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MORISCOS IN NORTH AFRICA AFTER THE EXPULSION FROM SPAIN IN 1609 AND THEIR DISCOURSE ABOUT EXILE AND DIASPORA

GERARD WIEGERS

The expulsion from Spain of the Moriscos, descendants of the Muslims who had been converted to Christianity under duress, constitutes one of the most significant instances of ethnic, religious, and political cleansing in European history.¹ The event, which took place between 1609 and 1614, was based on the dominant ideology at the time that freedom of conscience was incompatible with the functioning of a well-ordered Catholic society. It was an ideology which valued religious and cultural uniformity over diversity. The supporters of this ideology argued in favour of expulsion of the Moriscos because they deemed the processes of religious assimilation and full cultural integration to have failed. They argued for expulsion because of the Moriscos' alleged refusal to become good and loyal Catholics. However, it is unlikely that such a full assimilation would ever have solved the problem since this was a society which still placed great store on the notion of cleanliness or purity of

* The research leading to this publication received funding from the HERA project *Encounters with the Orient in Early Modern Scholarship* (EOS). I thank Yosef Kaplan for his careful reading of a draft version of this contribution.

¹ Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, "Introduction," in *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers (The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World, 56) (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1–16; translation of Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard A. Wiegers, eds., *Los Moriscos. Expulsión y diáspora. Una Perspectiva internacional* (Valencia, Granada, Zaragoza 2013). Standard works on the Moriscos are Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de los Moriscos. Vida y tragedia de una minoría* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1978), and, most recently, L.P. Harvey, *Muslims in Spain, 1500 to 1614* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

blood (*limpieza de sangre*), an idea that was by then more than two hundred years old and had embedded itself deeply in Old Christian Castilian society. The notion of *limpieza de sangre* was a symbolic expression of the fear of cultural, political, religious, and social infiltration. The weight of this fear became obvious when over three hundred thousand Moriscos were ordered to leave Spain even when they were able to prove that they were good Christians. Records show that they were often indistinguishable from their Old Christian neighbours in language, dress, or social and religious behaviour. There is no doubt that being descended from Muslim ancestors, and its alleged effects on loyalty and the possibility of integration, became the main argument for an ethnic and religious purge which, according to contemporary discourse, was needed to avoid divine punishment and preserve the Spanish king's reputation as a very Christian King who had been able to complete the Reconquest and finally defeat Islam. What happened in 1609?

The Moriscos were descendants of Muslims who for centuries had lived in the Christian territories as Muslims. In fact, for a long time Medieval Christian Iberia was, along with the Balkans, Hungary, and parts of Eastern Europe, an exception to the rule in the rest of Europe where public practice of Islam was prohibited. Some medieval Christian travellers to Spain were scandalised when they heard the call to prayer from mosques in the densely populated Muslim areas in the Kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia (where Muslims made up between twenty-five and thirty percent of the population) and in the cities of the Kingdom of Castile with its small, but quite visible minorities (about three percent).² After being forcibly converted at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the 1580s the Spanish state council took a first decision to expel all Muslims when it appeared that many had remained practicing Muslims in secret but did not carry it out for the time being. In the following years several options were considered. The decision to expel all Moriscos from Spain was taken in 1609 as a radical solution to the political, social, and religious “problems” posed by the presence of crypto Islam and as a way to enhance the image of Philip III as a Christian king in the wake of a number of military defeats and the truce with the Dutch heretical insurgents. The expulsion of the Moriscos would enable Philip III to confirm himself as a Christian king who had fulfilled the founding myths of Spain to secure his realm's safety, fight heresy, and finally purify Spain from the Muslims. On 4 April 1609, the very same day as the Twelve Year's Truce with the

² Olivia Remie Constable, “Regulating Religious Noise: The Council of Vienne, the Mosque Call and Muslim Pilgrimage in the Late Medieval Mediterranean World,” *Medieval Encounters* 16/1 (2010): 64–95.

Dutch Republic was signed, it was decided to expel all Moriscos. The political, ideological, and military attention of the Spanish authorities henceforward shifted from Northern Europe to the southern shores of the empire. The decision, officially politically motivated, was kept secret for a while in order to prevent revolts.³ Religious agents against the expulsion had to be neutralised; likewise, groups that were opposed to the expelling of very young children and groups of people who remained hopeful that, with the right approach, Moriscos would eventually become good and faithful Christians. Among the institutions potentially opposed to the measure was the Vatican which, in the end, never gave its approval.⁴ The political nature (*crimen de lesa patria*) of the decision commanded that public opinion had to be convinced that the Moriscos posed a danger to the state. Official motivations and religious arguments were debated until the first ban was published in Valencia on 22 September 1609, justified by apologetic writings and diplomatic efforts that included visual and other means of propaganda. Opposition to the imminent measure was difficult in the face of the strong ideology of suppression. Some humanists and Jesuit scholars continued to oppose expulsion and argue for continuation of the mission among them. Some solitary voices called for acceptance of the status quo to the point that they pleaded for acceptance of public religious diversity instead of forced homogeneity, but when the nobles who employed many Moriscos on their lands were promised compensation for their economic loss, the tide turned.⁵

During the sixteenth century, Moriscos responded to the increasingly strong oppression and threat of expulsion in several ways. First, they used their networks to find ways to secretly leave the country.⁶ Secondly, they started to organise their emigration by contacting authorities abroad, especially the Ottoman and Moroccan authorities. Over time, a religious

³ Manuel Lomas Cortés, *El Proceso de expulsión de los Moriscos de España (1609–1614)* (València, Granada, Zaragoza 2011).

⁴ Stefania Pastore, “Rome and the Expulsion,” in *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wieggers (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 132–55.

⁵ Francisco Márquez Villanueva, “El Morisco Ricote o la hispana razón de estado,” in idem, *Personajes y temas del Quijote* (Madrid: Taurus, 1975), 267–78.

⁶ Aḥmad Ibn Qāsim Al-Ḥajarī, *Kitāb Naṣīr al-Dīn Alā 'l-Qawm al-Kāfirīn (The supporter of religion against the infidel). General introduction, critical edition and annotated translation. Reedited, revised, and updated in the light of recent publications and the primitive version found in the hitherto unknown manuscript preserved in Al-Azhar by P.S. van Koningsveld, Q. al-Samarrai and G. A. Wieggers*, ed. Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld, Q. al-Samarrai, and Gerard A. Wieggers (Madrid 2015; first edition 1997), 46 ff.

discourse helped them to survive religiously. Their stay in Spain among the Christians was viewed as an exile. They lived there as strangers (Ar. *ghurabā'*, Aljamía: *algharibos*). The word *gharīb* evokes an eschatological atmosphere for it is associated to the well-known hadith that, "Islam began as a stranger and will end as a stranger," viz. at the end of time.⁷ Moriscos identified with this notion of being an eschatological Muslim vanguard in Christian Iberia who would precede the Day of Judgement and the Messianic era. They found encouragement and support in prophecies in Arabic and Castilian-Aragonese that circulated among them and expressed the same ideas (often in the form of Prophetic Traditions). That mood had existed among them for quite some time, starting well before the sixteenth century. Several prophecies and traditions spoke about them as *ghurabā'*. The word expresses alienation and exile in a situation which one does not easily recognise as such.⁸

In 1609 the situation of the Moriscos changed drastically with their expulsion. They were transported to places on the coasts of North Africa, predominantly Morocco and Tunisia, and settled there. Moriscos who wished to settle in France and Italy were not permitted to on the basis of their Muslim identities and left for Tunis, Algiers, and the Ottoman Empire. Some reached present-day Libya and Egypt. I will not go into the

⁷ Mercedes García-Arenal, "Un reconfort pour ceux qui sont dans l'attente." Prophétie et millénarisme dans la péninsule Ibérique et au Maghreb (16–18 siècles)," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 220–4 (2003): 445–86; Mercedes Sánchez Álvarez, ed., *El Manuscrito misceláneo 774 de la Biblioteca Nacional de París (Leyendas, Itinerarios de viajes, profecías sobre la destrucción de España y otros relatos Moriscos)*. Edición, Estudio y Glosario (Madrid: Gredos, 1982), fol. 305v; Luce López Baralt, *La literatura secreta de los últimos musulmanes de España* (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2009), 181–236; Maria Del Mar Rosa-Rodríguez, "Simulation and Dissimulation. Religious Hybridity in a Morisco Fatwa," *Medieval Encounters* 16 (2010): 143–80, 172, one of the aljamiado manuscripts reads: "Ilegue a las manos de los captivos y peregrinos en rinos en [tierra] estraña"; Devin Stewart, "The Identity of the 'muffi of Oran,' Abū 'l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Abī Jum'ah al-Maghrāwī al-Waḥrānī (d. 917/1511)," *Al-Qanṭara* 26 (2006): 265–301; Devin Stewart, "Dissimulation in Sunni Islam and Morisco Taqiyya," *Al-Qanṭara* 34 (2013): 439–90; Gerard A. Wieggers, "Jean de Roquetaillade's Prophecies among the Muslim Minorities of Medieval and Early-Modern Christian Spain: An Islamic Version of the *Vademecum in Tribulatione*," in *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam*, ed. Nicolet Boekhoff-Van der Voort, Kees Versteegh, Joas Wagemakers (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 229–47.

⁸ Maribel Fierro, "Spiritual Alienation and Political Activism: The *ghurabā'* in Al-Andalus during the Sixth/Twelfth Century," *Arabica* 47/2 (2000): 230–60.

details of the geography of the migrant communities in the Maghreb and other Islamic countries but will focus on the responses to the expulsion that are traceable in their writings in Arabic and Spanish, written roughly between about 1600 and 1700. The aim of the present essay is to explore the concepts used to express exile and return among the expelled Moriscos. In doing so I aim to examine how these displaced individuals and groups viewed themselves in relation not only to their country of origin (Christian Spain), but also their Islamic host societies. Once expelled, did Moriscos see themselves as exiles from their places of origin or as people who have come home? The question is important for at least two reasons. The first is the Islamic discourse on Muslim “minorityness”; the second the ongoing discussions in Early Modern studies about notions of diaspora, to which the present paper aims to contribute. Did the Moriscos consider their new societies to be sites of exile and diaspora or did they look at them in other ways?⁹ I will return to both issues below. Which concepts can be found among the Moriscos shortly before and after the expulsion? We may distinguish the use of different concepts in their religious writings, varying polemics, genealogical works, and documents kept in various libraries and archives, a selection of which I will deal with below.

Expulsion as Liberation from the Yoke of the Unbelievers and Arrival in the Promised Land

Among the Morisco writings written in exile we find a number that view the expulsion as liberation from the yoke of the persecuting and intolerant Spanish unbelievers and as an expression of the Divine will to liberate them and bring them to *dâr al-islâm*, the Abode of Islam, and lead them away from its corollary, *dâr al-ḥarb*, the Abode of War. The former abode is presented as their natural “home,” and even as a promised land. A very interesting account in this regard is given by the Morisco Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raffī^c, who tells us the following about the expulsion:

So many were burned, and so many punished . . . until the victory and the joy from God [came] in the year 1013 [1604 CE] of the *hijra* of the Prophet—may peace be upon him. Some of us began to escape secretly,

⁹ See Martin Baumann, “Diaspora. Genealogies of Semantics and Transcultural Comparison,” *Numen* 47/3 (2000): 313–37; Steven Vertovec, “Religion and Diaspora,” in *New Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. Peter Antes, Armin W. Geertz, Randi Warne, vol. 2, *Textual, Comparative, Sociological and Cognitive Approaches* (Berlin-New York: Verlag De Gruyter, 2004), 275–303.

pretending to profess the religion of the Unbelievers (*muzhiran dīn al-kuffār*)—may God eliminate them—to the Maghrib and the Mashriq. Some of our beloved brothers, among them the noble faqih and teacher, the *sharīf* Abū ‘l-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Ḥanafī, known as ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Qurashī¹⁰, and with him one of his uncles, went to Belgrad, a city in one of the provinces of the Ottoman empire, and had a meeting with Minister Murād Pasha, one of the *wazīrs* at the court of the great deceased¹¹ Sultan Aḥmad, son of Muḥammad—may God make them victorious and support them.¹² They informed him about the misery (*al-shidda*) of our Andalusian brothers in France and elsewhere. He [the *wazīr*] wrote an order to the Lord of France—may God most High curse it—on behalf of the Sultan—may God, most High, make him victorious—ordering to allow the Andalusian Muslims, servants of the Ottomans, to leave his dominions, and to send them to Islamic territory in his [Ottoman] ships, including their belongings. When this order of the Sultan was read in the *Dīwān* of the French in Paris, the capital of the Kingdom, and was heard by the person who was sent to them on behalf of the Lord of the Green Peninsula, the cursed Philip the Third, he sent the message to his Lord so that he knew about the fact that Sultan Aḥmad had sent an order to France and had ordered its Lord to allow the Andalusians to leave, [telling him] that no harm should be done to them and they would go to its ports and in its ships to whichever Muslim country they would wish to go.¹³

According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīf, who himself stayed in Constantinople in 1612 and wrote the aforesaid lines in Tunis where he lived in the 1620s, it was fear for the interference and the firm decision of the Ottoman sultan to consider the Moriscos as his protégées that lead the Spanish to expel them.¹⁴ Though this view is not confirmed by the Spanish sources, it is likely (as we will see below) that emigration of Moriscos started some time before the official expulsion.¹⁵ The author considers the expulsion to

¹⁰ He later became an important religious authority in Tunis.

¹¹ The text was written much later.

¹² Ahmed I (1590–1617). He started to reign in Rajab 1012/ December 1603.

¹³ *Kitāb al-anwār al-nabawiyya fi abā’ khayr al-bariyya*, Rabat, Royal Library, ms. K 1238, 327–328. Recently, an edition and Spanish translation of this manuscript was published: Lotfi Aïssa, Mouhamed Aouini, and Houssein Eddine Chachia, eds. *Entre las orillas de dos mundos. El Itinerario del jerife Morisco ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīf de Murcia a Túnez*. (Murcia: Universida de Murcia, 2017). This publication appeared too late to be taken into account in the present essay.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 329–30.

¹⁵ See Luis Fernando Bernabé Pons, “Notas sobre la cohesión de la comunidad morisca más allá de su expulsión de España,” *Al-Qantara* 29/2 (2008): 307–32; Gerard A. Wieggers, “Managing Disaster. Networks of Moriscos during the Process

be liberation and uses the vocabulary of captivity and demission. The discourse suggests the influence of the Ottoman authorities in Tunis and elsewhere and hence conforms to a Muslim majority discourse.

The anonymous Morisco author of *Treatise of the Two Ways*, probably writing in Tunis, praises God, and tells his Morisco readers as much in the introduction to his work:

[T]o whom we owe gratitude for liberating us from those heretic Christians, and witness these heresies, and each day the horrors in our hearts increased, and they forced us to show what they wanted [“y era fuerça mostrar lo que ellos querrían,” viz. Christian behaviour], because if one did not do so they delivered us to the Inquisition, but the heretics were never able to change their form hearts, and so they started to consider ways of punishing them, and we daily prayed to be liberated from them, which remained virtually impossible, until one day God almighty put the idea in the heart of Philip III [“puso en el coraçon del terçero Filipho”], and the hearts of his councillors that they should order us to leave his kingdom under the pain of death, and God opened for us a way through the sea and through land, free and without any danger [“libres y sin daño”], and we went by ship and caross [“en nabios por la mar y en carroças por tierra”], with children, women and goods, and He brought us to the Abode of Islam [“tierra del yçlam”]. In this part [of the Abode of Islam] we were received by Uzman Dey.¹⁶

The author reminds his readers that they were favoured, and because many of the first generation of Morisco immigrants had already passed away he tells the story so that those who are born in Tunis may know from him who have been saved. He reminds his readers that although they had a similar experience as the children of Israel, they should, unlike the Israelites, be grateful to God for His favour (Ar. *ni^cma*).¹⁷ The Israelites

of the Expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula around 1609,” *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 36/2 (2010): 141–68.

¹⁶ *Tratado de los dos caminos*, fols. 10v–11v.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 13r.: “Y éstas las digo por que no se acaben de olvidar; pues, mientras bibían los que benimos, no se olvidaban, pero ya con el discurso del tiempo, que se ban acabando. Lo refiero para que los an naçido acá lo sepan de mí y de los pocos que quedan y sepan y reconozcan que Dios, nuestro señor, nos sacó de entre ynfieles, como tengo referido. Y que el haçerlo fue grande bentura y dicha que nos alcançó, de que debemos estar agradeçidos y no ser yngratos a su ni^cma, como lo fueron los hijos de Yçra’il, que los sacó de poder de Faraón, el que haçía con ellos tantos ynultos y mensopreçios, apremiándolos a los que no podían llebar, y les ynbió por capitan al ssanto propheta Muça y su hermano Harun . . . , y con su fabor

even had as their leader the Prophet Musa and his brother Harun, but after they passed the sea and were given means to survive and reached the promised land safely, they were ungrateful and adored the calf (*beçerro*), and therefore they are damned until this very day in this world and the next, and so, the author tells his Morisco readers that they must be thankful, for the sea having been opened, and having found the land they longed for. They have been well received and now live in a land where the words of the Divine Unity are heard in high places and do not need to be concealed, as in Spain. The author adds that he has mentioned all this in order to make it clear that coming to the Abode of Islam was a Divine Miracle, and he wished to stress this especially for those who were born there, for they should realise what their life would have been if they had been born in Spain.

It is clear that these passages are reminiscent of Qur'ān, sura 2: 29–50, and parallel passages such as sura 44: 23–31. These suras tell us about the good life that the Israelites left behind in Egypt, that the sea was split for the people of Israel, how they saw the armies of the Pharaoh drown, and that they were safely delivered from oppression.

Another of these works is a text which we only know because it was quoted in the second volume of Joseph Morgan's *Mohametism Fully Explained*. The manuscript itself has not been preserved. Morgan tells us the following:

I borrowed once a Manuscript in *Barbary* [italics in the original, GW], of a *Spaniard*, but one of the moderate *Catholicks*, of that Nation, I ever met with. It was lent to him by a *Moor*, whose Great-Grandfather, the Author, came from *Spain*, at the last Expulsion of the Moriscoes in 1610. It is a pretty thick Quarto, and the Owner, when he heard I had it, should not suffer to keep it long, lest I should make ill use of it, as he said, though he could not read a Syllable in it himself. However, I was possessed of it long enough to make several Extracts out of it, wherewith I shall take occasion to close this Treatise; among what which this that follows, in my Opinion carries with no small Share of Smartness.¹⁸

He clarifies the contents thus:

los sacó; y, llegando a la mar dio con su bara y la abrió doce caminos, desbiándose las aguas de una y otra parte.”

¹⁸ Joseph Morgan, *Mohametism Fully Explained*, 2 vols. (London 1723–25), 2: 295 ff.; Ángel Galán Sánchez: *Una visión de la 'decadencia española': la historiografía sobre los mudéjares y Moriscos (siglos XVIII–XX)* (Málaga: Servicio de Publicaciones, Diputación Provincial de Málaga, 1991), 42–46.

This book bears the date 1615. The author's name was *Abdelkerim Ben Aly Perez*. The First Part contains a System of *Islamism*, with high Encomiums on its Purity and Excellency, in Opposition to all other Religions, with a long Catalogue of *Mahomet's* Miracles. I did not meddle with that Part, nor indeed did I scarce read it through, and only remember, that he begins very devoutly, "Giving God Thanks for having brought him to a Place where he enjoys free Liberty of exercising the true Worship, as directed by the Holy *Alcoran*, without being any longer in Fear of being persecuted for his Religion, or being compelled to pay Adoration to *las vanas Figuras de los Infieles*, the *vain Figures* of the *Infidels*." As to the latter Part, it runs wholly on severe Invectives against the Pope and Clergy of *Rome*, accusing them of Idolatry, Bigotry, ridiculous Superstition, Inhumanity, and, in a Word, of all Vice: And I much regret my not being Master of the Whole, it being well worth publishing.¹⁹

The discourse about liberation and "opening" is the voice of the orthodox Sunni elite of the Moriscos in Tunisia and elsewhere. They voiced it in a number of polemical works against Christianity. The passages quoted above suggest that the authors knew each other's works, if they are not identical.²⁰ What is clear is that in these works the Morisco authors are very critical of Spain's religious and political authorities. The Roman Catholic Spaniards are criticised for their harsh repression through the Inquisition, which are based upon wrong beliefs. The political authorities are criticised for their unjust politics, which affect both the guilty and the innocent. The expulsion from Spain is seen as an infringement on the right to freedom of expression which is in agreement with the Quranic message, and that view is connected to the idea that it is better to live in the Abode of Islam. The expulsion is seen as liberation. These Moriscos do not consider themselves to be in exile, they are rather granted a life in a more apt political and geographical setting. This attitude is a very late appropriation of the views of a number of muftis who over the centuries had rejected the possibility that one could live as a good Muslim outside Islamic territory, namely outside the Abode of Islam (*dār al-islām*) in the so-called Abode of War (*dār al-ḥarb*), the territories in which Islam was not the dominant religion. This was the view of such religious scholars as

¹⁹ Morgan, *Mohametism Fully Explained*, 2: 299.

²⁰ According to Luce López Baralt (in *Tratado de los dos caminos por un Morisco refugiado en Túnez (MS S 2 de la Colección Gayangos, Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia*, ed. Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes, J. C. Villaverde Amieva, and Luce López Baralt, [Madrid: Oviedo 2005], 60ff), the aforesaid ^cAbd al-Karim Ali Perez is not the author of MS S 2.

Ibn Rabīʿ (who died in 1309 in Granada) and al-Wansharīṣī (who died in Fez in 1508), and others.²¹

Moriscos as Exiled Spaniards

The second position I distinguish agrees with the first, that the expulsion from Spain is an infringement on the right to freedom of expression and belief. However, those who hold this view do not consider the expulsion decree to be either an expression of the Divine will, or a blessing, nor do they consider the Abode of Islam as a promised land.

In a document from the beginning of the seventeenth century,²² a Morisco from the village of Terror in the Kingdom of Aragon who had lived for quite some time in Algiers, states that in spite of being able to freely practice Islam in Algiers and without the vigilance of the authorities, he preferred his life in his village in Aragon. He claims that he was better able to practice Islam in a situation in which he and his coreligionists were forced to pray in the secrecy of their household while mocking the religious symbols (crucifix and host) they were forced to venerate in public.²³ He implies that he and his fellow Moriscos were better Muslims than those in the Islamic territory. This is an example of the expression of the memory of a heightened sense of religiosity reminiscent of feelings of an Islamic awakening and individualised religiosity.

A similar view is expressed by the character Ricote in Cervantes's novel *Don Quixote*. At the end of the second part of the novel, Sancho Panza unexpectedly meets his former neighbour, a Morisco by the name of Ricote,²⁴ who is dressed as a German pilgrim (on his way to Santiago de

²¹ See on the different positions of the religious scholars with regard to living as Muslim under Christian rule for example Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld and Gerard A. Wieggers, "The Islamic Statute of the Mudejars in the Light of a New Source," *Al-Qanṭara* 17 (1996): 19–58 and the literature referred to there; Alan Verskin, *Islamic Law and the Crisis of the Reconquista. The Debate on the Status of Muslim Communities in Christendom* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

²² Hossain Bouzineb, and Gerard A. Wieggers, "Tetuán y la expulsión de los Moriscos," in *Ṭiṭwān khilāl al-qarnayn 16 wa 17* (Tetouan 1996), 73–108.

²³ *Ibid.*, 97–99. The document is also discussed in Mercedes García-Arenal, "The Moriscos in Morocco: From Granadan Emigration to the Hornacheros of Salé," in *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wieggers (The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World, 56) (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 286–328.

²⁴ The history of Ricote is told in part 2, chapters 54 and 63.

Compostela). Ricote tells Sancho Panza how he had left Spain years earlier ahead of the imminent expulsion and travelled to Germany. Eventually he reached a village near Augsburg and there, as Cervantes writes, experienced the liberty of conscience (“libertad de conciencia”). Now, disguised as a pilgrim, he is on his way back to his village in Spain to retrieve the treasure that he had hidden there before he left. Ricote says about himself that he cannot be called a good Christian, though he looks and behaves more like a Christian than a Muslim, while his wife and daughter are called pious Christians.²⁵ The name Ricote is not a coincidence: the Moriscos of the Ricote Valley, the last to be expelled from Spain in 1614, were known for the number of pious Christians among them. Augsburg may be taken as a metaphoric *pars pro toto* here for the Augsburg peace of 1555 that established the solution of the problem of religious division in Germany with its “*eius religio, cuius regio*” settlement. Ricote’s voice expresses criticism of Spanish politics, sadness about loss of a fatherland, and a longing for life in Spain. This viewpoint is also held by some other Morisco polemicists, such as the Morisco al-Ḥajarī, who wrote a very lively description and analysis about his travels in Spain, France, and the Netherlands, in which he expressed his belief that living as a Muslim in a Christian country was possible.²⁶ Nevertheless, al-Ḥajarī faulted the ideological foundations of the religious regimes in Europe by attacking the very sources he considered to be their ideological bases: Christian and Jewish canonical texts, which were susceptible to *tahrīf* (i.e., alteration with regard to their wording and/or meaning and corruption).²⁷ In other words, according to Muslim scholars, if a person was able and permitted to practice the pillars of Islam and its devotional acts (*‘ibādāt*) even in a minority situation, this was to be deemed a good and pious Muslim life. This view is expressed in a *fatwā* by an anonymous mufti living in fourteenth-century Christian Iberia and in a collection of early sixteenth-century *fatwās* from around 1510 issued by the four chief qadi’s in Cairo belonging to the four different Sunni schools of law.²⁸ This opinion is also implicitly expressed by the Moriscos in

²⁵ His daughter had gone to Algiers and succeeded to escape dressed as the captain of a corsair ship.

²⁶ Al-Ḥajarī, *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn Alā ‘l-Qawm al-Kāfirīn*, passim.

²⁷ In this way Muslims expressed the idea that the original Jewish and Christian revealed texts have not been preserved in their original state, see also Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*, 284 ff.

²⁸ On the fourteenth-century mufti see Van Koningsveld and Wiegers, “The Islamic Statute,” passim, on the views of the judges see Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld and Gerard A. Wiegers: “Islam in Spain during the Early Sixteenth

Rabat-Salé in Morocco. These former Andalusians were from the town of Hornachos in Spain, who upon their expulsion from Spain in 1611 settled in the Old Qasba of the Oudayas. For years these Moriscos negotiated resettlement in France and Spain.²⁹ It is a position that is also expressed in the behaviour of many Moriscos who secretly returned to Spain, in the hope that they might take up their former lives and be left to practice Islam more or less in public.³⁰

Moriscos as “Cultural Muslims”

Finally, I would also distinguish a third, middle position. These Moriscos regretted the expulsion because they felt part of Spanish culture, but they integrated into the North African societies from which they maintained their cultural difference, while adapting to the majority religion after a while. This cultural difference, expressed in terms of being an Andalusian remained intact in various places, in Rabat, for example, and especially in Tunisia. Among these Moriscos, Islam did not play a dominant role in their life. In the daily speech of Rabat their descendants are still today referred to in a slightly pejorative way as the “muslimin Ribat,” indicating that their Muslim identity and piety is considered less than exemplary.³¹ They were perhaps, what we could call today, cultural Muslims: Islam was part of their Spanish identity and cultural heritage in a similar way as it functioned among expelled Spanish and Portuguese Jews and conversos.³²

Century. The Views of the Four Chief Judges in Cairo (Introduction, translation and Arabic Text),” in *Poetry, Politics and Polemics. Cultural Transfer between the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa*, ed. Otto Zwartjes, Geert Jan van Gelder and Ed de Moor (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 1997), 133–52.

²⁹ See Hossain Bouzineb, *La Alcazaba del Buregreg. Hornacheros, andaluces y medio siglo de designios españoles frustrados* (Rabat 2007) and the literature referred to by the author.

³⁰ See for example Trevor J. Dadson, *Los Moriscos de Villarrubia de los Ojos (Siglos 15–18): Historia de una minoría asimilada, expulsada y reintegrada* (Madrid/Frankfurt 2007); James B. Tueller, “The Moriscos Who Stayed Behind or Returned: Post 1609,” in *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers (*The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World*, 56) (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 197–215.

³¹ Beebe Bahrami, “Al-Andalus and Memory: The Past and Being Present among Hispano-Moroccan Andalusians from Rabat,” in *Charting Memory. Recalling Medieval Spain*, ed. Stacy N. Beckwith (New York: Garland, 2000), 111–43.

³² Yosef Kaplan, *Judíos nuevos en Amsterdam. Estudios sobre la historia social y intelectual del judaísmo sefardí en el siglo 17* (Barcelona: Gedisa editorial 1996);

It was among such groups, I would suggest, that we find agnostics and sometimes outright atheists. Often these people felt torn between two religions and became skeptical about both of them. Halperin Donghi, for example, quotes a Morisco who testified before the Inquisition that “ley ninguna tenía en su corazón,” to wit, that “he had no religious conviction in his heart,” explaining that he was too poor to afford this luxury.³³ Others had become sincere Christians.

Conclusions

The attitudes to exile and diaspora displayed by the expelled Moriscos shows three positions: one is the dominant position that endorses the traditional distinctions between the Abode of Islam and the Abode of War. The voices of Moriscos who subscribed to this position can be clearly heard in the texts written after the expulsion, which stipulate that the expulsion was a divine miracle that liberated them from Pharaonic captivity and slavery. One author contrasts Muslims and Israelites/Jews in a way strongly reminiscent of Mudejar and Morisco anti-Jewish polemics: unlike the Muslims, the Jews have lost God’s favour. Authors holding the second position do not adopt this discourse. They criticise the Spanish authorities, but do not deny that it is possible to lead a good and pious Muslim life in a non-Muslim environment. Lastly, there is a group of Moriscos, who today would be called “cultural Muslims,” whose voices are much weaker and whose lives were not guided by strong beliefs. The three positions outlined in this essay can still be traced among Muslims. The first is found to this day among the “hardliners,” those who think that it is impossible to live in a non-Muslim society and still be a good Muslim. Their views are mirrored in the thinking of the present-day Europeans that claim that Islam and Europe are incompatible. Then, there are those, like the Muslim thinker Tariq Ramadan, who in a similar way reject the distinction between the Abode of Islam and the Abode of War, substituting for it the notion of the Abode of Mission (*dār al-daʿwa*). Like that

Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation. Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

³³ Tulio Halperin Donghi, *Un conflicto nacional: Moriscos y cristianos viejos en Valencia* (Valencia 1980), 105–6. See on this last position also Gerard Wiegers, “The Expulsion of 1609–1614 and the Polemical Writings of the Moriscos Living in the Diaspora,” in *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers (The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World, 56) (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 398–412 and the literature about the Morisco diaspora.

Morisco from Terrer, they believe that one can live a pious Muslim life in Europe. And finally are those who have adopted the third position, the great numbers of Muslims who accept and feel at home alongside European culture. What seems to me important here is to state that not in all cases is it correct to use the word diaspora for the expelled Moriscos. Their experiences differed and so did the concepts they used to qualify the situation in which they found themselves. The concepts indicating alienation—*ghurba* and *gharīb*—are not used in the same way in the writings of the Moriscos while they were in Spain and after the expulsion.³⁴ Instead, we find a tendency to instruct “cultural Muslims” in orthodox Sunni Islam, from which they had become alienated.³⁵

³⁴ See for example, Ridha Mami, ed., *El manuscrito Morisco 9653 de la Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid. Edición, Estudio lingüístico y glosario* (Madrid 2002), 523 (index s.v.).

³⁵ Wiegers, “The Expulsion of 1609–1614,” 411–12.