middle Ages", which he first published in 1987. In that essay, Eco argues that the culture of postmodernism is witnessing a renewed interest in the medieval period and he asks why this might be the case. His response to the question is that the Middle Ages are the "root of all our contemporary 'hot' problems" (65). We, therefore, return to that period when we seek answers about our origins, as "looking at the Middle Ages means looking at our infancy" (65). Eco argues, moreover, that the fascination with the Middle Ages is not really a new phenomenon: nostalgia for the medieval period can be observed immediately after it came to an end. This study proposes to draw on Eco's work in its examination of contemporary projections onto al-Andalus. Through a critical analysis of the textual corpus, it will seek to ascertain how writers of the period engaged with al-Andalus. It will attempt to tease out common themes and identify narrative strategies, which will allow us to understand the meanings behind the nineteenth-century dreams of al-Andalus.

A period as complex as the Spanish nineteenth century makes for a daunting task, particularly for a thesis of this scope. In an attempt to fully gain an overall picture of the uses of al-Andalus throughout the period, I have deliberately avoided imposing constraints of genre or decade. Some of the writers I analyse in this project are ‘literary giants’ of nineteenth-century Spain (Martínez de la Rosa, Eugenio Hartzenbusch). But I also engage with literature that is often neglected in surveys of the period, such as historical novels by lesser-known writers, short stories in literary periodicals and forgotten theatrical works. Yet this study does not pretend to be exhaustive. During my research, I came across hundreds of relevant texts, which, for obvious reasons of economy, it has been impossible for me to include here. Broadly speaking, the thesis is divided into two parts. The first section examines depictions of Muslim characters; the second, analyses portrayals of Jews. Naturally, there is a degree of overlap between the two, as some of the texts contain both religious minorities. However, this division reflects the significant difference in the ways the two groups are portrayed. Moreover, the imbalance between the two sections, with the first somewhat longer, attests to the higher visibility of Muslims in nineteenth-century texts.

The first chapter deals with the complex question of Spain’s relationship with Orientalism. How did its portrayal as an Oriental country by its European neighbours affect its own representations of the *andalusi* past? To answer this question, I read Spanish texts about buried Muslim treasure alongside similar stories by foreign authors. Furthermore, this chapter also engages with discussions around Spanish colonialism in North Africa and examines how al-Andalus came to play a role in defining Spain’s position in Europe.

Chapter 2 builds on the discussion of Orientalism. It seeks to reveal the mechanics of gender and sexuality that informed Spanish representations of the Muslim past. The Golden Age discourse around Boabdil’s tears when he surrendered Granada reveals that gender has always played a role in portrayals of Muslims. How, though, does this change in the nineteenth century?

The first part of the thesis concludes with Chapter 3, which looks at al-Andalus as a political metaphor for Spanish Liberalism. It examines the representation of Muslim expulsion in three texts and how this is used to draw parallels with the contemporary political situation. Why do liberal writers turn to al-Andalus as part of their liberal project? And, what is at stake in the way they portray the Muslim past? This chapter will seek to show how the texts tackle questions of identity and belonging through the use of al-Andalus.

In Chapter 4 I turn my attention to representations of Jewish characters and examine two novels by writers of the periphery: from the Basque country and the Canary Islands. In both novels, Jewish characters and Jewish identity play an important role. What is the purpose of Jews in these novels? How does their portrayal differ from that of Muslims? And, why might this be the case?

The thesis concludes with a case study. The Jewess of Toledo, most frequently known as Raquel, is a figure from Spanish historical legend. Owing to the literary popularity of the legend, she has become the most renowned Jewish character in the Spanish literary tradition. By examining literary adaptations of the legend, in Spain and Europe, the final chapter charts the emergence of a Spanish-Jewish *topos* and asks the following questions: What does the legend reveal about the position of Jews in society? And, what do the different representations of the legend tell us about attitudes to Jews in different periods and countries?

# 1

## Spanish Orientalisms

‘Correspondencia de dos beduinos’ is an epistolary short story in the periodical *La Esmeralda*. In the first letter, Ader, a Bedouin, writes to his estranged lover Delka about the loving nature of Allah, which fills the world with transcendent love and beauty. In her reply, Delka reveals to Ader that she finds herself in French captivity and suffers greatly. She tells him that she cannot agree with Ader’s vision of the world because, to her, it seems full of war, violence and jealousy. In subsequent letters, Delka intimates that she has lost her capacity for love and no longer loves Ader as she once did. She also suggests that French attempts to convert her to Christianity have led her to doubt her Islamic faith. Spurred to action by his former lover’s fate, Ader seeks out a local holy man for advice. The man predicts that he will become a great warrior and that: “no está lejos el tiempo en que ennoblecerás a tu nación y la libertarás del envilecimiento en que ha caído desde que no bebe las aguas del Genil, y el sol de Granada no brilla sobre las verdades creyentes...” (T por. J.M, *La Esmeralda* 18, 2). Ader tells Delka that, under his new *nom de guerre* of El-Kader, he will free her from the French and lead a rebellion of the Muslim people.

The geographical and historical settings of the story are never explicitly stated, but the mention of French soldiers suggests North Africa in the nineteenth century. Regardless, the short story illustrates some common features and many of the issues at stake in nineteenth-century orientalist fiction in Spain. As in the reference to Granada in this story, al-Andalus is almost always present in Spanish depictions of the Orient. Portrayals of the Muslim world, whether North Africa or Turkey, are filtered through the lens of Spain’s historical relationship with Islam. There is often no distinction made between the Orient as a geographical location beyond Spain and the Orient as a cultural Other belonging to the national past. Indeed, nineteenth-century Orientalist stories in Spain often blur the boundaries between the two. As ‘Correspondencia de dos beduinos’ makes clear, contemporary Muslims are considered merely as degenerate survivors of the Moors of al-Andalus. The text, moreover, collapses the distinction between European colonialism of the nineteenth century and the expulsion of Muslims from Granada in the fifteenth. Ader’s promise to liberate his beloved Delka is symbolically related to the Muslim defeat in 1492.

The short story also reveals another crucial aspect of Orientalism in Spain: the overwhelming French influence. As Lou Charnon-Deutsch has observed, Spanish

Orientalism was “a product of its abiding admiration for European culture as much as its interest in Oriental cultures” (262). Spanish portrayals of the Orient, as this story reveals, are often filtered through French accounts of direct contact with the region. The French Orientalist paradigm influences the accounts of al-Andalus produced by Spanish writers in the nineteenth century. Yet at the same time, Spanish writers are increasingly aware not only of their country’s historical contact with the Muslim world, but also of its long tradition of literary representation of the Other. The short story, therefore, reveals the way in which portrayals of al-Andalus were both inspired by European Orientalism and shaped Spanish responses to the movement. How did their portrayal of their national history interact with the foreign works produced about Spain? Can we ascertain differences in the way al-Andalus was represented in Spanish works as compared to those of foreigners? How did they balance their own interest in al-Andalus with a need to maintain Spain’s status as a European country? Did the knowledge that Muslims formed part of the country’s own past inform the ways in which these groups were represented in Spanish stories, as compared to those written by outsiders?

## 1.1 Orientalism in Spain: a unique case

In the prologue to the 2002 Spanish edition of *Orientalism*, Edward Said admits that he overlooked the unique situation of Orientalism in the Spanish context. While rebuffing criticism that his work focused too narrowly on France and Britain, he concedes that he did not address properly the complex and dense relationship between Spain and Islam. Spain, he argues, is a notable exception to his model of Orientalism, as a discourse of control and domination over the Muslim world by European powers (9). His self-correction recognises something that we saw in ‘Correspondencia de dos beduinos’: that Spanish engagement with the Muslim world in the nineteenth century is, at least partly, conditioned by its earlier historical encounter with Islam. The seven centuries of Muslim presence in Spain suggest a perspective on the Muslim world that is somewhat different from that of the French and British. Said argues that for these countries the Muslim world was simply seen as an external power to be conquered and dominated. In the Spanish case, however, because Islam forms a part of Spanish history, the dynamic is inevitably altered (10).

Said’s recognition of the uniqueness of Spain’s relationship with Islam is a welcome corrective to his previous oversight. Yet in his eagerness to make amends for earlier errors, he risks falling into another trap: overcompensating and diluting Spain’s role in the Orientalist project. Indeed, the country fully participated in European

Orientalism, despite its unique history and often because of it. Said's assertion that Spanish representations of Islam were always marked by a sense of "complementariedad" and "intimidación" smack of the mythical portrayal of al-Andalus as a moment of uniquely peaceful coexistence (10). In reality, however, the medieval period was characterised by a high degree of ambiguity, which entailed an interplay of both violence and peaceful coexistence (Nirenberg 7-11). In a similar vein, an awareness of Spain's unique historical relationship with Islam did not merely reinforce a feeling of goodwill in the nineteenth century. Rather, the shared history was often used as a pretext for Spanish territorial expansion. Thus, Spanish contributions to Orientalism were just as enmeshed with the country's imperial ambitions as those of their French and British counterparts.

Serafín Estébanez Calderón, for instance, was a passionate Arabist. He studied the language in order to read the inscriptions on the Alhambra in his native Granada (Manzanares de Cirre 414). Moreover, he wrote a number of literary works that can be considered orientalist in nature: 'Cristianos y Moriscos', 'El Collar de Perlas', 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra'. All these stories demonstrate a keen interest in the Islamic legacy of Andalucía and a desire to connect with the past. Yet his *Manual del oficial de Marruecos* (1844) clearly reveals the imperialist ambitions of his engagement with Muslim culture. In the prologue, he justifies potential interest in the "sociedad semi-bárbara" on the basis of Spain's historic links with Morocco and "el porvenir que allí se brinda a nuestra patria" (4). León López y Espila, moreover, in the account of his period in exile in Morocco, *Los cristianos de Calomarde* (1835), writes of his desire to see Spain extend its dominion over North Africa, as a natural continuation of the Reconquista (15). Moreover, Domingo Badía y Leblich was the first European to travel to Mecca, in an expedition that is believed to have been a primitive form of espionage on behalf of the Spanish authorities<sup>3</sup>.

The Spanish-Moroccan War (1859-60) marks the beginning of overt Spanish attempts to assert a colonial presence in Morocco. Although the attempt ultimately failed, thanks to the intercession of the British, the short conflict inspired an enormous cultural response that is clearly Orientalist in nature. The painter Mariano Fortuny, for instance, who travelled to Paris to learn from French Orientalist painters, was sent to Morocco to document the war with a grant given to him by the municipal authorities of Barcelona. The colonialist dimension of Spanish Orientalism, then, complicates Said's assertion that the country's unique relationship with Islam led to a less aggressively dominant mode of representing the Muslim world. It is true that Spanish Orientalism in

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<sup>3</sup> See Martín, Fernando Escribano, "El peregrino Ali Bey, un «príncipe abasi» español del siglo XIX", *Arbor* CLXXX.

the nineteenth century is influenced to a great extent by the country's historical encounter with Islam. The texts in this chapter demonstrate the centrality of al-Andalus in the collective imagination of Spanish writings on Islam, in general, and Morocco, in particular. Awareness of the past, however, does not necessarily lead Spanish writers to seek a different paradigm for relations with the Muslim world from the one privileged by France and Britain. Indeed, the historical circumstances of al-Andalus are often used, on the contrary, to justify the priority of Spanish claims on Morocco over those of other European countries.

The uniqueness of Spanish Orientalism lies precisely in the ways in which its historical relationship with Islam played a determining role in the country's position within the European hierarchy. The country was viewed with suspicion as not quite European, partly because of its history of Muslim domination<sup>4</sup>. In asserting its right to cast a dominating Western gaze over the Orient, Spain in the nineteenth-century sought to demarcate its position as a European power. Paradoxically, however, the renewed awareness of its unique Islamic heritage deepened the association between Spain and the Orient in the eyes of other Europeans. Once the dominant power in Europe, Spain began to decline in power in the seventeenth century. As Iarocci explains:

The end of Spanish hegemony in the late 1600s entailed not only a diminishment of Spanish power within the European political arena, but also the forfeiture of Spain's ability to represent and successfully project its history and culture internationally. A country that had been one of the privileged sites for the enunciation of European history in the early modern era had by the eighteenth-century increasingly become an object of representation - and symbolic subordination - for a newly dominant northern Europe. (xi)

The discourse of the "newly dominant northern Europe" was one that excluded Spain from modernity. With the project of European Enlightenment, the geographical hierarchy of the continent was revised, and the North was accorded the privileged position. The South, meanwhile, and previously powerful Spain in particular, was marked as a zone of periphery: a place out of phase with the burgeoning capitalist modernity of Northern Europe (x-xi).

In Spanish literature of the Enlightenment there is an awareness that the country is out of step with its European neighbours. The works of the Friar Benito Feijoo or Jovellanos, for instance, aimed to introduce foreign (mostly French) ideas to Spain. They criticised the ignorance and superstition of the Spanish populace and the lack of

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<sup>4</sup> In his *Voyage en Espagne* (1859), for instance, Théophile Gautier writes that Spain "n'est pas faite pour les mœurs européennes. Le génie de l'Orient y perce sous toutes ses formes, et il est fâcheux peut-être qu'elle ne soit pas restée moresque ou mahométane" (192).

education of the country's aristocracy. In the *Cartas marruecas*, José Cadalso ventriloquises the Moroccan voice to present a critique of Spain's lack of scientific enquiry and industry in comparison to its neighbours. The form is, of course, inspired by Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, which again shows the inescapable French influence.

By the nineteenth century, the view of Spain as subordinate to northern Europe began to change. In the new understanding of history, influenced by Hegel's dialectic philosophy and by the Napoleonic Wars (Lukács), differences in geography (eg variations between countries) began to be interpreted as temporal differences. When Northern Europe looked at Spain it no longer saw a culture subordinate to itself; it saw the past (Iarocci 19). In earlier centuries, the aristocratic British travellers of the Grand Tour bypassed Spain in favour of the classical antiquities of Italy and Greece and the natural wonders of Alpine Switzerland. What interest for travellers could there be, after all, in a land of bandits and muleteers? In the nineteenth century, however, the very same aspects of Spain became a point of attraction. As Iarocci argues:

When northern Europe - now ambivalent rather than triumphal about its modernity - turns its gaze to Spain once more, it discovers in the centuries-old image it has created the very values it wishes to embrace: a national spirit untainted by a now-suspect civilization, a land that is the very image of a now-desired past, the living incarnation of a now-mystified rather than reviled Middle Ages. (19)

Moreover, Spain's heroic resistance to the Napoleonic invasion during the War of Independence caught the European imagination. It was seen as the expression of an authentic national character, one that had not been tainted and dampened by the modernisation and industrialisation of the North. Literary accounts of foreign travellers in Spain—the so-called *curiosos impertinentes*—portrayed the country and its people as different, not quite European. They were hot-tempered, fiery, irrational. In short, they were exotic.

## 1.2 “Africa begins in the Pyrenees”

The identification of Spain with Africa and Islam was a commonplace of nineteenth-century travel literature of the country. In his *Mémoires historiques sur la révolution d'Espagne* (1816), Dufour de Pradt, for example, writes the following: “C'est une erreur de la géographie que d'avoir attribué l'Espagne à l'Europe; elle appartient à l'Afrique: sang, mœurs, langage, manière de vivre et de combattre; en Espagne tout est africain” (168). Dufour de Pradt's memoir of the Spanish revolution against Napoleon is likely the origin

of the notorious nineteenth-century phrase 'Africa begins in the Pyrenees' that is often attributed, falsely, to Alexandre Dumas. The image of Spain as an Oriental nation was driven by the romantic fantasy of al-Andalus, which increasingly came to dominate foreign representations of Spain in the nineteenth century.

The dominant position of al-Andalus was reinforced by the physical legacy of its civilisation, which attracted writers and artists, already drawn to romantic ruins. The *curiosos impertinentes*—like the earlier Grand Tour travellers who sought out antiquities—overlooked contemporary Spain in favour of the ruins of al-Andalus. In their writings, these travellers collapsed the cultural and historical distance between the Islamic civilisation of the Middle Ages and nineteenth-century Spain. As a result, Spanish underdevelopment in comparison with the rest of Europe was no longer a function of incomplete modernity or a need to catch up; Spaniards were different in essence. They were Oriental, as demonstrated by the oriental monuments that filled their cities, especially those of Andalusia. No single building more readily encapsulated the brilliance, romance and history of al-Andalus than the Alhambra in Granada. Throughout the nineteenth century, the palace became an emblem of Spain's Muslim past: a privileged site of memory that connected contemporary Granada with its illustrious past.

The vogue for the Alhambra—even today one of Europe's most visited monuments—took off in the 1830s with the publication of Washington Irving's *Tales of the Alhambra*. The book, which Irving wrote after residing in the building for almost a year, is a collection of popular legends about the Alhambra, interspersed with Irving's impressions of the place and its ragtag group of contemporary inhabitants. Thus, the narrative juggles two temporal realities: nineteenth-century Spain and the historical period of the Nasrid Kingdom. However, within the narrative, the Alhambra becomes an almost magical conduit to the past, so that al-Andalus becomes a timeless place that exists permanently alongside nineteenth-century Granada. Like many literary travellers in nineteenth-century Spain, Irving repeatedly blurs the boundaries between the reality he observes and his own fantasy of al-Andalus:

As I loiter through these Oriental chambers, and hear the murmur of fountains and the song of the nightingale; as I inhale the odor of the rose, and feel the influence of the balmy climate, I am almost tempted to fancy myself in the paradise of Mahomet, and that the plump little Dolores is one of the bright-eyed houris, destined to administer to the happiness of true believers. (769)

Irving's imagination is piqued by the sounds and smells of the Alhambra and he converts the mundane Spanish characters around him into poetic incarnations of an exotic past. The encounter between past and present is most explicit, perhaps, when Irving describes the Court of the Lions. There he sees a "turbaned Moor quietly seated near the fountain" and imagines that "one of the superstitions of the place were

realized, and some ancient inhabitant of the Alhambra had broken the spell of centuries, and become visible” (47). In reality, however, the figure he sees is a modern-day Moroccan from Tétouan who has a shop in Granada where he sells imported merchandise. Irving’s narration of the story is an example of how writers of the period were aware of the falsity of their romantic vision. Yet Irving’s awareness does not prevent him from conflating the modern-day inhabitants of Morocco with the Moors of his imagination. Talking to the native of Tétouan, he concludes that contemporary Moroccans are a decadent version of the noble Moors of medieval Spain.

Irving’s conflation of Moor with Muslim is a common feature of nineteenth-century literature, both in Spain and abroad. It is characteristic of the ways in which al-Andalus spilled beyond the historical and geographical boundaries of Muslim rule in Iberia and came to signify the encounter between East and West more generally. This blurring of the boundaries characterises Spain’s relationship with Orientalism, which was shaped to a large extent by the perception of foreigners like Irving.

### **1.3 Treasures of the Muslim past: the return of the Moor in the text**

In the nineteenth century, Spanish historians and writers turned their attention to the Middle Ages. This tendency was part of the wider European romantic movement, which sought to re-evaluate the medieval period, so derided by Renaissance Europe. For Derek Flitter, the new engagement with the past was driven also by religious motivation:

Romantic historians in Spain as elsewhere in Europe did not wish merely to redress the perceived imbalance between the respective views of Classical antiquity and the medieval period that had previously obtained. It became a systematic part of their procedure to underscore the superiority of the Christian Middle Ages over the pagan societies of Greece and Rome. (12)

Yet when Spanish writers turned to their medieval past, as did their northern counterparts, they were confronted with the prolonged presence of a non-Christian civilisation. The recognition that Islam and Judaism played a significant role in Spanish medieval history complicated attempts to construct a national narrative based on the achievements of Christianity.

Moreover, an important aspect of Romanticism both in Spain and abroad was a new-found appreciation for Spanish literature of the Golden Age. In the Age of Enlightenment, the forms of Golden Age theatre and poetry had been denigrated for

failing to conform to classical precepts, and French Neoclassicism had dominated the Spanish stage. In the nineteenth century, however, Spanish Golden Age literature came to be seen as excitingly *sui generis*; an authentic expression of national feeling. In the recuperation of Spanish literature, foreign perceptions of the country again played an important role. In the *querella calderoniana*, for instance, the German Nicolás Böhl de Faber sought to privilege Spanish writers like Calderón de la Barca, while José Joaquín de Mora defended Neoclassicism. Like Joaquín de Mora, Spanish writers were ambivalent about turning to their own history. They did so, partly, under the impulse of a foreign romantic vision of Spain's national history, which was often faster to recognise—or construct—the uniqueness of Spanish literary history.

Intertwined with this complex web of exchange was Spain's own Muslim history, which was amply reflected in the country's medieval and Golden Age literature. This fact may explain the ambivalence of Spanish writers at the beginning of the nineteenth century in turning to their own literature. In effect, they were caught in a double bind. On the one hand, reasserting Spain's position within European culture necessitated staking a claim for its important and unique contributions. On the other hand, these contributions threatened to portray the country as not entirely European because of the strong presence of both Muslims and Jews. Complicating the issue still further is the fact that much Golden Age literature coincided with the apogee and subsequent expulsion of Morisco culture in Spain. The portrayal of Islamic culture in literary works of that time, therefore, was not merely an exercise in nostalgia. Instead, depictions of Muslims and Moriscos engaged in a dialogue with the country's specific historical and political circumstances.

The literary periodicals of the nineteenth century clearly demonstrate the enormous influence of foreign works on Spanish writers. Short stories, poetry and entire serialised novels were translated and copied, often without reference to the original. Yet we cannot overlook the extent to which Spain's own literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries played an important role in creating French and English interest in Spain's history of Muslim rule and the culture of chivalry that accompanied the centuries-long Reconquista. For example, Ginéz Pérez de Hita's *Historia de las guerras civiles de Granada* (1595), which introduced the idea of the rival Abencerrage and Zegrí clans in the fifteenth-century Nasrid court of Granada, began a trend in Golden Age Spain for *romances* and *novelas moriscas*, which portrayed an idealised image of the frontier wars. Pérez de Hita's work was translated into English in 1801 and into French in 1809 and inspired both Washington Irving and Chateaubriand, whose texts I will study below.

In Washington Irving's *The Alhambra*, the short story 'Legend of the Enchanted Soldier' recounts the discovery of buried Moorish treasure by a student in Granada. It is the same legend on which Estébanez Calderón based his 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra'. A comparison between the two stories points to some interesting differences in the

portrayal of Spain's Muslim past. Irving's 'Legend of the Enchanted Soldier' tells the story of a student from Salamanca, who finds a ring with the Seal of Solomon in an enchanted cave before he leaves for Granada. Once in the Andalusian city, the student is surprised one day to see a soldier appear before him, dressed in the uniform of the guards of the Catholic Monarchs. Being unfamiliar with the city, the student assumes this to be a local custom until the soldier approaches him and asks for his help. The soldier tells the student that he was one of the Spanish soldiers at the time of the city's conquest. He has been cursed by the spirits of Spain's exiled Muslims to guard the treasure that they left buried beneath the Alhambra when they were forced to flee. He explains to the student that he is permitted to appear once every hundred years, during the festival of San Juan when he can seek assistance for his liberation. The soldier shows the treasure to the student and informs him that he will receive a portion of it as his reward if he is willing to help. The student agrees and goes in search of a Christian priest and young girl, as instructed by the soldier. The priest is needed to "exorcise the powers of darkness" and must be a *cristiano viejo*, which means that he must not be descended from converted Muslims or Jews. The student returns with the priest, the girl and the Seal of Solomon and they appear ready to lift the curse, free the soldier and claim the treasure. One of the stipulations, however, was that the priest mortify the flesh by engaging in a fast of twenty-four hours prior to the exorcism. He eventually succeeds on the third attempt but, while they are in the cave of treasure, he cedes to temptation and indulges in some of the food the student has brought to break the fast after the ceremony. The exorcism fails and the soldier is doomed to remain imprisoned for another hundred years.

Serafín Estébanez Calderón published the short story 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra' in the same year. It thus seems unlikely that his work was directly inspired by Irving. Rather, they both seem to be based on the traditional oral legends of Granada. Estébanez Calderón dispenses with Salamanca and begins his story in Granada, where two students meet every evening by the river Darro to walk together to their lodgings. One night, however, the narrator's friend Don Carlos arrives late to their appointment and appears in an extremely good mood, full of grandiose plans about how to spend vast sums of money. He does not explain the reason to his friend until the second night, when he arrives dejected and reveals the full story of what occurred. He explains that on the first night, while making his way to the appointment with the narrator, he was stopped by a soldier in fifteenth-century uniform who asked for his assistance and led him to one of the towers of the Alhambra. Once inside the soldier reveals a dazzling collection of treasure from the time of the Moors. He explains to the stunned student that he is the guardian of the treasure—hidden by the Moors when Granada fell—and that he is condemned to remain in the tower for eternity. Every three years, however, he is permitted to make himself visible to a passer-by and attempt to secure his freedom. To do so he needs the stranger to fulfil a number of conditions, the first of which is to

obtain three coins that are “pedidas, pensadas y dobladas” (3), which means that the coins must be borrowed from someone unaware of their intended use and that each coin must be double the value of the previous one. The student agrees to help the soldier and is offered a portion of the treasure as a reward.

At his lodgings, the student is able to secure the required coins from an old housekeeper. He returns the following night with the money and follows the instructions of the soldier to release the treasure. The old coins, however, are engraved with the names and effigies of Ferdinand and Isabel on the reverse side. They are not suitable for the task, therefore, as the reminder of the monarchs who had conquered the city offend the Muslim genies that control the site. Don Carlos watches in horror as his portion of the treasure crumbles into dust and the soldier returns to his captivity. Unlike Irving’s soldier, though, he is permitted to attempt another escape in only three years. Don Carlos, meanwhile, despairs at his inability to access the treasure and loses his mind through obsession. He returns to his native village in the Alpujarras and summons the narrator to his deathbed. “No he podido ser superior a mi desgracia,” he tells him before his death, “El que tuvo ante la vista y destinadas para él tantas riquezas y tal poder y se le escaparon de la mano, no debe sobrevivir” (4).

Given that both Irving and Estébanez Calderón were inspired by the same legend, it is unsurprising that the plot is similar in both versions. Indeed, both stories stage an encounter with Granada’s Muslim past in the form of the apparition of a soldier, who guards buried Moorish treasure. In both stories, the treasure cannot be accessed. If we understand the treasure to metonymically represent the legacy of Muslim culture in Spain, both suggest the impossibility of interaction between the two cultures. Yet here is where the dynamic in the two versions of the story is radically altered. In the American story, the soldier identifies himself as one of Isabel and Ferdinand’s guards. In order to gain his freedom—and access the treasure—his original, unfinished task must be completed. To do so entails performing the original Reconquista in spiritual terms: the Christian priest must exorcise the demons of Islam and purify the Alhambra. They fail to free the soldier and to get hold of the treasure because the priest is unable to maintain his fast and is therefore not pure enough to enact the exorcism<sup>5</sup>. The spirit of al-Andalus continues to reign over the Alhambra and the Christian Reconquista is incomplete.

By contrast, in the Spanish story the student fails to liberate the soldier and access the treasure for the opposite reason. The coins he brings are remnants from the time of Ferdinand and Isabel: they are a reminder of the conquering attitude of the Christians and, therefore, insult the Muslim genies that control the treasure. The story suggests,

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<sup>5</sup> The figure of the gluttonous priest (el fraile glotón) is a trope of Spanish literature.

then, that the student has attempted to uncover the Muslim culture that lies hidden in the buildings of Granada, but he fails to do so because of a lack of understanding. In Irving's story the treasure suggests that the process of re-conquest and cultural homogenisation is incomplete: there are still Muslim elements that have not been eliminated. In Estébanez Calderón's version of the legend, however, the discovery of the treasure represents an opportunity to come to terms with the past. In order to do this, however, the student in the story must move beyond the confrontational strategies of the Reconquista.

Although Don Carlos takes a very superficial interest in the treasure—he cares only for its monetary value—the text does explore the deeper level of cultural contact between Spain and the Moors. The treasure is not retrieved because Don Carlos does not demonstrate enough understanding of history. The coins that he provides for the soldier contain the images of Ferdinand and Isabel, the Catholic Kings who conquered Granada and forced its inhabitants to convert or seek exile. Spanish imperial history, therefore, continues to influence nineteenth-century Spain and prevents a deeper encounter with the forgotten and buried Other. While a deeper encounter between contemporary Spain and its Moorish Other does not take place in the text, the short story does suggest the possibility of a renewed engagement with the past. Although Don Carlos is unable to retrieve the treasure, he is confronted—albeit briefly—with a vision of Granada's Moorish past that remains buried. His encounter with the treasure, moreover, leads to madness, as the buried Muslim past—now revealed, but unresolved—haunts him.

Buried Muslim treasure is a pretext for cultural contact in another Spanish text: 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra o amores de Aben-Amed', which appeared anonymously as a chapbook in Madrid in 1862. It narrates the adventures of Aben-Amed, a descendant of Boabdil, who returns to Granada in 1587 to reclaim the family treasure that lies buried beneath the Alhambra. Equipped with a parchment written in Arabic, Aben-Amed locates the family treasure but another tunnel leads him through a trapdoor into the bedroom of María de Mendoza, the daughter of a Spanish nobleman, whose family played an important role in the capture of Granada. By coincidence, this is the same girl he met the previous day in the city when, dressed as the Spaniard Luis de Sotomayor, he saved her life by killing a charging bull. María fell in love with her mysterious saviour and so welcomes his nightly visits, which eventually lead to the birth of a child. At this point, Aben-Amed reveals the truth about his identity and their different religions create a difficulty for the future of their relationship. He implores María to follow him to Africa where, he says, they can live in freedom, but she refuses to do so. Don Pedro, a rival suitor for María, discovers the existence of Aben-Amed, and a duel ensues, in which Aben-Amed defeats the Spaniard and is forced to flee to Africa to evade justice. His return to Spain and conversion to Christianity, however, offer the

possibility of reconciliation, as is demonstrated through his acceptance by María's father.

The anonymous story is very similar to François René de Chateaubriand's *Les aventures du dernier Abencerage*, which was written in 1826. In this story, which is set in 1516, twenty-four years after the Conquest of Granada, Chateaubriand imagines the return of the last surviving descendant of the Abencerrages to the city of his ancestors. Like the Spanish story, Chateaubriand's Aben-Hamet intends to resurrect Muslim rule over Granada but ultimately falls in love with a Spanish woman, whom he vows to marry. Both texts portray the return of a descendant of Granada's Moors, whose arrival in Spain stages a renewed encounter between the two cultures. In both cases, the military encounter is reimagined as a romantic affair. Moreover, María de Mendoza and Blanca, the two Spanish women, are descendants of illustrious families that played an important role in the Spanish campaigns against Nasrid Granada. The names of the Moorish protagonist - Aben-Hamet in the French text; Aben-Amed in the Spanish - also suggest the connection between the two stories. On a textual level, finally, Aben-Amed's fatalistic acceptance of the defeat of the Moors with the words "Estaba escrita" is identical to the phrase "C'était écrit" in Chateaubriand's story.

In *Les aventures du dernier Abencerage*, the love affair between Aben-Hamet and Blanca is impossible. They attempt to convert each other to their respective religions but neither is willing to concede. Moreover, Aben-Hamet—whose code of honour is the same as that of the Spanish nobility—must ultimately flee in order to avoid fighting his lover's brother in a duel. Despite her love for him, Blanca asks him to return to the desert. In other words, they are unable to overcome the cultural differences that separate them and they are unable to imagine a future together that would be able to transcend their different—and antagonistic—origins. Consequently, unlike in the Spanish version, no child is born.

As in Estébanez Calderón's 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra', in 'Historia de los subterráneos', Moorish treasure is a synecdoche for Spain's Islamic past. In this story, however, Aben-Amed has no difficulty in retrieving the treasure. Indeed, it belongs to him by birthright. The first words he utters establish a connection between the treasure and his father: "juré a mi padre que penetraría en el subterráneo" (5). Filial duty, then, not greed is his motivation for seeking the treasure. His familial connections to it are reinforced by his ability to name the owners of each jewel in the hoard: "Aquí está el collar de la sultana Aumina y que no tenia igual...Estas ajorcas pertenecian a la hermosa sultana Zumega..." (5). Not only does he possess the parchment, vouchsafed to him by his father, but also as a Moor he is able to understand it. His access to the site of treasure, moreover, is possible because, in 1587, when the story is set, Moriscos were numerous in Spain.

Aben-Amed's desire for the treasure is based on a political promise to his father: "mi anciano y moribundo padre me reveló mi nacimiento, le juré que vendría a Granada

y que con este tesoro ayudaría la rebelión de los Moriscos” (6). By 1587, however, the idea of a Morisco uprising is a lost cause, as Aben-Amed recognises in the continuation of the above quotation: “...pero eso es un sueño. ¿Cómo poder derrocar a los reyes españoles? Los Moriscos están desalentados, la tiranía los oprime y toda tentativa sería inútil. ¡Estaba escrito!” (6). Although Aben-Amed finds the treasure he was seeking, he immediately abandons his original plan to foment a rebellion and reclaim the city of Granada for the Moors. From the outset, then, the text neutralises the possibility of military conflict between Spaniard and Moor and instead converts the encounter between the two cultures into a romantic one: Aben-Amed's love affair with María de Mendoza. Because their cultures and religions stand in opposition to one another, their love affair becomes a negotiation between two possible identities.

Even after the Moors had ceased to pose any real military danger, the cultural ambiguity of the Moriscos was a threat to Spanish identity. Aben-Amed, although Moor and not Morisco, adopts the trappings of a Spaniard in the guise of Luis Sotomayor. While his moral ownership of the treasure through family bonds suggests a more dangerous moral right to the city, it is his relationship with María de Mendoza that is most threatening. The duality of his character - he saves her life as a noble Spaniard, yet seduces her at night by emerging into her bedchamber at night from an underground (Moorish) tunnel - represents the slippery nature of Morisco identity. The instability of their identity would ultimately prove untenable in Spanish society; the Moriscos were expelled *en masse* from Valencia in 1609 and from Castile in 1614.

In nineteenth-century Spain the Morisco expulsion was an overlooked historical event, yet the country's intellectuals sought to question Spanish cultural boundaries and to define a modern national identity. With the rise of regional nationalisms and ideas about religious tolerance, the perceived purity and unity of Spanish identity increasingly came to be questioned. Aben-Amed's secret love affair with María de Mendoza rehearses some of the anxieties around racial purity, which can be seen more clearly when the affair results in a son, whose cultural affiliation must be determined. When María announces her pregnancy, Aben-Amed decides that he must reveal his true identity and is concerned about her reaction. To his surprise, however, she brushes aside the racial and cultural differences between them because of their shared offspring: “¿Y qué importa que seas moro? Descendiente de Boabdil, ¿no eres el padre del hijo que traigo en mis entrañas?” (14). María's surprisingly ‘modern’ reaction seems to place the individual above his or her cultural origin. Through a cross-cultural love affair and the birth of a mixed-race child the text hints at the possibility of approximation between Spain and the Moors. Nevertheless, while Aben-Amed's origins pose no problem for María, she does stress the religious divide between them: “Las creencias nos separan, pero ahora que tienes un hijo no vacilarás en abandonar tu religión por la mía; sí lo harás, ¿no es verdad?” (13). María assumes (correctly) that Aben-amed will convert and thereby allow himself, and his child, to be absorbed into the Spanish culture.

As we have seen, the Spanish texts –the chapbook and Estébanez Calderón's 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra', take a different approach to the relationship with the country's Islamic past from that of the foreign texts (by Irving and Chateaubriand). Estébanez Calderón suggests the possibility of cultural understanding between the Spanish and the Moors, where such an option does not exist for Irving. Similarly, 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra' alters the dynamic of Chateaubriand's earlier story. In both versions, the portrayal of Aben-Amed/Aben-Hamet is extremely positive. He is depicted as a noble Moor, and we sympathise with the pain he feels when he thinks about the loss of Granada. In the Spanish version, Aben-Amed's disguise as Don Luis Sotomayor is convincing enough that his Christianity is never in doubt, nor do the Spaniards suspect his origins:

Aben-Amed en Granada, era conocido bajo el nombre de don Luis de Sotómayor, creyéndolo todos cristiano. Era buen mozo y gastaba sendos escudos de oro; esto bastaba para que nadie tratase de averiguar la vida privada de don Luis. (7)

Aben-Amed's behaviour is extremely honourable and even contrasts favourably with the Spaniard Don Pedro, his rival for María's affection. In *Les aventures du dernier Abencerage*, however, the cultural differences between the two lovers are insurmountable. Blanca asks Aben-Hamet to return to Africa in order to avoid a duel with her brother. The story thus confirms the separation of cultures that the completion of the Reconquista entailed. Moreover, Chateaubriand reenacts the Morisco question only to replay the history of their expulsion. In 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra', there are a number of obstacles to the couple's love affair. Indeed, as in the French text, Aben-Amed returns to Africa when it seems that no future is possible for the two lovers. Yet the story suggests that Morisco culture cannot be so easily extricated from Spain. Aben-Amed's return to Spain after the birth of his child leads to his conversion to Christianity and ultimately his acceptance by María de Mendoza's dying father. The text, therefore, not only hints at the possibility of assimilation of the other but also offers the more radical suggestion that Spain is a product of the integration of the two cultures. In other words, the Moriscos are not entirely expelled from the country. Rather, the act of religious conversion suggests a safer form of integration that recognises the influence of Spain's others, without threatening the nation's religious and cultural unity.

## 1.4 Moorish horror: fantastical responses to the past

‘El sacristán del Albaicín’ by Luis de Montes (*La Alhambra* 1839) and ‘La virgen del clavel’ by Giménez Serrano (*Semanario pintoresco español* 1848) tell much the same story. In both, the instability of Morisco identity is explored through the use of fantasy. The protagonist in ‘El sacristán del Albaicín’ is Juan, an orphan in sixteenth-century Granada who becomes the sacristan of the first Christian church to be established in the Albaicín after the conquest of the city. Juan is invited to a friend’s wedding with a Morisca. At the wedding, he falls in love with the bride and drinks to excess. In his state of inebriation, however, he still remembers to ring the midnight bells. Upon arriving at the church, though, he is surprised to see the young Morisca bride in the doorway. She tells him that she has come to pray, and Juan, seeing an opportunity, invites her to join him at a more private altar. He goes to kiss her, and she screams in horror because she sees her husband run towards them with a knife. She runs to the church tower, followed by Juan and the husband who pursues them both. At the top of the tower, with nowhere to go, they both jump. In mid-fall, the Morisca unfolds a pair of bat wings and flies towards the horizon, while Juan falls directly to hell. A voice tells him: “Juan Aguilera, mal sacristán, borrachón, que te bebes el vino de las vinagreras, que no estás con devoción en la iglesia, que estás siempre en riñas y francachelas, que persigues a todas las mozas del barrio sin distinguir de viuda, casada ni doncella, muere! maldito, muere!” (95). He wakes up in his friend’s *carmen*<sup>6</sup> surrounded by the wedding guests and decides to join a Carthusian Monastery.

‘La virgen del clavel’ adds another layer of narration to the story. It begins in the nineteenth century as the narrator evokes a memory of a visit he once made to the Convent of Santa Isabel la Real in the Albaicín district. Although its main structure is Gothic, the convent also contains a portion built by the Moors as a mosque and conserves an Oriental chamber with a chapel dedicated to the Virgin of the Carnation. The narrator explains that only later would he learn the origin of the chapel’s name.

A carefree sacristan, again named Juan, falls in love with a beautiful Morisca named Amina. She is of Zegrí ancestry and has only recently converted to Christianity. Though raised by a strict Islamic scholar with an orthodox interpretation of Islam, she has become, after his death, the ward of the local parish priest, who has instructed her in the Christian faith. One evening, Juan serenades Amina beneath the window of her

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<sup>6</sup> A *carmen* is a typical courtyard house in Granada built in Moorish style. They traditionally incorporated a patch of land for food cultivation but gradually became more urbanised.

house and she throws him a carnation with a note that invites him to visit her later that night. Juan is nervous about whether he should go and gets drunk in a local tavern before summoning the courage to visit. When he enters the garden, he is transported into a world of oriental beauty and luxury:

Estaba en un templete morisco con paredes de filigrana y cornisas de encaje, cerrado por una cúpula de alerce y ébano. El pavimento era de mármol y un surtidor de agua olorosa saltaba en el centro de un reducido *mar*. La luz salía al través de unas lámparas transparentes de mármol de Macael, ocultas entre las flores que adornaban los ángulos del recinto y mezclándose los rayos débiles de la luz artificial con los reflejos de la luna que penetraban por las claraboyas estrelladas de la cúpula y por el calado de los muros formaban un conjunto semejante a la claridad de la alborada. Sobre una piel de tigre, en un almohadón carmesí con alamares de oro estaba sentada Amina ensartando las perlas esparcidas de un collar. (199)

The descriptions of the place are reminiscent of Irving's evocations of the Alhambra, or, more generally, of the luxuriant scenes of Orientalist painting. Moreover, Amina's pearl necklace connects with a Spanish romantic tradition that associates al-Andalus with precious jewels, as we have seen in the short stories above.<sup>7</sup>

Juan is entranced by the exotic setting of Amina's Moorish home, but when he attempts to kiss her she tries to flee. She explains that she cannot dishonour the house of her Muslim ancestors and they decide to escape the city in order to be together. Outside, however, a storm is raging; the lovers leave the safety of Amina's home only to be confronted by the priest, who tries to prevent their flight. Juan kills him with a dagger but he cannot fight the rising waters of the river Darro. As they begin to drown in the turbulent waters, Amina is rescued by an angel, while Juan is dragged to hell. He subsequently wakes up on the street in front of Amina's house, with a carnation in his hand. In this version, also, he decides to join the monastic order of the Carthusians, while Amina enters a convent.

In both short stories the sacristan's desire for the other—a young Morisca—creates a space of fantasy, in which there is a struggle between temptation and duty. The temptation is not merely sexual, but also ethnically transgressive. The sacristan, supposedly a figure within the Catholic Church, is drawn towards the excised culture of the Moors. Like the church in the story, which is built on the foundations of a mosque, Juan's desire reveals the hidden aspect of the Moriscos. In the first story, the Morisca is

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<sup>7</sup> See for instance 'El collar de perlas' by Serafín Estébanez Calderón, in which a pearl necklace worn by the sultana of Granada is imbued with talismanic properties. It belonged to the original conquerors of Granada and its possession guarantees the stability of the Kingdom.

seemingly a good Christian, but beneath this appearance there lurks something that straddles the line between desire and fear. When the repressed memory returns, it does so in the form of horror: a hybrid of bat and woman.

In 'La virgen del clavel', the past is brought to life more fully in the realm of fantasy. Amina's garden allows Juan to experience—for a brief instant—the lost world of *al-Andalus*. Yet his fantasy cannot be sustained. Amina's garden is merely an idealised recreation of the past. It is a chimera that responds to Orientalist fantasies, not to the realities of Spain's Morisco history. The fundamental instability of her Morisca status is highlighted in the description of her desire for Juan:

Amina, africana de sangre, mora en sus costumbres, cristiana en sus creencias, quería al travieso sacristán con el fuego del desierto, con el voluptuoso abandono de los orientales, con la poética humildad de la muger esclava de su galán, con la intensidad y espiritualismo de la religión cristiana. (192)

The identification of Oriental women with what Said called 'sexual promise' and 'untiring sensuality' (188) is something I will explore in greater detail in the following chapter. The above quotation makes clear, however, the threat posed by Amina's indeterminate status. Because of her African blood, she is a foreigner and, therefore, exercises dangerous desire. Despite her association with the Orientalist trope of the female slave, she cannot be reduced to a passive object of Juan's desire. Moreover, her Christianity, which provides an outward form of justification for the Moriscos in Spain, here merely serves to intensify her desire.

Ultimately, Juan's dream of a sexual encounter with Amina is only possible within the space of the fantasy. Once he awakes from it, the only integration possible between the two cultures is through the Catholic Church: Amina joins a convent. Not only is her religious instability now firmly settled, but her dangerous sexuality is also curtailed. Crucially, moreover, she is prevented from having children. Her only 'offspring', then, is the legacy that she leaves in the form of the chapel that bears her name. For the nineteenth-century narrator who visits the convent, Morisco culture is present only in the safe form of history; the building itself and the chapel's name remind him of the country's Islamic past, but do not threaten to undermine its narrative of Christian identity.

By contrast, the moment of fantasy within the story allows the writer to explore an alternative vision of Spain's Islamic legacy, one in which the past returns with greater force. For a brief period, the protagonist—and the reader—is confronted with the possibility of making a more meaningful connection with Moorish culture. Indeed, Juan is tempted to do so and symbolically murders the priest—guardian of Spain's

Christian homogeneity—in order to be with Amina. The possibility fades, however, outside the realm of fantasy, as the protagonist chooses the moral path.

Yet 'La virgen del clavel' does not end when the lovers take their religious habits. There is a second part to the story, which takes place after Juan has joined the monastery. One day it is attacked by a group of Moriscos during the Alpujarras rebellion. Juan arms himself and confronts the rebel leader, Harmez, but is shocked when he suddenly sees a vision of his erstwhile lover's face; Harmez is Amina's brother. Juan's moment of reminiscence distracts him sufficiently for Harmez to deliver a fatal blow. Before his death, Juan asks for the carnation to be given to Amina in the convent, hence the name of the chapel. This ending complicates the story because it introduces another aspect to the interaction between Christian and Morisco. In the narrative structure of the short story, the Morisco appears twice: once, during a fantasy, where there is an attempt to connect romantically, and another time in 'real life', when the encounter is a violent one. The moment of fantasy is somewhat subversive, as it allows for the possibility of an alternative outcome to Spain's Morisco history through the lovers' union. The real encounter, in contrast, cements the militaristic and violent nature of Christian and Muslim relations that formed the official narrative of the Reconquista and rejects the possibility of a romantic union between the two. In 'El sacristán del Albaicín', Juan overcomes the temptation for the Morisca woman, which runs free in the fantasy. He wakes up and decides to live a virtuous life as a monk. In 'La virgen del clavel', however, Juan is unable to overcome his initial temptation. Although his elopement with Amina is merely fantasy, in the second part of the story he is still seduced by her face, in the form of her brother Harmez. His lack of resolve—and desire for the Other—leads to his death at the hands of the Morisco.

'Beltrán' by Augusto de Ochoa (*El Artista* 1835) similarly makes use of fantasy to represent—and condemn—the temptation of the Muslim Other. In a nineteenth-century guesthouse in Asturias, a traveller (the narrator) hears a ghost story that explains the origins of a ruined castle in the vicinity. The story is of Beltrán, a Christian soldier who falls in love with a Muslim girl, Elvira. Although she loves him too, she rejects him because of their different religions and refuses to abandon Islam. Desperately in love with Elvira, Beltrán eventually converts to Islam, abandons his family and deserts his military post. After a while, however, his conscience causes him to regret his decision and he runs away from Elvira back to the army. Torn between his conscience and his love for Elvira, he takes enormous risks hoping to die in battle but fails to do so. Later, he devotes himself hedonistically to parties and orgies as a form of distraction. Eventually, he is so exhausted with life that he returns to his father's castle to seek solace. When he arrives, however, he finds Elvira waiting for him already, and they move into the castle together. Shortly afterwards, his father dies, probably killed by Beltrán, and Beltrán begins to terrorise the area, evicting nuns from their convent, overtaxing Christian farmers and converting the local church into a mosque. It is there

that one day Beltrán and Elvira decide to marry in an Islamic ceremony. As they are about to say 'yes', however, a storm rages, and a giant warrior emerges from the ground beneath the church. The warrior confronts Beltrán and drags him down into the ground. It is said that nobody has inhabited the castle since but that Elvira's ghost is sometimes seen haunting the ruins.

Whereas in 'La virgen del clavel' and 'El sacristán del Albaicín' the use of fantasy enables the protagonist to indulge his temptation for al-Andalus from a safe distance, Beltrán not only acts on his desire for the Other, but also converts to Islam. The fantastical element of the story intervenes, instead, at the end, as a corrective to his transgression. Yet in all three stories supernatural forces punish the protagonists' sins. The punishment is slightly different in each story. Yet in each the temptation of Islam is seen through a Christian lens as a sin: the sinner is then punished for his transgressions. In 'El sacristán del Albaicín', Juan falls to hell within the fantasy, before repenting in 'real life' and choosing the life of a monk—a complete renunciation of not only desire for the Other, but sexual desire *tout court*. In 'La virgen del clavel' meanwhile, the sacristan is punished within the fantasy by drowning and going to hell. He again repents after the fantasy ends and seeks salvation in a monastery but is punished for a second time: he is killed because his temptation re-emerges when he sees Harmez.

In Ochoa's story, Beltrán does not repent of his very real sins. His punishment calls to mind the punishment of another unrepentant anti-hero of Spanish literature: Don Juan, which indeed has echoes in all three stories. In *El burlador de Sevilla* attributed to Tirso de Molina, for instance, Don Juan is killed by a statue that comes to life and he is sent to hell. All three stories analysed above can be considered Orientalist versions of the Don Juan myth. The choice of Amina, for example, as the name of the Morisca in 'La virgen del clavel' and 'El sacristán del Albaicín' could point to the influence of Molina's work, where Amina is a peasant girl seduced by Juan. The choice of Juan as the name of the sacristan certainly points to a conscious imitation of the myth. The name Elvira in 'Beltrán' may also have been inspired by a nineteenth-century version of the Don Juan myth: José de Espronceda's *El estudiante de Salamanca* (1840), published eight years previously. Don Felix—the Don Juan figure—also seduces a woman named Elvira<sup>8</sup>.

Espronceda may also have inspired 'La virgen del clavel'. Elvira dies after she is abandoned by Don Felix. Her brother seeks to avenge her by challenging Don Felix to a duel in which the unrepentant seducer is killed. We have already seen that in 'La virgen del clavel' Amina's brother plays an important role: he kills Juan. He does not do so deliberately, as Juan has not seduced and subsequently abandoned Amina. Yet his appearance, once the fantasy of al-Andalus is seemingly concluded, suggests that the

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<sup>8</sup> The name also recalls Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, which was premiered in Prague in 1787.

dangerous aspect of Moorish culture remains unresolved. Unlike Espronceda's Don Felix, Juan repents of his sinful infatuation with Amina, but the Other that so fascinated him is not so easily overcome. The echoes of the Don Juan myth are intriguing, here. They show us how, in the nineteenth-century, Spanish writers turned to many aspects of the national literary tradition as part of representations of al-Andalus. Moreover, such was the level of interest in the Muslim past that writers found ways to portray it where it not was present<sup>9</sup>. Yet while Spanish versions of the Don Juan myth do not have any connection to the Muslim world, in Lord Byron's poem *Don Juan* (1819) the protagonist is sold as a harem slave in Constantinople and attempts to save a Muslim girl by running away with her. The parallels with the three fantastical stories analysed here again demonstrates the cross-cultural nature of nineteenth-century representations of al-Andalus in Spain.

## 1.5 The Spanish-Moroccan War: Encounters with Contemporary Islam

Thus far, the texts I have examined in this chapter stage encounters between Spain and its Muslim past. In some stories, aspects of the Muslim past appear in the nineteenth century. This is the case, for instance, in Serafín Estébanez Calderon's 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra'. In other texts, the encounter is between Christians and Muslims in the period after the downfall of al-Andalus, when the presence of converted Muslims (Moriscos) offered an opportunity for contact between the two groups. These texts explore the fundamental instability of Morisco identity, which they attempt to resolve, as we have seen, through conversion, mixed offspring, or violence. In still other texts, such as 'Beltrán' and 'La virgen del clavel', the narrative structure of the story itself brings the Muslim past into dialogue with the nineteenth century. The final text of this chapter, however, is somewhat different. In Pedro de Alarcón's 'Moros y cristianos' (1881), there is an encounter between nineteenth-century Spain and contemporary Moroccans, who are brought together through the physical legacy of al-Andalus, in the form of buried treasure. The discovery of an ancient parchment of Arabic writing in a mountain village in Andalusia leads to a series of exchanges between the two sides of the Straits of Gibraltar, which ultimately ends in disaster: the treasure is never found

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<sup>9</sup> We observe the same phenomenon in the next chapter. Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch places Muslim Spain at the centre of his *Los amantes de Teruel*, where no mention of it is found in the original legend.

and those who seek it die. As in 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra', the treasure remains buried.

Tío Gómez, an inhabitant of Aldeire, discovers the parchment during his attempt to destroy an old Moorish fortification tower. He believes it contains instructions on how to find buried Moorish treasure and recognises the writing as 'moro'. He is unable to read it, however, and seeks advice from an acquaintance in a nearby town. The latter promises to send the parchment for official translation in Palestine but sends it instead to a nephew of his in Ceuta. There follows a series of deceptions, in which each character deceives the previous holder of the parchment in order to claim the treasure entirely for himself. The nephew lies to his uncle and claims that the parchment contains only blasphemies written by 'perros Moriscos' and that he has destroyed it (ch. VI). In reality, however, in an echo of Don Quixote, he seeks out a Moor by the name of *Manos-gordas* in the city's souk, whom he asks to translate the parchment.

The Moor claims that he cannot decipher the parchment alone because it is written in an older version of Arabic and promises to consult with a scholarly relative. Instead, he steals the parchment and leaves the city to seek the assistance of Juan Falgueira, a Galician renegade and convict, who has adopted a Moroccan identity under the name Ben Mununza. Falgueira kills *Manos-gordas* and travels to Aldeire, where he intends to use the parchment to uncover the treasure. Before he is able to do so, however, a letter from *Manos-gordas'* wife arrives, and Falgueira is arrested by the Spanish authorities and executed. Tío Gómez dies soon afterwards of an infection, but not before sending a recriminatory letter to his relative in Ugíjar, who subsequently dies, after sending a similar letter to his nephew in Ceuta, who also dies.

Both 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra' and 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra' emphasise the cultural differences between Spaniards and Moors in order to create a sharp opposition between the two. In the first text, for instance, there is a dichotomy between the spirits that guard the Moorish treasure and the reminder of Christian domination in the form of the coins with the insignia of the Catholic Monarchs. Furthermore, the temporal distance between the student in nineteenth-century Granada and the medieval Moorish Kingdom is emphasised by the anachronistic figure of the soldier. In the second text, the religious differences between Aben-Amed and Maria present an insurmountable barrier to the continuation of their relationship until the Muslim agrees to convert to Christianity.

In 'Moros y Cristianos', though, the second paragraph already states: "Aldeire, dicho sea con perdón de su señor cura, es un pueblo Morisco" (Ch. I). Immediately, then, Alarcón undermines the clear distinction between Spanish and Moorish that is found in the other two texts. In a satirical way, Alarcón reminds the reader of the blurred boundaries between the two cultures. The narrator goes on to list a number of characteristics that demonstrate the similarity of the village's inhabitants to the Moors; for instance, their fiery tempers and melancholic black eyes. The narrator suggests that

not all the Moriscos in the region were expelled and therefore “el tío Juan Gómez [...], alcalde constitucional de Aldeire en el año de gracia de 1821, podía muy bien ser nieto de algún Mustafá, Momahed o cosa por el estilo” (Ch. I). The Spanish discoverer of Moorish treasure, then, may actually be of Moorish origin himself.

The portrayal of the Other in 'Moros y Cristianos' also represents a parody of the romantic portrayal of the Moor. In 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra' Aben-Amed is depicted in the tradition of the noble Moor. He is a gallant gentleman, who saves Maria and conforms to the codes of honour that were prevalent during the period of the Reconquista. Indeed, Aben-Amed is so noble that when he disguises himself as Luis de Sotomayor he passes for a Spaniard. In 'Moros y Cristianos', however, the Muslim characters are comical and absurd. The first Moroccan to steal the parchment in Ceuta, Manos-gordas, speaks a pidgin Spanish, using only infinitives. Alarcón again minimises the difference between the two cultures, as ultimately the Moroccans are portrayed in the same way as the Spanish characters: all are greedy and dishonest and attempt to deceive others in order to obtain the treasure for themselves.

The story is humorous and intended to be ironic. In its constant exchange between both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar, however, the story clearly points to the events of the Spanish-Moroccan War (1859-60). Each time the parchment crosses from Spain to Morocco or vice versa, some aspect of the truth is hidden or distorted. The story questions the possibility of an honest exchange between the two cultures. The contact between them is reduced to a manifestation of greed and selfishness.

Why is the treasure never found in this story when it was so easily retrieved in 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra'? To find the treasure in both stories one needs four things: a parchment indicating its location, the ability to decipher and understand the parchment, access to the site of the buried treasure, and the moral right of ownership. Whereas Aben-Amed, as we have seen, possesses all four qualities, in 'Moros y cristianos' the first three could be achieved only through cooperation among the characters. The characters' mistrust and greed, however, prevent this collaboration. Thus, Gómez, who initially discovers the parchment, is unable to read it: 'Yo no sé leer, ni tan siquiera en castellano, que es la lengua más clara del mundo; pero el diablo me lleve si esta escritura no es de moros.' (Ch. II). Indeed, no Spaniard can, so it must be sent to Africa. The nephew in Ceuta must approach a Moroccan for assistance. But since Manos-gordas attempts to trick the nephew and to find the treasure alone, he is left without access to the site of treasure; as a Muslim, he cannot be in Spain legally:

¿Qué apoyo (a juicio de *Manos-gordas*) podría hallar en las leyes ni en las autoridades de España un extranjero, un mahometano, un semisalvaje para adquirir la Torre de Zoraya, para hacer excavaciones en ella para entrar en posesión del tesoro o para no perderlo inmediatamente con la vida? (Ch. IX)

Hence, he must seek help from the unscrupulous renegade Falgueira. But the latter is, in turn, prevented from accessing the treasure because of the forces of justice. Justice, indeed, in the form of moral rights to the treasure, is mentioned explicitly in the parchment itself:

Al salir de esta Torre para emprender la última y decisiva campaña dejo escondidos aquí, en sitio a que no podrá llegar nadie sin topar primero con el presente manuscrito, todo mi oro, toda mi plata, todas mis perlas; el tesoro de mi familia; la hacienda de mis padres, mía y de mis herederos; el caudal de que soy dueño y señor por ley divina y humana [...] como son de cada mortal los malos humores de cáncer o de lepra que hereda de sus padres. (VIII)

The treasure, then, is as inseparable from its rightful owner, as the body is from its own diseases; it is inherited through the family line. The moral owner of the treasure of Aldeire is absent. Like the ruined tower that once belonged to him, he is no longer part of modern Spain and the treasure will remain buried, if, indeed, it even exists.

By the early nineteenth century in which *Moros y cristianos* is set, however, Moors and *Moriscos* are a historical memory for Spain, not potential threats.

Alarcón's exploration of an encounter between Spaniards and Moors, though, was not merely an exercise in nostalgia. He wrote 'Moros y cristianos' in 1881, two decades after the start of the Spanish-Moroccan War, although it is set prior to the conflict. This war drew Spanish attention back towards North Africa after centuries of neglect and would ultimately pave the way to Spanish colonialism in Morocco. We know that Alarcón had the war in mind when he wrote 'Moros y cristianos' because he refers in the text to the previously unknown geography of Morocco that has acquired new meaning for the Spanish as a result of the war:

[...] le llevó al camino de Tetuán, o bien a la borrosa vereda que, siguiendo las ondulaciones de puntas y playas, conduce a Cabo-Negro por el valle del Tarajar, por el de los Castillejos, por Monte-Negrón y por las lagunas de Río-Azmir, nombres que todo español bien nacido leerá hoy con amor y veneración, y que entonces no se habían oído pronunciar todavía en España ni en el resto del mundo civilizado. (VIII)

Unsurprisingly, the *Guerra de Africa* elicited comparisons with *Al-Andalus* and the Reconquista. After an interval of around 300 years, Spain was once again at war with the 'Moors'. Although, the shoe was on the other foot, as it were, and the disputed territory was on the opposite side of the Straits of Gibraltar, it did not take much imagination to connect the nineteenth-century conflict to the confrontations of the Middle Ages and early-modern period.

Indeed, in his *Diario de un testigo de la Guerra de África* (1859), Alarcón writes of his desire to cross the Mediterranean to “tocar, por decirlo así, en aquel maravilloso continente, la viva realidad de lo pasado” (i). He is particularly interested, he says,

because of his childhood in the Sierra Nevada, where he grew up “en las ruinas de mezquitas y alcazabas, y acariciando los sueños de mi adolescencia al son de los cantos de los moros, y la luz de su poesía, quizás bajo los techos que cobijaron sus últimos placeres” (i). Like the French and Spanish Romantics, Alarcón imagines all Moorish life emerging out of the ruins they left behind. Morocco, then, becomes a living fossil of Moorish life in Spain, a viewpoint that ironically justifies the Spanish invasion. Indeed, Alarcón suggests that the *Guerra de África* is an opportunity to rectify Spain's historical mistake in expelling the Jews and Moriscos. He argues that the exiles took with them “el talismán de nuestra fortuna” and that Spain must invade Africa “a recobrar ese talismán, o lo que es lo mismo; que España debía comprender que la función más natural de su existencia es una constante expansión hacia el Mediodía” (iii). Tellingly, then, the departing Moors and Jews are again associated with treasure, this time the talisman of the nation's fortune. Since their legacy—their buried treasure—cannot be recovered in Spain, Spaniards must seek it directly in Morocco through conquest.

In the *Diario de un testigo de la Guerra de África*, Alarcón is an enthusiastic supporter of the war as a colonialist project. By the time he comes to write 'Moros y cristianos', however, his ambivalence towards the Spanish campaign in Morocco is fairly evident in the text. Indeed, by the time of his return to Spain, Alarcón doubted that Spain's imperial project could be successful and began to campaign for Spanish withdrawal and the permanent closure of Spain's 'door to Africa'. (Martin-Márquez 205). Thus, in 'Moros y cristianos' Alarcón emphasises the impossibility of honest and fruitful cultural exchange between Spaniards and Moroccans. In the opening passages, Alarcón's text speaks frankly of the Moorish origins of much of southern Spanish culture. Indeed, the narrative voice openly mocks the notion of cultural purity in Aldeire, the village in which the story is set: 'Aldeire, dicho sea con perdón de su señor cura, es un pueblo Morisco' (Ch. I). While Alarcón dryly notes that the village *alcalde* is probably a 'nieto de algún Mustafá, Mahommed o cosa por el estilo' (Ch. I), he also mocks the ignorance of nineteenth-century Spaniards when it comes to their own Muslim past. Thus, the *alcalde* Juan Gómez has no inkling that the tower he sets about with purpose to destroy is of Moorish origin. Moreover, when he finds the Arabic parchment and brings it to his wife, she confirms her suspicion that it is 'moro' by smelling the document.

Ultimately, 'Moros y cristianos' seems to reject the notion that Spain can reconnect with its past by coming into contact with modern Moroccans, which was the belief of many Spanish intellectuals during the Spanish-Moroccan War. As we have seen, Alarcón himself believed, only a few years previously, in the importance of such an endeavour. In the short story, an attempt to bridge between the cultures separated by the Straits of Gibraltar leads only to mistrust and deception. Furthermore, the Spanish attempt to recover the memory of its cultural Other, as symbolised by the recovery of buried Moorish treasure, ends in failure and leads directly to five deaths.

The texts we have examined in this chapter stage a confrontation between Spain and its Islamic past. As we have seen, in 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra', 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra' and 'Moros y cristianos' the impetus is buried treasure from the period of Muslim rule in Granada. In other texts, a romantic encounter with a Muslim woman brings the characters into contact with the past. I have argued that the texts make use of different narrative strategies to deal with the legacy of the Other, that ranges from appropriation to rejection. In 'Los tesoros de la Alhambra' and 'Moros y cristianos', for instance, there is no possibility of connection with the Muslim past, as a lack of understanding ('Los tesoros') or trust ('Moros') prevents any meaningful contact. By contrast, the three fantastical short stories make use of fantasy to negotiate the dichotomy between the temptation of Muslim Spain and its final rejection. If the space of fantasy allows an imagined encounter to take place, the 'real space' ultimately rejects the Other. Yet, in 'La virgen del clavel' and 'El sacristán del Albaicín', the Morisco is appropriated into Spain through conversion to Christianity. The strategy of conversion is used in 'Historia de los subterráneos de la Alhambra', in which not only does the Muslim man convert, but a child is born of shared Christian and Muslim parentage. In all these texts, however, there is a recognition that the Muslim past is not entirely Other. Unlike foreign Orientalist texts, we can clearly observe an attempt to come to terms with and recast Spain's relationship with the Muslim past.

## 2 Weep like a woman: gender confusion in al-Andalus

*"Do not weep like a woman for what you could not defend like a man."*

The short story, 'Ramiro', by Eugenio de Ochoa, was published in *El Artista* in 1835<sup>10</sup>. The eponymous Christian protagonist is in love with a Muslim woman named Zelma. In order to stymie his plans, his rival in love Aliatar imprisons him "contra todas las leyes del honor y de la caballería" in his castle (293). With all hope seemingly lost, a mysterious figure arrives and offers to free Ramiro from his unjust captivity. In return, however, the stranger tells Ramiro that he will summon him sometime in the future in order to kill him, as revenge for Almanzor, a Muslim warrior that Ramiro had killed in battle. Ramiro accepts the terms, is provided with a suit of armour and a horse and is set free. Ramiro finds his lover Zelma and goes with her to the Christian encampment outside Granada, where he seeks the permission of Queen Isabel to marry. The Queen enthusiastically agrees and decrees that theirs will be the first Christian wedding held in newly-Christian Granada, after the local mosques have been converted to churches.

At first glance, Zelma's personal conversion at the end of the story mirrors the political conversion of Granada from Islam to Christianity. Their marriage, moreover, hints at the incorporation of Spain's Muslim culture after 1492, under a common religion. Yet Ramiro's attraction to Zelma is not the only attraction towards the ethnic Other in the story. After he leaves Aliatar's castle, Ramiro rides through the forest and sees a young Muslim man crying over his sorrows. Ramiro's first reaction is to be struck by the man's beauty: "le pareció que más hermoso jóven no había visto en toda su vida" (294). Ramiro contemplates the youth, who is described in feminine terms, with his "larga cabellera de ébano rizada" (294). Moreover, as Ramiro finally approaches the Muslim man, he does so very gently: "Solo el deseo de consolarte en tu aflicción me ha movido a turbar tu reposo" (294). In response, the man, Abenamar, tells Ramiro that he cannot be consoled because his sorrows are too great, but invites Ramiro to sit beside

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<sup>10</sup> *El Artista* was a weekly periodical that Eugenio de Ochoa founded along with Federico de Madrazo, in imitation of the French periodical *L'Artiste*. Although short-lived, with a run of only 15 months, *El Artista* was considered to be the "publicación emblemática del romanticismo revolucionario español" (Rodríguez Gutiérrez 65).

him and hear his story. Ramiro graciously agrees to listen, “apretándole la mano afectuosamente” (294), but tells him that his own sorrows probably rival those of the Muslim. The interaction between the two men, who should be enemies, is not only affectionate; there is also an implicit homoeroticism in their encounter. This possibility, however, is averted by the discovery that Abenamar is Zelma’s brother. Ramiro’s admiration of Abenamar’s beauty, then, is a product of his resemblance to the female love object<sup>11</sup>. The possibility of attraction between Ramiro and Abenamar creates a moment of uncertainty. It reveals how, for nineteenth-century Spain, al-Andalus represented potentially dangerous sexual and gender confusion that undermines the simple narrative of male domination of a feminine Other. Ramiro’s desire for Abenamar undermines the narrative of enmity between Christian and Muslim and introduces a note of ambivalence, by which hatred is substituted for desire. Ambivalence towards the Other, both male and female, raises a number of questions about the role of gender in portrayals of Spain’s Muslim past. How is gender used to create distinctions between Christian and Muslim Spain? What role does desire play? What implication does the representation of Muslims have for Spanish sexual and gender identities?

In the previous chapter I showed that nineteenth-century Spanish representations of al-Andalus were in dialogue with both contemporary European Orientalism and earlier Spanish literary traditions. In this chapter I propose to build on that earlier discussion to examine how questions of gender permeated portrayals of Muslim Spain. Many scholars have critiqued Edward Said’s *Orientalism* for failing to sufficiently unpick the role of gender in Western discourses on the Orient. In recent years, some critics have begun to examine this aspect in greater detail. Raina Lewis, for instance, argues that Orientalism “conceptualised the Orient as feminine, erotic, exotic, and savage, allowing the West to accede to a position of superiority as Christian, civilized, and moral” (54). Similarly, in the specific Spanish context of the Reconquista, Andreu Miralles suggests that “el triunfo de la España cristiana es también el de unos valores masculinos (honor, arrojo, valentía, dominio) sobre una Granada feminizada (voluble, sensual, cautivadora, pasiva)” (184). While Andreu Miralles is correct to identify this basic dynamic in textual representations of al-Andalus, the question of gender is never so straightforward.

As the short story ‘Ramiro’ demonstrates, gender dynamics betray a degree of ambivalence towards the Other that encompasses desire, as well as denigration. The encounter between Ramiro and Abenamar recalls a similar moment in the Golden Age

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<sup>11</sup> In Chapter One (Orientalism), we find a similar dynamic in the short story ‘La virgen del clavel’. Here too, Juan is distracted by the face of his attacker Harmeiz, only to realise that the Morisco is the brother of his former lover. Juan’s momentary distraction—and homoerotic attraction to Harmeiz—leads to his death, as the Morisco asserts the military nature of confrontation between Christian and Muslim.

novel *Historia del Abencerraje y la hermosa Jarifa* (1561-1565). In his analysis of the anonymous text, Gregory S. Hutcheson argues that “queer desires [...] slip out between the cracks” of the relationship between the Spaniard Rodrigo de Narváez and the Muslim man Abindarráez (114). The first sighting of Abindarráez in the novel by Rodrigo’s soldiers recalls the scene I have just described in ‘Ramiro’. Seeking an opportunity for battle with the Moors, the soldiers hide in the bushes:

Y mirando con más atención, vieron venir por donde ellos iban un gentil moro en un caballo ruano; él era grande de cuerpo y hermoso de rostro y parecía muy bien a caballo. Traía vestida una marlota de carmesí y un albornoz de damasco del mismo color, todo bordado de oro y plata. (33)

Gregory S. Hutcheson unpicks the homoerotic nature of the scene, in which the soldiers “almost let him pass without incident, so ‘aroused’ are they by the sight of him” (115). Yet the portrayal of the Moor, like Abenamar in “Ramiro” is surprisingly feminine. Indeed, it recalls similarly eroticised depictions of Muslim women. Louise Mirrer has argued that Reconquista texts placed a great emphasis on questions of masculinity, as a way of creating distinctions between the two communities. She argues that medieval and early-modern Spanish texts routinely undermine Muslim masculinity. Even the common trope of the “friendly Moor”, she suggests, does not so much represent friendly relations between the two religions, as cast the Muslim man in a subordinate position as weak and submissive in comparison to the Christian (4). Thus, the feminisation of Abenamar in “Ramiro” and Abindarráez in *Abencerraje* also serves to denigrate the Muslim man and assert Christian superiority.

In this chapter, I will examine three texts: *Ramiro, conde de Lucena* by Rafael Húmara y Salamanca, *Boabdil el Chico* by José Velilla y Rodríguez and *Los amantes de Teruel* by Eugenio Hartzenbusch. In all three texts, Muslim Spain represents a place of disorder, in which the strictures on sexuality, and the policing of gender norms, are less evident. I will argue that the texts use gender relations to seek to create boundaries between Muslim and Christian Spain. But the boundary is not clear.

## 2.1 Contrasting veils: Christian and Muslim women in *Ramiro, conde de Lucena*

*Ramiro, conde de Lucena* (1823) by Rafael Húmara y Salamanca is considered to be Spain's first historical novel<sup>12</sup>. Set during the Christian siege of Seville of 1247, the novel follows Ramiro, a favourite soldier of Spanish King Fernando III, as he arrives in the Muslim court to negotiate the release of a prisoner. He catches sight of the sultan's daughter, Zaida and is taken with her beauty. He abandons the Spanish army to be with her, but later regrets his decision and decides to return to his wife Isabel and to regain the confidence of the King, who believes him to be a traitor. However, Zaida, who is passionately in love with Ramiro, refuses to let him leave until the Muslim soldier Alí-Rosai intervenes and arranges safe passage for Ramiro and Isabel. They seek sanctuary in the countryside with a loyal friend of Alí-Rosai, so that Ramiro can reclaim his honour in the army. Through his heroism in the conquest of Seville, Ramiro is able to regain the King's trust. While he is away fighting, however, Zaida finds and kills Isabel. Ramiro returns in time for Isabel to die in his arms and then he too dies of heartbreak.

In his introduction to the novel, Donald Shaw argues that *Ramiro* illustrates the transition between the Enlightenment and Romanticism in Spain. For Shaw, the novel seeks to reconcile traditionalist ideology with a romantic recognition of cosmic injustice (36). Building on Shaw's argument, Blackshaw observes that the distinction between the two worldviews is expressed through the contrast between Christian and Muslim Spain. She argues that Muslim Spain represents "a space in which humans are governed by an arbitrary destiny instead of by a benevolent God and where human love, whatever its consequences, has been elevated to an absolute value" ("Between Enlightenment and Romanticism" 3). Yet Blackshaw's identification of Muslim Spain with the values of Romanticism exaggerates the difference between the two worlds. Indeed, while it is true that Zaida is willing to sacrifice everything for love, this is not the case for the other Muslim characters. Alí-Rosai, for instance, holds to the same system of honour as the Christians and explicitly rejects Zaida's scheme. Instead, it is Ramiro himself, before his change of heart, who most closely conforms to the values Blackshaw attributes to Muslim Spain. In reality, Muslim and Christian Spain are remarkably similar in the novel and the border between them is crossed with ease. Moreover, the antagonism between the characters does not fall along religious lines. I have already mentioned, for instance, the mutual respect between Ramiro and Alí Rosai. The Muslim also admires Isabel, whom he describes as "honor y gloria de las hembras castellanas" (116). Furthermore, at

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<sup>12</sup> See Llorens, "Sobre una novela histórica: *Ramiro, conde de Lucena*", *Revista Hispánica Moderna*, XXI, 1-4, 1965.

the end of the novel, Alí Rosai visits Ramiro's tomb and expresses his admiration and friendship for the dead Spaniard. Indeed, he even forgives him for the destruction of his homeland.

Alí-Rosai's magnanimity in defeat, however, only serves to reinforce the Christian victory. As we have seen, the image of the "friendly Moor", which recurs frequently in medieval Spanish texts, does not necessarily represent true friendship between Christians and Muslims. As Mirrer has argued, representations of the 'friendly' Muslim man often seek to reinforce his submission to the Christian (4). Alí-Rosai's graceful acknowledgement of Muslim defeat, then, becomes a submissive recognition of Spanish superiority. Indeed, when Vargas gifts the Muslim Ramiro's sword so that "no quede en Sevilla el testigo de la sola vez en que Rosa fue vencido", he accentuates Ramiro's dominant position—even in death—over the Muslim (169). The competitive masculinity between the two warriors suggests gender plays a role in drawing the line between the two worlds. Yet the examination of difference between Christian and Muslim Spain is not to be found chiefly in the male interaction I have just examined, but in the contrast between the two women: Christian Isabel and Muslim Zaida.

In his prologue, Húmara outlines the connection between his vision of women and the novel:

Pongo bajo la protección del sexo amable una obrita que sus virtudes y sus gracias me han inspirado. En los lejanos países adonde el destino me condujo, apoyado en las agrestes rocas de la Córcega, admirando las ricas campiñas de la Francia, o saludando con emoción las patrias márgenes del Tajo, el carácter apasionado, fiel, generoso y heroico de las damas españolas, ha sido constantemente el objeto de mi adoración: cuando la historia horrorizada escribía con sangre las páginas de la revolución francesa, al trazar los nombres inmortales de algunas heroínas, esposas, madres, hijas o amantes de los proscritos, se sonreía consolada y se reconciliaba con la humanidad. (41)

Húmara makes clear his intention to pen an ode to Spanish femininity; to portray them as heroically as he considers them to be. Hence, the overwhelmingly positive portrayal of Isabel, which is heightened by the contrast Húmara creates with the Muslim Zaida.

Paradoxically, however, Zaida is a foil for Isabel's virtue, precisely because the two women are so similar. Ramiro's description of her to his squire Alfonso emphasises the resemblance: "su boca es tan roja, tan graciosa, sus dientes tan brillantemente esmaltados como los de Isabel..." (61). The similarity is such that Alfonso begs Ramiro not to profane Isabel by "asociándole a la descripción sacrílega de las gracias de una sarracena" (61). There are also parallels in the interactions between Ramiro and the two women. When Ramiro first meets Isabel, he is struck dumb: "mudo, atónito, y frío como el mármol, quedó deslumbrado sin articular palabra" (71). Similarly, when he comes

face to face with Zaida for the first time, after arriving in Seville, the two lovers “quisieron hablar, pero el amor, que había reunido toda su expresión en las mutuas miradas, se negó a desatar sus lenguas entorpecidas por el placer” (97). Furthermore, when Ramiro marries Isabel, “la estrechó con delirio sobre su corazón palpitante” (75), which is almost identical to his encounter with Zaida, in which “la estrechó contra su corazón palpitante” (97).

Nevertheless, the two scenes also point to subtle differences between the women that only heighten as the plot evolves. One such example is the contrast between the two women’s veils. While Isabel is “cubierta con su virginal velo, brillante de juventud, de modestia y de belleza” (75), in her first appearance the Muslim woman is described as “la arrogante Zaida [...] cubierta con un velo bordado de lunas de esmeraldas” (60). Húmara draws a distinction between Isabel’s modesty and Zaida’s arrogance. More significantly, however, he provides two entirely contrasting meanings for the same garment. Whereas Isabel’s veil, through its virginal association, connotes the Virgin Mary and Christian female modesty, Zaida’s veil, with its crescent-shaped jewels, is the exotic veil of Islam. Yeğenoğlu argues that nineteenth-century Orientalists were fascinated by the Islamic veil because of its semiotic power (44). The veil symbolised both the concealment and unavailability of the Muslim woman and, paradoxically, the erotic promise of that which is hidden. We can read the same ambivalence in Húmara’s description of Zaida’s veil. Its purpose as a garment of modesty is undermined by the luxury of the precious stones that adorn it.

Ramiro’s description of Zaida emphasises the erotic charge that hides behind her veil when he tells Alfonso that “los negros rizos que se escapan de su verde turbante descansan desordenadamente sobre el seno más perfecto que la imaginación de los hombres puede ambicionar” (61). Her hair—the very symbol of sexuality that the veil is intended to hide—escapes from underneath and leads suggestively down to her breast. Moreover, the image of her disordered hair suggests Zaida’s wild nature, which stems from her exotic Otherness: “nacida bajo la influencia del sol ardiente de la Andalucía y criada en las riberas del Guadalquivir, sus pasiones eran impetuosas y sus deseos leyes supremas” (94). In this sense, she is the Romantic hero of the novel. She tells Ramiro: “si el destino me asegura el vivir a tu lado, si exige en recompensa el abandono de mi patria y de mi fortuna, sin la menor repugnancia huiré de la tierra que me vio nacer” (99). Her willingness to abandon everything for the sake of love contrasts with Ramiro’s privileging of nation and religion when he rejects her: “Antes de verte nací español y Cristiano, ni debo ni quiero faltar a los deberes que estos dos títulos me imponen. Mientras respire seguiré la augusta religión de mis padres; mientras respire defender los estandartes gloriosos de mi patria” (98). Zaida’s passionate love is also opposed to Isabel’s more restrained “terneza conyugal” (52). Moreover, Zaida’s passion leads her to violence. When Ramiro tells Zaida that he will return to Spain and introduces her to Isabel, Zaida’s reaction is compared to the instinctive desperation of an animal: “No

vuelve con más presteza la cabeza de una víbora pisada; no ruge con más furor el tigre herido que ya encadenado sufre el castigo del hombre, como la apasionada y celosa mora” (113). The serpent metaphor continues as she tells Ramiro that “el veneno del odio y de la venganza circula por mis venas” (114). By contrast, Isabel is restrained and forgiving. Although she knows that Ramiro has been unfaithful, she arrives in Seville “más bella que nunca, el perdón y el amor exaltados por la generosidad” (110). Her understanding is such, that she is compared to a benevolent goddess who, “compadecida de los infortunios del hombre”, descends from heaven to offer succour (110).

I have suggested that male-male interactions in *Ramiro* downplay the differences between Christian and Muslim Spain. However, the portrayal of Zaida—and the world she inhabits—points to a clear opposition between the two religions, which is highly gendered. Ramiro emphasises this point when he speaks of the “ambiente afeminado que aquellos bárbaros respiraban, las esencias, las flores que por todas partes se ofrecían” (60). He protests that such luxury is not to his masculine taste and compares it to the “polvo de los campos”, “sangre de las lides” and “guerreros francos y sencillos” of his Spanish upbringing (60). Zaida, who “en su lujo oriental excedía a las odaliscas del Califa” (89), represents the antithesis of Spanish Christian masculinity. As a representative of a disordered Eastern sensuality, Zaida embodies an entire array of Orientalist stereotypes, such as the odalisque.

Húmara’s use of Orientalist tropes is most obvious, perhaps, in his description of Zaida’s palace:

Recostada sobre un sofa musulmán, bajo un pabellón de lilas y de plata, respiraba el áloe de Cochín, la mangalia del Japón, la canela de Ceilán, o los aromas de Basora; leía algunas sentencias del *Alcorán* escritas sobre los muros árabes en caracteres formados por el mosaico más perfecto, o tomaba el café de Moka en copas de fragante nardo. Un cenador artificial ocupaba el centro del salón, guarnecido con girándulas y campanillas a la moda de Malabar, y adornado con las flores más suaves del Oriente, entre las que brillaba el pomposo clavel de Cachemira y el azul bluet de Tibet. (89)

Zaida se divertía en escuchar y ver a sus esclavas, imitando los bailes de las bayaderas del Indostán, sea con el chal indiano o con guirnalas de rosas siempre vivas. Las negras lustrosas de las playas de Madagascar, acompañándose con la lira del Mogol, con voz armoniosa y gestos expresivos, entonaban los amorosos romances españoles, que describían el juego de las cañas de Granada, los torneos de Córdoba, los amores de Gazul y de Zoraida, o los placeres soberanos de una vida voluptuosa. (90)

The description of fragrances, spices and materials from throughout Asia and Africa creates a composite image of an expansive 'Orient', which is not linked to a particular place. Unlike Alí-Rosai, who is rooted in Muslim Spain with its culture of chivalry to match the Christians, Zaida lives in an exotic 'utopia'. The paragraph insists on the cosmopolitanism of Zaida: her dangerous globalism, in contrast to the virtuous, safe, provincialism of Isabel. Entering Zaida's cosmopolitan world becomes a test for Ramiro. Indeed, Donald Shaw argues that:

el amor momentáneo que Ramiro siente por Zaida no fue más que un pretexto para crear una situación en la que Húmara pudiera desarrollar el heroísmo y la abnegación del caballero castellano, quien renuncia a su pasión adúltera en el momento en que va a consumarla. (28)

Yet Ramiro's temptation and ultimate resistance is also highly gendered. By succumbing to Zaida, and entering her palace, he risks falling under the spell of her powerful, exotic femininity. Indeed, after falling in love with her, he is adrift and melancholic. His rejection of her is also seen through the paradigm of gender: "En medio de esta brillante y afeminada escena, modelo del interior de los serrillos de Ispaham y del Mogol, se descubriría un guerrero Cristiano inmóvil" (99). Despite the effeminate surroundings, then, Ramiro remains a warrior when he resists Zaida. Ramiro's rehabilitation is not possible, however, without Isabel, who represents the sexual order of the Christian world. Unlike Zaida, who poses a threat because of her raw sexuality and femininity that crosses boundaries, Isabel confirms the social order. She tells Ramiro that "las caricias de una esposa fiel y enamorada, cual las aguas del sagrado río borran los extravíos y apagan las teas de la discordia" (111). She ends the disorder that Zaida represents and when she forgives Ramiro he assumes "la actitud de un héroe" and returns to being "el apoyo de la cruz y el defensor de la patria" (111). Ramiro's reconciliation with Isabel, therefore, is not merely a personal, domestic affair. Rather, as Andreu Miralles has argued, nineteenth-century Spain came to see women as "guardianas del honor nacional a través de su virtud familiar y doméstica" (237). Thus, Isabel becomes the conduit for Ramiro's reconciliation with the values of Christian Spain. By conforming to her role, which she defines as a loyal and loving wife, she also confirms Ramiro's masculinity.

Isabel's final triumph, moreover, is confirmed by Zaida's conversion to Christianity. As she dies, Isabel magnanimously forgives Zaida and baptises her into the Christian faith. Not only does this gesture confirm the superiority of Isabel's character over Zaida but it also confirms the superiority of Christian Spain. As we have seen, *Ramiro* creates a dichotomy between two women: the Muslim Zaida and the Christian Isabel. Ramiro's attraction to Zaida threatens to destabilise the boundaries between Christians and Muslims and to undermine his masculine virtues as a soldier of the Reconquista.

## 2.2 Muslim effeminacy: flawed masculinity in *Boabdil el Chico*

As I demonstrated at the beginning of this chapter, the differences between Christian and Muslim Spain can also be expressed through the portrayal of the Muslim man. In the play *Boabdil el Chico, último rey moro de Granada* (1848), Juan Ruiz del Cerro stages the collapse of Muslim Granada by focusing on the final days of Boabdil's reign. The Muslim King's harem, and its sexual confusion, becomes a corollary to the political decline of his Kingdom. I will explore how the play undermines Boabdil's masculinity to paint a picture of domestic and sexual disorder that mirrors the political and military disorder of Nasrid Granada. First, a brief outline of the plot: although King Ferdinand's Spanish army is marching towards Granada, Boabdil is distracted in his harem by his new Christian captive, Luz, with whom he has fallen in love. By coincidence, Luz is the wife of Fernando, a prisoner of Boabdil's, who has become the harem's chief physician after proving his loyalty to his captor. Luz is captured by Boabdil because she came in search of her missing husband. When they meet in the harem, they decide to keep their connection secret and begin to plot their escape.

Boabdil becomes infatuated with Luz and seeks to make her his wife, although she repeatedly refuses. His obsession distracts him from his military duties and he fails adequately to respond to the increasing Christian threat. He is criticised by his general Omar:

En vez de tomar soberbio su bridon y su armadura, y cerrar contra el cristiano y derrotarle en la lucha, afeminado y cobarde en el haren se sepulta, arrastrándose a los pies de esa española hermosura, mientras el cristiano su trono y su religion derrumba. (23)

Omar's words point to a gendered paradigm that associates cowardliness with the feminine, in opposition to masculine aggression. Boabdil is judged according to norms of masculine behaviour and found wanting. He should be on the battlefield, but is in the harem. Rather than confronting the Spaniard with armour and pride, he prostrates himself to Spanish beauty.

The dichotomy between militarism and the pursuit of 'forbidden' women of a different ethnicity is a recurring trope of Spanish literature. In the following chapter, for instance, I will examine the legend of King Alfonso VIII's affair with the Jewess of

Toledo, which leads to his neglect of the project of Reconquista. Moreover, as we have seen, in *Ramiro, Conde de Lucena*, the eponymous protagonist is considered a traitor by the Spanish King when he abandons his military duty because of a dalliance with the Moorish princess Zaida. Both Alfonso VIII and Ramiro are Christian men who stray from their militarism because they are attracted to beautiful women of a different ethnic group. Boabdil is effectively a mirror image of the usual portrayal, since we are dealing with a Muslim King who falls in love with a Christian woman. Interestingly, in both the Jewess of Toledo and *Ramiro*, the Christian men cede to temptation, after being seduced by the female Other. Unable to resist, they are undoubtedly portrayed as guilty of weakness but they redeem themselves when they overcome their infatuation. The underlying dynamic in all three stories is that of a double transgression: Alfonso, Ramiro and Boabdil stray from the socially sanctioned encounter with the Other—a military confrontation between men—in favour of a sexual encounter with a woman. Yet, unlike the Spanish men, Boabdil is not seduced by Luz. Indeed, she vehemently refuses his advances. He offers her riches, jewels and power and promises her that she will become Queen of Granada. Her response, however, is to denounce all these things in the name of freedom, with the metaphor of a bird. She tells him: “¿Qué vale al ave enjaulada que dorada mire su estrecha prision, si en su amargo desconsuelo no alza el vuelo por la azulada region?” (15). Luz’s rejection of Boabdil leads him to threaten her with violence if she refuses to submit.

Boabdil’s passion, however, is suspect because he cannot control it: “¡Mi pasión! ¡Delirio ciego! Dile que pare al torrente, dile al sol que no caliente jamás con su ardiente fuego” (16). Luz makes an explicit contrast between his uncontrollable passion and her self-control, when she tells him: “la ilusión de mis virtudes de ayer hará que logre vencer mañana vuestra pasión” (15). Boabdil’s incapacity for self-restraint is reflected also in his inability to command his military effectively and see off the Christian threat to Granada; his personal decadence represents the decadence of the Nasrid Kingdom. By contrast, Fernando’s capacity for restraint—both sexually, as physician of the harem, and politically, through his loyalty to his captor—demonstrates the superiority of the Spanish Christian man. The connection between Boabdil’s inadequate masculinity and his loss of Granada is made explicit by Fernando. He tells the Muslim king: “huyes sin trono, sin honor, sin nada, y pierdes una joya de tal precio que es la hermosa y sin igual Granada” (22). Like Luz who will not submit to Boabdil in his own harem, the beautiful Granada is another prize the Spaniards claim from a man unworthy of it for his lack of honour. Indeed, Fernando, whose very name identifies him with the conquering King of Aragon, represents the inevitability of Spanish victory over Muslim Granada. Fernando is the Spaniard who brings order to the domestic and sexual world of Boabdil’s harem, while another Fernando (the King) conquers the political and public sphere of Granada and brings an end to Muslim rule.

In contrast to Boabdil, Fernando is portrayed as a paragon of the masculine values of chivalry. Unlike the Moor, for instance, he is keenly aware of the need to police sexual norms. Thus, when he discovers that Boabdil intends to make Luz his concubine, he asks her to die rather than submit to the Muslim King.

Luz: ¿No me amas?

Fernando: Grande es mi amor

Luz: ¿Temes por tí?

Fernando: Por más temo

Luz: ¿Es por los dos?

Fernando: Con extremo

Luz: ¿Y es la causa?

Fernando: Nuestro honor.

Luz: Será un acero, leal/ defensor de la honra mia.

Fernando: Pues guarda con osadía/ en tu pecho este puñal.

Luz: Te juro sobre su cruz, /ante Dios que nos escucha, / si se traba fiera lucha/  
perecer con virtud. (18)

Fernando's primary concern is with maintaining honour, much like Luz in her earlier encounter with Boabdil. Fernando's concern with honour is why he is unwilling to escape from the palace with his wife because of a promise he made to Boabdil. He asks Luz to escape without him and to explain to the Spanish King that he has not deserted him, but that he must behave according to his "honor de caballero" (19).

Boabdil's lack of masculinity manifests itself also in his lack of respect for the codes of chivalry. Firstly, he tries to force himself on Luz, by threatening to torture the other Spanish captive Estrella, if she does not submit. Subsequently, when he discovers that Luz has escaped, he attempts to kill Fernando in a jealous rage. He does so despite Fernando's evident loyalty towards him—he has chosen to remain in his captivity. Yet Boabdil's attempt to kill Fernando is consistent with his uncontrollable sexual desire for Luz. Both represent an inability for self-restraint, which characterises depictions of both the Oriental and the feminine. The emotional irrationality of the Orient is opposed to the masculine restraint of Christian civilisation.

There is a parallel here also with a much earlier Spanish legend about al-Andalus. The downfall of Granada in Cerro's play echoes the collapse of the Visigoth Kingdom at the time of the Muslim invasion, as it is described in the legend of La Cava. This legend similarly attributes the collapse of the Kingdom to the unrestrained sexual appetites of the King. According to the story, Visigoth King Rodrigo rapes La Cava, the daughter of Count Julián, who, as revenge, facilitates the Muslim invasion by letting them pass through his North African province. Another legend, also, the Cave of Hercules, tells of a forbidden cave in Toledo. The legend suggests that if a King disrespects the prohibition to enter he will face defeat. King Rodrigo cannot resist the urge to do so and, when he

enters, he sees turbaned figures on the walls that announce the upcoming Muslim invasion and the collapse of Visigoth Spain. With its clear sexual imagery—in the form of forced entry into the cave—the legend of the Cave of Hercules is evidently a variation of the legend of La Cava. Moreover, in both examples, military defeat (by an ethnic rival) is tied to questions of male sexual transgression and an incapacity for self-restraint.

Nevertheless, in *Boabdil el Chico*, the dichotomy between the masculine Spaniard Fernando and the effeminate Boabdil is not so simple. Although Fernando demonstrates manly restraint in upholding the codes of honour that are expected of chivalrous men, there is a chink in his armour. When Boabdil attempts to kill him, he is saved by his wife Luz. Her sudden arrival at the critical moment, sword in hand, to save her imperilled husband seems an unusual inversion of the male/female pattern of rescuer and rescued. Has Fernando not been equally emasculated, like Boabdil, by his rescue at the hands of his wife? The scene suggests that the gender roles the play seems so keen to reinforce are not so clear. Fernando almost dies because of his insistence on honour but is saved by his more cunning wife. The play, then, condemns Boabdil for his failure to keep to the masculine norms of behaviour expected of him. Yet it also seems to call into question Fernando's masculinity.

## 2.3 Gender subversion in *Los amantes de Teruel*

*Los amantes de Teruel* (1837) by Eugenio Hartzenbusch combines two aspects of Muslim representation that we have seen in *Ramiro* and *Boabdil el Chico*. Like *Ramiro*, the Christian man, Diego, is caught between a Muslim and Christian woman. In this case, however, Diego is not interested in the Muslim woman. Rather, like Luz in *Boabdil el Chico*, Diego becomes the object of unwanted desire by a Muslim: Zulima. Like Boabdil, Zulima's desire is unrequited and she seeks revenge. How does this alter the representation in comparison to the two texts studied above? The play is based on a popular Aragonese legend<sup>13</sup>. Diego Marcilla and Isabel are lovers. Yet Isabel's father refuses to allow them to marry because of Marcilla's lack of wealth. Marcilla asks for a period of grace, during which Isabel is to wait for him, while he seeks his fortune. With the period of time almost over, Isabel assumes that Marcilla is dead and, under pressure from her father, consents to marry another man. On the very day of the wedding, however, Marcilla returns, now a wealthy man. He discovers that Isabel is married but

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<sup>13</sup> For more on the story's origins see D. W. Cruickshank, "The Lovers of Teruel: A 'Romantic' Story".

asks her to kiss him, nevertheless. When she refuses to betray her husband, he dies of grief. Heartbroken, Isabel grants him the kiss that she refused in life and she too falls dead.

Hartzenbusch transforms the legend through the introduction of Zulima, whose central presence foregrounds the differences between Christian and Muslim Spain<sup>14</sup>. In earlier interpretations of the legend, Isabel assumes that Diego Marsilla has died because of the time that has elapsed since he left to seek his fortune. In *Los amantes de Teruel*, however, Zulima disguises herself as a man and travels to Isabel to inform her (falsely) that Diego is dead. Zulima's visit to Isabel is doubly transgressive. In order to move freely in Christian Aragon, she crosses the boundaries of both gender and religion, passing herself off as a Christian man. This act is one of many throughout the play, in which Zulima seems to undermine the gender codes of the society in which she lives. Her transvestism not only appropriates both male and Christian identity: it also reverses the traditional relationship between East and West. The premise of Orientalism is that the West does not describe the 'Orient' as it is, but rather 'creates' it by writing about it<sup>15</sup>. In *Los amantes de Teruel*, however, "the Orient is creating the Westerner" when Zulima uses her assumed identity to create and control the narrative about Diego (Blackshaw, "It is the East" 7).

Already in the play's opening scene, Zulima subverts gender norms when she summons Diego from his captivity in her husband's prison to the harem. Zulima's servant Adel reveals the similarities between a prison and a harem: "En la cárcel donde se gime, puede el carcelero recibir mil huéspedes sin peligro; pero en la cárcel donde se goza, si da entrada a más de uno, ya puede despedirse de su cabeza" (I, I) <sup>16</sup>. His statement also speaks to the rigid codes of seclusion in the harem. The reader's first 'glimpse' of Diego is through Zulima's eyes, as she contemplates her object of desire, who lies unconscious in a bed, under the effect of a narcotic that Zulima's servant Adel has administered. However, Zulima does not merely appropriate the scopophilic male gaze so familiar from nineteenth-century Orientalist harem scenes. She also (re)writes Diego in the image of her own fantasy about him. Thus, she gives him the name Ramiro and imagines him to come from a rich and powerful background. Her assertion, moreover, that he is too haughty for Christian love, that "sólo un amor de África,

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<sup>14</sup> There are two versions of *Los amantes de Teruel*: it was first performed in 1837, but Hartzenbusch produced a slightly revised version in 1849. In this study, my quotations are from the original 1837 version.

<sup>15</sup> Leela Gandhi, for instance, writes of Orientalism as "a discourse which invents or orientalises the Orient" (88).

<sup>16</sup> The referencing system I have chosen reflects that *Los amantes de Teruel* is partly in prose, partly in verse. For the quotations in verse, I provide act and verse in parenthesis, whereas for the prose quotations, I reference act and scene.

ardiente como el sol, que hace carbón el cutis, pudiera inflamarle” (I, I) is an appropriation of the exotic sensuality that Western male observers traditionally attribute to the Muslim woman.

Yet Zulima’s desire for Diego echoes the Cervantine theme of the Muslim woman who falls in love with a Christian captive. The most known example is the captivity of Ruy Pérez de Viedma in *Don Quijote*. Zoraida, the daughter of the Muslim jailer, helps to free the Spaniard and travels with him to Spain to convert to Christianity. Zoraida writes to Ruy Pérez: “Yo soy muy hermosa y muchacha, y tengo muchos dineros que llevar conmigo. Mira tú si puedes hacer como nos vamos, y serás allí mi marido, si quisieres” (Part I, Chapter XL). In an echo of this scene, Zulima offers Diego diamonds and other riches in exchange for his love. Moreover, she introduces herself as Zoraida when she pretends to be the daughter of Merván. Manuela Marín suggests that the theme of the Muslim woman who falls in love with the Christian captive functions to reassert the authority of the Christian: “convertido en posesión de un amo musulmán, el Cristiano subvierte su humillante situación al conseguir ser objeto de deseo por las mujeres de su dueño” (238). Despite his vulnerable position as a captive, the Christian man reaffirms his masculinity by stealing, as it were, the wife/daughter/concubine of the Muslim man who has captured him. Moreover, the Muslim woman’s willing conversion to Christianity cements the moral victory of the Christian.

In *Los amantes de Teruel*, however, this dynamic is subverted somewhat by Zulima’s powerful position. Unlike *Don Quijote*’s Zoraida, who assists Ruy Pérez surreptitiously, Zulima imperiously moves him from the prison to the harem, thereby converting him, as the opening scene makes clear, into her personal captive. The sultan is absent in *Los amantes de Teruel*, which reinforces Zulima’s control over the harem; she reminds Adel that, in the sultan’s absence, he must obey her commands. Furthermore, she tells Diego that: “aunque soy mujer, / mi voz el valor disfruta / de ley...” (I, 17). Zulima’s power within the space of the harem reminds us of its sexual ambivalence, which so fascinated Orientalists of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, the harem is a symbol of male authority over passive (Oriental) women: they belong, for all intents and purposes, to one man, and confirm his power. On the other hand, though, the harem threatens the patriarchal order because, as an exclusively feminine space, it is a “site of radical opposition to phallic power” (Lewis 181). Zulima’s appropriation of the harem, then, and her placing of Diego within that space, can be read as a subversion of the more traditional relationship of power between a Muslim woman and a male Christian captive.

Zulima’s usurpation of male power points to the ambivalent representation of her as a Muslim female. Certainly, Labanyi is correct when she states that Zulima “illustrates a powerful, primitive, femininity” (“Liberal Individualism” 15). As Zulima herself states, when she intimates her passion for Diego: “Le vi, le amé; no con leve, / con devorante passion; / brasa es nuestro corazón, / el de las cristianas nieve” (I, 233). Hers is a fiery

passion, in contrast to the cold hearts of Christian women. Yet Zulima's behaviour, both politically and sexually, mimics the stereotypical portrayal of the Muslim man. Not only does she behave like *Boabdil el Chico's* Boabdil by lusting after a captive and threatening violence when unrequited; she also justifies her behaviour as revenge for her husband's infidelities. In spite of her usurpation of male power, though, Zulima's declaration of love for Diego is not expressed in powerful terms. Rather, she tells him: "¿no te envanecieras de / ver de tu voz pendiente / una mujer, una esclava" (I, 263). Zulima lowers herself to the status of a slave: she does not so much command Diego's love as beg for it. In the same vein, she is willing to share Diego with another woman. In response to his suggestion that he may love another woman, she states: "¿No dispuso / entre vosotros el uso / tener esposa y manceba? / De este título afrentoso / verás que ufana me precio" (I, 254)<sup>17</sup>. Zulima's willingness to share Diego with another woman corresponds to the logic of the harem, in which multiple women are at the man's disposal. Her identification with this role undermines her usurpation of male power, as she is willing to place herself in a subordinate position<sup>18</sup>.

The distinction that Zulima draws between "esposa" and "manceba", however, also points to the contrast that Hartzenbusch creates between Isabel and Zulima. Unlike Zulima, who accepts adultery, Isabel refuses to run away with Diego after he returns to find her married. She reminds him that "soy de un hombre que me hace de su honor depositaria" and must defend his honour (V, 223). Isabel is keenly aware of the codes of honour that govern female behaviour and, unlike Zulima, is careful not to transgress them. Moreover, whereas Zulima transcends the limits placed on her gender in order to act on her desire, Isabel conforms to the destiny that is created for her. Thus, for example, she agrees to marry Rodrigo although she does not love him, in order to comply with her father's wishes and save her mother's honour. Indeed, Isabel tells her father that her marriage to Rodrigo must be God's will: "estaba escrito en el cielo que este hombre había de ser mi esposo" (IV, V).

Isabel and Zulima embody the contrast between Christian and Muslim Spain, which in *Los amantes de Teruel* manifests itself in different approaches to love. When Zulima informs Isabel that Diego was pursued by a married woman in Valencia, Isabel is

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<sup>17</sup> After Zulima imagines a false identity for Diego, under the name Ramiro, their initial interaction continues the role-play. Zulima pretends to be Zoraida, daughter of the *alcaide* Merván. Furthermore, her declaration of love for Diego is couched in the narrative of an imaginary conversation with another captive. Her verbal charades prefigure the physical disguise she later adopts.

<sup>18</sup> Zulima's willingness to submit to such a relationship resonates with Orientalist portrayals of exotic women that sought to draw a distinction between the treatment of women in the East and West. On these depictions, for instance, Lou Charnon-Deutsch writes: "the poor Arab women are passionate and neglected slaves. Arab men are cruel and indifferent to their (many) wives. European men offer women a sincere (monogamous) relationship that any woman would want" (186).

horrified: “¡Qué decis! ¡Una mora se prendó de él! ¡Una mujer casada! ¡Qué infamia! Gente sin fe ni ley” (III, II). Her outburst highlights the disordered sexual practices of the Muslims, which contrast with the more refined notion of love that she represents. For Isabel, love and desire coexist with abnegation, as she reminds Diego: “la pasión que nos inflama / es una virtud más: ¿por qué pretendes / en la última prueba profanarla?” (V, 228). Isabel reassures Diego that she still loves him, but that their love is of a spiritual kind; it must not be profaned by temptation. Jean-Louis Picoche suggests that the Christian love that Hartzenbusch portrays in *Los amantes de Teruel* is reminiscent of the courtly love tradition of medieval Europe: so-called *fin’amors* (86). Indeed, Diego refers to this specifically, when he tells Zulima that his love for Isabel is a “fino amor” and that they are “un alma en dos partida” (I, 123, 127). This Christian love is the lens through which Diego repeatedly seeks to view Zulima: “Yo en ti no miro una dama, / miro una divinidad” or “Eres algún Serafín / en figura de mortal: (I, 81, 47). Yet Zulima defiantly asserts her physicality and she tells Diego: “Mujer soy; la prueba tienes / en que reclamo una paga” (I, 51). Zulima’s ‘Oriental’ vision of love is not just embodied in the flesh. She also refuses the selflessness of Christian love. Her femininity, she argues, is proven by the transactional nature of the relationship she seeks with Diego.

The contrast between Christian and Muslim love is reinforced by the marriage between Rodrigo and Isabel. In contrast to Zulima’s comparison of herself as Diego’s slave, Rodrigo tells Isabel: “Esclavo diréis mejor. / Soberana es la beldad / en el reino del amor” (IV, 10). Rodrigo’s vision of love again echoes the idea of courtly love, in which the unworthy man dotes on the woman. Isabel’s marriage to Rodrigo, however, undermines the clear distinction between Christian and Muslim Spain. For despite Rodrigo’s claim to be Isabel’s servant, he has won her hand in marriage through blackmail and manipulation. Rodrigo discovers a cache of letters that reveal the marital infidelity of Margarita, Isabel’s mother. He uses this information to secure marriage to Isabel. Margarita’s infidelity suggests that sexuality is just as disordered among the Christians as among the Muslims. Moreover, Rodrigo’s manipulation suggests that Christian marriage is no more noble, in reality, than the traditions of Muslim Spain. Indeed, in response to Isabel’s declaration of undying love, he tells her:

Pues bien, amad, Isabel,  
y decidlo sin reparo;  
que con ese amor tan fiel,  
aunque a mí me cueste caro,  
nunca me hallaréis cruel.  
Mas si ese afecto amoroso,  
cuya expresión no limito,  
mantener os es forzoso,  
yo, mi bien, yo necesito

el nombre de vuestro esposo.  
¡No más que el nombre! (III, 101)

Don Rodrigo accepts that Isabel, despite marrying him, will continue to love somebody else. Not only does he reduce their marriage to a superficial arrangement but he also echoes Zulima's earlier call for Diego to have both wife and lover. Both Don Rodrigo and Zulima, therefore, are the antithesis of the perfect—if unattainable—love that Diego and Isabel represent. Zulima explicitly points to the similarities between Christian and Muslim marriage, when she tells Diego that if he wants to see Isabel he should seek her “en el harem de don Rodrigo” (IV, III). Margarita makes a similar point. Like Zulima, she resorts to transvestism in order to circumvent the lack of freedoms afforded to her gender. Indeed, she is the only other character who transgresses social norms through her affair. She tells Isabel that she should have lived in a different era, with different codes of honour: “tú en otra [edad] vivir debiste / más inocente o más culta” (II, 391). In this age, she claims that “todo humano sentimiento / se sacrifica al sangriento / ídolo llamado honor [...] según su alcorán decreta” (II,401). Her ironic reference to the Christian and masculine values of honour as their [the Christian men's] Koran echoes Zulima's likening of Christian marriage to a harem.

Lou Charnon-Deutsch has argued that representations of exotic women in nineteenth-century Spain reminded Spanish women that “Arab men are cruel and indifferent to their (many) wives. European men offer women a sincere and (monogamous) relationship that any woman would want” (186). This, she argues, is meant to reassure Spanish women that they are not Muslim women. Margarita's critique of Christian social mores and Zulima's explicit likening of Christian marriage to the harem, however, undermine this distinction. Rather, Hartzenbusch seems to offer a criticism on the status of women in Spain. In this sense, Zulima is a heroine, of sorts, because of her refusal to accept the strictures of society. Hence Blackshaw's assertion that “despite being a female and a moor, or perhaps because of it, [Zulima] defends the values of the subversive or liberal Romantic Movement.” (15). Hartzenbusch does seem to sympathise with Zulima's plight: her destructive violence is a consequence of her excessive passion, not malice. Yet Zulima's attempt to subvert gender and cultural roles directly lead to the deaths of Diego and Isabel. She not only misinforms Isabel about Diego's death leading to her agreeing to marry Rodrigo; she also delays Diego's arrival in Teruel, thereby preventing him from intercepting Isabel's marriage to Rodrigo. Moreover, Zulima is also punished for her transgression. Adel, sent by the sultan of Valencia, stabs her at the end of Act IV. Thus, while Isabel dies of love, Zulima is unceremoniously murdered.

The ambivalent portrayal of Zulima in *Los amantes de Teruel* emphasises her powerful femininity, while also suggesting that she is able to subvert gender roles, to a certain extent, and adopt masculine characteristics, which the Christian women are

unable to do. While Zulima's exotic sexuality creates a contrast with Christian Spain, the distinction between the two worlds is often undermined. This is particularly true of the numerous parallels between Zulima and Margarita, as women who attempt to escape the rigid codes of honour of their respective societies. The use of Zulima in this way chimes with Lou Charnon-Deutsch's argument that "Spain's sexual Orientalism is part of a larger text that joined Spanish bourgeois women and exotic *other* women in a complex relation of similarity and difference" (253). Thus, Zulima's portrayal as an exotic other both reinforces and disputes prevailing constructions of female Spanish identity.

This chapter set out to examine the representation of Muslims in Spanish texts through the lens of gender and sexual identity. The three texts I have analysed all portray al-Andalus as a place of disordered sexuality, in which the conventions of Christian Spain do not apply or are not rigidly adhered to. Within this disordered world, Muslim men are often effeminate, while Muslim women are highly sexualised. The three texts, however, respond to the problems this poses in different ways. In *Ramiro*, the Muslim Zaida serves as a reverse mirror image of the Christian Isabel. She is passionate, vengeful and manipulative, while Isabel is modest, forgiving and honest. The contrast between the two women, moreover, calls into question Ramiro's masculinity. His desire for Zaida leads him to abandon his king and country and travel to Seville, only to change his mind. Ramiro resists temptation and regains his social honour by rejecting the exotic Zaida. His momentary desire leads to Isabel's death and his own. However, through Zaida's deathbed conversion to Christianity, the novel finds a way to incorporate the Muslim woman, once she has been 'cleansed' of the dangerous attributes—passion, sexuality—that made her a threat.

*Boabdil el Chico* shifts the focus to Muslim masculinity. Boabdil is portrayed as effeminate because of his failure to restrain his passions, which costs him his throne and leads to the Christian conquest of the city. Boabdil's inadequate masculinity contrasts with the honourable behaviour of Fernando, who represents the superiority of Christian Spain and the inevitability of Spanish victory in the Reconquista. Nevertheless, Ruiz del Cerro introduces a degree of ambivalence through the character of Luz, whose heroic actions threaten Fernando's traditional masculinity.

The inversion of gender roles is taken further in *Los amantes de Teruel*, in which Zulima usurps and subverts masculine power, in rebellion against the social role she has been assigned. In her love for a Christian man, Zulima is similar to *Ramiro's* Zaida. She also echoes Boabdil in *Boabdil el Chico* through her attempt to use the power of the harem—which she temporarily commands—in order to coerce her captive. *Los amantes de Teruel*, however, uses Zulima's sexual and ethnic difference to question the position of women in Spanish society. All the texts, however, suggest that gender and sexuality is being used to create a distinction between Christian and Muslim Spain.

### 3 Exiles in history: liberal readings of al-Andalus

*“Por poco liberal que uno sea, o está uno en la emigración, o de vuelta de ella, o disponiéndose para otra: el liberal es el símbolo del movimiento perpetuo, es el mar con su eterno flujo y reflujo”*  
(Mariano José de Larra, *La Diligencia*, 1835).

Larra’s statement illustrates the centrality of exile to the Spanish liberal experience, which was formed, to a large extent, outside the borders of Spain. Ferdinand VII’s abolition of the Constitution in 1814 saw the first wave of exiles, followed by another in 1823, after the failure of the Trienio Liberal. Unsurprisingly, the experience of exile left a trace in literature. Indeed, it became a literary motif in nineteenth-century Spain. As an example, we can cite the Duque de Rivas’s poem *El desterrado* (1824) or Alcalá Galiano’s *Recuerdos de un anciano* (1878). In seeking ways to write about exile, Spanish writers, unsurprisingly, turned to al-Andalus, which furnished the most famous and significant examples of expulsions in Spanish history. Yet their interest in al-Andalus was not simply as a historical parallel of their own experience. Rather, liberal thinkers began to see a direct connection between the two events. José Luís Abellán has argued that: “La constitución de la nacionalidad española se construyó sobre una base estructural que, al identificar unidad política y unidad religiosa, propiciaba los exilios” (17). He points to a certain vision of Spain—homogenous and exclusionary—that took root in the country after 1492. Henry Kamen makes much the same point when he states, in his landmark study, *The Disinherited*, that the Jewish and Muslim expulsions marked the beginning of a long series of exiles. Spain, he argues, “became a land of perpetual leave-taking, a nation that in order to enhance its own feeling of cohesion was prepared to drive into exile hundreds and thousands of its own sons and daughters” (4).

Spanish liberals in the nineteenth century, particularly the exiles among them, came to reject these values. They did not feel at home in a country built on a myth of national unity, which centred on the triumph of Catholicism and the expulsion of the

Muslims and Moriscos; a myth that excluded them. In reaction, Spanish liberals began to identify with the defeated elements of the Muslim past: Muslims, Moriscos, and Jews<sup>19</sup>. Liberal writers in exile, or writing about it, took particular interest in the Moriscos, because of the unresolved nature of their identity. José Antonio González Alcantud suggests:

Los liberales cogerían la bandera de la defensa de los moriscos, engarzando con la tradición romántica maurofílica europea, mientras que los conservadores lo verían como un obstáculo inevitable a salvar para la constitución coherente de la nación española. (269)

Moriscos could be constructed as either Spanish or foreign, depending on one's political position. Hence, they were of paramount importance in discussions of exile. Jesús Torrecilla suggests that liberal historical revisionism was so prevalent that "the idealization of al-Andalus as a multicultural society where three cultures and religions coexisted in harmony became one of the foundational myths of Spanish liberalism" (216). Concurrently, however, these same writers continued to use Muslim characters as examples of intolerance. The Duque de Rivas, for instance, whose *El moro expósito* (1834) paints a positive picture of a multicultural world (Labanyi 234), also gives us Aliatar. The eponymous protagonist of his play *Aliatar* (1816) may be a romantic hero. But his sadistic cruelty also brings to mind the figure of the Oriental despot, which had become a *topos* in the Enlightenment era<sup>20</sup>. He thus represents the ambivalence of liberal writers towards the Muslim past. It is precisely this contradiction that this chapter will seek to address. What role does Muslim Spain play in articulating liberal ideas in the nineteenth century? How are portrayals of Muslim Spain used to define national identity? What values does the Muslim world represent? This chapter will examine these issues in three texts: *Los espatriados o Zulema y Gazul* by Cosca Vayo, *Aben Humeya* by Martínez de la Rosa and *La expulsión de los moriscos* by José Velilla y Rodríguez. It will seek to show that liberal writers used the theme of exile to draw parallels between al-Andalus and the political struggles of the nineteenth-century. It will suggest, however, that the uses of the Muslim past were far from straightforward.

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<sup>19</sup> Positive reevaluations of Jews only appeared much later in the century. Only after contact with descendants of Spanish Jews in Morocco during the Spanish-Moroccan War (1859-60) did the Sephardim re-enter Spanish consciousness. In the following chapter, I will examine a liberal portrayal of a Converso in *Aventuras de un converso* (1877). For more on representations of the Jew in Spain in the latter half of the nineteenth-century, see González García, Isidro. *El retorno de los judíos*, 1991.

<sup>20</sup> See Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois* (1748) or Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger, *Recherches sur l'origine du despotisme oriental* (1761).

### 3.1 Power and liberal politics in *Los espatriados*

In *Los espatriados o Zulema y Gazul* (1831), Cosca Vayo draws an explicit parallel between the thirteenth century and political events in nineteenth-century Spain. In the prologue, he writes:

Escribí en 1831 esta novela con ánimo de recordar a los españoles en la expulsión de los mauros otra desgraciada expatriación que todos habían presenciado. El cuadro de ciudades enteras huyendo de sus muros al acercarse un ejército que había proclamado las cadenas y la tiranía; los heroicos esfuerzos de tantos valientes que arrostraron la muerte por la libertad; y la inmoralidad, por fin, de ciertos hombres que vendiendo a sus compañeros de infortunio, y vistiéndose de varios colores hicieron más desastrosa la muerte de la patria, todo quise retratarlo en esta obra. (iii)

The “desgraciada expatriación”, of course, refers to the exile of liberal thinkers during the *década ominosa*, which saw the repressive absolutism of Fernando VII. In drawing the reader's attention to the similarities between the two events, Cosca Vayo converts his historical novel into a commentary on the politics of his time. Cosca Vayo's comparison between the two events—the thirteenth-century expulsion of Muslims in the context of the Reconquista and the nineteenth-century exile of liberals for political reasons—is remarkable. It suggests an identification with the Moorish inhabitants of medieval Spain, as fellow victims of tyrannical state power. We have already seen in previous chapters that Spanish writers often wrote sympathetically about Muslims but they rarely questioned the fundamental dynamic of the Reconquista and its attempt to create a homogenous, Catholic nation. *Los espatriados*, however, undermines this idea and presents the expulsion of the Muslims as one of the nation's historical errors.

Against the backdrop of expulsion, Cosca Vayo portrays the love story of two Muslims, Zulema and Gazul. The order of expulsion divides the Muslim population of Valencia because of disagreements about how best to respond. Zulema and Gazul find themselves in opposing political camps. Gazul is a patriot and fanatical adherent to Islam and intends to fight against the Christians in order to resist the imminent expulsion of his people from their homeland. Zulema, meanwhile, remains loyal to her father, Muley, who chooses to convert to Christianity and work with the Christians so that he may remain at home and keep his riches. Gazul considers him to be both a traitor and an apostate and implores Zulema to join his rebellion and leave Muley behind, which she refuses to do. Driven by the tyrannical orders of the military leader Abdelasis, Gazul kills his friend Aliatar and inadvertently causes the death of his lover, which leads him to question his politics and stubborn allegiance to Abdelasis.

Gazul is torn between different worldviews. He is driven by a misguided sense of loyalty to Abdelasis, which prompts him to subjugate love to duty. Gazul clings fanatically to religion, until he realises that his actions risk causing Zulema's death. Gazul's personal journey—a negotiation between contradictory ideas of power—allows Cosca Vayo to question the relationship between the individual and the state. The choice of historical period, therefore, does not simply provide parallels with the nineteenth-century exile. It also permits Cosca Vayo to explore political structures and systems of belief in a divided state. Moreover, the portrayal of the human tragedy of the Muslim expulsion in itself represents a subversion of official Spanish narratives of Reconquista. Cosca Vayo attempts to rescue the history of the Moors in Spain and uses it to criticise the abuse of power in Spanish history. He does this by reminding the reader of the contributions made by the Moors through their industry:

El ingenio de los mauros y su constante laboriosidad habian hermoseado el suelo que hollaban sus plantas: parecia que el sol ungiese entonces sus fogosos caballos de auríferas crines mas cerca de Edeta, dorándola con toda la pompa de su soberana lumbre: que los perfumes de las flores fuesen mas suaves; mas continuada la primavera; mas sazonados y sabrosos los frutos; mas plácida el aura vital que se respiraba, y mas alegre y encantador el cielo. (4)

With their expulsion, Valencia lost not only its most industrious citizens; it also fell into decline:

Pero con el trono de los árabes desapareció por grados la oriental belleza que reinaba en todos los objetos; y el reino edetano gozó el siglo de oro, bajo el hierro-dominador del africano, del mismo modo que la Grecia lo habia disfrutado con el imperio de justas y admirables leyes. (4)

Cosca Vayo subverts the usual historiography of Spain. Whereas the country's Golden Age is normally associated with the period of imperial expansion after 1492, here he suggests that, in Valencia, at least, the true golden age was before Muslim expulsion.

Cosca Vayo's focus on the agricultural prowess of Valencia's Muslim inhabitants reinforces their natural connection to the land. Thus, for instance, descriptions of the landscapes of Valencia make repeated reference to its productivity. There are "riquísimos y bien cultivados campos que parecen besar las olas", numerous water courses that irrigate the "siempre verde y fructífera huerta", which is filled with "inmensas filas de manzanos y granados." (68). The description goes beyond the bucolic, however. The narrator is enchanted (*arrobado*) as he sees the waves come to rest under a "toldo de azar y jazmin" or lap the "hojas de la vid o de la dulcísima sandía" (69).

Orange blossom and jasmine are fragrant plants that evoke the peaceful, harmonious and Oriental civilisation that Cosca Vayo seeks to portray.

In this passage we can see, once again, Cosca Vayo's attempt to reinterpret the history of Moorish Spain in a positive light and to draw the reader's attention to their achievements:

[el viajero] juzga que mira reunidas todas las producciones de la tierra, porque con los progresos que en este reino hace al presente la agricultura admiramos el sistema de riego establecido por los mauros. (69)

Spain's agricultural progress in the nineteenth century, then, becomes an extension of the Moorish genius for irrigation. The text goes on to describe how some Moors were willing to share their agricultural secrets with the incoming Catalan and Aragonese settlers. They refused, however, to reveal their knowledge of other techniques to the Christians:

Los cristianos no podían conseguir que les descubriesen el modo de fabricar los azulejos, de hacer relojes, el mecanismo de algunos tintes, y la manera de cultivar y sembrar distintas producciones raras y muy apreciables. (70)

The list seemingly serves as a pretext to remind Cosca Vayo's nineteenth-century readers of the industry of the Moorish population, an industry that was lost to Spain because of their expulsion. In the light of nineteenth-century history and the liberal politics of Cosca Vayo, it is clear that the author intends to draw a parallel here with the loss of the country's contemporary exiles during the *década ominosa*.

### Competing moralities

As I have suggested, however, *Los espatriados* is more than a historical analogy between the expulsion of thirteenth-century Muslims and the exile of liberals in the nineteenth. Rather, the world of the frontier provides an opportunity for the author to examine and critique structures of political power and to make a case for freedom from tyranny. The love affair between the two Moorish characters, when set against the backdrop of Christian re-conquest and Muslim expulsion, creates dramatic tension between competing ideologies and different sources of power in the text. The protagonist, Gazul, embodies a number of these tensions as he is forced to choose among his divided loyalties, and specifically between a reductive vision of his ethnic identity and tribal loyalty and his personal loyalties to friends and to Zulema. Throughout the novel,

Gazul's shifting sense of duty, which moves from an idea of loyalty to a nation and leader, based on 'nationalism', towards a more personal sense of responsibility to one's own beliefs, provides a critique of monolithic structures of power and stakes a claim for a more individualist morality. Gazul is an indecisive hero. When the expulsion of Muslims is decreed, he cannot decide what to do: "ni podía decidirse a seguir la turba de los espatriados mauros, ni resolverse a habitar el país dominado, donde en un caso habría de permanecer oculto o abjurar su religión" (12).

The first encounter in the novel between Gazul and Zulema already demonstrates the tension between competing concepts of duty. It takes place after Gazul has risked his life to return to Zulema's house and persuade her to accompany him and to abandon her apostate father. Her refusal to do so enrages Gazul, who believes she has also turned her back on her people and her religion. Zulema attempts to explain that she believes in Islam as firmly as before but that she cannot abandon her father: "antes de conocer el culto del Profeta sentí las leyes de la naturaleza, los latidos de mi corazón, que aun en la cuna me anunciaban la presencia de mis padres; y si debo a la patria obligaciones, debo también a ellos esa misma patria" (25). Zulema's words bring to light the opposition between duty to one's nation and religion and what she terms "natural law"; i.e. the loyalty owed to one's parents. As her utterance explains, nationhood is built upon the family.

The same tension emerges in the encounter between Gazul and his friend Aliatar, when they disagree about Zulema after her father's apostasy. Gazul fears that Zulema "juraré odio a la ley del Profeta y amor a los tiranos de su tierra natal." Aliatar, however, counters Gazul's rash judgement, with the following plea: "No es cuerdo condenar sin exámen, ni sin pesar las razones inclinar la balanza del juicio" (9). Aliatar's call for a dispassionate examination of the facts echoes the ideals of the Enlightenment. Moreover, he follows a more "humanistic" code of behaviour, which privileges interactions between individuals and a sense of personal honour over national and religious duties. We see this clearly in the argument he makes to Gazul about the Christian he has agreed to shelter. He tells his friend:

Hallarás en este albergue a un desconocido que se me ha presentado pidiendo hospitalidad: es cristiano, pero nada me importa su religión cuando se trata de sembrar beneficios. Espero que no te moverá un celo injusto a resentimientos viles a faltar a las leyes que la naturaleza inspira y el honor dicta. (35)

Aliatar's appeal to Gazul's sense of personal honour is similar to Zulema's earlier justification for privileging loyalty to her father over religion and nation. Both Aliatar and Zulema make reference to natural laws; their personal code of honour takes

precedence over the external values of nation and religion. Aliatar reiterates this philosophy to the Christian, who is revealed to be none other than King Jaime in disguise. He reassures the King that Zulema, although still a believer in Islam and an opponent of the King's policies towards the Muslims, will offer him protection: "Conozco a Zulema y respondo de sus intenciones. Aunque detestamos a los opresores, amamos a los hombres, y librar a uno de la muerte es para nosotros un deliciosísimo placer" (50). The life of a human being, then, takes primacy over politics for Aliatar and Zulema.

Gazul's reaction, however, is to reiterate the importance of national identity: "Aliatar, no te conozco, ni entiendo tus palabras: ¿tú favoreces a nuestros enemigos? ¿a los tiranos de tu patria? ¿Qué busca en este sitio un nazareno? ¿Dudas que será un espía, un traidor?" (35). Ultimately, the difference in the friends' philosophies leads Gazul to kill Aliatar on the orders of Abdelasis. The rebel leader considers Aliatar's hospitality towards the Christian king to be an act of treachery. He reminds Gazul of the uncompromising nature of his political philosophy: "no perdonarás la sangre de tu propio padre si es necesaria para espurgar la tierra de nuestro enemigo y recobrar la perdida libertad" (45). Indeed, Gazul executes his friend in the name of the political cause. His choice deliberately flouts the laws of nature to which Zulema and Aliatar subscribe: "la patria lo era todo para el exaltado mancebo, ya en el frenesí de su entusiasmo reputaba virtud el sacrificio de los dulces afectos de la naturaleza" (55).

Nevertheless, Gazul's political convictions begin to waver as the novel progresses and he starts to question his ideals. Reflecting on his execution of Aliatar, he wonders about the virtue of the path he has chosen:

Si de esta suerte pago a los que me aman, decia entre sí, si vierto la sangre de los que me son mas caros, ¿qué haré con mis enemigos? [...] ¿Y por quién tú caído en este abismo de infortunios? ¿Por quién lo ha perdido todo? ¿Por una patria que no existe? (96)

Gazul begins to question the power structures that had driven him to murder his close friend. For the first time in the novel, his unerring convictions give way to doubt. Eventually, Gazul's thinking comes closer to Aliatar's philosophy. When he unwittingly aids in the capture and imprisonment of Zulema, he argues with Abdelasis that he must set her free:

Si he sido bárbaro hasta el punto de inmolar a un amigo, si he contribuido sin saberlo a la prision de la que amo, el honor me manda ahora defenderla, ponerla en libertad, y morir luego si tal es mi suerte. (115)

Abdelasis, however, insists on the military and national codes of honour that Gazul defended at the start of the novel:

El honor, contestó Abdelasis, a nadie prescribe hollar sus juramentos militares, no obedecer a su rey, y ser traidor a la patria [...]. El honor ordena acallar la voz de las pasiones, ponerlas freno, sujetarlas cuando se trata de otros deberes mas sagrados. (115)

Gazul struggles between these two positions, torn by the tension between his love for Zulema and his loyalty to Abdelasis and the Muslim cause. The idea of honour that Abdelasis represents—placing military duties above personal interest—is contested by the opposing concept of honour that Zulema articulates. When Gazul fears losing his honour by surrendering to the Christian king, Zulema argues:

No creas que mancillas la lumbre ni el honor de las armas: salvar al hombre, disminuir sus desgracias, atributos son que ennoblecen e ilustran mucho más que las sangrientas hazañas que cubren de terror el orbe y dejan á las familias privadas de apoyo y en la viudez. (137)

For Zulema, honour is not found in violent battles, but rather in seeking peace.

Although Gazul wavers between the competing visions of honour and morality, he eventually allows his personal attachments to take precedence over political expediency. He recognises that, after killing his friend, he may be about to kill his lover and must find a way to free her. The horrific possibility that he will be responsible for Zulema's death leads Gazul to renounce Abdelasis and openly confront him.

As the novel progresses, Gazul shifts from the fanaticism of Abdelasis to the enlightened tolerance of Aliatar. Alongside these two positions, however, there is a third perspective in the novel: the scepticism of Muley. At first, his decision to convert to Christianity to avoid losing his fortune in exile is portrayed as self-interested:

como su avaricia no conocia límites, al reconocerse en la alternativa o de perder sus riquezas o de abjurar de su creencia, habia abrazado el partido del perjurio y acababa de presenciar la espatriacion de sus hermanos con indiferencia y aun con ciertos visos de alegría. (14)

Indeed, Gazul even catches Muley attempting to steal the treasure his family has buried before leaving. In the exchange between them, Gazul seems the more moral figure: while Muley appears to be a common thief, Gazul has the magnanimity to forgive him. Yet as the novel progresses, Muley is seen in a more favourable light. His scepticism proves to be prescient and articulates a critical view of the historical situation of the Muslim expulsion:

¡qué delicioso es vivir en este país! Al nacer nadie me preguntó en qué rincón del globo quería colocar mi cuna, y la suerte la puso en la tierra del infortunio. Espulsan a los naturales de ella, les privan de los bienes, los encadenan y los matan, y todo esto porque nacieron aquí y no bajo otro cielo más propicio. (79)

Muley's statement recalls, once again, the exiles of the nineteenth century. Not only does he reveal the injustice of expulsion; he also highlights its arbitrariness. After he is almost killed twice on the same journey, first by Muslims and then by Christians, Muley asks himself: "Aquellos, decía entre sí, le quitarán la vida juzgándome cristiano, y estos me entregan a las llamas creyéndome adorador del Profeta: ¿qué deberé ser en la tierra para que me dejen en paz?" (83). His Socratic *naïveté* questions the fixed certainties of both the Christians and Muslims. Indeed, it radically undermines the violent identity politics of thirteenth-century Valencia (and, of course, nineteenth-century Spain). Muley's political vision seeks to emancipate the individual from the fanatic tribal loyalties of those around him. He represents a perfect combination of Enlightenment rationality and Romantic individualism.

### (Un)just monarchy

Muley's critique of the injustice of expulsion has an effect on the king. Jaime I begins to question the benefits of war after he realises the devastation it wreaks on ordinary people in the country:

El cielo no consultó á este hombre sobre el sitio donde quería nacer ni sobre la ley que había de profesar su padre: el Turia bañó susurrando su cuna, y juzgó aquel infeliz que la orilla de aquel benéfico y fecundísimo río era el lugar señalado por el destino para que pasara en él alegres y venturosos días. De repente me presento yo, y digo á los habitantes de la ribera: "Huid de aquí; no os pertenecen los frutos que con vuestro sudor arrancais á este suelo: si vuestros padres lo cultivaron fue una usurpación: huid, son míos, son de aquellos que me sigan, que piensen lo que yo pienso." (91)

The King echoes Muley, almost word for word, as he realises that nationality and religion are mere accidents of birth. Moreover, his speech undermines the moral basis for the Christian Reconquista. Cosca Vayo ventriloquizes a historically celebrated conqueror, who came to be known as *el Conquistador*, to challenge the values that the Reconquista has come to represent. Cosca Vayo emphasises, again, the important

Muslim contribution to agriculture in Valencia. He suggests, moreover, that it is productive use of the land, rather than lineage, that confers legitimate ownership. Regardless of the long history of conquest and re-conquest, the land belongs to the Muslims by rights because it is their sweat that has brought forth its bounty. The king's remarks demonstrate the injustice of Muslim expulsion.

The Christian king's ability to see the suffering caused by his actions also serves to draw a comparison with Abdelasis, his Muslim counterpart. Unlike Jaime, Abdelasis is indifferent to the human cost of his rebellion. As we have seen, he blithely subjugates personal ties to military expediency, in the service of an increasingly fanatical and violent nationalism. Moreover, while the Christian displays the insight of a philosopher-king, Abdelasis is simply an inept tyrant, "un hombre comun, sin cualidad alguna que pudiera distinguirlo, a no ser audacia" (122). Yet he captures the popular imagination of his people and "con su ineptitud conducia al precipicio a los infelices moros" (123). It is clear, of course, that the two figures of authority represent nineteenth-century concerns about good governance, which was in short supply. Jaime represents an ideal projection of insightful rule, whereas Abdelasis—a typical Oriental tyrant similar to Rivas' Aliatar—symbolises the tyranny of Fernando VII's reign.

### 3.2 A manifesto of moderate liberalism: *Aben Humeya*

As we have seen, in *Los espatriados*, Cosca Vayo turns to al-Andalus to draw a parallel between the expulsion of the Muslims from Valencia and the liberal exiles of the nineteenth century. I have argued, however, that the Muslim past was also used to examine structures of power and to question the relationship between the individual and authority. Martínez de la Rosa's *Aben Humeya* (1830) similarly focuses on the question of power. The conflict between Christians and Muslims is the historical background for the play. But, like *Los espatriados*, the text is more concerned with struggles within the Muslim community. The play is set during the Rebellion of the Alpujarras (1568-71), an uprising of the Moriscos in the mountains around Granada, in protest at the increasingly harsh restrictions on their customs and cultural practices. As in *Los espatriados*, *Aben Humeya* creates parallels between al-Andalus and nineteenth-century liberalism through the theme of exile. Yet Martínez de la Rosa appears to question the legitimacy of the Morisco uprising, while also condemning the oppressive measures taken against them. *Aben Humeya* deals with Moriscos, not Muslims. Its characters are, therefore, torn between two identities. The ways in which the text

examines this tension raises interesting questions. What were the limits of liberal identification with the Muslim Other? In what ways did Spanish liberal writers question the historical expulsions, given their own experience of exile?

The Moriscos emerged as an ethnic category in the years following the conquest of Granada. Although the treaty of capitulation, signed by Boabdil and the Catholic Monarchs, guaranteed the right to freedom of worship for Granada's Muslim citizens, it was not respected in practice. After 1492, the task of converting Granada's Muslims was left to the city's first archbishop, Hernando de Talavera, whose preferred policy was "gentle persuasion" (Coleman 6). By 1499, however, the campaign of conversion was headed by the more aggressive Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, Archbishop of Toledo. His more violent methods led to uprisings, which in turn led to increased royal consent for religious intolerance. Finally, in 1502, Queen Isabel decreed the compulsory conversion of all Muslim inhabitants of Castile, under pain of expulsion (Coleman 6).

The official conversion of Granada's Muslims, who henceforth came to be known as Moriscos, created a new problem for the Spanish authorities. They were suddenly confronted with a population that, while Christian on the surface, was suspected of adhering to its old religion behind closed doors. Moreover, the Moriscos maintained a number of Islamic cultural practices—clothing, diet and the Arabic language—that distinguished them from the old-Christian population<sup>21</sup>. As we will see in greater detail in Chapter 4, Spain had been here before: the mass conversion of Jews at the end of the fourteenth century created the so-called Converso problem. Fear of covert Judaizing among the new Christians was an important factor in the creation of the Spanish Inquisition. In 1492, the fear of Jewish influence on the Converso population and the wish to sever cultural and familial ties between the two groups, led to the expulsion of the former. The Morisco presence created similar anxieties. In the sixteenth century, especially in the reign of Phillip II, ever harsher measures were introduced in an attempt to eliminate Morisco cultural exceptionalism. From the 1520s, for example, there were prohibitions on Morisco songs and dances, ritual slaughter of animals and even bathing (Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent 22)<sup>22</sup>. Eventually, the Spanish authorities

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<sup>21</sup> In "Disappearing Moriscos", William Childers makes the important point that the term "Morisco" masks a vast array of complex categories of ethnic and racial identification that governed identity relations in post-conquest Granada. Moreover, he argues that despite its proto-racial status, there was a flexibility about who, in fact, constituted a Morisco. That it was a label with a high degree of ambiguity confirms my point about the unstable nature of Morisco identity. See Childers, William. "Disappearing Moriscos" in *Cross-Cultural History and the Domestication of Otherness*. 51-66

<sup>22</sup> For a detailed discussion of the phenomenon of Jewish and Muslim conversions in Spain from a number of perspectives, see Kevin Ingram (ed.) *The Conversos and Moriscos in Late Medieval Spain and Beyond. Volume One: Departures and Change*. Brill. 2009.

decided that the Morisco presence in Spain was untenable, and they were expelled *en masse* between 1609 and 1614.

In the nineteenth century, writers used representations of Moriscos in order to express the ideological fissures of contemporary Spanish society. As in the sixteenth century, nineteenth-century Spain was an unsettled country of intense rivalries and factionalism. The history of the Moriscos not only echoes, on a reduced scale, the cultural and religious confrontations of the Reconquista. It also neatly encapsulates a number of prominent issues and concerns in nineteenth-century Spanish political discourse. When writers of the period turn to Morisco history “no solo estudian un hecho histórico [morisco], sino que defienden unos puntos ideológicos concretos a través del estudio de la minoría” (Bunes 60). The treatment of Spain’s Morisco population—and its periodic resistance—raises questions about tolerance of minorities, religious freedom, political justice and exile, all of which were of great relevance in the turbulent early decades of the nineteenth century.

Returning now to our text. *Aben Humeya* was originally written in French and was first performed in Paris in 1830, during the writer’s exile in France. Martínez de la Rosa later translated the play into Spanish for its 1836 Madrid premiere. The plot is simple: in the opening scene, Fernando (*Aben Humeya*) and his wife Leonor (*Zulema*) discuss the repression faced by their community. Their daughter arrives in a state of agitation because her veil has been removed by Castilian soldiers in the street. This event, together with the news that his father has been captured, leads *Aben Humeya* to seek armed resistance, despite warnings from his father-in-law Muley Carime, who urges restraint. The Moriscos convene in a cave inhabited by an Islamic alfaqui, where they pledge to adopt the identity of their ancestors and *Aben Humeya* is elected king. After they attack a church, conspirators *Aben Farax* and *Aben Abó* are angered when Muley Carime saves the life of a young boy. Moreover, they discover that Muley Carime is in talks with governor Mondéjar to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict. They take this information to *Aben Humeya*, who is forced to kill his father in law. Yet *Aben Humeya* has been betrayed: *Aben Farax* and *Aben Abó* spread the rumour that *Aben Humeya* was involved in the conspiracy with Mondéjar. The two leaders, with an army of Moriscos, storm into *Aben Humeya*’s palace and murder him, after which *Aben Abó* is chosen to be the new king.

In the prologue to the French edition, Martínez de la Rosa’s makes his sympathy for the Moriscos clear. He explains that the policies of Phillip II intended to “effacer jusqu’aux traces de ce peuple vaincu”. He then enumerates the measures that were adopted against them:

On publia, à cet effet, de nouvelles ordonnances, qui défendaient aux femmes leur costume, encore rapproché du moresque, qui interdisaient aux descendants des Maures de parler en arabe, de célébrer leurs fêtes, de prendre même des bains, de fermer les portes de leurs maisons, à certains jours de la semaine...(Avant-propos)<sup>23</sup>

In a clear allusion to Fernando VII's repression of Liberals, Martínez de la Rosa sets the Moriscos up as the oppressed minority, with a Spanish King, Phillip II, as tyrant. Thus, as Andreu Miralles argues, he “daba entrada a los moriscos en la narrativa liberal-patriótica de un pueblo español en lucha contra el despotismo, la intolerancia y el oscurantismo” (150).

Jo Labanyi argues that *Aben Humeya* pleads for a “tolerant, multicultural model of the nation” (238). She suggests that Aben Humeya represents the middle path between the fanaticism of Phillip II, on the one hand, and the more extremist Moriscos—with the support of North African Muslims—on the other. This view is problematic, however, as there is little evidence in the play that Aben Humeya is less fanatical than his followers. His actions are consistent with the philosophy of violence that he espouses at the start of the uprising: “¡Quédense los lloros para viejos y mujeres; las injurias que se hacen a hombres esforzados no se lavan sino con sangre!” (I, VI). Indeed, he urges his followers to show “¡Ni perdón ni piedad!” and to ensure that death finds the Christians everywhere: “¡En el seno de sus esposas, al pie de sus altares, en el asilo de nuestras casas, por todas partes hallan la segur de la muerte!” (I, XI). Moreover, Aben Humeya explicitly calls for the support of African Muslims:

¿Y qué medio más eficaz que nuestro mismo levantamiento, para apresurar la llegada de los socorros de África, y alzar a un millón de nuestros hermanos en todo el ámbito del reino?... Cuando vean a nuestra raza empeñada en una guerra a muerte, ¿permanecerán indecisos en un solo instante, o se negarán a tendernos una mano amiga? (I, XI)

Aben Humeya is also opposed to Muley Carime's negotiations with Lara to seek a peaceful end to the conflict. He hesitates to punish Muley Carime only because of their familial ties: a hesitation that Labanyi attributes to the neoclassical nature of the character, torn between duty to his family and to his ‘nation’ (237). Given the evidence

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<sup>23</sup> All quotations from *Aben Humeya* are taken from the digital edition compiled by the *Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes*.

in the text, then, it seems difficult to read Aben Humeya as a character that represents tolerance.

## Shifting identity

Labanyi's insistence that *Aben Humeya* is a plea for multiculturalism is problematic given the depictions of the Other in the text. Despite Martínez de la Rosa's sympathy for their cause, the portrayal of the Moriscos in *Aben Humeya* is not entirely positive. Indeed, Andreu Miralles suggests that *Aben Humeya* "nunca reconoce al «otro» islámico su legitimidad" (150). Yet I suggest that *Aben Humeya* neither argues in favour of multiculturalism, nor rejects the legitimacy of the Muslim Other. Rather, Martínez de la Rosa examines the process by which a part of the Spanish population becomes Othered and foreign through revolution. In other words, the play focuses on the ambiguity of Morisco culture within Spain: they are both Spanish and foreign.

As the play progresses, Morisco identity shifts from being that of a minority group within Spain to being a separate nation. The use of the term 'nación' in *Aben Humeya* raises the question of "how a nation in the pre-modern sense of an ethnic group relates to the 'nation' in the modern sense of the nation-state." (Labanyi 237). In the prologue, Martínez de la Rosa writes: "Tout-à-coup, comme par enchantement, on vit paraître une nation musulmane au milieu d'une nation chrétienne" (*Avant-propos*). For Labanyi the phrase demonstrates the confusion that arises in the nineteenth century as the term 'nation' expands to include the sense of a nation state. Yet I think that Martínez de la Rosa deliberately uses the polysemantic nature of the term to explore the question—very pertinent to Spain in the nineteenth century—of where to situate the boundaries of nationhood.

All the Moriscos in the play have two names: an Arabic and a Spanish one. At the start of the play, they refer to each other by their Spanish names, which suggests this is how they see themselves. Yet when they decide to rebel, they vow to "arrojar la indigna mascara que nos envilecía a nuestros propios ojos: (I, X.) Is their Spanish identity a mask? When they conceive of their rebellion, the Moriscos themselves speak of the ambiguity of their relationship with Spanish culture: "¡Nosotros vivimos con sosiego bajo el látigo de nuestros amos, adoramos su Dios, llevamos su librea, hablamos su lengua, enseñamos a nuestros hijos a maldecir la raza de sus padres!" (I, I). Their assertion reveals the complex nature of their identity. They claim to live under the Spanish yoke and, therefore, have repudiated their ancestors. Yet in claiming to love the Christian God and to speak the Spanish language, they also reveal the extent to which they have adopted these elements and made them their own. Their identity is split.

They not only wear the clothing of their oppressors, but have also interiorised their language<sup>24</sup>.

*Aben Humeya* explores how their ambivalent identity became politicised through rebellion. As the play progresses, it demonstrates how their dual Morisco identity—Christian and Muslim—becomes untenable. The Rebellion of the Alpujarras represents a moment in Spanish history, in which relations between the two groups were on a knife-edge. Although, Martínez de la Rosa expresses the inevitability of violence during a revolution, it is by no means clear that the separation of the Moriscos from Spain was historically inevitable. Yet *Aben Humeya* seeks to understand the political process which made Morisco life impossible in Spain.

Martínez de la Rosa is sympathetic to the Morisco's fight for cultural authenticity. When Aben Humeya offers Lara his life, in exchange for the renunciation of his country and religion, Lara rebukes him: “¿Renunciar yo, por salvar una vida sin honra, renunciar a mi rey, a mi patria, a la religión de mis padres?... ¡Antes la muerte, mil veces la muerte!” (II, X). Aben Humeya's reply, “Esa es nuestra respuesta”, demonstrates the hypocrisy of the Spanish attempt to excise Morisco culture. Yet it also shows the Morisco rebellion as a cry for liberty, which Martínez de la Rosa approves. As we have seen, however, Martínez de la Rosa's portrayal of the Moriscos is complicated. It reflects the ambiguity of the relationship between Morisco and Spanish culture, as well as the author's own ambivalence about liberal revolution. Martínez de la Rosa began his political career as a *liberal exaltado* at the Cortes de Cádiz that promulgated the 1812 Constitution. By the time of the Trienio Liberal (1820-23), however, his views had softened and in 1822 he became Secretary of State as head of the *moderado* faction, the so-called *doceañistas* who opposed the more extreme liberalism of the *exaltados*. After his return from exile in France, Martínez de la Rosa formed a government in 1834 with his Partido Moderado.

Martínez de la Rosa's political shift sees him reject revolutionary politics and he, thus, condemns the violence of the Morisco uprising. Labanyi argues that the play “charts the tragic overthrow and murder of the cultured, tolerant Morisco leader Aben Humeya by fanatical rivals, backed by North Africa” (237). Her suggestion, then, is that Aben Humeya represents a moderate position between the repression of Phillip II and the fanaticism of the Morisco rebels. Yet I must concur with Andreu Miralles's argument that Muley Carime, not Aben Huemya, embodies the “justo medio” between the absolutism represented by Phillip II and the “posturas más radicales del liberalismo

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<sup>24</sup> The Moriscos' claim to speak the language of someone else recalls Frantz Fanon's argument about cultural alienation. In *Peau noire, masques blancs*, he writes: “Parler une langue, c'est assumer un monde, une culture” to reveal the linguistic mechanism by which a subject people adopts the cultural assumptions of the coloniser, including the denigration of the colonised culture (33).

doceañista, que parecen encarnar los cabecillas musulmanes” (155). Muley Carime prefers dialogue to violence and compromise to extremism. He defends himself along these lines, when he is accused of treason for seeking to negotiate with the Spanish authorities. He tells Aben Humeya: “¡Muy lejos estaba yo de querer a nuestros opresores...los aborrecía con toda mi alma, tanto como tú, aun más todavía... Me han hecho más tiempo infeliz...”. But, he contains his anger for the sake of his family: “era padre, Aben Humeya, era padre, y veía en riesgo a mis hijos...” (Act III, Scene VII). Muley Carime’s explanation brings to mind the philosophical attitude of another Muley, from *Los espatriados*, as well as the humanism of Zulema and Aliatar in the same novel. All privilege personal bonds over the idea of nation. In *Aben Humeya*, Muley Carime tells Aben Humeya that he is willing to die, as long as the Morisco king guarantees that he will send his wife and daughter safely into exile.

Central to *Aben Humeya* is a meditation on political violence and the danger of revolution, which often replaces one tyranny with another. Thus, as the Moriscos begin to organise their rebellion, there is already a sense of fatalism. When Aben Humeya is chosen to be king, Aben Abó cautions that: “¡Aun no hemos desenvainado el acero, y ya buscamos a quien someternos!” (I, XI). Aben Abó questions the legitimacy of Aben Humeya’s claim to the throne:

Cuando hayamos borrado, a fuerza de honrosos combates, las señales de nuestros hierros; cuando seamos dueños de algunos palmos de tierra en que zanzar a lo menos nuestros sepulcros; cuando podamos siquiera decir que tenemos patria, los que logren sobrevivir a tan larga contienda, podrán a su salvo elegir rey..., y aun entonces no debiera ser la corona ciego don del acaso, sin premio del triunfo.  
(I, XI)

Not only is Aben Humeya to be crowned monarch of a non-existent nation but his rights to the throne are based only on ancestry. For Aben Abó, the monarch should earn his title. Of course, Aben Abó’s interventions turn out to be entirely cynical, as he later kills Aben Humeya and takes his place. The circularity of power reinforces the idea that revolution, once unleashed, is uncontrollable. With his dying breath, Aben Humeya warns of the inevitability of violence. He tells Aben Abó: “¡Muero contento..., pronto me seguirás, y asesinado también...; a estos traidores les lego mi venganza!” (III, XIX). Thus, *Aben Humeya* becomes a call for political moderation: a warning about the inevitable violence of revolution. It condemns the tyranny of Phillip II—and, by analogy, of Ferdinand VII—but points to the pitfalls of rebellion.

### 3.3 Historical revisionism: *La expulsión de los moriscos*

In the introduction to this chapter, I discussed the idea of historical revisionism, whereby liberal writers rewrote the myths of the Reconquista and questioned Spain's historical path after 1492. In the following text, *La expulsión de los moriscos* (1871) by José Velilla y Rodríguez, we can more clearly see the “idealization of al-Andalus as a multicultural society” (Torrecilla 216). The play undermines the Spanish historical narrative by tracing the evolution of Torrellas, an outspoken enemy of the Moriscos. As the play opens, he celebrates their imminent expulsion, only to regret its consequences. Thus, although the expulsion ultimately takes place, Velilla y Rodríguez rewrites the historical event to include the regret and nostalgia that some sectors of Spanish society felt in the nineteenth century about the Morisco expulsion.

With the imminent expulsion as a backdrop, the play centres on the love affair between Torrellas' daughter Isabel and Diego Alcacer. Isabel knows nothing of Diego's Morisco origins, until he saves her from a planned attack on her father. She realises that the Moriscos not only recognise Diego, but also call him by the name Almunia. Isabel is horrified to learn of the lowly status of her lover, rejects him and joins a convent. Diego, meanwhile, joins the Morisco rebels, despite his initial reluctance. The Moriscos, with help from North African pirates, organise a raid on a coastal convent, which coincidentally is the one where Isabel lives. When Diego sees her, he tries to call off the attack but, although unable to do so, he manages to save her life. The Spanish soldiers arrest him and he is condemned to death for his part in the rebellion. Moments before his execution, however, he receives a royal pardon.

In a sense, *La expulsión de los moriscos* ‘picks up where *Aben Humeya* left off’. If *Aben Humeya* examines the Rebellion of the Alpujarras as the moment a Morisco political consciousness is born—the uprising engenders the separation between them and the Spanish—*La expulsión de los moriscos* represents the culmination of this process. Through expulsion, the Spanish and Morisco ‘nations’ definitively part ways. Yet whereas Martínez de la Rosa uses the Morisco characters to examine nineteenth-century politics in Spain, *La expulsión de los moriscos* focuses instead on the Spanish characters and their reaction to the Morisco expulsion.

Nevertheless, a closer reading of *La expulsión de los moriscos* reveals that, like *Aben Humeya*, the text engages with fundamental questions about the borders of Spanish identity. If the play's condemnation of the Morisco expulsion as an act of intolerant fanaticism is clear, less clear is the identity of those expelled and their relationship to mainstream Spanish culture. The play seems to raise the following questions: Were the Moriscos an enemy? In which case, can the behaviour of the Spanish towards them be justified? Or were they fellow Spaniards, unjustly expelled from their own nation? The opening dialogue of the play, between Torrellas and his friend Blanes, sets out the issues

at stake throughout the play. In response to Torrellas, who expresses his joy over the forthcoming expulsion, Blanes tells him: “Me causa lástima grande mirar que una raza entera de la patria que ha nacido para siempre se destierra” (8). His recognition of their suffering fails to elicit compassion in Torrellas, however, who reminds his friend that the Moriscos are the same race that conquered Spain, against which they fought for eight centuries. For Blanes, though, the seventeenth-century Moriscos are fundamentally different from the Muslims who invaded in 711: “Mas, cuando vino, adoraba la falsa ley del profeta, y hoy, don Vicente, de Cristo la ley sagrada profesa. Españoles cual nosotros son los moriscos” (9). Blanes makes a bold claim about Morisco identity: because of their Christianity, he argues, their identification as Spaniards cannot be called in to question.

Yet his statement raises more questions than it answers. His use of religion to determine national identity seems to contradict his use of the term ‘raza’ to refer to the Moriscos. Is this a defence of the multicultural model of nation that Labanyi sees in some liberal works of the nineteenth century? Does he suggest that Spanish identity is built on religion? The complex relationship between race, religion and nationality is problematic in the Spanish context. Indeed, in the wake of the Muslim invasion, the narrative that emerged to unite the disparate kingdoms of Spain in the Reconquista tended to conflate Spanishness with the Catholic religion.<sup>25</sup> Yet when minority groups did adopt the Christian religion, history shows that they were not entirely accepted. Following the mass conversion of Spanish Jews in the late fourteenth century, for instance, identity began to be racialized, with a new emphasis placed on blood purity (*limpieza de sangre*).<sup>26</sup>

In *La expulsión de los moriscos*, religion proves to be only one aspect of Morisco identity, which is complex and ambiguous. Some of the Moriscos are secretly Muslim, such as Molina, who reveals to Diego that he never converted. Yet Diego’s response, “a Cristo adoro yo”, shows that his Christian faith is not merely a mask (24). Nevertheless, Diego’s Christianity is not sufficient for Isabel. When she discovers his true identity, she tells him: “debo guardar sin mancilla mi puro honor castellano” (33). For Isabel, then, Moriscos are not Castilian; indeed, they risk contaminating it. Yet Diego calls her categorisation into question when he responds: “¡Soy un noble a quien obligan a convertirse en bandido” (33). Diego not only shifts the blame to the Spaniards themselves: he also subtly reminds Isabel that there are two systems of identity that

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<sup>25</sup> I will discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 4, where I look at the use of religion to create narratives of national and regional unity in *Amaya o los vascos del siglo VIII*.

<sup>26</sup> See Chapter 4 for a discussion of the Converso experience. Furthermore, Chapter 5 looks at the instability of the religious and racial category of the Jewess.

uneasily coexist in Spain. Diego's claim to nobility, as a descendant of the last Muslim king of Valencia, stems from the time of al-Andalus.

In *Aben Humeya*, the eponymous protagonist is chosen to be king because of similar ancestral claims. In *La expulsión de los moriscos*, however, Isabel makes it clear that his title is meaningless in a society that, despite Blanes' argument in the opening scene, derives identity from race. Moreover, it is too late for Diego's ancestry to bring him any form of political power—Morisco presence is about to end in Spain—but he demands recognition, at the very least. He realises, though, that his dual Spanish-Morisco identity is untenable and defiantly tells Isabel, after she rejects him: “¡Yo soy de los despreciados, yo soy de los expulsados, yo soy morisco también!” (54). Later, however, when Diego is about to attack the convent with the other Moriscos and sees Isabel, he decides he must save her. At first, she rejects his help (¡Morisco... si hasta me ofende que salgas á mi defensa!), but then admits that she still loves him. As the Moriscos come towards her, Diego intercedes, draws his sword and tells her: “¡Moriremos!...¡Los cristianos!” (59,62). He refers to himself and Isabel here and places himself firmly in the camp of the Christians. The many permutations of Diego's identity reveal its unfixed nature. He first declares himself a Morisco, in opposition to Isabel, after she rejects him. Subsequently, however, he defines them both as Christian, in opposition to the Muslim attackers in the convent.

### Political Tolerance

Like *Ramiro* and *Los espatriados*, *La expulsión de los moriscos* has at its heart a love affair that is doomed because of a conflict. In *Ramiro*, Ramiro and Zaida cannot be together because their different religions place them on opposite sides of a conflict. Moreover, Ramiro's attempt to overcome this obstacle leads not only to his death but also to that of his wife Isabel and Zaida. Similarly, in *Los espatriados*, Gazul and Zulema's love affair is doomed when they find themselves on opposite sides of the Muslim response to the expulsion. In both examples, moreover, death results from the lover's action. In other words, the romance itself causes the tragedy. Zaida kills Isabel in a jealous rage, whereas Gazul inadvertently causes Zulema's death.

In *La expulsión de los moriscos*, Isabel's love affair with Diego is also impossible because Diego is a Morisco. Yet, the play explicitly shifts the tragedy away from the personal to the political. As Diego is about to be executed, Isabel meets him and blames herself for his death. She tells him:

Por no escuchar mi pasión le puse horrible mordaza;  
por el orgullo de raza la ahogaba en mi corazón.  
En mi delirio insensato te desprecié... Tú partiste.,  
Desesperado corriste a combatir... ¡Yo te mato! (80)

Thus, Isabel echoes Gazul in *Los espatriados*, who realises too late that he privileged race and religion over love. But Diego rejects her interpretation. He tells her that she is not the cause of his death. Rather, he is to be executed simply because he is a Morisco who refused to leave Spain. He thus shifts the focus from the personal tragedy to the wider political context. He suggests that Isabel's individual actions do not matter.

Nevertheless, the play does create a space for the personal within the political. Indeed, Isabel's evolution from abhorring the Moriscos to respecting them is driven by her personal attachment to Diego:

¿Qué pasa en mi corazón?... a esa raza odié de muerte... ¿Y hoy el odio se convierte en amor y en compasión? Mi mente no la rechaza con orgullo loco y ciego...y es... ¡ay! porque amando á Diego amo también a su raza. (77)

Isabel's belated recognition of the injustice of expulsion resonates in her argument with her father, Torrellas. As Diego climbs the gallows, she points out the brutality of her father's position:

Isabel: Sube al cadalso...  
Torrellas: ¡Que expie su delito abominable!  
Isabel: ¡Ellos muriendo perdonan, y vos ni en tan duro trance los perdonais!  
Torrellas: Son...moriscos.  
Isabel: Son hombres...y son iguales a los demás... ¡Tambien tienen hijos, esposas y madres! ¡Y ellos dicen: perdonamos, y contestáis: sangre, sangre! (88)

Isabel argues for the basic humanity of the Moriscos, which Torrellas eventually accepts. Moreover, while Isabel is not responsible for Diego's execution, her appeal to Blanes does result in his being saved at the last minute, which marks another triumph of the personal over the political.

The relationship between the two demonstrates the contradictory nature of *La expulsión de los moriscos*. The play questions the nature of Morisco identity but fails to reach a conclusion. The Moriscos are traitors, as Torrellanes states at the beginning, because they facilitate the activities of North African pirates and Turks. Furthermore, as Molina reveals, they do secretly practice Islam, with the exception of Diego, who is, unsurprisingly, the only Morisco to be saved. Yet, as I suggested earlier, the play does not really attempt to answer these questions. Rather, its focus is on the Spanish themselves. How do they react to the expulsion? The play traces the evolution of Torrellanes and Isabel's views of the Moriscos. At the end, both embrace a concept of

tolerance that goes beyond Blanes' statement at the beginning of the play. They suggest that the expulsion of the Moriscos is a historical error, regardless of their religion. The play was written in 1871, during the *sexenio revolucionario*, which saw the adoption of Spain's first liberal constitution since 1812. The new constitution guaranteed religious freedom for the first time. Thus, the play's strident plea for tolerance certainly chimes with nineteenth-century concerns. It suggests that while the expulsion is inevitable (and does take place at the end of the play), Spanish intolerance is not.

This chapter has looked at how liberal writers approached the question of exile in al-Andalus. It has argued that representations of Spain's Muslim and Morisco past were used to test the boundaries of national identity and to rewrite aspects of the country's past to suit contemporary liberal politics. I have sought to demonstrate how al-Andalus provided a space in which different identities coexist. In *Los espatriados*, Gazul's wavering between competing moralities allows the writer to examine different political models of the state. Although a contrast is made between the Muslim tyrant Abdelasis and the more philosophical Jaime I, the portrayal of the Muslims is far more nuanced than such a distinction would suggest. As we have seen, the next two texts, *Aben Humeya* and *La expulsión de los moriscos*, are concerned less with the individual than with the collective. They turn not to Muslim Spain prior to 1492 but to the Moriscos to raise questions about the nature of national identity and examine the frontiers of Spanishness. They raise questions about who can claim to belong to the Spanish nation and if expulsion is ever legitimate. In *Aben Humeya*, Martínez de la Rosa turns to the Morisco rebellion of the Alpujarras in order to question the liberal political project. The Moriscos become a microcosm of a state in perpetual revolution, through which Martínez de la Rosa seeks to demonstrate *moderantismo* politics. Finally, *La expulsión de los moriscos* rounds off the analysis. The text raises questions about the borders between Moriscos and Spaniards and portrays the ambiguities of belonging, in order to argue for greater tolerance. In all of the texts, the historical expulsion of the Moriscos becomes an opportunity to rewrite Spain's national narrative. Torrecilla suggests that:

The historical revisionism of nineteenth-century liberals reveals above all a strong will to create a new country. This desire shaped their image of an ideal society which, while located in the past, reflected a project for the future. (213)

The texts studied in this chapter seem to substantiate Torrecilla's claims. We have seen, for instance, that the writers look to the Muslim and Morisco past as a way to explore aspects of political liberalism. Yet we have also seen that their vision of al-Andalus is not an ideal; nor do they seek to entirely revise Spain's view of its Muslim and Morisco Others. Rather, their response to al-Andalus is one of ambivalence.

## 4 Counternarratives: The Jew and the Converso

Even more than the Muslim, the Jew has always been the Other *par excellence*. Expelled in 1492, Jews had by the nineteenth-century long ceased to be part of the nation. Yet, as Gonzalo Álvarez Chillida argues, the significant role of Jews in medieval Spain was never forgotten (21). Spanish writing on Jews in the nineteenth century largely relied on commonplace stereotypes and anti-Jewish tropes that were passed down from the Middle Ages. Moreover, critiques were usually inspired by Catholic theological discourses on Jews as a “stubborn race”<sup>27</sup>. Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century, the Jew also came to represent aspects of modernity—cosmopolitanism, capitalism, revolution—that were perceived to threaten the traditional concept of the nation. As a result, “antisemitism was linked to anxiety about and reactions against modernization, in all of its disruptive manifestations” (Goldberg 19). How does the portrayal of Jews in Spanish texts reflect this relationship? In what way does this differ from the representation of Muslims? This chapter will examine these issues in two texts: *Amaya o los vascos del siglo VIII* (1879) by Francisco Navarro Villoslada and *Aventuras de un converso* (1877) by Agustín Millares Torres.

### 4.1 Jewish villains and Basque heroes: *Amaya*

Francisco Navarro Villoslada's *Amaya o los vascos en el siglo VIII* (1879) is a historical novel about peace between Basques and Visigoths in the eighth century. But Jewish characters are critical to the plot. Moreover, their portrayal is part of an early attempt to articulate a national identity for the Basque Country that precedes the more politicised Basque

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<sup>27</sup> See for instance Calixto de Andrés Tomé's *Edissa* (1875) as a prominent example of anti-Jewish literature from a Catholic perspective. *Edissa* criticizes the Jews for their unwillingness to convert to Christianity and reads like an encyclopaedia of Spanish literary anti-Jewish stereotypes: usury, conspiracy with Muslims and ritual crucifixion of Christian children.

nationalism of Sabino Arana. While *Amaya* has not been extensively studied, some critics have taken an interest in the novel, though usually focusing specifically on issues of Basque identity. Jon Juaristi for instance, in *El linaje de Aitor* (1987), studies *Amaya* in the context of his work on Basque national mythology. Carlos Mata Induráin, meanwhile, analyses *Amaya* in his study of Navarro Villoslada's use of the Basque language ("Amaya da asiera" 2000). The importance of Jewish characters in the novel, however, has largely been overlooked. Brian Dendle points out that "Jews are portrayed as contemptible villains" in *Amaya* but does not engage further with aspects of their representation (130). Yet Navarro Villoslada's use of Jewishness in a novel ostensibly about the simultaneous emergence of a Basque nation and a wider Spanish consciousness raises a number of questions. To begin with, why does the author give Jews such a central role in the national history of the Basque people? Furthermore, how do the Jewish characters interact with the other ethnic groups in the novel? And finally, how does the representation of Jewish characters contribute to and shape the construction of Basque nationhood in the novel? In this section I will argue that *Amaya's* Jewish villains function as the obverse of its Basque heroes. Navarro Villoslada makes use of historic Spanish anti-Jewish discourse, as well as nineteenth-century French anti-Semitism to construct a negative mirror image of the ideal Basque identity that he seeks to construct. By defining Basque nationalism against the Jewish Other, Navarro Villoslada seeks to resolve the contradiction inherent in his attempt to carve out a separate Basque identity within the parameters of a wider Spanish State.

Although mostly forgotten today, Navarro Villoslada was extremely successful during his lifetime. Indeed, the popularity of *Amaya* among nineteenth-century Basque readers helped propagate the national myth of Aitor and turned *Amaya* into a common name for Basque girls.<sup>28</sup> Navarro Villoslada was known by his contemporaries as the Walter Scott of Basque tradition for his application of Scott's literary model to the history and folklore of the Basques. More specifically, however, *Amaya* owes its structure to Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820), which was written half a century previously. In *Ivanhoe* Scott portrays English history as a process of hybridisation between erstwhile enemies: the Saxons and Normans. Navarro Villoslada represents a similar process between Basques and Visigoths in *Amaya*. Both novels turn to destructive events in the early Middle Ages as a way of tracing the emergence of their respective nations. *Ivanhoe* is set in the twelfth century, just after the Norman Conquest, and portrays the development of English identity. Similarly, *Amaya* looks back to the eighth century Muslim invasions and depicts the emergence of the Spanish State through the alliance between Visigoths and Basques, who unite in response to a common enemy. In both

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<sup>28</sup> See Jon Juaristi, *El linaje de Aitor. La invención de la tradición vasca* (Madrid: Taurus 1987).

novels, moreover, the union between the two races is cemented symbolically through a mixed marriage that reinforces hybridity. In *Ivanhoe*, Rowena, a former Saxon princess, marries Wilfred Ivanhoe, who is Saxon by birth but has assimilated into Norman culture. In Navarro Villoslada's novel, the eponymous protagonist Amaya, herself of mixed Basque and Visigoth descent, marries García Jiménez, who is ethnically Basque but, like Wilfred Ivanhoe, has assimilated into the dominant culture - the Visigoths - through military practice. Marriage, then, is not simply the union of two opposing factions; it also confirms and celebrates the degree of cultural mixing that already exists between the two groups.

### **Conflict and ethnicity**

While *Ivanhoe* is widely known, it will be helpful at this stage to give a brief summary of the plot of *Amaya*. *Amaya* is set in the early years of the eighth century. Spain was ruled by the Visigoths from Toledo, but they failed to subordinate the Basques in the Pyrenees. There had been frequent wars between the two peoples, especially around Pamplona, where the Goths maintained a stronghold. The Basques, meanwhile, were divided between Pagans and Christians. Twenty years previously, one of the female members of the House of Aitor, Lorea, had converted to Christianity. She chose the name Paula during her baptism and married the Visigoth ruler of Pamplona, Ranimiro. Heavily pregnant, Paula was tricked by her Jewish servant Respha, who persuaded her to leave the city and go to the valley of Aitor. Once there, she was imprisoned by Basurde, husband of the pagan Amagoya, because he wished to steal the the ancestral treasure of Aitor. Ranimiro went to the valley of Aitor in search of his wife but arrived too late to save her. Basurde had set fire to the house and Paula was killed by the blaze. Ranimiro found her dead but was able to rescue the infant lying beside her. He rescued her—his own daughter—and baptized her Amaya.

Many years later, Ranimiro and Amaya travel to the Basque country in an attempt to negotiate a peace treaty. They are taken prisoner by the Basque soldier García, who intends to prevent Ranimiro from leading the Goths in an upcoming battle against the Basques. He vows to keep them safe, however, and to release them once the fighting is over. Meanwhile, Theodosio de Goñi, scion of an important Basque Christian family, believes he is the natural choice to become the first Basque King. In order to qualify, he seeks the legendary treasure of Aitor and the endorsement of Amagoya. She is the head of the Aitor clan and a fervent pagan but Theodosio hopes to persuade her to support him, despite his Christianity, and to allow him to marry her niece Amaya de Butron.

As part of the Basque preparations for the battle against the Visigoths, García intercepts a number of scrolls written in Hebrew. They contain a plot by the Jews, along with a few Gothic nobles, to assist the Moors in their invasion of the Peninsula. García

catches the hermit Pacomio (supposedly Gothic but living among the Basques) as he attempts to steal the scrolls. Petronila, whom Paula entrusted with guarding the treasure before her death, reveals the connection between Basurde and Pacomio, whom she unmasks as the Jew Abraham Aben Hezra. She explains that both are originally from the French side of the Basque country and belong to a sect of astrologers who plot to gain hold of the treasure and to manipulate Basque and Visigoth leaders for their own ends.

García decides that the threat facing Spain is greater than the squabble between the Basques and the Goths, as it is a threat against Christianity. He volunteers to fight alongside Pelayo and Rodrigo in Bética to defend Christian Spain from the Moors. Meanwhile, the Visigoth King Rodrigo, defeated by the Moors, nominates on his death bed his former chief adviser Eudon as Duke of Cantabria. This new position gives Eudon, widely believed to be a citizen of Byzantium, power over Pamplona and the Basques. Eudon does not reveal the collapse of the Visigoth Kingdom and the death of the King to his new subjects and continues to rule in his name. In his travels to the Basque country, he pretends to be from Basque Aquitaine. Later it is revealed that Amagoya adopted him as a young man because of a misunderstanding. He told her his name was Aser but she misheard and assumed him to be the long-awaited Asier from the prophecy of Aitor. He now returns to tell her that he has destroyed the Visigoth Kingdom on behalf of the Basques and seeks the hand of Amaya de Butron, so that he can become the first united King of the Basques. Petronila realises that Eudon is actually a Jew, the son of Abraham Aben Hezra. He has conspired with the Muslims against the Visigoths and Basques, playing each ethnic group against the other, in order to seize power.

García returns from Bética with heavy injuries from fighting the Moors and takes command of what remains of the Visigoth Kingdom: reduced to Pamplona and rural parts of Navarre. García and Amaya marry, and Amagoya recognises her niece as the true successor to the House of Aitor and the living embodiment of the prophecy. Amagoya uses her ancestral healing powers to cure García, before seeking exile, as she cannot accept the Christianisation of the Basques. García and Amaya seek out Pelayo in Asturias with the intention of continuing the battle against the Moors.

As this plot summary makes clear, the Jewish characters play a central role in *Amaya*. In addition to the structural similarities with *Ivanhoe*, the importance of Jewish characters reflects Navarro Villoslada's indebtedness to Scott's novel. In both novels, the Jewish characters undermine the opposition between two races: Saxon and Norman, Basque and Visigoth. As a result, they act as destabilising forces in the novels. They disrupt and, at times, drive the plot. Yet, for all their similarities in narrative function, the portrayal of Jewish characters is markedly different in both novels. Whereas Scott's portrayal is ambivalent, that of Amaya is roundly negative: the Jewish characters in the Spanish text are villainous, scheming and manipulative. In *Ivanhoe*, Isaac may be an amalgam of traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes—avaricious, vengeful and a nineteenth-

century Shylock—but Rebecca is portrayed in an extremely positive way. So much so, that many critics have seen her as the novel's true protagonist and heroine, admirable for her courage and resolve. She rebuts the negative portrayal of the greedy Jew, giving coins and charity, to compensate for her father's miserliness. Moreover, she is principled and fearless in her stand against the sexual advancements of the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert and eventually wins even his respect.

Despite her positive traits, though, Rebecca is too much of an outsider to be able to marry Wilfred Ivanhoe. At the end of the novel she chooses exile from England, as the country has failed to create a safe space for its Jews. The pathos of the final scene, in which she takes her leave of Rowena, demonstrates Scott's sympathy for the outcasts of English history. While his conservative – note, not reactionary – view of history recognizes that great change is inevitable, his novelistic vision provides a space for history's victims and suggests a critical attitude towards the nation's inability to accommodate its Jews: Saxons and Normans learn to live together but the Jews are excluded from the new England they create.

Although Jewishness is also eliminated in *Amaya* through the trope of conversion rather than exile, the novel provides no such space for a critical view of history. The Jewish characters are not merely outcasts, as in *Ivanhoe*, but also actively hostile to the two principal races. Their presence in 'Spain' is a threat to its political development, and their elimination removes one of the principal obstacles to the future union between Basques and Visigoths. The Jewish characters in *Amaya* have no redeeming features: they are untrustworthy, deracinated and disloyal. They are portrayed as a dangerous Other that must be vanquished in order for the Spanish state to emerge. Thus, while in *Ivanhoe* Jewish exile is a tangential consequence of the new English identity, in *Amaya* the removal of Jewishness is a necessary prerequisite to the emergence of Spain. Scott and Navarro Villoslada use the history of racial synthesis in different ways. Whereas the former, as Chris Worth suggests, seeks to place hybridity at the centre of Englishness (65), Navarro Villoslada attempts to give voice to a unique Basque identity that allows the Basques to maintain their difference from the rest of Spain, while nevertheless participating in the larger national project. This key difference, I argue, lies behind the radically different portrayal of Jewish characters in the two novels.

### **Emergence of the nation state**

Chris Worth has read Scott's representation of Saxon and Norman enmity and of their ultimate compromise as a metaphor for nineteenth-century debates about Scotland's role within a larger United Kingdom (65). Although the Act of Union of 1707 officially brought together two equal nations, the imbalance between a small Scotland and its more powerful English neighbour resembles the subaltern position of the Saxons in

*Ivanhoe*. Just as Scott is a writer of the periphery, who represents English history from a Scottish perspective in order to raise questions about contemporary Britain, Navarro Villoslada is a Basque writer interested in the balance of power in the contemporary Spanish state. The historical conflict between Basques and Visigoths in *Amaya* rehearses nineteenth-century debates about the relationship between centre and periphery in an increasingly centralising Spain.

Though part of Spain, the Basques traditionally enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. This was enshrined in the *fueros*, which curtailed the power of the Spanish monarchy within the Basque country. Attempts by the liberal government in Madrid to suppress the *fueros* led many Basques to support the Carlist movement. *Amaya* was first published serially in *La Ciencia cristiana* in 1877, just one year after Antonio Cánovas de Castillo, Prime Minister of Spain under King Alfonso XII, abolished the *fueros* after the defeat of the Carlists in the Third Carlist War (1872-76). Although originally a liberal, Navarro Villoslada rallied to the Carlist cause in 1868. In *Amaya*, he sets out to provide models of integration into the Spanish state that preserve the uniqueness of Basque identity. In this sense, the novel differs markedly from *Ivanhoe*, in which the emergence of Englishness necessarily entails the elimination of separate Saxon and Norman cultures.

As Carlos Mata Induráin has observed, however, Navarro Villoslada's political evolution towards Carlism can be explained by his interest in "la defensa del catolicismo, que constituye la idea nuclear de su pensamiento" ("Francisco Navarro Villoslada" 263). The quotation elucidates what is abundantly clear in the novel itself: the author's central preoccupation with Catholicism. In *Amaya*, there is a tension between his religious outlook and his concern with a separate sense of Basque identity. How can he carve a unique space for Basque self-expression while simultaneously celebrating the Catholic unity of Spain? It is here that the author's use of the Muslim invasion of 711 takes on great importance. Whereas the union of Saxons and Normans in *Ivanhoe* is presented as an inevitable historical process, conditioned by time, proximity and loyalty to a common King, the Basques and Visigoths in *Amaya* make peace only when confronted with a common threat: Islam. Unlike Scott's England, Navarro Villoslada does not see Basque integration as inevitable but rather as a product of historical necessity. The Muslim invasion of the Iberian Peninsula not only furnishes a common enemy but also leads to the destruction of the Visigoth Kingdom, which had antagonised the Basques. The Muslim invasion thus creates a *tabula rasa* on which a common identity can be written. Moreover, this common identity has a specific purpose: the liberation of the peninsula from Muslim rule. By situating the *Reconquista* at the very centre of the new Spanish nation, Navarro Villoslada places Christianity at the root of what it means to be Spanish: when faced with an external enemy, religious identity takes precedence over national and linguistic ties.

In *Ivanhoe*, this dynamic is reversed, and religion plays a secondary role to national sentiment. Scott's focus on the hypocrisy and fanaticism of the Knights Templar not only serves as a satirical attack on Catholicism from a Scottish Protestant but also creates a boundary between Self and Other. The Templars, more so than the Jews, are portrayed as foreigners and represent a threat to the authority of the English King. The return of Richard the Lionheart in the novel, which entails the consolidation of Englishness and the establishment of a commonly agreed authority over both Saxons and Normans, culminates in the expulsion of the Templars from England. Portrayed as Catholic fanatics, although hypocritically impious in their actions, the Templars must be vanquished for Englishness to dominate. Religion, then, is subjugated in *Ivanhoe* to the idea of a nation. Scott elucidates this dynamic in the trial of Rebecca, who is accused of witchcraft by the Templars. Although she is Jewish, Wilfred Ivanhoe comes to her rescue. He represents her against Brian de Bois-Guilbert in the trial by combat, which thus becomes a struggle between England and the foreign Templars. They are subsequently expelled by the King, while the Jews are not.

### The Jewish Question

Scott's portrayal of Isaac and Rebecca is a response to political debates about Jews in nineteenth-century Britain. The 'Jewish question' had already been a prominent issue in the previous century, when the "debate about the so-called Jew Bill of 1753 and the very public conversion of Lord George Gordon to Judaism, along with a few notorious criminal trials involving Jews, kept the issue of Jewishness very much alive in public and political circles" (Simpson 438). It was the sudden emancipation of Jews in Revolutionary France, however, that really brought the issue to public attention in England. After the Constituent Assembly extended French citizenship to Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews in 1790 and 1791 respectively, there were calls for England to follow suit. Jewish emancipation in the United Kingdom, however, was hindered by fears of divided Jewish loyalty and, paradoxically, by the association of Jews with revolutionary politics. In short, Jews came to represent the threat of French influence on British politics. Moreover, conservative opposition to Jewish emancipation stemmed from a sense that Jews were essentially foreigners and could never be integrated sufficiently. Such debates reached their heights around the time that Walter Scott published *Ivanhoe*. Indeed, thirteen years after the novel's publication, a bill was finally brought to Parliament that proposed to grant British Jews the same political and civic rights as their Christian counterparts. Although the bill was defeated, legal discrimination against Britain's Jews was progressively abolished throughout the nineteenth century.

In *Ivanhoe*, Scott dramatizes the debates about the possibility of Jewish participation in public life by returning to a historical moment of Jewish expulsion.

*Ivanhoe* re-enacts the historical expulsion of the Jews from England in the twelfth century through the voluntary exile of Rebecca and her father Isaac to Moorish Granada. In the light of nineteenth-century debates about the Jewish question, such an ending seems at first to favour the rejection of Jewish participation in the public sphere. Judging by the ending alone, one might conclude that Scott opposed emancipation. Simpson has argued, however, that *Ivanhoe* undermines the “myth of racial synthesis and inclusion (always under the rubric of Englishness)” that was implicit in Scott's other novels (439).

In portraying the expulsion of the Jews as a historical consequence of the emergence of the modern English state, Scott criticizes England's failure to accommodate its Jewish population. Englishness becomes, therefore, the product not simply of a teleological destiny, in which antagonistic races and ethnicities are set aside in favour of a common identity but also of a specific process of selection, in which certain elements are deemed worthy of inclusion and others are expelled. Rebecca tells Rowena that she must leave England because “the people of England are a fierce race. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people” (Scott 499). The new English state, which is achieved thanks to a historical compromise between its indigenous Saxon inhabitants and the invading Normans, cannot provide a safe home for the Jewish people.

Rebecca's need to seek exile because she feels unsafe is ironic here, given that she is the only character in the novel who is able to heal the wounds that the quarrelling Saxons and Normans inflict on each other. With Rebecca's oriental heritage comes knowledge of traditional medicine, which she uses to nurse Wilfred Ivanhoe back to health. Despite Rebecca's association with the Orient, she stakes a claim early on in the novel for her right to belong to England. When Ivanhoe tries to address her in the rudimentary Arabic he learned as a crusader, she responds: “I am of England and speak the English tongue, although my dress and lineage belong to another climate” (267). Rebecca's claim to belong to England, her religion notwithstanding, resonated in nineteenth-century England, where Jewish loyalty to Britain was often called into question.

A broader reading of Rebecca's role in the text, therefore, brings to light the ways in which Scott subtly undermines the logic of expulsion to present a more nuanced case for Jewish inclusion. Rather than seeking to re-enact their historical expulsion, Scott uses history to criticise English intolerance. His sensitive portrayal of Rebecca suggests that Jews in twelfth-century England were as rightfully English as Saxons and Normans. Scott's representation of Jewishness in *Ivanhoe*, then, seems to support their integration into nineteenth-century British life by undermining the idea that Jews represent a dangerous Other masquerading beneath a veneer of Englishness. In fact, as Michael Ragussis observes, they are the only characters in the novel that do not mask their identity. *Ivanhoe*, he points out, is “structured as a comedy of disguise” in which the

principal characters all hide their identities at various stages because of the complexity of 'race relations' in twelfth-century England (194). Saxon men in the novel must assume a false identity in order to cross safely into the Norman world. Indeed, Wilfred Ivanhoe disguises himself as the Disinherited Knight so that he can compete in the tournament at Ashby. Even Cedric - the ardent Saxon nationalist - dons the disguise of a Norman friar, when he attempts to escape from the Norman castle. King Richard, by contrast, adopts the disguise of a Saxon in the form of the Black Knight so that he may return to England unrecognised. The Jews are the only ones who do not participate in this game. When Rowena entreats her to convert to Christianity and live with her as a sister, "Rebecca refuses to wear the Christian disguise that would allow her safe settlement in England" (204). Jewish identity in *Ivanhoe* is thus presented as authentic and even courageous.

### The Crypto-Jew

In *Amaya*, the reverse is true. Jewishness is a secret identity that the Jewish characters conceal beneath multiple masks and cultural disguises. Eudon, for instance, pretends to be a Byzantine citizen and under this identity becomes chief adviser to the last Visigoth King. In Aitormendi, the homeland of the tribe of Aitor, however, he assumes a Basque identity under the name of Asier. Meanwhile, his father, the Rabbi Abraham Aben Hezra, lives among the Basques under the guise of the Gothic hermit Pacomio. The Jewish characters mask their identity, moreover, in order to manipulate those around them. Eudon uses his powerful position at the Visigoth court to assist the Muslim invasion of Iberia by distracting the King and giving him misleading advice. As the Basque Asier, he tricks the pagan Amagoya into adopting him as her son so that he can position himself as a future ruler of the Basques. Pacomio, too, uses his influence over the Basque Christians to seek access to the treasure of Aitor. We can find in Pacomio—a Jew who masquerades as a Christian hermit and preaches to the Basque people—traces of the Inquisitorial fear of the crypto-Jew, who contaminates and corrupts Spanish Catholicism. For Navarro Villoslada, Jews represent a threat to the nation not because they are outsiders but rather because they stand both uniquely within and without the dominant culture. In *Amaya*, the Jewish characters are reminiscent of Spain's crypto-Jews or *marranos*, which Yirmiyahu Yovel described as the 'Other within' because of their unique condition of both belonging to Spain and living in alienation from it. This fundamental quality of ambivalence is common to all the Jewish characters in *Amaya*: they conceal their Jewishness beneath multiple layers of identity and it is easy for them to do so. The ability to hide makes them dangerous, as they use their concealment to plot the destruction of the Basque nation.

Fear of Jewish treachery in *Amaya* is rooted, above all, in their religious difference. If, as we have seen, Navarro Villoslada attempts to frame Spanish unity as a fundamentally Catholic project, it is logical that Jews are excluded. The novel is also rooted in a Spanish historical tradition of anti-Semitism that sees Jewish culture as alien and hostile to Christianity. The medieval *Cantigas de Santa María*, for example, refers to Jewish attempts to desecrate the host or to crucify Christian children.<sup>29</sup> While these beliefs were common throughout Christian Europe, uniquely Spanish is the myth that Jews collaborated with the Muslim invasion of Iberia because of a shared hatred of Christianity. Fernando Bravo López traces this myth to the thirteenth-century *Chronicon mundi* by Lucas de Tuy.<sup>30</sup> Thus in *Amaya*, when García discovers Eudon's conspiracy to assist the Muslim invaders against the Visigoth Kingdom he exclaims that no group in Iberia is more hostile to Christianity than the Jews. While Muslims have traditionally been seen as the enemy of Christianity in Spain, Jews came to be associated with treachery. Gonzalo Álvarez Chillida explains that the image of the Jew as traitor has deep significance in Spain precisely because it came to be associated with the invasion of the Moor: the nation's quintessential other.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike Scott, Navarro Villoslada's representation of medieval Jewish characters does not respond to contemporary questions of Jewish integration in public life. Jewish emancipation was not on the political agenda in nineteenth-century Spain, and there were few Jewish residents. Some did settle in the country after the Glorious Revolution of 1868 established confessional freedom. Although exact numbers are difficult to ascertain, the Jewish community most likely did not exceed a few hundred individuals. The role of Jewish characters in *Amaya*, then, is not to reflect questions of Spanish-Jewish relations in the nineteenth-century but rather to stand as eternal, mythologised symbols of conspiracy and betrayal. Although Jewishness represents religious opposition to Catholicism, the biggest threat in the novel is hidden, not overt, Judaism. The Jewish characters come to represent underground currents that are considered to undermine the Basque way of life, hence their association with dangerous movements, such as the astrologers. In the novel, astrologers are presented as a secretive sect that, throughout history, has threatened the peaceful existence of the Iberian natives:

Hay en España un linaje de hombres que se remonta a la más remota antigüedad. Fueron al principio sacerdotes que adoraban al sol y estudiaban el curso de los astros; pero su conciencia estaba envuelta en misterios. Griegos, egipcíacos o caldeos, gente extraña a los sencillos iberos y celtíberos montaraces, lograban, por

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<sup>29</sup> See Hatton, Vikki & Mackay, Angus. "Anti-Semitism in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*".

<sup>30</sup> See Bravo López, Fernando. "«La traición de los judíos» La pervivencia de un mito antijudío medieval en la historiografía española".

<sup>31</sup> See Álvarez Chillida, Gonzalo. *El antisemitismo en España: La imagen del judío 1812-2002*.

el respeto y veneración que a los naturales infundían, acomodarse en el país, levantar edificios, que a la vez eran templos y observatorios, y luego servían de espías y adalides a su gente, que venía en pos, so capa de mercaderes y amigos, o con insolencia y estruendo de conquistadores; de ellos se valieron también los romanos. El sistema daba siempre felicísimos resultados; pero había caído en desuso por inútil después del cristianismo, en cuyos primeros tiempos los tiranos de Roma dejaron de ser conquistadores porque nada tenían ya que conquistar.

Pero un hereje llamado Prisciliano restauró y fomento la astrología a fines del siglo IV. Este mal español, sabio entre los suevos, era hipócrita, malvado. [...] Se propagaron entre los suevos, nos infestaron a los visigodos, y abiertamente subsistieron hasta los tiempos de nuestro católico Recaredo. Mas no se han extinguido aún. Subsisten hoy audaces y terribles como nunca, y como nunca astutos y solapados. Creo que entre los judíos es donde arraiga la secta con más vigor. (112)

Navarro Villoslada's nativist vision posits an opposition between Jews—representatives of a dangerous current of opinion—and the simple, rustic Iberians. In the context of the ideological struggles of nineteenth-century Spain, however, it is evident that Navarro Villoslada's astrologers represent groups such as Freemasons or liberals, to which he was opposed.

In nineteenth-century Spain, traditional forms of anti-Jewish discourse were supplemented with a new form of French anti-Semitism. After the emancipation of the Jews following the French Revolution, right-wing and Catholic thinkers in France began to link Jews to political conspiracy theories that supposedly sought to undermine traditional French values. In Spain, because of the Napoleonic invasion and the large-scale influence of French culture on the Spanish elite, Spanish conservatives, such as Navarro Villoslada, saw France as the epitome of the corrupting influence of modernity on traditional Spanish values. Paradoxically, moreover, Jews became associated with the Universalist values of the French Revolution, which reinforced their mythical role as the eternal enemies of *castizo* Spain. The link between Jews and France is clear in *Amaya*. Both Abrahama Aben Hezra (Pacomio) and Aser (Eudon) come from the French side of the Basque country, and the other Jewish character, Respha, is also from France. She is instrumental in helping Basurde, Amagoya's husband, to murder Lorea/Paula as part of a plot to steal the treasure of Aitor. Basurde is a Basque pagan, like his wife. But he too comes from the French Basque country, which is where he develops his ties with Respha, despite their religious difference. Given that the treasure is intended for the first King of the united Basques, their scheme undermines the process of Basque unity. Jewish characters in *Amaya*, moreover, pose a threat to the budding alliance between Basques and Goths, which Eudon and Pacomio attempt to prevent. As we have already seen, they represent an existential challenge to the Catholic identity of Spain.

Yet Jews are not the only characters in *Amaya* to hinder these historical processes. Iñaki Iriarte López has argued that Amagoya—a Basque pagan—“constituye el impedimento más serio a la misión encargada a los héroes” (5). Since the novel’s heroes—Amaya and García—seek the “unificación de vascos y godos en virtud de su calidad común de cristianos”, Amagoya, who clings stubbornly to her pagan faith, is a threat to this union (Iriarte 5). Moreover, she holds power over a large swathe of the Basque population and because she can decide who will marry her niece, Amaya de Butron, she has influence over who will be recognised as the first King of Vasconia. The character of Amagoya points to the tension at the heart of *Amaya*: she embodies the proud, ancestral traditions of the Basque people, yet stands in the way of Christianity and, therefore, the Catholic unity of Spain that Navarro Villoslada wishes to convey. The author attempts to articulate a sense of Basque identity that is both separate from Spain and rooted in tradition. However, Amagoya demonstrates how tradition can stand in the way of historical progress and constitute an obstacle to the implantation of Christianity. Her character confronts us with the contradictions at the centre of Navarro Villoslada's politics: the tension between a neo-Catholic version of Carlism that privileged Spanish unity above all and a *fuerismo* that argued for the maintenance of traditional forms of self-government.

### **Basque Paganism and Spanish Catholicism**

*Amaya* emerges out of an earlier wave of romantic Basque nationalism. Jon Juaristi has described the novel as an “híbrido de *leyenda y novela histórica*” (124) because Navarro Villoslada (re)writes one of the foundational myths of nineteenth-century Basque nationalism: the legend of Aitor. The legend originates in the work of Joseph Augustin Chaho, a Basque writer from France, whose *Histoire primitive des Euskariens-Basques* (1847) almost singlehandedly created the myth of Basque origins in the Caucasus. Chaho's legend takes the Basque word for father (*Aita*) and imagines Aitor as the ancestral father of the Basque race, who moved his people from Eastern Iberia in the Caucasus to the Pyrenees. Juaristi argues that Navarro Villoslada's meeting with Chaho, around 1851, played an important role in the elaboration of *Amaya* (124). Yet, if Navarro Villoslada is tempted by Chaho's romantic vision of Basque identity, which clearly sets them apart from the rest of Spain, there is once again an ideological issue. Chaho was a radical republican, who sought precisely to emphasise the pre-Christian, pre-monarchic tradition of the Basque people. Unsurprisingly, this vision of the Basques presents a number of insurmountable problems for a traditionalist Carlist supporter. To overcome this contradiction, Juaristi suggests that Navarro Villoslada attempted to strip Chaho's work of its revolutionary elements and maintain the traditionalist background of his writing. He sees *Amaya* as a response to *Histoire primitive des Euskariens-Basques*, one

which amends the aspects of Chaho's work that contradict Navarro Villoslada's traditional interpretation of history (126). Navarro Villoslada attempts to inhabit the Romantic nationalism of Chaho and rewrite it in the service of his own nationalist vision, which treads a fine line between Basque exceptionalism and Spanish Catholic unity. The struggle between Amagoya and Amaya's vision of the future of the Basques represents this tension between an unchanging, racially pure and isolated Basque nation and an open vision of Basque identity that participates in a larger Christian project.

Navarro Villoslada dramatises the process of Basque conversion to Christianity, which is the precursor to Basque unity and ultimately to the creation of Spain. Although Basque paganism must necessarily give way to Catholicism, the values that Amagoya represents cannot be entirely swept away. Iriarte argues that Amaya's triumph in the novel does not entail the exclusion of Amagoya's vision for the Basques. Rather, her vision is subsumed within a 'pactista' discourse, which is to say a mutually beneficial agreement between Basques and Visigoths (10). Indeed, unlike her treacherous husband Basurde on the French side of the border, Amagoya represents a number of positive Basque characteristics that the author admires. Her stubborn refusal to change is, after all, a conservative defence of Basque tradition. Although anti-Christian, she is pro-Basque and her ambiguous portrayal represents the complex relationship in the novel between these two concepts of nationalism. Unlike the Jewish characters, Amagoya cannot be roundly condemned because she represents an aspect of Basque identity that the author wishes to maintain.

Navarro Villoslada's solution to this contradiction is to portray the world of the Basque pagans as fundamentally correct but out-dated. As Juaristi states:

Para Navarro Villoslada, la sociedad que describe Chaho corresponde a la época anterior a la cristianización. Defendiendo su primitiva independencia, los vascos se enfrentaron, como afirma Chaho, a los invasores germánicos; pero, unidos con éstos por los lazos de la religión de Cristo, se enfrentaron juntos al enemigo común, el Islam, iniciando así la Reconquista y estableciendo los cimientos de la nación española. (127)

The arrival of Christianity, therefore, supersedes the past and necessitates the transformation of Basque nationalism. Amagoya's vision of "pureza racial, este orgulloso aislamiento" belongs to the times of the pagans and "debe ceder ante la fraternidad cristiana" (Navarro Villoslada 129). Hence, Amaya is not portrayed as a rival to Amagoya, but rather as her successor. Although she is half Gothic, she conserves the traditions of the women of Aitor. Indeed, Amagoya recognises her as a true member of her tribe when she hears her singing the traditional songs of Aitormendi. Navarro Villoslada rewrites Chaho's legend so that the treasure of Aitor contains a prophecy that foretells the coming of Christ and the Basque conversion to Christianity. He thus places

Christianity at the centre of Basque identity and is able to portray the rejection of paganism as respect for Basque tradition rather than an abandonment of it. Amagoya is thus redeemed because, unlike the Jewish characters, her motivation is moral; she is merely misguided, victim of a “tradición mal entendida” (385). Even she recognises her error and proclaims: “¡También Aitor se vuelve contra mí! ¡También Aitor se ha hecho cristiano!” (386). Nevertheless, she is too fixed in her ways to convert. She recognises Amaya's legitimacy as heiress to the treasure and accepts that the Basques will abandon their ancestral paganism but she is unable to do so and chooses exile and, eventually, suicide.

Yet, although the revelation of the prophecy delegitimises Amagoya's moral claims about the Basque religion, it paradoxically redeems her as the guardian of Basque traditions. The scroll that contains the prophecy of Aitor is written in the ancient Basque script that has long been abandoned in favour of the Latin alphabet. Only Amagoya, because of her loyalty to the tradition of her ancestors, is able to understand and reveal the message it contains. Through this action, Amagoya comes to represent, not an obstacle to the future of the Basques but rather the key to their conversion. Catholicism emerges, once again, from within the Basque tradition and not in opposition to it. Amagoya embodies the tension at the heart of the novel, which is none other than the contradictory nature of Navarro Villoslada's vision of Basque identity in the nineteenth century.

Throughout the novel, Amagoya is akin to Cedric in *Ivanhoe*. Like the pagan priestess, the proud Saxon dreams (unrealistically) of the restoration of the Saxon throne. He clings to a notion of racial purity that belongs to the past. Thus, he seeks to marry his daughter Rowena to Athelstane, who descends from the royal line of the last independent Saxon King. Scott ridicules Cedric's reactionary impulse: Athelstane is incompetent and entirely unfit to unite the English nation. Rowena's eventual marriage to Wilfred Ivanhoe responds to the changing dynamic in twelfth-century England. Racial purity gives way to the mixing of peoples and the establishment of a new nation. In the same way, Amaya no longer represents the old ways of Basque racial purity and isolation, but rather embodies the new, mixed future under the banner of Catholicism. By the end of the novel, however, Amagoya is more reminiscent of Rebecca: a heroic victim of historical forces of change that she cannot control. Like Scott's Jewess she chooses exile over conversion. Rather than adapt to a country that no longer has a place for her, she remains as she is and leaves. Before leaving, however, she uses her knowledge of ancestral herbal medicine to save García's life. Like Rebecca, then, who heals Wilfred Ivanhoe, Amagoya helps enable the new order, from which she will be excluded.

## Basque Racialism and the Jewish Other

Amagoya's resistance to change becomes almost heroic. Like Rebecca, she is portrayed as an authentic character, unlike the masked Jews of the novel. In the light of the inherent tensions we have discussed above, the Jewish characters in *Amaya* are important in another way. How can Navarro Villoslada articulate a sense of Basque identity that is both fundamentally different from the rest of Spain and yet part of a shared Catholic and monarchic tradition? To do so, he must incorporate both the pagan elements (Amagoya) and the Christian (Amaya): privileging the latter, without entirely rejecting the former. To maintain unity in the face of this division, the Basques require a common enemy. While, traditionally, they fought for their independence against the Visigoths, this division must be overcome in favour of the Christian union that Navarro Villoslada wishes to reinforce. The Jewish characters, who are neither Basque nor Visigoth provide the essential Other against which Basque identity can be defined. Like Amagoya they are not Christian, yet unlike her, neither are they Basque. As a result, whereas Amagoya is misguided but operates from within Basque culture, the Jews are outsiders. Their malevolent presence allows Navarro Villoslada to portray Amagoya as authentically Basque, in contrast to Eudon, who merely masquerades as such. If Amagoya speaks with the moral authority of Basque tradition, although she is pagan, Eudon misuses Basque tradition in an attempt to seize control. Seeking to unite Basques, Jews and Visigoths under his leadership, he tells Munio:

¡Yo he de ser en Vasconia rey de godos, judíos y vascos! He de dominar a gentes que nunca han sido domadas. Hasta aquí llegó Wamba; hasta aquí, César Augusto y Pompeyo y Aníbal; hasta aquí llegaron los celtas; pero ninguno de ellos pasó de aquí. Yo lo abarco todo, no tolero la exención de nadie. A mí no me satisfacen alianzas, pactos, tributos: lo quiero todo, lo exijo todo. Para mí no hay Pirineos. Dominadores del mundo he conocido; dominadores de los vascos, no. Munio, decidme si tenéis noticia de una ambición superior a la mía. (264)

His ambition to conquer the unconquered people resonates with the (mythical) eternal independence of the Basques, who always seek peace with their larger neighbours on their own terms. Eudon's vision of Basque and Visigoth unity is one of coercion, whereas Navarro Villoslada seeks to portray a union of equals, an alliance similar to the historical pacts with Rome and Hannibal.

For Navarro Villoslada, the concepts that Eudon rejects (*alianza, pacto, tributo*) are the very foundations of his vision of Spanish national identity. The Basques and Visigoths are drawn together through the emergence of another external Other: the Muslims. The invasion prompts the recognition of the Catholic destiny of Spain, which is revealed, through the ancient prophecy of Aitor, which foretells the Christian future of the Basque people. Thus, they are not absorbed into a larger national project but

rather become willing participants. Indeed, the Catholic unity of Basques and Visigoths emerges from deep within Basque identity. This celebration of Spanish political unity, however, was politically ambiguous in the immediate aftermath of the Third Carlist War, when the novel was written. Navarro Villoslada sympathised with the Carlist cause and with movements that sought to re-establish the ancient *fueros*. Abolished progressively between 1841 and 1878, the *fueros* guaranteed the legal autonomy of the Basque Provinces. In *Amaya*, Navarro Villoslada attempts to articulate a vision of Basque nationalism that encompasses both his political vision—his opposition to Spanish centralisation—and his Catholicism. Whereas the Muslim characters function as an external Other that unites the Iberian Peninsula, the Jewish characters function as an internal Other that allows the author to stake a claim for the uniqueness of the Basques. By situating the origins of the Basques in the Caucasus, the legend of Aitor replaces the traditional myth of Tubal, which suggests that the descendants of Noah populated the Iberian Peninsula in Antiquity. The myth of Tubal gives Biblical roots to the Spanish people and links the earliest settlers to a form of proto-Christianity. Juaristi has pointed out that early Basque nationalists in the late nineteenth-century used the legend of Aitor to reinforce the racial differences between the Basques and the rest of Spain (244). The Spanish, they argued, descended from Tubal and were, therefore, Semitic. Moreover, they were racially impure, because of the mixture of populations under Muslim domination. The Basques, by contrast, had European roots, as descendants of Aitor. Furthermore, because they were never part of *al-Andalus*, the Basques maintained their racial purity. Navarro Villoslada's reconfiguration of the legend to include a prophecy about the coming of Christianity manages to maintain the exclusivist racial element of the original legend without losing the ancestral connection to Christianity that descent from Tubal confers. By defining the Basques against the Jewish characters, Navarro Villoslada can create a space for a nativist Basque tradition without compromising his vision of “unidad católica, pensamiento dominante, espíritu vivificador y sello perpetuamente característico de la monarquía española” with which the novel ends (478).

This analysis of *Amaya* demonstrates how Navarro Villoslada uses Jewishness as symbolic currency. Whereas in *Ivanhoe* Walter Scott's portrayal of Jewish characters is rooted in the historical realities of his time, Navarro Villoslada's Jews represent notions of Jewishness that persisted long after Jewish people ceased to be part of everyday reality in Spain. Navarro Villoslada builds on existing textual discourses that framed Jews as the eternal Other. Such representations lack the complexity found in *Ivanhoe*. Jews are associated, instead, with negative qualities. In *Amaya*, for instance, we have seen how Navarro Villoslada uses Jewishness as a symbol of the scientific rationalism of the Enlightenment, the political threat of French values, as well as the idea of treachery. Through this process of symbolic replacement, Jewishness comes to represent the qualities that threaten Navarro Villoslada's reactionary political vision for the Basque

people. By using Jewish characters in this way, Navarro Villoslada overcomes the contradiction between the pagan nature of the Basque national myth and his desire to promote the Catholic unity of Spain.

## 4.2 The Jewish voice as counternarrative: *Aventuras de un converso*

My analysis of *Amaya* has demonstrated how the use of Jews as symbolic Others helped to shape a narrative of Basque identity. In my second text, *Aventuras de un converso*, the dynamic is reversed. Whereas the Basque novel used the Jews to articulate an inchoate Basque nationalism within the confines of Spanish Catholic unity, *Aventuras de un converso* uses the character of the Converso to undermine and criticise Spain's religious narrative. The novel tells the story of the Spanish colonization and evangelization of the Canary Islands in the years preceding the conquest of America and the completion of the Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula. Set in 1478, it tells the story of an expeditionary ship that set sail from Puerto de Santa María in the Bay of Cádiz with the intention of subjugating the native population of the islands and converting them to Christianity. The story seems to be based on the historical mission to Gran Canaria of 1478. It begins with the scene of a rustic lunch shared between an old soldier and his ten-year-old daughter, who are on their way to join the expedition. While eating, they encounter a young traveller, who has been on the road for two days and is starving. They offer him some bread, discover that he too is bound for Puerto de Santa María, and decide to travel together. Along their journey, the stranger, whose name is Juan, reveals his unfortunate past and his reason for leaving home. We discover that he is an orphan, with no recollection of his parents or childhood. He explains that he is a descendant of *Cristianos nuevos*, or *Conversos*, which is to say of converted Jews. He was raised by a priest in Seville, who constantly reminded him of his inferior status because of his Jewish origins.

One day, after hearing that the clergy in Seville has arranged to sell him into slavery to a travelling merchant, he decides to escape and travels towards Puerto de Santa María, where he hopes to meet the priest's niece, Magdalena, who lives in a convent in the city. She was the most understanding towards the *Converso* during his childhood, and he plans to see her again before attempting to enlist as part of the expedition to the Canary Islands, which he hopes will be a “medio honroso de buscarse la vida” (28). A novel with a *Converso* protagonist is unusual, and Millares uses his status

to reveal and criticise the mistreatment of outsiders in early-modern Spain. Thus, the Converso functions as an ethnically and religiously marked *pícaro*, an internal Other<sup>32</sup>. The traveller not only expresses his own suffering at the hands of the priest in Seville but also exposes the treatment of the Jews and Conversos in fifteenth-century Spain. He accuses the church authorities of falsely using the name of God to act as executioners in order to enrich themselves with confiscated property. His analysis of their actions is extremely critical:

¿Quienes fueron los que ganaron con aquellas matanzas? Los grandes Señores y el Clero, deudores de los industriosos Israelitas. Con el puñal y la tea en sus manos homicidas, arrancaron ellos mismos el recibo del mutilado cuerpo de sus infelices acreedores. Esa es, segun ellos, la justicia de Dios. (35)

The protagonist's critical analysis of the treatment of Conversos in Spain is met with a threat by the old soldier, who warns him: “detened vuestra lengua si quereis vivir en paz en España” (36). His words remind us of the silence that reigned over much of Spain's history of (re)conquest. Millares, like a number of liberal writers of the nineteenth century, attempts to subvert silences and counter official narratives. The protagonist, however, steps back from his criticism and affirms his indifference to the suffering of the Jews: “¿Qué me importa a mi la raza de Israel? Sé yo acaso quien soy?” (36). He also defends his status by arguing that he is not responsible for his origins and that he is no less Christian for the Jewish faith of his ancestors. As he will do later in the novel, Millares explores the slippery nature of national and religious identity.

Agustín Millares Torres was a relatively well-known writer, historian and composer, who was born in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in 1826. He was part of a wider nineteenth-century cultural movement in the Canary Islands that sought to better understand and divulge the history of the archipelago. In *Aventuras de un converso* he places the conquest of the Canary Islands at the centre of Spain's early-modern history and the country's emergence into modernity. The novel demonstrates the interconnectedness of the colonisation of the Canary Islands, the discovery of the New World and the completion of the Reconquista. It traces the birth of Spain's expansionist colonial rhetoric to the missions to subdue and convert the Canary Islands, which

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<sup>32</sup> Many critics have noted the connection between the picaresque genre and the Conversos. Marcel Bataillon, for instance, writes: “el hidalgo es racialmente puro, por definición; el pícaro no podrá ser realmente su antítesis, si no aparece marcado, poco o mucho, por aquella impureza que tenía que excluirlo para siempre de los privilegios reservados a los hidalgos. Es decir que el auge de la picaresca bajo Felipe III nunca será plenamente comprendido si se olvida la herencia medieval de la España de las tres religiones” (199). See also Yovel, Yirmiyahu. “Picaresque Antiheroes”, *The Other Within*, pp. 263-283.

preceded the Columbian discovery of America. Moreover, the novel establishes a link between the colonial policies of the Spanish Crown and the policy of religious and ethnic purity that emerged in Spain at the time of the Reconquista.

## Religious freedom

The themes of the historical novel and the questions that it raises can be clearly connected with some political preoccupations that were important in nineteenth-century Spain. The most evident in the novel, perhaps, is the question of religious freedom and tolerance, which was at the centre of a number of debates at the time. Joseph Bonaparte abolished the Inquisition during his reign (1808-1812), and this position was maintained by the liberal Cádiz Constitution that was promulgated in 1812. When Ferdinand VII retook the throne, however, he reinstated the Inquisition, which would be provisionally suspended during the *Trienio liberal* and then finally abolished definitively during the Regency of Maria Cristina. The abolition of the Inquisition, however, did not entail the immediate extension of freedom of worship to religions other than Catholicism. Indeed, such freedom was officially guaranteed only after the Glorious Revolution of 1868, which deposed Queen Isabel II and led to the establishment of the First Spanish Republic. Nevertheless, the Restoration of 1875 saw the revocation of these religious freedoms and in 1876, the year prior to the publication of *Aventuras de un Converso*, public freedom of worship was watered down to mean only private tolerance of religious difference.

The debate about religious freedom is central to the novel. Millares not only focuses on the Spanish mission to evangelise the native Guanches but also explores the religious coercion of the Jews immediately prior. Thus, the novel creates the ironic situation of a *Converso* employed to convert others to Catholicism. As an outsider himself, he expresses his reservations about the morality of the undertaking, which he sees as “despojar á esos isleños de las tierras que Dios les ha dado, y cazarlos como bestias feroces para esclavizarlos luego ó hacerlos morir” (28). Already in the opening dialogues between the *Converso* and the old soldier, we are confronted with critical attitudes towards the fanaticism of the Church and of ordinary Spaniards. As I have already mentioned above, the *Converso* argues that the persecution of Jews and *Cristianos nuevos* is driven by an interest in profit rather than an interest in divine justice. When the old soldier apologises for his negative reaction on learning of his interlocutor's Jewish origins, he ascribes his intolerance to a general Spanish tendency towards fanaticism: “cuando se nos habla de cosas que tocan a la Religion, perdemos la cabeza y nos convertimos con frecuencia en fieras o idiotas.” (33).

The novel also contains numerous examples of anticlericalism. Indeed, negative representations of religious authorities abound. Priests are hypocritical, avaricious and immoral and are, in many ways, the novel's villains, against whom the *Converso* attempts to fight. Not only do the Church authorities conspire to sell him into slavery, but during his visit to the convent, he also overhears a plot to send the ship captain's young niece, Isabel, to the Canary Islands in order to arrange for her death and take charge of her sizable inheritance. Such specific examples reinforce Juan's earlier claims that the Inquisition against Spain's Jews was a cynical attempt to seize control of their possessions and riches. The closing lines of the novel, moreover, mock the intolerance of Catholic Spain, as Juan and Isabel must pretend to enjoy an inquisitorial execution, so that their religious belief is not doubted. Juan attempts to hide Isabel's disgust by saying that: "el gozo la embriaga, respondió en voz alta el joven. ¡Ese olor de herege es tan grato para un católico!" (304). In response to Juan de Córdoba's assertion that Spain needs more such executions to rid itself of the "mala semilla", the *Converso* responds:

llegará el día en que esta noble Nación, reciba el lauro merecido por tan briosas hazañas. Entonces seremos todos felices, porque habrán desaparecido de entre nosotros el libro, el pensamiento, y la razón libre. (303)

The *Converso* sees that the logical conclusion of the intolerance of the Spanish Inquisition is the destruction of thought, reason and literature. This is not merely a throwaway comment but rather echoes the thinking of many (liberal) intellectuals in nineteenth-century Spain. Faced with the reality of Spain's marked decline in comparison to its European neighbours, particularly in terms of scientific progress, a number of thinkers, such as Adolfo de Castro or José María Blanco White, blamed their country's backwardness on the closing of minds and the fear of inquiry that developed in the years after the Reconquista. Thus, Millares's entire narrative becomes a comment on the politics of his own century, filtered through the lens of history. Indeed, the end of the novel makes the author's own position clear:

- ¡Viva la hoguera, la inquisición y los frailes! gritó Solórzano con furor creciente, dirigiéndose al fanatizado Pueblo.

- Viva!!! repitió ruiendo la multitud.

Y durante tres siglos ese fue el grito de la católica España. ¡Feliz España! (304)

The final phrase is an indictment of Habsburg Spain and the country's homogenising tendency from the expulsion of the Jews onwards. In this sense, Millares is part of a wider tradition of liberal writers in nineteenth-century Spain who considered Catholic intolerance as central to Spain's contemporary ills. In the last chapter, we saw that *La expulsión de los moriscos* makes the same point about Morisco expulsion. Both works make

a distinction between positive, tolerant religion and the fanatical cruelty of Spanish Catholicism. Indeed, during the *auto da fé*, Juan tells Isabel that their God is not “ese Dios intolerante y sanguinario de los frailes e Inquisidores” (303).

The use of Spain's history of religious intolerance by liberal writers of the nineteenth century was not unusual. Many writers turned to Spain's history of Reconquista and its immediate aftermath in an attempt to locate a historical 'wrong turn' that set the country on a course of decline. Indeed, Millares is explicit about this connection in the novel. While on the expedition to Gran Canaria, the old soldier, Nuno, tells Juan to hide his Jewish origins well, because he has heard rumours of the establishment of a holy tribunal in Spain to root out Conversos. Juan is horrified that a “reina tan justa y piadosa” (169) would resort to such violent means. He goes on to say: “Si ese Tribunal se establece, la España en expiacion de un crimen tan nefando, llegará dia en que ocupe el último lugar entre los pueblos de Europa.” (169)

I have already demonstrated how Millares uses the religious background of the Converso protagonist to undermine the narrative of religious and ethnic purity that dominated in fifteenth-century Spain and echoed throughout subsequent centuries. Indeed, towards the end of the novel the protagonist has gained the social status he was seeking, thanks to his exploits during the expedition to the Canary Islands and the discovery of the noble birth of his wife. He remains, however, deeply at odds with majority opinion and continues to be an outsider, where his opinions are concerned.

*Aventuras de un Converso*, however, is unusual among Spanish novels of this type because of the important role of the Canary Islands, which become central to the history of religious intolerance in Spain. Millares foregrounds the expedition to evangelise the Guanche natives in such a way that it becomes a historical precursor to the persecutions of Jews and Muslims on the mainland, as well as practice, as it were, for the conquest of the Americas a few decades later.

Similar to Juan's explanation that the expulsions of Jews and Muslims are motivated by material interest, the novel reveals the rapaciousness that underlies the expedition to the Canary Islands. Although the mission is justified in terms of Christian piety and a wish to evangelise, Millares suggests that land and power were the true motivating factors. The naïve Nuno, who represents the Spanish people rather than its elite, expresses the arrogant sense of domination that Millares seeks to deconstruct. When Juan asks why the island natives were born, if they are to be attacked and exterminated by the Spanish expeditionary force, Nuno answers:

Para ser nuestros esclavos, hijo mio. Nosotros los españoles estamos destinados a convertir infieles, y llevar triunfante la enseña de Cristo por donde quiera que haya adoradores de Belial. Dia llegará en que no haya moros ni judios en España, y entonces seremos completamente felices. (168)

His outburst not only demonstrates the interconnection between religion and Spanish imperialism. It also shows the unity of purpose in the colonisation of the Canary Islands and the 'purification' of Spanish identity at the end of the fifteenth century. Furthermore, his speech also demonstrates the narrative of superiority that was used to justify slavery, a discourse that the Spanish would later apply to the Native Americans, and which undermined the religious argument of saving lost souls. Millares refers ironically to the cognitive dissonance between Spanish religious rhetoric and harsh economic reality when he describes the process of conversion when a native is caught:

Cuando esto sucedia, los isleños eran conducidos a la capilla de Santa Ana, donde se les bautizaba con gran pompa, siendo guardados luego como prisioneros, hasta que se presentaba cualquier patron genoves, mallorquin o lusitano, que los compraba y llevaba a revender a Europa, recibiendo por ellos un buen precio. ¿Qué importaba el cuerpo, si el alma se habia purificado en el agua del bautismo? (212)

The Guanches in the novel, however, are not portrayed simply as victims of Spanish aggression. Rather, Millares uses them to reinforce his ideas on religious tolerance. This is clear in the subplot about the Faican, the tribal leader of the island. Juan stays behind on Gran Canaria in order to save Isabel, who has been traded with the Faican. There, while sleeping in a cave, he is discovered by Adalmina, the daughter of the Faican, who is half Spanish, as her mother was from Andalusia. Adalmina falls in love with Juan and decides to travel with him back to Spain to see the land of her mother's ancestors. Her father, the Faican, however, is outraged at her decision to abandon her family and religion and join the enemies of her people. After he informs her that he plans to kill Juan, she threatens to die alongside him. Their argument hinges on the question of religion. The Faican asks his daughter: "¿Hasta tal punto te ciega la pasion, que renegarías de la fé de tus padres?" (239). Her response, however, is to plead for the unity of religion:

No hay más que un Dios, contestó ella con acento inspirado, la religion es la envoltura, el alma es Dios; desechar un vestido viejo para vestir otro nuevo, no es un perjurio. (239)

Adalmina stakes a claim for the relativity of religious belief, the idea that customs and practices matter less than true belief; a point that she makes more explicitly in the following paragraph:

¿Qué le importa a Dios que la adoren sobre las alturas de Tirma, o delante de un madero en cruz? Si el corazon está limpio de toda impureza, llamará a su seno con

igual ternura a los ricos españoles y á los humildes canarios. [...] ¿Quién sabe de nosotros? Y entonces, ¿con qué derecho queremos imponerles nuestra religión? Déjame padre ser cristiana, no porque yo crea que sus ritos sean mejores que los nuestros, sino por salvar esa barrera que se opone a mis deseos. (240)

Thus, the intolerance of the Faican mirrors the fanaticism of the Spanish conquistadores of the Canary Islands and the overseers of the Inquisition.

Adalmina's plea for the right to become a Christian contains within it a plea for the Canary Islanders to be able to maintain their own religion if they choose to do so, as neither belief system can be considered superior. Adalmina's demand for religious freedom also acts as a justification of the *Converso*; one who has changed religion as a matter of expediency. When the Faican asks his daughter, who has taught her to think this way, she responds that her reason guides her (240). Thus, Millares makes use of the conflicts among the native islanders and between them and the Spanish in order to articulate the message that reason and tolerance must prevail over the fanaticism and obscurantism of the Catholic Church.

The novel's criticism of the Catholic Church becomes more strident when the Faican forces Juan and Isabel to marry in exchange for their freedom. Juan does not wish to marry her because he is not of noble birth but she brushes aside this issue. He then confesses to her that, although a Christian, he is often plagued by doubt that shakes his faith. He makes clear, however, that he is not agnostic. Rather, he explains:

Dudo de aquellos que nos enseñan a conocerle y amarle; dudo de los que estan encargados de representarle en la tierra; dudo, en fin, de la bondad de sus practicas externas, de sus virtudes de su abnegacion, y de la validez de su mandato. (281)

Juan's criticism, then, is of the Church hierarchy and the authority it grants itself to act as God's representative. When Isabel admits that she too has entertained doubt on these matters while in the convent, Juan reveals the secret of his birth: his descent from a family of *cristianos nuevos*. Isabel's revelation that her mother was also a *Converso* seals their union. The *Converso* ancestry of both protagonists places them outside mainstream society and provides them with a unique perspective on Catholic hypocrisy. Yet Isabel's injunction is to ignore their past: "Ocultemos nuestro origen; procuremos ser buenos" (283). She interprets their ancestry as something shameful, a stain against which they must strive to be good. Her ambivalence towards her mother's *Converso* status, however, is seen in her description of her as belonging to "esa raza proscrita donde nació el Salvador del Mundo" (283). Although she refers to the Jews as a proscribed race, her comment also reminds the reader that Jesus Christ himself was a Jew.

She continues to say, moreover, that the proscribed race is represented in Spain by “los Cartagenas y los Santa-Marías” (283). Here she undoubtedly refers to Pablo de Santa-María, a famous convert of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Born in Burgos in 1350 as Schlomo Ha-Levi, he converted to Christianity in 1390 and became Bishop of Cartagena and later Burgos. His son, known as Alfonso de Cartagena (b. 1384), was an important priest, humanist and Spanish diplomat in the fifteenth century<sup>33</sup>. The mention of these famous figures seems to point once again to the possibility of Jewish assimilation into the Spanish body politic. Through the process of conversion, former Jews can even reach positions of Christian power, as exemplified by the Cartagena family. Yet, the status of these Conversos also points to the hypocrisy of the time because Juan and Isabel still feel the need to hide their origins in order to integrate. Indeed, no sooner does Isabel reveal her ancestry to Juan than she silences it. Their future marriage will be based on a common bond of silence. With a few rare exceptions, such as Alfonso de Cartagena and Pablo de Santa María, this was the fate of Spain's Conversos.

The mention of these historical Converso figures, however, complicates the position of the former Jew in medieval Spanish society. Both are known for their active hostility to the unconverted Jews of Spain. From the time of his conversion, Pablo de Santa María campaigned to convert members of his former community (Gorsky 140). In January 1412, he wrote an edict in conjunction with the Dominican Vincent Ferrer that was one of the harshest anti-Jewish measures yet promulgated in Castile. Issued in the name of King John II, the edict confined Jews to *juderías*, forbade them from practicing medicine, working in certain trades and holding public office, and imposed a number of other severe measures designed to impoverish them and push them towards Catholicism. Alfonso de Cartagena was similarly noted for the influence of his anti-Jewish policies on Pope Eugenius IV. He played a role in persuading him to issue the Papal Bull of 1442, which withdrew the privileges granted to Jews by former Popes.

The hostility to Jews demonstrated by these historical figures resonates in the text with another Converso character that Juan mentions in his first encounter with Nuno at the start of the novel. He attributes the prejudice he suffered as a child to the specific anti-Jewish propaganda of Fray Alonso de Espina, who “predicaba contra sus antiguos correligionarios cosas espantosas” (34), and describes a book published by the Converso friar, in which he called for the extermination of all Jews. The novel suggests that in order to survive as a Converso in fifteenth-century Spain one must persecute others. Indeed, in order to secure his position in Spanish society, the Converso protagonist Juan joins a mission to persecute another minority group: the Guanches of the Canary

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<sup>33</sup> See Pérez, Joseph. *Los judíos de España*. Marcial Pons Historia. 2005.

Islands. He does this despite his rejection of the official narrative of conquest that Nuno enunciates.

## Loss of Empire

Nuno's speech, as I suggested earlier, exposes the connection between the zeal to evangelise and the more prosaic nature of Spanish imperial ambitions. His discourse dehumanises the native Canary Islanders as non-Christians who are therefore ripe for exploitation and enslavement. Furthermore, he argues that Spain is destined to expand and conquer. For the novel's nineteenth-century readership, the confident tone of Nuno's proclamation would have seemed somewhat ironic. The nineteenth-century saw the piecemeal dismantling of the Spanish Empire in the Americas, as one republic after another proclaimed its independence from a nation in decline. The process was stimulated by the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808, which triggered a series of constitutional crises in Spanish America, as rival factions supported either the deposed King Ferdinand VII or the Cortes of Cádiz. The sense of national decline in Spain prompted anxiety about the country's position in the world and culminated in the “disaster” of 1898, in which Spain lost Cuba and the Philippines after its defeat in the Spanish-American War.

Millares Torres wrote, therefore, at a time when Spain's role as an imperial power was increasingly being questioned. In order to compensate for its shrinking empire in America, Spain turned its attention to North Africa. With the Spanish-Moroccan War of 1859, Spain attempted to establish a colonial presence in Morocco. This ambition was only fully realised in 1912, with the establishment of the Spanish Protectorate of Morocco. Yet already in 1877, when Millares Torres wrote *Aventuras de un converso*, Spanish intellectuals debated Spain's role as an imperial power. By portraying the conquest of the Canary Islands, which was the first act of Spanish overseas imperialism, the novel joins this debate. Millares Torres uses the invasion of the Canary Islands to question the official narrative of Spanish colonialism. The relationship between the imperial project and the Catholic Church is exposed as hypocritical. Much as Nuno's speech demonstrates the slide from evangelisation to slavery, the religious justification for Spanish expansion proves to be a mask for personal ambitions and greed.

Millares Torres also explores the impact of Spanish colonial aggression on the society of the Canary Islanders. While the tribal chief, or Faican, responds with violence and revenge against the few Spaniards he is able to capture, the character of Adalmina undermines the simplistic antagonism between the two groups. Born to a Spanish mother, she dreams of one day travelling to Spain. Her ability to speak fluent Spanish enables her to communicate with Juan and demonstrates the hybrid identities that begin to form on the Islands. In this way, she is similar to Juan, whose Converso status

undermines the pure definition of Spanishness that the fledgling Empire sought to project.

*Aventuras de un converso* examines the connection between Spain's nascent Empire and the concept of purity. It demonstrates the continuity of the homogenising project of the Catholic Monarchs (the Reconquista) and their outward push for territory. The year 1492, of course, is an auspicious date in Spanish history, which is remembered as the year that Columbus sailed westwards with the hope of reaching India. The same year, however, only a few months earlier, also marks the capitulation of Nasrid Granada, the last Muslim-governed territory in Iberia, and the Alhambra Decree, which proclaimed the expulsion of Jews from Spain. That these events all took place in the same year is not merely historical coincidence, but rather demonstrates the logical consequences of the national project undertaken by the Catholic Monarchs. Not only did they unite the important crowns of Aragon and Castile, which they used to pursue an aggressive policy of national identity construction, but they also pushed this expansionist logic outward, into new territories, ones that contained new Others to vanquish or assimilate.

In the novel, the Spanish invasion of the Canary Islands, which precedes the downfall of Granada, is portrayed as the testing ground for the subsequent colonisation of the Americas. Moreover, the Spanish attitude to the native islanders foreshadows the exclusionary policies that will be formalised in the mainland with the establishment of the Inquisition. Granada was immediately incorporated into the Kingdom of Castile and its Jewish inhabitants (alongside those in the rest of Spain) were offered the choice of conversion or exile. Although the treaty of surrender formally recognised the legal status of Islam in the newly Christianised realm, in practice this policy was not respected and Islam was effectively prohibited by the end of the fifteenth century. The completion of the Reconquista, then, was the starting point for the project of Spanish cultural and religious homogenization, which took an ethnic turn in the sixteenth century following the introduction of the blood purity laws (*limpieza de sangre*).

Agustín Millares deconstructs the conquest of the Canary Islands to reveal the rapaciousness of the supposedly noble enterprise. In so doing, he strikes at the core of the Spanish imperial identity because he exposes the hypocrisy that lies beneath its rhetoric and self-image. The discussions between Juan and Nuno, and Juan and the captain, centre on the morality of conquest. Juan, already in a dangerous position because of his Converso background, makes use of irony and suggestion to reveal the greed beneath the facade of Christian charity. Thus, for example, when the captain argues that “las buenas tierras han de ser siempre para los buenos cristianos” (105), Juan retorts: “Si Dios los quisiera quitar esas tierras, Sr. hidalgo, no necesitaria de nosotros” (105). Irony is not confined to Juan, but is present also in the narrative voice, which sometimes seems to adopt a Converso perspective.

Their departure for the islands is delayed owing to unfavourable wind conditions. The narrator reflects that this delay, which would have annoyed a commercial venture,

does not dim the high spirits of the soldiers. They continue to sing and play dice “sin acordarse de que cada minuto de retraso en la conquista isleña, robaba un Alma al cielo y se la daba al Diablo.” (101). The narrator here ironizes on the rhetoric that this mission is not simply another commercial venture. This definition is ironic, however, as it will later prove to be precisely that. Furthermore, the formula of saving souls is mocked through a sort of *reductio ad absurdum*, whereby every delayed minute is a lost soul.

Agustín Millares' focus on the conquest of the Canary Islands serves not only to expose the contradictions inherent in Spain's self-rhetoric but also to underline the importance of the Canary Islands - his place of birth - within the narrative of Spanish history. He reminds his readers that the Canary Islands occupy a central role in Spain's vision of itself since 1492, as a place of expansion and homogeneity. Yet, as the novel reveals, this image is grafted onto a reality that is far more nuanced and complex. When *Aventuras de un converso* was published, Spain had already lost a number of its colonies in the New World and was finding it increasingly difficult to hold onto its remaining possessions. The novel is one of many examples of nineteenth-century writers seeking to understand the origins of the Spanish Empire, at a time when its economic and social model was being surpassed by the colonialist models of France and England. The Canary Islands thus becomes not only a privileged site of Spanish imperial history but also a place where alternative power relations between coloniser and colonised may be explored. Juan and Isabel's interactions with Adalmina and the Faican point to the broader possibilities of cross-cultural interaction before the imposition of the narrow parameters of Spain's imperial apparatus. For Agustín Millares, then, the Canary Islands become a place of resistance against the overwhelming Spanish narrative of Self that was part and parcel of its imperial project.

The question of purity, whether religious or ethnic, is undermined by the very existence of Juan, Isabel and Adalmina. They embody the multiple shades of nuance that characterised life in early-modern Spain, behind the facade of its official self-image. Adalmina is a Guanche and, therefore, one of the heathens that the Spanish expedition sets out to convert. She reveals, however, that her mother was Spanish and that she often dreams of visiting Spain and seeing the places of her ancestors. She is forced to live a double life, in which she wears the mask of heathen native, but longs for Spain and is, partly, at least, a Christian believer.

Living a double life is a characteristic quality of the Conversos in Spain (Yovel xii). Forced to hide their (true) identity beneath the mask of orthodox Catholicism, the Converso experience is one of a hidden inner voice and a fractured identity. The presence of the Inquisition, which aimed at total control, not only of one's actions, but also one's inner thoughts, created a culture of secrecy and performative identity. After Juan and Isabel return to Seville from the Canary Islands, they live as a married Catholic couple, while secretly believing in a different God - perhaps a Protestant, or Jewish one. During the Inquisitorial *auto-de-fé*, they must perform as pious Catholics who derive

satisfaction from the spectacle of purification they witness. The burning of heretics was deliberately organised as a public spectacle, designed not only to instil fear, but also to edify the crowds. While Juan and Isabel are horrified by the intolerance they witness, and tell each other that this is not the God in which they believe, they must hide this opinion from the dignitaries around them.

Adalmina is unable to construct an elaborate mask to hide her inner life and reveals to her father that she is a Christian. The Faican, who is as intolerant as his Spanish counterparts, cannot accept losing his daughter to the enemy religion. In her argument that only practice and ritual separate the two religions, she, in effect, argues for the importance of the inner religious experience, above and beyond ritual. Yovel has argued that the Conversos in Spain, pulled between a forced Catholicism and a forgotten Judaism, came to value a religious experience that was centred on inner belief, which placed less emphasis on the formalism of Catholicism (240). Ultimately, Adalmina sacrifices her life for the sake of her beliefs: she commits suicide by drowning. In her martyrdom, too, she recalls the experience of numerous Conversos in Spain, who died at the hands of the Inquisition. As we have seen, *Aventuras de un converso* makes use of the Converso voice to present a critique of aspects of Spain's past. The dual nature of the Converso voice, which is that of insider and outsider, brings to light the hypocrisy of Spain's colonial narrative and the country's lack of religious freedom.

This chapter has looked at representations of Jewish and Converso characters in two historical novels from the latter half of the nineteenth century. Both novels return to formative moments in Spanish history: the Muslim invasion in *Amaya* and the birth of the Spanish Empire in *Aventuras de un converso*. In both, moreover, the Jewish or Converso characters undermine, in some way, the historical thrust of the novel. In *Amaya*, the Jewish characters seek to prevent the unity of Christian Spain after the collapse of the Visigoth Kingdom. Their defeat, however, paves the way for Basques and Visigoths to join forces against the Muslim invaders. In *Aventuras de un converso*, the Converso protagonist takes part in the Spanish conquest of the Canary Islands, but through his 'outsider' perspective, the text critiques the cynicism and savagery of that project.

Francisco Navarro Villoslada and Agustín Millares Torres are both writers from the periphery: Navarra and the Canary Islands respectively. Despite their political differences, both use Jewish characters to undermine national narratives of centralisation. Both novels seek to 'tell the story' of their regional identity and are keen to mark a separation with Spanish culture. To do this, they 'harness' the metaphorical power of the Jew, as society's ultimate Other. Yet as we have seen Navarro Villoslada is at pains to make space for Basque identity within a shared Catholic unity, whereas Spain's Catholic history is a principal target of criticism for Millares Torres. In both novels, the fight between the Muslims and Christians is part of the historical background: the Muslim invasion in *Amaya* and the completion of the Reconquista in

*Aventuras de un converso*. The Muslim in the novel is a traditional enemy; one fights him for territory. We have seen, in other texts, that this enables Muslims to be incorporated into Spanish culture. By contrast, the Jew is not a military enemy, but instead represents a form of subversion. The Jew's danger in the text lies in his ability to hide his true identity. Moreover, the Jew is always excluded, ultimately. In *Amaya*, the unmasking and condemnation of the Jew is necessary to achieve Basque unity with Spain. In *Aventuras*, the exclusion of Juan serves as a condemnation of Spanish fanaticism and intolerance.

German-Jewish novelist Lion Feuchtwanger published his novel *Die Jüdin von Toledo* in 1955. It is an adaptation of the medieval Spanish legend about a love affair between King Alfonso VIII of Castile and a Jewess from Toledo. Feuchtwanger begins the novel with a glittering description of Muslim Spain, which he describes as the most beautiful and best governed country in Europe (9). Moreover, it is a paradise for the Jewish people, who live the most contented lives since their expulsion from Palestine (10). Yet the paradise is not to last, as increasing intolerance drives the Jews north to Toledo, where Raquel falls in love with the Castilian King, but is eventually killed by an angry mob. For Feuchtwanger, the legend of the Jewess of Toledo becomes a way to come to terms with the Jewish experience of the Holocaust in Germany and the loss of their natural *heimat*. In rewriting the Jewess of Toledo, Feuchtwanger builds on a long tradition of representation, both in Spain and abroad. Indeed, Raquel is the most prominent and enduring example of Jewish representation in Spanish literature.

Why does Feuchtwanger turn to a medieval Spanish legend to portray the collapse of Jewish life in Germany? What does the legend reveal about the position of Jews in society? And, what do the different representations of the legend tell us about attitudes to Jews in different periods and countries? In previous chapters, I have organised my research into sections that study a number of texts according to specific representational strategies and themes. In this chapter, by contrast, I propose to use the legend of the Jewess of Toledo as a type of case study, one which reflects and integrates the strategies of representation that I have previously identified. The different literary adaptations of the Jewess of Toledo serve as a synchronic and diachronic study of the portrayal of Jewish characters in Spain, by both Spanish and European writers. I will explore how the original Spanish legend was imbued with new meanings during the nineteenth century, through the incorporation of European—particularly French—discourses on Jews and the Jewess. Conversely, the Jewess of Toledo was taken up by European writers, as part of the tradition of the *belle juive*, which cast the Jewish woman as both sensual and self-sacrificing, in stark contrast to the overwhelmingly negative portrayals of male Jews<sup>34</sup>.

My hypothesis is that the legend serves to articulate important questions about Spanish identity, by asking which elements belong to the nation and which must be

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<sup>34</sup> For a comprehensive study of the *belle juive* in French literature see Éric Fournier, *La "Belle Juive" d'Ivanhoé à la Shoah* (2011). See also Nadia Valman's *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* (2010).

excluded. It is not insignificant that the first literary adaptations of the legend, during the Golden Age, occurred at a time of national cultural consolidation, after the defeat of Muslim Granada and the expulsion of the country's Jews. Symbolically, King Alfonso VIII is an important historical figure because of his decisive victories against the Moors during the Reconquista. Thus, at a time when the boundaries of Spanishness were being identified and ever tightly drawn, his love affair with a Jewess represents a form of boundary testing.

During the nineteenth century, the legend enjoyed renewed popularity, which was driven, no doubt, by the increased interest in all myths and legends from the nation's past. Yet for the nineteenth century, also, the legend served the purpose of questioning the limits of the nation. Given the overall focus of this study, I will concentrate on the legend's nineteenth-century adaptations, in Spain, France, Austria and England. First, it is necessary, however, to briefly sketch the earlier versions that were most relevant for successive rewritings.

## 5.1 From Lope de Vega to García de la Huerta's *Raquel*

The legend first appears in writing in the form of margin notes in a number of manuscripts of the *Primera crónica general*, which was composed during the reign of Alfonso X (1252-1284), but collated and published only in 1906 by Menéndez Pidal (Castañeda 15). A reference to the legend appears also in the *Castigos e documentos del rey don Sancho*, which was composed during the reign of King Sancho IV (1284-1295). But the first truly literary treatment of the legend is Lorenzo de Sepúlveda's *Romance del rey don Alfonso y de la Judía*, which was published in 1551. The poem does not expand significantly on the chronicle. More important for the purposes of this study is Lope de Vega's *Jerusalén conquistada* (1609), in which the Jewess is named Raquel for the first time:

Llamábase Raquel, que aun quiso el cielo,  
que la imitasse en nombre y hermosura,  
y fuese el Rey Jacob... (xxiii, xxviii.)

Lope de Vega's naming of the Jewess proves to be extremely influential, as henceforth all treatments of legend will use the name. In the medieval chronicles, the Jewess is either referred to as *judía* or *formosa*. Given its meaning, beautiful, it is unclear if the name originated merely as an epithet that then became associated with the character's name.

Lope de Vega's choice of name is probably a result of his associations with the Bible. Castañeda argues that the legendary period of seven years that Alfonso spent in isolation with the Jewess suggests parallels with the seven-year period that Jacob had to remain married to Leah before meriting Rachel (44). Certainly, Lope de Vega could not choose the name based on his acquaintance with real Jews, as they had already been expelled from Spain. In the simple act of giving the Jewess of Toledo a name, Lope de Vega transformed the historical life of the Jewish people in Toledo into a literary motif. It is in this literary form that the story of Raquel and Alfonso would continue to fascinate. Lope de Vega is also responsible for the first true dramatic adaptation of the legend with *Las paces de los reyes y judía de Toledo* (1617). Although Raquel is an important character in the play, its focus lies elsewhere: in the tension between public duty and private desire. King Alfonso VIII's struggle is to choose between the responsibilities of his position and his private passion for Raquel. The Jewess's religion—and her outsider status—serve to highlight the irresponsibility of the King's choices, rather than being a central focus of the play. In later versions, particularly in the nineteenth century, more emphasis is placed on the question of ethnicity. In *Las paces de los reyes*, however, Raquel's Spanishness is emphasised, in contrast to the foreign (English) Queen Leonor. As the title suggests, the play's central theme is the reconciliation of the two monarchs and the restoration of peace and stability to the Kingdom of Castile.

The direct antecedent and point of departure for the nineteenth-century texts, however, seems to be Vicente García de la Huerta's dramatic tragedy *Raquel*, published in 1778. This version sets the blueprint for the basic model of the plot that later writers, both in Spain and abroad, will largely follow. García de la Huerta shifts the focus more directly towards Raquel, who becomes, as the title would suggest, the protagonist of the play. It is her tragedy (“de Raquel la desventura”) that is being told (29)<sup>35</sup>. In so doing, however, García de la Huerta portrays Raquel in a more negative light. At the opening of the play, she has become Queen, to the consternation of Alfonso's loyal subjects, and the Castilian nobility. They blame the “desorden del Reino y su abandono” (41) on the King's decision, seven years previously, to take up with Raquel. It is clear, however, that she is held responsible, whereas Alfonso is reduced to a passive victim. Raquel is compared to

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<sup>35</sup> For quotations from García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, the numbers in parentheses correspond to the line of verse.

a basilisk, which has ensnared the King in a trap: “en sus lazos enredado le tiene una Judía” (58).

The Jewishness of Raquel contaminates not only the King, but, by extension, the entire Kingdom. The nobleman García begins by talking of the King's entrapment and captivity at her hands. He then widens his focus and speaks of the “Reino infeliz, presa y despojo, de una infame mujer prostituida” (96). García attacks Raquel on two fronts: she is Jewish and she is a woman. As such, her intrusion into the heart of Castilian power is doubly offensive. Her presence strikes an incongruous note, which García makes clear with his sarcastic comment on seeing her: “¡Y qué bien entre Godos capacetes parecen, Garcerán, tocas Judías!” (127-8). This comment, of course, highlights her otherness in the Castilian court. It also establishes, however, a binary set of values between Goths (Christian Spaniards) and Jews: the former cover their heads with armour, the latter with fine cloth. Thus, the *capacete* and the *toca* encode a vision of the Spaniards as tough, militaristic and manly, while the Jews represent luxury, sensuality and surrender.

This binary distinction takes on great importance for García de la Huerta's *Raquel* because one of the principal charges against Raquel is that she tempts the King away from his military duties. In so doing, she stands in the way of the project of Christian Reconquista that aims at recapturing Iberian territory held by the Muslims. Hence, García refuses to show respect to Raquel. He remembers that the King used to “esgrimió contra Alarbes la cuchilla” or fight in Palestine. Now, however, he “en fiestas se entretiene” and the only wars he fights are “guerras de amor” (146, 151). Because of his romantic attachment to a Jewess, then, Alfonso fails to fight Muslims.

The accusation that Raquel distracts the King from his military duties becomes an important part of future adaptations of the legend also. There is a connection established between Raquel, as a Jew, who prevents the Reconquista, and the Jews in general, who are seen as suspiciously indifferent to Moorish invasion, or worse still, as active enablers and supporters of the Moorish conquest of Spain. In this way, the Jews become a fifth column within Spanish society that works against its interests.

In this version of the legend, García de la Huerta develops the character of Ruben, who speaks for the first time in any version of the legend. Ruben is not just a rabbi, but also Raquel's confidant and tutor. He goads Raquel to use the powers granted to her by Alfonso to punish the Spanish nobles: “muera Fernando, muera quien irrita a Raquel” (235-6). His advice, however, is to proceed with subterfuge, “con disimulo, no armes con la amenaza la malicia” (239). Moreover, Ruben reveals that his “astucia” and “doctrina” led to Raquel's capture of the King's heart and the arrival of the Jews at the heart of State power (226). Thus, there is a sense in the text that the Jews have captured the machinery of the State. Raquel's elevation to the role of Queen opens the door to Ruben's ideas and a retinue of Jewish advisers. They take advantage of the situation to reform the government in their favour. The nobles are angered because their traditional privileges have been usurped by the Jews.

Raquel's Jewishness, then, marks her clearly as a foreigner. This is a departure from Lope de Vega's adaptations of the legend, in which Raquel is not part of a coterie of Jews, nor is her foreignness an important element. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, Raquel insists on her Spanish identity: “Yo, Sibila, aunque no soy cristiana, soy Española” (Lope de Vega 1140). This is in contrast to Queen Leonor, who is described as “hermosura extranjera” (1121) and “nieve del norte” (1125) because she is English. As I have suggested earlier, the lack of Jews in Spain led to their literary deployment as symbolic substitutes for a range of enemies and threats to the Spanish State. In García de la Huerta's tragedy, we can clearly see that the Jews have become representatives of a threatening foreign element that undermines traditional authority.

If we situate the play within its historical context, we begin to see clear parallels with political movements of the time. Although first performed in Madrid, in 1778, Raquel Ibañez-Sperber suggests that it was written earlier, in 1766 (142). She draws attention to the popular uprisings of that year against the monarchy of Carlos III (145). These events, largely instigated by the nobility, came to be known as the Esquilache Riots, or *Motín de Esquilache*. The underlying cause of the disturbances was the rising cost of bread and other basic foods, which were leading to the impoverishment of the Spanish people. The riots were sparked, however, by a series of governmental measures that were enacted by Leopoldo de Gregorio, the Marquis of Esquilache. He was a Neapolitan and a favourite of the new King. As part of his attempt to modernise Spain, however, he wished to ban the traditional capes and broad hats of the *madrileños* and replace them with French-style dress.

Although seemingly trivial, this event represents a more general feeling among the Spanish nobility - and the population at large - that the government of Carlos III was seeking to transform Spain and undermine its traditional values and structures of power. The new King inherited the throne in 1759 and arrived from Italy with a retinue of Italian advisers and courtiers. As a proponent of enlightened absolutism, he attempted to centralise authority and create a government bureaucracy to modernise Spain. As part of this process, he deliberately weakened the power of the nobility and of the Catholic Church.

We know that García de la Huerta was involved in political activities against the government of the day. He escaped to Paris after the Esquilache Riots and, after returning to Madrid, in 1766, he was exiled to Granada on suspicion of sedition. It is unsurprising, therefore, that in *Raquel* there is a sense of a foreign element that threatens the social order and seeks to undermine the privileges of the traditional ruling class. For this reason, the foreign nature of Raquel—and the Jews in general—becomes paramount. Raquel, in her argument with García, differentiates herself from the Castilians, when she refers to “lo inculto de los montes de Castilla” and the “[p]atria de fieras y de atrevimientos” (162-5). By contrast, she refers to the Jews as “pobres

extranjeros” (336). Unlike Lope de Vega's Jewess, then, she does not assert her Spanishness, but rather makes clear that she is a foreigner.

In keeping with the negative portrayal of foreigners in García de la Huerta's tragedy, his Raquel is far more negative than the innocent Jewess of Lope's drama. She is both arrogant and scheming, and attempts to manipulate Alfonso through love. When Alfonso decides to send her, along with all Jews, into exile, she plots with Ruben to play on the King's affections for her and reverse the decision. Ruben then makes it clear that he will seek revenge on the rebellious nobles.

Raquel, then, is guiltier and more responsible for her own death than in Lope's version. She is not at fault merely for loving the King, but also for attempting to accrue and abuse power. When the rebellion becomes unstoppable, Raquel is killed by Ruben, who is forced to do so by the nobles in the room. This ending enables García de la Huerta to keep the Spanish nobility blameless for the death of Raquel. It facilitates the desired reconciliation between Alfonso and his nobility, once the foreign threat has been expunged. Nevertheless, García de la Huerta's *Raquel* does maintain the element of popular uprising that accompanies the rebellious nobles. As Raquel Ibañez-Sperber argued, it is clear that García de la Huerta deliberately relates the legend of Alfonso and Raquel to political questions of the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century, however, different versions of the legend begin to complicate this direct relationship.

## 5.2 Jacques Cazotte's *Rachel ou la belle juive*

Jacques Cazotte's *Rachel ou la belle juive* appeared for the first time in the 1788 edition of his *Oeuvres badines et morales*. Although in the preface he makes direct reference to the Spanish historical chronicles (*Chronique générale espagnole*), the work seems to be largely derived from Vicente García de la Huerta's *Raquel* (1778), which he mentions in the preface. Elie Lambert argues that it was unlikely that Cazotte had read any of the Spanish chronicles or even any other Spanish adaptation of the legend. Furthermore, he supposes that Cazotte read García de la Huerta's work in translation; the 1785 edition of *Raquel* mentions a French translation of the play (381).

Cazotte's *Rachel* takes the form of a *nouvelle historique espagnole* and so marks a departure from previous theatrical works. Despite this, in both plot and characterisation, Cazotte's work is largely faithful to García de la Huerta's tragedy. Ruben, the duplicitous Jew and confidant of Raquel, is maintained, as is the manner of Raquel's death: here again, she is stabbed by Ruben. Whereas García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, however, begins in the middle of the love affair between the King and the Jewess, once Raquel is already in power, Cazotte portrays the moment of their meeting and how

they fall in love. Lambert points out also that there a number of errors that betray Cazotte's lack of historical research. He confuses Alfonso VII for Alfonso VIII, for instance, attributing battles and victories to the latter that occurred during the former's reign (382). Many Spanish versions, however, have also taken poetic licence with the historical record, in order to exaggerate the King's achievement. More importantly, though, Lambert shows that he mistakes Tolosa - the scene of Alfonso's famous victory over the Moors at Navas de Tolosa - for Toulouse and thus writes that the King: "après avoir été cueillir des nouveaux lauriers dans la Guyenne, gagné une victoire memorable dans les plaines de Toulouse, vient s'établir tranquillement à Tolède avec son épouse Ermèngere" (Cazotte Préface)<sup>36</sup>. As we can see, the Queen's name has been changed to Ermèngere. It is unclear where he has taken this name from, especially as he recognises, in the preface, that other writers called her Éléonore.

Lambert argues that Cazotte's work differs from García de la Huerta's *Raquel* because of the political dimension of the French work. He considers Cazotte to be explicitly political, whereas García de la Huerta is not (384). As I have argued above, however, García de la Huerta's tragedy undoubtedly had political implications, given his personal political activities and the wider Spanish political context at the time of his writing. Lambert is nevertheless correct to identify the clear bias in Cazotte's work in favour of the King and the Spanish nobles. Cazotte was a convinced monarchist and supported the political *status quo* of the *ancien régime*. He was guillotined in 1792 for his opposition to the Revolution.

His political beliefs are evident in the entirely positive portrayal of the nobility. Manrique, whose loyalties are split between his class (Castilian nobles) and Raquel (as mistress of the King) in García de la Huerta's version, becomes a more straightforward character in Cazotte's adaptation. Moreover, the King is portrayed as entirely innocent. Through the duplicity of Ruben, he becomes a victim of his trusting nature and the naiveté of his loyal friend Garcerán: "C'est ainsi que l'aveugle confiance d'une part et une présomption peu éclairée de l'autre, introduisèrent le dangereux Ruben à la cour de Tolède" (Cazotte). To an even greater extent than in García de la Huerta's tragedy it is the Jews that bear responsibility for infiltrating, and subverting, royal power.

Ruben's presence in the castle and the events that follow are not coincidental, but rather form part of the Jew's plan: "ce scélérat n'était pas pris au dépourvu; et, quoiqu'on eût cru le surprendre sans le prévenir, il arrivait avec un plan formé, dont l'imprudence et l'aveuglement allaient lui faciliter le succès" (Cazotte). From the outset, then, the love affair between the King and the Jewess is part of a conspiracy. Ruben sets

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<sup>36</sup> Jacques Cazotte's *Rachel ou la belle juive* is a digitised text, available on Project Gutenberg. No page or chapter numbers are provided.

the King up to fall in love with Rachel and brings her to the court in order to gain a hold over the monarch.

The idea that the Jews deliberately introduce Raquel/Rachel to the King in order to curry favour is not new. Already in Mira de Amescua's *La desgraciada Raquel* (1625), the Jewess is chosen by the Jewish elders to plead with the King against the order of expulsion. Amescua's play hints at the possibility of sexual exploitation of the King by the Jews, since they decide that: "era bien ir alguna hermosa judía a hablar al Rey." (Act 1, 126). The story demonstrates clear parallels with the Book of Esther. The biblical story recounts the life of a Jewish orphan girl called Esther who finds favour with the King and uses her influence to prevent a massacre of the Jews. Esther is adopted by her cousin Mordecai, who is a courtier to the King and brings Esther to him when a call is issued asking for young virgins to be brought to the palace. Mordecai is an obvious inspiration for the character of Ruben in García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, although the biblical allusion is more explicit in the adaptation by Cazotte. Indeed, in *Rachel ou la belle juive*, Rachel is also an orphan. This not only alludes to the biblical story but also serves to highlight that Rachel is a daughter of all the Jewish people.

Jewish manipulation of the King is stated explicitly by Cazotte in the preface to his work, in which he says that Alphonse became a slave to the Jewess and that the Castilians were victims of the Hebrews. He explains that the King's subjects rise up in indignation, although this is not directed "contre leur souverain, qu'ils regardaient comme assujetti à la puissance d'un maléfice" (Cazotte). Cazotte is clearly at pains to acquit the King of any responsibility for the tragedy and to avoid any suggestion of popular unhappiness with the King. Nevertheless, in order to follow the legend, Alphonse must be portrayed as abandoning his duties and his war against the Moors for a period of seven years. Cazotte's trick, however, allows the King to immediately return to his duties once he is "délivré de ses chaînes". After his liberation from Ruben's sorcery, he immediately justifies the loyal support of his subjects through his military endeavours and once again becomes "la terreur des Maures".

In the preface, Cazotte suggests that the magical and fantastical elements of the story are necessary in order to justify this complete and instantaneous turnaround. Indeed, how else to explain the seven-year abdication of responsibility by a King that must be judged as infallible? Cazotte argues that one must almost dismiss the notion that the King spent seven years in idleness with a Jewess. Otherwise, if it were true "en l'imputant au seul excès d'une passion, on déshonore le héros et l'amour." For this reason, he argues, "[i]l faut avoir recours au merveilleux pour l'expliquer" (Cazotte). As a result, he introduces the magic mirror, in which Alphonse sees Rachel for the first time. Furthermore, to highlight the King's enslavement, he introduces the portraits of Rachel and Alphonse that are hung on each other's necks. These act as magic talismans and perpetuate the King's infatuation. Once Raquel is killed and the portrait is removed from the King's neck, he returns to his senses.

This justification for the use of magic, however, seems somewhat insufficient, when one considers the rest of the author's *oeuvre*. His earlier, and more famous, work *Le Diable amoureux* (1772) contains a number of fantastical elements that appear to have inspired him when he came to write *Rachel*. In his 1984 book on mysticism in the work of Cazotte, Georges Décote points out a number of analogies between the two works. In both, the protagonist comes under the influence of a “cabaliste”, as a result of which he falls in love with a young girl. He eventually becomes a prisoner of this love until he is freed from it by a religious intervention that reveals the diabolical nature of the forces at work. In both examples, the hero snaps back to his senses once he is liberated from his enchantment and regrets what has happened.

*Le Diable amoureux* is also set in Spain and is subtitled “Nouvelle espagnole”. In this case, however, the sorcerer is not Jewish but Flemish. This would seem to suggest that Cazotte was not interested in the Jews *per se*, but rather in the idea of cabalism, secret societies and plots. In both cases, though, the conspiracy is presented as against the interests of social order and the Catholic Church. The interest in secret societies and mysticism also reflects Cazotte's own life. In his later years, he became a Martinist, which was a form of esoteric Christian mysticism that was popular in late eighteenth-century France. The movement believed in the possibility of recovery or illumination, to atone for the fall of man. It was also interested in religious and mystical symbolism, the influence of which can be seen in Cazotte's writing.

### 5.3 *Raquel*: a historical novel

The first historical novel to be written based on the legend is Joaquín Pardo de la Casta's *Raquel* (1852). In this version, *Ruben*, Raquel's Jewish adviser and confidante, disappears. In his place, Isaac, Raquel's father, becomes a more important character. This change may reflect the influence of Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, in which the two Jewish characters are Isaac and his daughter Rebecca. As well as the traditional profession of *joyero*, or jeweller, which was long associated with Jews in Spain, Isaac is also a magician, or alchemist. In the text, we discover that he learned magic from a certain Rugeri, from whom he inherited his books and potions. The name Rugeri and the magical elements, such as the magic mirror, point to the influence of Cazotte's text on Pardo de la Casta.

The historical novel dispenses entirely with the rebellious nobles, nor is there any popular uprising against the King as a result of his affair with the Jewess. Instead, the plot against Raquel is a result of personal grievances: it is a conspiracy between Queen Leonor and Don Álvaro, the Count of Fuen-Saldaña. The former cannot bear to see a rival for her affections with the King; the latter seeks revenge against Raquel because

his love for her is unrequited. As a result, the political dimension of the tragedy is less clear than in earlier versions of the legend.

In common with García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, however, the historical novel also sees Raquel die at the hands of fellow Jews. Pardo de la Casta's innovation is for Raquel to be killed by poison. Although the Queen and the Count hatch the plan, the poison is, in fact, administered to the unfortunate Jewess by her handmaid Betsabé. She accepts to play a murderous role in the conspiracy because of her own thirst for revenge, both against Isaac and King Alfonso. We discover later that she had been in love with Isaac, but the jeweller rejected her in favour of Raquel's mother Rebecca. After poisoning Raquel, she reveals her responsibility for the death of Rebecca also, many years previously. She wishes to murder Alfonso because his father was responsible for the burning of her mother at the stake on suspicion of witchcraft.

Betsabé's characterisation is extremely negative in the novel. From the beginning, she is portrayed as possessing a “sonrisa hipócrita” and a “siniestra fisonomía” (7). Her ugliness is contrasted with the incredible beauty of Raquel: “había un contraste prodigioso entre aquellas dos mujeres; entre la belleza de la una, y la fealdad asquerosa de la otra” (8). In the text, the physical contrast points to a deeper contrast in personality and moral standing. Thus, the difference between the beautiful Raquel and the ugly Betsabé also becomes the difference between: “la candidéz de aquella, y la hipocresía de ésta, que parecía estar poseída por todos los malos instintos de la raza humana” (8).

Betsabé, then, is portrayed with the negative characteristics that are stereotypically ascribed to the Jew: she is deceitful, vengeful, secretive and perfidious. Whereas Raquel's beauty sees her represent the attraction of the exotic Other, Betsabé is an entirely negative representation of a Jewish character. Isaac is similarly portrayed in a negative light. He practices his magic in secret and hides this fact from his daughter. Although it enriches him, however, his dark magic is unscrupulous and dangerous. Indeed, he produces and sells the poison that will ultimately be used to kill his own daughter. He is, of course, unaware of its intended victim. Nevertheless, that he is willing to sell lethal poison at all speaks to the amorality of his business.

The greedy Jew, who is amoral in his business dealings, is a common trope of Jewish characters in literature. The figure can be found right through the history of European literature. Shakespeare's *the Merchant of Venice*, of course, provides one of the most famous examples in the character of Shylock. Avaricious Jews can also be found in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. A number of Spanish historical novels of the nineteenth century, however, contain Jewish characters similar to Isaac, who use (pseudo)-scientific knowledge to gain both money and power.

Interestingly, the negative portrayal of Isaac and Betsabé contrasts with the very positive representation of Raquel herself. Unlike García de la Huerta's arrogant and manipulative Raquel, Pardo de la Casta gives us an entirely innocent Jewess, who has no

interest in power. Indeed, Raquel only discovers the true identity of the King much later and does not move into the palace to adopt the trappings of a Queen. King Alfonso dons a disguise and introduces himself to the Jewess as Enrique, a lowly *ballestero*, or crossbowman in the royal army. This deception allows the author to portray her love for Enrique/Alfonso as entirely untainted by greed or a desire for social status. Indeed, although she is Jewish, and therefore excluded from courtly society, she is much wealthier than Enrique. Betsabé uses this difference in wealth in her attempt to persuade Raquel to forget about the *ballestero* and turn her attention to the Count, whose wealth and status, she argues, will more likely please Isaac.

Raquel discovers her lover's true identity by accident, when she sees the King during a procession and recognises him. Rather than rejoicing at the high status of her lover, Raquel is horrified and angry. She accuses him of having betrayed her and of using deception to seduce her:

Con todos os habeis mostrado harto generoso: los de mi raza os bendicen, por los muchos beneficios que les habeis dispensado: los cristianos os adoran, porque han encontrado en vos un rey bueno, noble y, sobre todo, valiente. Habeis dado a vuestro reino paz y prosperidad; y esto siendo tan joven. Solo conmigo os habeis portado cruel y desapiadadamente. (162)

In these lines, Raquel reverses the usual charge against Alfonso. She accuses him of behaving impeccably as a ruler, but badly as a lover. Whereas in other versions of the legend, such as García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, Alfonso is seen as having abandoned his government because of his love affair with Raquel, this is not the case here. Indeed, Raquel seems to suggest that both the Christians and the Jews are happy with his reign. The accusation that he neglects his military duty by not continuing the fight against the Moors is reversed in this text to suggest that he has brought peace to his Kingdom.

Pardo de la Casta's novel also departs from previous versions of the legend in that the King takes his revenge on those responsible for Raquel's death. While Alfonso kills Ruben in García de la Huerta's tragedy, this is the first time that a member of the nobility pays for the conspiracy against Raquel with his life. The King orders Hernando to find Count Fuen-Saldaña and kill him for his crimes.

## Theatrical adaptation

Pardo de la Casta's historical novel inspired a stage adaptation of the same name that was published in 1859. The author of the play is Pedro Pardo de la Casta and was, therefore, probably a relative of Joaquín. Pedro Pardo de la Casta's play is almost identical to the historical novel in every aspect of the plot. The magical aspect of the

novel is also present, as is the poisoning of the Jewess by Betsabé. Unusually, however, the play has a happy ending for the Jews. Isaac, who had been imprisoned by the King for daring to ask for permission to leave Toledo, returns home in time to understand that Raquel has been poisoned by one of his potions. He is able to create an antidote and save her before she dies.

The play ends after Raquel has recovered. Isaac has been given a scroll by King Alfonso, which entitles the Jewish father and daughter to leave Toledo and seek residence in Valencia. It is suggested that this move will enable Isaac to abandon his magic and to return to the life of a good man. This positive ending, in which the Jews are triumphant, is extremely rare in literary treatments of the legend and marks a significant departure from its historical roots.

The surprise ending is all the more shocking given the similarity to the historical novel in every other aspect of the plot. Until the final few pages, the play not only follows the plot details of the earlier historical novel, but also uses the same dialogue. Ríos Carratalá argues that the historical novel is the original text and that the play is an adaptation of the novel (427). A study of both texts certainly supports this suggestion. The identity of the two authors, however, remains something of a mystery. Ríos Carratalá speculates that they may be brothers, although the author of the historical novel appears to hail from Valencia, while Pedro Pardo de la Casta is presented as a military officer from La Coruña on the title page of the 1862 edition. Ríos Carratalá, however, does not dwell on the play, beyond noting its different ending.

Given that Raquel's awakening from the effects of the poison occurs in a short final scene it seems natural to speculate on whether this was not originally part of the piece. I did wonder if, perhaps, this sudden twist was a later addition. It is possible that at a particular performance there was an attempt to give the play a happier ending, which led to the addition of Raquel's recovery.

It seems unlikely, however, that this would be the case. The legend of Alfonso and Raquel is an extremely popular one. Audiences in the nineteenth-century would, in all likelihood, have been familiar with the story and it is doubtful that there would have been an attempt to soften the ending for their benefit. Moreover, the story is famously a tragic one and the death of Raquel is a cathartic moment that is crucial to the denouement.

Raquel recovers because her father Isaac realises that she has been poisoned and gives her an antidote in time. Since this occurs in the previous scene, and is not included in the historical novel, it seems more likely that the alternative ending is a deliberate decision by the author to transform the story. In both the historical novel and the play, Isaac is imprisoned by Alfonso. In the historical novel, however, his release comes too late and he is unable to do anything to save Raquel. In the play, he is by her side soon after she has drunk the poisoned water.

The new ending is interesting not only because of its abrupt departure from the historical legend and its literary legacy, but also because it rewrites the religious dynamic at work in the legend. In previous versions of the legend, Raquel's death severs her ties with her Jewish coreligionists and binds her to the King. She either dies at the hands of a fellow Jew, Ruben, converts, or else dies with her love for Alfonso still intact. In this version, however, her recovery serves to reconnect her with her father and, by extension, with her father's faith. She is reborn, as it were, cured, not only of the poison, but also of her 'deviant' love for the Christian King. As she says: “¡Es posible, padre mio, que tu hija se haya olvidado de tus canas por los rubios cabellos de un soldado nazareno!!..” (100).

Raquel's new sense of duty reminds her of the frivolity of her love for the Christian King: her true love must be for her father and her own religion. Her father, of course, is the one that saves her from death. Although, as in the historical novel, he makes the poison that threatens to kill her, this mistake is swept away by his ability to cure her. In producing an antidote and saving her life, Isaac confirms the wisdom that goes with his 'canas'. Moreover, he stakes a claim for the superiority of Jewish learning and the power of his science: “¡Si, envenenada!!.. ¡pero la ciencia de tu padre es muy grande... muy experimentada...” (95).

This triumphant celebration of Jewish scientific knowledge stands in contrast to the portrayal of Jewish learning as something sinister and suspicious. In Joaquín Pardo de la Casta's historical novel, as well as in the French version by Cazotte, Isaac's magic is dark and dangerous. In this version, also, Isaac creates the poison destined to kill Raquel. His science is redeemed, however, when it becomes clear that it can heal as well as harm. Although he stakes a claim for the power of his scientific knowledge, Isaac connects this immediately to the power of the Jewish God. The antidote will have an effect on God: “prueba este antídoto, que solo con que tus labios toquen sus bordes, Jehová te conservará la vida.” (96). Jehovah will be merciful and will save Raquel's life.

Whereas writers of the legend in previous centuries were keen to justify the superiority of Christian belief, such religious motivation is absent from this play. Indeed, Pardo de la Casta is not concerned about elevating the Jewish religion when Isaac calls on his God to save Raquel. Moreover, the final line of the play, “¡Dios de Jacob, bendito seas!!” (100), allows the Jewish voice to be heard to an unusual degree. The victory of the Jews in the play is certainly unusual in nineteenth-century Spanish literature. After Raquel's recovery, Isaac discovers a scroll on the ground, which has been left by Alfonso. It authorises the father and daughter, in accordance with Isaac's request, to leave Toledo and move to Valencia.

This outcome is not only a personal victory for Isaac, but it also represents a transformation of the dynamics of exile in the legend. In previous versions of the legend, Alfonso's affair with Raquel is bound together with the question of Jewish exile. In some cases, Raquel and Alfonso meet when the former approaches the latter to beg

for the revocation of an edict of exile. In other cases, the exile of the Jews is demanded by the nobles because of the influence of Raquel and her Jewish advisers on the business of government. In this version, however, the King does not decree the exile of the Jews, but rather uses his power to grant freedom of movement to Isaac and Raquel. In their case, exile is voluntary.

Despite its radical departure from other versions of the legend, however, the new ending of Pedro Pardo de la Casta's play does confirm, as previous versions, the impossibility of the union between Raquel and Alfonso. Although Raquel does not pay with her life for transgressing the moral code, her (voluntary) exile with her father achieves her separation from the King. This allows Alfonso to return to the affairs of the Kingdom and removes the threat of contamination from the centre of Castilian power.

In the penultimate scene, Alfonso speaks to Raquel, whom he assumes to be dead. He asks for her forgiveness and makes it clear that her death entails his return to the battlefield. There, he will recover his “prez” and “gloria” in battles against “los enemigos de mi religion”, or Muslims (99). The play makes clear, as do previous versions, that Alfonso's love affair with Raquel prevents him from fighting against the Moors. There is no sense of antagonism, however, towards Raquel's religion, although we would expect that Jews would also be considered enemies of his religion. Rather, Alfonso asks Raquel to speak to her “hermanos, los angeles del cielo” and to ask God to spare him from any future suffering (99).

As we have already seen, the historical novel by Joaquín Pardo de la Casta moves away from the simplistic characterisation of the Jews as an alien Other in the midst of Spanish society. In the late eighteenth century, García de la Huerta highlighted Raquel's foreignness in order to draw attention to contemporary concerns of foreign interference in Spanish governmental affairs. Although these contemporary foreigners were not Jews, Raquel's Jewishness was a powerful symbol that allowed García de la Huerta to connote Otherness.

Joaquín Pardo de la Casta is less concerned with Raquel's foreignness. Her Jewishness becomes an exotic detail that is expressed through descriptions of her beauty. Like the character's appeal to nineteenth-century romantic writers across Europe, the Raquel in the historical novel appeals to Alfonso, in a sense, as a result of her Jewishness, which renders her exotic and unattainable. The other Jewish characters in the historical novel, however, represent literary Jewish stereotypes that found an echo in other nineteenth-century portrayals of Jews.

Pedro Pardo de la Casta's adaptation of the historical novel maintains these negative portrayals of both Betsabé and Isaac. The former remains the poisoner, while the latter is the producer and vendor of the poison. The negative portrayal of Isaac, however, is completely overturned through his ability to save his daughter, thanks to his scientific knowledge.

## 5.4 Franz Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*

Interest in Spain's medieval past can also be discerned in nineteenth-century German literature. Greatly influenced by romanticism, German-speaking writers followed their French counterparts in devoting a significant amount of work to Spanish themes. In Germany, there was also a large body of German-Jewish literature, particularly after the Jewish Enlightenment led by Moses Mendelssohn. Ned Curthoys has explored how German Jewish writers turned to the history of *Al-Andalus* in an attempt to negotiate contemporary Jewish identity within Germany. He argues that German-Jewish intellectuals found in *al-Andalus*, with its culture of pluralistic coexistence, a useful model for religious harmony in their own time. It also allowed Jewish writers to evoke a perceived Golden Age for Jewish culture in Europe and to construct a Jewish identity that was at once both confidently Jewish and open to the cultures around it (Curthoys 110).

The legend of the Jewess of Toledo also found its way into German literature. The first adaptation in German was produced in 1851 by the Austrian playwright Franz Grillparzer. *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, however, was not performed in the theatre until 1872, when it was premiered in Prague, after Grillparzer's death. *Die Jüdin von Toledo* offers an interesting example of the legend's treatment within a different literary tradition. Moreover, Austria was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the nineteenth century, which had a large and relatively assimilated Jewish population in all of its principal cities. The question of Jewish emancipation was the subject of controversial debates in the politics of the Empire throughout the century. Jews were eventually emancipated in Austria-Hungary in 1867, sixteen years after Grillparzer completed *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and five years before its debut performance in the theatre.

In her article on *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, Helfer suggests that there were two major influences on Grillparzer when he wrote the play. The first was Jacques Cazotte's *Rachel ou la belle juive*, which Helfer claims he read continually while he wrote (162). It is likely that he first came to the legend through Cazotte, whose work was popular throughout Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The influence of Cazotte's work is certainly visible in *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, as Grillparzer builds on the theme of magic and sorcery, and the power of enchanted images. When she is sheltered in the King's garden pavilion, Rahel takes his portrait from the frame. She plays at sorcery and suggests that she can use his portrait to influence his emotions and even cause physical harm by sticking pins into it. When she is escorted home she refuses to return the portrait, and steals it, leaving her own in its place. The King feels his hand burn when he picks up the portrait and suggests that it:

Makes flame the embers glowing in my breast,  
To think she holds my picture in her hands!  
They talk of magic and forbidden arts  
This folk employs with symbols such as this,  
And something as of magic chills my flesh. (43)

The magical element is not as explicit as in Cazotte's work. Indeed, Esther, reminds the King that her sister Rahel is not a sorceress, but merely "pampered, an unruly child" (39). She argues that her sister has no knowledge of "forbidden arts" (39). Nevertheless, the portrait of Rahel appears to influence the King and drives him to see her again. As in Cazotte's work, there is a sense of Jewish manipulation of the King and the idea that his attraction to the Jewess is not entirely natural.

The other influence that Helfer identifies is Lope de Vega's *Las paces de los reyes*, which Grillparzer mentions in his diary (163). The influence of the Golden Age play is evident in Grillparzer's focus on affairs of state and in the final reconciliation between the King and Queen and between the King and his nobles. Despite these influences, Grillparzer's play is strikingly original in a number of ways. Already in the opening act there is an unusual portrayal of Rahel as a rebellious and spirited girl who disobeys her father's wishes. Furthermore, the three Jewish characters, Rahel, Esther and Isaac are not only more developed than in other versions of the legend, they are also very different from each other.

Critics of Grillparzer's play have remained divided on its central theme. Within the German tradition, most have focused on the play's representation of the State. Josef Nadler, for instance, argues that the purpose of the play is to demonstrate the fundamental importance of the State and the moral imperative to sacrifice everything for the cause of its stability. Others have turned their attention to Alfonso himself. Johannes Volkelt and Dorothy Lasker-Schlitt, among others, suggest that the drama centres on the King's inner struggle between duty and passion. This recalls, of course, Lope de Vega's *Las paces de los reyes*, which minimises the Jewish aspect of the lover, to focus, instead, on the King's moral conflict. Lope de Vega does not question the transgressive nature of a love affair with a Jewess, but neither is Raquel presented in a particularly negative way.

In focusing on these themes, critics have tended to overlook the Jewish aspects of Grillparzer's drama. We must question, however, why an Austrian writer would choose this particular story at the time that he wrote. I must concur with Helfer when she argues that the Jewish aspect forms a central part of the play. By situating the work in the historical context of debates on Jewish emancipation in the German-speaking world she demonstrates the importance of the Jewish question in the play.

There is a high degree of complexity to Grillparzer's portrayal of the Jews, which is ambivalent and oscillates between philo-Semitic declarations and stock anti-Semitic

stereotypes. With the exception of Esther, however, with whom I will deal a little later, the anti-Semitism of the play is expressed through the portrayal of the characters, whereas the philo-Semitic elements are to be found in the King's speech.

From the outset Rahel is identified as a negative character. She is, at the very least, childish and naïve, if not headstrong and manipulative. Even in the eyes of her own father Rahel is troublesome. He complains that, like her mother, she covets riches and lusts after “Egypt’s flesh-pots” (10). She disobeys the laws of Castile in order to catch a glimpse of the King, whom she believes to be young and handsome. By contrast, Esther is good like her mother, Isaac's first wife. Throughout the play, she is the sensible and humble foil to Rahel's impulsive and irrational tendencies. Like in previous adaptations, then, Grillparzer has created a duality of Jewishness. Positive traits are represented in the character of Esther, while the negative fears around Jewishness (sorcery, manipulation, love of finery) is concentrated in the negative character of Rahel.

Through the character of Isaac, Grillparzer is able to portray the most stereotypically negative traits of the Jew in literature. Act III opens with Isaac in charge of the King's economic affairs. In the comic scene, a number of petitioners ask for Isaac's help to bring their grievances to the attention of the King. While he clearly shows very little interest in their problems, he uses his influence to take their jewels and money. Act III presents us with a vision of the machinery of the State after it has been corrupted by the influence of the Jews. Rather than dispensing justice Isaac uses his power to enrich himself. His avarice is again on display after Rahel's death. When Esther reminds him that they have a task to attend to - her sister's burial - Isaac responds that he will first go and get his gold. This callous materialism angers Esther, who lifts the curse she had placed on the King and the Christians for the murder of Rahel. Instead, she finds the Jews equally to blame and asks for forgiveness.

Unlike the Spanish versions of the legend, then, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* suggests the possibility of Christian guilt for the murder of Rahel. Despite the negative portrayals of Rahel's character, the play's ending seems to suggest that she is an innocent victim of a sacrificial murder. Esther's final words inculcate the Jews also for their part in her sister's death; it is their avarice, she suggests, that led to her sacrifice. She does not, however, exclusively blame the Jews for the tragedy, but rather states that they are equally culpable, along with the Christians. The Jews and the Christians are united in a common, if negative, humanity.

*Die Jüdin von Toledo* constantly complicates its representation of Jews and Jewishness. As I have already argued, the play's most resoundingly negative character is Isaac. His portrayal conforms to cultural stereotypes of the Jewish people that were common tropes in European literature. Thus, he is avaricious, cowardly and scheming. Rahel, too, is negative—she is manipulative and capricious—but beautiful. To a large extent, though, her femininity is emphasised more than her Jewishness. By contrast, Esther is an extremely positive portrayal of a Jewish character. She is able to overcome

the marginal position of being both female and Jewish to become the moral centre of the play.

Aside from characterisation, however, the representation of Jews and Jewishness in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* is ambivalent. The text's relationship to the Jews is constantly complicated by its reliance on, and undermining of Jewish stereotypes. As I have already analysed the negative portrayal of Jews in preceding paragraphs, I will turn now to the most consistently pro-Jewish voice in the play: King Alfonso.

From the opening scene of the play, Alfonso portrays himself as the protector of his Jewish subjects. When he is informed that Christians in Toledo have been mistreating Jews because they suspect them to be spies in the service of the Moors, the King promises to protect all his subjects equally, regardless of religion. Similarly, when he is informed that Rachel, Esther and Isaac look to him for protection, his reply is positive: "Right, for here she will be safe. God's lightning blast the man who does her harm" (21). Moreover, he overturns the rule that Jews are forbidden from entering the royal garden when the court is present.

Nevertheless, his protection of the Jews is complicated by his admission that the Jews cannot be spies because they do not know anything about his plans. He tells Garceran:

None can betray the things he does not know,  
And as I have always despised their Mammon,  
I never yet have asked for their advice. (21)

The Jews are reduced metonymically to the commodity most associated with them: gold. Alfonso alludes to the suspicion that Jews gain influence over monarchs through the instrument of finance, which he has so far shunned. He does, however, make it clear that Christians, too, are not included in his decision-making.

As the play proceeds, the King uses every opportunity to defend the Jews when they are criticised by the Christian nobles. Manrique, the father of Garceran, tells the King that the punishment he found for his son, "to guard this rabble", is unjust. The King replies that the punishment is not so hard and that, indeed, Garceran may enjoy the company of the women (27).

Grillparzer's portrayal of Rahel emphasises her femininity, beauty and power of seduction and this is how she appears to Alfonso. He is almost immediately taken with her and sees her beauty rather than her religion. He tells Garceran:

With ropes of pearls around her gleaming arm,  
Her head thrown gently back, reclines your love.,  
Her golden hair—not golden, I mean black!—  
Those coal-black raven locks—and all the rest!  
You see how well you teach me, Garceran;  
What difference if Christian, Moorish, —Jewish! (31)

Alfonso makes it clear that, at least sexually, he does not discriminate between the three religions in Spain. When Garceran admits that soldiers on the frontier “have certain rights to Moorish women” but that Jews are beyond the pale, the King admonishes him for his hypocrisy (31).

He claims that Garceran would readily accept Rahel if she were to show interest in him. In the speech that follows, Alfonso lays out a remarkable defence of the Jewish people:

I love them not, these people, but I know  
That what disfigures them, we cause ourselves.  
We lame them, then are angry if they limp.  
And something great moreover, Garceran,  
Is in this tribe of restless, roving shepherds. (31)

Once again, the King's defence of the Jews is couched in negative terms. He admits that he doesn't like them as a people. Nevertheless, the rest of his speech is a remarkable piece of pro-Jewish prose for the nineteenth century:

We are but of today, but they extend  
Back to creation's cradle, back to times  
When God in Eden walked about with man,  
When Cherubim were guests of patriarchs ,  
The triune God was judge and justice both.  
Amid this world of fancy, truth is found  
In Cain and Abel, in Rebecca's wisdom,  
In Jacob, wooing Rachel with his service [...]  
The Christian like the Moslem finds his line  
Goes back to them, this oldest folk, the first;  
So it is they doubt us, not we doubt them.  
And if, like Esau, they have sold their birthright,  
We ten times daily crucify our Lord  
By sins that we commit by our misdeeds,  
While they, the Jews, have done the deed but once. (32)

Alfonso provides a Biblical defence of the Jewish people, whom he respects for their ancient lineage.

Helfer argues that his pro-Jewish statements are undermined by his sexual intent. She suggests that his arguments are a pretext to justify his relationship with the Jewess (169). This seems reductive, however. Although Alfonso is clearly attracted to Rahel, this is not sufficient to undermine the force of his arguments. We cannot find such a critical dismantling of anti-Jewish ideas in any of the Spanish versions of the legend.

Grillparzer, in the mouth of Alfonso, uses religious terminology to undermine Christian anti-Semitism. Moreover, he makes explicit the underlying association between the Spanish legend and the Biblical story of Esther. The story, which is obviously told from the Jewish perspective, highlights the positive outcome of a Jewess's love affair with a Gentile King. Esther is able to save her own people.

If we read the story in the light of its Biblical counterpart, Rahel's actions take on a heroic quality that is absent from the play itself. Although the play casts doubt on the desirability of Jewish women arriving at the heart of State power, Grillparzer reminds us here that there are positive examples and that the negative outcome of the play is not the sole possibility. Why, then, does Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo* differ to such an extent from the Spanish legends, despite its faithful adherence to the traditional narrative?

The answer most obviously lies in the historical context in which the play was written. In terms of the Jewish question, Austria-Hungary in the nineteenth century was a very different place from Spain. Many Jews lived in the Empire, with estimates of over 200,000 in Vienna alone. In 1848, three years before the completion of *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, Emperor Franz Joseph I ascended to the throne. He enacted a number of policy changes that were favourable to the Jews and progressively extended their civil rights. Between 1848 and 1867 (the year of full Jewish emancipation), the Jewish question became an important matter of debate in Austrian politics. Although the Emperor was progressive in his views towards the Jews, his policies towards them provoked anger among many Austrians.

It is in this context that we must read Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*. The play is an attempt to engage with contemporary debates about the Jews and must be situated within the Austrian discourse of the time. Grillparzer's choice of the legend of the Jewess of Toledo is not coincidental, as the story provides an opportunity to rehearse anxieties about the increasing influence of Jewish people and their proximity to power.

The story of Raquel and Alfonso also examines circumstances in which Jews and Christians lived alongside each other and Jews came close to political power. By the time the story has reached Grillparzer, however, it has become part of a tradition of representation that reflects Spanish anxieties and myths about the Jews. Both this aspect and its engagement with contemporary Austrian discourse can explain the ambivalent attitude to Jews in Grillparzer's play.

The character of Esther in Grillparzer's play merits more detailed analysis because of the important function she performs within the narrative. She represents the voice of wisdom and understanding in the play and to some extent seems to be the voice of Grillparzer himself. Nevertheless, her Jewishness means that she remains marginalised and speaks from a position of weakness, despite the power of her words. The ambiguity of the character echoes the play's ambivalence about Jews and its complicated relationship with anti-Semitic tropes.

Esther is a character invented by Grillparzer and is a significant departure from his two principal sources. In Jacques Cazotte's *Rachel ou la belle juive*, Rachel does not have a sister at all, whereas in Lope de Vega's *Las paces de los reyes* Raquel has a sister called Sibila. Sibila appears in only one scene, in which she discusses the looks of the English Queen Leonor with her sister. While this dialogue allows Raquel to insist on her Spanish identity, in opposition to the Queen's foreignness, Sibila is not a particularly important character. Unlike Esther, her character does not challenge stereotypical portrayals of the Jewish female.

Previous Spanish adaptations of the legend portray Raquel in two different ways. She is either a negative manipulator or an innocent beauty. These two positions represent the stereotypical narratives of gendered representation of Jewish women in nineteenth-century Spanish literature more generally. In Vicente García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, for instance, the Jewish protagonist is an untrustworthy and duplicitous character, who plots with her fellow Jews (Ruben) to manipulate the King and thereby subvert the power of the State for benefit of the Jews. In Lope de Vega's *Las paces de los reyes*, however, Raquel insists on her Spanish identity and is indeed entirely innocent of any wrongdoing. She is a victim of the King's forbidden love for her. Although *he* has transgressed the permitted boundaries of the State, *she* is punished.

In both examples, however, the portrayal of the Jewish female is gendered and sexualised. When portrayed as an innocent victim, Raquel's beauty and sexual appeal to the Christian male enables her to be 'cleaned' of the stigma of her Jewishness. Although this is enough to render her suitable as a mistress for the King, it is not sufficient to entirely separate her from association with the stigmatised males of her religion.

The Jewish identity is given a deeply gendered reading. On the one hand, there is the abhorrent and unsalvageable male Jew, on the other the female Jew, who is worth saving, particularly if beautiful. In Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, the King enunciates this gendered racial code more explicitly. He tells the Queen: "the women of her race can please, are even good. Not so their men, with filthy hands and niggard greed of grain; None such shall lay his finger on the girl" (75). The Jewish female body, then, becomes a battleground between two male cultures: Christian and Jewish. The Christian male asserts his superiority over the Jew by staking a claim to Jewish women, whose femininity allows them to escape the stigma of Jewishness. Through her body, the Jewish female is offered the possibility of escaping her own culture and becoming marked as neutral, or Christian.

Moreover, when Raquel is portrayed as dangerous and subversive, it is once again her sexuality that is a threatening force. She uses her beauty and powers of seduction to subvert the State's masculine power from the inside. In these examples, both her Jewishness and her femininity become dangerous markers of difference. Her power to seduce is articulated more clearly when the suggestion of sorcery is added to the story.

Esther, on the other hand, is not represented in terms of her physical attributes. She is not portrayed as a great beauty, nor does she attempt to influence through seduction. Rather, she is able to empower herself through language and her intelligence. She acts to restrain the wild impulses of her older sister and, moreover, appears wiser and more mature than both her own father and the King. Indeed, after Rahel's death, she suggests that she will become a mother to her own father Isaac and that he will live a second childhood under her care.

Esther is also able to speak for the Jews. She rebuts stereotypical accusations levelled against the Jews by the courtiers. Thus, she rejects the idea that her sister is able to use witchcraft against the King and also reacts to Manrique's suggestion that the room should be searched in case anything is missing. She reprimands him: "Think not we are so poor that we should stretch our hands for alien goods" (41) Indeed, her statement reminds us that such an idea is ridiculous. The opening scenes indicate that the family is rich. Rahel is covered in jewels and offers to trade them for protection when she first enters the palace.

Esther appears to be a female version of the Jewish Nathan character. Nathan is a character from the German play *Nathan der Weise*, written by Gotthold Lessing in 1779. The play is set during the Third Crusade in Jerusalem and is a polemic in favour of religious tolerance. The eponymous protagonist is a wise Jewish merchant who extols the virtues of friendship across religions. The influence of the play on German literature may have shaped the character of Esther in Grillparzer's play<sup>37</sup>. For Spanish writers, however, no such tradition of Jewish representation existed from which to draw on. Positive Jewish characters - other than the beautiful Raquel - only began to appear in Spanish literature in the latter years of the nineteenth century.

Esther complicates the play's relationship to the Jewish question. Firstly, she provides a mitigating Jewish presence against the negative traits of both Rahel and Isaac. More powerfully, however, she draws our attention to the hypocrisies of the Christian characters and their attitudes towards the Jews. Along with Pedro Pardo de la Casta's Raquel, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* is the only version of the legend in which the Jews speak the final words in the play. In this case, Esther condemns the King and his courtiers for their readiness to forget her sister's murder and think of the future:

You see, they are already calm and glad,  
Already planning marriages to be.  
They are the great, and slew for their atonement day  
A victim from the ranks of little men,

---

<sup>37</sup> Adolf Foglar suggested that Grillparzer admired *Nathan der Weise* so much, he wished he had written it (34)

And now clasp hands still reeking with its blood. (96)

The words she chooses condemn the Christians for their willingness to use Rahel as a scapegoat and to sacrifice an adolescent girl for their future victories.

Nevertheless, in her subsequent suggestion that she has put a curse on the King that will cause him to lose the battle, she creates suspicion yet again that the Jews are capable of subterfuge. After arguing that her sister was no sorcerer, but merely a spoiled young girl, she now threatens to harness sorcery herself. Moreover, by calling for the King to lose his battle against the Moors, she reinforces the suspicion—often levelled against the Jews in Spain—that they were in league with the Moors against Christian Spain.

Esther's final words provide yet more of a hint that Grillparzer undermines her positive traits. After Isaac's stereotypical interest in collecting his gold before burying his own daughter, Esther retracts the curse and suggests that the Jews themselves are in fact guilty for Rahel's death. Helfer argues that Esther's "condemnation of the Jews blurs an important ethical distinction: the Jews may have speculated with Rahel's person with Rahel's consent, but they did not commit murder; the Christians did" (170). While this outcome does seem to suggest that the Jews can be considered equally guilty even of lesser crimes, the Spanish versions of the legend never question the moral dimensions of Raquel's murder. The reconciliation of the King and his noblemen is never questioned, but simply accepted as a necessary aspect of the restoration of State order.

## 5.5 English adaptations of the Jewess of Toledo

The legend of the Jewess of Toledo did not make the same inroads into English literature as it did in French and German. Indeed, only one version exists in English: *The Fair Jewess*, by Joaquín Telesforo Trueba y Cosío, which was written in English by a Spanish author. Trueba y Cosío was one of many Spanish writers to seek exile in England in the 1820s, as a result of the draconian, absolutist rule of King Ferdinand VII. Although they were instrumental in supporting the Spanish uprising against Napoleon, thus returning the Spanish King to the throne, Ferdinand turned against the liberals in 1824. In London, Trueba y Cosío began to write in English in order to court an English readership. His principal output consisted of historical novels set in Spain that took inspiration from the popular style of Walter Scott. Much later, in 1872, he published his collection of

short stories about Spanish history, *A Romance of History: Spain*. Within this collection, he recounted the legend of Raquel and Alfonso.

*The Fair Jewess* is conventional in terms of plot, which is to say that it deviates little from the most influential versions of the legend that were written before the nineteenth century. Indeed, the influence of García de la Huerta's *Raquel* is made clear: Trueba y Cosío quotes a passage from the tragedy on the title page of the story. Moreover, like the eighteenth-century play, *The Fair Jewess* has the character of Ruben, who is portrayed entirely negatively. Once again, Ruben is portrayed as the archetypal scheming and untrustworthy Jew:

“Curse me, proud Christians,” he muttered, apostrophizing the Castilians; “pour forth all the venom of your souls in bitter maledictions and abuse, for I heed it not: my power now is as vast as your rage. Whilst Rachel lives, Alphonso is mine; and whilst the King is mine, I laugh your resentment to scorn”. (8)

He admits to using his influence with Rachel to manipulate the King and displays a haughty pride in his dealing with the Castilian nobles. The portrayal of Rachel, however, is very positive. Aside from her physical beauty, she is described as being “endowed with charms that might have enslaved the heart of a man much less passionate and generous than the King” (9). There is no suggestion, however, that Rachel's interest in the King is guided by any ulterior motive; only Ruben attempts to manipulate the King's affection to his advantage.

Trueba y Cosío examines the opinions of the Castilian nobles in greater detail than other adaptations of the legend. Indeed, the story dramatises the decision-making process that leads to the plot against Rachel. Given his status as a political exile, it is unsurprising, perhaps, that Trueba y Cosío should take a specific interest in political debate and intrigue. During their argument about how to free Castile from Jewish influence, the Castilian nobles decide that the only course of action is to kill Rachel. Expulsion is ruled out because “when you strike an enemy whom you fear, you ought to strike him to the death” (15). The text makes explicit the deep fear of the Other that Raquel and the Jews represent.

Although it would be excessive to claim that *The Fair Jewess* negates the anti-Semitism that forms part of the legend, it is true that there are a number of moments in the text, in which the discourse of anti-Semitism is deconstructed, if not entirely overturned. During their meeting to justify the murder of Rachel, the noblemen argue that: “that woman's fatal charms and allurements are more redoubtable to the Castilians than a host of mail-clad warriors” (15). There is certainly a hint of irony to the suggestion that a young girl, previously described as charming and beautiful, could threaten battle-hardened soldiers to the same extent as the Moorish armies. Furthermore, after the murder of Rachel, the scene is described as a “motley throng [...] parading about in derision and barbaric joy” (36). There is certainly no sense of nobility

or heroism to their actions. Indeed, there is once again a hint of irony when the noblemen defend themselves because a slave carried out the murder to prevent tainting Castilian honour with murder of a woman.

More importantly, however, Trueba y Cosío seems to examine the mechanisms of the scapegoat in Spanish society through the symbolic association of the Jew and the boar, and Rachel and the doe. During the hunt, Don Rodrigo captures a boar: “‘Hold Don Rodrigo,’ cried the King, with a burst of laughter, ‘do not hurt the poor Jew.’” (33). Don Rodrigo's reply suggests the anti-Semitic basis for this association: “I should indeed be a Jew if I were to spare this boar” (33). The Jews are associated with the boar because of their religious prohibition against eating swine. The two hunters proceed to kill the boar, which they enjoy, as they associate it with Ruben. Later, when Rodrigo kills a white doe, the King remembers Rachel and rushes back to Toledo with the apprehension that she is in danger. Trueba y Cosío, then, creates a symbolic echo of the ritualised murder of Ruben and Rachel, which takes place at the same time as the hunt. The substitution of hunted animals for the Jews draws our attention to the sacrificial nature of Rachel's death.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to argue that the text is an attempt to censure Spanish anti-Jewish feeling. Rather, Trueba y Cosío seems to be concerned with discourses of power and the mechanism of exclusion. The text, indeed, is at best ambivalent about its Jewish characters, as it is about the actions of the Castilian nobles, which it does not entirely condemn:

Had the nobles only seen in these amours the mere indulging of a sensual passion, they would not have been so desirous of constituting themselves the moral instructors of their sovereign; but unfortunately, many political interests were involved in this fatal passion, which called for their serious attention. (10)

I would argue that Trueba y Cosío is not interested in Jewishness for its own sake, but rather for the way in which it can be used to articulate difference in the Spanish context. *The Fair Jewess* is one of the few adaptations of the legend that does not avoid criticism of the King. Hernán García begins his lament with the following lines: “I see my King trampling upon our rights and privileges, striving to make us slaves, whilst he himself is the degraded toy of a woman” (6). Given Trueba y Cosío's political inclination, and his status as an exile, the parallel with the tyranny of Ferdinand VII is clear.

My analysis of the different versions has allowed me to draw some conclusions about the representation of the Jewish characters, as well as the political uses of Jewishness in the nineteenth-century texts. Indeed, the enduring popularity of the legend stems from the possibility it offers writers to explore political issues of the day. As a result, it has been regularly adapted in Spain since the Golden Age, with increasing frequency in the nineteenth century, at which point it became very popular both in Spain and abroad. The story of the Jewess of Toledo has two protagonists: King Alfonso

and Raquel. Whereas some authors focus primarily on the King and his infatuation with the Jewess, others pay more attention to Raquel and her interest in the affair. In some cases, the author has preferred to concentrate on the struggle between duty and pleasure, which is exemplified by the King's choice between his wife and Raquel, or between governmental duties and love.

The question of Jewishness in the legend is treated in a number of different, often contradictory, ways. In Vicente García de la Huerta's *Raquel*, for instance, Jewishness is clearly seen as a negative attribute and is associated with a damaging foreign influence on the country. By contrast, Pedro Pardo de la Casta's *Raquel, o los amores de Alfonso VIII Rey de Castilla* subverts the story in such a way that the positive aspects of Jewishness are brought to the fore. More generally, however, the portrayal of Jewishness is somewhat ambivalent, which is demonstrated through the different portrayals of each Jewish character and especially in the contrast between Raquel and her adviser or father. The most ambivalent portrayals of the Jews occur in the German and English stories, whereas the French adaptation, written by Jacques Cazotte, is extremely negative about the Jews.

The first point of analysis concerns the representation of Raquel. Broadly speaking, across all the different versions studied, her portrayal can be divided into two categories. She is either wholly innocent and naïve: a sacrificial victim of her doomed love for the King; or else, she is guilty of seeking to capitalise on her favoured position and wishing to usurp the Christians. When she is portrayed in this way, she becomes part of a Jewish conspiracy against the Spanish State. Along with either Ruben or her father, she plots to use her emotional hold over Alfonso to work for Jewish advantage and to turn the King away from the interests of the Castilian nobility. In some cases, particularly when sorcery is involved, there is a suggestion that Raquel has deliberately seduced Alfonso in order to gain control over him. The perceived sexual threat that Jewish women pose to Christian men points to the gendered dimension of religious difference that I discussed in Chapter 2. There is one exception to the aforementioned portrayals. In the Austrian play, *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, by Franz Grillparzer, Rahel (the German version of the name) is portrayed very negatively, but not as a manipulator. Rather, she is a spoiled and capricious child, whose behaviour even offends her own Jewish relatives.

A constant aspect of Raquel's character, however, is that she is described as extremely beautiful. The relationship between her beauty and her Jewishness, however, is quite variable. In some versions, it is suggested that her beauty sets her apart from her coreligionists. In the play by Joaquín Pardo de la Casta, however, her beauty is said to stem from her Jewishness. Indeed, the text states that her beauty is the epitome of the beauty of Jewish women in Spain. In contrast to the character of Raquel, who is an integral part of the original legend, writers have felt freer to innovate with the secondary characters in their respective stories. In the majority of cases, the other

Jewish characters are overwhelmingly negative and conform to literary Jewish stereotypes, such as avarice, cowardice or subterfuge.

Ruben is the character that recurs most often in the different versions of the legend. He is either Raquel's relative or simply an adviser. The predominance of this character - who encourages Raquel to make use of her power - probably reflects the influence of the Biblical story of Esther. Ruben is a reinterpretation of Mordechai, who is Esther's uncle. In the Biblical story, Mordechai uses the Persian King's love for Esther as a way to save the Jews from the threat of expulsion. In the Biblical story, both Esther and Mordechai are heroes because they succeed in saving the Jewish people, from whose perspective the story is told. Ruben and Raquel's interventions, however, are seen from the Spanish (Christian) perspective, as untrustworthy and dangerous.

Raquel's father Isaac is another important Jewish character that appears in many of the adaptations. He is portrayed as a combination of stereotypical Jewish traits. Thus, he is wealthy, avaricious and cowardly. In the adaptations that follow the example of Jacques Cazotte, Isaac is also involved in the occult. The association of Jews with magical practices and secret societies is to be found in other Spanish works of the nineteenth century<sup>38</sup>.

In other adaptations of the legend Raquel has either a sister or a Jewish maid, Betsabé. In contrast to Raquel, Betsabé is described as ugly, vengeful and manipulative. She is driven both by money and by the desire for revenge. She is representative of Christian fears that the Jews will find an opportunity to revenge past injustices perpetrated against them by the Christians. In a number of versions of the legend, speeches by the rebelling Spanish suggest that Jewish hatred of Christians is greater than Christian dislike of the Jews. Raquel's sister is usually an insignificant character. In Franz Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, however, Esther becomes an important counterpoint to Raquel. She is also a voice of wisdom and is the most positive representation of a Jewish character in any of the versions of the legend.

In the majority of the adaptations Raquel's murder occurs at the hands of a Jew: either Ruben or Betsabé. In some stories, she is poisoned with poison sold by her father. This facilitates the final reconciliation between King Alfonso and his people after Raquel's death. By removing Christian responsibility for Raquel's death, the story enacts a scapegoat mechanism. The Spanish nobility plot her death but can wash their hands retrospectively of responsibility for it, as all guilt has been borne by the scapegoat. In Pedro Pardo de la Casta's *Raquel*, this process is undermined because Isaac discovers that Raquel has been poisoned and provides an antidote, which saves her life. The Jew thus becomes a saviour, rather than a killer.

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<sup>38</sup> See, for example, my analysis of *Amaya o los vascos del siglo VIII* in Chapter 4.

There is a gendered component to the story of Alfonso and Raquel that contrasts Raquel's femininity with the expected masculinity of the King. Thus, the most common complaint against Raquel is that she distracts Alfonso from his duties, which are principally military in nature. As a result of their love affair, Alfonso is preoccupied with sensual pleasure, which is associated with the female, and neglects his manly need to fight and seek glory on the battlefield. Indeed, the explicit reason given for the murder of Raquel is to “free” Alfonso from her influence and allow to him to fight.

The gender dimension intersects with racial questions, as Jewishness becomes associated with feminine vices: cowardice and the love of luxury. Raquel's presence close to the King and at the heart of Spanish power is thus doubly threatening to the social order. As a woman and as a Jew Raquel represents the antithesis of the desirable male, Christian virtues of the Spanish nobility. The interconnection between race and gender is complicated further by the presence of a third racial group: the Muslims. The Jews, in this case Raquel, threaten to distract the Spanish from their principal military project: the Reconquista. Furthermore, there is suspicion that the Jews secretly assist the Muslims and act as a fifth column within Spanish society.

This thesis has attempted to trace the manifestations of al-Andalus as a literary theme in nineteenth-century Spain. It has argued that al-Andalus was a metaphor, through which writers of the period expressed a number of contemporary concerns. Thus, writers turned to the country's Muslim and Jewish past to examine Spain's position with relation to its European neighbours, liberalism, religious freedom and regional nationalisms. In the introduction, I argued that the symbolic meaning of al-Andalus in the nineteenth century could be situated along a spectrum. I suggested that at one end, there was an uncomplicated identification with the values of the Reconquista: the Muslim and Jewish past stood in opposition to Spain and Spanish identity. On the other end, there was a reversal of this idea: writers sought to claim the elements of the andalusí past as their own. Therefore, the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from the country came to be seen as a historical error. In examining the multiple possibilities along this spectrum, this thesis has identified a number of representational strategies that writers used to portray Jews and Muslims.

We have seen that the Orientalist tendency arrived in Spain—principally, through French influence—and that this informed Spanish representations of their own Muslim past. In an aesthetic sense, at least, al-Andalus was often portrayed with the vocabulary of Orientalism. Yet it has become clear, also, that patterns of representation established in the literary traditions of the Middle Ages and Early Modern period, in such genres as the frontier ballad or *romance morisco*, continued to exert a great influence on nineteenth-century texts. Moreover, these tendencies, through increased translation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, inspired European Romantic stories about Spain's past, which made their way back to Spain and influenced Spanish writers in turn. For Spanish writers, though, unlike their Northern European counterparts, al-Andalus was not a distant and exotic place. Its geographical and historical proximity to contemporary Spain brought consequences for Spanish identity. Thus, we have seen that there was a tendency for Spanish writers to seek ways to incorporate the Muslim Other, through narrative strategies like conversion to Christianity of Muslim or Morisco characters.

Yet, as a number of texts show, there were also strategies that sought to create distance with the Muslim past. We have seen this, for instance, in the way elements of fantasy were used to provide a space of connection, which is then curtailed. We have seen how mechanisms of gender demonstrate a similar ambivalence. Many of the texts I have examined reveal a degree of desire for the Jewish or Muslim Other. But the Other, while a source of temptation, is dangerous. Beauty and allure sit uncomfortably close to

punishment and death. We have seen this, for example, in *Ramiro, conde de Lucena*, in which the protagonist and his wife die because of Zaida's violent passion. For, if the texts allow the expression of desire, they also use issues of sexuality and gender to create distance between Spain and its Muslim and Jewish others. The portrayal of passionate and sexualised Muslim and Jewish women contrasts with virtuous and pious (Christian) Spanish women. Effeminate Muslim men fail to conform to the masculine codes of honour and self-restraint demonstrated by the Christians. In general, the portrayal of al-Andalus is as a place where gender and sexual norms are more fluid.

This thesis has also argued, however, that representations of Muslims and Jews often had a political purpose. The examples we have studied confirm Labanyi's suggestion that al-Andalus was used to experiment with "alternative models of the nation" (229). Indeed, the texts project visions of authority—from tyrannical to democratic—onto the Muslim past. While the stereotypical image of the Oriental despot appeared in many texts, in allusion to Ferdinand VII, Muslims—and Moriscos—also came to be identified with the liberals themselves through the shared experience of exile. Because it has examined more texts, in greater detail, this study has been able to nuance Labanyi's assertion that al-Andalus was used by liberal writers to argue for a multicultural vision of the nation. Rather, the texts suggest an uncertainty on the part of liberal writers about the degree to which Muslim culture 'belonged' to the Spanish nation. They criticise aspects of the history of expulsion—the fanaticism and violence with which it came to pass—but do not unreservedly welcome the legacy of al-Andalus.

Said has argued that the West creates an image of the East, against which it defines its own identity (1-3). As we have seen, Spanish writers sometimes use al-Andalus in the same way: Muslims and Jews are seen as antithetical to 'essential' traits of Spanish identity, while nineteenth-century Spain struggled to assert itself as truly European, in opposition to its Muslim past. Yet, here too, this thesis has been able to offer a different perspective that refines Said's approach in the Spanish context. As we have seen, in a few examples, Spain's historical Others were not used to define a monolithic Spanish identity, but rather to highlight contradictions and create counternarratives. In *Amaya*, for instance, we have seen that the Jewish characters allow the author to resolve the tensions between the Catholic unity of Spain and a need to reaffirm the particularity of the Basques. Through his metonymical association with foreignness, the Jew becomes the Other of the Other, as it were; the enemy of Catholicism. Thus, with the presence of the Jew in the text, Basque identity can be asserted, without threatening the importance of Catholicism as a unifying force for the whole of Spain.

The Jewish Other, however, also appears in the form of the Converso, who is both a part of Spanish society, and rejected by it. As we have seen in *Aventuras de un converso*, the Converso protagonist allows the writer to critique aspects of Spanish history with which he disagrees, such as religious fanaticism and the cruelty of its conquest of the Canary Islands and the New World. Like the Jew, the Converso stands in opposition to

Spanish society; its values reject him. As a result, the Converso protagonist lends the text an ironic distance from Spanish history. His presence allows the writer to expose society's hypocrisies and to draw attention to its shortcomings. In essence, the Jewish (and Converso) characters are used to draw boundaries around Spanish identity, to ask "what are we" and "what are we not" and to offer suggestions about "what we should be".

The strategies that this thesis has identified allow us to make a number of general observations. Firstly, we have seen that portrayals of al-Andalus were not monolithic. Spanish writers did not simply accept or reject the Muslim and Jewish past. Their responses to the past were as varied as their respective political projects or aesthetic interests. Spanish writers played an important role in cultivating the myth of al-Andalus and extolling the uniqueness of their Muslim history, as part of the Romantic celebration of the local and the specific. Yet we have also seen quite clearly that, in an important sense, images of Jewish and Muslim "others" were relatively static in the nineteenth century. They did not depart significantly from the Muslim archetypes and anti-Semitic conventions of earlier Spanish representations. Thus, we have found frequent examples of the noble Moor, the Muslim captive or the avaricious Jew. When writers did incorporate foreign influences in their work, they tended to react uncritically to the stereotyped images of the Muslim offered to them by Orientalism, such as the sensual Muslim woman, the Oriental despot and the uncontrollable passions of the East. Similarly, they unquestioningly absorbed the new anti-Semitism of post-revolutionary France, in which the Jew was not so much rejected for his opposition to Christianity, but because he came to be seen as a rootless cosmopolitan and harbinger of modernity's ills.

Reliance on such mythical views of the Other is, perhaps, a reflection of contemporary realities. For most of the nineteenth century, there were no Muslims or Jews living in Spain. By that time, moreover, the period of *convivencia* was a distant memory in the Spanish imaginary. In the case of Jews, for example, we have seen in Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Grillparzer's *Die Jüdin von Toledo* that literary portrayals reflect contemporary debates about Jewish emancipation in England and Germany respectively. This is manifestly not the case in Spanish works, where Jews may serve as a pretext for debates on religious freedom, but there is no real sense that the Jewish characters represent authentic Jewish life.

Nevertheless, representations of Morisco and Converso characters are quite different; they are less reliant on myths and archetypes. As categories of identity that are unique to Spanish history, they seem to provoke specific literary responses that do not rehearse traditional patterns of representation, nor ape foreign influences. Moriscos and Conversos are ambivalent, as they are both insiders and outsiders; Spanish and foreign. We have seen how this ambivalence is used in the texts to examine what it means to be Spanish and where the borders of the nation lie.

This thesis has only touched on the question of Morisco and Converso portrayal. One of its shortcomings is that it has not sufficiently taken account of the difference in representation between Muslim and Morisco, Jew and Converso. It has tended to collapse these distinctions, where further study of the phenomenon may lead to some useful insights. Furthermore, in attempting to describe the overall complexity of engagement with al-Andalus, this thesis has too readily overlooked the influence of generic conventions on representations. This is particularly true where earlier traditions of andalusí portrayal, such as the frontier ballad, or the Morisco novel, may play an important role. Another limitation of the thesis has been its narrow focus, at times, on Spanish literary production. Although time and space constraints did not allow me to engage more deeply with other literary traditions, there is certainly scope for further study on the interaction between Spanish portrayals of al-Andalus and representations of the period. Moreover, further engagement with the symbolic meanings attached to al-Andalus in other countries could also lead to some interesting insights.

This study's analysis of overlooked texts by lesser-known Spanish writers could be of interest to scholars working in Nineteenth Century Studies, or researchers of Spanish Romanticism. Beyond the texts themselves, however, this study has also sought to elucidate some of the mechanisms by which national identity is constructed in opposition to—and in negotiation with—ethnic others, as well as the medieval past. It certainly has implications for the study of uses of al-Andalus in other periods of Spanish history, particularly the early twentieth century, or even today. Indeed, we have seen in the introduction that contemporary discourses on Spain's Muslim and Jewish past are often still framed through the mythical lens that was refined in the nineteenth century.



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