

**After al-Andalus / Palestine: Resistance and Collaboration in Morisco and Palestinian Literatures**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores dichotomies of resistance and collaboration; mythmaking and testimony; and individual artistic freedom versus collective duty in the occupied contexts of Morisco and Palestinian literature. I focus on literature produced by populations who remained living in their homelands after being conquered. In both Morisco and Palestinian cases, their conquerors forged nation-states unified around a single ethnic, religious, and linguistic identity, which excluded and marginalized the conquered people who remained. This put their literatures under unusual stress, and made literature an important tool of cultural preservation and resistance.

I examine works by modern Palestinian writers inside Israel from the first few decades after 1948, including Mahmoud Darwish, Tawfīq Zayyād, Samīḥ al-Qāsim, Rāshid Hussein, and Emile Habiby. I put their literature and its context into dialogue with early modern Morisco literature, including works by the Mancebo de Arévalo, Francisco Núñez Muley, Muhammad Rabadán, and Ibrahim Taybili, as well as other anonymous poems, songs, legends, and prophecies

## INTRODUCTION

### **Finding Palestine in al-Andalus: Literary Responses to Settler-Colonialism Past and Present**

Luce López-Baralt begins her exhaustive study of Morisco<sup>1</sup> literature, *La literatura secreta de los últimos musulmanes en España*, by reminding us of Edward Said's axiom that "Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient" (qtd. 14). She situates herself as a Puerto Rican, a still-colonized person who can see something of herself and her compatriots in the colonized, embattled Moriscos (14). She emphasizes that Morisco literature is the literature of a colonized people, and served them as "a powerful sign of their identity" (19, my translation) and "an indispensable weapon of social safeguarding" (16, my translation). López-Baralt identifies in Morisco literature many of the features of modern post- or anti-colonial literature: many Moriscos demonstrate a "double consciousness" and even *nostalgia* for the Spanish culture of their conquerors, a sort of "mimicry of the center" typical of modern colonial writers (20). She even compares certain Morisco texts to works by modern writers like Walcott, Naipaul, and Achebe, who "use different discursive strategies to displace the English language from its old center and oblige it to enter the orbit of the different vernacular languages of the old colonies" (26, my translation), with the caveat that while Moriscos certainly altered and bent the language of their Castilian oppressors, they only used it in the first place "*malgre lui* [...] because they had no other option: they had forgotten Arabic" (27, my translation). In that vein, she stipulates that the hybridity of Morisco literature, as with colonized literature in general, should not be read into so far that it "obscures the antagonism and the aggression of the colonizer and of the colonized, and [does] not leave any room for the discourse

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<sup>1</sup> *Mudejars*: Andalusian Muslims who remained living in their homelands, now under Christian rule, post-Conquest, during the Middle Ages. *Moriscos*: Mudejar inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula, forcibly converted to Christianity between 1500-1526, sometimes referred to as "New Christians," who remained living in Spain during the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Despite increasing restrictions and Inquisitorial persecution, many fought to preserve their Islamic beliefs and culture, producing a secret *aljamiado* literature written in Spanish dialect using Arabic letters. They were expelled *en masse* from Spain in 1609-1614.

of resistance” (28, my translation). López-Baralt’s analysis here in her introduction has been an inspiration for my own project, which will take two colonial situations, that of the Moriscos and that of twentieth-century Palestinians, as a historical foundation from which to examine the literature of the recently-conquered and colonized. Like López Baralt, I hope to “privilege the point of view of my authors” while also letting readers know here, at the beginning, where I am situated (28, my translation).

In the early 2010s, I was living in the university town of Birzeit, in the occupied West Bank in Palestine. During the week I would go into the city of Ramallah/al-Bireh to teach English, and sometimes on the weekends I had time to read. As an undergraduate student of both Spanish and Arabic, I had picked up a copy of L.P. Harvey’s *Muslims in Spain: 1500 – 1614*, without fully understanding Harvey’s place in the field of Morisco studies or indeed, the existence of such a field. In Palestine in 2012, I found myself finally reading it, and as I read, certain similarities jumped out at me. In his introduction, Harvey explicitly draws a parallel between the situation of the recently-occupied Moriscos in Spain, and modern-day Palestine, writing: “The very different ways in which people can speak of events in the very recent past in the land that some call ‘Palestine’ and others call ‘Israel’ bring home to us how ‘what actually happened,’ both over the short term and over the longest of periods, may be conceptualized in totally different ways by members of different groups” (ix). He adds, “As with Palestine/Israel, there are two names for roughly the same geographical space, Spain/al-Andalus, and two claims on that space [...] and two quite different histories located within one and the same geography” (x). This is not the only or even the main connection to the modern world that Harvey makes in his introduction, but it was what I focused on there in my room in Birzeit. And as I read through the rest of Harvey’s book, I found myself continuously drawing parallels and making comparisons to the situation of modern-day Palestine.

As a graduate student, I would delve deeper into the field of Morisco studies, as well as the study of modern Palestinian literature, and I would come to find out that my initial feelings of history repeating itself were hinted at by poets, writers, and scholars, though rarely if ever directly explored in an academic medium<sup>2</sup>. In this introduction, I hope to outline two main paths

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<sup>2</sup> One exception is María José Lera’s article, “Prácticas sociales genocidas: el caso de los moriscos y el caso de los palestinos,” which compares Morisco and modern-day Palestinian situations through the lens of genocide studies, looking at the actions of states and colonized people through a legal and historical prism. However, what I undertake in this dissertation is a *literary* comparison, focusing on the literature of the conquered people themselves.

of connection. First, I will give some context on the role of al-Andalus (medieval Muslim Spain) in Arabic literature as a potent symbol of Paradise and its loss, and its use in the modern era as a symbol for the loss of Palestine. Secondly, I hope to fill in a bit of background on how Spanish medievalists and early-modernists have adopted the frameworks of colonialism and post-colonial theory to describe the “Reconquest” or fall of al-Andalus, and its early-modern aftermath, as experienced by the Moriscos – al-Andalus’s human remnant. This lens can offer some powerful and fascinating parallels to the situation of “48 Palestinians”<sup>3</sup> who remained in historical Palestine after its transformation into Israel following the Nakba (“catastrophe”) or ethnic cleansing of 1948.

### I. Literary Connections: Al-Andalus in Andalusian Literature

In addition to expressing their solidarity with contemporary anti-colonial struggles from Yemen to Vietnam to the U.S. civil rights movement, Palestinian poets and writers living under Israeli military rule after 1948 have also looked to the past for inspiration. In particular, Palestinian poets have used al-Andalus as a metaphor for their own Paradise Lost. This symbology has deep roots in Arabic literary history. From the “opening” of al-Andalus via Islamic conquest in the eighth century with ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I *al-Dākhil*, loss has been central to the mythos surrounding Islamic Spain. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I fled from Damascus to al-Andalus after the rival Abbasids murdered his Umayyad family members (Menocal 5); when he established his own Umayyad emirate in the Iberian Peninsula, he built “an Andalusian culture that constantly looked back in time, and eastward, to define itself” (Elinson 4). ‘Abd al-Raḥmān constructed an estate for himself in Córdoba and named it Rusafa after the Umayyad estate of the same name outside Damascus (Menocal 9, Elinson 4). In his famous poem to a palm tree, he expresses the longing and nostalgia that would be so central to Andalusian poetry for centuries to follow:

A palm tree appeared to us in the middle of Rusafa.

In the west (*al-gharb*) it is far from the land of palms.

So I said: “you are just like me in exile (*al-tagharrib*), far away,

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<sup>3</sup> Palestinians who remained living in those parts of Palestine occupied by Zionist forces in 1948.



and in long separation from my people.

You have grown up in a land in which you are a stranger,

and I am like you, isolated and far from home.” (Qtd. Elinson 4)

In later centuries, beginning with the civil war that shook Córdoba in 1010 and the dissolution of the Cordoban Caliphate into Taifa city-states in 1031, a similar nostalgia and would take shape within the *rithā' al-mudun* genre, as Andalusian poets eulogized the cities they had lost to internal strife and to external conquerors (Elinson 6, Ruggles 171).

*Rithā' al-mudun*, or “elegy for [lost] cities” developed as a genre during the Abbasid period, as Arab society urbanized and cities replaced the “abandoned campsite” traditional in the *naṣīb* section of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīdah* or ode. In the *naṣīb*, the poet would stop by the abandoned campsite of their beloved to express loss and nostalgia for a past time/place that could not be recreated (Elinson 5, 17). An early example of the genre is ninth-century Abbasid poet al-Khuraymi’s *rithā'* for the city of Baghdad, devastated in a civil war for succession between Harun al-Rashid’s two sons (Cruz 16, Elinson 20). With this elegy for the Baghdad-that-was, we can see several themes that carry into Andalusian *rithā' al-mudun* poetry and modern Palestinian poetry. Al-Khuraymi idealizes his lost, pre-war Baghdad as “An immortal garden” (*jannatu khuldin*) and “an abode of bliss” (trans. Elinson 21). Al-Khuraymi also employs the repeated phrase “they said” as a way to frame himself/the poet as a speaker for the collective, giving voice to its grief (21). The trope of the Lost Garden / Lost Paradise and the role of the poet as speaker for their community are two central themes in Morisco and Palestinian literature that I will explore in the body of this dissertation.

Many Andalusī poets composed verse in the *rithā' al-mudun* genre as a way to mourn and immortalize their lost cities, first when Cordoba fell to civil strife and then as the Christian Reconquista ate up more and more territory during the tenth and eleventh centuries (Cruz 14). When the palace-compound of Madīnat al-Zahrā', built by Andalusian-Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Raḥmān III in 936, was destroyed in the civil war that wracked Córdoba beginning in 1010, it became a locus for *rithā' al-mudun* poetry (Ruggles 171, Elinson 6). During the civil war, the palace was sacked and burnt. In the eleventh century, materials from Zahrā' and other Umayyad palaces were sold and taken off to neighboring kingdoms, so that by the twelfth century it was “on the verge of disappearing altogether” (Ruggles 172). Staring in the eleventh century, many poets would compose elegiac verses to Madīnat al-Zahrā', seeing in it a symbol of past strength

and excellence (the Umayyad Caliphate), past love and joy, a lost garden or paradise, and even the hubris that may have led to the Umayyad Caliphate's downfall and dissolution into Taifa city-states by 1031.

The poet al-Sumaysir, for example, fled Córdoba during the civil war, and later composed a *rithā'* addressing Madīnat al-Zahrā' as if the place itself were the beloved (176), using the trope of *al-bukā'* '*alā al-aṭlāl* (weeping over the ruins of the beloved's abandoned campsite) common to the pre-Islamic *naṣīb* (Elinson 6):

I stopped at al-Zahra' weeping; considering it,

I lament its broken fragments.

And I said: "O Zahra', no, come back."

And she answered: "Can someone come back from the dead?"

I did not cease crying, crying there,

But, oh, how the tears were of no use, none at all.

They were like the traces of tears shed by professional

mourners of the dead. (trans. Elinson 6-7)

Ibn Zaydūn (1003-1071) was another member of the Umayyad Cordoban aristocracy (Cruz 14). Although he was just eight years old when the Berber *fitna* of 1010 led to the destruction of Madīnat al-Zahrā', when he was a young man, the ruined palace and its gardens became the site of trysts with the Umayyad princess and poet Wallādah, bint al-Mustakfī (21-22). In later poems he would evoke the site as a symbol of lost youth, lost love, and eventually the loss of the city of Cordoba. Ruggles describes how "returning from self-imposed exile," Ibn Zaydūn hid in the ruins of al-Zahrā', from which he "sent pleading poems to his beloved Wallādah in Cordoba," comparing the war-ravaged palace and its gardens to Wallada spurning him (173). Ibn Zaydūn was then imprisoned, and wrote his *Mukhammas* ("quintet"; Cruz 35), in which he expresses loss and longing for the city of Cordoba itself, addressing it with the feminine ending *-ki* as if it were the beloved:

Oh beautiful Cordoba! Is there desire within you?

Is the heart that burns with desire due to your distance quenched?

Will your famous nights have a return?

Where beauty is seen and leisure is heard

Where all the world's pleasures are pleasant

Is it not surprising that distance is distant from you?  
Wasn't I intoxicated by the scent of your courtyards?  
Weren't my parts tied to yours?  
Wasn't I first created out of your earth?  
Wasn't I safely cradled in your fold? (trans. Cruz 35)

Ibn Zaydūn's evocation of "desire" and "intoxication" repurposes the language used to describe a distant or uninterested beloved, and applies it to the city of his birth and his youth. The lines "Weren't my parts tied to yours? / Wasn't I first created out of your earth?" emphasize a kinship, a connection between the poet and the land itself, that is also central to modern Palestinian poetry.

Cruz focuses in her analysis on Ibn Zaydūn's construction of a "memory palace" of Cordoba and al-Zahrā' from his imprisonment, reconstructing the site of lost love and lost youth, as well as of political decline, as it *was* and as it *should be* (30, 35):

Oh how lovely Zahra' is! A welcomed sight!  
With delicate winds and jewel-like perfection  
How remarkable it is in beauty and presence  
The Garden of Eden and River Kawthar marvel at you  
With a single look, life is extended (trans. Cruz 35)

This lost paradise becomes the site of nostalgia or, as Pierre Nora puts it, the "site of memory," as well as a place to contemplate the passing of time and the nature of loss and longing: "Places where I wept for lost love / More tender and fine than a plucked rose / [...] / Oh brothers! Do those who return ever come back? (trans. Cruz 35; Nora 7).

Another contemporary *rithā'* for Cordoba was written by Ibn Shuhayd, who like Ibn Zaydūn and al-Sumaysir had been a member of Umayyad Cordoba's aristocratic class. In addition to the trope of the Lost Garden / Lost Paradise, Ibn Shuhayd's *rithā'* "mourns the loss of an Arabic literary culture" and "the end of a perceived 'pure' Arabic culture and political unity" of the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba (Elinson 38). While Ibn Shuhayd strives for a "pure" or traditional Arabic literary style (39), he explicitly blames the *fitna* on the various non-Arab elements of society, especially the Berbers:

For the likes of Cordoba, the weeping of one

Who cries with an overflowing eye is not enough.  
An abode, my God forgive the faults of its people,  
For they were Berberized, Moroccanized, and Egyptianized.  
Everywhere there are groups of them  
Perplexed and bewildered in separation.  
I knew it when its people were unified  
And life there was green. (trans. Elinson 40)

Ibn Shuhayd then describes the various palaces and gardens, illustrating Cordoba's pre-*fitna* glory as a "Paradise" (40-41). The lost garden trope here is combined with a very specific ethno-religious view of the idealized, "pure" past – reminiscent of Catholic Spanish obsessions with unity of language, religion and "limpieza de sangre" ("purity of blood") in the early modern period, when leaders strove to unify the Spanish nation-state around a national mythos of ancient Gothic or Roman Christian roots and Reconquest "return." Elinson reads Ibn Shuhayd's mention of "Egyptian" influence as a reference to the Fatimids, i.e., a coded reference to Shi'ism (44); likewise, "Berbers" refers to the Berber Hammudis who played upon Berber discontent in Cordoba in order to establish themselves as an alternate power to the Umayyads, leading to the eventual dissolution of the Umayyad Caliphate in 1031 (43). There is a longing on both the linguistic and ethno-religious levels here for a "return to a time and place when language and culture were unadulterated" (45).

Yet at the same time there is also a curious mixing of east and west, past and present in the geography Ibn Shuhayd describes. As he addresses the city of Cordoba, he moves from naming palaces and landmarks of local significance (the al-Zahiriyyah and al-'Amiriyyah palaces, the Great Mosque) to more distant, religious and even mythological sites:

Your courtyards were a Mecca to pilgrims,  
the frightened taking refuge in them, finding safety.  
O abode and its people, in which and with whom the bird of separation alighted  
so that they were transformed and became unrecognizable.  
The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your courtyards, as did the Tigris.  
So too did the Nile and the River Kawthar. (trans. Elinson 41)

The religious site of Mecca is listed alongside the Tigris and Euphrates in modern-day Iraq, calling to mind the power of the Abbasids who made Baghdad their capital and whom the

Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba had attempted to rival. The mention of Kawthar, the mythical river in Paradise, brings Umayyad Cordoba out of the worldly political and sectarian realms and onto the mythological plane of heaven and hell, depicting it as a Lost Paradise.

Ibn Hazm (d. 1064) was another Cordoban exile<sup>4</sup> who wrote about the loss of his city (Ruggles 174). Specifically, he described returning to his family home to see it ruined. In verse, he addressed it, using the same tropes of *rithā' al-mudun* to describe his own very personal loss:

O abode, it was not our choice that you were deserted by us,  
for if we could have our way, you would be our burial place.

[...]

O best of abodes, abandoned, lovely though you are,  
the morning clouds watered you; how splendid you were, how noble.

O unveiled gardens, surrounded by  
beautiful garden courtyards that became dust after we left. (trans. Elinson 27)

This transformation from “garden” to “dust” can be seen in Ibn Hazm’s prose account of the experience, as well: “It was as though the graceful palaces and embellished chambers which were as radiant as the sun [...] now that ruin and utter destruction was all around, were as the gaping mouths of wild predators announcing the annihilation of the world...” (qtd. Ruggles 174).

Although Ibn Hazm’s visit to his ruined family homes and gardens was literal, as we have seen in the work of Ibn Zaydun, Ibn Shuhayd, and al-Sumaysir, the images of empty palaces and overgrown gardens are “particularly appropriate symbols for the passage of time” (Ruggles 174). Palaces and gardens are man-made and require constant upkeep and guarding; as Andalus began to fall, the remains of palaces like Madinat al-Zahra’ would serve as a locus for reflection. Although the Reconquista began in earnest with the fall of Toledo in 1085, Cordoba proved a particularly long-lasting site for *rithā' al-mudun*, because of the nature of its demise. Cordoba and al-Zahra’ became “a testament to the disintegration of Hispano-Islamic unity that would ultimately prove the kingdom’s downfall” (175) and on the flip-side, Cordoba allowed for a “nostalgic yearning for an irretrievable time when Islam ruled a unified al-Andalus” (175).

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<sup>4</sup> His father had served as a vizier in Umayyad Cordoba and the family fled during the Civil War (Ruggles 174).

As Islamic city-states of the Taifa period began to fall to the Christian “Reconquista,” *rithā’ al-mudun* continued to be used as a way not only to mourn these losses, but also to issue calls to action – much as Palestinian poets before and after 1948 would use verse to encourage resistance among their peers. In response to the fall of Toledo in 1085, Ibn Ghassal wrote,

O people of al-Andalus, spur your mounts,  
for our place here is but a deception.

The fabric of the peninsula is unraveling from the  
edges, and the cloth even unravels from the center.

We are in the midst of enemies we cannot get rid of.

What kind of life is this, living in a basket of vipers? (qtd. Ruggles 175)

The emotion of these verses totters wildly between a “heroic” mood in which the poet calls out for aid in resisting the military advances of the Reconquista, and despair as he describes the entire peninsula “unraveling”; the fall of the “center” (Toledo) has shaken his faith in Islam’s grip on the Peninsula as a whole.

In a similarly pessimistic tone, a second, anonymous poet reacts to the fall of Toledo, using repetition to drive home his grief:

What a pity, what a pity, what sadness!

What is repeated, fate repeats again (qtd. Elinson 28).

The second verse connects the loss of Toledo with previous losses, possibly including the loss of Cordoba decades earlier. One loss prompts the poet to look back to history for signs of why this happened and how to respond to it. In the twentieth century, modern Arabic writers and poets would “look back” to al-Andalus in much the same way, searching for deeper understanding and better tools to describe contemporary challenges of colonialism and post-colonial oppression.

When Valencia fell to el-Cid (who besieged it in 1094), Ibn Khafājah responded via *rithā’ al-mudun*, in a poem which hearkens back not only to the pre-Islamic *qaṣīdah* but also to more recent Abbasid poetry:

A land whose dwellers were scattered by dire events,

Fate’s blows have scattered it by cruel blasts,

The hand of Destiny wrote on its courts:

You are not you, these dwellings are not yours. (qtd. Ruggles 175)

The final line, “You are not you, these dwellings are not yours” is a direct quote from the ninth-century Abbasid poet Abū Tammām, who condensed the pre-Islamic *nasīb* into a single verse:

(qtd. Vázquez 124) لا أنت أنت ولا الديار ديار / خفت الهوى وتولت الأوطار

The verse encapsulates the connections between abode and inhabitant – place and personal/collective identity – in the parallelism between “you” and “the abodes.” Ibn Khafajah appropriates Abū Tammām’s verse to encapsulate the connection between the loss of Valencia, and the world-shattering effect this had on its inhabitants.

Centuries later, Granadan Spanish poet Federico García Lorca would appropriate the same verse, most likely learned from a Spanish translation of Ibn Khafajah, in his “Romance sonámbulo,” describing how a father’s grief over the death of his daughter has made his home “no longer his.” The father tells the girl’s would-be suitor, “Si yo pudiera, mocito, / este trato se cerraba. / Pero yo ya no soy yo, / ni mi casa es ya me casa” (“If I could, young man, / this deal would be sealed / But I am no longer myself / and my home is no longer my home”; qtd.

Vázquez 124). Here the loss of a beloved daughter prompts the quotation, while for Ibn Khafajah it is the loss of a beloved home/city. Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish would introduce his 2004 collection *Lā Ta’tadhir ‘Ammā Fa’alt* (*Do Not Apologize for What You Did*) by quoting this verse first from Abū Tammām and then from Lorca, side by side (Darwish 11).

One final theme in the Andalusian *rithā’ al-mudun* genre which would be carried over into Morisco literature is the assigning of blame. Hubris, the sins of fathers and forefathers – all are possible reasons for the fall of cities. In Ibn Shuhayd’s elegy for Cordoba, for example, he tells the city, “I am sadly affected by the death which has befallen you. But was it not divine justice, since, during your life, you were so endlessly proud of your own splendor?” (qtd. Ruggles 173). After the fall of Seville in 1248 to Fernando III, Abū Mūsa Hārūn b. Hārūn wrote,

O Seville, was it preordained for you when fate took aim  
and destruction did not observe a covenant of protection?

O paradise, our sins tore us from your beautiful watercourses.

Now we must suffer sorrow and regret. (qtd. Elinson 29)

Centuries later, following the mass expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609-1614, we can see a similar impulse in the anonymous sonnet, “Dios, que a los suyos padeciendo mira,” (“God, who watches his people suffering”) whose author blames the Moriscos’ difficulties under the Inquisition on “...pecados de padres sin gobierno” (“sins of lawless fathers”; Taybili 199).

Al-Andalus, then, from its founding by an Umayyad exile to the dissolution of Cordoba in the eleventh century and throughout the gradual chipping-away of the Reconquista, was replete with “lost cities” that served as memory-sites in poetry and prose. They became a place to reflect on lost youth and lost love, on the nature of time and loss, on hubris and God’s punishment; they were Paradise Lost, Eden; they were a call to arms and the occasion for political critique; as Ruggles writes of Madinat al-Zahra’, “it was a blank page on which to inscribe a variety of meanings” (176). Or as Darwish would write of Granada from the distance of the twentieth century, “Granada is for the great ascension to herself, / and she can be however she wishes to be: the longing for / anything that happened or will happen...” (“How Do I Write Above the Clouds?” in *Aḥada ‘Ashara Kawkaban*).

## II. Literary Connections: Al-Andalus in Modern Arabic Literature

The modern Arabic literary interpretation of al-Andalus has taken this mythic, amorphous aspect of Islamic Spain and run with it. Granara describes this as the Bakhtinian “chronotope” of al-Andalus. Citing Augustine’s formulation that “the present time of things past is memory; the present time of things present is sight; and the present time of future is expectation,” Granara outlines modern Arabic interpretations of al-Andalus as containing the *memory* of a great civilization embodying tolerance and cultural efflorescence, the *sight* of current-day colonialism and a flipped power dynamic with “the West,” and the *expectation* or at least imagining of a better life of liberation and equality (Granara 60).

The use of this multivalent “Andalusian chronotope” in modern Arabic literature begins with modern Arabic literature itself, in the *Nahḍa*, or “awakening” of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the field of prose, Granara gives the example of the novel *Charl wa ‘Abd al-Raḥmān* by Jurjī Zaydān (1861-1914), a romantic-epic novel published in 1904, relating a fictionalized version of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil’s conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century (Granara 63). Granara describes Zaydān’s early novel as populated by “exaggerated and one-dimensional heroes and villains,” pitting “tolerant and benign Muslim rule” against “the intolerant and brutal Osgoths and Franks” to create a mythic image of early al-Andalus as an “interfaith utopia” (63-64). Granara explains this by highlighting Zaydān’s historical place in the *Nahḍa* and his anti-colonial, pan-Arab ideology: “The process of



projecting a pan-Arab vision, an essential component to Jurji Zaydan's novelistic project, onto the chronotope of the Islamic conquest of Spain comprises a systematic demonization of the 'Other[s]' of this novel, including Berbers, Jews, and Christian armies (64). Interestingly, Zaydān portrays Christian clergy as "caught in the middle," victims of circumstance – perhaps, Granara conjectures, "in deference to the author's own Christianity and his mission to unite all Arabs through his writing" (64).

In other words, Zaydān's projection of a vision of Arabo-Islamic strength and goodness, binarily opposed to Franco-European intolerance and evil, is very much rooted in his Nahḍawī project of fostering pan-Arab unity and pride, and in the reality of European colonialism being experienced across the Arab world at that time. Jurjī Zaydān was from Lebanon, where Ottoman rule was in its waning years and American and European influences could be clearly felt in projects like the Syrian Protestant College (later AUB). Lebanon had seen bloody sectarian civil war just decades earlier in the 1860s, and by 1904, wealthy absentee landowners in Beirut were busy selling off land in Palestine to Zionist colonists, while countries like Egypt and Algeria had already been under direct European colonial rule for some time. No wonder, then, that Zaydān seized upon the "opening" or conquest of al-Andalus to project a reverse-image of European colonialism – a strong, tolerant, enlightened Arabo-Islamic colony in Europe, and an image of pan-Arab unity across sectarian divisions.

Something similar was happening in the realm of poetry, as neoclassical poets contemporary to Zaydān seized upon al-Andalus to project similarly nationalist (in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century sense) and anti-colonialist visions of Arab greatness. Egyptian poet Aḥmad Shawqī (1868-1932) in particular is famous for his *Andalusiyyāt* ("Andalusian" poems), written during the period of his political exile in Spain from 1915-1920 (Snir 266-7). From 1892-1914, during the British occupation of Egypt, Shawqī served as court poet to the khedive of Egypt, writing panegyrics in which the khedive and the monarchy served as the "focus of Egyptian identity" (Noorani 240). Shakib Arslan, Shawqī's defender, interprets these poems as anti-colonial in nature: "The original ruler is the only remaining emblem of the nation's independence," he argues, so that a panegyric to the ruler is functionally also a panegyric to the nation, a way to "glorif[y] the independence of Egypt in the face of foreigners desirous of usurping all authority" (qtd. Noorani 240). By the early twentieth century, a bourgeois nationalist movement was growing in Egypt, and the monarchy began to lose its status as a symbol. In 1914, both Shawqī

and his patron the khedive, were exiled by the British occupiers, and with the khedive deposed, Shawqī (now in exile) shifted his audience to the bourgeois readers who now comprised the new face of Egyptian nationalism (Noorani 240-241). His Andalusian poems, or *Andalusiyyāt*, from the period of his exile in Spain from 1915-20, reflect this new role and political stance (Noorani 241, Snir 267).

Shawqī spent his time in Spain visiting Andalusian monuments and reading Andalusian literature; his poems from this period “use referential patterns that the poet consciously imported from medieval Andalusian poetry,” for example, in his use of the *muwashshah* form for his poem *Saqr al-Quraysh*, about ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil (Snir 269). Snir describes a “trend” among neoclassical poets employing the Andalusian chronotope of *mu’āraḍah* or “imitations” of famous medieval Andalusian poems (266). Shawqī, for example, composed a *mu’āraḍah* of Ibn Zaydūn’s famous *rithā’* for his lost love (Wallādah) and lost city (Cordoba), comparing his own exile with Ibn Zaydūn’s: “O mourner of bad luck, our evil days are so similar” (qtd. Snir 267). These sorts of comparisons are not simply backward-looking; returning to the past/present/future orientation of the Andalusian chronotope, we can see how “When [Shawqī] describes the great Arab Andalusian remains, he finds in them proof that the ancient glory they evoke will be revived in the near future...” (268). Past glory provides a response to present colonialism, occupation and exile; it gives shape to nationalist hopes for a brighter future. Noorani explains that another of Shawqī’s *Andalusiyyāt*, the “*Sīniyyah*,” named so for its “sīn” rhyme, owes its inspiration “as much to the colonial situation in which [it was] produced as to the splendors of Islamic Spain. Indeed [its] central impetus is a vision of cultural renaissance that negates the present political reality and elaborates a truer one that supersedes it” (237).

The “*Sīniyyah*” hearkens back to Andalusian *rithā’ al-mudun* from the outset, as it begins with an evocation of lost youth, moving from there to the poet’s longing for his homeland of Egypt, from his present exile in Spain (Shawqī “*Sīniyyah*”). Unlike in its medieval predecessors, here, the initial evocation of lost youth and lost homeland is explicitly anti-colonial, establishing British rule in Egypt as oppressive and unjust: “O daughter of the Nile, why is your father so stingy? / Why does he delight in forbidding and confining? / Is the tree unlawful for its nightingales / Yet permitted to all other birds? / A home belongs rightly to its own. / Except in a vile, wicked doctrine” (Shawqī, trans. Noorani 245). As in Andalusian *rithā’ al-mudun* where the lost city was compared to a lost paradise, Shawqī evokes the idea of paradise in the connection

he draws between Islamic Spain and Egypt. However, here, in the “*Sīniyyah*,” the homeland (Egypt) is longed for *despite* Shawqī’s physical present in “paradise,” i.e., among the traces of Islamic Spain: “My homeland: were I distracted from it by paradise, / My self, even in paradise, would pull me back to it” (qtd. Noorani 238).

Next, Shawqī goes further, establishing Islamic Spain’s ability to “heal” his homesickness through its representation of the *ideal of homeland*: “Al-Buḥturi was awakened by Sassanid monuments,<sup>5</sup> / And I was healed by Umayyad palaces” (qtd. Noorani 238). Noorani explains, “The poet’s self remains in his homeland no matter where he goes. Unlike paradise, the Umayyad monuments of Spain cure him of his longing for that homeland because they are identical to it” (238). This similarity is not so much a literal resemblance between Spain and Egypt; rather, it is al-Andalus-as-ideal, as not just “a superior version of modern European civilization [but] rather, an altogether higher reality, beyond the rule of fate and mortality for which Western imperialism stands” (239). If contemporary colonial rule in his homeland of Egypt is one pole of Shawqī’s “*Sīniyyah*,” the idealized Andalus / homeland – the “Andalusian chronotope,” as Granara puts it – is the other. Shawqī employs the chronotope of al-Andalus in his “*Sīniyyah*,” as well as in other *Andalusīyyāt*, to “inver[t] the reality of modern colonialism” because it represents “the poet’s authentic homeland [...] a former Arab-Muslim colony in Europe that provided the fulfillment perpetually denied by the colonial rule of the present” (Noorani 246). We can draw a clear parallel to Jurji Zaydān’s pan-Arab ideology in *Charl wa ‘Abd al-Rahman*, written roughly a decade earlier in the same cultural moment of pan-Arab Nahḍa and resistance to European colonialism.

By the mid-twentieth century, however, political realities and literary trends had shifted, and with them, the use of the Andalusian chronotope in Arabic literature. The dissolution of the Ottoman empire following WWI had simply led to French and British partition and “Mandate” colonial rule in the Levant, while colonized countries like Egypt and Algeria remained colonized. During the Palestinian Nakba of 1948, long-lasting Zionist colonial rule was established in most of historical Palestine, which was ethnically cleansed of two-thirds of its Palestinian inhabitants, while the colonially-installed Hashemites of Jordan and the colonially-administered state of Egypt carved off the West Bank and Gaza for themselves, respectively. It

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<sup>5</sup> Shawqī’s “*Sīniyyah*” is a *mu’araḍah* of al-Buḥturi’s “*Sīniyyah*,” describing al-Buḥturi’s visit to Tāq Kasrā or the Arch of Ctesiphon.

was a time of disunity, betrayal, hopelessness, and mass disillusionment with the sort of pan-Arab unity that Naḥḍawi writers like Zaydān and Shawqī had espoused.

In this landscape of disaster, ‘Alī al-Jārim (1881-1949) wrote his historical novel, *Hātif min al-Andalus*, in 1949. Al-Jārim had been one of the many neoclassical poets employing Andalusian imagery earlier in the twentieth century (Snir 266). Now, near the end of his life, the outlook seemed much bleaker. Whereas Zaydān in 1904 had focused on the initial Muslim conquest of al-Andalus as a moment of enlightenment and heroism, al-Jārim in 1949 chose to base his novel instead around the life of Ibn Zaydūn, with all the political backbiting that entailed, including the dissolution and fall of the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba (Granara 65-67). Al-Jārim portrays Ibn Zaydūn’s Cordoba as an oasis of “religious tolerance, intellectualism, and social and cultural intercourse,” but also highlights “themes of jealousy, disunity, and betrayal” which describe not only the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate but also “the causes for any real or hypothetical defeat of the modern Arab nation” (66). The allusion to the modern Arab states’ spectacular disunity and failure to defend Palestine during the Nakba seems clear enough. In al-Jārim’s hands, Ibn Zaydūn becomes an advocate of Arab unity in the face of colonial attempts to divide and conquer; from his fictional-historical imprisonment, the character of Ibn Zaydun writes to his beloved Wallādah about his desire to “...restore the Arab nation of al-Andalus to its former glory [...] The Arabs must unite; an unbreakable bond must bring them together; these petty kingdoms must come together as one united state over which one flag waves, symbolizing one voice, one power, one destiny” (qtd. Granara 66). The petty (*tawā’if*) kingdoms of the eleventh century become a warning to contemporary Arab states: fight amongst yourselves, and colonizers will eat you up one by one. The cautionary tale is mixed with a forward-looking optimism and call to action – al-Jārim, through the character of Ibn Zaydūn, calls for unity as the only way to regain and preserve that cultural utopia represented by the Andalusian chronotope.

During this time period, in addition to cataclysmic political events, literary forms were changing as well. In the late 1940s, *al-shi’r al-ḥurr* (“free verse”)<sup>6</sup> poetry began to break away from classical meters and forms, and a modernist poetic movement developed, influenced by European modernists like T.S. Elliot (Snir 270-1, Cruz 38). With modernist poetry came the

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<sup>6</sup> Different from what is called “free verse” poetry in English, which is closer to the Arabic *shi’r al-nathar*.

popularity by the late 1950s of the *qaṣīdat qinā'* or “mask poem” (Snir 271). Andalusian historical figures became “masks” with which the poet could traverse and/or connect distinct time periods and places, weaving together multiple mythologies and histories to explore universal human experience and to make political commentary on the struggles of the Arab world at that time.

Iraqi modernist poet ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī made extensive use of myth and history in his work, particularly the Babylonian myth of Tammuz and Ishtar (often portrayed in Bayātī’s poetry through the figure of “‘Ā’ishah”), with its central theme of death and resurrection (Cruz 38). Like many of his contemporaries, Bayātī was also influenced by “Western” poets including Pablo Neruda and Federico García Lorca. Lorca would take on special significance to Arab poets of this generation both as a martyr killed by fascism and as “the son of the ancient Arab city of Granada,” whose poetry was “highly influenced by the Arabic writings of al-Andalus” (Rafiq al-Akhdar, qtd. Snir 275). In her 2016 dissertation, Cruz explores how Bayātī’s “*al-Mawt fi Gharnāṭa*,” (“Death in Granada”) from his 1968 *diwān, al-Mawt fi-Ḥayāt* (Death in Life), weaves together the chronotope of Nasrid Granada and the figure of Lorca, together with the myth of ‘Ā’ishah/Ishtar, the biblical story of Jonah, the Christian figure of the Virgin Mary, and the Shi’i Islamic story of the martyrdom of Hussein.

In this poem, Bayātī uses the Andalusian chronotope as well as the other myths and stories mentioned to explore themes of oppression and exile. The poem starts optimistically, as ‘Ā’ishah/Ishtar rewrites the story of Jonah to show her own agency, rescuing herself from the belly of the whale and waving her hand above the water. However, the agency represented here by the active/waving hands is soon replaced with the tyranny and violence of severed hands, in the scene of Lorca’s execution by fascists. (“*al-Mawt fi Gharnāṭa*”). This scene takes place simultaneously in Granada and in Iraq, tying the historical event to the contemporary oppression faced by Bayātī and his countrymen: “And weeping in Granada / The youths’ teacher: / ‘Lorca is dying, he is dead / The Fascists executed him at night along the Euphrates / They mutilated his corpse and gouged out his eyes / Lorca is without hands” (qtd. Cruz 40). Lorca’s martyrdom is then tied even more directly to contemporary Iraq, and also to the martyrdom of Hussein: “A world turning in the void and blood is spilt / Woe unto me over Iraq / Beneath its red summer sky / From a thousand years before the cries get louder / Grieving over the martyr of Karbala / His spilt blood is still along the Euphrates / Staining the surface of the water and palm trees in

the evening” (qtd. 43). These martyrdoms are punctuated with supplication to the Virgin Mary: “yā ‘*adhrā*’,” which may allude to Lorca and contemporary Spain’s Catholicism, but also may be read as yet another religious/mythical thread tied into this already jumbled tapestry of religion, myth, and history.

Whether in conquered Granada, fascist Spain, or Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, tyrannical rule leads inevitably to death or exile, and we can see Bayātī arrive at this conclusion by the end of the poem, where he portrays “mythical Granada as a wasteland” (Cruz 43):

Oh world ruled by wolves  
we have nothing in it, but the right to cross these bridges  
we come and go, carrying the poor to the graves  
Oh cries of light  
Here I am an abandoned besieger  
Here I am dying  
In the darkness of the coffin  
the graveyard’s foxes eat my flesh  
and daggers are stabbing me  
immigrating from country to country  
on the wings of a bird (“*al-Mawt fi Gharnāṭa*,” my translation)

This final death or exile has no rebirth. Just as al-Jārim’s post-Nakba novel was much darker and more “realist” than the heroic poetry and prose of Jurjī Zaydān and Aḥmad Shawqī, al-Bayātī’s modernist, mythic poetry here makes use of the Andalusian chronotope to describe his own contemporary struggles with oppression and exile. Cruz argues that as Arab poets from the Nakba onward were deeply affected by external political events “such as colonialism, political upheaval, and exile,” they were able to make use to the Andalusian chronotope and the *qaṣīdat qinā*’ to “address or criticize contemporary political issues of their time” (37) and to “acquire a sense of self or identity [...] by looking to the past for any indication of continuity” in the face of contemporary colonialist attempts to erase their history (38). With its flexibility and the significance it had acquired over centuries as a symbol of greatness and of loss, al-Andalus appeared again and again in Bayātī’s work, as well as in the poems of his contemporaries (44).

While “*al-Mawt fi Gharnāṭa*” centers around themes of death and exile, Bayātī explores other facets of the Andalusian chronotope in other poems. For example, his poem “Ziryāb”

focuses on the figure of the famous Abbasid court musician Ziryāb who successfully transplanted himself to the Umayyad court in Cordoba and grew to a position of power and renown in his new homeland (Snir 272). In this poem, Bayātī evokes the “Andalus of the unknown” to address the more hopeful side of exile – the blank slate in which the exiled artist can not only thrive but also transfer some of the cultural treasures of his old home to his new one (Bayātī qtd. Snir 272). In his poem “*Al-dukhūl ‘ilā Gharnāṭah*,” Bayātī shows his reader a Granada which is “a symbol of the longed-for utopian city which [Bayātī] will never enter during his earthly life” (274). Although the poem first evokes impossible *distance* from this utopia, it moves toward a *closeness* which keeps the utopian ideal within reach, at least in the realm of poetic imagination:

*I did not enter Granada, but I was a ghost there*

Wandering in Alhambra

Listening to the weeping water

And the wailing roots of trees.

Climbing the towers of the destroyed walls

What did the fortune teller say?

*You will never enter Granada*

[...]

Here I am falling from high above the tower

I am flying for some time

*I am entering Granada through all its gates*” (Bayātī qtd. Snir 274; my emphasis)

The lines “I did not enter” and “you will never enter” are contradicted by the assertion, “I am entering Granada through all its gates” – this happens parallel to the shift from “falling” to “flying,” as the real distance from Andalusian utopia in the physical world transforms into closeness and freedom in the poetic imagination<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> “*Al-dukhūl ‘ilā Gharnāṭah*,” pays homage to Spanish poet Rafael Alberti’s 1953 poem, written from exile in Argentina, “Balada del que nunca fue a Granada” (Ballad of the One Who Never Went to Granada). This poem explores Alberti’s grief and guilt around the Spanish fascists’ 1936 execution of his friend and fellow-member of the *Generación del ’27*, Federico García Lorca. Lorca had invited Alberti to visit him in Granada, but was killed before Alberti ever took him up on his offer. Alberti’s “Balada” does not mention Lorca’s murder explicitly, but the references are clear: “Come, those who never went to Granada / There is blood spilled, blood that calls me / [...] / There is blood spilled, blood of the best brother / Blood on the myrtles and in the water of the courtyards / [...] / Blood of the best friend, on the myrtles / Blood in the Darro; in the Genil, blood...” (my translation). As Bayātī would later imitate, each stanza in Alberti’s poem ends with a variation of the phrase “I never went to Granada” / “I

Many of Bayātī’s contemporaries, including Badr Shākīr al-Sayyāb, Salāḥ ‘Abd al-Ṣabūr, Nizar Qabbani, Adunis, Sa’di Yousef, Ahmad ‘Abd al-Mu’ti Hijāzi, Muḥammad ‘Afīfī Maṭar, and Mahmoud Darwish, would explore a similar variety of themes through the chronotope of al-Andalus (Cruz 44, ‘Uthman 11). For example, in Adunis’s 1965 collection *Kitāb al-Taḥawwulāt wa-l-Hijrah fī Aqālīm al-Nahār wa-l-Layl*, the figure of ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Dākhlī is used to explore themes of cultural transfer, similar to Bayātī’s “Ziryab”: “The Hawk [‘Abd al-Rahman] in his labyrinth, in his creative despair / Builds on the peak at the end of depths / Andalus of the depths / Andalus which is arising from Damascus / Bearing to the West the harvest of the East” (Adunis qtd. Snir 271). During this period, al-Andalus acted as a “poetic equivalent for the idea of homeland in exile,” and poets wrote about the fall of al-Andalus as a symbol of the demise of the collective, nationalist dream in the present day – themes particularly relevant in the *Palestinian* context (‘Uthman 13, 28). Palestinian poet Mu’īn Bsīsu, for example, used the figure of Tāriq ibn Ziyād in his poem “*Qaṣīdah min Faṣl Wāḥid*,” which portrays Tāriq in prison, and his play “*Thawrat al-Zanj*,” which has Tāriq called to join in armed struggle (Snir 272). The parallels to Palestinian experience of imprisonment and armed conflict are clear, and we can even draw some connection between the solidarity Palestinian poets showed toward contemporary anticolonial struggles (e.g., in Mahmoud Darwish’s “Letter to a Negro,”<sup>8</sup> or Samīḥ al-Qāsim’s “*My Sister, Sana’a*”) and the cross-historical identification with such figures, who constitute the “masks” and metaphors for the contemporary Palestinian struggle.

The figure of Federico García Lorca also formed an important bridge between the anti-colonial present and the past myth of al-Andalus for Arab and specifically Palestinian poets. Egyptian poet Salāḥ ‘Abd al-Ṣabūr, for example, highlights Lorca’s role as a bridge between the Andalusian past and Spanish present, as well as his iconic role in the struggle for freedom and equality, in his 1972 poem “Lorca”: “Lorca / Is a fountain in the square / A shelter and a resting place for the poor children / Lorca is gypsies’ songs” (qtd. Snir 275-6). Fountains are a traditional part of Islamic Andalusian architecture which became incorporated in later centuries

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never saw Granada” / “I never entered Granada,” expressing Alberti’s regret and guilt (“Balada,” my translation). However, the final stanza flips this refrain on its head with a call to action: “If the towers are high, courage is high as well / Come through the mountains, by sea and by land. / I will enter Granada” (my translation). Bayātī follows the same format, shifting the refrain at the end of his poem to the affirmative “*I am entering Granada through all its gates.*”

<sup>8</sup> See Maha Nassar, “Palestinian Engagement with the Black Freedom Movement Prior to 1967”



by Christian Spain<sup>9</sup>. Lorca in his poetry and essays highlights the gypsies' role in preserving Islamo-Arabic Andalusian music and culture through the difficult centuries of the Inquisition and into the present day; "the gypsies' songs" is a direct allusion to this "bridge" role played by the Romani and by Lorca himself. The line "a shelter and resting place for the poor children" highlights Lorca's outspoken role in the struggle for justice and equality. In his poetry, Lorca highlighted the marginalized gypsies and Spain's Arabic, Andalusian past as a direct challenge to official, homogenizing narratives of Catholic Spanish identity. In his plays, he addressed the struggles of women in a deeply patriarchal Andalusian society. During his life, Lorca toured Spanish villages with a theater troupe whose express goal was to bring art to the people; he was an outspoken advocate of "committed" art as opposed to "art for art's sake," and when he died it was at the hands of Franco's fascist movement. Other contemporary Arab poets who addressed similar themes through the figure of Lorca included Lebanese Druze poet Fu'ād al-Khashin in his poem "*Qamar Gharnāṭah wa-l-Ḥaras al-Aswad*," and Egyptian poet Faṭḥi Sa'īd in his poem "*Layālī Gharnāṭah*" (Snir 276-7).

Lorca's significance for Palestine and Palestinian poets can be seen in Samīḥ al-Qāsim's "*Laylun 'alā Bāb Federico*," which focuses on Lorca's martyrdom/murder by fascist forces, with increasing speed and anxiety throughout the poem as the speaker begs Lorca to hide him (implying similar forces threatening the Palestinian poet). Yet at the same time, the poem highlights the beauty represented by Lorca's artistry, his moral stance, and by his connection to al-Andalus. The poem "does not allude directly to al-Andalus at any point, but rather to a sense of splendor that was Arab Andalusia" (Snir 278):

Federico  
 The guard turned off his flashlight  
 Come down  
 I am waiting in the square

Fede-ri-co  
 The lamp of sadness is a moon  
 The fear is trees  
 Come down

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<sup>9</sup> Alberti's "Balada del que nunca fue a Granada," on which Bayātī bases his "*Al-dukhūl 'ilā Gharnāṭah*," includes a similar reference to fountains, alluding to the fascist takeover of Granada with the question, "Who now imprisons its gardens, and puts / chains on the speech of its fountains" (my translation).

I know, You are hiding in the house  
Gripped with fever

Burning with death  
Come down  
I am waiting in the square  
Burning with the flame of the rose  
My heart is an apple

A rooster calls on a tiled roof  
Federico  
The star is a wound  
And the blood is screaming on the strings  
And the guitar is aflame

Fede-ri-co  
The black patrol threw its weapons in the well  
Come down to the square  
I know, You are hiding between the wings of an angel  
I see you

A lily behind a curtain  
And between your lips trembles a butterfly  
And your hands caress the hair of the night  
Come down, Federico  
And open the door for me  
Quickly  
I am waiting on the doorstep  
Quickly

At the street corner  
The din of approaching militia  
The clatter of rifles  
And the clanging of lances  
Open the door for me  
Quickly  
Hide me  
Federico  
Fede-ri-co!" (Qtd. 279)

Al-Qāsim juxtaposes the dark forces of fascism that murdered the poet with images of the moon, lilies, roses, an apple, trees, and the “bleeding” strings of a guitar – all of which “allude to earlier Andalusian nature poetry,” and to images in Lorca’s own poetry (279). Even Andalusian architecture is evoked in the contrast between the open square where the speaker stands and the closed, protected house where Lorca hides from his pursuers – this open/public versus closed/private dichotomy is a cornerstone of Arabo-Islamic architecture which, like Andalusian music, carried over into modern Spain. The connection to Palestine and the lived experience of the Palestinian poet is also clear in the lurking police presence and the struggle to preserve love, art, and beauty in the face of overwhelming fear, oppression, and death. And although I will hold off discussing him here to leave space later on, al-Qāsim’s contemporary and fellow-“resistance” poet Mahmoud Darwish is perhaps the most famous Palestinian poet to make use of the Andalusian chronotope to explore themes of loss, exile, defeat, survival, and the “lost garden” of the idealized remembered/hoped for homeland.

All of the above authors, poets, and artistic works focus upon three central moments in Andalusian history: the heroism and possibility of the initial conquest or “opening”; the internal divisions and cultural florescence of the late Cordoban Caliphate and early *Ṭawāʾif* period; and the tragic loss and betrayal of the final fall of Nasrid Granada. However, some of these poets, notably Samīḥ al-Qāsim and Mahmoud Darwish, were themselves members of a Palestinian minority who had remained on their land *post*-conquest, living under occupation and military rule of a regime which aimed to erase both their presence and their history. Strange, then, that even these poets would ignore the comparable situation of those Andalusian Muslims who remained on their lands following Christian conquest and continued to live under Christian rule, first as *Mudejars* and then starting in 1500 as Moriscos or forced converts. To my knowledge, the Moriscos are rarely addressed by modern Arabic literature – perhaps due to lack of reliable sources and information, or due to the same sorts of suspicion faced by al-Qāsim, Darwish, and other 48 Palestinians by those living in exile, or in occupied Gaza or the West Bank. Living under occupation necessarily compromises one’s position, making the conquered population vulnerable to collaboration, cooptation, and acculturation. Certainly, the Moriscos faced these same suspicions from their North African peers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries;

perhaps modern Arabic literature so often avoids them because of how “messy” life and loyalties under occupation can be?

The one notable exception to this rule is Radwa Ashour’s *Granada Trilogy*, which directly tackles Moriscos, not al-Andalus, as a metaphor for contemporary Arab experience, including and especially the Palestinian experience. The *Trilogy* follows the lives of the members of a single Granadan family, from the initial conquest of Granada through to the final expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609-14. Its first book, *Salimah* (published in English by William Granara as “Granada”) details the first several decades of life under Castilian rule, through the many viewpoints of the different family members. Their varying ages, life experiences and personalities illustrate the spectrum of effects and reactions occupation can cause. Sa’id, a traumatized refugee from Malaga who was adopted into the family as a boy, takes to the mountains and joins the armed resistance. Salimah, the educated daughter of the family patriarch (himself a bookmaker), retreats into reading and scientific experimentation, focusing her energy on preserving her grandfather’s Arabic books and becoming a self-taught *curandera* or folk-healer for her neighbors; at the end of the first book, this leads to her being burned as a witch by the Inquisition. Throughout her narrative arc, Salimah’s battle is as much against gender norms within her community, as it is against the burning and confiscation of her precious Arabic books. Salimah’s brother Hassan, by contrast, is portrayed as conservative and traditional. He keeps his head down in order to survive and pressures his family members to do the same. Hassan’s wife Maryam, the daughter of a musician, exemplifies the ideology of *ṣumūd* as she convinces the family not to flee into exile when faced with forced conversion, but rather practice *taqiyyah* and stay put in Granada; her cunning and resourcefulness help her and her neighbors to continue preserving their Arabo-Islamic customs and identity despite increasingly strict laws against it. Na’im, another foundling and Sa’id’s childhood friend, gets offended when his friend joins the armed resistance without telling him first and decides to take his opportunity to travel to the New World with his priest-employer, later escaping the Spanish settlement with an indigenous woman with whom he has fallen in love – a nod to the notion of global anti-colonial solidarity.

These experiences of occupation and exile, and the wide range of possible responses to them, serve as a clear parallel for “contemporary Arab political life” of the 1990s (Granara 96). Ashour’s decision to allow all these voices to coexist without intervening as an author to explicitly center one or the other creates what Granara calls “a [Bakhtinian] dialogized

heteroglossia representing the many contradictions of the world of the modern novel” (71). The patriarch, Abu Ja’afar the bookmaker, dies early on in the novel, meaning that “as the spirit of the deceased hero [Abu Ja’afar] assumes mythological status, his character is dismantled, decentered, displaced, and then reconstructed through the various members of his household” (69) – akin to the killing-off and mythologization of the patriarch-character at the beginning of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Munīf’s *Cities of Salt*, which explores the contemporary history of the Gulf oil states and Saudi Arabia in particular. With the *Granada Trilogy*, the analogy to any specific modern Arab nation-state is less straightforward, since the novel uses the “mask” or “chronotope” of the Moriscos to explore its themes of survival, occupation and exile. However, the Palestinian connection comes through clearly in the themes of exile, armed resistance, *ṣumūd*, acculturation, collaboration, and the difficult decisions the characters make that take them down one more of these paths. Ashour fittingly dedicates her *Trilogy* to her son, the Palestinian nationalist poet Tamim al-Barghouti. My hope is that this dissertation will provide another small brick in this bridge between the Moriscos and the Palestinians, specifically focusing on how 48 Palestinians and Moriscos used literature to shape and strengthen their identity in the face of occupation and ethnic cleansing.

### III. Historical Parallels: Reconquest Colonialism, Zionist Settler-Colonialism, and Ethno-Religious “Purity” in the Nation-State

The appeal of al-Andalus to Palestinian poets like Samīḥ al-Qāsim and Mahmoud Darwish, or to Arab writers who cared deeply about Palestine, like Radwa Ashour, is not just a literary one. I would argue that it is also rooted in a *historical* sense of shared experience and shared loss. Ashour’s use of Morisco characters to comment on contemporary Arab experiences of colonization, marginalization, resistance and exile is apt, based in strong historical parallels between the medieval colonialism of the Reconquest and modern colonialism; between ideals of linguistic, ethnic, and religious superiority and “purity” central to the construction of the Spanish nation-state in the early modern period, and similar ideals at the root of Zionism and its state-building project in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. María Jose Lera actually goes so far as to compare Morisco and modern Palestinian situations through the lens of genocide studies, particularly Feierstein’s “phases” of genocide (construction of a negative otherness, physical and

legal harassment, isolation, systemic weakening, material annihilation, and symbolic realization of genocidal practices; Lera 3-4). In the case of the Moriscos, she finds that all phases apply, while in the case of modern-day Palestine, she argues that *most* of the phases apply, though thankfully, we have yet to see the utter and complete annihilation of the Palestinian people (Lera views the situation of Palestinians as a genocide in-process; 25). Highlighting the *colonial* dynamic at play, Lera points out that both Reconquista and Zionist projects culminated in the creation of a *nation-state*, by colonizers self-defining as natives (“hijos de la tierra” or “sons of the land,” to use Lera’s term) “returning” to “their” homeland. In both cases, the Spanish/Israeli nation-states are “creado[s] y definido[s] en base a una mezcla de cuestiones de sangre, raza, etnia y religion” (“created and defined on the basis of a mixture of questions of blood, race, ethnicity, and religion”; 26), requiring the subjugation and/or elimination of native inhabitants who do not fit this mold, and the seizure of their land and property.

While Reconquista colonialism and Zionist settler-colonialism are each a full area of study in their own right, they share some central tenants and themes which appear in modern Arabic and Palestinian literature. In its most basic definition, colonialism involves the appropriation of land and resources at the expense of and against the wishes of the native inhabitants. Memmi’s definition of a colonizer is a useful baseline here:

A foreigner, having come to a land by the accidents of history, he has succeeded not merely in creating a place for himself but also in taking away that of the inhabitant, granting himself astounding privileges to the detriment of those rightfully entitled to them. And this not by virtue of local laws, which in a certain way legitimize this inequality by tradition, but by upsetting the established rules and substituting his own.  
(Memmi *Colonizer* 9)

Zionism’s colonial nature has been thoroughly documented by this point, in large part in reaction to Zionist political efforts to brand the project as “liberal” and democratic. In her book *Citizen Strangers*, Shira Robinson explores “the contradictions that emerged from Israel’s foundation as a liberal settler state—a modern colonial polity whose procedural democracy was established by forcibly removing most of the indigenous majority from within its borders and then extending to those who remained a discrete set of individual rights and duties that only the settler community could determine” (3). Her work builds on previous works by Ilan Pappé, Rashid Khalidi, Nur

Masalha, Ted Swedenburg, and many others, which document the basic colonial nature and history of the Zionist project and the Israeli state.

We are quite accustomed to applying the term “colonialism” and the theoretical work broadly categorized as “postcolonial studies” to situations in the modern world – but is it anachronistic to apply these concepts to sixteenth-century Spain of the Moriscos, or indeed to the medieval Reconquista? On the contrary, within the past few decades, medievalists like Robert Bartlett in *The Making of Europe* and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* have explicitly drawn on postcolonial theory and related concepts like Orientalism to examine the ways medieval European societies viewed and interacted with their – particularly Islamic – Others. Holsinger’s article “Medieval Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and the Genealogies of Critique” offers a thorough and succinct overview of the use of postcolonial theory by medievalists and recent debates surrounding this practice. Of course, the original inventors and proponents of the “Reconquista” imply that Muslim Arab and Berber armies were in a sense the original settler-colonizers of the Iberian Peninsula; beginning in 711, they conquered increasing swathes of territory, until their advance was stopped at the Battle of Tours (732). However, I think it fairly moot at this point that Umayyad and later *Tā’ifa*, Almoravid, Almohad, and Nasrid kingdoms in al-Andalus were part of a series, as they were preceded by a period of Visigoth rule in the Peninsula, and Roman rule before that. Where the real break would come would be in the narrative and practice of the so-called “Reconquista” or “re-conquest” of the Peninsula by and for Iberian Christians, at the expense of all others.

During the centuries-long process of Reconquista, northern Christian kingdoms seized cities and their surrounding lands from Muslim control, and redistributed land and property (*repartimiento*) to northern Christian settlers (*re pobladores*). Wacks quotes from an episode in the *Poema del Mio Cid* to summarize this colonial attitude and practice; after conquering the Muslim town of Alcocer, the Cid tells his soldiers, “posaremos en sus casas y dellos nos serviremos” [“we will settle in their houses and make use of them”] (qtd. 90). Wacks explains, “This is colonialism in a nutshell: Christians are not to deport or kill Muslims, but rather should subjugate them and politically exploit them by occupying their space and appropriating their resources” (90).

The medieval system of Mudejarism has been lauded by, for example, Maria Rosa Menocal, as an example of tolerance in action – minorities allowed to remain in their homelands

post-conquest and to preserve their culture and religion with some degree of autonomy, in a kind of Christian equivalent of the Islamic *dhimmi* system. Other academics quickly responded with descriptions of medieval Iberian violence toward religious minorities (e.g., David Nirenberg's *Communities of Violence*). Burns's *Medieval Colonialism*, a study of James the Conqueror's efforts to conquer, settle and administer Valencia in the thirteenth century, offers what I believe is a more holistic way to view Mudejarism – through the lens of colonial administration. The very word “mudejar” comes from the Arabic “*mudajjan*,” meaning “domesticated,” which connotes a colonial dynamic in which the colonizer “domesticates” the colonized into a subservient servant/working class. Burns employs the term “colonial Mudejarism” to describe this system, which by the thirteenth century had become an “inherited [...] pattern by which Arago-Catalonia [and other Christian Iberian kingdoms] absorbed and administered subject Moors” (*Medieval* 9). This pattern had its roots in Alfonso VI's conquest of Toledo in 1085. “Neither tolerance nor discriminatory ghetto,” Burns writes, it “pragmatically accepted parallel, antipathetic societies” – viz., settler and native (9).

This separation of native and settler societies “sternly forbade crossing over”; although “theoretically the host society welcomed and even sought converts[,] in practice Valencia's Christians [settlers] demonstrated lively prejudice against them as cultural aliens” (10). At the same time, while crossing-over was forbidden, “in most towns and over the countryside, [...] Christians and Muslims lived cheek by jowl. [...] They met and mingled at a hundred levels – in business, entertainment, agriculture, markets, travel, domestic service, social life, vice, and crime” (10). Mudejars sometimes found themselves mixed up in court cases involving Christian settlers, which brought them into direct contact with Christian colonial court systems (10). Yet they still had their own days at public baths, their own *ḥalāl* food suppliers, and a “distinct tax structure” (10). Mudejarism's balance of permeability and impermeability – mixing and strict segregation – can perhaps be best understood as common feature of colonialism, a result of what Ecker calls “the problems of settlement faced by colonizers: whether to blend or to expel (or to contain), whether to restore or to rebuild, and whether to control by persuasion or by force” (45). As hinted at in the etymology of the word “mudejar,” by allowing Muslims to remain as a subservient class, Christian Iberian conquerors were able to make use of their labor and local knowledge, not just their physical buildings and lands, comparable to Israel's use of Palestinian labor in its agriculture and construction projects – an appropriation of human beings similar to



that of their houses and cities, for the material benefit of the colonizer. The paradoxical desire to blend/expel the colonized is a familiar dynamic to 48 Palestinians and to anyone who has visited “mixed” cities in Israel like Haifa, Yafa/Tel Aviv, Nazareth, or Jerusalem, which have acquired a large settler population while retaining a significant percentage of their Palestinian inhabitants.

Another central problem of settler-colonialism is logistically how to divide and redistribute confiscated land and property once it has been conquered, shifting ownership from native to settler. Just as victorious Zionist leaders were able to create laws labeling many Palestinians “present absentees” and permitting the legal “confiscation” of their property by the Custodian of Absentee Property, medieval Christian Spanish regimes created their own laws and government offices to ease the transfer of property and land from native to settler ownership. As Ecker explains, “The expulsion of entire populations from large cities such as Córdoba and Seville as part of the surrender pacts meant that all types of immoveable property [...] came under the control and occupation of outsiders” (47). The process of *repartimiento*, or the redistribution of Andalusí land/property to settlers, had its own official paperwork (the *Libros de repartimiento*) and relied on the collaboration of middle-men: local informants and Mozarabic scribes in Mallorca, for example, “local Muslim informants and Jewish translators” in Écija, and “Jewish and Mozarabic administrators” in Seville (52).

Such collaboration brings to mind the modern role of nineteenth- and early twentieth century *samāsirah*, or land brokers, in selling off lands owned by wealthy absentee-landlords and farmed by Palestinian *fellaḥīn* to the JNF, whose colonial aims they ignored for their personal financial benefit. And as with Zionist land acquisition in Palestine, in the context of medieval Iberia, planning for colonial administration and redistribution of property would often begin *before* the actual military victory. Burns describes how before the military surrender of Valencia to James the Conqueror, for example, “the canny [Arago-Catalan] lawyers computed crown profits, arranged for property redistribution, and in general prepared the colonial regime” (*Medieval* 6). In another account of the same conquest, Burns describes how “Christian notaries briskly listed the deserted properties, assigning them to crusaders or immigrants” (*Islam* 8). He adds that rural *repartimiento* essentially allowed Valencian Muslim farmers to continue living more or less as before, now as tenants to Christian landlords (9). Palestinian author Emile Habiby notes a similar pattern in his novel *The Pessoptimist*, when describing a village of

Palestinian *fellaḥīn* who continue working their land, now under the ownership of a nearby Israeli settlement.

As hinted at by this dynamic, the *repartimiento* of native property to settlers was not a simple one-way exercise of colonial power. Ecker examines how, in conquered Andalusian cities, “the imported institutions [clerical, administrative] were shaped by the very context that their sponsors sought to transform” (45). Churches were built on the foundations of mosques, and church parishes were established along the lines of conquered cities’ previous Islamic administrations and neighborhoods (47-48). This process was particularly rapid in cities like Seville and Córdoba, which had been “emptied of their populations” as part of the initial surrender agreements (48). In this pattern of adapting existing urban geography, buildings and urban structures can be seen in famous monuments like the Great Mosque of Córdoba, or the Alhambra in Granada, both of which were architecturally modified and became symbols of Castilian conquest, while retaining their base of Islamic architecture. In this way, existing city structures served as a pre-existing foundation upon which to build; and as with human subjects, there was a tension between the urge to incorporate such structures, and the impulse to build over and erase them.

A similar dynamic would continue centuries later, in the physical and administrative changes enacted on the conquered city of Granada: “Everywhere, medieval palaces were transformed into monasteries and convents, and mosques were replaced by hospitals and parish churches” (Harris 1). Old Christian settlers were attracted by a variety of opportunities – for artisans and farmers, becoming a settler meant the chance to take land and property, while for social climbers and high-status administrators and bureaucrats, it meant a chance to secure power within the new regime (15). Returning again to Memmi’s definition of the colonizer, we can note that after the first Granadan Mudejar uprising in 1499, the city council did not allow Muslim Granadans among its members – the colonizers were increasingly establishing their *own* upward mobility while excluding the colonized from it (15). Just a year before the revolt, in 1498, “Granada’s Christian and Muslim leaders agreed to partition the city into two separate zones”, with the native inhabitants relegated largely to the Albaicín; this physical segregation between native Granadans and Christian settlers “both stemmed from and contributed to persistent tensions between them” (21). Land theft, another telltale trait of colonialism, was common: “Morisco landowners found themselves the object of unwanted attention from land-hungry

newcomers, who used both legal and extralegal means to acquire the Moriscos' intensely cultivated and irrigated small plots" (22).

Building over and covering up existing native geography and architecture allows colonial regimes not only to control the landscape, but also to control the narratives and memories attached to that landscape. A. Katie Harris in her book *From Muslim to Christian Granada* describes how the "Sacromonte," a hill outside Granada previously the site of at least one Sufi *rábida*, became a site of settler-Christian pilgrimage and devotion after the "discovery" there in the late sixteenth century of a series of lead tablets or *plomos*, ostensibly paleo-Christian relics dating back to the Roman era (Ch 5). The *plomos* were likely originally forged and planted by members of the Morisco collaborator class, in an attempt to "redefin[e] Christianity along Muslim lines" (30), making certain aspects of Christianity more acceptable to Moriscos and reversing racialized discrimination against Moriscos by portraying Spain's early Christians as Arab (33). Yet the books (published and unpublished) and maps produced by Granada's Christian settler intelligentsia to frame and "explain" the *plomos* tended to elide any Arab or Morisco connections. Instead, these settler-produced studies built the *plomos* into an elaborate, newly-forged history of Granada as a center of paleo-Christianity in Roman Spain:

Although the *plomos* themselves put forward a version of Granadino history that redeemed the Moriscos by transforming the city's patron saint into a converted Arab, the new, official historiography written around them centered on continuity, not conversion. The constitution of Granadino civic identity around an invented Christian heritage pushed the Moriscos outside the community in the narrative of Granadino history and civic tradition. (82)

Just as Castilian government and military and legal bodies exerted their physical control over the landscape of post-conquest Granada, Castilian settler intelligentsia both secular and clerical worked to shape the *narrative* around that landscape.

Official histories and maps would paper over Granada's centuries of Islamic architecture and history with a new Christian settler geography and "ancient" Christian history. For example, in Vico's "Plataforma" or map of sixteenth-century Granada,

At the center of the map, and first on the list of identified monuments, is the cathedral – a huge, incomplete building that dwarfs all of the surrounding structures. (123)

And

The city bears the marks of the urban changes of the sixteenth century, with new plazas – the scene of religious festivities and *autos da fe* – and new neighborhoods on a nearly

regular grid beyond the boundaries of the old city. The streets of the Albaicín, actually narrow and twisting in the manner of medieval Muslim cities, appear unusually straight, as if Castilianized and Christianized through cartographic artifice” (125). Meanwhile, city histories written by the settler intelligentsia, especially those interpreting the findings at the Torre Turpiana and Sacromonte in the 1580s-90s, focused on creating a “new interpretation of Granada’s past that emphasized continuity between the modern and the ancient incarnations of the city and the constancy of Christian faith” (47). In the case of Granada and other recently-colonized territories, “Civic historians, especially those writing for Andalusian cities, balanced their emphasis on Christian antiquity with a relative lack of attention to the medieval Muslim era, often either ignoring it completely, or reducing it to participation in the long process of the Christian Reconquest” (51). The Sacromonte forgeries were so beloved and important to Granadan clergy and local historians precisely because they helped establish the city’s ancient Christian “roots” and elide “the all-too-plentiful evidence of its Muslim Middle Ages” (54).

Control of landscape and narration around it have likewise been central to the Zionist settler project in the modern day. Taking one localized example, the Galilee village of Saffuriyya, built around a hill, was one of hundreds ethnically cleansed in 1948 (see Hoffman). In the present day, the base of the hillside has been built over by a moshav (settlement) with a Hebraicized version of the same name: Tzipori. Around the edges of the moshav, fast-growing pine trees do not quite conceal the remains of a few stone Palestinian buildings, whose roofs have been allowed to cave in. The forest floor around them is littered with cow patties; moshav dwellers apparently allow their cattle to roam the area. In the moshav, wide paved streets are lined by ranch-style houses on either side. Towards the entrance of the moshav there is a clump of olive trees which have been allowed to grow wild and out of check, higher than the houses; in the fall, the olives remain unpicked, shriveling on their branches or falling to the ground. Olive trees are and have traditionally been cultivated by Palestinian farmers, and in their agricultural use are pruned and maintained to keep them at an appropriate height for harvesting.

Meanwhile, tourists are advised to head to the top of the hill – also planted over with fast-growing pines – where they can view the historical Roman ruins of Sepphoris, in what is now an official archeological reserve, Tzipori National Park. The official website of the “Israel Nature and Parks Authority” has a page devoted to Tzipori, in whose “History” section it tells us,

Tzipori was the magnificent capital of the Galilee already in the time of the Roman conquest, in 65 BC. In the 2nd century CE Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi transferred the Sanhedrin to Tzipori, where the Mishna was completed. The Christians also attribute importance to the city because, according to their tradition, this is where the parents of Mary, mother of Jesus, lived.

According to Josephus, Tzipori was called the "glory of the entire Galilee". The population of the city was mixed, and it was a Jewish spiritual center. Many scholars lived here, Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi transferred the seat of the Sanhedrin from Bet She'arim to Tzipori, and around 220 CE he completed the Mishna in the city. In the middle of the 3rd century, after the seat of the Sanhedrin was transferred to Tiberias, Tzipori lost its status as capital of the Galilee, but it apparently continued to be an important Jewish center until the 5th century CE, when the Christian community in the city increased and became a significant component of the population.

The Christians attribute great importance to Tzipori due to their tradition that in this city lived Anne and Joachim, the parents of Mary, Jesus' mother. The fact that the city was a Christian center is evidenced by the remains of the Byzantine-Crusader church. In the Arabian period the city fell from its greatness and in the Crusader period "La Sephorie" was a city and fortress in the Galilean Principality.

This text is emblematic of the "Israel Nature and Parks Authority," and indeed the Israeli government and Zionist historians as a whole in the way it easily elides any Palestinian or even Muslim presence on the land. There is no hint here that the village of Saffuriyya ever existed or was ethnically cleansed to make way for the new state, nor indeed of centuries of Muslim rule from early Islamic through to Ottoman period in the land of Palestine - all of this gets condensed to "in the Arabian period the city fell from its greatness." Instead, the emphasis lies on Roman, Jewish, and Christian history, all of which are easily incorporated into the Biblical narrative of "return" through which Zionism legitimates its conquest and colonization. In the same way, Castilian and Aragonese kings of the Middle Ages employed the "Gothic legend" of their own pre-Andalusian Visigoth roots, and the narrative of "Reconquest" of lost "Christian" territory to legitimize their wars for land and resources in southern Iberia. Similarly, Granadan settler historians in the early modern period built up the legend of the ancient Roman or Phoenician history of Granada as a paleo-Christian city, in order to portray the new settler class as heirs to an ancient civilization, rightfully returning it to Christianity.

Saffuriyya is a small but typical example of the modern Zionist control of space and narrative; other prominent examples include the demolition of the Maghribi quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem decades ago to create a large plaza that would center the Wailing Wall, a

Jewish religious site, as a locus within the city. In doing so, the city's new administration would downplay the role of the *ḥaram al-sharīf*, the compound containing the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosque, just next to the Wailing Wall. The many archeological excavations underneath the *ḥaram al-sharīf* have also played a role in this rewriting of history, as they highlight the same “ancient” Roman, Jewish and Christian history outlined in the blurb above while eliding the centuries of early Islamic, Umayyad, Abbasid, Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk and Ottoman rule that followed the Roman and Byzantine periods. These excavations have also made headlines many times because of the threat they potentially pose to the structural integrity of the al-Aqsa compound, and indeed some more extreme elements of settler society have called for the building of a “third temple” on the site – part of an apocalyptic Biblical narrative of return and entitlement which is still in line with the more mainstream Zionist historical narratives in that it focuses on an ancient semi-mythical Jewish past and the construction of a direct link between that ancient past and present colonial settlement, which elides centuries of Muslim rule in between and incorporates centuries of Christian rule only as a shared element of the overarching Biblical narrative.

While both modern Zionist and medieval Iberian colonialism adhere to the basic definition of seizing land and resources and imposing laws contrary to the wishes of native people, neither defined itself as a colonial enterprise. On the contrary, both sought to justify their actions through narratives of religious entitlement and “return” – as visible in the term “reconquest.” Wacks distinguishes the actual colonial *aims* of the Reconquest from its religious rhetoric: northern Iberian kings, he writes, “aim[ed] to unseat Islamic political power on the Iberian Peninsula, and they sought to authorize this project by discrediting Muslim leaders as the usurpers of lands to which the Christians were rightful heirs. In their view, Christian conquests of al-Andalus were the recuperation of lands that, in the eyes of God himself, belonged to them” (87). Based on studies of eighth- to thirteenth-century monastic and royal chronicles, he writes, “the ideological basis of Reconquest colonialism was to ‘recuperate’ land to which Iberian Christians had a historical right” (92). The “Gothic legend” of the loss of the peninsula by its Visigoth rulers to Arab and Berber armies helped construct a myth in which Christian conquest was a “return” of the land to the same ancient ethno-religious ownership. This is why by the early modern period, establishing the presence of “ancient” (particularly Roman) Christian

history in Granada would be so important to its Castilian settlers, as a means of justifying their conquest as part of a great “return.”

Such a politicized use of a mythological retelling of history, the narrative of one religion and people’s God-given right to a piece of land, is obviously familiar to the victims of modern-day Zionism. In the Palestinian novel *The Pessoptimist*, the narrator’s teacher echoes the Zionist conquerors’ narrative about their supposed historical-yet-timeless connection to the land Palestine: “These aren’t Mamluks or Crusaders. These are people returning to their country after an absence of two thousand years!” (Habiby trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 24). This Zionist narrative is greeted with naïve irony by Saeed, the Palestinian protagonist: “My, what prodigious memories they have!” (24). Similarly, the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, speaking in the late 1980s about the recent turn toward myth in his poetry, explains:

[...] one has to be aware that Palestine has already been written. The Other [viz., the Zionist colonial movement] had done it in this manner, through the narrative of a birth which no one dreams of denying. A Creation narrative that has become one of the sources of knowledge for humankind: the Bible. Given this, how can we [Palestinians] have written a less mythic narrative?” (“I Discovered...” 82).

In the case of Darwish, Habiby, and other Palestinian writers, this religio-mytho-historical narrative of entitlement and return would necessitate *counter*-narratives, Palestinian poetry and novels which could reframe Zionist colonization as just one of a series of conquerors who had passed through the land and had each, in their day, left their own mark.

Moriscos, too, wrote their *counter*-narratives to those of the ruling Christian settler community. Their own secret *aljamiado* literature was part of this, but so were the public, Castilian-language documents they produced. Francisco Núñez Muley’s *Memorandum* is a detailed plea to Phillip II’s subordinates not to go through with a series of repressive laws they planned to issue, and in it his perspective as a colonized person comes through in his use of the word “natives” – Granadans were not just “little moors” or Moriscos, they were *native* inhabitants of an ancient kingdom. Similarly, among a roster of city histories written by Castilian settlers in early modern Granada, Katie Harris catalogues one - Luis de Cueva’s *Diálogos de las cosas notables de Granada...* - which *deviates* from the settler tendency to gloss the Sacromonte discoveries as purely Christian relics: “While Granadino [settler] historians and Sacromonte apologists usually ignored or downplayed the *plomos*’ connection to Morisco culture, Cueva

makes these links explicit” (64). In Cueva’s version of events, “St. Cecilio [purported author of the forged *plomos*] wrote in Arabic for the benefit of the Arabic-speaking, Christian inhabitants of Granada – the descendants of the Phoenician ‘Arabs’ who conquered ancient Iiberis [...] Cueva implies that they were the ancestors of the modern Moriscos...” (64). This “philo-Morisco” stance leads Harris to posit that Cueva was quite probably a Morisco himself, though he lived and wrote as a Christian cleric (64).

Such counter-narratives are a recognition of *culture* and *literature* as a central field of colonization, and of anti-colonial resistance. Reconquest and Zionist colonial projects did not simply *erase* colonized buildings and culture; they also often *appropriated* them; a more complex maneuver which asserts ownership at the same time that it erases the actual native history of a cultural artifact. Ferdinand and Isabella did not demolish the Nasrid palace of the Alhambra; rather, they built a cathedral in its center and made the palace their royal residence, a symbol of Castilian-Aragonese victory over Islam. In occupying the Alhambra, they changed its semantics by raising crosses and banners, with relatively few architectural changes. Similarly, old Palestinian homes in cities like Yafa and Tabarayyah (Tiberias) now play a completely different role as Israeli art galleries, highlighting the artistic achievement of the settler class, while their lack of any explanatory plaques or books implies their “belonging” to that same settler class since time immemorial, thereby erasing their actual Palestinian roots. Israeli restaurants in settler-majority West Jerusalem, where Palestinian homes were either demolished and built over or else re-occupied with Jewish settlers after their owners fled in 1948, will commonly serve falafel and other traditional Palestinian / Arabic cuisine, sometimes going so far as to adorn this food with tiny Israeli flags. Anton Shammas has addressed such appropriation in his article “West Jerusalem: Falafel, Cultural Cannibalism and the Poetics of Palestinian Space.” Within the past decade, Israeli clothing designers’ efforts to appropriate the Palestinian kufiyyah, itself a symbol of Palestinian resistance to colonial rule although originally most associated with *fellāhī* identity, has caused outrage and made headlines. The common marketing of camel-rides and Bedouin-inspired imagery in Israeli tourist materials is another example of such cultural appropriation; the same goes for various Dead Sea inspired products and tourist packages.

Settlers make an easy assumption that colonized peoples’ foodways, clothing, landmarks, architecture, traditional modes of transportation, and so on are actually theirs, while simultaneously erasing the colonizeds’ existence from the picture altogether, or else portraying



them in reductive and negative stereotypes. Ghassan Kanafani devotes a chapter of his *Adab al-Muqāwamah* to the representation of “the Arab” in Zionist literature. In the examples he studies, Palestinians are caricatures of low, cowardly, lascivious, violent and greedy Arabs, who can only be “saved” by the civilizing influence of Jewish settlers (91, 93). Occasionally, a Zionist writer will express some guilt over his country’s colonial erasure of Palestinians, as in A. B.

Yehoshua’s *Facing the Forests*, where the Palestinian character appears as a *literally* mute reminder of the Palestinian villages covered up by JNF pine forests. In this story, the mute Arab is implied to be responsible for burning down a forest, re-exposing the Palestinian history buried beneath (Bardenstein 9). Yet even here, the narrative voice and viewpoint are those of Jewish Israeli settlers.

Similarly, medieval and early modern Christian Iberian literature can only portray Muslim Andalus in a negative light, providing moral justification for Christian Reconquest, or else in early modern “maurophilic” literature as an “approved, revised other” (Said qtd. López Baralt 19-20). Medieval Castilian nobleman and settler-aristocrat Juan Manuel, for example, shows the complexity of colonial cultural appropriation in his *Conde Lucanor*, which adapts the Andalusian genre of the *frametale* to Castilian vernacular and a Castilian readership (Wacks 89). Juan Manuel was the nephew of Alfonso X, famous for the projects he initiated to translate Arabic Andalusian classics into Castilian vernacular. Wacks argues that while Alfonso’s translation projects “were very much a colonial gesture, a wholesale appropriation of native Andalusian literary tradition” akin to a nineteenth-century British colonial administrator translating Arabic or Sanskrit into English, “Juan Manuel’s project is quite different in that he is a product of a later, hybrid colonial culture in which ‘Andalusian’ and ‘Castilian’ cultural production were not always clearly distinguished” (94). This is what allowed Juan Manuel to appropriate the *frametale* genre and express at times his admiration for Andalusian cultural and material wealth, while still portraying his Muslim Andalusian characters “Alhaquem” and “Abenabad” as “decadent materialists, pointing to a justification of the Reconquest as the unseating of a corrupt Islamic dynasty unfit to rule on grounds both theological and moral” (95).

These characters are based on the historical Andalusian kings of Seville and Córdoba, but Wacks adds that in the *Conde Lucanor*, “Nonhistorical and nameless Muslim characters are characterized as merely unscrupulous seekers of wealth,” marrying for money and beating their wife, or else grave robbing (96). Yet Wacks is quick to add that while Juan Manuel’s Muslims

are greedy and his Muslim kings are frivolous and overindulgent, “underlying this criticism of Andalusī mores [...] is a begrudging and unvoiced admiration for, and perhaps jealousy of, the superior material culture of al-Andalus, which the ‘mud’ made up of spices mixed with sugar cane<sup>10</sup> represents” (98). The ideological need to justify the Christian Reconquista through negative caricatures of Andalusī Muslims is undercut by the admiration for Andalusī wealth and indeed the adoption of an Andalusī cultural form, the *frametale*, to create the mixed messages characteristic of colonial “border thinking” (Memmi’s term; Wacks 97). In a related development, “Maurophile” Castilian literature like the story of Abenamar would really explode in popularity *after* the fall of the last Andalusī kingdom of Granada, when Muslim characters could safely be transformed into chivalrous, even Orientalized knights fighting for maidens and honor, now that *actual* Muslim knights were no longer present on Spanish shores. Such appropriation of colonized culture, combined with the reduction of colonized characters to negative stereotypes, allowed the settler class to “domesticate” Andalusī (or, later, Palestinians) *culturally*, just as Alfonso III and his Reconquista successors had “domesticated” Andalusians militarily and politically, reducing them to marginalized minority status as Mudejars (*mudejar* from the Arabic *mudajjin*, meaning “to domesticate, to tame”).

Narrative, then, was a central field of struggle in both Iberian and Zionist colonial situations, as regimes fought to control not only the physical landscape but also the stories, memories, and culture people connected with it. But narratives are *narrated*, stories are *told*, and so *language* itself would be another central field of struggle for colonial control (again, a struggle typical of colonialism in general). In the modern context, Ismail Nashif’s *Al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyyah fi-l-Nizām al-Šahyūnī* explores the Zionist regime’s cooptation of the Arabic language itself as a means to control Palestinians and their narrative. In the early modern context, Claire Gilbert’s “A Grammar of Conquest” details the role of Spanish and Arabic dictionaries, textbooks, and language policy in the control and suppression of Mudejars and later Morsicos in conquered Granada after 1492. On the one hand, figures like Antonio de Nebrija (author of the 1492 *Gramática castellana*) were busy formalizing Castilian as an official language of empire through the composition of dictionaries and grammars (3). Meanwhile, in Granada, Pedro de Alcalá’s *Arte para ligeramente saber la lengua arauica* was meant to be a tool for “soft” or

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<sup>10</sup> In this story, Abenabad indulges his wife, who saw a woman making bricks and wants to try it herself, by making “mud” for her out of spices and sugarcane, so as not to dirty her.

Pauline conversion, allowing priests to learn enough Granadan dialect to aid in their evangelization (4). This came as part of a longer process of linguistic “Reconquista,” starting in the Middle Ages with Alfonso el Sabio’s translations and continuing through the Congress of Seville. Gilbert highlights such regulation of language as a central part in the colonial process of *reducción*, “used to describe political and military domination in late medieval Spanish historical texts”— i.e., the process by which conquered Andalusians were “reduced” to a subservient, non-threatening minority in relation to the new settler population (8). Nebrija himself, in his *Gramática castellana*, highlighted language’s role in empire, and “used *reducción* to describe both of the mutually reinforcing projects of Spanish philology and empire” (10).

Nebrija’s attitude highlights the role of Castilian vernacular in consolidating centralized power in the (early) modern Spanish nation-state. A similar project of Hebraicization had been used by Zionist authorities to enforce their own primacy and authority. As a small example, street signs for Israel-controlled highways in the occupied West Bank show Hebrew on top, with the Arabic place-name below. In the culturally and politically outstanding case of Jerusalem, street signs actually go a step farther and transliterate the Hebrew word, Yerushalaim, in Arabic letters, rather than the Arabic name, al-Quds. This linguistic manipulation is akin to Pedro de Alcalá’s project of “soft conversion” – the Arabic alphabet is coopted to replace an Arabic place name with a Hebrew one, and in doing so replace a Qur’anic sacred history with an Old Testament one.

Indeed, the entire project of modernizing Biblical Hebrew, for centuries a purely religious language, into a modern language for daily and bureaucratic use by a new colonial nation-state, can be seen as akin in nature to Nebrija’s efforts to replace Latin with vernacular Castilian. A vernacular language like Castilian is *literally* the “mother” tongue – it is the language of the protected domestic space and of daily interpersonal relationships. By bringing the vernacular into the official realm of governance and bureaucracy, replacing Latin as the language of state, early modern linguists like Nebrija were simultaneously bringing the *state* into the private and domestic spheres (Gilbert 38-9). Codifying the vernacular meant simultaneously codifying other aspects of “national” identity – and so as Granadan Arabic was codified by Pauline priests, it was over the course of the next several decades marginalized by a series of laws and policies which kept it *out* of government, of universities, of churches, and confined in the tight spaces of

Morisco private life.<sup>11</sup> And eventually, of course, Arabic was outlawed in Granada altogether, sparking the second Alpujarras Revolt (1568-70) and expulsion of Granadan Moriscos from Granada. The marginalization and then criminalization of Arabic is central for understanding the *significance* of Arabic script and its use in *aljamiado* texts by Moriscos.

There are of course many other ways in which medieval-early modern Christian Iberian and modern Zionist settler-colonialism overlap, but I hope the brief overview here will help lay a foundation for the following study, which does *not* focus on texts produced by colonizers, but rather by those colonized. The confounding and earth-shattering circumstance of suddenly becoming an unwanted minority in one's homeland is what I will be exploring here. In this colonized space, survival (usually) takes the place of direct armed revolt, and this survival is cultural as much as it is physical. While colonizers transformed names, built churches over mosques, and *kibbutzim* and *moshavim* over villages, the colonized, both early modern and modern, used cultural production, particularly literature, to fight back – to define themselves and to frame their situation on their own terms, in their own words.

#### IV. Organization and Overview

This dissertation is divided into three thematic sections, each containing 1-2 chapters. Each section explores a particular tension or dichotomy that arises in the Palestinian and Morisco contexts as a result of these groups' occupation and marginalization by a hostile foreign regime. Part One (which has just one chapter, Chapter One) examines how in these colonized contexts, resistance and collaboration may be best viewed as opposite ends of a spectrum, rather than as mutually exclusive opposites. First, I examine how Moriscos and 48 Palestinians adjusted their linguistic and literary practices in reaction to state censorship. I discuss the linguistic and cultural hybridity of Morisco-*aljamiado* texts, which used Arabic letters (*aljamiado* script) to preserve the community's connections to Islam, even while many Moriscos only spoke their local *Romance* dialect. I consider both communities' reliance on oral forms, particularly poetry, to avoid censorship and reach broader audiences, as well as both communities' recourse to the

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<sup>11</sup> This is not unlike Israeli use of modern Hebrew as the language of state and of higher education, which excluded and excludes 48 Palestinians from Israeli universities and government unless they *agree* and *are able* to participate in the language of their colonizers.

smuggling and secret hand-copying of Arabic literature banned by the authorities. I then explore the unique go-between role of certain Morisco and Palestinian *writers*, who collaborated to varying extents with the new Castilian or Zionist regime at the same time that they served as representatives of their newly marginalized communities. In this regard, I focus specifically on the examples of the Granadan Morisco nobleman, Francisco Núñez Muley and his 1567 *Memorandum* to the Royal Chancery; and on Emile Habiby and his role in and rhetoric during the Nakba and its immediate aftermath as a member of the National Liberation League, and later, Maki (The Israeli Communist Party). Finally, I examine the portrayal of collaborator characters in Palestinian and Morisco literature, focusing in particular on the Mancebo de Arévalo's descriptions of his meetings with collaborationist members of the Granadan aristocracy in the 1530s, and on Emile Habiby's *The Pessoptimist* (*al-Mutashā'il*, 1974), whose antihero narrator serves as an informer for the state of Israel.

Part Two examines how Morisco and Palestinian writers used two distinct strategies, mythmaking and testimony, in order to narrate the loss of al-Andalus / Palestine. Where mythmaking is central to the creation of collective identities (e.g., national identities), testimony tends to be more personal, and is often used in self-defense against an accusing outsider. Chapter Two discusses Morisco mythmaking, looking at the Morisco-*aljamiado* legends of Caracayona and the Sacrifice of Ismail, as well as the mythologizing tendencies in the Mancebo de Arévalo's *Tafsira*, and finally, some Morisco prophecies or *aljófores*. I then examine how Andalusian exiles Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥī' ibn Muḥammad al-Andalusī and Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥajari employed testimony as a form of self-defense against North African accusations that Moriscos were, in fact, too Christian. Lastly, I return to the Mancebo, to investigate some of the more testimonial aspects of his *Tafsira*, aimed at preserving Morisco accounts of Granada's fall and Aragón's forced conversions for future generations.

In Chapter Three, I examine mythmaking and testimony in the 48 Palestinian context. I begin by returning to Habiby's *The Pessoptimist* to delineate how Habiby slips in testimonial accounts of 1948 and its aftermath into the wild fictions of his unreliable narrator, Saeed. Next, I look at Mahmoud Darwish's *Eleven Planets Over the Last Andalusian Scene* (1992) for a sense of how and why al-Andalus would appeal to the Palestinian poet as a metaphor for the "lost garden" or "lost paradise" of the conquered homeland. I then examine poems written in the 1950s and 60s inside occupied Palestine by the young Darwish and by Tawfīq Zayyād to study

how the trope of the lost garden / lost paradise became a central metaphor in Palestinian “resistance literature.” Finally, I look at how Habiby’s *The Pessoptimist* and his later book, *Saraya* work to deconstruct Palestinian and Israeli myths - and in *Saraya* to finally find some peace with mythmaking as a valuable form of remembrance.

Part Three focuses on Palestinian and Morisco poetry, specifically the tension in these occupied societies between the poet’s individual artistic freedom, and their perceived duty to speak to and for the collective on political matters. Chapter Four outlines how literary theories of *iltizām*, “resistance literature,” and “minor literature” each deal with this tension. It then discusses this tension in Morisco poetry, starting with sixteenth-century poems written in *aljamiado* inside Spain, generally by members of an educated *alfakí* (Arabic *al-faqīh*) class for use by a broader Morisco audience. I focus on the tension between folklorizing tendencies that keep this poetry alive and popular, and the more orthodox Islamic views likely preferred by its *alfakí* scribes. I also examine the poetry of Muhammad Rabadán, who wrote on the eve of the mass-expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain, and of Ibrahim Taybili, who quoted Spanish poetry by memory from the distance of exile. I focus on the tendency in the seventeenth century, exhibited by Rabadán and Taybili, to shift away from older *aljamiado* language and styles toward more open emulation of Castilian Golden Age poetry, perhaps in response to audience needs, *or* as an unconscious expression of authorial desires.

Chapter five focuses on the individual-collective tension in Palestinian poetry, looking at popular (*sha’bī*) poetic responses to British and Zionist colonial rule in the mid-twentieth century, and outlining how Mandate-Era poets like Ibrāhīm Ṭūqān created “committed” models and audience expectations which the “resistance poets” after 1948 would naturally follow. Specifically, I discuss how “resistance poets” Mahmoud Darwish and Rashid Hussein sought to balance audience expectations of political poetry with less strident personal artistic desires or tendencies – not always successfully. Ultimately, these Palestinian poets, like their Morisco counterparts, struggled with a heightened sense of obligation caused by their community’s “minority” status. The *need* for therapeutic poetry that would speak to the community’s suffering and offer empowering visions for the future placed extra pressure on these “minor” poets<sup>12</sup>, even

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<sup>12</sup> Referring to Deleuze and Guattari’s term, “minor literature.”

while any attempt to *ignore* the daily suffering imposed by an oppressive regime would be to “believe reality” (Jayyusi “Introduction” 3) – hence the struggle to find balance.

Ultimately, I hope to show in the case of each dichotomy how the “opposites” of collaboration/resistance, myth/testimony, and individual artistic freedom/collective duty blur and interpenetrate in the conquered contexts of 48 Palestinian and Morisco literature, in which the exigencies of collective cultural survival demand creativity and flexibility. There are countless other themes that I only touch on in this dissertation in passing – among them, hugely important ones like gender, which gets downplayed in the patriarchal context of Morisco literature (instruction in *aljamiado* and Islamic material by an *alfaqui* was usually limited to boys), not to mention in the fragmented and shrunken Palestinian literary scene of 1950s-60s Israel. However, I hope that this initial exploration of thematic and actual literary connections between the Moriscos of early modern Spain and 48 Palestinians can be the beginning of future exploration and discussion. Morisco scholars like L.P. Harvey and Luce López-Baralt have gestured toward this connection in their introductions to their longer works; Radwa Ashour made it the central premise of her *Granada Trilogy*, though never naming Palestine explicitly. I hope here to push the connection a bit further, within the scope of a dissertation, to offer a broad survey of a few central shared themes in the literatures of the Moriscos and 48 Palestinians.

**PART ONE**

**Literature After Defeat: Collaboration and Resistance**



## Chapter One

### Collaboration and Resistance in Palestinian and Morisco Literature

#### I. Introduction: Resistance and Collaboration

The main phenomenon that draws together the two groups of literature I explore in this thesis, despite being separated by several centuries as well as the length of the Mediterranean Sea, is that they were created and used by what ‘Ādel Mannā’ (2016) calls “*al-baqiyah al-bāqiyah*,” or the “remaining remnant” – conquered people who were not driven away when rulers changed, but rather remained living within the boundaries of a new state. Muslims who remained in Spain, forcibly converted to Christianity, maintained for over a century their own unique literature which they used in a variety of ways to delineate and preserve their specific identities, in spite of policies aimed at obliterating any trace of their religion and culture. Palestinians who remained living within the boundaries of the newly formed state of Israel after 1948 were similarly subjected to a repressive regime and military government, designed to isolate and exclude them from the mechanisms of the new state. As with the Moriscos, much of the urban Palestinian intelligentsia had fled, and those who remained were a largely rural society. Also like the Moriscos, Palestinians living in the Galilee area in the new state of Israel developed a literature through which they shaped and preserved their own identity as a group whose very existence was considered undesirable by those now in power. For both Moriscos in Spain and Palestinians in Israel, acts of creating or passing on this literature were in themselves a type of cultural resistance.

The term “resistance literature,” in reference to that literature produced by Palestinians remaining in the new state of Israel, was initially coined and promoted by writer and activist Ghassan Kanafani in his 1966 study, *Adab al-Muqāwamah (Resistance Literature in Occupied Palestine: 1948-1966)*, which introduced works by Mahmoud Darwish, Samīḥ al-Qāsim, Tawfiq Zayyād, and others to an Arab and Palestinian audience outside the borders of the new Zionist state. In publishing this book, Kanafani was hoping to bridge the wall of silence and isolation dividing Palestinians inside and outside the new state, a wall which was constructed both by

Arab states' boycotts against Israel, and by the Israeli military governor's censorship of Arabic books and speech. This "cultural siege," as Kanafani called it, led to a situation in which Palestinians in the occupied Galilee were largely isolated from Arabic literary influences outside of Israel, and were often forced to copy out Arabic texts secretly, by hand (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 15, Hoffman 206). Palestinian and other Arab writers on the outside were also largely cut off, until the publication of Kanafani's *Resistance Literature* in 1966, from the poetry and other literary works that were developing inside Israel, and being used by Palestinians in the Galilee and coastal cities for their own specific, socially situated needs.

Kanafani makes his political and didactic goals in writing *Resistance Literature* quite clear from the beginning. In his introduction, he lays out his goal of introducing this literature to "the Arab reader in general, and the Palestinian refugee in particular" (*Adab* 7). In targeting this audience, Kanafani hopes to inject new energy into the nationalist cause outside of Palestine, by highlighting the spirit of steadfast resistance expressed by Palestinian literature inside Israel. "Poetry in the occupied territory," he writes, "as opposed to the poetry of exile, is not crying or weeping or despair, but is rather a revolutionary and lasting brilliance and wondrous hope" (*Adab* 36). Whether or not this is an accurate and holistic picture of the literature in question, this is clearly how Kanafani hoped to employ what he dubbed "resistance literature in occupied Palestine." Kanafani was a "committed" (*multazim*) writer, and his term "resistance literature" comes very much from a desire to promote his own political cause, viz. the liberation of Palestine from Zionist occupation. Kanafani lived during a time when armed resistance seemed a realistic possibility, and he was assassinated in 1972 by the Israeli Mossad, a decade before the Palestinian armed resistance was routed from Beirut. His book was a call to solidarity, to arms, and to hope.

However, in this chapter I would like to reexamine his title, *Resistance Literature in Occupied Palestine*. This literature certainly functioned in many ways to strengthen resistance to Zionist policies – specific poems cited by Kanafani rebuked collaborators, memorialized the victims of the 1956 Kufir Qasim massacre, criticized and defied the military governor's censorship powers, and so on. However, it is an over-simplification to imagine Palestinian poets and writers living in the occupied Galilee in the 1950s and 60s purely as heroic resisters, rather than as people living under an extremely coercive form of military rule, on the heels of an ethnic cleansing which was ethically murky when it came to the actions of various Palestinian

intellectual figures. Often the very reason why certain groups or individuals were able to remain in Palestine after 1948 was due to their previous and/or ongoing collaboration with Zionist forces or politicians. And so, when it comes to Palestinian and Morisco literature, it is important to view resistance not as a simple label, but rather as part of a spectrum with collaboration on the other end of that spectrum. In the literature of these two conquered populations, resistance and collaboration sometimes piggyback off of one another in surprising ways.

Palestinians in Israel and Moriscos in Spain, by virtue of having remained on their land when it came under occupation, were often considered suspect by outsiders, particularly those who viewed any degree of collaboration as unacceptable. This is illustrated in the Moriscos' case by the attitudes of contemporary jurists towards the issue of *dār al-Islām* (territories under Islamic rule) and *dār al-ḥarb* ("the abode of war," i.e., territories under non-Islamic rule). Many jurists had, throughout the later Middle Ages, considered it a duty upon Muslims whose territories came under Christian rule to emigrate from what was now *dār al-ḥarb* to *dār al-Islām*; this led to a drain of religious leadership from Muslim communities in Aragon and Castile, for example, to Nasrid Granada. However, many *fuqahā'* in al-Andalus and North Africa remained divided on the question of whether emigration from conquered territories was mandatory, and under what parameters: for example, what if it would bankrupt the person emigrating, or separate them from family members, or cause bodily harm or death to the Muslim in question? What if emigration would deprive the Muslims living in conquered lands of juridical/scholarly leadership that they badly needed? (Miller 260-262). When Nasrid Granada finally surrendered to the Catholic Monarchs in 1491-92, many Maliki jurists followed traditional arguments that made it a duty upon Muslims in newly-conquered territory to emigrate if they could. The Fez-based Moroccan Maliki jurist al-Wansharīsī issued a famously strict fatwa in 1495 (after the fall of Granada in January of 1492 but before the forced mass conversion of Granadan Muslims in 1501-02) in response to questions posed to him about whether conquered Granadan Muslims could remain in or return to their homeland, for a variety of reasons. Al-Wansharīsī argued that "migration to Islamic territories [*arḍ al-Islām*] is a religious duty [*farīdah*] until the Day of Judgement" and that even those unable to travel "must have the intention [*niyyah*], so that given the ability to travel, they would" (al-Wansharīsī 151, 153; my translation). He adds that those who wish to return, whether to help other Muslims or because they faced poverty and prejudice in exile in Morocco, could not return and continue to be Muslims (157).

On the other end of the spectrum, we have the famous fatwa written in 1504 by another Maliki jurist based in Fez<sup>13</sup>, Aḥmad Ibn Abī Jum’ah, whom Devin Stewart argues wrote this fatwa in response to the harshness of al-Wansharīsī’s opinion (“The Identity” 299). Ibn Abi Jum’ah’s legal opinion fits into the larger context of Sunni Islamic scholarship on *ikrāh* (compulsion) and *taqiyyah* (dissimulation). Although the mufti never uses the term *taqiyyah* explicitly in his fatwa, he advises Granadan Muslims forcibly converted to Christianity to dissimulate in order to protect themselves, for example by resorting to rubbing their hands on dirt or walls (*tayammum*) rather than ritual washing (*wuḍū’*) before prayers, using word play (*tawriyah* and *alghāz*) to give the impression that they are blaspheming when in fact they are not, and even eating pork and drinking wine if forced to, all the time keeping their intention (*niyyah*) correctly Islamic (Stewart “Dissimulation,” Harvey “Crypto-Islam”). It is also important to contextualize Ibn Abī Jum’ah’s ruling, since he makes clear in his fatwa that he hopes “the Turks” (i.e., the Ottomans) would soon liberate al-Andalus from Christian rule, and the Muslims of Granada would be able to “worship God openly” again (“Crypto-Islam” 174). Later Morisco copyists of *aljamiado* (Romance text written in Arabic script) versions (fatwa M, dated 1563, and fatwa A, dated 1609) may have hoped for the Day of Judgment to release them soon from their difficulties, as the special place of Spanish Muslims in heaven and their role as successors to the *salaf* are mentioned in the fatwa, and we know that a strong Millenarian tendency runs through *aljamiado* literature (Rosa-Rodriguez 159).

We can look at the opinions of al-Wansharīsī and Ibn Abī Jum’ah as two poles on the spectrum of resistance and collaboration. While al-Wansharīsī acknowledges that remaining in conquered al-Andalus implies some degree of assimilation and/or collaboration with Christian rulers and settlers, to him this means that Muslims must leave as soon as humanly possible, even if it leads them to a life of misery and destitution in North Africa. Ibn Abī Jum’ah, on the other hand, views outward assimilation as an acceptable strategy for survival, so long as one inwardly preserves one’s faith; he also indicates modified words and gestures through which Muslims can outwardly yet privately maintain their religious faith and practice (in this reading, I disagree with Rosa-Rodriguez, who argues that the fatwa “completely sever[s]” the “symbiotic relationship between belief and practice.” “Crypto-Islam,” Rosa-Rodriguez 148). For Ibn Abī Jum’ah,

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<sup>13</sup> Aḥmad Ibn Abī Jum’ah was originally from Oran, and later moved to Fez (see: Stewart). His 1504 fatwa to the Moriscos is often referred to as the “Oran” fatwa based on his last name, al- al-Wahrānī (“from Oran”).

collaboration is itself a method of resistance, as it allows Granadan Muslims to preserve their lives and their faith, and play a unique historical role, which he believes will end in redemption by God and/or the Ottomans.

This debate over the morality of remaining in conquered territory, and the potential of collaboration and resistance to dovetail, rears its head once more in the context of the Zionist occupation of large sections of historical Palestine in 1948, during which time many Palestinians were driven out of their homes, while others remained under Zionist rule. While I have not come across any Islamic legal inquiries by Galilee Palestinians to muftis requesting their opinion on the legality of remaining in *dār al-ḥarb*, I have certainly noticed a similar debate or tension within Palestinian literature. Specifically, one can see a tension between those who reject collaboration and assimilation completely, and those who view collaboration, at least for those residing in Israeli-controlled territories, as inevitable, and potentially a form of resistance. Take, for example, the ending to Ghassan Kanafani's *ʿĀ'id ʿila Haifa*, in which the narrator condemns his Zionist son Dov (who was left behind as a baby during the 1948 bombing of Haifa and raised by an Ashkenazi settler) and embraces his younger son Khalid, who was raised in exile and has joined the armed resistance. Take also the entirety of Kanafani's *Umm Sa'ad*, in which the titular character is empowered by her son's armed resistance and proudly turns down offers by a collaborating Palestinian *mukhtār* to ease her son's way out of prison. It is important to note that Kanafani wrote from exile, and the characters mentioned above likewise were able to embrace armed conflict from their positions in exile, whether that meant the West Bank or Lebanon. At the opposite end of the spectrum, one might place Emile Habiby's *The Pessoptimist*, whose antihero narrator demonstrates both the shame of collaboration, as well as what Habiby viewed as the impossibility and ineffectiveness of armed revolt. Saeed the Pessoptimist reverts to the supernatural (not unlike the Moriscos' embrace of millenarianism) as an eventual escape from his impossible reality as a member of *al-baqiyyah al-bāqiyah*. Habiby's work explores the ideology of *ṣumūd*, or steadfastness, as strategy of survival for Palestinians in Israel, as they wait for external salvation that may never come.

All this is to say that whether one couches it in religious or nationalistic terms, there was a vital debate among Muslims in conquered early-modern Spain and Palestinians in conquered twentieth-century Palestine as to the limits and morality of collaboration, and the relationship between collaboration and resistance. In this chapter, I will explore the sticky relationship

between resistance and collaboration, within the literature that these two communities produced, in hopes of arriving at a more nuanced understanding of what these terms even mean to people living under constant watch and censorship by a hostile government.

## II. Contexts of Writing and Use: Language Reacting to Censorship

In order to understand the relationship between resistance and collaboration in Palestinian and Morisco texts, it is important to understand the historical context in which these texts were being produced, and how these contexts restricted and shaped the production, use, and language of the texts themselves. In the case of the Moriscos, the context of textual production and use varies across the differing nature and circumstances of Morisco communities in the various kingdoms of Spain. Morisco communities in Castile and Aragon, for example, had been living under Christian rule as *mudéjars* for centuries before the forced conversions of 1500-02 in Granada and Castile, and those instigated by the *germanía* revolts in 1525 in Aragón (*Muslims in Spain* 22, 94). This means that Castilian and Aragonese *mudéjar* communities were already comparatively integrated into the majority Christian society by the time they were forcibly converted. This helps us to understand why the phenomenon of *aljamiado* writing became so widespread among these communities; while they spoke local Castilian and Aragonese dialects in their daily lives, as devout Muslims they sought to preserve formal Arabic for religious reasons, and so produced texts of their own local Romance dialects written in Arabic script and employing a variety of Arabic loan words and calques. We do not have the same kind of access to written works from the Valencian crypto-Muslim community, and yet we know from other sources that dialectical, spoken Arabic was maintained in Valencia throughout the sixteenth century (125). In Granada, we know from Morisco texts such as those produced by the Mancebo de Arévalo that certain Muslim elders, including members of a collaborator class of Granadan nobles who “passed” into the new Castilian aristocracy, preserved and shared their knowledge of Arabic and Islam with the younger crypto-Muslim generation (*Muslims in Spain* 185-7, “Yuse Banegas” 297-9). When the second Alpujarras revolt led to the forced relocation of Granadan Moriscos across Spain, these Granadans in some cases actually revitalized crypto-Muslim culture in the communities they joined (*Muslims in Spain* 236).

Thus, the particular situations of different Morisco communities across the Iberian Peninsula deeply affected their written culture. Perry discusses ways in which Granadans, after their dispersal across the peninsula in the late sixteenth century, used Arabic and *aljamiado* texts as a form of cultural resistance; Chejne explains that while some earlier 16<sup>th</sup>-century Morisco texts demonstrated Romance-Arabic bilingualism (e.g., Arabic Qur’ans with Romance interlineal translation), this bilingualism waned in the later half of the sixteenth century (Chejne 48). While certain enclaves like Valencia maintained spoken Arabic up to the bitter end, it appears that in general, Arabic knowledge was on the wane throughout the peninsula by the second half of the sixteenth century. This was a natural outcome of government policies meant to forcibly assimilate Moriscos into Christian Spanish culture, while simultaneously preventing the majority of them from accessing the rights, privileges, and esteem accorded to Old Christians, via mechanisms such as the laws of “purity of blood” (*limpieza de sangre*; Perry 54-55). In this context of exclusion and persecution, Moriscos produced linguistically and culturally hybrid Islamic religious texts, often written in *aljamiado*, which reflected both the extent to which they were influenced by Christian society, and their desire to resist its oppression and preserve their own unique identity.

*Aljamiado-morisco* texts were produced in spite of the Inquisition’s targeting and persecution of their owners; Barletta and Perry argue that these texts were an important form of cultural resistance for the people who made, used, and preserved them. Barletta, for example, explains how the text of the folkloric *Alhadith del xakrifixi’o de Isma’il* (an expanded version of the story contained in the Qur’an) would have been read aloud during the celebration of Eid al-Adha (132), thus helping to preserve Islamic holidays and cultural practice, and how the *Libro de las luces* (an *aljamiado-morisco* version of *Kitāb al-Anwār*) was used to educate and socialize Morisco boys, as evidenced by margin notes written by young students in a folio of one manuscript (87-89). Perry focuses on how stories like those of the “handless maiden” Carcayona and the long-suffering Raḥma, wife of Job, may have provided models of behavior for Moriscos in the difficult period after the Granadans’ forced relocation in 1570, and may also have served to strengthen these Granadan Moriscos’ resolve, since these stories focus on characters who endure suffering gracefully for the sake of their faith and are ultimately rewarded by God (27, 124). Beyond their written form, these stories, prayers, and formulae were part of an oral culture that was passed down by parents and recited at holidays; thus, the *aljamiado-morisco* texts were

also meaningful to Morisca women and children who could not read them. Fournel-Guérin argues that these books held primarily totemic value for most Moriscos (*Covert Gestures* 138), and Perry cites an incident in which several Morisca women attempted to conceal a Qur'an from Inquisition officials by concealing it in their skirts and in other parts of the house (74). This story reinforces the idea that even if most Morisca women could not read Arabic or *aljamiado*, they still considered such texts of value and would risk Inquisitorial persecution to protect them. In this way, *aljamiado* texts enabled cultural resistance both through recitation and as physical objects.

It is also important to note the hybrid nature of *aljamiado-morisco* texts, both linguistically and culturally. Immersion in Christian culture, often including forced Christian schooling and mandatory church attendance, did not pass crypto-Muslims by without leaving any mark. *Aljamiado-morisco* texts demonstrate a certain amount of assimilation, combined with a repurposing of mainstream Christian influences in order to strengthen Muslim cultural resistance. The very fact that Castilian and Aragonese Muslim communities no longer spoke Arabic, and yet retained the Arabic alphabet as well as a variety of religious words, phrases, and even entire texts (such as Arabic copies of the Qur'an), shows that while they were assimilated in some ways, they still retained a strong desire to use Arabic in its Islamic religious context. A look at a few *aljamiado* texts, or at a modern glossary of *aljamiado* terms, will reveal a wide range of Arabic loan words that were part of the vocabulary of these texts, such as "Allah" where Christian contemporaries would have written "Dios," and "*nahwi*," "*alfaki*," or "*alim*" to refer to an Islamic scholar ("Yuse Banegas" 300, Narváez Córdoba 19). Chejne explains that Morisco authors "appear to have resisted translating Arabic expressions with religious connotations. Thus, the words *prayer* (*ṣalah*), *fasting* (*ṣawm*), *ablution* (*wdu'*), [...] and many others preserved their Arabic origin" (48).

One also sees a variety of calques in *aljamiado-morisco* texts – Castilian or Aragonese words which have come to take on a specifically Islamic meaning, a meaning more commonly associated with the Arabic translations of these words. One example is the Mancebo de Arévalo's use of the word "pascua" as a calque of the Arabic "*'eid*" ("Yuse Banegas" 300). The Castilian term would generally signify the Christian holiday of Easter, but in the Mancebo's writing, it has an explicitly Islamic meaning, referring to holidays such as Eid al-Aḍḥā and Eid al-Fiṭr. Barletta has noted the use of the phrase "rekóntonos" (from the Castilian *recontar*) as an



*aljamiado-morisco* calque for the Arabic *ḥaddathana*, used to introduce a *ḥadīth* (recounting by a chain of transmitters of the sayings or doings of the Prophet Muhammad) (*Covert Gestures* 20). Certain Arabic words were also modified to fit Romance grammatical models; Chejne gives the example of the Arabic *khalaqa* (to create), which becomes in *aljamiado* texts a verb along the Romance mold: *khalaqar* (to create), and a noun following the same Romance grammatical rules: *khalaqador* (creator) (48). *Aljamiado-morisco* texts also make use of Islamic formulae as ways of culturally marking these texts, signifying them as part of the Islamic tradition and in many cases lending practical ritual or performative value to the texts. For example, in the *aljamiado* version of the story of the sacrifice of Ismail discussed by Barletta, Ibrahim's third failed attempt to kill his son for God is followed by an Arabic invocation of God: "Allahu akbar, Allahu akbar, akbaru kabiran wa alhamdu lillahi kathiran wa subhana Allahu bukratan wa asilan" (qtd. *Covert Gestures* 119). While the narrative is in *aljamiado*, the religious formulae remain in Arabic. Many other *aljamiado-morisco* texts start and/or end with religious formulae, thus retaining a linguistic tradition that they inherited from Arabic texts, a tradition with clear religious implications. These expressions connect the *aljamiado-morisco* texts to their cultural and religious past, and thus help them to preserve their own sense of their identity and role in history as Muslims.

Perhaps for similar traditionalizing goals, *aljamiado* texts also tend to retain more archaic aspects of Romance, such as *cibdad* (*ciudad*), *fazer* (*hazer*), and *kerades* (*querays*), as well as local dialectal variations (Chejne 48). While the presence of local dialectal features may point to the Moriscos' lack of much formal education, their use of archaizing linguistic features in Romance may also have been a part of their dialects, or it may point to a desire on their part to use lofty, traditionalizing language as a sign of the gravity and sacred nature of their devotional literature (Perry 55, *Covert Gestures* 88). In other words, Morisco scribes used their own cultural hybridity to their advantage, to help elevate the religious texts they were producing *against* the grain of hegemonic Catholic culture. The "collaborationist"<sup>14</sup> or "assimilationist" Romance linguistic features of these texts were employed to achieve explicitly Islamic goals that resisted the attempts of the majority culture to erase them.

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<sup>14</sup> Whether by design, or as was often the case, by pure necessity, i.e., lack of Arabic/Islamic knowledge.

Not only were *aljamiado-morisco* texts linguistically hybrid, they were also hybrid when it came to their source material and cultural background. For example, in his discussion of the *aljamiado* texts produced by the Mancebo de Arévalo, Harvey points to a study by Fonseca which demonstrates that “the Young Man from Arévalo was deeply influenced by the *Imitatio Christi* of Thomas á Kempis, and to such an extent that long sections of the *Sumario de la relación y ejercicio espiritual* are direct transpositions of that Christian devotional manual,” which the Mancebo only had to change or Islamicize slightly (*Muslims in Spain* 174). Harvey’s hypothesis is that the Mancebo as a boy attended a school or college where Kempis was taught, and that he then “exploit[ed] his memories of Kempis for Islamic purposes” (175). The Mancebo often manages to “Islamicize” the sayings or moral teachings of Kempis by attributing them to a real or invented Islamic scholar (e.g., “Almuraba’i” – this one seems invented – and “Ben Arabi” i.e., Ibn ‘Arabi). In a similar vein, María Teresa Narváez has shown how a certain passage by the Mancebo “depends directly on the Senecan passages at the opening of that seminal Castilian best seller of the early sixteenth century, *Celestina*. The Morisco author had read and internalized what all literate people in Spain had read” (*Muslims in Spain* 177). In other words, the Mancebo, who was raised in Arévalo and lived from roughly 1510-1550 (Chejne 39), was very much immersed in mainstream Catholic culture, while at the same time he was a pious Muslim working to preserve and pass on Islamic knowledge.

The same could be said of the anonymous *alfakís* responsible for the *Poema de Yusuf*, which uses a medieval Christian clerical poetic meter (*cuaderna vía*) to relate the Quranic story of Yusef, adapting the authority of that form to their own Islamic uses (*Covert Gestures* 140). Another example occurs in the *Libro de las luces*, which includes an *aljamiado-morisco* retelling of the birth of the prophet Mohammad. Barletta notes that in certain manuscripts, the baby Mohammad himself is actually portrayed as speaking, which has clear parallels to the Qur’anic version of the story of the birth of Jesus (*Covert Gestures* 97). Given what Barletta calls the “problematic relation between Jesus – as both a central figure of Islam and an ominous reminder of Christian power in Spain – and Muhammad for the Moriscos,” he concludes that it is not surprising that Morisco scribes copying out the *Libro de las luces* would attribute to baby Muhammad a miracle similar to that of baby Jesus in the Qur’an (97). In the same book, we see a similar conflation of the Christian figure of Mary with the Prophet Muhammad’s mother Amina, when the Prophet’s grandfather purportedly says to Amina, “Blessed are you over all women”

(82). This phrase echoes the line from the Ave Maria, “blessed are you *among* women,” referring to the Virgin Mary. Barletta points out that the creation of such a “discursive link” between Amina and Mary illustrates “a complex ideological and discursive hybridity” and may also imply (through the use of the word *over*) that Amina supersedes Mary in importance (82). Moriscos’ portrayal of figures like Amina and Mohammad may show certain possibly unconscious parallels in the Morisco scribes’ minds to the roles of Mary and Jesus in Christian practice. It is possible that Moriscos were responding to the dominant culture by choosing religious figures from Islam to play similar roles in their own *aljamiado* literature and religious world-views.

Moriscos used stories that were common to both Christianity and Islam, such as those of Job and Yusef, to further their own religious understanding and practice. Morisco versions of these stories differed from those of their Catholic neighbors and reflected a unique Morisco view of their role as Muslims and their relationship to God. For example, a Morisco retelling of the story of Job adds the character of his long-suffering wife Rahma, who carries the decomposing Job in a sling on her back until they find a new community to take them in, then supports him financially through her own manual labor (Perry 124-5). This reframing of the Job story sets up Rahma as a role-model and parallel for the Moriscos themselves; it extols her long-suffering patience and faith in God. As Perry explains, “[a]lthough the Old Testament story of Job seems an unlikely text to hide from Christians, Moriscos concealed an Aljamiado version of this story, not only because it was written in a forbidden script, but also, I would argue, because it had become a subversive text of resistance” (125). Other Morisco retellings of stories found in the Old Testament – such as those of Joseph/Yusuf, and Abraham/Ibrahim’s sacrifice of his beloved son - are reframed in Morisco retellings to emphasize the protagonists’ acceptance of God’s will, their acceptance of suffering and death, and their ultimate triumph thanks to their persistence in their faith. All of these elements contained obvious parallels to the Moriscos’ own situation, and their view of themselves as a long-suffering but heroic Muslim remnant who would ultimately be rewarded by God for their steadfastness in their faith. In framing these Old Testament stories the way they did, Moriscos took a hybrid, ambiguous cultural artifact, and used it as a tool of cultural resistance to bolster their own perseverance.

While *aljamiado-morisco* texts were linguistically and culturally hybrid, they tended to employ their hybridity for the larger goal of cultural perseverance and resistance against erasure. After 1566, *aljamiado* texts were written within the context of laws that prohibited the

possession of texts in Arabic letters, and in an environment in which neighbors and even family members were often well-positioned to hand over suspected crypto-Muslims to the Inquisition, which could then torture, imprison, heavily fine, publicly humiliate, or kill suspected Muslims depending on the circumstances. Given the high stakes of possession of Arabic or *aljamiado* texts, many scholars have theorized about why Moriscos went to such lengths to preserve and use the Arabic alphabet. Barletta argues that *aljamiado-morisco* narratives, including the script in which they were written and process of teaching and passing on that script, were “a discursive resource for the very survival of Spanish Muslims as a minority population in Renaissance and Baroque Spain,” since these narratives “would have been powerful mediators by which Castilian and Aragonese Moriscos negotiated, questioned, and aligned themselves with their communal and personal identities” (*Covert Gestures* 77). Similarly, Harvey points out that if Moriscos “had only prudently avoided possessing books and committed nothing to writing, they would have been much safer,” but that “clearly,” the Morisco’s sense of themselves as good Muslims depended at least in part upon on the possession of Arabic and *aljamiado* texts as an expression of their identity and form of cultural resistance (*Muslims in Spain* 122). Perry focuses on *aljamiado* texts as one of a range of tools for cultural resistance, both passive and active, including other forms of embodied knowledge. She also explores how thematically, Morisco narratives could have provided role models and reflected a specific millenarian worldview in which Moriscos’ suffering and steadfast patience would ultimately be rewarded by God. Chejne argues that the lack of access to high levels of education in Latin may also have influenced the Moriscos’ use of Arabic script, which took on further symbolic significance once it was in use (Chejne 41). For a variety of reasons, then, *aljamiado* became a means of connection for Spanish crypto-Muslims to their own cultural and religious past, and thus a means of cultural resistance in the face of hegemonizing Catholic culture. Their resistance was *possible* in many ways due to its own linguistic and cultural flexibility – its use of mixed Romance and Arabic vocabulary, its Arabic script, its mixed sources and influences all gave it the flexibility necessary to survive despite oppressive laws and Inquisitorial attention for over a century. For *aljamiado* literature, strength was found in a combination of collaboration and resistance – a linguistic and literary appropriation of hegemonic influences for minority purposes.

The prevalence of censorship and legal persecution as the context for the production of *morisco-aljamiado* texts suggests several parallels to the production of Palestinian literature in

the occupied Galilee in the 1950s and 60s, as well as some significant differences. Clearly, we are making a comparison here between a conquest that took place in the early modern period, and one that took place in the mid-twentieth century, within the global system of nation-states; specifically, we are looking at the literature produced by conquered minorities in each of these cases. And despite the obvious differences in worldview and style of rule that come with this temporal distance, we can see some similar attitudes on part of the ruling parties, which in turn create similar obstacles for the conquered minorities in question, and thus some shared strategies of collaboration and resistance in the literature of these conquered minorities.

A similar central conundrum faced Moriscos in Spain and Palestinians in Israel; this conundrum was that the new governing power in each case seemed to simultaneously want to *incorporate* the remnant minority into its majority population (which was characterized in both Spain and Israel by ideas of ethnic and religious purity and superiority), and to want to *separate* and *mark as other* the minority population, in order avoid perceived contamination. As Perry explains in the case of the Moriscos, although the Christian government and society put plenty of “pressure to assimilate” on Moriscos (i.e., by outlawing in a series of Pragmatics their methods of eating, bathing, music and dancing, dressing, speaking and writing, not to mention the mere possession of Arabic texts), at the same time, “[i]n their rhetoric, laws, and institutions, Christians seized the power to say who Moriscos were and what they represented, and their message was clear: Moriscos represented the impure, the lewd, and the nefarious – in a word, pollution” (Perry 46, 54). So, while Christian government and society demanded that Moriscos assimilate and become good Christians, they simultaneously instituted purity of blood statutes<sup>15</sup> which barred Moriscos from accessing certain professions, positions, and privileges, and they generally viewed Moriscos as tainted and Other (55).

Palestinians in Israel found themselves in a similar catch-22, as Shira Robinson explains: with the ethnic cleansing of the majority of Palestinians and the creation of Israel as a Jewish state in 1948, the remaining Palestinian minority became “citizens in a formally liberal state *and* subjects of a colonial regime” (Robinson 3; my emphasis). 1948 altered Palestinian society in fundamental ways. With the flight of the urban intelligentsia, the Palestinian society which remained was overwhelmingly rural, mostly farmers and agricultural workers (*fellāhīn*) (*Adab*

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<sup>15</sup> Such statutes originated as a response to the Jewish Converso “problem,” and were later applied to Moriscos, as well.

*al-Muqāwamah* 11). The remaining Palestinians inhabited just 100 villages (hundreds more had been demolished during 1948), one major town (Nazareth), and “fragments” of the five cities of Haifa, Ramallah, Lydd, Acre, and Jaffa (Robinson 30). The Israeli government used its 1948 census as a tool to mark any Palestinian who had not been included in the census (even if they were physically present) as a “present absentee,” a phrase which in its paradoxical language demonstrates the state’s uneasy relationship with the remaining Palestinian minority (Hoffman 157). While it did its best to expel Palestinians and restrict and monitor the activities of those who remained, Israel still felt obliged to give nominal “citizenship” to Palestinians in Israel, in exchange for UN recognition (Robinson 36). The new state of Israel re-applied the 1945 British Defense Emergency Regulations (DERs) to “suspend all basic constitutional liberties” for remaining Palestinians, then expanded upon these to form a full Military Government to police the Arab population (33-5). Under military rule, Palestinians were unable to leave their towns without a permit from the military governor; while waiting in line for these permits, they were routinely subjected to “humiliation, terror, and physical abuse” (40). Military rule in the Galilee restricted and monitored the movements of Palestinians between the 58 ghettos that Israeli authorities had demarcated, and simultaneously created “a culture of racial profiling” which “served to criminalize the Palestinian public at large” (42).

The permit system resulted in mass Palestinian unemployment, as Israeli authorities did their best to “protect Jewish jobs” by restricting permits for Palestinians. Palestinians were banned from membership in the MAPAI-controlled Histadrut (“General Organization of Workers in Israel”), which effectively barred them from accessing the new regime’s main health care provider, and meant that they often had to work “illegally” for an average of 40% less than the wages earned by Jewish settlers (40). Breaking permit guidelines and curfews would send Palestinians into “a revolving door of summary military tribunals” entirely separate from the civil court system to which Jewish settlers were subject (42). Land theft also threatened the livelihood of the rural Palestinian population, as the 1950 “Absentee Property Law” (which dubbed Palestinian refugees driven out in 1948 “absentees”) made official Israel’s expropriation of “more than 10,000 shops, 25,000 buildings, [...] and nearly 60 percent of all fertile land in the country,” including “95 percent of existing olive groves and nearly one half of all citrus groves” (47). The Palestinian “resistance poets” of the 50s and 60s each have their own stories of dispossession, such as the destruction of Mahmoud Darwish’s village of al-Birweh in 1948 when

he was still a child, or the confiscation of grazing land from Rashid Hussein's village of Muşmuş, to be transformed into an Israeli military camp (Boullata and Ghossein 28).

Structural barriers to education formed another factor in Palestinian miserization. In the decades after 1948, the Israeli state "denied the Arab population autonomy in running their educational affairs and underfunded this sector to 'delay the emergence of political organizations and movements'" (Mattawa 20). Not only were Arab schools separate from Jewish schools, but they were "poorly maintained," for example lacking textbooks and bathrooms (Boullata and Ghossein 30), and were forced to teach a "lower level" of materials than Jewish schools for the same age groups (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 24). The curriculum used for Arab schools in Israel made no "mention of the Arab nationality or culture," implying that "Arab literature [was] valueless, at least according to the [educational] planner's intentions. Jewish literature, on the other hand, appear[ed] quite valuable" (Mar'i 79 qtd. Mattawa 20). Teachers depended on the Israeli government for their salaries and were therefore often "perceived as agents of the Israeli military" (Mattawa 20). The number of Arab students in Israel during this period was just 3% that of Jewish students, even though Arabs made up about 12% of the population; most Arab students left school around age 14-15 to work, and 90% of those who attended high school would go on to work, not to pursue higher education (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 24-5). The Palestinian resistance poets who gained fame in the 1960s, like Mahmoud Darwish, Samīḥ al-Qāsim, Salem Jubrān, and Rashid Hussein, were high school graduates who gained their poetic abilities through their own efforts and through the "poetry festivals" of the 1950s-60s - held *against the wishes* of the military governor (Hoffman 205, 230, 258).

At the same time that Israel took steps to control and marginalize those Palestinians who remained, Zionist discourse worked to Other and exoticized them in a way similar to that described by Perry in relation to the Moriscos: "state leaders instilled within the Jewish public at large the idea that all Palestinians, including their co-citizens, were marauders and savages until proven otherwise: exotic at times, perhaps, but fundamentally part of the 'desert and unknown' that continued to threaten the nascent state's survival" (Robinson 54). This image of Palestinians as dangerous, exotic or polluting "Other" can also be seen in Kanafani's analysis of the figure of "the Arab" in Zionist literature from the immediately pre-and post-Nakba periods. In the narratives Kanafani discusses, Arabs are portrayed as greedy, dirty, oversexed, cartoonish, and backwards - or else killed off because their existence is too problematic (*Adab al-Muqāwamah*

89, 107). Yet despite all these efforts at separation and control, the Israeli government also made nominal attempts towards assimilation, by forcing Palestinians to celebrate Zionist holidays, consume an Israeli education which elided Arab and Palestinian history, and to parrot Zionist ideology and praise the state in public settings (Robinson 115, 146). At the same time, the state denied Arabs rights and services, pushing them to the margins of society. Palestinians in Israel in the decades following 1948 found themselves in a situation in which they were subject to face-value attempts to *incorporate* them into the new political body, while on a daily and practical level they were viewed as a polluting element to be controlled and marginalized, not unlike the forcibly converted “New Christians” (Moriscos) in sixteenth-century Spain.

When we discuss Palestinian and Morisco literary responses to this central paradox, one of the similarities that appears is a shared isolation from contemporary Arabic culture, and in response a clandestine, manual copying of what literary scraps remained within their reach, as well as a reliance on oral recitation as a means of strengthening group identity for a largely rural and often illiterate populace facing pervasive government spying and censorship. Palestinians in the new Israeli state were now a mostly-rural society, due to the flight of Palestinian political and cultural leadership during the ethnic cleansing of 1948. They were also cut off from Arabic cultural influences by the Arab states’ boycott of Israel, as well as Israel’s strict control of the borders and the censorship of Arabic texts by the Israeli military governor, who was put in charge of the Palestinians of the Galilee (until 1966). As Hoffman explains, “For a full decade, almost no Arabic books were available for sale in Israel [...] Arabic books were neither imported nor printed within the country for several years, and even after initial attempts were made to publish locally, the number of volumes that emerged was miniscule” (204). From 1948 until the Egyptian victory against the Tripartite Aggression in 1956, only about 20 Arabic-language books (15 collections of poetry and 5 novels) were published in occupied Palestine, and of these, “In the first years following the establishment of Israel, only love poetry was published ...” (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 27-8, Hoffman 204). Arab towns in Israel lacked public libraries, and “a ban on Arab-owned presses and independent Arab publications went on for two decades...” (Mattawa 19).

This scarcity and repression impacted the ways in which Palestinians in this environment used and produced literature. The hand-copying of books became a phenomenon among writers and politicians of the older generation, and among a growing generation of students being



brought up in segregated-yet-strictly-monitored government schools for Palestinian children. For example, as high school students, the young future “resistance” poets Mahmoud Darwish and Salem Jubrān “would share poetry books they’d copied out by hand – by the Iraqi neoclassicist Mahdi al-Jawahari and the Syrian love poet Nizar Qabbani – and would spar poetically according to the medieval Arabic tradition of literary dueling” (Hoffman 263). Nazareth lawyer Walid al-Fahum recalls the time a Christian friend brought back a book of poems by Nablus-based Palestinian poet Fadwa Tuqān:

Walid then circulated [the book] throughout his high school class according to the labor-intensive method these poetry-hungry teenagers had already perfected: one student would copy the poems by hand, then pass this notebook version along to the next student on the chain, who would recopy them into his own notebook [...] and so on until, as Walid estimates, some twenty students would possess (literal) copies of the book. (205)

This medieval method of passing on Arabic texts brings to mind the context in which Morisco scribes managed to copy out whole volumes in Arabic script; they had to do so by hand rather than by printing press, which was by that time coming into prominence<sup>16</sup>. Nevertheless, certain towns like Almonacid de la Sierra became centers of trade in *aljamiado-morisco* hand-copied books (Barletta 75). Similarly, Palestinians responded to their initial deprivation of Arabic literature (not counting Arabic-language Zionist propaganda, which is a separate issue) by hand-copying texts; this in turn shows the great value which these texts held for their copyists.

Galilee-based poet Hanna Abu Hanna recalls a “rescue mission” of sorts involving Arabic literature that took place in late 1948. At that time, the Israeli Communist Party (specifically Palestinian party members Emile Habiby and Tawfiq Tubi) were recruiting Palestinians to harvest the olives of those who had been driven out of Ramla and Lydd (Miḥjiz 60-61). According to Abu Hanna, some of the Palestinian olive-pickers went into the empty houses of those who had been driven out and “rescued” their Arabic books: “...whatever uneasiness the workers may have felt at looting the libraries of the Lydda and Ramla refugees, their act seems to have been viewed by others as understandable, even admirable, since it took place within the context of the Israeli government ‘carting off furniture from the homes and goods from the shops’” (Hoffman 206). The “Custodian of Absentee Property” had been established by the Israeli government to manage and facilitate the appropriation of Palestinian

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<sup>16</sup> For example, Cervantes’ *Quixote* was published and widely distributed thanks to the use of the printing press; it was published in two parts, one before and one after the start of the mass-expulsion of Spain’s Moriscos in 1609.

property – and the Palestinian olive-pickers saw their retrieval of these books as an important act of cultural preservation – and I would argue, resistance.

Aside from the hand-copying and “rescue” of Arabic literature, Palestinians in Israel during the 1950s and 60s also responded to the military regime’s censorship by using means other than books. Newspapers certainly played a role, but these were still monitored by the Israeli government. So, while the Israeli Communist Party (Maki) would criticize the repressive policies of the regime in their paper *al-Ittiḥād* and their literary magazine *al-Jadīd*, they still toed an ideological line meant to “skirt the national – and thus the colonial – question” (Robinson 66). As Hoffman puts it, in *al-Jadīd*, Maki members

... were outspoken from the outset in their calls for all the workers to band together, regardless of religion, race, or nation, and alongside essays about Arabic literature and culture, the magazine published frequent surveys of modern and medieval Hebrew literature and philosophy, as well as a regular ‘Letter from Tel Aviv,’ which offered reviews of the latest plays running at the major theaters in that city. (224)

Maki was allowed to print material critical of the government because it still accepted the basic Zionist premise of a Jewish state on the land of Palestine; its side-by-side publishing of Arabic and Hebrew literature established a false equivalence between those running the military occupation of the Galilee and those subject to it, and elided the racial and colonial character of the relationship. It is to say the least ironic that they published reviews of plays in Tel Aviv, given that Palestinians in the Galilee for many years were required to get permits from the military governor in order to travel anywhere outside their own villages, and were often subject to abuse when attempting to obtain these permits (Robinson 40). By contrast, when members of the Palestinian nationalist group *al-Arḍ* started voicing their nationalist sentiments in Mapam’s *al-Fajr* toward the end of the ‘fifties, and later in a series of their own publications, the Israeli government shut down the publications and arrested the leaders, then declared the movement illegal in 1967 (Miḥjiz 105). All this is to say that newspapers could play only a limited role in Palestinian resistance given their official nature, which required government approval and was subject to government raids and censorship (*al-Ittiḥād*, for all its acceptance of the Jewish state, still was subject to censorship and arrest, though it was never shut down permanently the way that *al-Arḍ*’s publications had been) (Hoffman 226).

In the spectrum of resistance and collaboration, these papers had to walk a fine line down the gray area in the middle, which included the normalization of the Zionist regime, since

whenever they leaned toward more explicit resistance they were met with repression and state violence. Hoffman argues that some of the more collaborationist publications, such as Michel Ḥaddād's *al-Mujtama'* (which published Palestinian writing but also published Zionist propaganda including essays by "official 'Arabists' of the Histadrut" and "florid Arabic panegyrics to the wonders of the new Jewish state" by Salim Sha'shua') still helped to offer budding Palestinian writers a space in which to develop their craft; she points out that early works by Samīḥ al-Qāsim and Mahmoud Darwish were published on the pages of *al-Mujtama'* (228-31). Newspapers and magazines were a space unlike any we see in secret Morisco-*aljamiado* literature, since they were both permitted and censored by the authorities, and served as a platform for both minority writing as well as state propaganda. This is a uniquely modern literary space which has no parallel that I can find in Morisco literature, apart perhaps from some of the non-literary forms that Perry discusses, such as Islamic architecture, which the Moriscos continued producing during the sixteenth century, as they were often hired as craftspeople and builders by Christian employers (Perry 23-25).

However, one aspect of Palestinian literature in Israel in the decades following the Nakba which has clear parallels to the Moriscos' situation and embodies a strategy to cope with censorship and illiteracy, was the oral recitation of poetry, particularly at political rallies and "poetry festivals" which became a widespread and well-known phenomenon in the Galilee. Hoffman describes how Maki rallies provided an initial platform for the public recitation and reception of committed or "resistance" poetry: "most Maki rallies featured a special 'artistic program' in which poetry was a crucial ingredient – and served as a rhythmic verse extension of all the speechifying that had come before" (257). Hoffman portrays the use of poetry at Maki rallies as a sort of baseline from which there developed in the 1950s the phenomenon of "poetry festivals" in villages throughout the Galilee. These "festivals" were "held sometimes in cities but most often in villages without electricity or paved roads and attended by hundreds, even thousands, of people, old, young, male, female, all of whom were living under the smothering restrictions of the military government and many of whom could not read" (258). Hoffman's description of the festivals as a way to reach an illiterate audience and to overcome the restrictions of state censorship recalls Barletta's descriptions of Morisco celebrations of Muslim holidays, in which folkloric renditions of Quranic stories would be recited in a form of popular

preaching, the orality and performative nature of the stories making it easier for illiterate participants to remember and internalize them.

Hoffman portrays these gatherings as a form of cultural resistance. Israeli authorities made many efforts to shut them down; the Shin Bet (“Security Services”) used roadblocks, police threats, army closures, and denials of travel permits to prevent people from reaching the festivals. They also subjected those who had attended post-facto to imprisonment and curfews. Teachers and other government employees who attended the festivals frequently lost their jobs (258). Nevertheless, government repression backfired, as poets defied closures and threats to attend the festivals, providing models of behavior and a sense of pride to those attending:

In many ways the poets’ defiance seems to have infused the eager crowds with a sense of possibility and strength. By all accounts, the festivals also instilled a crucial brand of cultural, linguistic, and communal pride that had been sorely lacking since 1948. The mass nature of the festivals made it possible for people to stand up – or, more literally, talk back – to the authorities and to do so on their own terms. (258)

As Kanafani and Hoffman point out, much of this “resistance poetry” or “festival poetry” started out relying on traditional poetic forms, as these were easy to memorize and pass on, and as they were a form in which people were already disposed to think and feel – and thus an appropriate vehicle for emotional, political messages.

While the poets who gained popularity at these festivals (e.g., Rashid Hussein, Samīh al-Qāsim, Mahmoud Darwish, Tawfīq Zayyād, and others) also released published versions of their work, the oral nature of this poetry continued to develop and change, as they experimented with form and responded to current events. For example, following the massacre of 49 Palestinian villagers by the Israeli military in Kufr Qasim in 1956, there was widespread outrage on the part of Palestinians and protests organized by Maki not only against the massacre itself, but also due to the government’s subsequent failure to punish any of the politicians or soldiers who ordered and executed the mass killing. The Israeli government actually forced the residents of Kufr Qasim to participate in a *ṣulḥa* (conciliation), thereby appropriating a Bedouin ceremony in order to “gloss over the gross imbalance of power between the state and the subjects of its military regime while reinforcing the popular image [among Jewish Israelis] of Palestinians as backward tribesmen who either rejected or did not understand modern judicial procedures” (Robinson 172). As Robinson explains, “The families of Kufr Qasim participated in the charade of the *sulha* out of fear and in the absence of a viable alternative” (175).

Palestinian “resistance poetry” played a major role in the Palestinian response to the massacre and the government’s subsequent failure to take any responsibility or to punish those who committed the murders. Poets responded directly to the events as they unfolded, for example in Mahmoud Darwish’s “He Who Kills Fifty Arabs Loses a Penny,” which Darwish wrote in response to the Israeli courts’ decision to fine Brigadier Shadmi (one of the higher-ups responsible for the massacre) a single piaster “for issuing the curfew order without the authorization of the military government” (Robinson 188). Samīḥ al-Qāsim likewise wrote poems responding to the massacre and its aftermath. As Hoffman explains, Kufr Qasim poetry was read at memorials every year and “became, in a sense, a genre unto itself” (261). The topic of the Kufr Qasim massacre coincided with acts of civil disobedience on the part of Palestinians; together with these acts, the poetry formed part of a practice of remembrance-as-resistance:

For Palestinians of Israel, [...] the massacre[‘s] whitewashed aftermath, and the humiliating sulha quickly emerged as the ultimate symbol of the state’s punishing treatment of them – and a popular theme among the local Arabic-language poets. They rallied to commemorate the dead of Kafr Qasim in their verse, often defying military closures to sneak into the village and read their poems on the anniversary of the bloodbath. They were frequently arrested for doing so. (261)

The oral nature of the poetry recited at these events was (as with festival poetry in general), in addition to being a method of building community and reinforcing minority identity, a method of overcoming censorship: “A great number of the [Kufr Qasim] poems were quashed by the censor, so that their recitation grew doubly important: they were memorized and passed along orally, though this hardly seems to have lessened their force” (261). This brings to mind Morisco use of early Islamic stories and legends in an oral and folkloric format at their holidays and gatherings as a way to reinforce their connection to an Islamic community and Islamic view of history, as well a way to reach a partially illiterate audience. Moriscos and Palestinians were also both using oral culture in an environment of state censorship, though unlike Moriscos post-1567, Palestinians did not face potential death sentences for the mere possession of Arabic texts.

While “festival” poetry and poems recited in honor of the victims of the Kufr Qasim massacre may seem to represent a fairly straightforward example of “resistance literature,” the other side of the coin, examined by Shira Robinson in her book *Citizen Strangers*, were the coerced speeches and poetic recitations that many Palestinians were forced to give by Israeli authorities during celebrations of Israeli state holidays or events. These speeches and recitations

formed part of a performance of loyalty that Palestinians in the Galilee often felt they had no choice but to give. For example, Israeli journalist Uri Avnery tells the story of Palestinian poet Rashid Hussein, as a student in high school and emerging young poet, being summoned by the Israeli military commander and asked to write a poem “honoring the state of Israel” for an Independence Day<sup>17</sup> reception and to read it at the gathering. Avnery describes the young Rashid Hussein as responding, saying “The government stole our land [...] The very existence of the military regime symbolizes the oppression of the Arab minority in Israel. And you want me to write a poem praising the military regime? Do you think I’m a whore?” (Qtd. Hoffman 275). However, when the military governor responded by threatening Rashid’s family, Rashid was forced to give in, and write and perform the requested poem in praise of the state (276).

While this story is anecdotal, a variety of other sources both Israeli and Palestinian confirm that it actually fits into a larger pattern of the state imposing the performance of Independence Day celebrations on Palestinians under its rule, as one of a variety of performances of loyalty required by the state of Palestinians living under its rule (Robinson 115). Poetry formed a part of these coerced performances. In Kufr Qasim, for example, and under the eyes of Border Guard troops, and alongside speeches celebrating “independence” from British mandate rule, Jaljuliya schoolteacher Bakr ‘Abd al-Malik Abu Kishk read a *madīḥ* (panegyric) he had composed, titled, “Our Leaders and Our Holidays” (122). As Robinson points out, by relying on stock forms and expressions, these poems left room for listeners to interpret them as satire, and this was indeed predicated by centuries of poetry, “because most talented panegyrists often tread the line between genuine admiration and satire, *madīḥ* and its injective counterpart, *hija*” (123). So, for example, the final lines of Abu Kishk’s *madīḥ* may be interpreted as either praise or satire: “Time is too limited to do justice to what you deserve / But I place myself humbly in your hands / I have no mastery over the verse except that / When I saw you this poem wrote itself” (qtd. Robinson 123). In this way, while Israeli authorities forced Palestinian villages to perform loyalty through poems of praise on Israeli Independence Day, and thus publicly celebrate their own subjugation, there were in fact ways for poets to draw on the history of Arabic classical

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<sup>17</sup> “Independence Day” here is referring to Israeli Independence Day, celebrated on May 15<sup>th</sup>, and honoring Israel’s creation and thereby its “independence” from British Mandate rule in May 1948 i.e., as the ethnic cleansing of Palestine was nearing its completion.

poetry in order to cast doubt on the sincerity of their words to their Palestinian listeners, while still performing loyalty to a watchful military and official audience.

This is not to say that Palestinians necessarily viewed these praise poems and accompanying celebrations as resistance or even as collaboration; Anton Shammas for example describes how the teachers and students in his village of Fassūṭa “were unaware that the state sought not to capture their hearts but to ‘sear’ them with the stamp of ownership” (Robinson 148), and it was only years later that in Shammas’ words, “we discovered [...] that there was an utter rift between the signified and the signifier; those flags did not signify a single thing. They were meant by the state to be utterly void of any symbolic meaning and were cynically used as mere decorative objects, completely detached from their statism” (qtd. 148). However, Robinson also states that “Regardless of their age at the time, Palestinians who remember these events tend to stress the sense of humiliation and demoralization they left behind” (116). In other words, Palestinians performing and observing these performances express a wide range of emotions about them, though at the time they either may not have recognized the performances as coercion/collaboration/resistance, or else may have been unable to do anything other than collaborate under the watchful eye of the state.

Palestinian filmmaker Elia Suleiman illustrates the ambivalence of these performances (along with their potential for humiliation) in his 2009 film *al-Zaman al-Bāqī* (The Time That Remains), which includes a scene in which Palestinian schoolchildren in Nazareth sing Independence Day songs in Hebrew and Arabic to honor Israeli Independence Day, in a hall festooned with Israeli flags and watched by teachers, students, and visiting officials, including some with cameras meant to commemorate the event (*Al-Zaman al-Bāqī* 35:00-37:00). The scene emphasizes the watchful presence of teachers (in the employ of the state), and the staged nature of the moment (a visiting official hands a small trophy to the teacher, as both pose for a photo). It is difficult to tell what the singing children think, but occasionally children or adults in the audience will smile or clap, sometimes as if to coach the singers along, and sometimes from apparent enjoyment. The visually staged nature of the performance, which involves the coercion of adults and children, makes it difficult to tell what anyone truly thinks or feels, but one can clearly see the power dynamics at play, as Palestinian adults and children perform loyalty to the Israeli state in hopes of pleasing visiting Israeli officials. As public shows of coercion, these

events created a space for both resistance and collaboration via poetry, but resistance only in its passive or satirical form.

It is also important to note that while Hebrew was used in these celebrations to some extent, state coercion took place largely *in Arabic*. Abu Kishk and Rashid Hussein wrote their poems praising the state in Arabic, as had been requested of them by state authorities. The children in Elia Suleiman's film sing first in Hebrew, and then in Arabic, using their own mother tongue to sing praises to "my country's Independence Day" and "Israel's holiday" (36:11 – 37:22). By contrast, in choosing to outlaw the Arabic language and the possession of any texts in Arabic, rather than attempting to coopt it, the Spanish government of the sixteenth century set different parameters for its coercion of its conquered minority. Rather than attempting to manipulate the language of the conquered, it strove to stamp it out. In conflating Islam with language and other aspects of culture, the Spanish state branded any expression of Granadan or Morisco culture as an expression of heresy and adherence to Islam. And in branding everything from language to one's manner of eating as "resistance" to the state, perversely, it designated a variety of methods of resistance, some of which Moriscos practiced unwittingly but others which they used quite consciously (Perry 40). Use of the Arabic language and script in particular became a conscious method of resistance, and the use of *aljamiado* was one of the most deliberate methods of cultural resistance developed by the Moriscos. Despite the laws preventing Moriscos from properly learning or passing on Arabic itself, *aljamiado* preserved for them a semantic connection to their faith, history, and culture.

Palestinian literature in Israel has no clear equivalent to the Moriscos' use of *aljamiado*. Palestinians in Israel were still allowed to speak and use Arabic openly, though of course their speech and their writing were subject to extensive monitoring and censorship. As a result, while Palestinians *were* memorizing poems to be passed on without censorship and were copying out certain texts by hand in response to their cultural isolation from the larger Arab world, they were *not* engaged in the desperate preservation of their alphabet nor were they being forced to learn only Hebrew in school. Whereas Moriscos were forcibly converted to Christianity, Palestinians were unable, had they wanted to do so, to convert en masse to Judaism and thus gain racial/religious privilege in the new state (Robinson 9). Morisco boys were often made to attend Catholic schools, where they studied in Latin. Palestinian children, though subject to indoctrination by the state, were still taught in Arabic and in separate schools. The Israeli



government used teachers in schools to monitor the speech of other staff and students, and rather than banning Arabic outright, it attempted for example to ban the teaching of any poem that included the Arabic word *waṭan* (homeland) or *Filasṭīn*, i.e., poems with language that might indicate a nationalist bent (139-40).

While Palestinians were able to consume and produce literature in Arabic, there was still a confiscation and appropriation of formal Arabic undertaken by the Israeli state, which was attempting through its use of language to control Palestinian identity, and to weaken the nationalist aspects of this identity. This is the argument put forward by Esmail Nashif, who argues that the utter destruction of the Nakba and also the lack of infrastructure for independent Palestinian literary production in the nineteenth century (compared to, say, Egypt) left in the face of colonialism a vacuum of meaning, which Zionist writing in Arabic was able to fill through a surplus (*fā'id*) of production, which in turn imposed upon Palestinians a forced or coerced (*qahrī*) form of reading and writing (Nashif 30). Nashif's understanding of colonial coercion in the field of reading and writing helps to illustrate the ways in which, while Palestinians were allowed to produce literature in Arabic, coercion was always present in this production. They may not have had to resort to *aljamiado*, but the state certainly monitored and censored their speech, and more importantly, to Nashif, it imposed the entire framework of their writing. Palestinians may have chosen like Michel Ḥaddād in his magazine *al-Mujtama'* to "accept" the Israeli "conditions" of loyalty to the state and separation from Arabo-Islamic culture/history, or they may have suggested like Emile Touma in Maki's literary journal *al-Jadīd* that Palestinians re-immense themselves in *fushā* Arabic in an effort to reconnect with their national group identity (20). However, at the end of the day, Touma himself was enmeshed in and responding to a Zionist system of meaning-making, as was Ḥaddād. Palestinians would never set the terms or "own" the "means of production" of meaning.

The differences in strategy between the Spanish and Israeli regimes' attempts to control unwanted minorities could make an interesting comparison between early modern and modern forms of coercion. The modern nation-state's attempts to manipulate and infiltrate the language of the minority certainly seem on the face of it like a more refined and possibly more effective method of control than simply outlawing it. But for now, I'd like to focus on the fact that said coercion made "pure" resistance by members of these conquered minorities impossible, since it meant that all forms of literature were subject to some form of coercion, and were produced both

*in answer to* and *subject to* this coercion. The literature of Moriscos in Spain and Palestinians in Israel is not a straightforward “resistance literature” (as Kanafani puts it), but rather a body of work that falls on a continuum between resistance and collaboration, incorporating aspects of both. In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss the role of the writer in these communities, and the ways in which writers could serve both as representatives of their communities, and collaborators with the new regimes.

### III. Writers as Representatives, Collaborators

In both Palestinian and Morisco contexts, it was often those who demonstrated some degree of collaboration who were then able to act as a voice for their community, due to the power and access that their collaboration gave them. In other words, they were able to act as go-betweens. Thus, in both contexts, we see various examples of writers whose writing embodied both an attempt to present their communities’ grievances to the state, and to further the agenda of the state within their communities. These figures were both spokespeople for their minority communities *and* collaborators for the state; their writing reflects their grasp of both discourses.

In the case of the Muslims of Granada following the conquest of 1491-2, collaborators played a prominent role during the conquest, and also after the forced conversion of Granadan Muslims *en masse*, serving as teachers of Islamic knowledge, or as political go-betweens and negotiators. Galán distinguishes between “the collaborators among the old Granadan aristocracy who came to have a leading role precisely because they had played a prominent part in the actual surrender and those motivated by ambition or desire for gain who appeared on the scene a little later” (*Muslims in Spain* 39). We see a similar pattern in Hillel Cohen’s description of Palestinians who collaborated with Zionist intelligence forces during the Mandate period – collaborators were often men from landed or “leading regional families” (Cohen 20) as well as local leaders whose actions the people of their communities followed (73, 77); however, other collaborators were often middle-men seeking personal profit, particularly land brokers, or *samāsira* (37). There were other motivations as well. As Cohen argues, “treason is ultimately a social construct”; his book shows the ways in which Palestinians attempted to combat the spread of Zionist colonization by constructing definitions of treason and acting upon those constructs, and the ways in which their attempts failed (Cohen 5). Similarly, Harvey points out that while

describing members of Granadan Muslim aristocracy who passed over into the new Catholic aristocracy after the conquest as “collaborators” or “collaborationists” is “superficially accurate enough,” it is also appropriate to ask what other “realistic alternative[s] these people had” - in other words, to view collaboration as a *strategy* which can be used for personal gain, and for the limited protection of one’s community (*Muslims in Spain* 41). Granadan aristocrats like Yuse Banegas and Ali Sarmiento who “passed over” into positions of wealth and power within the new regime performed through their actions and their writings a range of collaboration and resistance, often simultaneously.

One exemplary case of a member of this aristocratic class walking the line between collaboration and resistance can be seen in the person and the writings of Francisco Núñez Muley, himself related through his uncle to the (collaborationist) last Nasrid king of Granada, Muley Hassan Boabdil (Barletta “Editor’s Introduction” 9). Núñez Muley was born in 1490 and was converted to Christianity as a child; we know that as early as 1502, directly following the mass forced conversions of Granadans, he was serving as a page to the archbishop Talavera (6-7). While Núñez Muley received status and economic benefits for his collaboration with the new regime (e.g., he was paid well to collect royal tax revenue), he also served “as a kind of spokesman for the Moriscos of Granada on a number of occasions” (10). His collaboration gave him power; yet it may also have lessened his moral authority in the eyes of members of his community, who targeted collaborators in certain documented instances (11). Nevertheless, we see him involved as a young man in 1513 in negotiations that postponed the implementation of oppressive laws (bans on traditional clothing and Islamic methods of butchering, among other things) on Granadan Moriscos (Núñez Muley 57-58). While the Morisco community held a variety of opinions on the members of this aristocratic collaborator class, what I hope to focus on in this section is how *writers* in Morisco and Palestinian communities were often themselves a specific kind of go-between, collaborators who simultaneously tried to voice the demands of their communities to those in power, while also *participating in* and *benefiting from* those same colonial systems of power.

As Barletta points out in the introduction to his English translation of Núñez Muley’s 1567 Memorandum to the President of the Royal Chancery of Granada, Núñez Muley fits into what Edward Said describes as “a stratum of people who while fighting for their communities try to find a place for themselves within the cultural framework they share with the West” (Said

263). Said goes on, “They are the elites who in leading the various nationalist independence movements have authority handed on to them by the colonial power” (263). Examples given by Said of this sort of figure in the context of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century anti-colonial movements include Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Nehru, and the FLN (263). In other words, as Barletta summarizes it, “many of the protagonists of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century resistance struggles that eventually led to full-fledged independence movements in Asia and Africa were unmistakably complicit in the perpetuation of various emulatory practices within the intellectual sphere” (“Editor’s Introduction” 27). Said describes this combination of assimilation/emulation and resistance as a kind cultural “antagonistic collaboration” (Said 263). Barletta applies this dynamic directly to the language of Núñez Muley’s memorandum, since in this document, the Granadan aristocrat “strives both to *appease* his authoritative, Castilian, Old Christian reader and *openly contest* the injurious social policies adopted by this same reader and the legal body over which he presides” (28). Barletta’s use of Said in this context is striking, in that it deliberately draws a parallel between modern colonial collaboration and resistance, and the collaboration and resistance of colonized elites in the early modern period, *including* among Moriscos. Barletta brings in work on the discourse of Maya elites from the same time period, strengthening his analogy of 16<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish colonialism and collaborators with the more modern contexts discussed by Said in *Culture and Imperialism*. Similarly, we will find parallels between Núñez-Muley’s role as writer/representative/collaborator and the role played by certain Palestinian figures in Israel in the 1950s and 60s.

Núñez Muley wrote his *Memorandum* in 1567, near the end of his life, in response to a *pragmática* (royal decree) that had been proclaimed on January 1 of that year. Núñez Muley’s letter is addressed to Pedro de Deza Manuel, president of the Royal Audiencia of Granada, and argues in several points against the implementation of the January 1 *pragmática* (“Editor’s Introduction” 20). The *pragmática* itself was meant to prohibit all sorts of expressions of Granadan Morisco culture, including Arabic texts, spoken Arabic, traditional clothing, public baths, *zambras* and other forms of traditional music/dance, women’s veiling of their own faces in public, and so on. What is more relevant, it ordered all of these practices to be altered suddenly and rapidly, after over six decades in which Moriscos had been able to purchase delays on these restrictions through negotiations and the payment of heavy taxes (“Editor’s Introduction” 21, *Muslims in Spain* 211). Núñez Muley’s *Memorandum* was a written response, in Castilian, to

Deza's *pragmática*. As such, it is not *aljamiado* literature, but it is certainly a text written by a (highly assimilated) Morisco arguing on behalf of the Granadan Morisco community, intended to be read by a powerful arm of the Spanish government. It is Morisco writing, and it shows the discursive strategies used by a member of the aristocratic collaborationist class to attempt to preserve limited rights for the Granadan Morisco community.

In terms of discursive strategies, Núñez Muley's *Memorandum* employs a very clear combination of collaboration and resistance. In order to appease and appeal to Deza, Núñez Muley makes repeated use of honorific titles and formulae to show his respect for Deza, different Catholic monarchs, and the members of the Spanish regime in general. He defers to Deza as "the most illustrious and reverend president of the Royal Audiencia" and does not (at least initially) directly blame Deza for his issuing of the *pragmática*, instead bringing to Deza's attention "the problems about which His Most Reverend Lordship should be informed" (Núñez Muley 55). Núñez Muley also attempts to demonstrate Granadans' allegiance to the regime through numerous historical examples. He cites the Granadans' support of the central government in actively putting down the Christian peasant and priest-led *germanía* revolts (74-75), and he cites his own memories both from his childhood, when he served as a page to the archbishop Talavera (80), and from his diplomatic service as an adult, as in the negotiations of 1513 between Granadan Moriscos and the government (58). The central tension here is that while Núñez Muley uses his memories to establish himself as a good Christian and loyal servant of the Crown, he simultaneously is asserting his own personal authority *against* that of Deza. For example, when citing the service Granadans provided in suppressing the *germanía* revolts, he does not merely say that Granadans should not be punished, but rather asserts that "[i]t follows from the service and loyalty demonstrated by the natives of this kingdom that it would be reasonable and just if they were more favored than those of other kingdoms and provinces, and their privileges and liberties preserved [...]" (75). In other words, he simultaneously asserts his loyalty to the Crown while linguistically flipping the tables of power and arguing that if anything, Granadans should be rewarded for their loyalty rather than punished for their difference.

Another way in which Núñez Muley asserts his own personal authority to resist the *pragmática* is through a detailed citation of his (very acceptable and Castilian) sources. For example, in explaining why the original forced conversion of Granadans violated the terms of the Articles of Capitulation signed by Ferdinand and Isabella, he not only describes the stipulations

of the Articles and the lineage through which the documents were preserved, but also adds, “Your Most Reverend Lordship can request and consult it, and see copies [*traslados*] of it that have been and are parts of claims and suits that have been filed in this city and in this Royal Audiencia (the secretaries of the Royal Audiencia will have copies of it) [...]” (57). It would be very presumptuous of Núñez Muley to explain to Deza how Deza’s own Audiencia worked, or what was contained in the Articles of Capitulation, which points to this being a sarcastic jab at Deza (and the regime)’s blatant disregard of their own agreement. Núñez Muley draws upon the authority and honor of the Spanish monarchs and Spanish legal system in order to point out violations of said system. This is what underlies his frequent citation throughout the memorandum of negotiations that he personally participated in, and his detailed listing of the amounts of money paid by the Granadan Morisco community to the Spanish government on which dates. This appeal to the supposed fairness of the colonial system will be seen later in the efforts of Palestinian members of Maki to use the Israeli courts to punish those responsible for the 1956 Kufr Qasim massacre; ultimately in both Spanish and Israeli examples, the colonial legal system would show its indifference to such appeals to its presumed fairness.

Núñez Muley’s central argument in the *Memorandum* depends upon the distinction that he draws between *religion* and regional *culture*. Essentially, he argues that all of the indicators of “Islam” that Deza is hoping to ban are in fact nothing more than expressions of regional culture. This includes language, clothing, music, dance, and bathhouses. He makes comparisons to Christians in Jerusalem and Malta, who neither spoke Castilian (the Maltese actually spoke Arabic) nor wore Castilian fashions in clothing, in order separate these markers of Granadan Morisco identity from Islam (70). He reinforces his own personal authority in this argument again by encouraging Deza to check his sources:

[...] For all that has been stated above, and in light of this most informative and true account (which in no way goes against the Holy Catholic faith), Your Most Reverend Lordship must help us to gain favor with His Majesty. And if Your Lordship has doubts as to the veracity of my report, simply summon some newly converted persons, as well as some Old Christians, that have visited and traveled in all of the aforementioned lands and kingdoms, such as Fez and Turkey and others. May Your Lordship check these claims in order to see if they are true or not... (71)

Núñez Muley knows that “newly converted persons” do not hold great authority in the eyes of his reader, and so he appeals to the authority of the Catholic Church, Deza himself (repeatedly and with many honorifics), and that of Old Christians. Again, the tone verges on sarcasm,

because Núñez Muley is pointing out that he should not have to qualify such an obvious claim, and yet he feels he must do so very thoroughly, due to Deza's potential disregard of his speech. He is again establishing his own authority, as well as his contempt for Deza's apparent disregard of precedent. As we will see later on, Palestinian writer and Israeli MK Emile Habiby would make similar use of satire in his novel *The Pessoptimist*, which sarcastically lauded the achievements of the Israeli state, including the massacre of Palestinian women and children (Habiby 102-3).

Another interesting tactic, which only really comes up at the end of the Memorandum, is an appeal to human empathy, a put-yourself-in-my-shoes thought experiment: "Let us imagine that His Majesty has decided [...] that there should be established a decree requiring all Christians to dress like Moriscos and wear their footwear; to cease celebrating weddings in the Castilian way and instead begin celebrating them as Moriscos do [...]," and so on. Ultimately, Núñez Muley does not spend much time on this thought exercise, as he seems to guess (probably accurately) that it will not carry much weight with Deza. Instead, Núñez Muley devotes much of his *Memorandum* to appealing to the regime's cupidity and desire to maintain law and order (and all the tax revenues that come with said order). He repeatedly points out the great wealth that the Crown gains from Granada, as well as the centrality of Morisco cultural signifiers, particularly Arabic script, to the smooth running of the Granadan legal and economic systems. He focuses on the fact that silk merchants record their product and sales in Arabic, and that the bulk of Arabic-language deeds to Granadans' property could not possibly all be translated in the time indicated by the *pragmática*, leading to potential economic and legal chaos were the pragmatic to be acted upon (95, 133). This is another form of establishing authority – in this case, Núñez Muley is establishing the Granadan Moriscos' economic power, by focusing on the wealth that their kingdom and their special taxes brings to the Crown. Habiby performs a similar move in *The Pessoptimist* by pointing to Palestinians as the labor behind the Israeli state: "...who erected the buildings, paved the roads, dug and planted the earth of Israel, other than the Arabs who remained there?" (Habiby, trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 81).

This brings us to one last strategy for establishing authority that Núñez Muley employs, which is to openly and repeatedly establish the colonial dynamic at play through his use of the word "natives" to describe Granadan Moriscos. While Núñez Muley also employs terms like "Morisco" and "newly converted Christians," which define the Moriscos in the narrow religious

sense that Deza and those like him wish to impose on them, he more frequently refers to Granadan Moriscos as “natives [*naturales*] of this kingdom” (55). As Barletta points out, this rhetorical move increases the Granadan Moriscos’ authority by defining them not as mere defective Christians, but rather as “natives (*naturales*) of a formerly independent Muslim kingdom with certain rights and freedoms that correspond to such a status”; it also “works [...] to marginalize the Old Christian authorities as a group of recently arrived, and in a very real sense, ‘foreign’ administrators with little understanding of the places and peoples they have been charged with governing” (“Editor’s Introduction” 33). Similarly to Núñez Muley’s constant, confrontational citing of sources in the *Memorandum*, this linguistic move flips the power dynamic when it comes to a monopoly over knowledge, in this case framing “native” Granadans (and Núñez Muley as one of them) as those with real knowledge of the kingdom and its operations, *not* the Christian administrators.

It is unclear whether Núñez Muley expected his *Memorandum* to have any effect on Deza. On the one hand, as Harvey points out in reference to the *pragmática*, “the crypto-Muslims had heard it before and no doubt assumed that once more they would be able to find some way round the problems” (*Muslims in Spain* 211). However, hindsight would show the direness of the situation, and it is clear from the course of events (Deza ignored Núñez Muley’s letter, and open rebellion broke out among certain Moriscos of Granada, which led to the forced expulsion and relocation of nearly *all* Granadan Moriscos in 1570) that Núñez Muley’s confrontational letter was not successful in changing Deza’s behavior. Barletta explains, “That Núñez Muley [...] seems openly to *challenge* the authority of local officials [...] reflects a level of audacity that probably has as much to do with Núñez Muley’s advanced age as with the hopelessness of the situation about which he complains so bitterly” (“Editor’s Introduction” 37). In other words, his strategy of appealing to the regime’s authority while simultaneously undermining it in favor of his own personal authority, while a fascinating rhetorical hybrid of collaboration and resistance, was not effective in achieving its aims.

Following the failure of Núñez Muley’s hybrid rhetoric of collaboration and resistance to turn back the *pragmática*, many Moriscos turned to “pure” resistance, i.e., armed revolt. The Second Alpujarras War was itself a morally and ideologically compromised undertaking, rife with infighting and subject not just to direct attack by government forces but also to “black propaganda” meant to discourage the resisters (Perry 88-108, *Muslims in Spain* 209). While the



direct resistance of armed revolt ultimately failed, one of these propagandists/collaborators, Alonso del Castillo, came to be known among modern-day scholars for his probable involvement in the composition of texts which, like Núñez Muley's *Memorandum*, demonstrate a mixed strategy of resistance through collaboration. Unlike the *Memorandum*, these texts did not *directly* attack the issue – instead, they were forgeries, which attempted to win the sympathy of a broad Christian readership (remember that the *Memorandum* tried this tact only briefly and was directed to just one unsympathetic Old Christian reader). One example, a letter from the Muslim rebel leader Aben Daud supposedly found by the coastguard and translated by Castillo, may have been forged (rather than translated) by Castillo himself – this is according to Harvey, who explains, “We know [Castillo] was not above actually planting forged documents when required, so we must be suspicious in this instance” (209). Harvey infers that Castillo may have planted this letter in order to garner sympathy among Christian readers for the Granadan Moriscos: “[...] whether it was in fact written by Aben Daud or whether it was yet another of Castillo's fabrications, the text still articulates forcefully the sufferings of the *nuevos convertidos de moros* (we may even surmise that it may have been Castillo's indirect way of bringing before the viceroy and, ultimately the king, the depth of Morisco alienation)” (209). In other words, Harvey hypothesizes that what Núñez Muley attempted to do directly, Castillo attempted to do indirectly, using his collaboration in the war effort to ensure his credibility.

Castillo is much more famous among modern scholars for his potential involvement, along with fellow translator and collaborationist Morisco Miguel de Luna, in the forgery of the Sacromonte “lead books,” which were “found” in the mid-1590s after most Granadans had been forced out of the kingdom of Granada (266). As members of a very elite collaborator class, Luna and Castillo remained, working for the Crown. The Sacromonte texts were written in Arabic and meant to be interpreted as lost gospels, additions to the Catholic canon that simultaneously elevated the status of Arabic and Arabic-speakers in the eyes of Old Christians, and presented a version of Christianity cleansed of all the elements that would be most offensive to a crypto-Muslim audience (264-90). The forgeries garnered a great following among Old Christians and New (as evidenced by al-Ḥajārī's discovery of copies of the texts, brought by Moriscos into exile in North Africa) (271). They are an example of what Harvey terms Morisco “entryism,” which he defines as “a type of infiltration whereby a concerted (and usually clandestine) attempt is made to take over and subvert a movement [...] or an ideology” – in this case, by elevating the

status of Arabic and presenting a form of Christianity that might be acceptable to crypto-Muslims, i.e., in which Jesus was the “spirit” rather than the “son” of God, no Trinity was to be found, and so on (268). The text also offered features meant to appeal to Granadan Old Christians, such as its view of the immaculate conception, and its Granadan origins, which catered to Granadan regional pride (173). Ultimately, the Moriscos were expelled en masse from Spain too soon after the discovery of the Sacromonte forgeries for these texts to have effected the long-term change they aimed to create. However, it is worth pointing out that while their rhetorical strategies and genre were dramatically different from Núñez Muley’s *Memorandum*, both were produced by members of a privileged and politically influential collaborator class, who attempted to use their writing as a method of resistance-via-collaboration, appealing to the systems of the conquerors in order to push for certain limited gains for the Morisco minority to which they also belonged.

In discussing those members of Granadan aristocracy who passed over into the new Catholic aristocracy post-conquest, I have mentioned Hillel Cohen’s delineation of a comparable Palestinian class of collaborators during the Mandate period, i.e., those sheikhs and local notables who collaborated with Zionist intelligence. While this collaboration had its roots in the Mandate period, it continued during and after 1948. Such local “leaders” were given special treatment by the authorities in return for their collaboration. For example, the biography of Palestinian poet Taha Muhammad Ali describes how the former mayor of Taha’s village of Saffuriyya, Sheikh Saleh Salim, was helped by Israeli authorities to obtain the documents he and his family needed to reside in the country legally and was allowed to claim as his own residence one of the larger “abandoned” homes near his old village, because “the Israelis [...] had a vested interest in maintaining his authority and the authority of other regionally respected old-school ‘notables’ like him” in order to control, monitor, and gain the support of the remaining Palestinian population (Hoffman 176-8). The government chose to support this patriarchal, almost aristocratic (on a smaller scale) system as a way to exercise and extend their own power; in doing so, they reinforced the image of Palestinian Arabs as backwards peasants. Sheikh Saleh was one of many such notables added to Mapai’s “Arab Lists” in the Knesset (Palestinian members of Knesset recruited to Zionist founder Ben Gurion’s Mapai party), which gave the governing party the *appearance* of including Arabs in their government, while in fact openly excluding them: “Mapai regarded its Arab Knesset members as mere hangers-on, whose duty it

was to vote the party line and support it during the formation of a government” (qtd. 178). In return for local power and personal favors, these figures provided the new settler government with legitimacy and votes. In this, they were not unlike the Granadan Morisco el-Fisteli, who was allowed power and wealth as a local tax-collector, or Yuse Banegas of the collaborationist Granada-Banegas family, who was allowed to keep a large estate including numerous Islamic texts, or Núñez Muley himself, who in addition to his political prominence enjoyed payments he received for his own work as a tax-collector (*Muslims in Spain* 39-41, “Editor’s Introduction” 9).

The focus on recruiting Palestinian notables as collaborators for the Zionist regime was useful for their strategy of divide-and-conquer, since it allowed them to “carve off” whole slices of the Palestinian population, as when “an agreement drawn up by certain Druze sheikhs with the Zionist side saved all members of their sect from being uprooted and driven out,” in return for their collaboration in the events of 1948 and afterwards, including service in the IDF (Mannā’ 146, 150). According to Mannā’, “The Druze in northern Palestine make up the first and most important model for a group-permanence via collaboration with the winning side” (152); other groups, such as members of collaborationist villages like Jerusalem’s Abu Ghosh did the same, with mixed success (Robinson 113-14). And when it comes to the collaborator / representative / writer figures that interests us here, we must examine the history of the Israeli Communist Party (Maki), and specifically its prominent member and writer, Emile Habiby. Like Núñez Muley, Habiby was a politician, famous both for his participation in the government of the conquerors, and his representation of his (now minority) community within conquered territories. He produced copious written work both journalistic (in his role as editor of Maki’s Arabic-language paper, *al-Ittiḥād*) and literary (including the short stories making up *Sudāsiyyat al-Ayām al-Sittah*, as well as his novels *al-Mutashā’il*, *Ikhtayyi*, and *Sarāya Bint al-Ghūl*). To understand Habiby’s ideology and the way he fits into the mold of representative / collaborator / writer, it is important to understand the history of Israeli and Palestinian communists in the decades before and after the Nakba.

Habiby grew up in a middle-class family in Haifa, and his older brother was a member of the Palestinian Socialist Party (Mopsi) during the 1920s (Miḥjiz 72-3). Emile joined the Party in 1940, at a moment of change and crisis within the party (73). Mopsi had participated (in a minor role) alongside Palestinian nationalists in the ’36-’39 Arab Revolt, and when the Revolt failed, many Jewish members criticized the party’s participation; a “Jewish branch” was established,

which acted as a separate entity and shifted towards a Zionist position. The branch was dissolved in 1939, but many of its members formed a new organization, *Imīt*, which adopted an openly Zionist ideology, and which was incorporated back into the party in 1942 (53). Then in 1943, the internal strife caused by the clash between Jewish and Arab nationalists led Mopsi to split into factions, including a “Zionist Socialist” contingent led by Shmuel Mikunis, and a separate Arab group which included Emile Habiby, Emile Touma, and Tawfīq Tubi. Mikunis’s group became the Land of Israel Communist Party, and the Arab contingent, including Habiby, formed *‘Uṣbat al-Taḥarrur al-Waṭanī*, or the National Liberation League (54). Initially after its founding, the League espoused “a firm nationalist policy and called for the withdrawal of British forces, demanded the independence of Palestine, and the establishment of a Palestinian democratic state, that would secure the rights of all its inhabitants, Arabs and Jews” (55, my translation). It was also during this period that Emile Touma obtained a license from the British Mandate to publish a weekly paper, *al-Ittiḥād*, which became the official paper of the NLL. When the UN issued its plan for the partition of Palestine in November of 1947, the League immediately reject the plan, as it contradicted their policy of working towards a single democratic Palestinian state. However, the Soviet Union caught them by surprise when it endorsed partition. This led to an ideological split within the League, which attempted to consolidate its opposition to partition (and thus to Zionism) through a public statement which it forced its Central Council members to sign (55).

However, in February 1948, a minority of cadres, led by Emile Habiby, Tawfīq Tubi, and Fu’ad Nassar, held a “secret meeting in Nazareth [...] in which the minority agreed to partition, in the absence of the majority, which had not been notified of the meeting, and with that they published a declaration, alleging that it was a declaration of the Central Council of the National Liberation League” (Miḥjiz 56, Mannā’ 160). This change in policy was pivotal; as Mannā’ explains, in altering the League’s stance, “Tawfīq Tubi and Emile Habiby led the League in northern Palestine down the path that carried them both to the Israeli Knesset” (160). At this time, Habiby’s counterparts in the Land of Israel Communist Party were busy joining the Haganah, recruiting Jewish soldiers, and procuring weapons and planes for use by the Haganah from Eastern Europe (Miḥjiz 56). Habiby himself seems to have participated directly in the Zionist war effort. After the February 1948 meeting in Nazareth in which he redirected the League’s ideology and policy, Habiby traveled with Shmuel Mikunis (leader of the Land of Israel Communist Party) to Belgrade to attend the Cominform conference. From there, he

accompanied Mikunis to Prague, where a deal was concluded to send Czech weapons to the Haganah. Emile Habiby later disclaimed having had any knowledge of such a deal when Mikunis “invited” him to Prague, and he sued the Nazareth-based paper *al-Sinnārah* for libel when they implied as much; however, these rumors continued to follow him for years (Mannā’ 161).

In any case, a look at the discourse of Habiby and his fellow League-members during the spring, summer, and fall of 1948 will show that this sort of direct, active collaboration, whether or not it happened, would not have been outside the spirit of the times. While Habiby traveled to Beirut after Prague to liaise with other Arab communists, Tawfiq Tubi remained in Haifa, and was there that spring when Zionist forces occupied the city and drove out most of its Arab inhabitants. Just ten days after this, Tubi and his colleague ‘Iṣām al-‘Abbasi (the only League member Tubi could find besides himself who managed to remain in Haifa) produced a pamphlet that laid the blame for Haifa’s fall at the feet of British colonialism, the Palestinian nationalist leadership, and the Hashemite King Abdullah, whom they called a “collaborator of British colonialism” (qtd. 164). However, their pamphlet is most notable for what it omits, viz. any condemnation of the Zionist leadership who had actually planned and carried out the occupation of Haifa (164). This would be characteristic of the League’s pamphlets from this era: “It appears that this pamphlet, which laid the blame for Haifa’s Nakba on people other than those who committed it, was the price or natural result of the League’s political position, and its walking in the path of Moscow and supporting Israel” (165).

The League became involved in what Harvey, referring to Alonso de Castillo’s work on behalf of the Catholic Monarchy to discourage Morisco rebels in Granada in the 1560s, refers to as “black propaganda.” In June of 1948, the League “increased its verbal attack against the reactionary Arab regimes and their armies that had entered Palestine, which were described as foreign and invading,” while maintaining “silence about the massacres and expulsions that the Jewish state was undertaking against the Palestinian people” (166). One particularly infamous example was the pamphlet distributed to Egyptian and Jordanian soldiers, in which the League encouraged Arab soldiers to “return to your countries and turn your fire toward the chests of the colonizers and their cronies” (qtd. Miḥjiz 57). This work was recognized as collaboration by both sides: Ben Gurion’s party paper, *Davar*, published an article on July 15, 1948, in which they expressed “‘words of thanks and respect’ for the pamphlets that the members of the League had

distributed to the soldiers of the Egyptian and Jordanian armies” (Mannā’ 170). Meanwhile, some League members were forced to hide or work secretly because the Arab side started targeting them; about ten distributors of the pamphlet were arrested, as well as several League members in Nazareth (who were released after prominent Nazarenes pulled strings), and Arab crowds actually burned down NLL headquarters at one point (Mannā’ 167-8, Mihjiz 57). Nazareth fell to Israeli occupation in July, and the League lost no time in meeting with the Israeli minorities minister and attempting to ingratiate itself to those in power (Mannā’ 175-6).

As to the reasons for Habiby and the NLL’s collaboration, Mannā’ explains that “the men of the League had come to believe in their ability to play a leading role in ruling the Galilee and other regions of Palestine, in collaboration with Israel,” and that they “saw themselves as ideological partners to the Israeli state and not as collaborators with an occupying state” (176, 169). In return for their collaboration, then, NLL members expected to be allowed to play a leadership role within the new state of Israel for the remaining Palestinian minority. Much like the Druze leaders who traded their assistance for their communities’ safety, League members may have felt that this was the price that had to be paid to remain on their land and in power. What they did not seem to anticipate was how limited their power would be, due to the racialized nature of the Zionist state. The post-war period was marked by the demand for shows of loyalty from NLL members, as they merged with the Land of Israel Communist Party to form Maki:

Because the balance of power had changed, it became clear that difficult conditions would be imposed on those returning. The most important of these conditions was the necessity for the National Liberation League to conduct an open self-critique of its past nationalist mistakes. And indeed, the League met these conditions and published its comprehensive declaration in which it apologized for its nationalist past. (Mihjiz 60)

It is important to point out that the unification of the Arab and the Jewish Communists in October 1948 “was not a unity between two equal partners, but rather an acceptance of the conditions of the Jewish communists, led by Mikunis” (Mannā’ 178). It was in essence a capitulation agreement by which the Arab communists, by adopting the discourse and positions of the conquering side, attempted to guarantee themselves a place in the new system, through which they later might be able to represent their own (now minority) community.

At the Unity Conference in which Maki absorbed the League, held in Haifa, Habiby exemplified this discourse in a “fiery” speech, in which he stated, “I speak in the name of a party which stands at the head of the popular war effort to drive out the occupation armies from the

Arab sectors of the land of Israel” (Mannā’ 178). He spoke of himself as representing “the secret resistance movement against the occupation armies in Jerusalem and Ramallah and Nablus and Gaza” – note that in both quotes, the “occupying” armies are the Arab armies, juxtaposed with Habiby’s self-identification with the “Arab sectors of the land of Israel” (178). The phrase “Arab sectors” reflects Zionist reluctance to refer to any Palestinian nationalist movement (thus the use in early Israeli discourse of phrases like “Arab Israelis” or “Arabs”), while the use of the name Israel seems premature, given that the Galilee had been designated in the UN partition plan as part of the planned Arab state, and its status as part of Israel had not yet been decided at the time of Habiby’s speech, in late October 1948. The Unity Conference was held under the waving of Israeli flags and the sound of the anthem, *Hatikvah*, “and Emile Habiby did not forget in his speech to point to the role of the comrades of the League in supporting the Israeli war efforts; this Zionist-ified [*mutaṣahyin*] communist discourse was the dowry that had to be paid in order to prove their loyalty and permit Maki to enter the political arena” (Mannā’ 182). The League’s print media (*al-Ittiḥād*) was demonstrating a similarly “Zionist-ified” discourse around this time: it “expressed the League’s positions, which were excited for the victories of the Jewish state” (Mannā’ 179).

The differences between the language used by Habiby and Maki, post-Unity Conference, and that used by Núñez Muley in his *Memorandum* are illuminating. As we have seen, Habiby’s discourse identifies himself with “the Arab sectors” of “Israel,” thus fully adopting the terminology of the conquerors. Núñez Muley uses terms like “Morisco” and “new converts” that come from the discourse of his colonizers, and yet he also and very persistently uses the term “natives,” (*naturales*), which demonstrates resistance to colonial discourse. It seems that the difference in identification and discourse depends largely on the situations in which each of these men spoke or wrote. Núñez Muley had led a life within the new regime and was, near the end of his life, being faced with sudden and dramatically less tolerant positions from the government; he must have felt he had little left to lose in speaking out. Habiby, meanwhile, was a young man in his late twenties at the time of the Nakba, so when he fully embraced this Zionist discourse in 1948, it was tied up in his own power grab within the NLL and his (and his comrades’) expectation of being rewarded for collaborating with a place in the political system of the new Zionist state:

Veteran NLL leaders now within the MAKI fold appreciated the significance of the party's concession to the Zionist consensus in Israel [about the occupation of the Galilee] but viewed it as a temporary setback. In an interview four decades later, Habibi explained their thinking that the only way Palestinians could effectively combat expulsions, which had continued throughout the spring and summer of 1949, and attain the equality that Israel's founding document had promised, was by accepting the application of Israeli law within the territories that the UN had allocated to their state. (Robinson 64).

In other words, Habiby later framed his adoption of Zionist discourse and stances as a tactical choice in the interest of being able to remain in the country, which according to Robinson, "would pay off in the short term" (64). After the shows of loyalty that Habiby and his peers were forced to make upon their entrance to Maki, they were then able in the 1950s and 60s to play an important role representing the Palestinians in Israel in their struggle for civil rights.

As Miḥjiz is quick to point out, Maki's resistance to Zionist policies existed only because it was *allowed* to exist. Far from demanding the right for Palestinians to choose their own political destiny (i.e., their right to self-determination), Maki limited itself to increasing Palestinians' (incredibly restricted) civil rights and fighting to end military rule. In the lead-up to the first Knesset elections of 1949, the Israeli government imposed military rule on the Arabs in the Galilee and elsewhere, restricting their movements and putting them under constant surveillance; "with that, the remaining Arabs were left 'in a political vacuum, without a national political organization. This left the political arena open to the Israeli Communist Party, the only party which the Zionist regime *allowed* to work and conduct its activities among the Arabs,' alongside Zionist parties like Mapam and Mapai" (61, my emphasis). The state made a calculated choice to use Maki as a pressure valve for Palestinians inside its borders, a valve which the state felt it could control. The repression of military rule and Maki's promises to fight certain aspects of it, "made the Arab masses [...] feel that the Communist Party, with its Arab members, was the only candidate for them, especially in comparison with the collaborators in the Arab Lists of the other Zionist parties, who were too cowardly to do what the communists were doing" (62).

On the other hand, within this limited framework, Maki certainly *did* advocate for the rights of Palestinians in Israel. Adina Hoffman describes how Habiby held forth at gatherings and as the editor of *al-Ittiḥād* "on everything from Ben Gurion's refusal to allow the refugees to return, to the cruelty of the military government, to the need to hold free and fair municipal



elections in Nazareth, the persecution of Communist Party members, the government's moves to prevent 'closeness between Arabs and Jews,' the confiscation of Arab-owned land, and the firing of teachers on political grounds" (256). She cites among her sources several Israeli police reports, as the police were monitoring Maki and indeed, Habiby (256-7). Still, we notice in his discourse from this time period a view of Palestinians and Jewish settlers as groups among whom "closeness" may naturally grow; in other words, an elision of the essentially colonial nature of the situation. This is visible in Habiby's early fiction as well, for example *The Pessoptimist*, serialized in *al-Jadīd* between 1972-74, which ends with a metaphorical workers' revolution in which Jewish and Palestinian workers join together to create a better future. As Robinson analyses Maki's efforts to bring justice to the perpetrators of the 1956 Kufir Qasim massacres, and its political successes afterwards, she notes that by limiting the scope of its protest in order to appeal to Jewish liberals, Maki made civil rights gains (e.g., the admission of Arabs into the Histadrut) and contributed to an end to military rule.

However, these perceived gains were in fact just a transition to more refined modes of domination and control: "[...] consensus had emerged that Israel could safely remove the *appearance* of discrimination and thus the stain on its global image, while maintaining the emergency regulations; transferring the powers of the regime to the civilian police; and inaugurating a new push to settle the Galilee" (159, 192). Thus, while Maki won specific civil rights battles, and its rallies and newspapers provided a platform for the growth of Palestinian resistance literature, "the very success of their struggle for civil equality [...] would make it more difficult for them to address the deeper structural questions of land, sovereignty, and the refugees" (193). The tactical turn to Maki's liberal Zionist brand of communism led Habiby and his comrades to win limited civil rights concessions for Palestinians in Israel, and it brought them personal status and power; yet ultimately, Habiby would express doubts and regrets about his involvement in politics. The parallels to the Granadan aristocratic collaborator class are quite clear: while collaboration was able to buy privileges for individuals and some limited civil rights for the minority community, collaboration and its discourse were ultimately unable to halt the oppression and expulsion of Granadan Moriscos. By winning the battles of temporary delays on repressive laws in the early 1500s, Núñez Muley accepted the legitimacy of Catholic rule, and left himself and his community vulnerable to its decision in 1567 to ignore its own precedent, and demand the erasure of Arabic language and culture.

We have seen in Núñez Muley and in Emile Habiby similar figures of writer / collaborator / representative. Both men achieved personal privilege and powerful political positions as a result of their collaboration with the conquering regimes, and they both made use of these regimes' official discourse in their public, political lives. They also both served as representatives and advocated to maintain certain limited civil right for their communities – in the case of the Moriscos, the right to preserve their language, clothing, privacy, and culture; in the case of the Palestinians, the right to some degree of free speech, freedom of movement, voting rights, and so on. Both Núñez Muley and Habiby were thus advocating a form of limited autonomy for their communities, while accepting their communities' overarching subordination to a regime that branded them as second-class citizens/subjects.

There is something intriguing about the idea of writers as both representatives of a community and as collaborators; it recalls the theorization of translation as betrayal. In this framework, the translator represents his or her community to the readers of another language, but also betrays the text through “collaboration” with the target language and culture. Through adjusting the original to fit more smoothly into some linguistic or cultural feature of the target language, the translator “betrays” the text (*aljamiado-Morisco* texts often try to *avoid* this and thus preserve the sanctity of Arabic by preserving as much of the original syntax and vocabulary as possible). Writers like Habiby and Núñez Muley, who were also political figures, constantly “betrayed” a more “native” or “anticolonial” discourse by employing the discourse of their colonizers; at the same time, it was their use of the colonizers' discourse which enabled them to represent their communities within those colonial regimes. Thus, for these minority communities, writing was not a simple matter of producing “resistance literature,” but rather it included also the “treachery” of translation into the colonizer's idiom, which was used to advocate for limited autonomy and rights for the minority within an oppressive colonial system.

#### IV. The Figure of the Collaborator in Morisco and Palestinian Literature

Apart from producing literature, collaborators also figure as characters within Morisco and Palestinian literature. Collaborators both shaped and were *shaped by* the discourse of these communities. As Kanafani indicates in *Resistance Literature*, some early popular songs and poems from the post-Nakba period were used to publicly shame and deter people from

collaborating, as in a popular song which derided members of the “Arab lists” (specifically Eshkol’s “*ma’rakh*”) in the 1965 Knesset elections:

What am I looking at? Oh my! / What wonders and perfection!  
See the knights of the Ma’rakh. / They became confused, and made their boss confused.  
Look at Seif and look at Diyāb: / wood in the shape of representatives [MKs].  
With Jaber and ‘Awaḍ and Nakhleh, / and Salīm and the rest of their gang,  
All await their boss, / Eshkol, to move their hand.  
Look, O brothers, / at the wonders of the end of time!  
Men who sympathize / with the oppressor over the oppressed.  
Right away, we should slap / the clowns of Levi Eshkol.

(Qtd. *Adab al-Muqāwamah* 22; my translation)

This is an example of folkloristic poetry being used to mold social behavior, to discourage collaborators and mobilize resistance (in this case, through voting for non-Arab List candidates or boycotting elections), by calling out specific names and drawing upon traditional tropes of honor in order to shame the collaborators. Kanafani’s *Umm Sa’ad*, written outside of occupied Palestine the late 1960s, at a time when armed resistance was gaining strength, makes a similar move of presenting a collaborationist *mukhtār* as a dishonorable character, and also a risible one; the never-corruptible and salt-of-the-Earth Umm Sa’ad turns away his offers of assistance by deriding and laughing at him, and instead places her faith in the armed resistance. While *Umm Sa’ad* does not belong to the body of literature produced by Palestinians in Israel, it is notable for one of the earlier literary depictions within Palestinian literature as a whole of the figure of the collaborator.

However, Morisco writers/copyists and Palestinian authors in Israel did not present a monolithically negative image of collaborators. One fascinating example from the corpus of *aljamiado-morisco* literature can be seen in the work of the Mancebo de Arévalo. While miscellanies abound in *morisco-aljamiado* literature, those produced by the Mancebo are unique in several ways. Not only did the Mancebo reflect his own unique vocabulary and authorial voice, but he also inserted accounts of his personal experience into the text at many points, while maintaining his (necessary) anonymity. The Mancebo begins his *Tafsira*, one of three manuscripts traced back to him, with an account of the secret meeting in Zaragoza of more than twenty crypto-Muslim ‘*alimes* (scholars), all debating on what course of action they should take

to best preserve Islam in their communities. It was at this conference that they charged the Mancebo with composing a text that would assist their crypto-Muslim communities by laying out basic tenants and practices of the faith, for people who spoke Romance in their daily lives and were no longer permitted to openly practice or study Islam (Narvez Cordova 19-20). The Mancebo’s *Tafsira* and *Breve Compendio* relate, among many folios devoted to practical devotional instruction, detailed accounts of his travels across Spain and his meetings with an entire network of Morisco (and even Jewish *converso*) figures. Among these figures are several members of the old Granadan aristocracy: people who were allowed to continue living in relative peace and affluence due to their collaboration with the Catholic conquerors. Unlike Kanafani or the composers of the popular chant cited above, however, the Mancebo sees in these characters a valuable source of Islamic knowledge, and his portrayal of them, while never hiding the collaboration of some, is compassionate, and focuses on their stories and their value to him as teachers.

During the Mancebo’s travels in Granada, he meets with at least three figures from the old Nasrid aristocracy. The Mora de beda, who was 93 years old at the time of the Mancebo’s visit, “had been an influential woman in [teaching] Qur’anic materials during the time of the Nasrid kings in Granada,” and she passes on the Mancebo some of her Islamic knowledge, before recommending that he visit a relative of hers, Yuse Banegas (Narvez Cordova 27). According to the Mancebo, in his *Sumario*, the Mora describes Yuse as “un baron muy ingular... All e u morada en la Kuweta de la Ig[u]era, una legwa de Granada, a donde tiyene una alkerya la ma adornada ke ay en todos los lmites deta nuwetra bega” / “a very singular gentleman... His home is over there, in the Cuesta de la Higuera, a league from Granada, where he has the most decorated [wealthy] farmstead within the limits of our entire Vega” (qtd. 28; my translation). This description of wealth, as well as his relationship with the Mora (who seems to have enjoyed some status during the Nasrid period), both square with Harvey’s suggestion in his 1956 article on this particular passage of the *Sumario*, that Yuse Banegas may have belonged to the collaborationist Venegas family. As Harvey recounts it,

[...] a certain Abu-l-Qasim Venegas formed a ‘pacifist group’ [...] in Granada during the final period of the wars of the Reconquest. This ‘alguacil’ [legal official] had an important role in the surrender of the city, by means of the known capitulations. It appears that the help that he gave the Catholic Monarchs earned him special favors on the part of the King, who awarded him a letter of safe conduct confirming him in the exercise of his civil liberties. (“Yuse Banegas” 297-8, my translation)

Harvey's 1956 transcription of the passage at hand is longer than the abridged version cited by Narváez Córdoba above; in it, the Mancebo notes that Yuse's farm, at the time of his visit, was being cultivated and administered by "more than a hundred" workers (qtd. "Yuse Banegas" 300). It seems, then, that Abu-l-Qasim's collaboration, which played a role in the surrender of Granada, paved the way for his family members to live in relative wealth and comfort after conquest, even at a time that was increasingly difficult for other Granadans. Certainly, although Yuse maintained Islamic books, he would not have been allowed to flaunt them or display them openly, and the Mora de Úbeda seems likewise to have retreated into seclusion in reaction to the harsh policies imposed upon Granadan Muslims: "as the times were so harsh for the Muslims, this Moor withdrew into the shadow of her misfortune, weeping for the fall of the Muslims" (qtd. Narváez Córdoba 25; my translation). In other words, it appears that his relative's actions and more pointedly, the safe conduct granted by King Ferdinand, allowed Yuse Banegas to live in relative safety and comfort; yet he and his friend/relative the Mora de Úbeda were intensely aware of the coming fate of the Granadan Muslims.

The Mancebo's account of his visit with Yuse Banegas is sympathetic, as the Mancebo views and presents Yuse in the role of teacher and elder who can pass on Islamic knowledge to him, as well as knowledge of a glorious lost homeland (the Mancebo absolutely mythologizes al-Andalus in his writings as a lost paradise with "rivers of honey") (40). The Mancebo writes that upon their meeting, Yuse struck him as "a singular and noble gentleman," and that after the first few days of his visit, Yuse produced a Qur'an and asked the Mancebo to read two *hizbs*, while Yuse corrected his reading: "He did not cease to correct me [...] nor did I mind being corrected" (qtd. "Yuse Banegas" 300; my translation). The Mancebo recalls his time of study with Yuse very positively, writing,

Yo eštube en š(u) konpaniya doš lunaš, i [...] ^yamás tube barón de tan lindo entendimiyento. No le pude ^yuzgar en dicho ni en fecho, mas [...] anađibat (sic; léase: i nađi bi tan) šuwelto en departir i leer el alqurén i todo tawsir arábigo i yebarayiko. Teniya la bos muy doñegil y šu hi^ya no le seme^yaba y era muy dokta, šabiya todo el alqurén de koro, iyasiya biđa šalehal. [...] I kuwando me despedí de padre y hi^ya, no faltó lloro por todaš parteš. (Qtd. "Yuse Banegas" 302)

I was in his company for two moons, and [...] I never saw a man of such beautiful understanding. I could not judge him in word nor in act, but rather [...] I never saw anyone so skillful in commentary and reading of the Qur'an and of all Arabic and Hebrew exegesis. He had a very majestic voice and his daughter did not resemble him,

and was very knowledgeable, she knew all of the Qur'an by heart, and lived a saintly life. [...] And when I bade goodbye to father and daughter, there was no lack of tears on all sides. (My translation)

As we see here, Yuse is presented as a fatherly figure, (rather than the beneficiary of his relative's collaboration), and a diligent and kindly teacher. His possession of a Qur'an and of any other Arabic or Hebrew books was most certainly facilitated by his rural location and his position of privilege as an aristocrat in Granadan (settler) society.

The Mancebo does not only describe Yuse as a teacher of Islamic knowledge; rather, he shows a deep empathy for Yuse when the latter sits down with him and recounts his memories of the fall of Granada, and his worries for the future of Spanish Islam. Yuse describes how his own personal loss, as well as his shame at seeing the violation and desecration of societal norms protecting women, left him an "orphan," deprived of his family and society:

Hi^yo, no lo inoro ke de laš cošaš de Granada ešté basiyo tu entendimiyento; i ke yo loš memoreno no te ešpanteš, porke no ay momento ke no še rreberbera dentro de mi korazón, i no ay rato ni ora ke no še rrašg[u]en miš entrañaš... nadi lloró kon tanta desbentura komo loš hi^yoš de Granada. No dubdeš mi dicho, por šer yo uno de elloš, i šer teštigo de bišta, ke bí por miš o^yoš deškarnesidaš todaš laš nobles damaš, anší biwdaš komo kašađaš; i bi bender en pública almoneđa máš de trešiyentaš donselláš... Yo perdí tereš hi^yoš baroneš i todoš muriyeron en defešsa del addīn y perdí doš i^yaš i mi muyer yešta šola hi^ya ke tengo kedó para mi konšuwelo, ke era de šiyete mešeš. I yo kedé guwérfano... (qtd. Narváez Córdoba 28)

Son, I do not ignore that your knowledge is empty of the events of Granada; and don't be startled that I recall them, because there is no moment that does not reverberate in my heart, and there is no moment in which my entrails are not ripped apart... No one has cried from such misfortune as the children of Granada. Do not doubt my words, for I was one of them and I was an eyewitness: I saw with my own eyes all the noble ladies mocked, widows and married women alike; and I saw more than three hundred maidens sold at public auction... I lost three sons: all died in defense of the religion [i.e., Islam] and I lost two daughters and my wife, and this only daughter that I have, remained to console me, as she was seven months old. And I was left an orphan... (My translation)

This account of the fall of Granada shows Yuse's deep personal loss of his wife and children, as well as the general distress and humiliation of observing his entire social world collapse around his ears, many of its members being sold into slavery. The Mancebo's sympathy is clear when he, as a narrator, either remembers or else inserts vivid descriptions of Yuse's emotional distress, such as "there is no moment that does not reverberate in my heart," and "there is no moment in which my entrails are not ripped apart." This language is characteristic of the Mancebo's

authorial “creative use of turns of phrase” (85), and here it pulls the reader into Yuse’s emotional world and creates empathy for his suffering, as member of a collaborationist aristocratic family whose collaboration led to the traumatic destruction of Yuse’s social and familial world.

The Mancebo also proves himself sympathetic in his recounting of Yuse’s worries for the future of Islam in Spain:

Hi<sup>^</sup>yo, yo no lloro lo pašado puweš a ello no ay rretornadda, pero lloro lo ke tú berás si aš bida, i atiyendeš en ešta tiyerra, yen ešta Išla de España... aún šerá nuweštoro addin tan menoškabado ke dirán laš <sup>^</sup>yenteš: ¿A dónde še fuwe nuweštoro peregonar? ¿Ké se hizo el addin de nuweštoroš pašadoš?... todo será kurudeza y-amargura... serán loš muslimes a par de loš krištiyanoš, ke no rreušarán šuš tara<sup>^</sup>yeš ni eškibarán šuš man<sup>^</sup>yareš. Peleg[u]e a šu bondad ke ayan eškibo de šuš obraš, i ke no atiyendan a šu ley kon šuš korazoneš. Yo no keriya alkanzar taleš lloroš... ši aora en tan berebe ešpasiyo pareze ke ya noš šuštentamoš de karreo, ¿ké harán kuwando bengan las poštreraš otoñadaš?... ši los padreš aminguwan el addin, ¿komo lo enšalarán loš choznoš? Ši el rrey de la konkišta no guwarda fidelidad, ¿ké aguwardamoš de šuš šuzešoreš? (qtd. Narváez Córdoba 28)

Son, I do not cry for the past, since there is no return to it, but I cry for what you will see if you have life and if you remain in this land and this Isle of Spain... our religion will be so diminished, that people will say, Where has our proclamation [call to prayer] gone? What has happened to the religion of our ancestors? ... Everything will be harshness and bitterness... Muslims will be as Christians; they will not refuse their clothing nor will they avoid their food. God willing, they avoid their acts and do not follow their religion in their hearts. I do not want to [live to] reach such weeping... If now, in such a short space of time it appears we are bearing this weight, what will they do when the final days [i.e., the Day of Judgment] come? If the parents diminish in their faith, how will their great great grandchildren praise it? If the king of the conquest does not keep faith [i.e., honor the Articles of Capitulation], what can we hope for from his successors? (My translation)

Here again, the Mancebo’s account shows great empathy for Yuse, as Yuse in this passage himself shows anxiety for devout Muslims like the Mancebo who will have to attempt to preserve a religious community which is both under attack and on the wane. Yuse comes across in this passage from the *Sumario* as a paternal figure (he always refers to the Mancebo as “hijo,” i.e., “son”) who has suffered greatly at the hands of the Catholic monarchs, and also clearly benefited from their protection. He is a sympathetic character in part because of the pain of his past, which he openly shares, and in part because of his concerns for the Mancebo and the Mancebo’s presumptive crypto-Muslim audience. As in the previous passage, the Mancebo presents Yuse’s words eloquently, using parallelism to reinforce the strength of Yuse’s pessimistic predictions.

A second collaborator who appears in the Mancebo's work is 'Alī Šarmiyento, who we learn is known to both Yuse and the Mora de Úbeda, all three making up points in the secret network of Islamic teachers whom the Mancebo visits (58). An account of 'Alī appears in the *Breve compendio*, recounting how the Mancebo and two companions "left Granada to visit this honorable 'alim, who had been a *catedrático*<sup>18</sup> in Granada and a man of great fame" (qtd. Harvey "Un manuscrito" 72, my translation). Upon meeting, 'Alī greets the three companions with "much honor," and the Mancebo notes that he "was very rich, and had sons and daughters who were married" (qtd. "Un manuscrito" 72, my translation). The Mancebo explains that 'Alī owned a "very splendid" letter of safe conduct from King Ferdinand, and then goes on to transcribe the text of the letter (which he presumably first had to translate from Latin). The text includes the following passage, which grants 'Alī and his descendants religious liberty in exchange for "favours":

[...] ke por ešta rreal data puede gozar i goze 'Alī Šarmiyento, él i todoš loš de šu ^yenealoya, de akaella libertad i farankiya ke gozaron šuš pašadoš i de la ke el dīcho Alī Šarmiyento le dará kontento, porke fue muy obediante i berdadero a šu úniko rrey, i no menoš fidelidad ademoš hallado en él en košaš a noš rrešpondiyenteš, i por šu buena meresida le damoš franka i libre libertad por todoš nueštoroš potentadoš, aší por tiyerra komo por mar, para bibir i pašar šin ningun impedimiyento... (qtd. "Un manuscrito" 72).

That through this royal document, Ali Sarmiento, and all members of his lineage, may and do enjoy that liberty and freedom<sup>19</sup> that his forebears enjoyed and which we are pleased to grant to the said Ali Sarmiento, because he was very obedient and true to his only king, and we have found no less faithfulness in matters concerning us, and as he is much deserving, we give him free<sup>20</sup> liberty in all of our territories, on land and on sea, to live and travel without impediment... (my translation)

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<sup>18</sup> *Catedrático* generally means professor; however, Harvey in his book *Muslims in Spain* says that in this particular context, "I interpret [catedrático] to mean *imam* or perhaps *khatib* in the city – the *cátedra* being, in my opinion, the minbar or pulpit of the mosque" (38). Narváez Córdoba points out in her framing of this passage that the Mora de Úbeda refers to 'Alī as a *nahwi*, which in the Morisco/Mancebian context, Narváez Córdoba defines as "philologic commentator on Qur'an" (58).

<sup>19</sup> The *Glosario de voces aljamiados-moriscos* does not contain the exact term "farankiya," but defines the related term "farankeza" as "generosidad" ("generosity") (300). Referring to the *Real academia española (RAE)*'s online database of early modern and modern Spanish dictionaries, the *Nuevo tesoro lexicográfico de la lengua española (NTLLE)*, I found that although the 1791 *Academia usual*'s definition of "franquía" did not fit the above quote, "franqueza" and "franquicia" were both defined as "libertad, exención" (freedom, exemption), which seems like a good fit in this context.

<sup>20</sup> The *Glosario de voces aljamiados-moriscos* defines "franko/a" as "exento" ("exempt"); I think this meaning is already conveyed here in the word "free" (from "libre") (300).



The letter of safe conduct specifies not only the privilege of free travel for ‘Alī (note that the Mancebo, who had no such letter, seems to have stuck to inland provinces on his journeys across Spain, as coastal territories would have been prohibited to Castilian Moriscos), but also specifies the protection of his wealth and property, and his freedom to observe “whatever religion or law is his own volition” (qtd. “Un manuscrito” 73; my translation). These copious privileges, the letter states, are granted in return for ‘Alī’s great “obedience” to the Catholic Monarchs, language which implies extensive services as a collaborator. The letter is dated 1499, and Harvey has proposed (and Narváez Córdoba concurs) that “‘Alī may have served as ‘informant’ or spy for the Christians” (Narváez Córdoba 59). However, while copying out the entire safe conduct and noting ‘Alī’s wealth, the Mancebo’s governing emotion seems to be admiration, more than any reproach – remember he calls the letter “very splendid,” and he describes ‘Alī positively as a learned and wealthy man; he is, after all, visiting him in his capacity as crypto-Muslim student in search of Islamic knowledge.

In his role as teacher, ‘Alī permitted the Mancebo and his companions to read from “his books and *tafsirs*, which were not few” (qtd. “Un manuscrito” 73; my translation), and in addition, “he did us a particular favor, and one Friday [...] he stood up in a pulpit in his house, and with the same tunic [...] that he used to wear when he gave the blessing to the monarchs of Granada on *‘eid* days or other designated days, and in this way he began to teach us” (qtd. 73-74, my translation). This in itself is a very pathetic and moving scene: ‘Ali, who has performed questionable work for the conquering monarchs, in exchange for his own religious freedom and civil liberties, and has now reached over 100 years old, is performing the actions of his glory days in Nasrid Granada in a kind of empty pantomime, dressed up in the now powerless garments of his former office. His audience now, rather than kings, is just three young men, whose Islamic learning is severely restricted by the laws imposed by the Catholic Monarchs whom ‘Ali served so faithfully. Ali’s court regalia is “pathetically obsolete,” and there is something deeply sad about the image of the centenarian standing before three young men as if he were addressing the Nasrid court: “Beloved children, faithful Muslims...” (Narváez Córdoba 60; Mancebo qtd. “Un manuscrito” 74; my translations).

In other words, the Mancebo, while exclaiming his own admiration and gratitude for ‘Alī’s instruction, also shows the tragi-comic element to his situation. Although he may not have intended this scene to be either funny or sad, it certainly comes across as such to readers

removed from the situation. As a Morisco living under Catholic rule, however, the Mancebo “knows himself privileged to be able to attend the final vestiges of Islam in Spain,” and it is this gratitude which dominates his written presentation of the scene, as he closes the scene by praising ‘Ali’s “high speech” (Narváez Córdoba 60; Mancebo qtd. “Un manuscrito” 74; my translations). In sum, while faithfully documenting the letter testifying to ‘Ali’s collaboration, the Mancebo seems to view it as extraordinary, and appears to admire the freedom of religion (and possibly the wealth and other civil liberties) that it grants ‘Ali. The Mancebo does not elide ‘Ali’s collaboration, but rather makes it clear that what he is here for is ‘Ali’s great value as a teacher of Islamic knowledge, and one of the last remnants of a lost golden age. His portrayals of ‘Ali and Yuse are deeply sympathetic, focusing as they do on these men as representative of their community in the loss they have suffered and in their anxiety for the future of Spanish Islam.

The Mancebo himself as a crypto-Muslim was forced to lead a double life; in addition to his Morisco pseudonym, he certainly had a public, Christian name (Harvey postulates that he may have been Augustín de Ribera, a young Morisco millenarian “prophet” from Arevalo who died in Inquisition custody in 1540; *Muslims in Spain* 171). We see certain “slips” in his *aljamiado* writing, in which his forcible Christian indoctrination seems to have influenced him involuntarily, e.g., perhaps in his veneration of chastity and virginity (Narváez Córdoba 89). Nevertheless, he is clearly passionate about his cause. Perhaps the Mancebo’s own (forced) hybridity enhanced his compassion for men like Yuse and ‘Ali. Certainly, the harshness of his circumstances meant that he was grateful for Islamic instruction from any and all quarters, whether that be the magician and midwife Nuzayta Kalderán, the ethical sayings of Thomas Kempis, or the instruction of these aristocratic Granadan collaborators.

In the Palestinian context, as we have seen, certain portrayals of collaborators as “clowns” without honor served the social function of deterring collaboration; we have seen how this was employed by popular chants in the Galilee during the mid ‘sixties Knesset elections against candidates of the Arab Lists. However, perhaps the most in-depth examination of collaboration, and one which shares certain elements of compassion and tragicomedy with the Mancebo, is Emile Habiby’s novel, *The Pessoptimist*. It was serialized in *al-Jadīd* between 1972-4, following the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967. And as we have discussed above, Habiby himself faced criticism from his political opponents for his own role as a collaborator in the Nakba and later as someone working within the system of Zionist

government, without extending his scope for activism beyond limited civil rights to actual self-determination. *The Pessoptimist*, then, is a fascinating look at Habiby's own creative reflections on collaboration, and on the desperate situation of his community.

The character of Saeed is that of a tragicomic fool; spared from death in 1948 by a donkey that walked in front of him and took a bullet, Saeed recounts how his life was saved and he was reborn, "due to the munificence of an ass" (Habiby trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 6). *The Pessoptimist* draws on characters ranging from the Arabic *Juha*<sup>21</sup>, who appears in folktales as a "clever fool," to various allusions and stylistic sensibilities (including its title) drawn from Voltaire's *Candide*, including a chapter repudiating accusations of "copying" *Candide* by stating "Don't blame me for that. Blame our way of life that hasn't changed since Voltaire's day, except that El Dorado has now come to exist on this planet [i.e., the "paradise" of the State of Israel]" (72). As with Núñez Muley, then, we see Habiby frequently resorting to satire to serve up political criticism.

After surviving through the grace of "an ass" and returning to Palestine/Israel through the help of his sister's lover (both thoroughly dishonorable actions), Saeed proceeds to offer himself up as a collaborator for the state, as his father was before him. The first section of the novel establishes Saeed's lack of honor or dignity, his selfishness, and the beginnings of his work as a collaborator. The second book recounts his marriage to a woman who, while also a 48 Palestinian, seems quite as isolated as Saeed himself, and the prevailing mood is one of fear, mistrust, and suppression of speech. Saeed and his wife Bāqiyah<sup>22</sup> name their son Walā' ("obedience") and raise him to "watch what you say" and not trust anyone (Habiby 151, my translation). Driven to desperation by this untenable lifestyle, Walā' rebels and takes up arms against the state; his mother joins him and in a surreal scene, they disappear into the sea. In this way, Saeed once again resorts to fantasy as an escape from a reality that has become unbearable for him.

In the third and final book, Saeed, in an overabundance of enthusiasm to demonstrate his loyalty to the State of Israel, raises a white flag during the 1967 war, on the roof of his house in

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<sup>21</sup> Habiby used the penname *Juhayna* (the name of one of his daughters) in most of his satirical weekly articles in *al-Itihād*; it seems he had long been considering the role of satire and the character of the fool in political activism

<sup>22</sup> Bāqiyah literally means "remaining" or "she who remains"; the character is the only member of her family to remain in Israel after 1948, and she embodies an ideology of steadfastness (*ṣumūd*) and permanence at any cost, until her son Walā' inspires her to take up arms with him in an act of direct, active resistance.

Haifa, which is taken as an act of rebellion by the State, and Saeed is thrown in prison with a Palestinian *fidā'iy* his namesake, from “outside.” The *fidā'iy*, not knowing Saeed, mistakes him for another freedom fighter, and addresses him as “father” – in doing so, he transforms the jail cell into a paradise, by restoring to Saeed the honor and community connection that he had lost as a collaborator: “I became his father. I became his brother [...] I was moved by a pride which had not moved me ever since Yu’ād [Saeed’s exiled beloved] had cried, ‘This is my husband!’” (Habiby 175; my translation). Prison restores Saeed to his Palestinian community and identity, and after his release, he leaves his collaboration work and shuns politics, becoming a seller of watermelons<sup>23</sup>. He is still in a bind, as the state continues to monitor him, and he continues too cowardly or too weak for any outright resistance, which leads him in the end to his spot sitting on a *khazūq*,<sup>24</sup> too rebellious to ally himself with Israel, too jaded to join the *fidā'iyīn*, and too cowardly to join the (communist) workers’ revolution; in the end, he is spirited away to safety by his “alien” friends. The following chapter indicating that Saeed’s letters to the narrator had been sent from a mental institution implies that this final fantastical escape may signify Saeed’s madness, which was his only remaining coping mechanism given the difficulty of his situation.

It is possible to interpret the character of Saeed as a stand-in for the Palestinian community in Israel as a whole after 1948, as Bashir Abu Manneh does quite convincingly. Abu-Manneh describes the actions and attitudes of 48 Palestinians as “as complicated and at times as contradictory as the circumstances that shaped them: they fought and submitted; resisted and collaborated; lived in fear and waited in anticipation” (97). He refers to the internal contradictions of the Israeli “liberal settler state” delineated by Shira Robinson and discussed above, i.e., that the state would attempt to grant Palestinians the trappings of citizenship while simultaneously denying them any access to the rights and benefits of that citizenship. And he argues that this pile of contradictions laid on 48 Palestinians by the state in turn led to their own attitude “not entirely to change the existing power structure, rather to minimize its negative consequences and to challenge its legitimizing ideology” (Ahmad Sa’di, qtd. 97). This attitude is what characterized the elevation of *ṣumūd*, or steadfastness, over armed conflict of the type advocated by Kanafani on the outside. In other words, Abu Manneh argues, their attitude was

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<sup>23</sup> A symbol of Palestinian nationalism, whose red, white, black and green color made them a stand-in for the Palestinian flag when Israeli authorities attempted to ban the display of even its colors

<sup>24</sup> a kind of stake used during the Ottoman period to execute people by impaling them

that of Saeed the Pessoptimist, awaiting his *mahdī* or savior in the form of the aliens from outer space, since he in his own weakened position was unable to save himself (98). We can see many parallels to the Moriscos here, both in their resistance to repressive laws (which they successfully delayed on many occasions by negotiating large tax payments as bribes), their steadfast preservation of their own culture through their secret writings and gatherings, and their hope for external salvation, either from “the Turks,” or through divine salvation at the Day of Judgment.

Read as national allegory for the 48 Palestinians, Saeed proves to the end unable to save himself, other than through the redemptive act of “writing as self-saving,” as when his alien friend encourages him to “keep writing to your friend” (Abu-Manneh 102; Habiby 108, my translation). Habiby begins *The Pessoptimist* with Samīḥ al-Qāsim’s poem, “Epilogue,” which urges its audience, “Don’t wait still more, don’t wait! / Now, off with your sleep-clothes / And to yourselves compose / Those letters you anticipate!” (qtd. Abu-Manneh 102). As Abu-Manneh sees it, “Saeed writes himself back into being, retrieving his lost agency and overpowered selfhood” (103). Saeed, like the Moriscos, is able to control his own self-presentation through a unique, hybrid writing style utterly his own, which is characterized by a stylistic hodgepodge of influences from East and West. Saeed’s *aljamiado*, while not literal, relies on cultural references to medieval Islamic heroes like al-Zāhir Baybars, and to a European colonial legacy, from Candide to Napoleon to the British. *The Pessoptimist* combines what Esmail Nashif designates as local, Islamic, and colonial influences on Palestinian writing; in doing so, it creates a hybrid language that is uniquely representative of the Palestinian community in Israel.

While Abu-Manneh reads *The Pessoptimist* as national allegory, Khudūr Mihjiz reads it instead as a crypto-autobiography of Habiby himself. Mihjiz bases this hypothesis on his own reading of *The Pessoptimist*, and on a detailed archival study of Habiby’s involvement in the Nakba and his discourse and actions as a Communist politician after 1948, discussed above. While Habiby played an important role in advocating for Palestinian civil rights in Israel during the 50s and 60s, he also accepted the central Zionist demand of a Jewish state in Palestine, thus eliding the colonial nature of the situation; his class reading of the conflict meant that he failed to deal head-on with the racialized, colonial core of Zionist ideology. Thus, the solution that he presents at the end of *Saeed*, in which a worker calls for Saeed to join his class revolution with Jewish and Palestinian workers side by side, seems like an ideological imposition on an otherwise often painfully honest work of fiction. The book is obviously never free of Habiby’s

communist ideology; it is sprinkled with allusions to current events that the Israeli Communist Party was trying to bring to light, and it is also full of Saeed's references to his collaborationist work trying to undermine the Communists (Habiby was speaking from experience here, as *al-Ittihād* had faced closures and arrests, and Habiby was himself monitored constantly by Israeli police recording the speeches he made at the rallies he participated in) (Hoffman 226, 256). However, the ending in particular reflects Habiby's advocacy of a worker's revolution, which in later years he would abandon in his fiction (e.g., *Ikhtayyi*, *Sarāya Bint al-Ghūl*) as the racial/colonial divide of Israeli society became clearer and more firmly cemented. In *Sarāya Bint al-Ghūl*, for example, which Habiby wrote in the late 1980s and was published in 1991, he turns to a recovery of repressed Palestinian *memory* as the only recourse left at that point. *The Pessoptimist* however, ultimately ends with a call to a workers' revolution and Saeed's own flight into madness/fantasy.

Reading the book as national allegory, as Abu-Manneh does, one would infer from this that in addition to being a call to write, it is also an admission that Palestinians in Israel are still waiting upon external salvation, and that the intolerable conditions of their wait may lead to all sorts of (possibly maladaptive) individual coping mechanisms, whether those be a workers' revolt, armed revolt, or madness. The important issue here is that all the figures Saeed sees passing before him while he is suspended on his *khazūq* are *individuals*, making their own individual choices. The community is still divided among itself. A reading of the *Pessoptimist* as crypto-autobiography, on the other hand, would interpret this ending as indicating the great guilt that Habiby feels for his own collaboration during and after the Nakba, and a feeling that he lacks options other than writing, using *The Pessoptimist's* unique combination of testimony and fantasy. The future, this reading would imply, is in the hands of those other than Habiby (and by extension, Maki). Although Saeed ultimately concludes in his conversation with the second Yu'ād that her brother the *fidā'iy* is deluded, and that Palestine can never be "restored" to what it was, Habiby as author does not give up on the idea of using writing as a tool to imagine possible futures. In Mihjiz's reading, such a future would exclude Saeed-as-Habiby, who was forced to resort to fantasy, after he could no longer bear the weight of his own actions. Saeed's actions as a collaborator were, after all, what had isolated him from his community, and instilled him with the fear and paranoia that kept him isolated even after his partial redemption in prison.

It is important to note that in portraying this collaborator figure, Habiby seems ultimately sympathetic with Saeed's weakness and his escapes into fantasy. On the one hand, the "friend" from outer space is quite harsh when he lectures Saeed:

This is the way you always are. When you can no longer endure your misery, yet you cannot bear to pay the high price you know is needed to change it, you come to me for help. But I see what other people do and the price they pay, allowing no one to squeeze them into one of these tunnels, and then I become furious with you. What is it you lack? Is there any one of you lacking a life he can offer, or lacking a death to make him fear for his life? (Qtd. Abu-Manneh 110)

However, as Abu-Manneh points out, "Habiby shies away from the creature's harsh criticism, and from blaming the victims for their weakness and their urge to fantasy" (110). While Habiby distinguishes between the "self-negating imagination" of escapist fantasy, and the "self-affirming imagination" of writing letters testifying to one's experience, "[...] the novel rejects neither. For Habiby, one is never completely defeated or dehumanized so long as the will to imagination exists" (110). In other words, Habiby shows for himself (if you follow Mihjiz's reading) and his community (if you follow Abu-Manneh's) a similar compassion to that shown by the Mancebo de Arévalo toward Ali Sarmiento and Yuse Banegas. While some of the collaborator's acts are clearly displayed as cowardly and despicable, there is a stating of facts as facts, and a clear hope that self-recognition may help bring about redemption.

I will add just one more note that seems to support Mihjiz's reading of *The Pessoptimist* as a disguised autobiography. We know from Mihjiz and Mana's histories of the Palestinian Communists and their role in the Nakba that Habiby, like Saeed, returned to Palestine from Lebanon under the auspices of the Israeli government, and that Habiby and his party's propaganda against the Egyptian army, for example, was viewed by Israelis and Palestinians alike as collaboration. In a series of interviews filmed near the end of Habiby's life, he was asked about a particular scene in *The Pessoptimist*. This scene establishes Saeed's complicity in the Nakba, as it takes place during 1948 and situates Saeed as a passive witness to a scene of Israeli dispossession of Palestinians. Saeed is riding in the back of the military governor's jeep, just after having put himself at the Israelis' disposal as a collaborator, and the governor stops the jeep when he sees a Palestinian woman and child crouching in a field of sesame stalks. She is from the evicted village of Birweh, she tells the governor, and readers would immediately think of the child as the young Mahmoud Darwish, who was born in Birweh in 1941. The governor points his

gun at the child's head and tells the mother to get up and walk "anywhere you like in the east," adding that if he sees she's returned, he won't spare them (Habiby trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 15). As the mother and child walk towards the horizon, "...the further [they went...], the taller they grew. By the time they merged with their own shadows in the sinking sun they had become bigger than the plain of Acre itself" (15).

Habiby in this scene uses surrealism and fantasy to show the permanence of the Nakba's trauma, and of the memory of the refugees. However, this may have been false comfort. When asked near the end of his life about this scene, he responded, "that too happened [to me]," and when asked why he (represented by Saeed in the scene) had been so paralyzed and failed to intervene to save the woman and child, he responded, "Out of political responsibility...bah [*tuz*]!" (qtd. Abu-Manneh 105). It seems then, that near the end of his life, Habiby was still wracked by guilt for his own collaboration, which the act of writing *The Pessoptimist* did not fully assuage. And this would explain why Habiby uses the alien as a stand-in for voices like those of Mihjiz, asking what the collaborator lacks, that he does not resist more resolutely. It also clarifies why Habiby as author does not lay too much blame at the feet of Saeed for the latter's weakness and collaboration, instead empathizing with his paralyzing fear and weakness, and encouraging him to speak in order to preserve his last trace of humanity (and not turn into "a cat that meows," as Saeed puts it at one point, expressing the dehumanizing effect of Israeli surveillance and censorship on 48 Palestinians; Habiby trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 76).

In sum, then, we have seen in the work of the Mancebo de Arévalo and of Emile Habiby portrayals of collaborators that demonstrate a great amount of empathy, allowing these collaborators to present their testimony, in the case of Yuse Banegas, or their crypto-testimony, as in the case of Habiby and the scene of the Palestinian mother in the sesame field. These figures express emotions of loss and guilt, as they also grapple with their own uncertainty and pessimism about the future: both the Pessoptimist and the elderly Yuse Banegas are relieved to consign the troubling future to others to deal with. Since the Morisco and 48 Palestinian communities were so compromised already by their situations, forced to collaborate or make shows of submission in many instances where they may have wished to do otherwise, the images of collaborators that we see in this literature, like the political stances and tactics of these communities, are mixed. Palestinians in Israel wrote poems ridiculing and discouraging collaborators, and they also produced representations like *The Pessoptimist*, which both blame



the collaborators and sympathize with them, in recognition that their situation is emblematic of that of the author and/or community.

The Mancebo's accounts of Ali Sarmiento and Yuse Banegas, like Saeed, rely on hope in an outside savior for "the liberation of this land," which he believes is imminent (qtd. Narváez Córdova 20). If we are to believe Harvey's hypothesis that the Mancebo was in fact Augustín Ribera, then we know that he held millenarian views common among many Moriscos, and laid his hope in divine salvation. It is also possible that he, like the Granadan rebels of the 1560s, hoped for Ottoman military aid. In any case, his portrayal of Ali and Yuse, while not denying their collaboration, is too concerned with the task at hand (preserving what is left of Spanish Islam) and too grateful for their Islamic knowledge, to take time off to harangue Ali and Yuse for their collaboration with the Catholic monarchs. If the Mancebo did indeed view the Day of Judgment as imminent, then the preservation of an Islamic community in Spain would have been a vital matter trumping all others – it would allow them to play a special role on the Day of Judgment and be rewarded by God for their suffering. Moriscos and 48 Palestinians ultimately demonstrated through their literature a wide range of attitudes towards collaboration, always acknowledging it as an inevitable aspect of their colonized condition. Collaborator characters in these texts, while resorting to passive resistance or *ṣumūd*, are often forced to embrace supernatural solutions or even madness or death, to make their patient waiting bearable.

## V. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the concept of "resistance literature" in relation to the crypto-Muslims of sixteenth-century Spain, and the Palestinian community in Israel in the decades following the Nakba. I contend that "resistance literature" is a misnomer in the context of these occupied populations, as their colonized condition creates a hybrid literature which reflects a spectrum of resistance and collaboration, the two often occurring simultaneously, or by means of one another. I have discussed this mixed literature as being a direct response to the contradictory nature of colonial rule, which both sought to incorporate new minority populations, and to separate and marginalize them. We have discussed the secret hand-copying of literature and reliance on oral recitation as responses to censorship, while recognizing that due to Israel's decision to appropriate and use formal Arabic as a means of control, Palestinians in Israel were never forced to produce their own literal equivalent of the Moriscos' *aljamiado* text. We have

also discussed the role of a certain type of middle-man in both societies as writers / collaborators / resisters, who adopted the colonial idiom in order to advocate for the civil rights of their minority community, while still accepting and working within the larger colonial framework as a practical necessity for survival. Finally, we have examined how texts produced by Moriscos and Palestinians in Israel during the given time periods portrayed collaborators as characters, sometimes to discourage collaboration but often with a measure of sympathy and understanding. All this is to show that in coining the phrase “resistance literature,” Kanafani was advocating a form of direct resistance which was much more apropos to his own community of Palestinians living in exile, for whom armed resistance was a realistic possibility. The colonized Palestinians and Moriscos who remained post-conquest did indeed form a literature which allowed them to resist, but it also collaborated in different ways with the idiom of the colonizer. They never controlled the circumstances of their own writing; instead, their literature was a response which helped them to survive, as they awaited external salvation. In the next chapter, I will look more closely at the *ways* in which Moriscos and 48 Palestinians told their stories – specifically how they alternately forged myths and gave testimony, depending on the goal and the intended audience of each text.

## **PART TWO**

### **Narrative Responses to Defeat and Occupation: Mythmaking and Testimony**

## Chapter Two

### *I Saw with My Eyes Rivers of Honey: Morisco Myths and Testimony*

#### I. Introduction: Myth and Testimony as Narrative Strategies

Moriscos and 48 Palestinians, as two conquered populations who remained living in their conquered territories, both employed narratives to make sense of the catastrophes that had befallen them, and to unite and shape their communities moving forward. When it comes to narrating “what happened” during the fall of Granada, or the Palestinian Nakba, and the difficult years that followed, two related yet seemingly opposite narrative strategies appear repeatedly. On the one hand, there is a tendency to mythologize the conquered homeland as a lost paradise, and to seize upon certain specific images, such as the olive or pomegranate tree, as mythic symbols of the “lost garden” of the homeland, pre-conquest.

The mythologized “lost garden” can be seen in Palestinian literature written from exile in the 50s and 60s, for example in the luminous, almost magical Yafa oranges pictured in Ghassan Kanafani’s “Land of Sad Oranges.” Similar “lost garden” imagery of olive trees, oranges, *ṣubbār*, and so on can be seen in the Palestinian “resistance literature” written inside the boundaries of the new Israeli state (e.g., Tawfīq Zayyād’s “On the Olive Trunk,” Darwish’s “A Lover from Palestine,” etc.), but in the case of these poets, such symbols were used to emphasize steadfast permanence on the land (*ṣumūd*; Kanafani 36, Bardenstein 18-21). As Bardenstein discusses, far from being merely an escapist last resort, nostalgia for the “lost garden” of Palestine could be used (as in the case of the “resistance” poets) to empower, by allowing poets and their audiences “to consider possibilities other than their present conditions, i.e., to contemplate and possibly enact change” (20-21).

In a similar way, Morisco-aljamiado literature relies heavily on myths of passive resistance, perseverance, and heavenly reward, as we have seen in the stories of the sacrifice of Ismail, Job and Rahma, and Carcayona (Barletta 105-132, Perry 21, 124-6). Notably, most Morisco-aljamiado literature does not dwell on the past glories of Islamic Spain, but rather focuses on stories of the Prophet and his early followers, or on millenarian prophecies, *aljofores*,

in which the Morisco's role at the End of Times (whether triumphant or tragic) was designated by God (Chejne 17, 96-7). This religio-mythic worldview, in which the Moriscos would play a crucial role as steadfast Muslims in the upcoming Day of Judgment, was no doubt a source of solace to many, valorizing steadfast endurance in the face of adversity, in a situation in which the authors had very little control over their own circumstances, only over their reactions to them. Morisco myths also suggested courses of future action, as Green-Mercado argues in the case of Morisco prophecies or *aljófores*, which were central to Morisco conspiracies and uprisings in the second half of the sixteenth century (14-15).

Morisco and Palestinian “mythologizing” narrative styles are most often directed inwards, towards an in-group audience. They were and are a way to shape and shore up collective identity and suggest courses of action and modes of behavior. They offer models of how to conduct oneself while living under an oppressive regime and provide a sense of unity and pride in the collective past – similar to the functions of nation-building and national myths described by Benedict Anderson, only in these cases coming from populations who no longer control their own territories, and in fact face imminent destruction by the state itself.

The flip side of this coin, the twin narrative strategy to the inward-facing strategy of mythmaking, was the almost journalistic or legalistic style of witness-bearing, what I will call a “testimonial” style: a tendency to try to defend the veracity and accuracy of one's counter-narrative of historical events, told in opposition to “official” state discourse, through the rigorous naming of facts and figures (names, dates, sources, etc.). This narrative style is used for self-explanation and self-justification; it is outward facing. It may be speaking directly to the conquerors, or else to a third-party audience who is suspicious of the minority-population's version of events. While we occasionally see it directed at an in-group (Palestinian or Morisco) audience, in these cases, the testimonial narrative serves as a way to *arm* the minority audience with rhetorical tools for self-defense, and to shore up the collective history and collective identity described in relation to mythmaking.

In the Morisco case, for example, we can see this journalistic or legalistic style used in Francisco Núñez-Muley's *Memorandum* to the Royal Audiencia, which aims to use the government's own documents and preferred sources *against* it. We also see it in the works of Morisco writers in exile in North Africa, who often feel the need to justify their seemingly “Christian” European culture to their North African colleagues. These writers resort to a

testimonial style to explain the circumstances of their lives as crypto-Muslims in Spain and thus both their partial assimilation and their genuine longing to be allowed to live openly as Muslims.

As with resistance and collaboration, myth and testimony in Morisco and Palestinian literature were not mutually exclusive; sometimes they worked with and through one another. In his forward to Goldberg and Bashir's *The Holocaust and the Nakba*, Elias Khoury writes that language "creates a spectrum of nuances for the meaning of words, such that, oftentimes, the implicit is more significant than the apparent" (xi). In this chapter and this section, I argue that the narrative strategies of myth and testimony create a similar "spectrum," whose "nuances" are highlighted by works that employ both strategies, not just by those that fall closer to extremes. Most Palestinian and Morisco texts lean towards one side or the other of the myth-testimony dichotomy, but certain texts and authors are unique in the way that they flip back and forth on a dime, using both narrative strategies within the space of the same few pages or paragraphs. In the Morisco context, the Mancebo de Arévalo's account of his journey to Granada mixes the unmistakable myth of the lost "land of milk and honey" with a remarkably "journalistic" style for a text produced in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, meticulously recording his conversations with the elderly survivors of the fall of Granada (Narváez Córdoba 26).

In the Palestinian context, meanwhile, Emile Habiby's fiction embodies this back-to-back flipping between "mythic" and "testimonial" styles. Habiby's decades as a politician with the Israeli Communist Party (Maki), and as editor of its Arabic newspaper *al-Ittihād*, meant that he was familiar with the specific events that formed points of contention in the party's battle for civil rights for Palestinians in Israel. Habiby's fiction writing blends this journalistic style with a mythical or magical-realist form of narration, in which aliens inhabit the catacombs of 'Akkā (in *The Pessoptimist*), or in which a literal ghost of pre-colonial Palestine haunts the narrator (in *Sarāya, Bint al-Ghūl*). These works combine mythical elements with a journalistic recitation of certain names, dates, and events. Habiby makes a point to cite his sources, for example in *Sarāya*, in which he frequently provides footnotes to the published works of other Palestinian authors and historians. This move is a gesture towards what Esmail Nashif would describe as reclaiming of the "means of production" of the Arabic language – citing Palestinian scholarly sources to testify to Palestinian history (Nashif 30). It shows how a testimonial urge to documentation can involve not just an appropriation of the conqueror's sources for use against them (as in the case of Núñez Muley's *Memorandum*), but also a re-valorization of the minority

community's own voice. Habiby's combination of mythic and testimonial styles, like that of the Mancebo de Arévalo, shows the strengths of both, while calling into question the separation between the two.

Amos Goldberg offers a useful theoretical examination of the interaction between national myth and individual testimony in his 2016 article, "Narrative, Testimony, and Trauma," which examines the titular themes in Elias Khoury's *Gate of the Sun*. In the context of Khoury's novel, Goldberg sets up a dichotomy between "the extremely destabilizing, traumatizing, and decentered testimony of the Palestinian victim-witness" and "the essential, collective Palestinian national epos that frames these individual narratives" (335). Goldberg draws on a corpus of Holocaust scholarship (including work by Primo Levy, LaCapra, Lacan and Derrida) in order to examine the ways in which we narrate trauma, and specifically how testimony undermines national myth (even "minority" or "opposition" nationalist myths like those of the Palestinians), by refusing to "clean up" or reduce individual experience to some kind of "comforting and redemptive version of the story" (342).

Goldberg views testimony, as used by Khoury in *Gate of the Sun*, as a tool with which to deconstruct the myths of the collective. More to the point for our purposes in this chapter, Goldberg outlines the dichotomy between myth and testimony: myth is collective, while testimony is individual; myth is constructed, while testimony relates experience; myth seeks to impose a sense of meaning, morality, and wholeness on the world, while testimony often reveals pain, disorder, and meaninglessness. When we talk about experiences of collective trauma like the Palestinian Nakba or the fall of Muslim Spain and forced conversion of the Moriscos, the fact that they are *collective* points to the need to make communal meaning out of suffering, i.e., to create a collective *myth*. However, trauma is experienced by everyone on an individual and deeply personal level, and this *individuality* of suffering leads to the alternate narrative strategy of *testimony*. Testimony and mythmaking in these instances develop together, in dialogue and sometimes (as in the case of *Gate of the Sun*) in conflict with one another. In other instances, as in Habiby's *Sarāya*, testimony and myth intertwine, as the narrator questions both his own memories and his own personal mythology.

Myth and testimony (both narrative modes of remembrance) do not just portray the past for an audience in the present; they can also help their audiences envision possible futures. In his article on al-Andalus in modern Syrian popular culture, Shannon draws on the work of Svetlana

Boym to examine the role of nostalgia in national remembrance and mythmaking. He defines nostalgia as “[...] a primary component of the memory practices of modern nation-states, including practices of remembering and forgetting,” which includes both *restorative* and *reflective* varieties:

Restorative nostalgia stresses *nostos* [“return home”] and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home. Reflective nostalgia thrives in *algia*, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming – wistfully, ironically, desperately. Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition. Reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity. Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth, while reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt. Restorative nostalgia is at the core of recent national and religious revivals; it knows two main plots – the return to origins and the conspiracy. Reflective nostalgia does not follow a single plot but explores ways on inhabiting many places at once and imagining different time zones; it loves details, not symbols. (Boym “Introduction”)

This harkens back to Goldberg’s dichotomy between national myth or epos, which he views as reductive, imposing false wholeness and heroism on narratives of past events; and testimony, which he views as a potential tool with which to deconstruct such myths, and to create “options for a new identity – one that is neither based on the dichotomous separation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ nor on the elimination of distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’, but rather creates a possible space for interaction and partial identification.” (Goldberg 355). Goldberg would identify the national myth with Boym’s “restorative nostalgia,” i.e., a form of remembering which seeks to reconstruct the lost or imagined homeland, and which brands its constructed myth as “truth.” Likewise, he might see in Boym’s “reflective nostalgia” a means with which to deconstruct such myths – reflective nostalgia does not parallel testimony exactly, but like testimony, it shifts the focus of remembering towards the *longing*, towards the *action*, rather than the “lost” place itself. In doing so, it follows Goldberg/Khoury’s model of shifting focus from narrative to narration, identity to identification – from the *thing* to the *action*. It is this shift, Goldberg argues, which creates a space for reflection and possible empathy. In the case of Khoury’s *Gate of the Sun*, Goldberg argues that the shift creates a space for empathy with Zionist colonizers, offering some measure of understanding, though *not* condoning their actions.

However, I believe that Goldberg confers too much value judgment on myth and testimony, implying the superiority of testimony as narrative strategy due to its perceived truth



value, its ability to “cut through” national myths to “what really happened.” As we know all too well from criminal justice systems, testimony as a form of remembrance is malleable in its own way. Pain and trauma dramatically affect narration, and even one’s ability to speak. Instead, here, I will view myth and testimony each as distinct narrative strategies, with some correlation to Boym’s restorative and reflective nostalgias, and with their own unique functions. For example, in refuting Goldberg’s preferential treatment of testimony as narrative technique, I would point to Bruce Lincoln, who argues that “the authority of myths” is akin to “revolutionary slogans and ancestral invocations in that they may have the effect of *mobilizing* a social grouping” (Green-Mercado 14, footnote 48, emphasis added). Similarly, Alessandro Pizzorno and other Italian sociologists studying collective identity formation argue that “a subject’s identity is not guaranteed unless he or she participates in the formation and preservation of a group that recognizes and acknowledges the individual’s identity” (14). Green-Mercado connects Lincoln to the Italian sociologists, arguing that myths (or in the case of her study, Morisco apocalyptic prophecies) are part of an active process of collective identity formation (14-15). So, while I agree with Goldberg that testimony can function to deconstruct national or collective identity myths, I follow Green-Mercado in her view that such myths are central to political and even military action; “not simply messages, but rather practices” (14).

In this chapter, I will examine connected narrative strategies of mythmaking and testimony, as used in the literature of the Moriscos and of 48 Palestinians and explore how they can interact and play off of one another. I will start by delineating how these strategies differ from one another in their use and their target audience, and then move to examine how certain writers in both historical contexts have managed to combine the two strategies, and to what effect. I will include in this examination a look at any internal critique of one or other strategy, especially within the more recent Palestinian context.

## II. Morisco Myths

As we have seen in the works of Perry and Barletta, Morisco communities in sixteenth-century Spain made use of the myths of Carcayona (the “handless maiden”), Job and his wife Raḥma, and the sacrifice of Ismail to create a “philosophy of suffering,” or rather, a series of role-models of steadfast passive resistance (Perry 21, Barletta 104-132). These characters all

suffer exile, injury, torture, and the threat of death, due to their conviction in a just God, who may test their faith, but will ultimately reward them for their steadfastness. They provide models of passive resistance to the Moriscos who would have either read these stories in *aljamiado* manuscripts, or else heard them performed out loud on special occasions (Barletta 138).

The story of Carcayona in particular is an example of a myth that could have motivated Moriscos to both passive and active resistance (Perry 35). In the story, which Perry paraphrases from Guillén Robles' *Leyendas moriscas*, based on the *aljamiado* originals, Carcayona is the beautiful daughter of a king in ancient India. When she reaches puberty, her father attempts to violate her, but she rebukes him, and he leaves, ashamed. Later, while Carcayona is praying to a golden idol, an angel in the form of a dove descends and tells her about the folly of polytheism and the truth of Islam (28). Carcayona then tries to teach her father about Islam, which he rejects, and in punishment for her stubborn refusal to go back to worshipping the idols, he has her hands cut off, and sends her to be left alone on a mountain (29). In desperate straits, she prays to God, who provides her with a cave for shelter and animal companions who provide her with food and friendship. Later, the King of Antioch goes hunting, and a doe leads him to Carcayona's cave, where he falls in love with her and brings her back to Antioch to be his wife (they also bring the doe). She gives birth to a baby boy, but one day while the king is gone, a letter arrives telling his mother that Carcayona is a witch who ensnared the king by deception, that their child is not really his, and that the king wishes her to be driven out from the palace. The queen mother complies, and Carcayona and her baby and doe are all thrown back into the wilderness (30). Carcayona once more appeals to God, who miraculously regrows her hands, which she then uses to build a shelter for herself and her dependents. Meanwhile, the King of Antioch returns to the palace and learns what has happened; it turns out the letter was a scheme concocted by some envious women, and he sets out to find Carcayona and bring her home (30). However, when she heard his voice calling, Carcayona "did not want to respond, because he had betrayed her and ordered her thrown out of his house" (qtd. 30). When he finds her and asks her to return, she tells him, "I will not return to the place of such evil people" (qtd. 30). Instead, Carcayona and the king decide to build a new city together, "where the religion of Allah could be taught" (qtd. 30). They build it on the banks of the Euphrates and name the city Carcayona (30).

Perry reads several metaphors and themes into this story, which could have appealed to Moriscos and informed their actions. For one thing, Carcayona serves as "a metaphor for both

the power and the powerlessness of Moriscos.” She exemplifies both victimization and agency, and models both accommodation and resistance as “strategies for survival” (28). She is victimized by her incestuous, violent father and her cruel mother-in-law, but is also active in refusing to return to her father’s polytheism, and in building a shelter for herself and her child during her second forced exile. She also is active in her refusal to return to the abode of “evil people”<sup>25</sup> after her husband finds her. Although she suffers “abuse [and] betrayal by the very adults who should have protected her” and breaks “gender prescriptions” of female obedience to male relatives, she emerges victorious in the end because “she has remained obedient to a higher power – that of the ‘true word’ of Allah” (31). Obedience to God allows her to preserve her own distinct self and be an active player in her own story, though sometimes (as when she first marries the King of Antioch), she conforms to traditionally passive female roles. Perry argues that this would have made Carcayona a readily applicable role model for Morisca women in particular, especially in circumstances where traditional leadership was dead or in exile, and after the 1568-70 Alpujarras Revolt, when many Morisco men were enslaved or dead:

Carcayona thus refines the ideal of woman; more than a creature of passive docility, the perfect woman must obey Allah above all, and this obedience justifies her disobedience to men. Rather than depending on men’s protection, she must make decisions and take action to ensure the survival of herself and her children. (32)

Perry also draws an interesting parallel between the mutilation of Carcayona (losing her hands) and the “mutilation” exercised against Islamic Andalusian buildings and monuments like the Great Mosques of Córdoba and Seville. The Great Mosque of Seville was torn down in the fifteenth century, leaving just its minaret and patio of orange trees, and a Gothic cathedral was erected in its place. Connecting this to the Carcayona story (where violence and the threat of rape endanger Carcayona), Perry writes that “the construction of this cathedral mutilated it, leaving only a few parts intact, but even then disfiguring and reducing them to conform to the needs of a hostile and victorious enemy” (33). Similarly, describing the church built inside of the Great Mosque of Córdoba as a symbol of Christian conquest, Perry argues that this architectural addition “represents not only an arrogant intrusion but indeed a rape that defiled and degraded the glory of former Muslim rulers” (33). Certainly, the themes of power and powerlessness, as

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<sup>25</sup> Perhaps a nod to the Islamic legal notions of *dār al-Islām* and *dār al-ḥarb* described in Chapter 1; Carcayona in exile from her homeland has no desire to return to *dār al-ḥarb* and insists on creating her own *dār al-Islām*.

well as the models of active and passive resistance that Perry identifies in the myth of Carcayona would have appealed to Morisco readers or listeners and helped to shape and influence their worldviews and the paths of potential future action they considered. Carcayona draws a line in the sand when it comes to her religious beliefs, even while abusive kin and countrymen enact violence upon her; she actively resists when other characters (e.g., her husband, her father) ask her to cross this line, and passively resists by enduring and surviving despite her suffering.

Another Morisco myth which embodies a certain “philosophy of suffering and action”<sup>26</sup> would be the *Leyenda sobre el sacrificio de Ismail* (Legend about the Sacrifice of Isma’īl)<sup>27</sup>, a Morisco retelling of the story of Abraham’s sacrifice of his beloved son. This story appears in the Old Testament as Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac, and in the Qur’an it is believed to be his sacrifice of Isma’īl (though Isma’īl is not mentioned by name). The Morisco version describes itself as *Alhadiz*, which Vespertino Rodríguez translates into Spanish as “leyenda,” or “legend” (141). *Alḥadīth* in the Morisco context is a common term for Islamic religious stories told in a mythical, legendary or even folkloric register. Some, like the *El-Alḥadīz del ‘Alkaẓar del-oro’, i la estora de la kulu’ebra kon ‘Alī ibnu Ṭālib*<sup>28</sup> retain the formulaic trappings of scholarly religious *aḥādīth* (sayings or doings of the Prophet Muḥammad), particularly the *isnād* or chain of transmitters at the beginning. The story of ‘Ali and the dragon portrays this historical figure of early Islam as a folkloric or mythical superhero, who vanquishes a terrifying dragon single-handedly, but it starts with a Romance version of the traditional *isnād*: “Diso: Rrekontónos Içḥāq / bnu ‘Abdu Allah, por Içḥāq ibnu Mālik / ibnu Qayṣar Jābir, por ‘Abdu Allah ...” (*El libro de las batallas* 326). This echoes the Arabic formula, “*qāla: ḥaddathanā fulān ‘an fulān...*” (“he said: so-and-so told us, from so-and-so...”), used to assert the authenticity of *aḥādīth* meant to accurately recount miracles and historical events in the life of the Prophet Muḥammad. Morisco use of this formula in their more mythical or folkloric tales of early Islamic heroes is a deliberate mixing of genres – *ḥadīth* and folklore, history and myth. Such mixing was a common feature of *aljamiado* stories relating the lives of early Islamic and pre-Islamic Biblical and Quranic figures.

The *Leyenda sobre el sacrificio de Ismail* similarly offers an amalgam of mythical and more traditional religious elements; interestingly, when it comes to religious sources, the

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<sup>26</sup> See: Barletta *Covert Gestures* p.110.

<sup>27</sup> Ms. Gay. T. 12: fols. 9r-13v, published in *Leyendas Aljamiadas Moriscas...*

<sup>28</sup> ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

*Leyenda* incorporates both Old Testament and Quranic elements into its narrative. This reflects the Moriscos' mixed cultural influences, particularly for those from Aragón and Castile, whose ancestors had lived under Christian rule as Mudejars for centuries before the forced conversions of early the sixteenth century. The doctrinally contentious issues remain solidly Islamic. Sura 37 (al-Şāfāt) of the Qur'an tells the story of how, after the incident with the Golden Calf (37:83-98), Ibrāhīm asked God to grant him a son: "My Lord! Give me [an heir], one of the righteous!" / So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son" (37:100-101). This son is understood to be Isma'īl, son of Ibrāhīm and Hagar, Ibrāhīm's first-born. Hagar is completely absent from this story in the Qur'an, and Isma'īl is unnamed but present. In the *Leyenda*, by contrast, Hagar, Isma'īl, and Abraham are the three human protagonists of the story – all are named, all perform actions, and all carry out dialogue with one another. The Old Testament version of course names Sarah as the mother and Isaac as the son, while relegating Hagar and Isma'īl to banishment in the desert. Hagar's status as a slave and claims of Isma'īl's "bastard" status had been used in medieval and early modern periods by Christians to denigrate Muslims in a racially charged manner, as in the *Plaint of Spain* attributed to St. Isidore, which predicts that "the Hagarene [Muslim] beasts will emerge from their poisonous caves to destroy upper and lower [northern and southern] Spain" (trans. Green-Mercado 11). Naturally the Morisco *Leyenda* adheres to the Islamic version in which Sarah, Isaac, and all problematic claims to their bloodline's superiority are absent, and Isma'īl and Hagar enjoy an uncomplicated relationship to Ibrāhīm.

However, the *Leyenda* deviates from the Quranic retelling in its focus on the fear and suffering of all three family-members, something which no doubt made the story relatable and useful to Morisco listeners. Oddly, this also brings it closer to the Old Testament version, in which Isaac senses danger and asks his father as they walk to the mountaintop, "Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the entirely burned offering?" (Genesis 22:6).<sup>29</sup> The tension in Genesis comes largely from Abraham's terse responses to both God and his child, which make it difficult to tell what he is thinking or feeling. God calls to Abraham and he responds "I am here"; when his son begins to ask questions on the walk up the mountain, Abraham again responds simply "I am here, my son" (22:2-6), and when Isaac asks why they are not bringing a lamb to sacrifice, Abraham's response is both curt and sinister, given that the

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2022&version=CEB>

reader already knows what God has asked of him: “The lamb for the burned offering? God will see to it, my son” (22:8). Isaac similarly speaks very little, asking once about the lack of a lamb, and then continuing in silence, with no body language or adjectives to give windows into his mental or emotional state. Even when Abraham draws his knife and the angel calls out to him to stop, he again only utters “I am here” (22:9). The emotional world of the Old Testament characters is entirely closed and utterly terrifying, as we are left to imagine their inner turmoil and fear.

The Qur’an, by contrast, emphasizes willingness to sacrifice and even die for God when portraying the emotional state of Ibrāhīm and Isma’īl: “When he was old enough to assist in his endeavour, he said, ‘My son! I see in a dream that I am sacrificing you. See what you think.’ He said, ‘Father! Do whatever you have been commanded. If Allah wishes, you will find me to be *patient* [*min-aṣ-ṣābirīn*].’ (37:102)<sup>30</sup>. This account emphasizes knowledge and consent, as Ibrāhīm is open with Isma’īl about his intention and motives, and Isma’īl willingly consents for the larger sake of God and His will. The adjective “patient” (“*ṣābir*”) is one with countless resonances in Palestinian culture and literature in its connection with the ideology of *ṣumūd* (and it could resonate with the image of the cactus-plants *ṣubbār* as both share the same root). Doubtless, it would have had similar resonances for Moriscos.

The *Leyenda* reflects Morisco needs and attitudes in its portrayal of the characters and their inner struggles, when faced with the horrible demand from God. In the *Leyenda*, Ibrāhīm dreams that God has requested a sacrifice (the *aljamiado* text preserves the Arabic term, *alqurbān*). Over the next three days he slaughters three different animals -first a camel, then a cow, then a sheep – and each time asks God whether He has received his sacrifice (142)<sup>31</sup>. At the end of this list, Ibrāhīm, showing confusion and frustration, asks God, “¡Mi señor, mi mayor!, ya é çerkado / alqurbān, kemellos (*sic*) y baqiyo y ganado, ¿kon ké mandas / ke yo faga alqurbān, yā señor?” (“My lord, my better! I have already presented / the sacrifice, camels and a cow and a sheep. With what do you demand / that I make the sacrifice, oh Lord?”) (143). God tells him, “...kiero ke degüwelles a tu fillo i palazer de tus / güwellos, Içma’ īl” (“I want you to slit the

<sup>30</sup> <https://al-quran.info/#37>

<sup>31</sup> The *Leyenda* introduces itself as a sermon to be delivered on ‘*Eid al-Aḏḥā*, which would teach Morisco listeners the story connected with that holiday (141). The repetition of Ibrāhīm’s attempts to please God, with minor deviations each time (camel / cow / sheep) reflects a folkloric style of storytelling which would have helped listeners to better recall and retell the story.

throat of your son and the pleasure of your / eyes, Isma’īl”) (143), echoing the Biblical ““Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac...” (22:2). However here, unlike in Genesis, we see the immediate emotional effect this has on Ibrāhīm and his family: “...priso Ibrahim / akella nuweyt a su fillo iy-apelególo a sus / espeytos, i besábalo entere sus guwellos” (“...that night, Ibrāhīm took his son and hugged him to his chest, and kissed him between his eyes”) (143). These unusual signs of love and distress cause Hagar to immediately ask Ibrāhīm what he is doing, and why he is not allowing her son to sleep in peace (143). He responds indirectly that his heart is simply filled with love “this night”, but then asks Hagar to bathe and dress Isma’īl the next day (143). The parents are clearly concerned, but Hagar demonstrates her place in the gendered order by obeying her husband, despite her concerns.

The next day, Isma’īl asks his mother, “Por ké me lavas / kon lavatoriyo de los muwertos” (“Why are you washing me / the way the dead are washed?”) (144). Hagar attempts to avoid a direct answer, telling him, “así m-es / mandado de tu padre” (“so it has been ordered of me by your father”), and in a show of filial obedience reminiscent of the Qur’anic account, Isma’īl tells her, “se mi padre / te lo á mandado, rrazon fazer de fer su mandamiyento” (“if my father / has ordered you to do it, that is enough reason to follow his demand”) (144). However, as with Ibrāhīm’s show of affection the night before, submission to paternal or divine will is not so easy for the Morisco Isma’īl as it appears in the Qur’an. As he and his father ascend the mountain, the devil (“el-Iblīs”) appears thrice<sup>32</sup> to Ibrāhīm, first as an old man, then as a bird, then as the mountain itself, trying to get a rise out of him and to deter him from his chosen path. Appearing first as an old man, he stirs up fear and doubt by asking Isma’īl, “¿A dó te liyeva tu padre?” (“Where is your father taking you?”) and when the boy responds “a partida de lo ke és menester” (“to do what is necessary”), Iblīs challenges his blind obedience, telling him, “Ante te liyeva a degollarte” (“First, he is taking you to slit your throat”) (144). When the devil admits that this is what God had ordered Ibrāhīm to do, Isma’īl stoutly replies, “Se Allah ále mandado, ke lo faga” (“If God has ordered it, let him do it”) (145), echoing the Quranic ““Father! Do whatever you have been commanded. If Allah wishes, you will find me to be *patient* [*min-aṣ-ṣābirīn*]” (37:102). In the Morisco context, Iblīs represents those dangers and coercive forces which would attempt to either scare or sweet-talk Morisco listeners away from the path of Islam.

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<sup>32</sup> The threefold listing structure echoes the early list of camel-cow-sheep and follows the same folkloric narrative style

Then Isma’īl directly asks his father whether he is planning to slit his throat, using the violent and graphic term “degollar” (145). This accusation reflects the brute violence of the act, something not highlighted in the Old Testament *or* the Quran, but which would have been relatable to Morisco listeners who lived in fear of the violent tactics of the Inquisition. Unlike in the Qur’an, but similarly to the Old Testament, Ibrāhīm is evasive and false in his answer: “¡Ya fillo!, /¿dó vedes padre ke deguwelle a su fillo?” (“Son, where do you find a father who would slit his own son’s throat?”) (145). Putting pressure on this weak response, Iblīs appears again in the form of a bird and repeats to Isma’īl that Ibrāhīm is planning to kill him, not sparing the gory details: “kon-el puñal serás degollado” (“with the dagger, your throat will be cut”) (145). At this, Isma’īl breaks down and weeps (“poloró Içma’il poloro muy fuwerte” / “Isma’īl cried desperately”) and accuses his father, “¡Ya padre!, // s-el viyello é mentoroso, est-awe no miyente, ke me faze / a saber ke me kiyeres degollar” (“Oh father! // If the old man was lying, this bird does not lie, it tells me/ that you want to slit my throat”) (145). Ibrāhīm *again* equivocates, brushing off this accusation as “lies” (145). At this point, the listener can easily identify with Isma’īl’s patent fear and feelings of betrayal, again as with Carcayona, by the very adults who should have protected him (his father and mother). As with Carcayona, fear of and betrayal by those in power would have been relatable experiences for Moriscos, who could see themselves in Isma’īl and follow his example. Finally, when Iblīs returns for the third time as the mountain to tell Isma’īl the truth, (“wey serás degollado sobre mí / “woe, your throat will be slit upon me”), Isma’īl for a second time accuses his father directly, and Ibrāhīm *finally* admits the truth: “¡Ya fillo!, desepárate al mandamiyento de Allah, ke yo é visto entere suweño ke yo te / é de degollar, guwarda ké te parece” (“O son! Abandon yourself to God’s command, for I have seen in a dream that I / must cut your throat. Look; what do you think?”) – almost an exact translation of the Quranic account, but with the admission delivered *after* the journey up the mountain. This means that unlike in the Qur’an, the journey here for Isma’īl has been a test of filial, not religious loyalty, and one which he questioned twice, one which even caused him to cry. Human actors, as in Carcayona’s tale, are not to be trusted, and can betray, even from within one’s own family.

Once the *Leyenda*’s Ibrāhīm *admits* the divine inspiration behind his deed, Isma’īl immediately consents and submits to God’s will, again paraphrased more or less directly from the Qur’an: “¡Ya padre! / fes lo ke te á mandado, a o me torobarás, se kerrá Allah, / de los



sufiriyentes” (“O father! / Do what He has commanded you, [sic.] you will find me, if God wills, long-suffering”) (146). *Ṣābirīn* (patient) here is translated as “sufriyente” (suffering, or long-suffering), giving some insight into this Morisco model of *ṣumūd*. However, this Quranic declaration of submission to God’s will is immediately followed by very human doubts and concerns; Isma’īl asks Ibrāhīm, “¿ké dirá mi madre / kuwando verá las kiriyaturas i no me veré enter-ellos jugar?” (“What will my mother say, / when she sees [God’s] creatures, and she doesn’t see me playing among them?”) (146) and begs him to “rruwega a tu señor ke rrefirme el korazón / de mi madre kon suferenciya” (“beg your Lord to strengthen my mother’s heart with patience”) (146). Isma’īl’s concern for his mother (more than for himself) both humanizes him and emphasizes the gendered role of Hagar – as with Carcayona, the tale provides a role model for Morisca women as supporters of their male relatives, but also as loving protectors of their children.

Then as Ibrāhīm takes out his knife, father and son take part in a dialogue; Ibrāhīm expresses his sadness (“dolor”) and begins to cry, and Isma’īl now is the one to encourage him and attempt to stiffen his resolve (146-7). The ordeal is more protracted, clumsy and painful than in either the Qur’an or the Old Testament, as Ibrāhīm attempts to slit his son’s throat *four* times unsuccessfully before Jibrīl finally appears and reveals the nature of God’s test, and the miraculous ram standing behind Ibrāhīm (147). Throughout these four attempts, father and son are both in deep distress – Ibrāhīm actually falls to the ground after the third attempt and calls out to God, “awme piyadat” (“have pity on me”) (147), while Isma’īl tries to comfort him, saying, “rrogaré a mi señor / ke te diya ar-rahma (perdón) por el poko de mi tiyenpo” (I will ask my lord / to forgive you for the shortness of my time [on Earth]”) (147). The Morisco *Leyenda* preserved the Qur’an’s emphasis on willing obedience to God, but places far more emphasis on the emotional struggles of father, son, and even mother, who are shown to experience doubt, suspicion, fear, resolve, betrayal, guilt, love, sadness – the whole range of human emotions that characterize such suffering.

More immediate and emotionally relatable than the Biblical *and* Quranic accounts, it passes along the lessons of *islām* or submission contained in the Qur’an, but with much more human role-models for Morisco listeners to identify with and emulate. Hagar is a dutiful wife, who has her suspicions and fears and embodies obedience to her husband as well as love of her son. Ibrāhīm is dishonest at first, having no real guidance on how to approach such a terrible

task, but eventually breaks down when his son confronts him with the truth and becomes honest and open about his emotions, carrying out a heart-wrenching dialogue with his son, one not found in either the Qur'an or the Bible, as they both come to terms with God's request. Isma'il is obedient to his father *to a limit*, that limit being his own self-preservation - a realistic lesson for Moriscos who had to exercise caution around even close friends and family members, as the Inquisition frequently used such ties to rat out other alleged practitioners of Islam.<sup>33</sup> However, in contrast, Isma'il is immediately and entirely obedient to God's will, and helps to push his father toward the final act of sacrifice, once he knows and understands the divine impetus behind it. He is willing to die *fī sabīl Allah*, in a way which supports other Morisco discourses of martyrdom<sup>34</sup>, e.g., those employed during the mobilization of the Alpujarras Revolt of 1568-70. The *Leyenda* provides what Barletta calls a "Morisco philosophy of suffering and action" – both passive and active steps are taken to fulfill God's will; at the same time, it outlines the emotions of all the characters, modeling how to die for a greater cause, how to sacrifice, how to love and support. The practical uses for such a tale are clear. Green-Mercado outlines how during the second half of the sixteenth century, Moriscos of Valencia and Aragón held secret meetings in individual homes, in which *alfakís* would use exhortatory preaching (*w'az*) and prophecies of Ottoman (or French or North African) military aid to push those present to action, i.e., plans for armed revolt (182-5). The *Leyenda* similarly could have been used to shape the worldviews and actions of its listeners, promoting self-sacrifice and perseverance in the face of cruelty, and holding out promise of divine reward.

As hinted at in the *Leyenda sobre el sacrificio de Ismail's* self-description as "*ḥadīz*" ("*ḥadīth*") and the hadith-like format of other *aljamiado* legends, myth was often mixed with more "factual" or historical genres in Morisco literature. One of the most common *aljamiado*-

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<sup>33</sup> Perry writes that, "Perhaps the most cruel contestation between Moriscos and Christians invaded Morisco family and kinship bonds. When inquisitors interrogated Moriscos about their religious beliefs and cultural practices, they often tried to get them to implicate other family members" (81). Specifically, she says that "the great majority of [cases] in which accused Moriscos identified the person from whom they had learned Islam named their mothers, grandmothers, or mothers-in-law" (79). Male relatives were also widely accused. Perry gives examples like that of Maria de Luna, who "voluntarily confessed to the Holy Office in Zaragoza that her father, Domingo de Luna, had persuaded her to live as a Muslim [...] From the age of eight, she had performed Muslim ceremonies with her father and many other Moriscos" (79) and Leonor de Morales, "whose husband had testified against her that she danced and sang as a Muslim at weddings..." (76). Green-Mercado bases much of her chapter on the young Morisco prophet/visionary, Augustín de Ribera, on the testimonies of Augustín's cousin and supporter, Juan de Sosa, and trial records of confessions by Augustín's older brother Luis de Ribera (Green-Mercado 21-22).

<sup>34</sup> See Green-Mercado Chapter 4, p.154-7.

Morisco genres was what Harvey calls “pious miscellanies, usually arranged in a loosely thematic way and designed primarily for religious edification” (151); Narváez Córdoba connects this genre to the Arabic *adab*, “a miscellaneous treaty which may include general information on religious, civil or literary themes, as much as [it includes] rules of etiquette” (17). Within this genre, one of the most influential writers was the anonymous figure known as the Mancebo de Arévalo<sup>35</sup>, the Young Man from Arévalo. The Mancebo de Arévalo’s *Tafsira*<sup>36</sup> is unique in its focus on the then-recent history of the fall of Nasrid Granada. It offers readers direct testimony from the survivors of the fall of Nasrid Granada, as well as an idealized and mythologized version of the land of Granada itself. After a secret meeting of ‘*alimes* in Zaragoza charged him with composing his *Tafsira*, to guide his newly converted community, the Mancebo undertook a journey across various parts of Spain, meeting with Morisco elders and learning what he could from them. As Narváez Cordova explains, “All of this situates the Mancebo in the Islamic tradition of *al-riḥlah fī ṭalab al-‘ilm* (voyage in search of knowledge)” (52, my translation).

While various chapters of the *Tafsira* offer religious instruction both spiritual and practical (e.g., “Kapítulo que tarata del-atayyammum i de suw obligassiyón,” or “Kapítulo que tarata de ké kosa es fe i kómo se a de wwardar”<sup>37</sup>), those chapters dedicated to the Mancebo’s travels in Granada show a tendency to mythologize the formerly Nasrid kingdom as a lost paradise, a trope which similarly pervades modern Palestinian literature when its authors speak of pre-Nakba Palestine (Narváez Córdoba 458). Since much *aljamiado* literature focuses on the early days of Islam and avoids discussion of the centuries of Islamic rule in al-Andalus, the Mancebo’s *Tafsira* is unique in offering us this glimpse at a Morisco writer’s impressions of what had been lost. In the Mancebo’s account of his travels in Granada, testimony and myth go hand-in-hand, as he simultaneously recounts the testimony of his Granadan elders and offers his own mythologized portrait of the Granadan landscape: “No abíya en tiyyera de reyyes ni suldanes más suwbilimes alkássares ni más deleitosos bercheles ni más anchas begas kon rrobles de dibersos furuwts. Yo bi por mis ojos arroyos de miyel por las berenas abasso” (“There did not exist in the lands of kings or sultans more sublime palaces, nor broader meadows with trees and diverse fruits. I saw with my eyes rivers of honey [running] through the scrublands below”)

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<sup>35</sup> Discussed in Chapter 1 in his role as chronicler of meetings with Granadan collaborators.

<sup>36</sup> From the Arabic *tafsīr*, or Qur’anic commentary, although this is *not* the genre of the Mancebo’s *Tafsira*.

<sup>37</sup> “Chapter which deals with *al-tayyammum* and its obligation” and “Chapter which deals with the nature of faith and how it is to be kept”

(qtd. 39; my translation). As Narváez Córdoba affirms, in this passage, “the Mancebo undertakes nothing less than a ‘mythification’ of al-Andalus. [...] he describes passionately and in detail the landscape of Andalucía, to which he does not hesitate to dedicate the most powerful elegies, mixing reality and fantasy and turning this region into a mythical earthly Paradise” (39). In particular, the phrase “I saw with my eyes rivers of honey” epitomizes the Mancebo’s mixing of “testimonial” style (“I saw with my eyes”) with a mythification of the lost homeland (Granada as a *literal* land of milk and honey).

The Mancebo’s mythification of Granada is based upon his longing for its Islamic past: “The ‘Isle of Spain’ which the Mancebo traveled with untiring enthusiasm, following the footsteps of a threatened Islam, trying to revive its former splendor, is converted into a ‘promised land’ for this young Morisco...” (Narváez Córdoba 92-3, my translation). This longing to see traces of a demolished past in the landscape of the present, and the subsequent tendency to mythologize that past as a lost paradise, recalls the modern Palestinian practice of revisiting the “memory-site[s]” (Bardenstein 2) of destroyed Palestinian villages. I recall walking in Aida refugee camp in Bethlehem in 2012 and observing murals of idyllic Palestinian villages, labeled with the names of the destroyed villages from which the camp’s residents had been driven out. In each mural section, little clumps of houses rested on green hills, occasionally with blank-faced villagers in traditional dress carrying water jugs or herding sheep. In these instances, memory of destroyed Palestinian villages conjures up idealized and simplified images, which themselves become the stuff of myths; like the inhabitant of Aida Camp, the Mancebo views the “lost homeland” of Spanish Islam through rose-colored glasses, describing its “sublime castles,” “broad fields,” “diverse fruits” and “rivers of honey” through the “eyes of a poet and myth-maker” (Narváez Córdoba 40, my translation).

As Narváez Córdoba explains, the Mancebo’s mythic description of formerly-Nasrid Andalucía “as the Promised Land” do not only focus on splendid palaces or lush vegetation (the “garden” part of the “lost garden” trope). The Mancebo “does not limit himself to the panegyric, but rather establishes a detailed parallel between the fate [*suerte*] of the people of Israel and that of the Muslim community of al-Andalus. Both are chosen by God to be separated from the straight path and suffer the terrible punishment of exile and persecution” (40, my translation). Many Palestinian writers would later draw similar connections between their people’s suffering and that of religious figures whom they shared with their occupiers, as in Mahmoud Darwish’s “I

am Yusef,” a poem which compares the suffering of Palestinians to that of the Quranic and Old Testament figure of Joseph. As with the case of Palestine, Moriscos in Spain faced conquest, exile, and persecution at the hands of a religious ethno-state, whose religion shared many stories and important figures with their own. This is why we have seen Morisco stories about the birth of Mohammad, for example, that echo Christian and Islamic stories of the birth of Jesus (Barletta 82). Just as Yusef/Joseph was an ambiguous figure for Palestinians, figures like Jesus and Mary were ambiguous to Spanish Muslims of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, precisely because of their honored role in Islam and their centrality in Spanish Catholicism. The Mancebo’s evocation of “the people of Israel” suffering and wandering after losing their homeland brings up similar ethical ambiguities – it is a story shared by colonized and colonizer, which Catholic and Muslim Spaniards would no doubt interpret very differently, each depending on their own role in the conqueror/conquered dichotomy. It is striking, however, that the Mancebo’s biblical techniques for raising the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada to mythical status would be echoed so many centuries later by Mahmoud Darwish, in his own use of biblical figures to represent the loss and suffering of Palestinians.

While the Mancebo is somewhat unique among Morisco writers in his focus on the recent history of Spain/al-Andalus, he shared with many Moriscos a need to view their current suffering over the *longue durée* of history, and like other Moriscos, for the Mancebo, this history was a distinctly Islamic and millenarian one. Morisco writings focused on the *salaf* and the early days of Islam precisely because many believed that the Day of Judgment was imminent – with such dire, apocalyptic circumstances, how could it not be? Like the *salaf*, many Moriscos believed, their role would be one of steadfast belief in the face of adversity and widespread persecution by polytheists, and ultimately on the Day of Judgment they would be rewarded by God for their faith. This brings us to a specific and very popular genre of morisco-aljamiado writing, which embodies the mythologizing tendencies of Morisco millenarianism: Morisco prophecies, otherwise called *aljófores* or *alguacías* (López Baralt 181).

Morisco *aljófores* (from the Arabic *jafr*, a genre including oracular predictions and emerging as part of the *hadith* literature) blended a mythical style with accounts of past and present political events to offer convincing predictions of the future, generally in an apocalyptic register (Green-Mercado 4). Prophecies were widespread in the political discourse of the early modern Mediterranean and helped to shape the worldviews and actions of Christian, Muslim,

and Jewish communities alike (López-Baralt 182). This led to “a wave of Christian prophecies that debate Islamic oracles” – a confrontation via prophecy between Spanish Christians and their Muslim counterparts (182, my translation). Morisco *aljófores* fought back against Christian prophecies proclaiming the ultimate victory of Christianity in al-Andalus, in a way that resembles the mythmaking of modern nation-states:

National narratives – inherently teleological, optimistic, and humanistic – attempt “to smooth out the fragmentary and slippery qualities of memory as they fashion a conception of identity” (Pardes 2000, 3). They endeavor to establish a stable identity based on national heroism, political power, a sense of justice, and the consciousness of a common destiny. (Goldberg 340)

For some Moriscos, the creation of communal narratives on a mythological, apocalyptic scale lent greater meaning and hope to their struggle. Morisco apocalyptic prophecies drew on Islamic as well as medieval Christian sources. They predicted the coming End Times in which Iberia would either fall completely to the Christians, or else be restored to Islam through the intervention of an external *mahdī* or savior, typically the Ottoman sultan but also, alternately, French Protestant and/or North African rulers (Green-Mercado *Introduction*, 228-31, 235).

Many of these prophecies had roots in Mudejar or even earlier medieval periods. For example, prophecies circulated during the Alpujarras revolt in 1568-70 drew on “numerous prophetic ḥadīths circulating in al-Andalus since the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba in 1031, whose diffusion intensified during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries” to “predict” the loss and ultimate restoration of al-Andalus (Green-Mercado 81). Moriscos passed on these prophecies textually, but *alfakís* and notables also implemented them in ritualistic communal settings, during the secret meetings at which sermons and prophecies read aloud directed listeners toward specific courses of action (Green Mercado 78). The use of these prophecies, fantastical as they might seem, was an important exercise in Morisco *agency*: “Through [the *aljófores*], the persecuted community attempts to distort its history and manipulate its future, which seemed so unpromising after the fall of Granada” (López-Baralt 184, my translation).

In *La literatura secreta de los últimos musulmanes en España*, López Baralt devotes a chapter to four specific *aljófores*, taken from BnF MS. 774, which embody a range of influences and attitudes, but all employ a mythic, apocalyptic narrative to shape the actions of their readers/listeners (Green-Mercado 7). Three of these *aljófores* are basically optimistic, foretelling the restoration of al-Andalus to Islam before the End of Times. They account for the current

sufferings of Moriscos as divine punishment for past sins; this attitude is shared by Christian prophecies from the same time period, and by other Morisco-aljamiado works, such as the Mancebo de Arévalo's *Tafsira* (López Baralt 187). It is also consistent with Quranic views of suffering as a test or trial from God, for example in Surat 'āl-'Imran, in which God asks, "...did you reckon that you would enter the Garden, when God did not yet know which of you *strive* and not yet know which are *steadfast*?" (Qtd. Green-Mercado 91, my emphasis). Suffering separates the wheat from the chaff, and Morisco prophecies seize upon this principle in order to elevate their own steadfast suffering above even the deaths of martyrs: "Guarding the frontier in Andalusia for only one day and one night is better than twelve completed *alḥajjes* (pilgrimages)" says one *aljófor*, adding that "guarding the frontier in Andalusia one night is more advantageous than a martyr rubbing himself with his own blood *fī sabīl Allah*" (BnF Ms. 774 qtd. 90)

After explaining that the Moriscos' current sufferings are a divine punishment for past sins, these *aljófores* go on to "predict" a series of misfortunes befalling Spanish Islam, before finally foretelling the ultimate triumph of Islam in Spain; the fourth prophecy actually predicts its defeat. While the authors remain anonymous, *aljófores* were often attributed to long-gone mythical figures, or else, like the legends discussed above, portrayed as *aḥādīth*. Of the four prophecies in BnF 774 discussed by López-Baralt and Green-Mercado, one is attributed to a historical Islamic figure, 'Alī ibn Jābir Alferesiyo ("al-Fārisī"), two to the medieval bishop St. Isidore ("San Isodoro"), and one, an alleged *ḥadīth*, to the Prophet Muḥammad himself (214-220, Green-Mercado 6).

The *aljófor* attributed to al-Fārisī exemplifies the optimism common to this genre – a kind of "wishful thinking" which an eloquent speaker could transform into collective action (López-Baralt 184, my translation). After "al-Fārisī" attributes the Moriscos' current suffering to the sins of previous generations, his prophecy predicts the capture and conversion of the "king of the Christians" to Islam (191, my trans). Based on the dialect and events mentioned in the *aljófor*, López-Baralt postulates that the author was an Aragonese morisco writing in the 1520s, in response to the forced conversions in Aragón in 1524: "it is not difficult to suppose that in these years of anguish and very concrete historical reversals in the 1520s, the Muslim community (particularly the Aragonese) would have needed such an optimistic *aljófor*" (192, my translation). When the anonymous scribe predicts that in 1532, the Christian king will be captured and converted to Islam, López Baralt reads this as "a desperate call to his coreligionists

for them to take political or military action. We should also not forget that the *alguacía* [*aljófor*] alludes to Turkish power [...]” (193, my translation). This view of the *aljófor* as a call to action coincides with Green-Mercado’s work on the implementation of Morisco prophecies in various rebellions and plots across Spain during the late sixteenth century. It also recalls the similar mobilizational function of “national narratives” as described above by Goldberg in the modern context.

The next two *aljófores* examined by López Baralt are both attributed to the Catholic Saint Isidore. The first of these two “still turns in the favor of Islam, but the ingredients of war and pain are underlined: as if the calamitous events were necessary to purify the Muslims, so that they could be worthy of the final victory” (194, my translation). López Baralt characterizes this *aljófor* as an adaptation of a contemporary Christian prophecy, which attempts to “subvert” it into a form of “counter-propaganda”; once again, the prophecy offers hope and issues a call to action (94, 196, my translation). The next *aljófor* which she examines, similarly attributed to “San Isodoro,” differs in that its adaptations are fewer and subtler; it “favors the Christians and denigrates the Prophet’s community,” although López Baralt believes it to have been written down by the same hand (197, my translation). It fluctuates between Christian and Muslim terminology, using both “Señor” and “Alá” to refer to God, and is overall “equivocal,” predicting final victory for the Christians while containing veiled, pro-Islamic references (199, 200, my translation). Less obvious and less optimistic than its twin-*aljófor* copied out by the same hand, this adaptation still falls within the “mythmaking” category, as it attempts to re-write a Catholic Spanish history from the point of view of the defeated Moriscos (more subtly this time). It does not predict victory or sound a clear call to arms, but its partial antagonism does not preclude it as a potential source of prophetic information for Morisco readers. There are many accounts of Moriscos acquiring Christian-written texts to use for their own Islamic means – for example, Ignacio de las Casas, writing in 1604, complained that Moriscos “used to buy copies of [Luis de] Mármol Carvajal’s book<sup>38</sup> as soon as they were printed ‘because it contained the prognostications, as well as books written by the Morisco [royal translator] Miguel de Luna, which narrated stories of the Muslims of al-Andalus and attributed to them victories and other favors” (Green-Mercado 78). The apparent antagonism of a Christian source clearly did not

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<sup>38</sup> *Historia del rebelión y castigo de los moriscos de Granada*, about the 1568-70 revolt in the Alpujarras.



phase some Moriscos, who were able to reinterpret and adapt such predictions to their own needs.

The final *aljófor* examined by López-Baralt from BnF Ms774 is framed as a *ḥadīth* (like the *Leyenda sobre el sacrificio de Ismail*), attributed to none other than Muḥammad himself. In it, Muhammad receives a vision of God showing him the ultimate destruction of Spanish Islam, and he weeps for its loss. In this dream, “Andalucía appears idealized over all the other territories of Islam,” and indeed “the Prophet mythologizes [*mitifica*] Andalusia, even as he predicts its future annihilation” (202, my translation). This “mythologization,” according to López-Baralt, can be seen when the *aljófor* states that Andalucía has four “gates,” which correspond to the gates of *al-jannah* (heaven); this “is nothing less than elevating al-Andalus to the sacred category of Jerusalem or the Ka’ba, which, according to Islamic legends, are located directly below the heavens” (204, my translation). In this vision of Muḥammad’s, al-Andalus is “idealized,” converted into a “new Jerusalem” – which no doubt it was for the Morisco scribe who had grown up there, seen it lost, and finally written this *aljófor* predicting the defeat of Spanish Islam (207). The *aljófor*’s author also makes use of aljamiado calques of the Arabic *ḥaddathanā* (e.g., *rekóntonos*, *recuéntase*, *fue recontado*) to lend his *aljófor* the authority and authenticity of a *ḥadīth* (201-2). In portraying a sacred al-Andalus, for which Muḥammad himself wept, the *aljófor*’s creator elevates his conquered homeland and his community’s history to the plane of myth. Morisco audiences may have found this validating, adding meaning to their struggle. It may have felt comforting to know that even if realistic chances at re-taking al-Andalus appeared slim, it held a central, sacred place in Islamic history and in God’s plan. Or, such elevation may have been a tool of persuasion, if cited in one of the many letters sent by Moriscos to Ottoman and North African rulers requesting political and military support over the course of the sixteenth century<sup>39</sup>: “the idealization of this Islamic Spain of the end times, perhaps motivated by the imperious need to lend spiritual – and maybe political – importance to a land on the point of succumbing completely under the yoke of Christianity, seems to have been an emotional refuge to many cryptomuslims” (208, my translation).

One final Morisco attempt to infuse loss with meaning and purpose via mythology was *not* conducted by rebel leaders, conspiracy plotters, or *alfakís* – instead, these were an attempt by

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<sup>39</sup> See: Green-Mercado *Visions of Deliverance*, especially chapters 3 and 4

middle-man collaborators to combine Christian and Islamic mythologies, in what Harvey calls “a desperate last-resort attempt on the part of members of the small group of ‘protected’<sup>40</sup> Moriscos to salvage something from the shipwreck of Spanish Islam” (267). The Sacromonte forgeries frame themselves as historical documents left by “Saint Cecilio” (al-Ḥajarī 72), and eschatological prophecies left by John the Baptist (75). They are generally attributed by modern scholarship to two members of the small, privileged collaborationist class allowed to remain in Granada *after* the uprising of 1568-70 – the translators, Miguel de Luna and Alonso del Castillo.<sup>41</sup> For Moriscos so highly assimilated and integrated into the Castilian structures of governance, armed rebellion was not a possibility, even less so after the crushing defeat of the Alpujarras revolt. Instead, Harvey argues, the forged “parchments” and “lead books” were part of an attempt (most likely by Luna and Castillo) “change [Christianity] *from within*, to make it, in the first place, at least less grossly offensive to Muslims” (270). In doing this, the forgers were going farther than simply losing with grace; they were attempting to shape the future of their community, and *not* for the long-term benefit of the colonizer either, as Harvey concludes:

Such corrections of the major “errors” of Christianity were not conceived in any spiritual or ecumenical compromise. The underlying intention is eschatological. The changes were to be part of the upheavals that would be a necessary preliminary to Judgment Day and the establishment of God’s kingdom. (270)

These forgeries proved popular among Moriscos (al-Ḥajarī found copies which had been brought into North African exile by other Moriscos, after 1609-14) and no doubt offered them some solace. But they also, Harvey argues, had been intended as just the first phase of a larger millenarian project, meant to achieve the final vindication of the Moriscos.

Al-Ḥajarī’s account of his encounter with the Sacromonte forgeries and his transcription of excerpts in *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn* indicate his own belief in these *aljófor*-like documents, as well as the belief of the Moriscos whose copies he later read and referenced in exile. The appeal, for al-Ḥajarī, lay in the texts’ “corrections” of what he (an orthodox Sunni Muslim) viewed as “errors” in Christianity, and in his own pro-Islamic interpretation of the Parchments’

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<sup>40</sup> Allowed to remain in Granada after the mass-expulsion of the Granadan Moriscos in 1570, following the government’s suppression of the Second Alpujarras Revolt.

<sup>41</sup> Mentioned above as transcriber of prophecies circulated during the Alpujarras revolt and published in Mármol Carvajal’s book; during the revolt, he served as translator for Phillip II, and crafted propaganda for Pedro de Deza (president of the Royal Chancery of Granada) meant to sow distrust between the Morisco rebels and their Ottoman-North African allies (Green Mercado 86)

“prophecies”: “[Here is] part of the contents of the divination [...] ‘From the adversities of the very east comes a king gleaning the spread of his power.’ / [...] / ‘A king who will dominate the whole world until doomsday’ / ‘And a religion which will proceed against those who have filled it with vices’” (al-Ḥajarī 78). The ambiguity of this “prophecy” (especially in the context of a Mediterranean confrontation between Christianity and Islam, both of which view themselves as ‘correcting’ human corruptions of earlier Abrahamic religions) allows al-Ḥajarī to interpret it as describing the spread and ultimate victory of Islam (78-79). Similarly, al-Ḥajarī cites a second “prophetic passage” describing an invasion from the West, and then another predicting, “When the time of Judgment comes, the Easterner will take hold of the City of the Sea absolutely!” To al-Ḥajarī, “No one who heard this [passage] doubted that the Easterner was the Sultan of the East and that he was [in fact] the Sultan of the Turks – may God make him victorious!” (80).

As with some of the *aljófores* studied by López-Baralt and mentioned above, these forged “prophecies” are ambiguous enough to walk the line between Christian and Muslims interpretations, enough so that they were embraced for decades by Granadan Christians and Spanish crypto-Muslims alike. In Morisco hands, like those of al-Ḥajarī, they become optimistic (though still rather dark) predictions of war, in which the final victory at the imminent Day of Judgment is handed to the Ottoman Sultan. This mythic millenarian worldview allowed Moriscos like al-Ḥajarī to view their own steadfastness as a heroic act, whether they fled *dār al-ḥarb* of their own accord, took up arms to fight, or were expelled against their wishes – all of this could be seen as faith to Islam during these final days, for which they would be rewarded at the imminent Day of Judgment. Much as *ṣumūd* (“steadfastness”) became a central virtue within the Palestinian national ethos, particularly for 48 Palestinians after the Nakba, so millenarianism allowed *ṣumūd* to be seen among Moriscos not only as a virtue, but as a central, heroic, and mythical role they would play, in the lead-up to the End of Days.

### III. Morisco Testimony

While Moriscos relied on myths to shape their identity and guide their actions in the face of state oppression, it is also important to examine the ways in which they used “testimonial” narrative strategies, such as citing official documents, oral testimony, and their own recollections, in order to preserve their own counter-narratives and lend them legitimacy when speaking with outsiders. We saw in the previous chapter how Francisco Núñez Muley attempted

to use historical legal documents, as well as his own personal memories, to dissuade the Spanish government from enacting a series of oppressive laws against the Moriscos of Granada. In such an instance, testimony is directed outwards, a futile attempt at self-defense and self-justification towards an unsympathetic conqueror.

But this was not testimony's only potential use. Moriscos used this form of self-defense and self-justification in exile as well, in response to accusations by North Africans that they were in fact *too* Spanish, too assimilated, not good Muslims, and so on. We saw this argument put forward in a 1495 fatwa by the North African jurist al-Wansharīsī, who argued that Muslims who had fled al-Andalus after the fall of Granada should be grateful for their new lives in *dār al-Islām*, even if they found themselves starving or unable to find work. Similar attitudes plagued Moriscos living in North African exile over a century later, as can be seen from the account of the Moriscos' final expulsion written by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Rafī' ibn Muḥammad al-Andalusī in 1635 (Matar 194).

This testimonial account combines al-Andalusī's personal experience from his childhood in Christian Spain (he fled with his father in 1604) with his historical account of the events leading up to expulsion, and a quotation attributed to Phillip III listing the Spanish monarch's reasons for wanting to expel the Moriscos (194-9). What is striking throughout is al-Andalusī's insistence on (and his pressing need to prove) the Moriscos' absolute loyalty to Islam, despite torture and death inflicted upon them by the Inquisition, and their ardent desire to *leave* al-Andalus and travel to *dār al-Islām*. This leads him to describe the expulsions of 1609-14 as a "great mercy and evident benevolence from our generous God" (al- Andalusī 198). Everywhere in al-Andalusī's testimonial account, the criticisms to which he is responding are readily apparent. The account begins:

Many of our brethren in God in these African regions, Tunisians and others [...] have chided us, we the nobility of al-Andalus, saying: 'Where is their honor, they having been in the land of the infidels [...] for hundreds of years, so much so that none of them is left who knows about Islam; they having mixed with the Christians [...]' and other such talk which I will not repeat here... (al-Andalusī 194)

Al-Andalusī's account aims at every turn to refute such accusations from his North African coreligionists.

Al-Andalusī turns to personal testimony as his first tool for refuting these accusations: he describes how at the age of six, "God almighty taught me about the religion of Islam through my

father, God almighty rest his soul” (194). In describing his childhood, he goes out of his way to paint a picture, and to emphasize the testimonial nature of what he is recalling: “My father took an oak [writing] board: *I can see it now*, so smooth without any clay or other stains, and he wrote the letters of the alphabet. [...] When I would enunciate a Spanish letter, he would write an Arabic letter and say to me then: ‘These are our letters.’” (194-5, my emphasis). The dialogue and detail in this passage make it easy for readers to imagine themselves in the place of that six-year-old boy, and to feel the fear and anxiety that he must have felt when, as he recalls,

[My father] asked me not to tell anyone, not even my mother, my [paternal] aunt, my brother, or the rest of our relatives. He told me not to tell a single soul, and he was quite insistent. Actually, he would send my mother to ask me, “What does your father teach you?” and I would answer, “Nothing.” She would say, “Tell me, and don’t be afraid, because I know what he is teaching you.” And I would answer, “Nothing at all, he is not teaching me anything.” (195)

This constant testing speaks to the parents’ fear; they are aware that such secrecy is a huge burden to place upon a six-year-old, and yet his successful performance of “pure” Christianity is vital to the entire family’s survival. As we have seen previously, one of the Inquisition’s common tactics was to use family members and friends to “out” one another as Muslims (Perry 76, 79-82). So, al-Andalusī’s parents, by practicing interrogation with him, were training the author-as-child to protect not only himself, but his entire community. Al-Andalusī was aware of the stakes, if not as a young child, then certainly not long after, since he writes that his father “[r]isked death if I divulged what he was doing. He would be burned, most certainly” (195). It is important to note that this adult knowledge only appears at the end of al-Andalusī’s recounting of this memory. By beginning with a detailed scene and drawing his reader into the mind of that six-year-old, he uses his own recollections to convey the supreme anxiety experienced by Moriscos – a fear so intense that children had to take on responsibility for adult lives, to learn secrecy and caution even from their own family members. Such harrowing testimony helps him to justify to his North African readers the “Christian” external appearance of the Morisco refugees who landed on their shores.

Al-Andalusī also explains to his North African readers how his family’s actions were an intentional form of *taqiyyah*, or dissimulation. In the same childhood episode, he recalls how his father “...used to teach me what to say when I saw the idols<sup>42</sup>. He said: ‘If you enter in their

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<sup>42</sup> Christian iconography or statues.

churches and see their idols, say *in your heart* the words of God: “[...] Those you worship other than God can never create so much as a fly [...]” (195; my emphasis). This again clarifies to his North African audience that Christian appearance was a deliberate, *Islamic* tactic of resistance among Moriscos, who kept Islamic belief in their *niyyah* (intention).

Al-Andalusī also recalls undertaking a kind of *riḥlah fī ṭalab al-‘ilm* as a young man, during which he “traveled far and wide to meet with the honorable Muslims in Jaen [...] and then to Granada and Cordoba, Seville and Toledo and other cities in the Green Island, may God Almighty return it to Islam” (196). He explains that he was able to gather testimony from these notable Moriscos, which he will now pass on to his North African reader: “After getting to know them I found seven of them who all spoke to me about Granada, and how Islam had flourished there, as I described it [earlier in the manuscript] and will describe it later.” (196) Al-Andalusī mentions a specific Granadan, al-Ujuri, who had studied the Qur’an as a child at an Islamic school in Granada, just before the city was seized. We can compare this *riḥlah fī ṭalab al-‘ilm* with that made by the Mancebo de Arévalo at least thirty years earlier, particularly in its similarly “journalist” goal of collecting and recording testimony from Morisco elders. For his North African audience, Al-Andalusī’s journey shows the lengths to which Moriscos were willing to go to obtain Islamic knowledge (despite Inquisitorial spying and legal restrictions on their movements, especially later in the sixteenth century). It illustrates the presence of a network of devote Muslims communicating in secret, even at the height of the Inquisition.

Al-Andalusī constantly emphasizes for his Tunisian readers the ways in which Moriscos remained loyal to Islam. He describes the vicissitudes of forced conversions and repressive laws: “The enemy then started to force infidelity upon them. He began by prohibiting them Muslim clothes, gatherings, baths, and other Islamic practices.” Then he moves on to describe the Moriscos’ resistance to assimilation: “They resisted firmly and repeatedly, and rose up against [the king] and fought him [...] We remained among them while the enemy of religion burned with fire all who acted like Muslims, inflicting upon them all kinds of torture” (197). Here, Al-Andalusī valorizes the Moriscos’ steadfast endurance in the face of persecution and torture; he points out that their resistance took both passive and active forms, and that their attitude was *never* one of straightforward submission. He uses the third person “they” when referring to the last Granadans and the early Moriscos who lived before his own time, who he learned about via testimony from the elders mentioned above. He switches to the first-person “we” when

describing the later Moriscos of whom he was one – “we remained” (97). Al-Andalusī has done the work both of eyewitness and historian for his North African readers, gathering testimony from primary sources and from his own experience. The closeness of his sources to the events described, and his own visible piety, would have lent weight to his arguments that he and his fellows were heroic in their steadfastness, not despicable in their assimilation.

Finally, al-Andalusī provides his own version of the events leading up to the mass-expulsion of the Moriscos. He includes a “brief synopsis that I have summarized and translated about the reasons that the infidel king, may God almighty keep him away, included in the decrees he issued regarding our brethren the Andalusians when he decided to expel them from the Green Island [al-Andalus]” (198). Al-Andalusī’s version of events leading up to the expulsion paints the Moriscos as unswervingly Islamic. He describes how a group of Moriscos went to tell their experiences to the Ottoman Sultan, and how the Sultan insisted that the King of France permit any Moriscos in his domains to travel safely and immediately to Ottoman territory. This, al-Andalusī tells us, made Phillip III afraid, and prompted him to expel the Moriscos from Spain (198).

In reality, fear of a Morisco “fifth column” did indeed form a part of the arguments for expulsion, and it was not baseless, as Moriscos has in fact reached out to several foreign powers to beg them for help in retaking Spain (Chejne 9, Harvey 337, 342-52). During the Alpujarras revolt of 1568-70, the Ottomans did in fact send soldiers to aid the Granadan rebels; when that revolt ended in failure, Phillip II and his successor Phillip III undoubtedly took Ottoman intervention into account when deciding how to respond to the Granadan and other Moriscos of the Peninsula. However, like much anti-Morisco screech from this time period, al-Andalusī’s portrayal of the Moriscos’ power and influence probably overstates their ability, especially after 1570, to pose an existential threat to Christian Spain. Harvey argues that while Moriscos had indeed contacted rulers in France, the Netherlands, the Ottoman Empire, and elsewhere to attempt to mobilize against Spain, those rulers were aware of the Moriscos’ limited numbers and strength. Instead, Harvey posits, Phillip III’s motives for expelling the Moriscos had more to do with distracting attention from his defeat in the Netherlands, redirecting it towards a vulnerable scapegoat (Harvey 308).

In providing an inflated picture of the Moriscos’ power, al-Andalusī emphasizes his community’s loyalty to Islam for his North African readers. He compares the Moriscos to the

*anṣār*, or early Muslims, and argues that they have played a similarly unique and vital role in fighting for Islam where no one else would (199). This is similar to the millenarian worldview evoked in the *ajófores* we have discussed, but here it is directed outwards, to a foreign audience, in self-defense. In his “summary” of the Edicts of Expulsion, al-Andalusī similarly highlights the “true Islamic character” of the Moriscos, adding weight to his words by putting them in the mouth of the reviled-yet-powerful Phillip III: “They never repented what they did, and never returned truly in their hearts to the religion of Christianity. [...] They also sought help from the Ottoman Sultan against us, [...] I wanted to cast them into the land of the Muslims because they were Muslims, and would be there with their ilk” (198-9). By having an enemy “testify” to the faith and perseverance of the Moriscos, al-Andalusī underscores their loyalty to Islam. He states bluntly that this is his purpose in “summarizing” Phillip III’s speech: “I want you to know from this synopsis about the condition of the Andalusians [viz. Moriscos], and learn some of the true reasons for which they were expelled, and not those the envious claim. [...] I hope this synopsis will prove useful lest we, the people of the Andalus, be maligned.” (198)

The veracity and accuracy of al-Andalusī’s testimony are necessarily suspect; he may have exaggerated or fabricated things in order to defend and justify the actions of his community. Parts of his testimony, such as his own childhood, bring up a wealth of detail and emotion, and thus appear quite truthful; yet we know from this very account that he was taught to lie and to keep secrets from the tender age of six. As a member of a persecuted minority, *al-baqiyyah al-bāqiyah*, he is inherently an unreliable narrator. Yet he presents his narrative as testimony, both personal and gathered from elders, from Spanish decrees and official documents, and through a general knowledge of history. By citing such sources, he appeals to the perceived truth-value of these kinds of first-hand accounts and documentation. On behalf of himself and his community-in-exile, al-Andalusī clad himself in the armor of testimony, in order to refute the accusations of North Africans that these new arrivals, who had been rejected in Spain for not being truly Christian, were not truly Muslim, either.

Another Morisco author who offered up his own personal testimony, alongside a translation of the Edicts of Expulsion, in a way that highlights his and his community’s loyalty to Islam was the translator and diplomat, Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥajarī. As al-Ḥajarī tells us, he grew up in Spain (most likely in al-Ḥajar al-Aḥmar, a Morisco/Mudejar village in Hornachos), and was involved in the Granadan Lead Books affair, before he subsequently fled with a fellow-



Morisco to Morocco. There, he was accepted into the royal court and became a translator and diplomat, one of a class of Mediterranean middlemen who played an important role during the Early Modern period (Van Koningsveld et. al., 18-20). Throughout his life in North Africa, al-Ḥajarī used the border-crossing skills his Morisco upbringing had given him (e.g., in his work as a translator), and he made an effort to aid the Morisco community, especially after their forced exile in 1609-14. By that time, al-Ḥajarī had already settled in Morocco, having fled Spain around the same time as Ibn ‘Abd al-Rafī’ al-Andalusī. When some Moriscos approached the Moroccan monarch, complaining that the French sailors responsible for carrying them out of Spain had robbed them at sea, al-Ḥajarī was selected to accompany five of them to France, to seek legal recompense (al-Ḥajarī 101-2). He made other contributions to his community-in-exile, such as translating Islamic texts for them from Arabic into Spanish, so that vernacular-speaking Moriscos could learn more about their own religion. Later in life, he translated a Spanish-language treatise on gunnery into Arabic, in an effort to assist Islamic North Africa in its ongoing struggles with its Christian neighbors, including Spain (Van Koningsveld et. al., 37, 45-7, 49-52).

In 1637, near the end of his life, al-Ḥajarī was prompted by the Egyptian sheikh al-Ujhūrī to write his autobiography, *Riḥlat al-shihāb ila liqā’ al-aḥbāb*, and a shortened version titled *Kitāb nāṣir al-dīn ‘ala ‘l-qawm al-kāfirīn* (Van Koningsveld et. al., 49). This latter text has survived (unlike its longer version), and it includes many examples of al-Ḥajarī’s “testimony” as a Morisco and as a devout Muslim. Al-Ḥajarī’s middle-man role, which he had assumed even before his escape from Spain to Morocco, makes his goals as an autobiographer quite the balancing act. While the meat of *Kitāb nāṣir al-dīn* is spent on polemical debates which al-Ḥajarī held with Christians during his travels in France and the Netherlands, he also has to justify to his North African readers the depth of his own knowledge of Christian and Jewish sources: “I told them, ‘You should know that I am the interpreter of the Sultan of Marrakesh. He who occupies that post must study the sciences, as well as the books of the Muslims and Christians, in order to know what he is saying and translating in the court of the Sultan” (al-Ḥajarī 133).

This comes from a passage in which al-Ḥajarī is explaining himself to his French hosts; however, we see al-Ḥajarī *constantly* explaining himself to different audiences over the course of his autobiography. In Granada, we see him downplaying his knowledge of Arabic to a Catholic priest, spinning a false story of a teacher from Valencia (whose inhabitants were legally allowed

to speak Arabic) in an effort to “protec[t] myself from their evil by lying” (74). He justifies this by citing part of al-Ghazālī’s *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*, in which lying is deemed recommendable (*mandūb*) when it is done to protect others (74). After his escape to Morocco, al-Ḥajarī once again has to prove himself, first by reciting the *shahādah* to the inhabitants of Azammur, then by giving a speech in formal Arabic to the court of the then-ruler of Morocco, Moulay Aḥmad (100, 102). By his own account, al-Ḥajarī’s performances in all these instances were successful: he managed to escape Spain without being caught, even though he reports that Moriscos from his town feared he had given himself away by demonstrating his knowledge of Arabic (81). His address to the Sultan of Morocco went similarly well: “The Sultan was delighted and asked: ‘How can there be someone in Al-Andalus who speaks Arabic this way, as this is the speech of religious scholars?’” (102). Al-Ḥajarī’s testimony, like that of Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥī’ al-Andalusī, portrays himself and his community as steadfast Muslims to his intended audience of North African readers. For al-Ḥajarī, this means justifying his *passing* for Christian in Spain, and his *knowledge* of Christianity in his subsequent role as translator for the Sultans of Morocco<sup>43</sup> (102).

Al-Ḥajarī’s autobiography offers a fascinating look into his involvement (as a translator) in the infamous affair of the Torre Turpiana parchments and the “Lead Books” of Sacromonte. Like al-Andalusī’s recollections of his childhood in Inquisitorial Spain, al-Ḥajarī’s account of his experience with the Lead Books conveys the atmosphere of fear and mistrust in which Moriscos at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century lived, which he feels compelled to explain to his audience of North African coreligionists. Recounting how he at first hid his knowledge of Arabic, then lied about his teacher in order to protect himself and his community, al-Ḥajarī presents an internal monologue: “I said to myself: ‘How shall I save myself, as the Christians kill and burn everyone on whom they find an Arabic book or about whom they know he reads Arabic?’” (73). This statement would go without saying for any Morisco reader, so it is clear that the intended audience in this instance are non-Morisco, Muslim readers. Similarly, al-Ḥajarī explains a few pages later that when he ran into a group of travelers from his own town in Granada,

[They] thought that the Christian Inquisitors [*al-ḥarrāqīn* – literally “the burners”] – who used to sentence and burn to death everyone who manifested his adherence to Islam in any way or was reading the books of the Muslims – would condemn me [as well]. Driven by this extreme fear, the Andalusians [Moriscos] used to be afraid of each other. They

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<sup>43</sup> Al-Ḥajarī served Aḥmad’s son, Muley Zaydān, after Aḥmad died.

only spoke about religious matters with someone who was “safe”, i.e.: someone who could be trusted completely. Many of them were afraid of one another. (81)

This account includes both a specific recollection – his townspeople’s reaction to his work translating for the Granadan Church, and a generalized recollection – Moriscos lived in a climate of fear and mistrust. Like al-Andalusī, al-Ḥajarī has to explain to a North African audience the context for his deception (*taqiyyah*), including why it was so *difficult* for him to finally flee to North Africa.

Al-Ḥajarī also includes transcriptions and explanations of sections of the Sacromonte tablets, which are shaped by his own Islamic beliefs. While North Africans may have viewed these texts as unorthodox (much as the Vatican condemned them as apocryphal and heretical), Al-Ḥajarī focuses on the syncretic aspects of the texts. He interprets their ambiguities with a decidedly Islamic tilt: “When I translated that ‘his religion will proceed against those who fill it with vices’, the priest said: ‘How do you reach this translation?’ [...] He disliked this very much because according to my translation, in fact the unbelievers, are the ones who would fill it with vices” (79). When faced with the cryptic term “*al-multabiba*,” other translators followed the Latin prefix multi- and translated this term as “the Trinity” - but al-Ḥajarī traces its meaning to the Arabic root, “*lubb al-shay*’” (the heart/essence of the thing), and thus decides that it means “the plain or pure essence which was neither composite nor mixed” (76). Where Christian translators saw an allusion to the Trinity, al-Ḥajarī instead sees a reference to the unity (*tawḥīd*) of God. In recounting this episode and his Islamic interpretation of the *plomos* (despite the danger it placed him in), al-Ḥajarī demonstrates his Islamic orthodoxy to his North African readers.

Near the end of *Kitāb nāṣir al-dīn*, al-Ḥajarī recounts how after completing his work in France, he went to the Netherlands with the excuse that their ships could offer him a safer return voyage. There he met with Maurice of Nassau, who offered to send Dutch military aid to the Moriscos in a hypothetical invasion of Spain: “He asked me: ‘What if I made an agreement with the leaders of the Andalusians and sent them a fleet of big ships in which they would sail with my soldiers, in order to capture Spain?’” (201). Al-Ḥajarī’s response was realistic: “This would be a great thing, should it indeed happen. But there is doubt whether it will really happen” (201). This reported conversation is in line with other documented Morisco efforts to reach out to the Dutch, the English, and even French Protestants for hypothetical alliances against the Spanish

(Harvey 343). What is unusual about al-Ḥajari's conversation with Maurice of Nassau is its late date, post-expulsion, and al-Ḥajari's own political position. Al-Ḥajari was not a representative of the Granadan or Aragonese or Valencian Morisco communities, rather he was representative of Muley Zaydan's government in North Africa – which, like Maurice of Nassau's government, saw Spain as a powerful enemy, but did not nurse the same dreams of “restoration” that some Moriscos had clung to, right up to the final expulsion.

During this conversation, Maurice of Nassau asks al-Ḥajari, “For what reason do you think the Sultan of Spain has expelled the Andalusians from his country?” (al-Ḥajari 200). Like al-Andalusī, al-Ḥajari's response (as he records it in *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn*) depicts Moriscos as true Muslims, steadfast in their resistance, prevented from leaving Spain by external forces:

You should know that the Andalusians were secretly living as Muslims, hiding their faith from the Christians. But sometimes their Islamic conviction was discovered. Then they were sentenced [for it]. When he had established the truth about them, he no longer felt safe from them. Thus, he did not engage anyone of them for warfare, which kills a lot of people. He also prohibited them to mount the sea lest they should run away to their own co-religionists. [...] among the Andalusians, there were no priests, monks, or nuns. All of them married, so that their number, as well as that of their children, increased, also because they did not participate in warfare or seafaring. This, I think, caused him to expel them, because they would become more numerous in the length of time. (200-201)

Like al-Andalusī, al-Ḥajari presents a monolithic picture of Moriscos “living secretly as Muslims.” From our previous look at collaborators and collaboration, we know that of course, the Morisco population of Spain was incredibly diverse from region to region and from person to person, and that different individuals preserved their Islamic faith to different extents and in different ways. However, presenting their testimony as Andalusians to a North African audience suspicious of the Moriscos' religious bona fides, al-Andalusī and al-Ḥajari strategically do not delve into the nuances of the situation. They prefer to present a monolithic image of Muslims who maintained their faith despite torture and death at the hands of the Inquisition. Al-Ḥajari's statements about Moriscos not being allowed to join the army, being banned from owning weapons, and being banned from travel to coastal areas were all true, lending credence to his oversimplification of Morisco religiosity, and crucial for explaining why so most Moriscos remained living in *dār al-ḥarb* for so long.

The “demographic argument” for expulsion, mentioned by al-Ḥajari, was one put forward by Christian proponents of expulsion. Al-Ḥajari had read both the official *Bando de expulsion*

published September 22, 1609, as well as another related document published eleven days earlier (Van Koningsveld et. al., 206). He does not merely summarize these arguments, but offers documentation: an Arabic translation of an edict of expulsion issued by Phillip III. Unlike al-Andalusī, whose “brief synopsis that I have summarized and translated” is vague about where he obtained these documents, al-Ḥajarī, as a diplomat, could show his receipts. He explains his personal experience with the edicts of expulsion – first as a Morisco in Spain during the reign of Phillip II, later as member of the Moroccan court hearing verbal reports of a second registration, and finally, translating the Edicts of Expulsion in an official capacity for the Sultan of Morocco.

Before I left his country, this Phillip the Second ordered all the Andalusian inhabitants, both the adults and the children, to register. [...] No one knew the underlying reason for this registration. Then, after about seventeen years, they arranged another registration like the first one, as I was told in Marrakesh [...] it was said at the time that they wanted to know whether they [the Andalusians] increased in number or not. When they found out their [number] was in fact increasing tremendously, they ordered them to be expelled shortly afterward. Sultan Phillip, the third of his name, wrote a letter to his relative and viceregent in the City of Valencia ordering him to start expelling the Andalusians. I translated a copy of the letter for Sultan Moulay Zaydan, the son of Moulay Ahmad, in Marrakesh. The letter was dated (but God knows best!) at the beginning of the year 1018 of the Hijra. In it he said [...] (al-Ḥajarī 205).

As Harvey tells us, although al-Ḥajarī translated these documents for Moulay Zaydan in 1609, “Morocco was in no position to act at that time” (352). Moulay Zaydan had just assumed power after a difficult civil war against his own family members and would not have been able to aid the Moriscos against Phillip III’s imminent ethnic cleansing. Al-Ḥajarī seems to have taken it upon himself to do all that he could, given his position as a translator and diplomat in the Moroccan court. He traveled to France and the Netherlands soon after the initial expulsion, to advocate for Moriscos who had been robbed on French ships and to speak with Maurice of Nassau, a potential military ally of both Morocco and the Moriscos. He subsequently recorded his own involvement in these historical events, as well as reports he heard in the Moroccan court and official documents he translated, in his *Kitāb nāṣir al-dīn*, for a North African audience.

As with Ibn ‘Abd al-Rafī’s translation of Phillip III’s reasons for expulsion, al-Ḥajarī’s transcription of the Edicts of Expulsion cites the Moriscos’ persistent Islamic faith (“none is found who is truly Christian”), as well as their diplomatic contacts with hostile foreign powers (“they have sent their messengers to the Great Turk in Istanbul and to Moulay Zaydan in Marrakesh asking them for help [...] They also sent [them] to our enemies at the sea in the North

under the Pole”); 204-205). Unlike Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥī’s short excerpt, al-Ḥajarī’s translation of the edicts of expulsion carries more weight of authority, as he is able to clearly explain from which documents it originated, and that he translated it in his official capacity as translator for Moulay Zaydan. As an Hornachero himself, it appears that he was in contact with the Moriscos of Hornachos, who settled in Morocco after the expulsion, and learned the specific circumstances of the expulsion of his countrymen. The Moriscos of al-Ḥajar al-Aḥmar had departed from Seville and had been forced to leave approximately a thousand children behind – all their children under the age of seven (210). Al-Ḥajarī’s combination of official documents with personal testimony, as well as oral accounts he had gathered from his countrymen, conveys a clear and convincing picture of the circumstances of the Moriscos’ lives in *dār al-ḥarb* and their expulsion from it; documentation lends weight and authority to testimony, offering a clear picture to a North African audience of exactly *why* Moriscos remained in *dār al-ḥarb* for so long, and why the circumstances of their final departure were so painful for them, despite being given the chance to live openly as Muslims. Al-Ḥajarī’s *Kitāb nāṣir al-dīn* is a prime example of a Morisco text that uses testimony –personal, collective, and documentary – to explain and justify the actions of Moriscos to an outside audience suspicious of their necessarily hybrid nature.

Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥī’ al-Andalusī and Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥajarī both used testimony as tool with which to convince a North African audience; roughly half a century earlier, Francisco Núñez Muley’s *Memorandum* had similarly used documentation and personal testimony to try to sway a hostile listener from outside the Morisco community. However, sometimes, testimony could be directed inwards towards a Morisco audience, for the purpose of recording and preserving history, before its actors passed away. This is apparent in the (much earlier – c. 1530s) work of the Mancebo de Arévalo, whose *Tafsira* and *Breve compendio* recount his own experience of a secret meeting of Islamic scholars and leaders in Saragossa, and the testimonies of three elderly survivors of the fall of Granada (discussed in Chapter One). In her introduction to the Mancebo’s *Tafsira*, Narváez Córdova outlines what she calls “la dimensión testimonial de la *Tafsira*”:

[...] perhaps one of the most revealing aspects of the Mancebo de Arévalo’s words is its testimonial nature. We are without a doubt facing one of the most data-rich documents, which capture for posterity the most prestigious figures of the Morisco environment, their experiences and their pain, their hopes and their fears in the face of the reality which it was their fate to live. (51; my translation)

As Narváez Córdoba explains, the Mancebo's testimony is vital in preserving the voices of the direct eyewitnesses to the fall of Granada and the immediate aftermath of the final wave of forced conversions, which took place in the early 1520s (Harvey 93-4). Narváez Córdoba suggests that the Mancebo traveled to Granada in 1533, as "part of his effort to compile knowledge, which had been solicited by the 'alimes of Zaragoza to compose his *Tafsīr*" (29; my translation). She places his journey to visit Muslim elders, and his accounts of conversations with them, in the Arabic genre of *al-riḥlah fī ṭalab al-ʿilm* (Narváez Córdoba 52).

The Mancebo states in his *Tafsira* that this meeting took place "not yet eight years from out conversion<sup>44</sup>," and he describes how the distraught 'alimes who gathered secretly used the opportunity to debate the best course of action. Would prayers be of any use if performed secretly, without the *adhān*? Would it be best to stay put and persevere in their faith despite its newly outlawed status, or to "*puxiexe haldas en cinta* [pull up their skirts, i.e., flee]" (*Tafsira* trans. Harvey 181, Narváez Córdoba 19-20). The Mancebo also describes how despite his young age at the time, the 'alimes present seem to have held him in some regard. They allowed him to perform the *khuṭbah* for their post-meeting prayer, gave him money to use for his planned upcoming *hajj*, and finally "asked me to set to work, while I was waiting to depart, and to revise a substantial part of the commentaries on our honored Koran, as briefly and compendiously as possible. I accepted the task of drawing up this *Tafsira*, so as to fulfill my obligation as a Muslim, at the request of these honored scholars" (trans. Harvey 182). This excerpt comes from the *Tafsira*, but Narváez Córdoba argues that since all three of the Mancebo's known texts reference his impending *hajj* and include many textual overlaps, it makes sense to view all three as compilations, all produced around the same time (30). She suggests that the Zaragoza meeting of newly crypto-Muslims took place just before 1533, and that the Mancebo set out on a journey across Spain shortly after the meeting, in order to obtain the knowledge he would need to compose his Islamic treatise. The estimate of 1533 has also convinced L.P. Harvey, who has devoted much of his career examining the Mancebo's life and works (Narváez Córdoba 29-30).

This date of writing (1533) illuminates the intended and actual *uses* of this testimony, as an *inward-facing* safeguard of memory and narrative for a Morisco audience. Like the myths

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<sup>44</sup> Forced mass-conversions in Aragón were in 1525.

which became powerful tools of steadfastness for Moriscos in the late sixteenth century, this testimony from the early sixteenth century proved popular among Moriscos living decades later:

It is interesting to note that the Mancebo becomes an authority for later Moriscos, who cite him and incorporate him in their own works. Perhaps they recognize the advantage this author had, that he could travel across Spain and collect the knowledge preserved by those who lived through the final period of Nasrid Granada and had full liberty to consult Arabic and Andalusian books, and to practice Islam without restrictions. This privileged situation was remembered with nostalgia by the now-*conversos de moro* Yuse Banegas, ‘Ali Sarmiento, or the Mora de Úbeda, who share with our Morisco from Arévalo their books, their knowledge, and – what is more invaluable – their experiences of the historical transition to which they testify [*atestiguan*]. (Narváez Córdoba 30-1; my translation)

The Mancebo was able to travel “very widely in Spain,” to Granada, Alcántara, Astorga, Ávila, Gandía, Jaén, Ocaña, Requena, Ronda, Saragossa, and Segovia (“all the parts of Spain except the seaboard provinces [...] presumably because those would have been barred to a Morisco”) in search of knowledge from his Muslim elders, *because* he was traveling and writing at such an early date, just after the last mass-conversion (that of the Muslims of Aragón; Harvey 172). His ability to undertake such journeys and interviews made him an invaluable source for later Moriscos, living in the more restrictive environment of late sixteenth-century Spain. He also influenced Morisco writers like Mohammad Rabadán, whose works were written on the eve of and from exile in North Africa after the expulsions of 1609-14 (Harvey 173).

The Mancebo’s works show us a picture of a religious activist, who spent his time running around in the immediate aftermath of calamity, trying to gather as many fragments as possible. He functions almost as an early-modern proto-journalist or war correspondent:

Had he lived in our times, we have little doubt that the Mancebo would have been inclined towards the journalistic profession. Because he does not only collect the physical features of his acquaintances: he also records in detail his conversations with them, and even transcribes for his readers the documents that they provide him. (Narváez Córdoba 51, my translation)

Narváez Córdoba frequently highlights the journalistic nature of the Mancebo’s travels and his writing. For example, she refers to him “reporting” on his visit to the Mora de Úbeda, in which the latter recounts her experiences of loss after the conquest of Granada: “Yo vi el Libro de la Altura Celeste en manos de un mercader que los hacía papeles para niños y yo recogí estos pedazos para mayor duelo mío” (“I saw the Book of the Celestial Heights [the Qur’an] in the hands of a vendor who made it into paper toys for children, and I gathered up these pieces, to my



great pain” (*Tafsira* qtd. 54). The Mancebo also partially transcribes a letter the Mora gives him, and we see this same pattern of recording both conversations and documents in his subsequent accounts of his meetings with Yuse Banegas and Ali Sarmiento.

In the case of Ali Sarmiento, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the Mancebo copies out the text of a safe-conduct agreement which ‘Ali was given by King Ferdinand, in return for his probable services as an informant: “The Mancebo’s ‘journalistic’ zeal makes him transcribe not only the cited document, signed by Fernando el Católico (which is translated into Latin) but also the entire doctrinal exhortation which ‘Ali offers the three companions who visit him [...] The scene gains life thanks to the details the Mancebo includes in his retelling” (Narvález Córdova 60, my translation). The Mancebo adds the text of this document to a detailed description of his encounter with Ali and of Ali’s sermon to his visitors. This account is not unsympathetic; the goal is to *document*, not to lay blame. This is in keeping with the nature of *testimony*, which as we have seen differs from national mythic narratives in that it does not avoid moral gray areas but, rather, attempts to relate the facts, without prettifying or eliding sticky issues like collaboration.

In the case of Yuse Banegas, the Mancebo mentions how lucky he was to have the chance to study with Yuse and read his books; but what he focuses on in his written account of his visit to Yuse is the latter’s oral testimony of the fall of Granada<sup>45</sup>. The Mancebo relates Yuse’s testimony in a style which emphasizes Yuse’s physical and emotional *closeness* to the events described: “...no hay momento que no reverbera dentro de mi corazón, y no hay momento en que no se rasguen mis entrañas” (“...there is no moment when it does not reverberate in my heart, and when my entrails are not torn”; qtd. Narvález Córdova 28, modernized version). Yuse, as portrayed by the Mancebo, drives home his role as firsthand witness: “No dudes mis palabras, que yo fui uno de ellos, y fui testigo de vista: vi con mis propios ojos [...]” (“Do not doubt my words; I was one of them, and I was an eye witness: I saw with my own eyes [...]”; 28). He uses

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<sup>45</sup> I discussed the full quote in the context of collaboration and resistance in Chapter One; for reference, here is the quote again in full: “Hijo, no ignore que de las cosas de Granada está vacío tu entendimiento; y que yo las rememore no debe espantarte, porque no hay momento que no reverbera dentro de mi corazón, y no hay momento en que no se rasguen mis entrañas... nadie lloró con tanta desventura como los hijos de Granada. No dudes mis palabras, que yo fui uno de ellos, y fui testigo de vista: vi con mis propios ojos escarnecidas a todas las nobles damas, [...] y vi vender en pública almoneda a más de trecientas doncellas... Y yo perdí a tres hijos varones [...] Y yo quedé huérfano...” (qtd. Narvález Córdova 28, modernized version)

repetition and parallel structure, in the manner of oral storytelling, to continually emphasize that the story in question is *Yuse's own experience*: “vi con mis propios ojos” is followed by “y vi...” “Y yo perdí...” “Y yo quedé.” The emphasis here is on “I” – on the “yo” and on the first-person form of each verb; the sentence structure is repetitive, always starting with a first-person verb – I saw, I lost, I became. Yuse wants the Mancebo (and/or, the Mancebo wants his readers) to view this passage as an eyewitness account of the fall of Granada, lest they remain ignorant of what happened to the last Muslim kingdom al-Andalus. The target audience of newly-crypto-Muslims extends past Granada’s borders; Yuse knows that the Mancebo is writing in the tradition of *al-riḥlah fi ṭalab al-‘ilm* and on the order of the council of *‘alimes* which convened in Zaragoza. He wants to convey to his coreligionists across Spain the reality and constant, intimate pain of his own experience of the fall of Granada. This memory, with its near-physical pain (“no hay momento en que no se rasguen mis entrañas”) would form part of a larger Morisco counter-narrative, the same counter-narrative enshrined in legends and prophecies. Where legends and prophecies connected Moriscos to a larger Islamic *umma*, the testimony recorded by the Mancebo connects them to the physical, historical reality of Granada. It is a testament to the existence of al-Andalus, a memory without which there could be no hope for future restoration.

#### IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined some of the ways in which Moriscos used both mythic and testimonial styles to narrate the catastrophic events of their defeat and their lives as a conquered minority in Spain/al-Andalus. Drawing on theories about nationalist mythmaking, nostalgia, and the function of testimony, I have argued that Morisco mythmaking was an inward-facing activity, used to shape and solidify group identity and offer models of graceful, steadfast suffering for Moriscos to emulate while they awaited salvation at the End of Times. Conversely, Moriscos testimony was most often directed outwards in an attempt at self-explanation and self-justification, as when Al-Andalusī and al-Ḥajarī made use of documents, personal recollections, and oral testimony they gathered from others to portray their community in a positive light to a suspicious and sometimes-hostile North African readership. We have also seen how the Mancebo de Arévalo produced texts which embody the impulse to mythologize the lost homeland, alongside the desire to provide detailed testimony, in order to preserve already-vanishing oral accounts of events for future generations. The Mancebo’s mythologization of the

lost homeland of Granada embodies what Boym calls “[t]he nostalgic desire to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space” (“Introduction”); yet in the same chapters, he contradicts this nostalgic urge by offering first- and second-hand testimony as well as historical documentation describing Granada before, during, and after its fall. His mythologizing urge brings a sense of meaning and grandeur to the loss of Granada, while his historicizing impulses lend his account a greater sense of authenticity. Morisco literature in all its variations thus offers a wide spectrum of mythic and testimonial narrative strategies, from modeling steadfastness in preparation for an upcoming Day of Judgement, to explaining the divine reasons for the loss of Islamic Spain, to attempting to subtly influence the conquerors’ attitudes through “entryism” (as in the case of the Sacromonte forgeries), to defending the community against outside attack, to preserving a quasi-mythic, quasi-historical vision of the lost homeland, as in the Mancebo’s account.

While it is tempting to valorize only certain kinds of remembrance, I believe that as readers, we are not in a place to do what Goldberg does in his essay and extol the virtues of “honest” truth-telling above all else, nor should we necessarily emulate a “committed” writer like Kanafani who makes use of nationalist mythologies to paint a hopeful (if inaccurate) picture of armed resistance. Rather, it seems most appropriate to me to recognize that each form of remembrance, whether it tends to testify or mythologize or both, is specific to its context and its author. Due to the collective nature of their tragedy, and the individual nature of trauma, Morisco writers produced texts which spoke to both the collective narrative style of myth, and the personal narrative style of testimony. As we move on in the next chapter to examine how 48 Palestinians employed myth and testimony to write about their collective tragedy, I will endeavor to transfer these lessons from the Morisco context into this modern and still very politicized one, and to offer an honest account of how certain Palestinian writers from within the occupied Galilee made use of myth and testimony for their own narrative purposes.

## Chapter Three

### *And Did they Really Sing Anyway? Palestinian Myth and Testimony*

#### I. Emile Habiby and Palestinian Crypto-Testimony

The dual narrative strategies of myth and testimony – and the blurring of these two strategies – was not unique to the Moriscos. As I have argued above, testimony often represents a deeply personal account, while myth is more usually associated with the collective – they can become forged into what Goldberg terms a “national epos” (335). Yet we often see Morisco writers using testimony, either their own or that of their fellow-Moriscos, to defend their community against rhetorical or ideological attacks coming from outside, and in the case of the Mancebo, as a tool in the immediate aftermath of a crisis to set the memory of their community into writing, before the carriers of that oral testimony pass away. Testimony is versatile in this way: although personal, it can be shaped and used for different purposes by the collective – it can become part of a collective “memory,” or can be used for self-defense against rhetoric that aims to criticize or undermine the authority of the community.

Palestine has its share of “testimonial” writing, from authors both within and outside the boundaries of the Israeli state. I would like to focus here on the fiction of one particular author, Emile Habiby, whose novel, *The Pessoptimist*, was discussed in Chapter One for Habiby’s role as and portrayal of a Palestinian collaborator. I have chosen to focus on Habiby in this section because of the unique way in which his fiction incorporates both “mythic” and “testimonial” narrative styles, and the ways in which living under occupation prompts him to present his own testimony indirectly as fiction, rather than claiming these experiences as his own from the start. Habiby’s oblique approach to testimony, which involves myth, history, irony, and satire, is a result of his circumstances as a Palestinian living under Israeli rule and working within the political structures of the Zionist regime. As Samar Attar puts it, he “whispers”: “Habiby seems to be afraid to speak clearly about the changes that have taken place in his city [Haifa]. For this reason perhaps, he tends to mix myth with reality” (Attar 51, 47).

This oblique approach to giving testimony can be seen in Habiby's novel *The Pessoptimist*, first serialized in three installments in Maki's Arabic literary magazine *al-Jadīd* between 1972-1974. The book's titular character, Saeed the Pessoptimist, is a comic antihero, a collaborator and son of a collaborator, utterly devoid of honor and distinctly unreliable as a narrator. The story is heavy on satire, and uses myth in the style of magic realism, to accentuate the honor/dishonor of characters and the absurdity of everyday life for Palestinians in Israel. Explicit reference is made to Voltaire's *Candide* as a source of inspiration, particularly Voltaire's use of the absurd to highlight the absurd cruelty of reality. However, amidst the stories of aliens, human transformation, miraculous escapes, etc., we also see how the author utilizes his unreliable narrator, Saeed, to insert bits of testimony into his narrative. Specifically, the novel employs three "testimonial" narrative strategies: the compulsive naming of destroyed Palestinian villages, the narration (with newspaper citation) of current events highlighting the Israeli state's oppression of its Palestinian citizens, and finally the insertion of Habiby's own political views, specifically his critique of Arab regimes and his lauding of his own political party, Maki (The Israeli Communist Party).

Naming is a recurring theme in *The Pessoptimist*. Although Saeed as an antihero proclaims his own self-interest and his indifference to the expulsion of his fellow-Palestinians in 1948, the narrative itself gives Palestinian refugees an opportunity to name their destroyed villages and testify to exactly what happened to them. When Saeed's Zionist bosses throw him into al-Jazzar Mosque for overnight storage, during the final days of the Nakba, he is greeted by refugees eagerly asking him for news. Their requests become a litany of names of Palestinian villages demolished by Zionist forces:

"I am from al-Manshiyya. There's not a stone left standing there except the tombs. Did you meet anyone from al-Manshiyya?"

"No."

"We are from Amqa. They plowed all its houses under and spilled its oil onto the ground. Did you meet anyone from Amqa?"

"No."

"We over here are from Berwah. They forced us out and obliterated it. Did you meet anyone from Berwah?"

[...] soon voices erupted again, persisting in drawing out their relationships to their villages, all of which I understood to have been razed by the army:

"We are from Ruwais." "We are from al-Hadatha." "We are from el-Damun."

"We are from Mazraa." "We are from Shaab." "We are from Miy'ār."

"We are from Waarat el-Sarris." "We are from al-Zeeb." "We are from el-Bassa."

“We are from Dair el-Qasi.” “We are from Saasaa.” “We are from el-Ghābisīyah[ yah].”  
“We are from Suhmata.” “We are from al-Safsaf.” “We are from Kufr ‘Inān.”  
(trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 21-22)

The visual format of this dialogue in the original Arabic takes the form of a long list, emphasizing the almost court-like or journalistic nature of the passage. Each refugee speaks out, testifying to their personal experience by naming their village and what happened to it. The narrator, again, wants no part of this and usually does not respond; however what Miḥjiz terms the “internal author” (as opposed to the “civilian” or “public” author) of the text seizes the opportunity to voice these Palestinians’ testimony (Miḥjiz 192).

*The Pessoptimist* is multilayered when it comes to narrators and authorial voice. The book frames itself as a series of letters from Saeed, who narrates his own experience to a chronicler<sup>46</sup> who collects Saeed’s “letters” and issues them in public form. This “chronicler,” an invisible yet always-present character, is separate from Miḥjiz’s “internal author,” who adds yet another layer. Significantly, it is not always the chronicler or the internal author who gives voice to Palestinian testimony; as evidenced by the epistolical nature of the work, Saeed himself offers up his story as “testimony” of his own experience. Sometimes, Saeed employs the same strategy of naming that we saw above in the Jazzar Mosque episode.

In the chapter titled “Saeed Takes Refuge in a Footnote,” the names come directly from Saeed’s own mouth. He tells us about the “disappearance” of West Bank donkeys, as Tel Aviv butchers turn them into sausages, and he asks whether this situation is a tragedy or a farce (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 44). He then asks about the donkeys of the destroyed Palestinian villages of Israel: “Is it the tragedy of the donkeys of Wadi al-Nasnās, who spent more than a year wandering: donkeys from al-Tireh, donkeys from al-Tantourah, donkeys from Ain Ghazal, donkeys from Ijzim, donkeys from Ain Hod, and donkeys from Imm al-Zaynat, who were saved from capture, and from women’s lamentation, and did not leave” (*The Pessoptimist* 63, my translation<sup>47</sup>). Within this satirical tale of donkey-meat sausages, Saeed lists the villages-of-origin of these Palestinian donkeys. In doing so, he inserts the same kind of testimony-through-naming into his narrative, despite his status as an antihero. He subverts his own discourse as a

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<sup>46</sup> The original Arabic title is *The Uncanny Chronicles of the Disappearance of Sa’id the Ill-Fated Pessoptimist*.

<sup>47</sup> I am using my own translation here because the English translation by Jayyusi and LeGassick mentions “the Valley [Wādī] of Nasnās” but not the rest of the list, added by the author in later editions.

collaborator to momentarily speak in the voice of those refugees who were driven out – the same refugees for whom he cared so little when he met them in al-Jazzar Mosque. Saeed plays on his own ambiguity as a collaborator, and his nature as an unreliable narrator, to insert such “subversive” moments even when he is otherwise fully invested in his collaborator role. This is the mask of the jester who speaks the truth, the tragicomic fool.

*The Pessoptimist* also gives testimony through references to atrocities committed against Palestinians in Israel which were current news at the time of writing. He cites various incidents with which he would have been familiar as a Maki representative and editor of *al-Ittiḥād*, focusing on the violation of Palestinian civil rights in Israel. For example, while explaining why his beloved Yu’ād’s ‘infiltration’ to Haifa from Nazareth put her at risk, Saeed tells us that the border between the West Bank and Israel is littered with mines left by British, Zionist, and Arab forces. “After the war finally ground to a halt,” he explains, “one of the mines exploded under some boys from the village of Sandala who stepped on it when returning home from school. Seventeen were killed, according to the official statement, not counting those wounded who were to die later” (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 57). As in the story of the donkeys, Saeed uses his slippery character as fool/collaborator to insert a bit of testimony into the larger story, bookended at start and finish by statements emphasizing his loyalty to the state.

A similar reference to current events occurs when Saeed-as-narrator takes a moment to contest the “charges” that he is aping Voltaire’s *Candide*, by comparing the events of *Candide* to those of present-day Palestine/Israel. Saeed asks rhetorically, “Did not Pangloss express consolation for the Abarian women who had been raped, and who had seen bellies ripped open, heads cut off, and their castles demolished, with the comment: ‘But we’ve had our revenge, for the Abares have done the very same thing to a neighboring barony, which belonged to a Bulgarian lord.’?” (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 73). Saeed explains, “We ourselves, after all, sought consolation in the same way two hundred years later. That was in September 1972, when our athletes were killed in Munich. Did our military aircraft not ‘take revenge’ for us by murdering women and also children, just beginning to enjoy the ‘sport’ of life, in refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon? Didn’t this ‘console’ us?” (73). Saeed’s identification of “us” referring to the Israeli government sends a certain message about his identity and his loyalties; yet his inclusion of this bit of galling news sends the opposite message, condemning the actions of the

state. Here, as in the Sandala story, Habiby employs Palestinian testimony *within* the framework of the Israeli state, to critique the actions of that state.

When current events are mentioned in *The Pessoptimist*, their sources are often painstakingly documented. For example, when Saeed begins to narrate “The Story of Thurayya, Who Was Reduced to Eating Mud,” he explains that he “read about” the story, in “your paper *al-Ittihād*” (93). The way in which he cites his sources echoes the format for relating a prophetic *ḥadīth*: “On September 10<sup>th</sup>, in the fifth year A.W. [After the [1967] War], or in 1971 A.D., your newspaper *al-Ittihād* narrated, from *Ma’arīv*, from *Ha’āretz*, from the Israeli general police, from the Israeli police in al-Lidd, that the elderly Ms. Thurayyā Abdel Qādir Maqbūl<sup>48</sup> [...]” (*The Pessoptimist* 129, my translation<sup>49</sup>). I use “from” here to represent the Arabic *‘an*, which connects the string of reporters of a *ḥadīth*. Saeed, as the narrator, uses the *ḥadīth* format, but instead of citing companions of the Prophet or other religious authorities, cites a variety of Israeli newspapers (including Maki’s *al-Ittihād*) and different Israeli police departments, to lend authority to his “testimony” about Thurayyā. Thurayyā, he tells us, sought help from the Israeli police and was taken advantage of by said police for a photo op, before they confiscated her property and sent her back to die in poverty in the al-Hussein refugee camp in Amman. Israeli sources here lend authority to a Palestinian tale, much as we saw Morisco writers al-Ḥajarī and al-Andalusī citing the official orders of expulsion issued by Phillip III to highlight the plight of the Moriscos and lend authority to their description of the Spanish government’s cruel treatment of their communities. It is also worth noting, given that we are viewing testimony and myth as complementary narrative strategies in Palestinian and Morisco writing, that Saeed describes Thurayyā’s return to her Palestinian home (long since occupied by an Israeli Jewish family) as “her lost paradise [*firdawsīha al-mafqūd*]” (130, trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 94).

Occasionally, Habiby’s inclusion of real, “newsworthy” events blurs the line between autobiography and fiction, as with the scene in which an Israeli officer threatens to shoot a Palestinian mother and child; near the end of his life, Habiby admitted in an interview, “That too

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<sup>48</sup> The first name “Thurayyā” means “The Seven Sisters” cluster of stars, while “Abdel Qādir” and “Maqbūl” both connote subservience to God’s will or to fate – presumably the name was invented to underscore the story. Thurayyā was also the name of the Christian captive who married Muley Hassan (king of Nasrid Granada); she was stepmother of Boabdil/Muhammad XI and reverted to Christianity after 1492, returning to her original name, Isabel (the name here may or may not allude to this story).

<sup>49</sup> The original Arabic more closely reflects the *ḥadīth* format, which is why I provide my own translation here to preserve that format.



happened [to me]” (Karpel *Nisharty be Haifa*, qtd. Abu Manneh 105). Such an admission calls other episodes in *The Pessoptimist* into question; for example, the story of a child accused of breaking curfew dragging Saeed before the military governor and insisting that he is his father, thereby sticking him with the punishment of a fine or jail time (*The Pessoptimist* 142). Saeed as narrator concludes this story: “This actually happened, on November 3, 1953” (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 103). It is unclear whether Habiby means that it was one of the many current events with which he was conversant, as a politician and as editor of *al-Ittiḥād*, or whether it happened to him personally (as he later in life clarified his own resemblance to Saeed, and the fact that many of Saeed’s exploits were taken from his own life). This fictional yet “testimonial” account thus blurs the line between first- and second-hand testimony of the 48 Palestinian experience.

In this vein, we can see how Habiby weaves his own political views, experiences, and agenda into *The Pessoptimist*, often by portraying “the communists” (Maki) as the targets and enemies of Saeed, the collaborator. We saw in the previous chapter how after Habiby and his political allies essentially staged a coup within the National Liberation League (NLL) during the Nakba, and were responsible for a batch of pamphlets distributed to Egyptian and Jordanian soldiers, in which the League encouraged Arab soldiers to “return to your countries and turn your fire toward the chests of the colonizers and their cronies” (Miḥjiz 56-7, Mannā’ 160, my translation). In his political life, Habiby saw himself and his comrades as enemies of backwards, imperialist Arab regimes, and as “ideological partners to the Israeli state and not as collaborators with an occupying state” (Mannā’ 176, 169, my translation).

His character Saeed echoes Habiby’s attitude towards pan-Arabism and neighboring Arab regimes, for example in his hatred of the (pan-Arabist / nationalist) teacher he remembers from his childhood: “Fate had granted us, when we were in elementary school, one God-damned teacher who was mad about astronomy” (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 29). This teacher “expressed a fanatical pride in all the old Arab astronomers,” like Averroes, and would “tell us proudly of the scientist al-Biruni,” who discovered gravity “some eight hundred years before Newton” (30). Saeed despised this teacher’s aggrandizement of medieval Arab scientists, and his lectures about how “The Arabs [...] always did things quicker than,” while modern-day Arabs “first dream and then continue to dream” viz., fail to take action against colonial rule (30). Saeed also expresses his hatred of his former Arabic teacher, blind in one eye (and metaphorically “blind” to the “errors” of Palestinian nationalism), who would make the students sing the

nationalist anthem, “Palestine Is My Country, So Come All My Children” (45, trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 35). This teacher once punished the child-Saeed by making him write lines of classical Arabic poetry by Imru’ al-Qays on the board. Saeed perceives these teachers’ aggrandizement of Arabic history/culture and open espousal of Arab nationalism as chauvinistic and bombastic. Given an understanding of Habiby’s own attitude towards neighboring Arab regimes and the ALA (which he viewed as an occupying army), versus the Zionist forces and government (which he saw himself as part of), we can see that Saeed’s attitude towards his old teachers in many ways reflects Habiby’s own political ideology (Mannā’ 176-8).

Habiby’s politics are similarly reflected in the way that Saeed portrays the Communists (Maki) throughout the novel as enemies of the state, respected by Palestinians. “The communists,” Saeed tells us, “soon began to call the Custodian of Abandoned Properties the Custodian of Looted Properties. We [Palestinian collaborators] cursed them, them, the Communists, in public but repeated what they said in private” (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 45). Through Saeed, Habiby portrays Maki in a flattering light, as enemies of the repressive Israeli intelligence services and as people who speak truth to power. Similarly, when narrating the story of the children of Sandala who were blown up by mines, Saeed recalls how his Mizrahi boss Jacob “delivered a lecture about the Communists – anti-Semites, as he said – who instigate people to strike and demonstrate and who were claiming that it had been an Israeli mine” (57). Here as before, Habiby through Saeed portrays Maki as brave representatives of the Palestinian people and enemies of the oppressive apparatus of the Israeli intelligence agency.

In the same vein, we see Saeed being sent out on missions to harass “the Communists” (his term) before an upcoming election, in hopes that if he did his work well, Jacob would assist him by pulling strings to allow Saeed’s beloved Yu’ād to return from exile: “I therefore never rested, never slept, in order to continue my pursuit of the Communists. I plotted against them, organized attacks on them, and gave witness against them. I would infiltrate demonstrations, tip over garbage cans in their way, and yell slogans advocating the destruction of the state to provide the police an excuse to attack them” (65). Outside the world of this novel, Maki did indeed face state repression, such as raids on its paper, *al-Ittiḥād*, and arrests of its members (Hoffman 226). Saeed-as-narrator’s portrayal of relentless Israeli attacks against Maki, while a form of testimony based on Habiby’s life experience, also serves to further aggrandize Maki and portray “the

Communists” as the primary internal enemy of the Zionist oppression of Palestinians<sup>50</sup>. As Miḥjiz and Mannā’ point out in their discussions of the NLL/Maki’s role in 48 Palestinian society during and after the Nakba, Habiby saw himself as *part* of that same Zionist establishment, and Maki advocated for limited Palestinian civil rights within an overarching system that fundamentally would always deny Palestinians full equality.

Despite this, Habiby portrays “the Communists” as heroes of the villagers with whom Saeed and the Second Yu’ād speak in Book III, since in the words of these villagers, “their members of Parliament, do dare to penetrate the cordon. They come right through and give us their sympathy and encourage us to resist. And they collect facts and shout in the Knesset [...] they force the minister to answer them. That forces knowledge of our plight through the official wall of silence” (trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 142). This glowing speech praising Maki, given in the voice of a villager, is followed by the young Yu’ād’s response, a scathing critique of Arab regimes: “The papers of the Arab world cordon us with new of ‘victories,’ like haloes over the heads of saints; there’s no space for reports of your cordons” (142). Through his characters, Habiby juxtaposes his aggrandizement of Maki’s role as advocate for Palestinians, with a simultaneous critique of Arab regimes, eliding any nationalist alternatives for Palestinians, including armed resistance. Saeed and Yu’ād echo Habiby’s public, political stance and actions as described by Miḥjiz and Mannā’, blending political speech, personal testimony, and fiction.

Finally, in the penultimate chapter of *The Pessoptimist*, we see the titular Saeed trapped on the flat head of a stake, suspended in a kind of midway space. This reflects the fact that he is both too miserable to remain a Zionist collaborator and too afraid to “jump down” and join the others who are calling to him from the ground, i.e., to join any of the many forms of resistance that they offer him. Among the figures on the ground is a “young man with [a] newspaper,” who we know from earlier in the novel to be a communist holding copies of *al-Ittiḥād* (158). He calls out to Saeed to “come down to the street with us,” and then, unlike the figures who chose armed rebellion (Wala’, Bāqiyah, the young *fidā’iy* Saeed), this young communist begins to chop down Saeed’s stake with an axe (221, my translation<sup>51</sup>). This is a clear ideological declaration on Habiby’s part: while armed conflict will only end in death (like the seeming deaths of Wala’ and

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<sup>50</sup> As opposed to, for example, the nationalist *al-Ard* movement, whose leaders were exiled as punishment for their publications.

<sup>51</sup> Jayussi and LeGassick’s translation shortens this to “I want to save you!” (159); I thought for my purposes here, a more literal translation would better reflect Habiby’s commitment to Maki and to communism

Bāqiyah) or else fail to achieve its aim (thus far, as in the case of Saeed the *fidā'iy*), communism is the way to cut down one's metaphorical paralyzing fear, and to move forward. Habiby depicts Saeed's Mizrahi boss and a German Jewish worker (dubbed "Akht," or "Eight") waiting for Saeed at the bottom of the stake as well, in a call to form a joint Arab/Jewish workers' movement (again, as advocated by Habiby and Maki at the time, and overlooking the racial and colonial aspects of Zionism that would preclude full equality for Palestinians).

In this fantastical setting, then, Habiby presents several forms of what we might call "testimony": first, an almost compulsive naming of destroyed Palestinian villages, sprinkled throughout the narrative. Second, he incorporates actual current events from the period of writing and the decades just before into the "letters" of Saeed the Pessoptimist, using an unreliable narrator to convey true information about the Palestinian experience under Israeli rule. Finally, Habiby speaks through Saeed's voice to paint a positive picture of the Israeli Communist Party and correspondingly negative picture of Arab nationalism and Arab regimes, which reflects Habiby's own political ideology as espoused and enacted *by himself* as a public political figure throughout the Nakba and the decades that followed. By mixing testimonial and fantastical narrative styles, Habiby attempts to separate himself as a real, political figure, from the voice of his "internal author" and the character of his Pessoptimist, Saeed (Mihjiz 192). In drawing this dividing line between "fiction" and "politics," it may be possible to lend a certain authority to fiction, an authority absent in the eyes of one's political opponents when regarding political speech. Perhaps akin to how Moriscos relied on myths as guides of behavior for their own resistance, Habiby may have been seeking here to create a "timeless" myth, to wrap his testimony and even his political agenda in fiction's (paradoxical) aura of epistemological authenticity.

## II. Mahmoud Darwish and the "Andalusization" of Palestine

Mythologization can be a powerful tool in the face of loss; we have seen how certain Morisco writers elevated their "lost" homeland ("lost" in both space and time) to an epic, mythic plane, through the use of the trope of the "lost garden." While their present reality in Spain was difficult to bear, they could instead picture a past in which things were better – more than better, they were paradise. Thus, the Mancebo de Arévalo describes the physical landscape of

Andalucía as green and fruitful, flowing with “rivers of honey,” and the author of an anonymous *aljófor* / “*ḥadīth*” attributed to Mohammad asserts boldly that Andalucía is in fact located directly beneath heaven, with four main cities corresponding to the four gates of heaven. When the Mancebo looks at the landscape of Andalucía and sees in it this paradise, he is mentally *separating* it from the present reality of Catholic rule and projecting backwards instead to imagine a mythic Islamic past – not necessarily the actual reality of Nasrid Granada (which, given his youth, he would never have known), but rather, what he *imagines* Nasrid Granada to have been. In other words, when he looks at the formerly Islamic homeland, he sees “a lost time that will not return / [...] a lost homeland [*waṭan*], that *might* return” (Darwish 29, my translation). As we now know in hindsight, not only was a return to the past impossible, so would be the return of Islamic rule to the Iberian Peninsula.

In modern Palestinian literature, images of al-Andalus are intimately connected with the myth of the lost homeland as “lost garden,” something Moriscos like the Mancebo identified with, as well. While the “lost garden” trope is common in Palestinian “resistance literature” written after the Nakba, the explicit link between al-Andalus and the lost garden / lost homeland is less common. Resistance poet Mahmoud Darwish, who wrote plenty of “lost garden” poems in the 1950s and 60s, would take until the 1980s and 90s, after the defeat of the PLO in Beirut, to make the Andalus-Palestine connection explicit. After the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the massacres at Sabra and Shatila, Palestinian poetry and Arabic poetry in general was pushed to undertake a “critical review of the possibilities for struggle that might be found in combining poetics and resistance” (Harlow 36); 1982 “produced a crisis not only in the course of Palestinian history but in the writing of it as well” (38). Palestinian writers sought out parallels and perspective in history and myth; for example, in the winter 1983 issue of *al-Karmel* (edited at that time by Darwish from exile in Cyprus), Samīḥ al-Qāsim compares Sabra and Shatila massacres to others from history and even to the mythical loss and longing of Qays for Layla:

...the invocation of the most beautiful names:

Lidice

Sabra

Shatila

Qays and Layla

My Lai...

(Qtd. 38)

The Nazi massacre in Lidice and American imperialist massacre in My Lai are accompanied by the story of Qays and Layla; modern history and pre-Islamic archetype have to work together to adequately describe the suffering of Palestinians after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Darwish was present with the PLO in Beirut but did *not* immediately leave after the Israeli invasion. He was pushed by the course of events to reevaluate his role as a Palestinian nationalist poet. It was the first time, he explains, that it fully hit him that he was not “just a poet,” but rather that the *poet* was a central part of the armed Palestinian resistance movement, not a bystander (35). This personal and poetic shift meant a shift in Darwish’s poetry. In watching the PLO depart Beirut, Darwish felt that “Greek tragedy, the classic artistic vehicle for the representation of human suffering, [was] no longer adequate to render in words the fate of modern peoples” (39). Darwish began in this post-Beirut period, then, to seek a more expansive, inclusive literary form, which could somehow do justice to the sheer breadth to the Palestinian tragedy: “Palestinian writers and poets began to sense that their literature, their internal debates, and even their cultural negotiations with the enemy would also have to take place on the global stage” (Mattawa 94). The battle over narrative would be a battle to counter the overwhelming victory of Zionist ideology, which drew legitimacy from the fact that it was “steeped in biblical mythology but taken as history” (94). Mattawa reads Darwish’s *Wardun Aqall* (*Fewer Roses*, 1986) and Edward Said’s *After the Last Sky* (which “were written around the same time and [...] can be read as a unified project”) as twin manifestos for this new, outward-facing era in Palestinian literature, during which Palestinian authors and artists attempted to universalize their message in order to bring the story of their struggle to a Western audience, and thereby counter the influence Zionist mythology upon that audience (95-6).

The “Andalusization” of Palestine would start here in earnest for Darwish, and would form part of his universalizing, mythologizing project: “The settings of the poems [from this period] – Córdoba, Aden, and others – change, but the circumstances remain similar. Repeatedly, we find ourselves caught within the same prolonged delay, mired in the hurry-up-and-wait of the Palestinian exilic experience” (98). I’tidāl ‘Uthmān explains,

It is worth mentioning that the “motif” of al-Andalus appears regularly in Darwish’s poetry as an equivalent for the homeland after the Palestinian resistance’s departure from Beirut. Or the departure from the exile of exile. And about this last departure, Darwish says, in one of three oral testimonies that the poet recorded: “Palestine is not a memory... she is larger than existence. She is not a past; rather, she is a future. Palestine is the

poetics of al-Andalus; she is the Andalus of the attainable.” (‘Uthman 33-34, my translation)

During the late 80s and early 90s, Darwish “begins to investigate historiography and mythmaking, looking into the ways both are responsible for the occupation of his homeland, the disempowerment of his own people, and the people’s alienation from their native landscape” (Mattawa 110-11). In response to the biblical mythology of Zionism, Darwish began to cultivate a “lyrical epic” style of poetry, which would provide a counter-mythology to that of Zionism. This would be a more *universal* mythology, incorporating a variety of historical and legendary sources, not limiting itself (as Zionism does) to the Abrahamic religions, or to any one point in history. Darwish’s poem “The Hoopoe,” for example, abandons “the biblical, monotheistic creeds” in favor of “devotion to earth as mother, who nurtures and heals all and who supersedes them” (117, 118). Similarly, “A Canaanite Rock in the Dead Sea,” Darwish’s poetic reworking of a Palestinian shepherd’s 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls, “challenges the Hebrewfication of the history of Palestine undertaken by modern-day Israelis, [and] emphasizes the multiple influences that have historically been brought to bear on the land and all its people” (120).

Given this trend towards “universalization” of Palestine, we can see how al-Andalus would have attracted Darwish as a symbol of *convivencia*<sup>52</sup>: “Emphasizing the ambiguity of history becomes an important tool to counter the single-minded Zionist vision of the past that claims historical certainty as the basis for its politics of exclusion. Darwish’s rewriting of myth depends on fissures in national myths, and it focuses on past spaces of heterogeneity that have been erased” (126). Darwish uses al-Andalus in his poetry from the late 80s and early 90s, and particularly in his *dīwān*, *Eleven Planets Over the Last Andalusian Scene*, both as a metaphor for the lost garden of Palestine, and as a symbol of what the “garden” had been and potentially could be in the future. Like Aḥmad Shawqī and the other twentieth-century Arab poets discussed in the Introduction, Darwish sees in al-Andalus at once a mythologized, idealized past; a symbol of past and present loss and colonization; and a potential model of future greatness. For Darwish,

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<sup>52</sup> *Convivencia*, or the coexistence (not peaceful, per sé) of different religious groups within the same territories and kingdoms, was put forward by Américo Castro and his students, especially María Rosa Menocal, as a way to describe the situation of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities in medieval Iberia. This portrayal of *convivencia* has been criticized as overly simplistic and idealistic in books like Nirenberg’s *Communities of Violence* but is an important part of the historiography of al-Andalus.

future greatness means a “universal” society which advocates the *incorporation* of multiple cultures as equals in a shared society, rather than *colonization* of one by the other (see “A Canaanite Stone in the Dead Sea”; Darwish 51-7 / Matar 123).

Focusing on the “Andalusian” poems from *Eleven Planets* (those which directly describe or speak in the voice of the Nasrid ruling class departing Granada in 1492), we can see a variety of gestures towards establishing the “garden” or “paradisical” nature of pre-conquest Muslim Spain. The speakers describe the nature, the landscape, and the architecture of their homes in loving detail. “On the Last Night on this Earth,” whose speakers are the Muslims leaving Granada on the eve of 1492, begins, “On the last night on this earth we cut our days / from our trees...” and “We contemplate the mountains surrounded by clouds” (Darwish 9, my translation). Emphasis is placed on those cultural elements (food, music), that distinguish Muslim Spanish culture: “Enter, O Conquerors, our homes and drink our wine / from our simple *muwashshah*. We are the night at midnight, there will be no / dawn carried by a knight approaching from the direction of the last *‘adhān*... / Our tea is green and hot, so drink it, and our pistachios are fresh, so eat them” (10, my translation). The first two lines reference the wine poetry which flourished in medieval Muslim Spain, as well as the *muwashshah*, a strophic poetic genre specific to Islamic Spain, which exemplified cultural and linguistic hybridity. *Muwashshah* poems written in classical *fuṣṣḥa* Arabic or Hebrew always included an end couplet (*kharjah* / *jarcha*) written in Arabic or Romance dialect, often in the voice of the beloved, and whose music incorporated European modes rather than just the traditional Eastern scales.

These verses also include descriptions of distinctly Andalusian delicacies (tea, pistachios, wine), as well as a reference to “the last *‘adhān*,” marking the Islamic nature of the garden that was about to be lost. The furniture and the image of a single room within the speaker’s home become a symbol for the homeland as a whole: “And the beds are of green cedar wood, so surrender to sleepiness / After this long siege, sleep on the feathers of our dreams / The sheets are ready, and so is the perfume above the door, and the mirrors are many - / enter them ...” (10, my translation). Here we can see the paradise/garden/homeland being reduced to a single room, just as Palestinians living in exile after many decades would see their homeland reduced in their inherited memories to a single image – something as small as a single lemon tree in the courtyard of the family home in Jaffa (Shammas 3). Even the images of food and furniture show a direct



connection to the land/garden – the bed is made of cedar wood, and the food itself (pistachios, tea, wine) is the produce of that earth.

In another poem from the same *dīwān*, “How do I Write Above the Clouds?”, Darwish explicitly defines Granada as a mythic symbol while using images of nature and wealth to once again paint Granada as a lost garden / lost paradise: “...but Granada is [made] of gold / of the silk of language embroidered with almonds, of the silver of tears in / the string of the ‘oud. Granada is for the great ascension to herself... / And she can be as she wants to be: longing for / Anything that has passed or will pass...” (11, my translation). Here, gold and silver are used to describe the *wealth* of Islamic Spain’s nature and culture – both the almonds (symbolizing the wealth of the land, evoking rural Palestine), and the ‘oud (representing the wealth of the culture) are woven through with these elements. Throughout the *dīwān*, images of nature, the garden, cultural wealth, and household objects continue as a constant theme: “I am still polishing the metal of this place,” says a Granadan leaving al-Andalus, “I know that I shall fly out of my banner like a bird that will not land on the garden tree” – these conflicting images of attachment to the place, coupled with the sudden inability to settle in it, are emblematic of the forced departure into exile (13, my translation). We see images of “myrtle above the roofs of houses,” and “a moon that used to illuminate all of Granada’s secrets” – again these images of nature (myrtle, the moon), combine with images of the domestic sphere (houses, secrets) (15, my translation). This combination of nature and the domestic that runs throughout the “Andalusian” poems of *Eleven Planets* is the defining element of a “garden” as opposed to wilderness – it is nature that human care has cultivated, has made safe and beautiful, has made part of home. In Muslim Spain as in modern-day Palestine, gardens were generally contained within courtyards, i.e., within the protected space shielded from public streets by walls, a safe and private space which represents home. The lost garden is an appropriate metaphor for a poet hoping to describe and synthesize all the positive, comforting elements of a lost home.

This brings us to loss. While Darwish describes the “garden” of Granada (its comfort as ‘home,’ its civilizational and natural wealth) with a great deal of love and care, when it comes to describing its *loss*, we see a range of emotions and reactions: grief, hopelessness, anger, blame, and finally a desire to freeze the image of the lost homeland in the memory and thus sublimate it onto the sacred or supernatural plane of myth. In “I am One of the Kings of the End,” the

speaker, in the voice of Muhammad XI / Boabdil<sup>53</sup>, cannot bring himself to look directly at the city he is handing over to its Christian conquerors. He repeats the phrase “I do not look” throughout the poem, to emphasize the feeling of guilt and the weight of this exile on his conscience:

... I am the last sigh of the Moor,  
I do not look at the myrtle above the rooftops, and I do not  
Look around me, so that no one here who knew me might see me  
One who'd know I'd burnished the marble of language so my woman,  
Barefoot, could walk on the patches of light, and I do not look at the night so that  
I won't see a moon that used to illuminate all of Granada's secrets  
Body by body. I do not look at the shadows, so that I do not see  
Someone who carries my name running after me: take your name from me  
And give me the silver of poplar trees. I do not look behind me so I would not  
Remember that I passed across this earth; there is no earth on  
This earth since Time shattered around me, shard by shard (15-16, my translation)

The overwhelming feeling in the speaker-king-collaborator's voice is one of guilt and shame, as well as great loss and grief. The final lines of the poem make it clear that the speaker feels the full weight of what his decision to accept surrender means for his people: “There remains no present / for me to pass tomorrow close to my yesterday. Castile will raise / Its crown above God's minaret. I hear the rustling of keys in / The door of our golden history, Farewell to our history, Am I / The one who will close the door of the last sky? I am the last sigh of the Moor.” (16, my translation). The speaker is intimately aware that his surrender means the death of his community, as well the end of his community's power to write its own history.

This is consistent with what *actually happened* to Muslims in Spain after the fall of Granada, which quickly led to the outlawing of Arabic language and culture and the forced conversion of Muslims, not to mention their exclusion from universities and government (the writers of official history). It is also consistent with the situation of Palestinians inside and outside Israel, which quickly planted or built over destroyed villages (Bardenstein 8) and assumed control of what Nashif calls the “means of production” of certain registers of the Arabic

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<sup>53</sup> Literally – the speaker repeats throughout the poem, “I am the last sigh of the Moor,” referring to the Christian Spanish mythology of “el último suspiro del moro” surrounding Boabdil as a historical/mythic figure.

language, through its censorship and its writings, as well as its control of universities and their admissions and language policies (Nashif 30). Thus, Darwish's speaker, in the mask of Boabdil, feels an overwhelming sense of guilt, responsibility, and loss. This may be related to Darwish's own feelings (though poet and speaker are separate) towards his role as official poet for the PLO in Beirut, the self-censorship it forced him to practice, and his emotions around the PLO's final defeat and exile from Beirut – and Darwish's own exile to Tunis and then Paris (Mattawa 88-90).

Elsewhere in this *dīwān*, the poetic voice expresses *anger* towards the leader-collaborator figure, with a great deal of sarcasm and bitterness. “The Truth has Two Faces and the Snow is Black” is a pointed rebuke of political leadership<sup>54</sup>, though it begins from a place of grief: “We are no longer able to despair any more than we have despaired already, / And the end walks toward the walls sure of its steps / Above these tiles wet with tears, sure of its steps” (Darwish 19, my translation). Grief quickly morphs into accusation:

Who will lower our flags: us, or them? And who  
Will recite to us the “Peace Treaty,” O King of Passing?  
Everything is already prepared for us, so who will remove our names  
From our identity: you or them? And who will plant in us  
The sermon of wandering: “We cannot lift the siege  
So let us hand over the keys of our Paradise to the Minister of Peace, and save ourselves...”  
(19-20, my translation).

Darwish sets up the opposition here between “us,” “you,” and “them” – the speaker's addressee (representing Boabdil/Arafat/collaborationist political leadership) *should* be part of “us,” yet his agreement to surrender his land for unsatisfactory terms has separated him into a “you,” and even suggests a possible alliance with “them.” The line “who will lower our flags: us, or them?” points to the humiliation the speaker feels, as he finds his people forced to participate in their own destruction. The anger and blame are palpable in his address to the “King of Passing”, whom he clearly views as responsible for the death of his people.

“I am One of the Kings of the End” provides a complimentary opposing viewpoint, in which speaker is Boabdil himself, helpless, grief-stricken, and guilty. In “The Truth has Two Faces and the Snow is Black” the speaker *addresses* Boabdil/Arafat as his audience, with a

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<sup>54</sup>Darwish disapproved of Arafat's role in and agreement to the Oslo Accords (signed 1993, but secretly in the works when this *dīwān* was published in 1992) and purposely distanced himself from the PLO from 1993 onward.

mixture of blame, anger, and humiliation at his own inability to change his leader's disastrous decision. The question hovers in the background as to whether a different course of action could have saved the Muslims of Granada (or by extension, the Palestinians) – in the case of Nasrid Granada, at least, we know that the final defeat was centuries-coming and likely impossible to avoid. Yet it is telling that no matter who his speaker –collaborationist ruler or angry, bitter subject – Darwish's "Andalusian" speakers in this *dīwān* all view their city and their kingdom as *firdawsina* ("our Paradise"). The trope of the lost garden is constant, regardless of speaker and regardless of the emotions expressed. It is a communal myth, comprised of individual and personal images like that of the "green cedarwood" of the beds, the "myrtle" of the rooftops, and the "polished metal" of household implements.

In *Eleven Planets*, Darwish articulates a consistent and almost obsessive need to *elevate* and *preserve* the homeland – its particular place and time – in the form of myth. He strives to sublimate those intimate, personal objects and images of household items and nature into an idealized, portable image of the homeland – "a poetic equivalent to the idea of the homeland in exile" ('Uthmān 13). His poetic speakers describe this process with the metaphor of shedding a skin or exiting a house, for it to be inhabited by another: "...the mirrors are many - / Enter them so we may exit from them entirely, and in a little while start looking for what / Was our history about your history in those distant lands / And ask ourselves in the end: was al-Andalus / Here or there? On Earth... or in poetry?" (Darwish 10, my translation). This is an attempt to establish a literary, spiritual home for the *myth* of the Andalus in poetry and in memory, even while its physical landscape is occupied and transformed. Similarly, in "Beyond the Sky I Have a Sky...", the poet-speaker says, "I will leave all of my skin, and from my language / There will descend some words about love in / The poetry of Lorca, who will live in my bedroom / And see what I saw of the Bedouin moon..." (Darwish 14, my translation). The physical traces, i.e., the speaker's house, will remain and be re-occupied by twentieth-century poet and advocate of Spain's marginalized people, Federico García Lorca, who was born and raised in the city of Granada. He is the speaker's cultural heir, as he highlighted the Arab Muslim history of Spain in his own poetry. The speaker's cultural legacy – his language, and the landscape he saw around him – live on despite the conquest and the speaker's physical absence.

In "O Water, Be a String in my Guitar," Darwish continues these themes of passing on a cultural legacy tied to the land itself, and of sublimating the homeland onto the plane of myth:

“Be a string in my guitar, o water; the conquerors arrived / And the old conquerors left. It is difficult for me to remember my face / In the mirrors. So you be my memory, that I may see what I lost...” (24, my translation). The guitar, a distinctly Spanish instrument descended possibly from the Arabic *‘oud*, represents the absent-presence of the conquered Granadan Muslims, in the physical traces they leave behind. Simultaneously, “memory” is preserved in music, a cultural and poetic mode of expression that has no physical presence, but still conveys an image of what was lost. Al-Andalus lives on in poem and music as myth, as “...the longing for / anything that happened or will happen” (11, my translation). This focus on *longing*, in and of itself, recalls Boym’s “reflective nostalgia,” which acknowledges the “ambivalences of human longing and belonging” (“Introduction”). Yet Darwish does *not* “esche[w] any sense of heritage and revival” – quite the opposite (Shannon 7-8). His mythmaking project is still a restorative one, which focuses on physical details of landscape and household, and on actual historical events, in order to write a mythology capable of challenging biblical Zionist mythology. Exile is permanent and never-ending, from Damascus to al-Andalus and away again, yet the exiled people carry their homeland with them, in their collective memory and literature. The strength of their creative output becomes universal, and so their homeland, too, becomes recognized by others. We have seen testimony used by Morisco and Palestinian authors to legitimize their speech to outsiders; here, Darwish uses myth to do the same, by making the Palestinian story a universal story of loss and exile, allowing out-group readers to understand and empathize with the specificity of Palestinian history.

### III. Constructing the Myth of the Lost Garden in Early Post-Nakba Palestinian Literature

While Darwish explicitly refers to al-Andalus in *Eleven Planets* as a metaphor for Palestine and symbol of the mythical lost garden / lost homeland, the trope of the lost garden existed in Palestinian literature well before Darwish began directly referencing al-Andalus. Leaving aside pre-Nakba poetry, if we return to the “resistance poetry” written by Palestinians in Israel in the 50s and 60s, we can see the construction of a set of tropes that would establish the image of Palestine-as-garden and would set the mold for Palestinian poetry in the decades to come. This poetry linked the Palestinian people to the land of Palestine, by using nature or “garden” imagery drawn from the land itself. For example, in response to the destruction of his village during his childhood, a Darwish poem from this period (1960s) asserts, “I am in your

soil, O my country, the youthful tremor of warmth / I am in the orchard of fig trees in the heart of the open country of gold / And here are my roots in your soil; How could foreign hands pull them out?" (qtd. Kanafani 39, my translation). Figs are not just a native plant; they are specifically a *cultivated* plant, one that Palestinians would traditionally grow in their gardens and courtyards. Darwish's speaker also references his literal "rootedness" in "the soil" of Palestine. "Rootedness" as a metaphor for *ṣumūd* (steadfastness) was a common theme not just to Darwish but also to his poet-peers. In the competition over narrative, Palestinian "resistance" poets of the 50s and 60s strove to prove that they were *more* rooted in the land than the recent Zionist transplants from Europe, as in Darwish's "Identity Card," in which the speaker asserts, "My roots / before the dawn of time were planted."

Tawfīq Zayyād's poetry from this time period offers further examples of the "garden" and nature imagery used to connect Palestinians, rhetorically, to their land. "On the Trunk of the Olive Tree," for example, includes numerous images of plants native to Palestine, and of a quintessentially Palestinian home and village. Although we may take Zayyād to be the speaker, his "I" could stand for more or less *any* of his fellow-48 Palestinians: "I will carve the number of each title / Of our land that was stolen / And the location of my village, and its borders / And the houses of its people that were pulverized / And my trees that were uprooted / And every wildflower that was crushed" (qtd. Kanafani 114, my translation). These images of uprooting are counterbalanced at the poem's conclusion by a promise of permanence on the land:

I will carve everything the sun says to me  
 And the moon whispers to me  
 And what the lark narrates to me  
 About the well whose lovers were driven away  
 So that I may remember...  
 I will remain standing, carving  
 All the seasons of my tragedy  
 And all the details of the Nakba  
 From alpha  
 To omega  
 On an olive tree  
 In the courtyard of [our] house!"  
 (qtd. 115-16, my translation)

Throughout the poem, images of nature, and specifically of a single garden in a single house, stand in for the poet's connection to his homeland.

Carol Bardenstein has discussed how the image of the olive tree, along with the prickly-pear cactus (*ṣabr/subbār*) and Jaffa orange, had begun before the Nakba to serve as symbols in a Zionist-Palestinian struggle over narrative, representing rootedness in the land (Bardenstein 1). In the above poem, the olive tree forms the main symbol of rootedness; it is also described as being located in the courtyard of the home, meaning that a central aspect of its symbolism is its connection to the home and the domestic sphere (the garden). This is another strategy in the battle over “rootedness” – a Palestinian portrayal of plants that *they specifically* had cultivated, as in Ghassan Kanafani’s 1962 short story, *The Land of Sad Oranges*, in which the narrator recalls being told by a fellow refugee that “the oranges would shrivel up if watered by a strange hand” (Bardenstein 19). Just as Palestinians retracing the remains of their demolished villages would search for fruit trees, palm trees, and *subbār* among the forests of newly-planted JNF pine, Palestinian “resistance poetry” from the 50s and 60s develops a symbology of the “lost garden” which focuses on olive trees, fruit trees, and other symbols of the domestic and agricultural spheres, to assert Palestinian rootedness in the land.

While the olive tree is one of the most-repeated symbols within Palestinian nationalist mythology, other symbols of the lost garden abound in the poetry of the 50s and 60s. Take for example Zayyād’s poem “*Nīrān al-Mājūs*,” in which the garden represents Palestinian hope for a *future* on their land: “Slowly / Slowly / I pull on the light... a glittering thread / In the darkness of the night / And I cultivate the seedbed of dreams / By the wellsprings of the flood / And I wipe the tears of those I love / With a scarf of jasmine / And I plant the most verdant oasis / Amidst the flames of sand” (qtd. Kanafani 116, my translation). Fertile valleys and springs are naturally-occurring elements of the Palestinian landscape, while the seedbeds and jasmine are specifically *domestic* elements, cultivated by Palestinians. In this poem, Zayyād’s hope for the future combines the natural wealth of the land with the labor of Palestinian hands.

In “The Impossible”, similar in tone to Darwish’s “Identity Card”, Zayyād challenges Zionist usurpers of Palestine by portraying an even stronger Palestinian connection to the land: “Here on your chests we remain like a wall / And in your throats / Like a shard of glass ... Like the *ṣubbār*/ And in your eyes / a whirlwind of fire”; and later, “Here we remain / So go drink the sea / We guard the shadow of the figs and the olives / And we plant ideas like yeast in dough / The chill of ice in our nerves / And in our hearts a red hell / If we grow thirsty, we squeeze the rocks / And eat the soil if we grow hungry / And we do not leave” (qtd. Kanafani 119-23, my

translation). The spikes of *ṣubbār*<sup>55</sup> and ancient olives represent the Palestinian's toughness and permanence the land, while more delicate images of the home and garden like fig trees and dough show us the garden / paradise / home that Palestinian listeners are meant to cherish and protect. The lines, "If we grow thirsty, we squeeze the rocks / And eat the soil if we grow hungry" call to mind Darwish's "I have eight children / I provide them with bread / and clothes, and books / from the rocks<sup>56</sup>," and show the Palestinian speaker drawing sustenance from the land itself.

While Zayyād's poetry from this period emphasizes a connection to nature and the land, and specifically to the domestic sphere of the garden, Darwish's poetry from the same period takes the mythos further by developing the trope of the land-as-female-beloved, specifically his poem '*Āshiq min Falasṭīn (A Lover from Palestine)*:

Your lips are honey, and your hand  
 a cup of wine  
 for others...  
 And the silk of your breast, your basil, your dew  
 are a comfortable bed  
 for others.  
 And I am the sleepless one lying by your black walls;  
 I am the sand's thirst, the shiver of nerves in firesides.  
 Who can shut the door before me?  
 What tyrant, what fiend? I will love your nectar  
 even though it is poured in the cups of others... (qtd. Mattawa 47).

Here, the (female) land-as-beloved has been usurped, and the (male) Palestinian poet's role is to remain loyal, and potentially to liberate the land-beloved from her usurper. Mattawa notes the secular nationalist nature of this land-as-beloved trope:

[...], basil, dew in the sand's thirst, and the shiver of nerves in firesides – these phrases were new to Arabic poetry and are generally secular, bearing no Islamic or traditional Arab echoes. The establishment of this specific relationship between Palestinians and Palestine bears the seeds of a rejuvenated nationalism that arises from new, native

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<sup>55</sup> *ṣubbār* = prickly-pear cactuses, symbols of steadfastness (*ṣumūd*) in post-Nakba Palestinian culture. Bardenstein details how *ṣubbār* were "traditionally used to delineate boundaries of village properties," and after 1948 became important signs allowing Palestinians to "read" the traces of their demolished villages even under JNF forests/projects designed to hide them (10). She explores discourses of rootedness that use *ṣubbār* including a painting of the cactus shielding a Palestinian mother and child by Palestinian artist Fathī Ghaban, the above poem by Zayyād (25), and Sahar Khalifeh's novel, *al-Ṣubbār*. In Khalifeh's novel, *ṣubbār* are a symbol of active armed resistance, as the character Zuḥdi talks himself into firing upon the Israelis who are shooting at Palestinian guerillas, "You're a thorn [ṣabr] now. Yes, a thorn in spite of yourself..." (27)

<sup>56</sup> Based on Darwish's father, who worked in quarries.



symbols as opposed to the symbols of Palestine within the broader pan-Arab nationalism, which were largely reliant on religious associations. (49)

When he does mention “psalms,” “scriptures,” “*‘āyāt*” (Qur’anic verses) and “*tartīl*” (Qur’anic or Christian recitation) in “A Lover from Palestine” (1966), Darwish incorporates both Christian and Islamic religious references into the female land-as-beloved. This reflects the multireligious nature of the Palestinian population: “Take me as an *‘āyah* in the scripture of my tragedies,” says the speaker, addressing the land-beloved, “And I swear / From my eyelashes I will weave a scarf / And will carve upon it poetry for your eyes / And a name, while I water it with a heart melted in *tartīl*” (qtd. Kanafani 135-42, my translation). The multi-confessional nature of this “love” poetry to the homeland-beloved underscores Darwish’s efforts to create a national mythos, based on connection to the land rather than connections to local, kinship, or sectarian communities.

“A Lover from Palestine” draws heavily on “garden” and “nature” imagery to assert the connection of the beloved and the poet to the land. Both poet and beloved here are Palestinians; while the beloved has been driven into exile, she continues to represent an unbreakable connection to the land of Palestine. The poet physically inhabits the land, yet he remains “shut out” from his birthright, with both land and exiled beloved now controlled by malicious external forces. The poem informs us at its beginning that speaker and beloved (stand-ins for 48 Palestinians and the Palestinian community in exile) used to live in unity: “Your eyes are a thorn in my heart / They hurt me ... and I worship them / And I protect them from the wind / [...] / And I forget, after a while, in the meeting of eye with eye / That we once were there, behind the house, the two of us!” (qtd. 135, my translation). The speaker uses violent imagery to describe how the Nakba severed these two Palestinian communities, weaving in images of home and nature:

Your words, like the swallow, flew from my house  
[...]  
And our mirrors shattered  
And sadness became two thousand-fold  
And we gathered the fragments of the voice  
We mastered nothing but the elegy of the homeland  
We will plant it together in the heart of a guitar  
And above the roofs of our *Nakba*, we will play it  
To disfigured moons and to stones” (qtd. 135-42, my translation).

Here we see partition and exile literally “disfiguring” not only the speaker and his beloved, but also nature itself – not unlike the Morisco legend of Carcayona (the “handless maiden”) and the Christian disfigurement of Islamic Andalusian architecture described in Chapter Two. Yet the images of flight, breaking, shattering, and disfigurement are followed by a promise to plant and cultivate the “elegy of the homeland” together – to grow the *mythological* garden of Palestine, even if physically separated from its land or its exiled people.

Darwish’s speaker then establishes the exiled beloved, and the mythologized image of the homeland that Palestinians bring with them into exile, as something *eternal*, indestructible:

I saw you yesterday in the harbor  
Traveling without family, without provisions  
I ran to you, like an orphan,  
Asking the wisdom of the forefathers:  
Why is the green orchard dragged  
To prison, to exile, to the harbor  
And it remains despite its trips  
Despite the winds and the salt and the longing  
It remains eternally green?” (qtd. 135-42, my translation).

The “orchard” here is the mythos or topos of that lost garden – Kanafani’s groves of Jaffa orange trees that shine in refugees’ memories in *The Land of Sand Oranges* – which remains evergreen despite and *especially* in the contexts of exile, prison, and suffering.

Darwish ties this idealized lost garden to the character of the female beloved as his speaker continues: “I saw in the mountains of thorns / A shepherdess without sheep / Chased, and in the ruins... / And you were my garden, and I the stranger to the house” (qtd. 135-42, my translation). The addressee (“you”) throughout this poem has been and remains the character of the beloved, the Palestinian-in-exile who simultaneously embodies this idealized “garden.” And while the poem contains images of her suffering (“I saw you in the jars of water and wheat / Shattered. I saw you in the night cafes, a servant...”), it also contains redemptive images of her triumph and her continuing connection to the land:

I saw you in the songs of orphans... and of despair  
I saw you full of sea salt... and sand  
You were beautiful like the earth, like children, like jasmine  
And I swear:  
From my eyelashes I will weave a scarf  
And will carve upon it poetry for your eyes  
And a name, which while I water it with a heart melted in *tartil*  
It spreads an arbor of plants

I will write a sentence more precious than martyrs and kisses:  
Palestinian she was – and she remains!” (qtd. 135-42, my translation).

The exilic images of “sea salt” and “sand” yield to images of fertility when the beloved’s connection to the land is reaffirmed: “like the earth,” and “like jasmine.” Poetry will spread “an arbor of plants” for the exiled beloved – it will affirm the Palestinian connection to nature and to the land, through this myth of the lost garden / lost paradise that lasts in memory and literature where physical connection fails.

The question of who is the “true” exile is a recurring theme in “A Lover from Palestine.” While the beloved has been driven into exile, we have seen how Darwish establishes her connection to the perfect, mythologized lost garden – the Platonic ideal of Palestine. Meanwhile, the poet-speaker is one of the “remaining remnants” of Palestinians who, as in Darwish’s case, were driven out of their villages, but still live as “internal refugees” in the Galilee. As such, he sees his homeland usurped every day, and is cut off from the *majority* of his community, now in exile. What does this make the speaker, then, other than an exile from his “garden”/beloved?

...  
*And you are my virgin garden...*  
As long as our songs are still  
Swords when we unsheathe them  
And you are faithful like wheat...  
As long as our songs are still  
A fertilizer when sown  
And you are like a palm tree in the mind  
That did not break to storms or woodcutters  
And whose braids were not split  
By the beasts of the deserts... and the forests  
*But I am the exile behind walls and door*  
Take me under your eyes...  
Take me, wherever you may be  
Take me, however you may be  
Return to me the color of my face and my body  
And the light of my heart and my eyes  
And bread’s salt, and melody  
And the taste of earth and homeland (qtd. 135-42, my translation/emphasis)

Here, the speaker is cut off from the “garden” of the homeland/beloved by the exile’s absence, and by the immediate absence of that idealized Palestinian homeland which has now been usurped. He asks the exiled beloved to help him regain “bread’s salt” and “the taste of earth and homeland.” This is, in other words, a call to action – a call for national unity through which an

idealized *past* homeland may be regained and built anew. The refugees' return home will reestablish the natural order in which Palestinians in exile and those inside Palestine are "behind the door, the two of them." Restoring this natural order means restoring the mythologized lost garden – the palm tree, jasmine, thickets, ever-green orchards, and various other images that Darwish employs throughout the poem. This is "resistance poetry" as Kanafani imagined and defined it: it "offers appropriate metaphors and personae to serve as symbolic representations of transformation and empowerment," rather than focusing solely on the harsh reality of Palestinians in Israel (Mattawa 39). Myth sparks action by imagining utopian past and future homelands, a loss and restoration of the "garden."

#### IV. Habiby's Critique and Embrace of Palestinian Myth

This brings us to what Mattawa has called the central "paradox" of resistance literature: the split between "the need to depict a harsh reality and the equally important need to create literature that helps people to imagine a way out of that reality" (38). According to Mattawa, Palestinian literature through the 1970s resolved this tension by "divid[ing] these functions according to genre" (38). So, for example, Darwish's *poetry* from the 1960s (his last decade living in the Galilee), constructed a mythology in which the poet-hero-lover fought for his beloved-land-garden. Poetry like Darwish's and Zayyād's issued calls to action, asserted Palestinians' connection to the land, and called for resistance. Meanwhile, Kanafani's *prose* from this period (1950s-60s), and especially his fiction from the 50s, such as *Men in the Sun* and *Land of Sad Oranges* focus on the bleak realities of life for Palestinians in exile. *Land of Sad Oranges* ends with an impoverished and clinically depressed father attempting to shoot his own children, to end his and his family's misery. *Men in the Sun* similarly shows Palestinians in exile driven to accept death silently, while struggling to provide basic sustenance to their families. Kanafani's works from the late 60s become more empowered and "optimistic" due to the growth of the armed Palestinian struggle in exile. However, even then, certain novels like *Returning to Haifa* seem to graft on an "upbeat" call to arms almost as an afterthought at the very end, not in keeping with the tone and message of the rest of the story (see Campbell, "Blindness to Blindness").

Within this framework, then, of contradiction between the need to depict reality and the need to offer hope and imagine a future, I would like to look at the ways in which Emile Habiby both uses and critiques “myth” as a narrative strategy in *The Pessoptimist* (1970-2), and in his later novel, *Sarāya, Bint al-Ghūl* (1990). As we have seen, Habiby incorporates testimony into *The Pessoptimist* by weaving it into the larger framework of fiction and myth. Mythic or larger-than-life happenings abound in *The Pessoptimist*. While the novel employs a satirical tone similar to that of *Candide*, as well as the “testimonial” narrative strategies discussed above, this is all within the framework of the fantastical tale of Saeed, a dishonorable informant within the new Zionist state. Saeed is a comic figure, a fool who through his foolishness is able to reflect the absurdity of life for Palestinians in Israel. Habiby employs myth and mythic fantasy as *part* of this effort to reflect through a distorted mirror the distorted reality that 48 Palestinians faced.

For example, Habiby often employs fantasy and myth to *enlarge* characters whose stature in the public imagination is larger than life – noble characters whose conduct makes them heroes. Specifically, we see this in the characters of “Imm al-Birweh” (“Mother al-Birweh”); Saeed’s wife and son, Bāqiyah and Walā’; and the “second” Saeed, the *fidā’iy*. “Imm al-Birweh” is a refugee forced out of Palestine at gunpoint in 1948, while the rest are Palestinians who chose to take up arms and fight for their freedom; all have assumed mythic proportions in Palestinian popular imagination, and so they take on mythic forms in *The Pessoptimist*. “Imm al-Birweh” (whose village of origin causes readers to immediately think of Mahmoud Darwish, originally from al-Birweh) appears during the events of the Nakba, after Saeed has snuck back into Palestine from Lebanon and begged the Israeli intelligence services to take him on as an informer. This is how Saeed finds himself riding westward in a Jeep with the Israeli military governor, when the latter suddenly stops to threaten a village woman and her child, whom he spots hiding between some sesame stalks. The governor points a gun at the child’s head and tells the woman to walk “anywhere east,” and which point Saeed-as-narrator interjects:

At this point I observed the first example of that amazing phenomenon that was to occur again and again until I finally met my friends from outer space. For the further the woman and child went from where we were, the governor standing and I in the jeep, the taller they grew. By the time they merged with their own shadows in the sinking sun they had become bigger than the plain of Acre itself. The governor still stood there awaiting their final disappearance, while I remained huddled in the jeep. Finally he asked in amazement, “Will they never disappear?” (Habiby trans. Jayyusi and LeGassick 15-16)

In this excerpt, the banished Palestinians sent to live in exile assume mythic proportions in the eyes of both their kinsmen and those who drove them out. The question of refugees' right to return has remained a constant for Palestinians and Israelis ever since; the psychological presence of these absent villagers would haunt both the state and those Palestinians like Saeed who remained behind. Habiby makes the psychological physical here through the mythic portrayal of a woman and child whose shadows grow longer the farther they walk, and who never seem to disappear. By describing this "growth" as if it were literal, Habiby uses the narrative strategy of mythmaking to "testify" to a psychological truth.

Similarly, characters who take up arms against the usurping state are portrayed with surreal, mythical grandeur in *The Pessoptimist*. The first example of this is Saeed's wife, Bāqiyah, who preserves a "treasure" passed down from her refugee father and hidden in a cave in her now-demolished village of Tanturah. This treasure is a symbol of hope for both Bāqiyah and Saeed, during their difficult twenty years together living under Israeli rule<sup>57</sup>. Their "secret" (i.e., knowledge of the treasure) is their one psychological defense against the overwhelming fear and caution that characterize their lives in the Israeli state. Saeed assumes the treasure to consist of riches; however, we discover at the end of Book Two that Bāqiyah has known all along that it held weapons. She has kept this nationalist sentiment in her heart, following a philosophy of *ṣumūd* - the passive resistance of people who, as she puts it, "plow and plant and bear our burden until it is harvest time" (111).

All of this comes to the surface when Saeed and Bāqiyah's son, Walā', grows tired of the confinement and caution that characterize his life in Israel, and unexpectedly (to his father) unearths Bāqiyah's treasure and takes up arms against the state. There follows a standoff in which Bāqiyah at first attempts to coax Walā' out of the cave by the sea where he is hiding, espousing her philosophy of steadfast endurance. Yet she is eventually convinced by Walā's insistence that "It was to breathe free that I came to this cellar [viz., took up arms], to breathe in freedom just once. In my cradle you stifled my crying. As I grew and I tried to learn how to talk

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<sup>57</sup> The topos of hidden or buried treasure was also common in early modern Spanish portrayals of Moriscos. In the second volume of *Don Quixote*, published after the mass-expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain in 1609-14, Cervantes incorporates the narrative of a fictional Morisco, Ricote (named after the Moriscos of the Val de Ricote), who sneaks back into Spain disguised as a pilgrim after being expelled. In part, he is motivated by the desire to recover "treasure" that he left buried in Spain. This could be metaphorically read as an allusion to the Spanish aspects of Ricote's identity/culture/history that he could not carry with him into exile, or more literally to the wealth that Moriscos were forced to leave behind them and/or sell at extremely low prices by the *Bandos de expulsion*.

from what you said, I heard only whispers. As I went to school you warned me, ‘Careful what you say!’ [...] just once, I want to be careless about what I say” (109-110). Walā’ explains to his mother that he has found emotional and psychological freedom in his armed rebellion – freedom from the self-censorship and fear he was taught to practice all his life. Bāqiyah’s philosophy of *ṣumūd* is eventually overcome by this argument: she tells him there is another rifle for her in the chest, and runs to join him.

At this point, Saeed is overwhelmed and can convey no clear picture of what happens next; however, he is later told by his boss Jacob that Wala’ and Bāqiyah “had managed to escape completely, without a trace” (113). Jacob describes a surreal scene in which Walā’ and Bāqiyah take on mythic stature in the eyes of their observers:

They had been last seen going toward the sea, mother and son, she embracing him and he supporting her, until they had disappeared into the water. The soldiers, he said, had been taken by surprise, and the big man had forbidden them to shoot to keep the news from spreading. He was sure they would either be caught or drown. However, the day and night search for them had not found them alive, nor had their bodies been discovered. Their fate remains a closely guarded state secret, too. (113)

In later episodes, Saeed describes Walā’ and Bāqiyah in a similarly mythic or fantastical manner. “I do have a son like you,” he thinks when addressing the young *fidā’iy*<sup>58</sup> in prison, “but his cloak is of sea coral” (133). When stuck immobile on the flat head of a stake at the end of the novel, paralyzed by fear, Saeed sees Walā’ and Bāqiyah among the figures who call out to him from the ground: “And Bāqiyah arrived, calling to me to descend. Walā’, she said, had built me a palace of sea shells there at his side” (158). Saeed remains afraid and paralyzed, likely equating Walā’s and Bāqiyah’s “side” with death. Though the original scene of their disappearance into the sea creates an aura of respect and heroism for them by specifying that their bodies were never found, Saeed seems to regard them in subsequent chapters as dead, or as good as dead. Yet their heroic armed resistance turns them into larger-than life, mythic figures, akin to the freedom fighters and heroes who so often appeared in the poetry of Darwish and his peers.

Similarly, we see the mythologization of the character of Saeed the *fidā’iy*, the son of Yu’ād, whom Saeed the Pessoptimist encounters in prison. Though both share a name, the younger Saeed has become through his actions a heroic, mythical figure in the eyes of the Pessoptimist. After being arrested for an ill-conceived attempt to demonstrate his loyalty to the

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<sup>58</sup> Freedom fighter – literally one who sacrifices himself (for the sake of their country).

state, which the authorities interpreted as an act of resistance, Saeed is taken to Shatta prison and thoroughly beaten, before being thrown into a darkened cell. There he encounters a man covered in blood from a similar beating. The blood appears to Saeed as “the crimson cloak of kingship” (131). Whereas Saeed as a collaborator has always lacked honor and been excluded from the Palestinian community, this younger Saeed, a *fidā’iy* who has grown up in exile, exudes the “royal” aura of honor and self-respect. He mistakes the Pessoptimist for another member of the resistance, and welcomes him, for the first time, into the Palestinian community, addressing him as “brother” and “father” (132).

Through the *fidā’iy*’s resistance and his integrity, the “room without windows” is transformed into “hope without walls,” (131), and Saeed exclaims internally, mentally addressing the prison guards who beat him up, “Trample all you like, you huge boots, on my chest! Suffocate me! [...] Those brutish guards, if only they knew, were merely guards of honor at the court of this king. That dark and narrow room was the outer hall that led to this, the throne room!” (132). As Saeed and the *fidā’iy* talk, Saeed describes how “he healed my wounds by talking about his own. He kept widening that single tiny window in the wall until it became a broad horizon that I had never seen before. Its netted bars became bridges to the moon, and between his bed and mine were hanging gardens” (133). Through his nobility, his resistance, and his faith in the success of that resistance, the *fidā’iy* builds for Saeed a literal “garden” of thought and speech, a mythical hope that lends the Pessoptimist strength he has not experienced before. This recalls Mattawa’s discussion of the function of Palestinian poetry, in imagining futures brighter than the current abysmal reality. This scene, through a magical / mythological register, performs a similar function, as do the scenes of Imm al-Birweh and Bāqiyah / Walā’s resistance. These figures all assume larger-than life proportions, and the *fidā’iy* in particular offers the Pessoptimist a road forward that (unlike the others) does not necessarily end in exile or death.

Habiby also uses myth and fantasy to highlight the difference between the heroic figures mentioned above, and the cowardly, dishonorable Saeed. Saeed is literally animalized at various points in the novel, due to his inability to confront the crushing fear and silence that surround him. His desire to perform submissiveness to his Israeli bosses leads him to animalize himself: “Bāqiyah’s secret [her treasure, symbol of her mental/emotional resistance] having become mine as well, I became caution personified on two feet. When I realized that true caution demands walking on four feet, I began to do that too” (97). In a more literal vein, Saeed describes how he



“change[d] into a cat that meows” (76). In this incident, Saeed begins by describing how he lived in Israel “for twenty years, unable to breathe no matter how I tried, like a man who is drowning. But I did not die” (76). This “inability to breathe” foreshadows Walā’s declaration to his mother, that he took up arms to be able to breathe freely<sup>59</sup>. Saeed then asks the reader to imagine that they have been reincarnated in the body of a cat: “...imagine your son, whom you love so dearly, going out to play as all children do, and you calling him, meowing to him again and again, while he tells you again and again to shut up. Finally he throws a stone at you. [...] That’s how I’ve been for twenty years, meowing and whimpering...” (76). Saeed’s fear of the Israeli authorities, and his subsequent silence and subservience, turned him into something as good as an animal, something that could not be understood or even sympathized with by humankind. This animalized collaborator stands in stark contrast to the “royal” or impossibly tall images of refugees and freedom fighters discussed above. Habiby uses a mythical narrative style to shrink and enlarge his characters, according to their behavior.

However, Habiby as an author does not leave these myths of heroism and “hanging gardens” unquestioned. The character of “the second” Yu’ād, daughter of the first Yu’ād and sister of Saeed the *fidā’iy*, has a frank discussion with Saeed the Pessoptimist in which she criticizes and deconstructs her brother’s beliefs. After arguing over who should take action and what action they should take, Saeed tells the second Yu’ād,

“...I’ll return to the beginning.”

“Impossible!”

“Then how can your brother [the *fidā’iy*] believe that things will return to where they began?”

“He got that idea from his elders; of his beginning an old man remembers only the prime of youth and so thinks fondly of it. Do you really know how the beginning was, uncle? The beginning was not merely sweet memories of pines over Mount Carmel, or orange groves, or the songs of Jaffa’s sailors. And did they really sing anyway?”

“Do you really want to return to the beginning, to mourn your brother torn to pieces by the crane as he carved his living from the rocks. You want to do it all again, from the beginning?”

“But your brother, Saeed [the *fidā’iy*], said they had learned from the mistakes of their predecessors and would not commit them again.”

“If they had really learned, they wouldn’t have spoken at all of returning to the beginning.” (154)

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<sup>59</sup> The poet Michele Haddād, editor of *al-Mijtama’*, mentioned in Chapter One, wrote in a poem included in his first collection of poetry, published in 1968: “وداعاً أيتها المقدرّة على التنفّس” - “Farewell, the ability to breathe!”

Yu'ād attacks the myth of the lost garden, the “pines of Mount Carmel” and “orange groves” that refugees and 48 Palestinians alike came to idealize in their literature. She does not criticize the Palestinian connection to the land, but rather the nostalgic idealization of a past that cannot return, which she views as misguided. She includes her brother the *fidā'iy* in this category of misguided souls seeking a return to a past that was never as idyllic as they now imagine. We can see here a reflection of Habiby's own rejection of armed resistance and his embrace of the Zionist political system, even as he worked to critique its racism on a more localized level. Habiby, through the character of Yu'ād, writes off Palestinian armed resistance as a pipe dream, equating the desire to retake the entire territory of historical Palestine with the impossible, misguided desire to return to the past.

In a similar vein, through Saeed-as-narrator, Habiby critiques and comments on Tawfiq Zayyād's “On the Trunk of the Olive Tree” (discussed above), quoting: “I will carve the number of each title / Of our land that was stolen / And the location of my village, and its borders / And the houses of its people that were pulverized / And my trees that were uprooted / And every wildflower that was crushed” (qtd. Kanafani 114, my translation). Saeed does not name Zayyād, but refers to him as “your Galilean poet,” and goes on to ask the reader, “How long must he continue carving? How soon will these years of oblivion pass, effacing all our memories? When will the words carved on the olive tree be read? And are there any olives left in courtyards still?” (22). These rhetorical questions echo Yu'ād's “and did they really sing?”, through which she challenges the mythologized image of the lost garden. By directly questioning Zayyād's poem, Habiby questions the mythologization of the garden once again, this time a mythologization which focuses on that garden's rootedness (the olive tree which remains in the courtyard despite the war and destruction around it). Habiby's critique of the idealized pastoral image of pre-Nakba Palestine is objectively valid (life in Palestine during periods of Ottoman and British colonial rule was not easy for many). Certainly, it reflects his own espousal of communism (within a larger Zionist framework) as the political path forward. But his equation of armed resistance and its nationalist ideology with a desire to return to an idealized past that never existed merits further examination. It is an oversimplification to say the least, given all we have discussed in Palestinian and Morisco contexts about mythology's motivational power, its role in helping historical actors envision possible futures to strive toward. In describing “restorative nostalgia,” Boym distinguishes between the mythologized past and the imagined future that past

*models* for national, religious, and other modern-day movements. While he acknowledges the emotional truth of certain myths (like the larger-than-life refugees and fighters), Habiby views “restoration” as an impossible and indeed harmful project.

Although he appears to have no patience for Palestinian nationalism and its accompanying myth of the lost garden, Habiby also takes space within *The Pessoptimist* to critique Zionist nationalist mythology. On the road to Shatta prison, the Ashkenazi Big Man waxes poetic, unwittingly highlighting the hubris and absurdity of Zionism’s blend of modern colonialism with biblical mythology: “That’s why our minister general has said that our occupation has been the most compassionate known on earth ever since Paradise was liberated from its occupation by Adam and Eve” (124-5). He adds that some Israeli officials believe that by treating Palestinian prisoners too well, “we encourage them to continue to resist our civilizational mission in the new territories, just like those ungrateful African cannibals who eat their benefactors” (125). The Big Man goes on to explain how Israeli demolitions of Palestinian homes are a well-meaning effort “to exterminate the rats that built their nests in them. This way we saved them from the plague” (125). Habiby uses satire here to allow the ridiculousness of Zionist mythology to speak for itself – specifically, the obvious falsity of the benevolent “civilizing mission” so often cited by colonial powers. As the prison truck passes through the so-called “green belt,” the Big Man opines: “Verdant fields! Green on your right and green on your left; green everywhere! We have given life to what was dead. This is why we have named the borders of former [biblical] Israel the Green Belt. For beyond them lie barren mountains and desert reaches, a wilderness calling out to us, ‘Come ye hither, tractors of civilization!’” (175, my translation). Here we see again the Zionist claim to having “made the desert bloom” as part of its *mission civilisatrice*; this claim is unassumingly undermined as Saeed asks, “Was this why you demolished the Latrun villages, Imwas, Yalu, and Bait Nuba, and drove their inhabitants away, master?” (126) Saeed cuts through the distortions of the myth of “making the desert bloom” and “civilizing” the Arabs through simply describing the actual actions of Zionist forces (demolishing villages and scattering the Arabs) – which are in direct opposition to the myth.

One myth that Habiby employs throughout *The Pessoptimist*, which seems beyond the critique directed at Palestinian and Zionist nationalist mythologies, is that of the aliens, Saeed’s “friends from outer space.” These aliens are closely identified with nature and natural forces, which form another source of comfort for Saeed (especially the sea). The first alien to greet

Saeed is described as being “wrapped in a blue cloak flecked with white foam,” standing by the sea near Acre’s lighthouse and looking “like the lighthouse itself” (37). He has a face full of wrinkles, like “the surface of the sea when the east wind blows” (37). Saeed finds comfort in the alien’s apparent age, just as he finds comfort in the long history of conquerors who have come and gone from Palestine, and in the immutable nature of the sea. As he says of the Palestinians in Haifa who drifted to the waterfront during the 1967 war, “they were searching in the sea for reassurance that there was something stronger than our state” (70) Saeed feels calm when he shakes the alien’s hand – one of the few moments of calm and comfort we see in the first two books of the story. The aliens discuss history and nature with Saeed, further enforcing their connection to this *long-durée* view of history. This should remind us of the Moriscos, who took comfort in larger scope of history as they saw it, viewing themselves as heirs of the *salaf* and holding out hope for the “restoration” of Islam in Spain at the hands of one conqueror or another.

*The Pessoptimist* was written in the early 1970s, when Habiby was very active politically in Maki, and these politics are reflected in his novel, particularly in his deconstruction of nationalist mythologies and his turn toward nature, history, and working-class solidarity for salvation. However, if we look to Habiby’s later novel, *Sarāya, Bint al-Ghūl* (*Saraya, the Ogre’s Daughter*), written in the late 1980s and published in 1991, we can see a huge shift both in how Habiby views politics, and how he views myth when it comes to the land of Palestine. While *Sarāya* embraces a magical-realist style similar to that of *The Pessoptimist*, there is no call to a workers’ revolution at the end, nor any critique of armed struggle. In fact, Habiby in his preface to *Sarāya* explicitly states that he no longer believes it possible to “carry two watermelons under one arm,” i.e., to practice both politics and literature. Instead, he argues, “Would we accept a pear tree that bore eggplants, and justify its yield with the claim that it wanted to feed the hungry with ‘poor peoples’ meat,’ as eggplants are popularly called?” (*Saraya* 8, 11). Just as Darwish’s efforts shifted after the defeat of 1982 towards a more “universal” poetry that would raise Palestine up into the level of myth, so Habiby’s *Sarāya* no longer considers communist politics, civil disobedience, or armed disobedience to be a realistic option. Instead, *Sarāya* focuses on the confrontation and recovery of suppressed memory as its field of struggle.

The book never calls itself an autobiography and is narrated in a split voice between the main character and a narrator / “friend” who refers to the main character in the third person. Although Habiby does not call the book an autobiography, this “main character” is an aging

Palestinian politician in Israel who is also a writer, has a love of fishing, and has escorted his mother to the Mandelbaum Gate in the 1950s, from which she left to live in exile with his brother; he received a prize for literature from Yasser Arafat in 1990. In other words, the “main character” is Habiby, although the character Sarāya addresses him as “‘Abdullah” (35). Habiby mixes in mythical elements and chooses not to label this book as an autobiography or a novel but rather as a *khurrāfiyyah*, a myth or tale (Theroux translates the word as “fairy tale”) (8). I will refer to this character as “Abdullah,” while accepting that he is also a stand-in for Habiby, within this semi-autobiographical *khurrāfiyyah*.

The *khurrāfiyyah* of Sarāya begins by recounting the eponymous folk tale, about a young girl who loves exploring and while out exploring one day, is captured by a ghoul, who adopts her as his daughter and imprisons her in a tower to raise her. She is eventually freed by her cousin, though the precise versions of how he frees her are many and various. We see the parallel of this myth woven throughout the story, in the figure of “Abdullah”’s own “Sarāya,” a young Palestinian girl who had been the companion of his youth. Although she appears to him in his old age as a kind of ghost or spirit, when we see her in his memories, she is young and laughing and full of energy. Abdullah recalls countless hours spent on Mount Carmel with her, jumping around and finding secret springs and eating the plants that grew naturally in that environment. Although Abdullah recalls his own schooling in the city during the Mandate period, Sarāya is taken by her father Ibrāhīm (Abdullah’s uncle) to be raised on Mount Carmel by the Bedouin. Ibrāhīm also passes onto her his uniquely traditional and magical knowledge:

She said that his uncle Ibrahim had taken it upon himself to raise and educate her just like a “city girl.” He helped her fathom the mysteries of the letters, and she learned to read his pamphlets and notebooks. He taught her “Arab medicine.” She could cure snakebites and suck out scorpion poison, set broken bones, [...] They agreed she was free to do as she liked; if she wished to carry her basket and go down to the city with their [the Bedouin] women and girls, she did; or else she went down alone. If she wished to join the shepherds, she did that. If she felt like wandering, she wandered. (107)

Sarāya spans a very specific range of Palestinian society: she is identified first and foremost with nature and tradition. She learns traditional medicine and the Arabic alphabet from her uncle, himself described as a traditional healer, a secret Isma’īlī, and in the eyes of the young Abdullah, practically a magician. She is raised by Bedouins, themselves a repository of their own traditions and living in direct proximity to nature. She sometimes gathers wild plants with them (these are what the women and girls “bring down to the city” in their baskets), or else herds sheep with

them. Either way, she knows how to live off the land. Within this association with tradition and with the land, Sarāya is given to inhabit not only female and male roles, but also to simply go off and wander on her own when she wishes – to be her own person. Sarāya is intimately associated with Mount Carmel, as Abdullah’s remembered meetings with her occur there. Just as the “lost garden” myth embodies all the positive qualities that nationalist poets like Zayyād and Darwish would associate with pre-Nakba Palestine (abundance, safety, connection to nature and the land), so Saraya represents something similar to Habiby and to his stand-in, Abdullah.

The important differences here is that Sarāya, whom Habiby connects with homeland and with Palestine, is *human* and active – not a passive beloved waiting to be freed nor an inert garden waiting to be tended. Even as a spirit or ghost, she moves on her own to *confront* her Palestinian writer / beloved / childhood companion. When her apparition first appears to Abdullah that night by the sea, he narrates, “She was, I imagined, calling to me: *Yaba!*” Sarāya speaks in colloquial and rural dialect that reflects her connections to the land and to tradition. Her appearance elicits fear and guilt in Abdullah: “I tried to get away. I willed my legs to move, but they were as stony as the boulder on which I’d been sitting. I willed my voice to speak, but tears stopped it” (35). Sarāya continues to confront him and does not let up: “The homeland longs for its people, Abdallah. Have you forgotten us?” (35) This “us” affirms Sarāya’s direct connection to the homeland, and her belonging to “its people.”

This Sarāya / beloved / homeland trope continues later on, as the narrator apostrophizes, “You, absent dear ones, must not be content with a nymph you can take to your beds as a substitute for a homeland, believing ‘you may choose whatever form for her you like.’ Nymphs only live in Paradise. Saraya, however, and despite the dust heaps of oblivion, is flesh and blood!” (77). The speaker follows up by admitting that he himself chose to “hide Saraya, afraid they’d throw her out the door...” (78). Here, I believe the “nymphs” represent the mythologized homeland that Habiby critiqued over a decade before in *The Pessoptimist*. But now, in *Sarāya*, he expresses his regret for locking away the flesh-and-blood Sarāya, i.e., his true memories of his homeland, for fear they would be attacked or “thrown out.” Sarāya is not a garden, the way *‘Āshiq min Falasṭīn* associated its beloved with a lost garden; instead, she is her own person, free to inhabit male and female roles, free to wander on her own if she chooses, subsisting on wild plants that grow on Mount Carmel. She is active, able to confront her Palestinian writer /

interlocutor on her own volition. She is Habiby's particular take on the lost beloved / lost garden trope. And throughout the *khurrāfiyyah*, his overwhelming emotion towards her is one of guilt.

This is the major change in tone from *The Pessoptimist*, following the changed reality in which Habiby, like so many other Palestinians in the late 1980s, was living. Armed resistance was crushed; Habiby himself had been ejected from his roles in the Israeli Communist Party (Miḥjiz 174-7). After seeing Sarāya reappear for the first time in decades, the Habiby stand-in, "Abdullah," confesses that "I tried to pluck from my heart the pangs of conscience that lay deep inside me, as though I were someone who had killed his own sister, when she came to him to be saved [...]" (38). As the story develops and the narrator digs further back into his own memories, he comes to blame himself for "my despicable silence towards the calls for help from Saraya, the ogre's daughter, which she repeated until I grew used to them and began to confuse them with other things on my mind" (170). In the parallel folk tale of Sarāya, the narrator likens his wandering, mysterious uncle Ibrāhīm to the ogre, since he "[left] me and [took] Saraya with him into exile" (177); yet he realizes eventually that *he* is the ogre in this parable, since he "forgot that person, truly forgot her" (176). Ultimately, he concludes, "I was given Saraya from the beginning – how is it that I imprisoned her in the castle I built for her above the clouds of neglect, until I entered the cell of the end?" (209). This is a late and dramatic pivot from *The Pessoptimist*. Rather than critiquing memories of "lost gardens" like the Second Yu'ād, the narrator of *Sarāya* is overwhelmed by guilt for having repressed memories of his own lost paradise for so long.

Saraya is "the eternally young, free and beautiful Palestinian girl" (Attar 50); this freedom and beauty embodied in the "lost garden" mythos is what Habiby had neglected for so many decades through repressing his idealized memories of the Palestinian past, in favor of more "pragmatic" political work and a more "realistic" assessment of Palestinian history. *Sarāya*, unlike *The Pessoptimist*, honors these "lost gardens" and lost beloveds, since with no hope remaining of a communist or nationalist revolution, these memories and this truth is all that the author has left. Habiby appears to turn if not full circle, then at least several degrees, from deconstructing nationalist mythology to "testifying" to the truth of his own personal myth-memory.

## V. Conclusion

This chapter began with Habiby's *The Pessoptimist*, with the indirect "testimony" of naming, citing current events, and citing the author's own political views and experiences, slyly inserted into a fantastical tale, in the mouth of an unreliable narrator. Relating this to our dichotomy of in-group -facing myths and out-group – facing testimony, Habiby's indirect style reflects his mixed audience. Writing inside the borders of Israel in the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, Habiby wrote *The Pessoptimist* in Arabic; in naming destroyed villages and recent Israeli atrocities, he was doing something similar to the Mancebo de Arévalo's recording of the Granadan elders' testimony. He was recording these facts for his Arabic-speaking, Palestinian (in-group) audience, to ensure that younger generations would not forget. He was also thinking of the out-group; these names and dates would serve to arm Palestinian readers with tools of rhetorical self-defense against Zionist narratives, and could simultaneously speak to the out-group, the colonizers (when translated by Anton Shammas into Hebrew), challenging their national mythology with Palestinian testimony, concealed inside the outer garb of fantasy and myth. Habiby's mixed audience is not comparable to the Mancebo's Morisco one; instead, it is closer to the audience of Moriscos like Luis de Cueva (see Introduction) who wrote in Castilian, anticipating both Old and New Christian readers.

When we discuss Palestinian mythmaking, the audience is more clearly Palestinian. In this chapter I examine how Darwish's 1992 *Eleven Planets* draws an explicit connection between the long Andalusian poetic tradition of nostalgia for lost, idealized homelands, and the loss of Palestine. Specifically, I focus on Darwish's portrayal of the "lost garden" of Granada (and metaphorically, Palestine), which echoes the many "lost gardens" of al-Andalus, from Ruṣāfa to al-Zahrā' to the Alhambra. Next, I trace the trope of the "lost garden" in Palestinian literature back to the "resistance poetry" of the 1950s and 60s, in which the garden evoked both the home that was lost, and Palestinian rootedness in the land. The "lost garden" myth in Palestinian resistance poetry most often corresponds to Boym's "restorative nostalgia," as so many of these poems end in a call to action, pushing listeners to "re" build the homeland/paradise that had been erased during the Nakba. Darwish's 1992 *dīwān*, by contrast, displays both restorative and reflective nostalgia – restorative in moments where it calls for readers to envision "a lost homeland that *could* return" (29, my translation), and reflective at times when it dwells more abstractly on the human experiences of loss and exile.



I end the chapter by examining Habiby's critique of the Palestinian nationalist myth in *The Pessoptimist*, despite the novel's copious use of myth and fantasy as narrative strategies. *The Pessoptimist* acknowledges Palestinian myths in the way that it portrays refugees, freedom fighters/martyrs, and prisoners as larger-than-life figures, who grow to impossible heights and build underwater kingdoms or royal palaces out of the respect they carry in the Palestinian community. He draws them mythically, as people see them, rather than plainly as they are. Similarly, he portrays the Saeed the collaborator as a mute animal, reflecting the collaborator's exclusion from the Palestinian nationalist discourse; the collective's lack of respect for such a character means that they refuse to hear anything other than "meowing" from him. And in the comments of the younger Yu'ād, Habiby finally criticizes the Palestinian nationalist myth (characterized by "restorative nostalgia," in Boym's terminology) as offering only a false portrayal of the past and an impossible, counter-productive vision of the future.

Yet by the late 'eighties and early 'nineties, after his contentious exit from Maki and epiphany about the un-mixable nature of literature and politics, we see Habiby return to the issue of mythmaking in *Sarāyā*, *Bint al-Ghūl*, and honor the narrative "truth" of myth, even with all its "false" idealizations of a paradisaical lost past / lost garden. In *Sarāyā*, Habiby blames his earlier self for "imprisoning" myths of the lost garden and their corresponding nostalgia. As an older man and having lost his public role as a politician, he does not embrace restorative nostalgia with its emphasis on "absolute truth" and restoration of the lost homeland; rather, *Sarāyā* is characterized by "reflective" nostalgia, which "dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity" (Boym "Introduction"). The colonized modernity in which Habiby was living in the 'eighties and 'nineties left precious little room for dreams of "restoration" of the lost homeland, as Israeli occupation of the physical land of Palestine would only continue to deepen and grow. Instead, Habiby in *Sarāyā* turns to reflective nostalgia as his only realistic option for recuperating his buried memories of pre-Nakba Palestine, embracing the lost garden myth in a way that his earlier, political self could not have done.

**PART THREE**

**Individual Artistic Freedom vs. Collective Duty  
in Palestinian and Morisco Poetry**

## Chapter Four

### Morisco Poetry Between Folklore and Golden Age Authorship

#### I. Theoretical Frameworks: *Iltizām*, Resistance Literature, and Minor Literature

For Moriscos living under Catholic Castilian rule in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and for Palestinians living under Israeli rule in the 1950s and 60s, the genre of poetry, with its tendency toward orality, was a uniquely important form of collective cultural resistance. For Moriscos, poetry recitation helped to preserve their Islamic culture during celebrations such as the *Mawlid al-Nabi*, the yearly remembrance of the Prophet's birth. For 48 Palestinians during the first few decades of Israeli rule, Galilee "poetry festivals" allowed for a collective therapeutic experience as poets recited words of pride and defiance, forging a national identity for an audience who craved just such validation and encouragement. Audience expectations, meanwhile, exerted a strong pressure back on the poets themselves, pointing them toward a specific style and content. This chapter will examine the inherent tension in such occupied contexts, between the individual artistic freedom of the poet and their perceived duty to speak to and for the collective, following preexisting models demanded by their audience.

The concept of literary "commitment" or *iltizām*, so prominent in Arabic literary circles of the 1950s and 60s, highlights this central tension. Palestinian and Morisco poets were both what we might call "committed by force of circumstance" – the political or ideological bent of their work was a central fact of life under hostile foreign rule, rather than a choice. Salma Khadra Jayyusi explains, "Palestinian writers have little scope for indulging in escapism; they are compromised by the events of contemporary history even before they are born." Therefore, "For the [Palestinian] writer to contemplate an orientation completely divorced from political life is to belie reality, to deny experience; for to engross oneself for too long in 'normal' everyday experiences is to betray one's own life and one's own people" (3). Anwar Chejne summarizes his study of Morisco poetry in similar terms:

[...] Morisco poetry is limited to religious and doctrinal matters, thus, aiming at instructing and keeping the faith in an adverse environment. This limitation with respect

to themes, structure, and variety of verbal expressions would place the poetry outside the realm of spontaneity making it utilitarian, aimed at a single purpose of responding to Morisco plight and future aspirations. As such, the poetry appears to be concerned more with conveying a message in a clear and simple manner than with aesthetics and poetical niceties. It is simply meant to reaffirm and defend the Islamic faith against outside attack by first reiterating and upholding Islamic faith, and secondly, by refuting and ridiculing Christian doctrine. (165)

More so than Jayyusi, Chejne frames commitment-by-force-of-circumstance as a *detriment* to artistry. Both, however, are commenting on the ways in which colonial occupation – in Palestinian and Morisco contexts – heightens the tension between the poet’s individual artistic freedom and their perceived obligation to speak *politically* to and for their community.

Literary “commitment” in the form in which Arab poets and writers of the 50s and 60s understood it relied largely on the ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre, who published a series of essays in the immediate aftermath of WWII laying out what he called “*engagée*” (“committed”) literature. In his essays “What is Writing?,” “Why Write?,” and “For Whom Does One Write?,” Sartre outlines some of the central ideas of literary “commitment.” To Sartre, to speak is to act, and therefore to remain silent on a given topic or issue is also to act: “Thus, by speaking, I reveal the situation by my very intention of changing it; I reveal it to myself and to others *in order* to change it” (36-37). The “committed” writer, according to Sartre, “knows that his words are action” (38). The choice to write or remain silent, as well as the manner of writing, are therefore political decisions – writers, like all other people, are in a “situation.” Sartre views the written work as a *gift* given in freedom and generosity – freedom on the part of the reader, who chooses whether or not to engage with a book, and generosity on the part of the writer, who creates his written work as an *appeal* to the reader’s freedom (54, 60, 61). The book, to Sartre, is an object which exists in motion: the narrative exists as the reader’s eyes follow the author’s words across the page, in that shared act of creation. Therefore, the author “appeals” to the reader to complete the enterprise which the author began (56).

From this Sartre extrapolates a “moral imperative” at the heart of prose writing: “the writer, a free man addressing free men, has only one subject – freedom. Hence, any attempt to enslave his readers threatens him in his very art” (68). This is why, according to Sartre, the literature of Nazi propagandists became increasingly shrill, as its readership failed to give it the kind of response a writer would expect from a free reader (68-69). Sartre traces a Franco-centric history of the role of the writer and the writer’s intended audience, from medieval “clerks” who

wrote for the Church establishment, to sixteenth-century nobility who wrote for one another, to writers like Voltaire and Diderot who wrote to a divided audience of the old nobility and the rising bourgeoisie, to the post-Revolution bourgeoisie, who “killed literature” by removing its message and capacity for class- or self-critique. Surrealism, for Sartre, was the natural conclusion of this historical movement, a “coming full circle” in which art lost all connection to meaning and the writer became supremely selfish. Commitment, then, is a call back from this abyss, a call for the writer to reconnect with society, with his own historical “situatedness,” and with the dialectical or collective nature of writing.

Meanwhile, the notion of political writing meant to address the community was nothing new in Arabic literature in 1947 when Egyptian writer Taha Hussein first published his analysis of Sartre’s essays and coined the term *iltizām* (DiMeo 41). Questions of how literature should engage with society and politics had been central to the Arab *Nahḍa* (“renaissance” or “awakening”) beginning in the nineteenth century, and in the first half of the twentieth century, several prominent writers in Cairo and Beirut advocated socialist views of literature that emphasized the responsibility of the author towards his community (Klemm 52, DiMeo 41-43). Beginning in the 1920s, Egyptian socialist writer Salama Musa advocated what he called “literature for the people,” written in the “language of the people” (DiMeo 43), reorienting literature away from the courtly poetry of the Middle Ages and towards the common people. Musa’s compatriot Luwis ‘Awad advocated similar principles (Klemm 52). In Lebanon, meanwhile, ‘Umar Fakhūrī issued a call for socialist realism in his 1944 book, *The Author in the Market (Al-Adīb fi-l-Sūq)*; his younger adherent Ra’īf Khūrī joined him in leading a Marxist-oriented literary trend from Beirut (DiMeo 45, Klemm 52). These four critics shared an ideology based around dialectical materialism, i.e., the understanding that the writer is part of society, and therefore what he writes both *influences* and is *influenced by* society (Klemm 52).

Thus, “By the time Sartre’s concept of *engagement* found its way into an Arabic journal, Khuri, Musa, Fakhuri, and their colleagues were enjoying a lively debate on socially committed writing” (DiMeo 45). Sartre’s terminology and certain of his ideas fell on fertile soil because the issue was already being debated throughout the Arab world; Taha Hussein was simply the first to translate Sartre’s essays and apply the term *iltizām* as a translation of Sartre’s *engagement*. Hussein in fact “seemed a bit taken aback that the articles had generated such excitement,” given

that socially committed literature was already a familiar topic of discussion, minus the term *iltizām* (46).

Despite Hussein's surprise, however, his discussion of Sartre generated great excitement. The term *iltizām* spread, and by 1953, Lebanese writer Suhail Idrīs had started publishing his journal *al-Adāb* specifically as a space for *multazim* writing (Spanos 110, Klemm 53). In the preface to the first issue of the journal, Idrīs wrote that “[*al-Adāb*] calls for and encourages ... the literature of *iltizām*” (qtd. DiMeo 47). Idrīs himself, along with his wife ‘Āidah Maṭarjī Idrīs, were deeply influenced by Sartre's ideas; together they “undertook to summarize, translate, and critique works by such existentialists as Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Jean Wahl, Emmanuel Robles, and above all Sartre” (Spanos 110). However, it is important to point out that “the works that the journal [*al-Adāb*] chose for translation were of a primarily literary and polemical bent, to the exclusion of [Sartre's] more phenomenological works” (Spanos 110).

While Suhail Idrīs was very interested in Sartre's existentialism, *al-Adāb*, as a magazine, “advocated a very special understanding of commitment” (Klemm 54). As Idrīs himself later explained, “I did not understand existentialism as a philosophy but as a social and political doctrine which puts the values of liberty and responsibility [...] into the center of ethical behavior” (qtd. Klemm 55). Idrīs focused on the timing and context in which Sartre originally published his essays (post-WWII France, following French collaboration with Nazi occupation), and saw parallels to the moment in which he was living, with Arab countries attempting to cast off colonialism, and just after the Arab failure to defend Palestine against Zionist colonization and ethnic cleaning in 1948 (Spanos 122). Idrīs believed that “the doctrine of *iltizām* and the [socialist] realist literature that it sanctioned emerged from a similar [...] set of historical circumstances as Sartre's post-war theory of engagement” (Spanos 122). Idrīs fused this understanding of Sartre's work with his own brand of “all-inclusive and non-partisan” pan-Arabism (Klemm 55). In this way, *al-Adāb* became a platform for “committed” Arab writers of a range of political stripes, from the older, more moderate writers like Taha Hussein to the Marxist and socialist thinkers discussed above (54).

In terms of its ideology and interpretation of *iltizām*, *al-Adāb* fell within a spectrum in the Arabic literary scene of the 1950s and 60s. The journal's second issue included an article by Anwar al-Ma'addawi, another major proponent of *iltizām*; the article “defined the program of *al-adab al-multazim* [...], arguing against both the strict Communist version of controlled literature

and the practice of ‘art for art’s sake’” (DiMeo 47). In doing so, al-Ma’addawī was placing himself (and *al-Adāb*) in a more inclusive camp than that of “the stricter, Marxist-based school centered around Mahmoud Amīn al-‘Alim and ‘Abd al-Azīz Anīs in Cairo” (49). Al-‘Alim and Anīs’s school of *al-adab al-hādif* (“targeted literature”) called for the writer not just to understand themselves as part of a larger society, but also to “have a working understanding of socialist principles and apply those in [their] writing” (49). Unlike al-Ma’addawī and Idrīs at *al-Adāb*, ‘Alim and Amīn rejected Sartre’s existentialism as “the foil to which they compared their committed philosophy” (49). Even ‘Alim and Anīs, however, shied away from overt government control of literature, having learned their lessons from the Soviet literary experience, which they viewed from afar with great concern (18-19). Within this spectrum of *iltizām*, then, from the more strict Marxist views of al-‘Alim and Anīs to the broad Arab nationalist platform of *al-Adāb*, all agreed on a separation between the writer and government, at the same time that the writer was committed to writing for and about society (26).

It is also important to note the ways in which *iltizām* in general and *al-Adāb* specifically differed from Sartre’s ideology of *engagement*. Spanos refers to this a *al-Adāb*’s “creative translation” of these texts, from one culture and language to another (111). One important difference was in regards to Sartre’s original exclusion of poetry from his concept of “engagement.” In his essay “What is Writing,” Sartre puts poetry in the same category as music and visual art, excluding it from the call to *engagement* by arguing that it treats words as *objects* rather than strictly as their *meaning* (Sartre 28-29). While the prose writer employs a certain style, the message and subject matter are always at the heart of his prose, whereas Sartre considers poetry to be more abstract and “outside language” in the same way that the color yellow in a painting is simply the color yellow; it can “symbolize” or suggest many different meanings to different people (27, 30-31). Given the historically central place of poetry in Arabic literature, Arab writers unsurprisingly rejected this aspect of Sartre’s early thinking on commitment, and in fact Sartre would himself later reverse his position in his introduction to *Black Orpheus*, a collection of works by *négritude* poets (DiMeo 31, Klemm 55). As Elias Khoury explains, from the beginning, “the *iltizām* movement [...] refused the suggestion of Sartre to keep poetry outside this concept. On the contrary, poetry was the center of the debate both in Egypt and the Mashriq [i.e., the Levant]” (84). *Iltizām*, then, would embrace and center poetry as a collective, communal endeavor long before Sartre did.

Other differences included the *multazim* writers' interpretation of certain key terms used by Sartre. For example, although Suhail Idrīs was quite interested in translating Sartre's existentialist works, taken as a whole the term was often used as a slur: "Somewhat ironically, Arab theorists of *al-adab al-multazim* chose the term 'existentialist' to label all the practitioners of empty, misleading metaphysical directions. Nonetheless, like Sartre, they believed that to pursue any of those trends was to shirk one's *iltizām*" (DiMeo 29). The irony here lies in the fact that both the *multazim* writers in question and Sartre viewed works that focused on abstract, philosophical questions about "the nature of man" as a distraction from the urgent issues of the day that the artist *should* address.

Whatever the internal differences among writers, or the divergences from Sartre's source material, there is no questioning the ubiquity and power of *iltizām* as a concept in Arab literary world of the 1950s and 1960s. What would bring about a change in this discourse was the force of history, as a series of defeats and humiliations caused Arab writers to reconsider the value of straightforward "committed" socialist realism as a means for effecting social and political change. One central factor was the June 1967 war, which "symbolized the failure of Arab socialism and Arab nationalism" for writers across the ideological spectrum (Klemm 57, DiMeo 60). In the wake of this defeat, demonstrating the failure of Nasser's socialist/pan-Arabist visions as well as the loss of now *all* of historical Palestine, not to mention parts of Egypt and Syria, "all ideals of the post-colonial Arab world collapsed" (Klemm 58). These are broad generalizations, but ones that are commonly accepted by historians and literary scholars:

It has often been argued that 1967 marked a critical turning point in Arab cultural history: it freed Arabs of their belief in the salvational power of the postcolonial state, a progressive narrative of history, and the definition of the human subject as a sovereign and able figure. In literary studies in particular this thesis has been invoked to explain the turn to traditional sources of literary inspiration (*turāth*) and the turn away from realistic modes of representation to more experimental, non-linear, and fractured narratives... (Spanos 131)

This turn away from socialist realism was a turn away from the version of *iltizām* advocated in the 1950s an early 1960s. 1967 ushered in a period of self-examination in which "[m]any intellectuals became skeptical. Looking for the roots of the disaster they began to examine the conceptual foundations of Arab politics and society" (Klemm 58). This self-examination led to a shift in emphasis towards a more basic assertion of the need for "free expression and author's



rights,” now considered “indispensable preconditions for any effective literary commitment” (Klemm 58).

A second, earlier factor in this shift was the role of the Nasserist regime in Egypt, which brought the issue of government control of literature to the fore: “The challenge for *multazim* theorists in the Nasser era was that regime openly espoused the very same ideals and goals that *al-adab al-multazim* expected from the political power, yet more often than not, it suppressed freedom and expression in the name of those goals” (DiMeo 55). Egyptian writers in particular found themselves in a “precarious position,” as they “were at the mercy of the state for jobs” (55-56). This led *multazim* writers like Naguib Mahfouz and Yusuf Idrīs to turn away from the socialist realist model of the 1950s, and instead compose “impressionist and surrealist tales of individual alienation in the 1960s, which once again forced critics to redefine the proper boundaries of *multazim* literature” (57). After Nasser’s humiliating defeat in 1967, followed by his death and Sadat’s embrace of both Israel and Western-style capitalism and neocolonial intervention, not to mention the Lebanese Civil War, circumstances were no longer conducive to the idealistic socialist-realist conception of *iltizām* that had dominated in the 1950s.

Finally, alongside these overwhelming historical events, Sartre’s own public positions towards Israel and the Palestinians played a role in Arab writers’ disillusionment with *iltizām* as it had earlier been understood. In the mid-1960s, Sartre was invited to a philosophy conference in Israel, which he attended. Not long after, in early 1967, Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir visited Israel, as well as Egypt and then-Egyptian-ruled Gaza (Spanos 126). In response to these actions, Suhail Idrīs made his concerns public, first with an article “in which he raised doubts about Sartre’s commitment to the alleviation of suffering,” and after Sartre’s attendance of the Israeli philosophy conference, with “an open letter to Sartre in which he asked whether such a visit was appropriate for a champion of the oppressed” (Spanos 126). Idrīs, as a translator of Sartre’s existentialist work and prominent advocate of *iltizām*, struggled to balance his admiration for Sartre’s early works on *engagement* with the latter’s actions during this period. In the March 1967 edition of *al-Adāb*, Idrīs published an editorial in reaction to Sartre and de Beauvoir’s Israel visit. While their visit to Cairo “gladden[ed] the hearts of all the Arab intellectuals,” Idrīs wrote, “The truth is that it is incumbent on us, the Arab intellectuals, to know how to explain to Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir this important issue [Palestine] on which rests the outcome of the entire

Arab crisis” (qtd. Spanos 127). Idrīs felt a duty as an Arab *multazim* writer to explain the situation to Sartre, and to counter the Zionist propaganda that Sartre had been consuming (127).

However, Sartre’s continuing public support of Zionist aggression pushed even admirers like Idrīs beyond ambivalence: “When Sartre signed a statement circulated among French intellectuals condemning Egypt for shutting the Strait of Tiran, an act it identified with war against Israel, Suhail Idrīs’s initial response was to withdraw his commitment to refusing government censorship” (Spanos 127). In response to this specific action, Iraq banned Sartre and de Beauvoir’s books, and Idrīs publicly supported this move, writing that “...the least we could do to counter this writer was to remove our confidence in what he writes, so long as it appeared contradictory to his principles” (qtd. Spanos 127). Idrīs also “felt compelled” to defend his earlier translations of Sartre, by pointing out that they had been undertaken *before* any of Sartre’s open normalization or support of Zionism (128). When Mahmoud Darwish, the most famous Palestinian “resistance poet” of the 1960s (and arguably, ever) advised Idrīs to leave behind his guilt and value the act of translation in and of itself, Idrīs felt his confidence somewhat restored (Spanos 128). But the direction of *al-Adāb* changed, and Idrīs’s internal struggle between his admiration for Sartre’s earlier writings and his dismay at Sartre’s later actions was emblematic in the shift among Arab writers as a whole from a straightforward, more naïve understanding of commitment to a turn away from realism. Spanos explains,

In the place of [*multazim* writers’] prior confidence new questions emerged about the historical subject and its relation to the world that couldn’t be asked so long as Sartre remained a hero. In this transformation, Arab intellectuals like Idrīs did not abandon Sartre and existentialism; but they shifted their interest from the utility of an ethics of commitment to an investigation of the challenges presented by ‘the situation’ itself. (112-113)

And despite the shift away from their earlier understanding of *iltizām*, these writers continued to struggle with the tension between artistic freedom and the writer’s duty to their society – between individual liberty and the political obligations imposed by the colonial and postcolonial circumstances of the Arab world. In 1972, for example, a major literary conference in Damascus was still “consider[ing] the age-old problem of *iltizām*: the balance of freedom and commitment of the writer” (DiMeo 60).

This tension can be traced back to Sartre’s original writings on *engagement*. Sartre’s fellow-existentialist Camus “found the demands of *engagement* at odds with the freedom Sartre

supposedly respected,” and concluded, “‘Impressed’ seems to me a better term in this connection than ‘committed’” (qtd. DiMeo 32). Karl Kohut distilled the issue to a few words: the committed writer is supposed to be “a free servant of his society” (Klemm 55). This paradox carried over from *engagement* into *iltizām*. When Taha Hussein published his critique of Sartre’s original articles in 1947, his choice of *iltizām* as a translation for *engagement* was critical: “in choosing that term, Hussein opened the door not only to Sartre’s spirit of *engagement* but also to Camus’s view of literature being ‘impressed’ as well [...] Both *iltizām* and *multazim* were heavily loaded terms with long historical associations in Arab memory” (DiMeo 46). For example, *iltizām* had been used to refer to a tax collector’s commission (46). The Arabic “*iltizām*” contains “on the ethical level, the connotation of *achievement of a duty or a law*” (Klemm 55).

This lent a strong moral imperative to Arabic interpretation of *engagement*/commitment, more so than in English or French: “This strict interpretation of *iltizām* occasionally comes to the surface [...] Thus, the critic al-Ma’addawi wants *iltizām* to be understood as a moral imperative. Even the ‘duty of commitment’ (*wazifat al-iltizām*) is proclaimed” (Klemm 55). The understanding of the Arabic term *iltizām* as a moral imperative highlights the internal contradiction between duty and freedom that had already been remarked upon by Camus in reference to Sartre’s *engagement*. Given Taha Hussein’s cautionary tone in his 1955 debate with Ra’if Khoury, in which he “spoke for the freedom of the writer” and “caution[ed] against the increasingly restrictive definitions of literary commitment dominating the Arabic critical discourse,” this double-meaning of *iltizām*, with its linguistic proximity to *ilzām* [compulsion] seems to have been intentional on Hussein’s part (DiMeo 16, 46). The political, Arab nationalist interpretation of *iltizām* of the 1950s and 60s elided Sartre’s emphasis on writing-as-gift and the *freedom* both reader and writer:

... Sartre’s ‘engagement’ was read as a way for instigating national rebirth in the eyes of Suhail Idrīs and his companions in the nationalistic struggle for Arab unity and independence. And his approach to the freedom of the writer as part of the freedom of the reader was neglected. Thus will Sartre become, unknowingly, an Arab nationalist who can fill a theoretical gap in the nationalist literary discourse... (Khoury 81)

The disillusionment of the late 60s onward was a push back against Arab nationalist *ilzām* or compulsion of the writer, towards an understanding of *iltizām* which balanced artistic freedom with its sense of collective duty, and more truthfully reflected Arab writers’ and readers’ shattered, fragmented and defeated reality.

Palestine, however, remained a special case. Even after 1967, “literature produced in occupied Palestine in particular continued to embody *iltizām* in its unbroken revolutionary sense” (Klemm 58). Following 1967, Palestinian refugees in exile still could not return, and Palestinians inside Israel’s ever-expanding borders continued to be subject to either military rule – now in the West Bank and Gaza – or limited civil rights and second-class citizen status for 48 Palestinians “inside” the territories occupied in 1948. The societal fragmentation of the Lebanese Civil War and the neo-colonialist capitalism of Sadat-era Egypt were not their main concerns; direct colonial rule instead shaped Palestinians’ daily lives and their literature. The very act of writing or speaking was therefore politically committed or *multazim*: “For Palestinian intellectuals, the act of writing itself was conceptualized as an act of rebellion, either against occupation or against particular Arab regimes” (Bashkin 94). For example, Palestinian writers Emile Habiby and Ghassan Kanafani, often held up as ideological and stylistic opposites, both emphasized *speech* in their works as a site of power and rebellion for their Palestinian characters (e.g., Maryam’s scream against her abusive husband in *Mā Tabaqqā Lakum*, Saeed the collaborator’s inability to form human speech while under his Israeli boss’s thumb in *The Pessoptimist*).

As such, Palestinian writers did not necessarily feel the ideological pressure of *iltizām* in the same way as other Arab *multazim* writers of this era. Ghassan Kanafani, for example, did not fit neatly into the box outlined by the 1950s-style socialist realist theory of *iltizām*. Kilpatrick cites the ending of Kanafani’s 1962 *Men in the Sun* as an example of how “his understanding of commitment diverges from the commonly held one” in his readiness to kill off the Palestinian main characters (Kilpatrick 17). This ending angered many Palestinian readers, but was a more accurate reflection of the Palestinian situation at the time of writing than it would have been, had Kanafani tried to graft on a heroic conclusion (17). Kanafani “challenged certain aspects of Sartre’s conception of commitment,” yet “attributed great significance to the political usages of literature” (Bashkin 94). He certainly exemplified some of the Manicheism of Sartre’s commitment: for Kanafani, “art [could] be either conservative and directed towards preserving the existing injustices of society, or seen as a weapon for transforming society” (Kilpatrick 18). Yet even before the war of 1967 and other historical factors described above, he did not feel that *multazim* stories needed a happy ending; instead, he built his stories from a mixture of personal experience and the stories of other Palestinians (17-18).

In 1966, Kanafani published his study, *Adab al-Muqāwamah fi Falasṭīn al-Muḥtallah*, which introduced the terms “resistance literature” and “resistance poetry” into the broader literary discussion of *iltizām*. The concept of “resistance literature” addresses the disconnect between individual artistic freedom and collective duty that makes *iltizām* so thorny. While valorizing and informing readers about the literature produced “inside” occupied Palestine, Kanafani focuses on historical circumstances in order to explain how this poetry developed organically: “These daily conditions [of life under occupation] did not only lead to the creation of a leftist literature, but also to deepening the position of resistance, and raising it from the level of blind emotion to the level of conscious, deeply-rooted emotion”; it is “a literature with a strong consciousness, without it being sunk in details” (64). Kanafani elaborates on this notion of organic development of resistance poetry in his 1968 *al-Adab al-Falasṭīnī al-Muqāwim*:

Daily Israeli challenges required literature to develop quickly, shortening the ‘childhood’ phase, which the contemporary Arab literary movements had spent in a long debate about the extent to which art can be committed, and whether committed art can be creative. The weight of the Israeli oppression itself gave a quick solution to this debate. In other words: The question of committed literature was not a subject of debate amongst the vast majority of Palestinian intellectuals. Debate was seen as a luxury that no one could afford. (Qtd. Abu Remaileh 173)

These circumstances were, then, a central part of what defined “resistance literature” and what made it organic. Kanafani juxtaposes this with the avant-garde, modernist poetry being developed by Palestinians in exile in Arab capitals (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 13-14, 16), and more broadly with the “weeping” and “despair” that to him characterized exilic writing (36). To Kanafani, Palestinian “resistance” poetry was *multazim* but organically so, springing from a connection to the land and the common people, and written in direct response to colonial oppression. It was time- and place-specific, and referred in particular to the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish, Samīḥ al-Qāsim, and Tawfīq Zayyād (Abu Remaileh 171), as well as “Salem Jubran, Hanna Abu Hanna, and several others whom Kanafani considered ‘poet warriors’ for the daring stance they had taken in their poetry and their lives” (Hoffman 313).

Kanafani highlights the *cultural* nature of Israeli occupation and Palestinian resistance. After the Nakba, Israel flooded the Arabic-language market in occupied Palestine with “cheap, silly books,” ensured that all legal Arabic publications were controlled by Zionist parties/organizations, subjected Arabic publications to strict censorship, and ensured abysmal educational and work opportunities for Palestinians in order to willfully “prevent the growth of

an educated Arab generation (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 24-27). This meant that resistance literature was “fighting on two fronts: the front of raising awareness of the oppressive conditions under occupation, and that of subverting Zionist myths, claims and accusations” (Abu Remaileh 174). Resistance literature, then, was directed both inward and outward; towards community- and nation-building, on the one hand, and towards self-defense from a conflicting and demeaning colonial narrative, on the other (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 62). As such, it *saw the value* of literature and particularly poetry as a weapon in this struggle:

[Kanafani] suggests that unlike elsewhere in the Arab world, resistance poetry did not begin by demeaning the value of the word, but rather recognizing its role, cherished it and considered it essential and indispensable. [...] Kanafani thus asserts that the role of resistance in occupied Palestine is one of combatting Israeli narratives of hegemony, cooptation and accusations of backwardness, which he saw as more potent forms of oppression than arms and violence. (Abu-Remaileh 173)

In resistance literature, ideology is organic, and narrative faces both outwards toward accusations levied by colonizers, and inwards toward a community in need of leadership and positive narratives about its own identity. Morisco literature is also arguably “resistance” literature in all of these aspects; it pushes back and defends against attacks by Catholic Spanish narratives of Muslim inferiority, it creates and solidifies a positive Islamic Iberian identity for its community members. It is a form of resistance in its mere existence, often written in forbidden Arabic script (*aljamiado*) and containing religious subject matter outlawed by Catholic Spanish authorities.

Resistance literature may have been “revolutionary” in the political sense, but artistically, the circumstances of occupation tended to create “an atmosphere averse to experimentation” (Mattawa 17). It had a “preoccupation with the discovered, the accepted, the craved” and “seldom [...] ventured beyond the expectations of readers and listeners to violate established continuities in theme, tone, and outlook.” (Jayyusi 10). Audience expectations made artistic experimentation and divergence from the norm difficult; in Morisco and Palestinian contexts, literature – particularly poetry’s – role as a weapon of cultural resistance meant that the *stakes* for writing down or reciting any given poem were heightened. For Moriscos, writing pro-Islamic poetry was suspect by the Inquisition (post-1567, just writing or possessing anything in Arabic was), and for ’48 Palestinians, participation in “poetry festivals” or in banned publications could lead to arrest or exile. The responsibility of poets was likewise heightened – poetry was tasked

with preserving a culture threatened with erasure, and upholding a positive collective identity under adverse circumstances.

Both Mattawa and Jayyusi point out the relevance of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "minor literature," when considering this sort of relationship between poet and audience, and specifically these nationalistic, "committed" expectations for literature. According to Deleuze and Guattari, "The three characteristics of minor literature are the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation" – it is deterritorialized, political, and collective (18). In the original study on Kafka, "deterritorialization" referred to the Jews of Prague being cut off both from the Czech-speakers around them and from the larger German-speaking world. In the context of 1950s-60s Palestinian "resistance literature," Mattawa points out that Palestinian resistance poets were similarly isolated in two directions, cut off from both the Arab world and from the literary culture of their Hebrew-speaking occupiers (Mattawa 21). Moriscos were likewise isolated from the larger Islamic world and from Catholic Spanish society which saw them as a polluting element.

As for political engagement, Deleuze and Guattari essentially point out what Jayyusi has observed about Palestine, and what Sartre observed about the African American experience: force of circumstance means that "everything in them is political" (Deleuze and Guattari 17). They explain, "[minor literature's] cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics. The individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensable, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating within it" (17). The story of an individual character is simultaneously the story of the community; the character's struggles intimately entangled with the political struggles of the marginalized collective. Mattawa adds that this politicization is a response to the particular circumstances of being threatened with communal extinction: "The danger of a disappearing national and collective consciousness outside the nation urges the writer to forge alliances and participate in different configurations of identity, whereby the individual and the political/collective are in tandem" (21). Mattawa focuses here on the inherent tension between the individual and the collective, in circumstances where poets feel obligated, based on their individual life experiences of oppression and based on group expectations, to speak to and for the collective.

This brings us to the final point of collective articulation, where “...the political element in minor literature assumes a kind of collective will operating within it, or an attempt to fashion such a will,” in response to the threat of collective erasure (Mattawa 22). Deleuze and Guattari explain that “precisely because talent isn’t abundant in a minor literature [because the community is small / marginalized], there are no possibilities for an individuated enunciation that would belong to this or that ‘master’ and that could be separated from a collective enunciation” (17) – something particularly true of Morisco literature, for which anonymity was a necessity of self-preservation, apart from anything else. Deleuze and Guattari continue, “what each author says individually already constitutes a common action, and what he or she says or does is necessarily political” (17), because this is how their minority audience will interpret it, and indeed how their own life circumstances dictate that it be. Kanafani’s Palestine-specific term, “resistance” poetry, fits within the definition of minor literature; it attempts to address a national collective while simultaneously creating and shaping it. Historically, Palestinian “minor literature” aimed at forging a *national* collective, while the Morisco literature of the early modern period still saw the Morisco community in religious terms, as a heroic and persecuted remnant of Islam in al-Andalus which was part of the larger Muslim *ummah* and had a vital role to play in God’s plan for the world and the end of days. Both modern Palestinian and early modern Morisco literature, however, clearly embody this idea of “collective articulation”; the “collective will” to resist erasure was a central organizing principle for both.

Jayyusi refers to Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of “minor literature” in the introduction to her 1992 *Anthology of Modern Palestinian Literature* (itself an attempt to solidify the imagined national community by establishing its literary canon and to legitimize it to an outside “western” audience, as the book was published in English):

Deterritorialized literatures tend to share a number of common aspects. Two of these, which figure explicitly in Palestinian literature, particularly within the personal account genre, are the political immediacy of the writings in question- and the way everything takes on a collective value. A third aspect is a frequent concern with ‘national identity’; this is a major incentive in Palestinian writings of the genre, for it is this very problem of identity that has been highlighted by the continuing malaise that lurks behind the varied experiences and special suffering that has been the hallmark of Palestinian life since 1948. (67)

Jayyusi here focuses on the connection between the collective and the political, and she also centers the idea of “deterritorialization” in Palestinian literature - for whether exile is outside or



within one's homeland, Palestinian literature as a whole speaks to the loss of the homeland to the outside colonialist forces which govern it to this day.

Jayyusi adds that “[...] deterritorialized Palestinian literature also has ancient roots; classical Arabic poetry is filled with the theme, established early in pre-Islamic times when the Arabs were still a nomadic people and thus had a constantly ‘deterritorialized’ existence” (69). Mattawa similarly points out that long before the Zionist movement had ever “deterritorialized” Palestinians in particular, there existed in Arabic poetry

[...] a preexisting model of the poet as political agent, a model that harkened back to the traditional Arab notion of the poet's role in the world, which survived quite intact into the modern era. Ancient classical Arab poet-warriors such as Imru' al-Qais, 'Antarah ibn Shaddad, Abi Firas al-Ḥamadani, and al-Mutannabi were either rulers or were seeking to become political leaders in their tribes or princedoms. Neoclassical poetry of the modern era also offered several examples of poets whose works reflected and influenced public opinion. (Mattawa 24)

The pre-Islamic roots of “deterritorialization” in Arabic poetry played out in classical Andalusian poetry, which made use of the *rithā' al-mudun* genre to mourn the loss now not of campsites but of Andalusian cities conquered by Christian Iberian armies. Morisco literature had both pre-Islamic and medieval Andalusian poetic models to draw on when it came to deterritorialization. Morisco and Palestinian experiences of internal exile and loss could therefore fit into a larger schema of Arabic poetry since its inception experiencing lost youth, lost love, and lost home as interconnected, with the traces of past homes representing an idealized, utopian state of existence, and offering a model for future striving.

We have, then, several theoretical tools through which to consider the tension between individual freedom and collective duty in Palestinian and Morisco poetry. There is the concept of *iltizām*, which was embodied in nationalist writings in Arabic starting in the *Nahḍa* period, articulated by Sartre in response to the French situation during WWII, and adopted, rearticulated, and debated by Arabic writers starting in the 1950s and 60s. In Sartre's original essays and especially the politicized, Arab nationalist interpretation of *iltizām* of the 50s and 60s, this ideology already felt *restrictive* to certain writers, highlighted in the paradox of the writer or poet being “a free servant of [their] society.” The central tension of individual artistic freedom versus the perceived duty to speak to and for the community in many ways defines *iltizām*. Ghassan Kanafani's term “resistance literature” focuses specifically on the context of occupied Palestine in the initial decades after 1948, and how direct colonial rule made the debates around *iltizām*

irrelevant for many Palestinian poets living under occupation; circumstances dictated that *any* speech act was by default political. Collective liberation, rather than individual freedom, was more immediate in the hierarchy of needs, and so Palestinian poetry written “inside” occupied Palestine became “resistance poetry,” emerging naturally in response to the colonial oppression and military rule. Finally, Deleuze and Guattari’s “minor literature” offers a larger, more abstract framework into which Kanafani’s Palestinian “resistance literature” fits, by delineating a range of similarly marginalized minority communities and the patterns their literatures share. Deleuze and Guattari argue that such “minor” literatures are characterized by deterritorialization, political involvement, and collective articulation. All three frameworks in their unique ways can help illuminate how the circumstances of Morisco and Palestinian life in their homelands under hostile foreign rule placed additional pressure on writers and especially poets – as poetry was a largely *oral* and therefore *accessible* genre for both groups – to speak to and for the collective following preexisting models “craved” and “desired” by their audiences, sometimes at the expense of their own individual artistic freedoms and inclinations.

## II. Early Morisco Poetry: Negotiating Religious Orthodoxy, Music, and Folklore

As with modern-day “minor,” “resistance,” and “multazim” literature, Morisco-aljamiado poetry, with its “utilitarian” bent, was a collective endeavor in its use, if not its composition. Many types of Morisco poetry were sung at special occasions, such as Mawlid al-Nabī (the birth of the Prophet Muhammad). Others like the (originally Mudejar / pre-1500) *Poema de Yuçuf* reframed Qur’anic narratives in more easily-memorized Romance verse, and so could have been meant as a teaching tool even for those (e.g., Morisca women) who were usually illiterate in written *aljamiado* script. The entire function of self-preservation of the religion and culture performed by these poems makes them a communal form of literature, even if composed or written down solely by an “elite” educated *alfakí* minority within the Morisco community. Throughout the sixteenth century, it is difficult to pinpoint individual authorship in Morisco poetry (and Morisco-aljamiado writing in general, for obvious reasons of self-preservation). Yet during this time, authorship becomes a central part of “mainstream” Spanish Siglo de Oro poetry and theater; Lope, Cervantes, Quevedo, Góngora, and all the other greats of Spain’s “Golden Age” become household names. By the eve of expulsion, we see Morisco authorship emerging at the level of individual poets with Muhamad Rabadán’s *Discurso de la luz*; similarly, Moriscos

living in North African exile after 1609-14 were free to attach their names to their works (though not free, as we will see, from self-censorship). For these later Morisco poets, the linguistic and stylistic influence of Siglo de Oro literature is much more pronounced. The imminence of expulsion, and expulsion itself, pushed among Morisco poets a kind of individual authorship, as well as literary style, common among their Christian contemporaries. While the goal of religious instruction of the community remained a constant even after exile, an aspect of individuality seems to creep in once it is realistically too late to achieve the desired “collective” goals any longer.

While Morisco poetry in general can be described as a mix of Siglo de Oro and older metrical forms (Fuente Cornejo 86), sixteenth-century (pre-expulsion) poetry in particular makes use of these older, medieval forms. This makes perfect sense, given Morisco scribes’ overall goal of preserving and adapting Islamic traditions to their new, clandestine state. In such a scenario of conquest and marginalization, clinging to traditions and modifying them is a natural outcome. What may seem *less* natural, given the Moriscos’ forced secrecy, is that their poetry in particular seems to have been used in group performative, often musical activities. In his study *Covert Gestures*, Barletta explains, “[o]ne of the most important conclusions of the present book has been that the meaning of *aljamiado-morisco* texts [...] is a socially embedded one most commonly linked to ritual practice and the performative activities that characterize such practice” (139). While some Moriscos may have individually read or educated their children, in most cases these tasks were undertaken and regulated by an *alfakí* (from the Arabic term *alfaqīh*, “a learned or semi-learned Muslim man charged with the ordering of Muslim life in most Morisco communities”) (139). As such, education and ritual practice were group activities.

This conclusion of Barletta’s becomes especially evident when we look at Morisco *poetry* and extrapolate how it would have been used. Skimming through the table of contents in Toribio Fuente Cornejo’s *Poesía Religiosa Aljamiado-Morisca*, we see the transliterations of three different manuscript versions of the same poem in praise of the prophet Muhammad, followed by three manuscripts constituting a poem or “couplets” in praise of Allah. The book contains two more poems in praise of God, one of them a “romance,” followed by a sermon or “*khuṭbah*” in verse, to be delivered on “la Pascua de Ramadán” (*Eid al- Fiṭr*), and a “prayer in verse” (“*plegaría en verso*”) (Fuente Cornejo 427-8). This table of contents highlights the practical uses to which these poems were put – either prayer (which one could imagine as individual or

communal) or else the implicitly communal celebration of certain holidays. ‘*Eid al-Fiṭr* is mentioned by name as “la Pascua de Ramadán” (literally, “the Easter of Ramadan,” presumably because in this Christian analogue, the fast of Lent is broken by Easter). Similarly, the poem in praise to Muhammad, discussed by Manzares de Cirre in a 1970 article and by Chejne in *Islam and the West*, would likely have been used in a communal setting during the holiday of *Mawlid al-Nabī*, celebrating the birth of the Prophet Muhammad.

*Mawlid al-Nabī* came into being centuries after the death of Muhammad himself. It was celebrated in Fatimid Cairo in the twelfth century as a courtly holiday, then instituted by the governor of Irbil in the early thirteenth century in imitation of Sufi trends; it returned to Ayyubid Egypt in the thirteenth century, now celebrated by the people as well as the ruling class, and with the support of Sufi *ṭarīqas*. From there, it quickly spread across North Africa and into al-Andalus (Fuente Cornejo 47). In North Africa and al-Andalus, where many Muslims were already accustomed to celebrating non-Islamic holidays like Christmas, *Nawruz*, and the festival of St. John, the *Mawlid* holiday was encouraged by Muslim political and religious leaders as a way to separate Muslims from these pagan or Christian holidays and replace them with something similar, but more acceptably Islamic (Fuente Cornejo 49). The holiday was popularly celebrated in al-Andalus as early as the thirteenth century, and was celebrated officially in Granada in the fourteenth century, during the reign of Yusef I, for which Ibn al-Khaṭīb wrote three *mawlidiyyāt* - courtly poems offered to a sovereign during celebration of *Mawlid al-Nabī* (50).

Poetically, two genres of medieval Arabic poetry developed out of this holiday, and both were used in the celebration of *Mawlid al-Nabī* in medieval Islamic Spain. One is the *mawlidiyyāt*, which were courtly poems offered to a ruler, containing a prologue, a panegyric to Muhammad, and a section in honor of the sovereign. The other genre are the *mawlid* (pl. *mawālīd*) poems, which were a popular genre, lacking the section of praise to the sovereign and focusing simply on a panegyric in praise of Muhammad, recited during the celebration of *Mawlid al-Nabī* in al-Andalus (45-6, 50). Moriscos no longer had a sovereign to whom to offer *mawlidiyyāt* (nor the level of Arabic learning to be able to do so), but they preserved the popular *mawlid* genre of medieval Andalusian poetry, even as they translated most of their praises of Muhammad into aljamiado. The “Almadḥa de alabança al-annabī Muḥammad” (Fuente Cornejo 227-242) is one example of *morisco-aljamiado mawlid* poetry which would have been performed

by Moriscos in a group context. Its linguistic hybridity shows an effort to preserve both the Arabic language and medieval poetic forms associated with this type of religious material.

In *Islam and the West*, Chejne refers to this poem as “Praise and Exaltation of the Prophet Muhammad,” and prefaces it by dating it to the fourteenth century (consistent with our timeline for the introduction and growing popularity of *mawālīd* in al-Andalus). He describes the poem as “seventy-one couplets composed in *zajal* form. Translated from an Arabic original, the poem may have had wide currency among the *Mudejars*, ancestors of the *Moriscos*. The poem has a *sonority and musicality* and was sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments at festive and religious ceremonies” (Chejne 153-4). *Zajal* and *muwashshaḥ* forms are both medieval Andalusī verse forms which combined elements of the vernacular (Arabic or, later, Romance) and were performed musically. The *muwashshaḥ* is older (dating back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century), largely written in classical Arabic and using classical Arabic poetic meters. It gained attention within the field of Spanish literature for the final special stanza or *kharjah* (*jarcha*) at the end, written in vernacular Arabic, sometimes mixed with Romance vernacular (Schoeler). *Muwashshaḥs* were usually love poems and panegyrics, but were also used by Sufi poets like Ibn al-‘Arabi, and specifically we can note here that the thirteenth-century poet Ibn al-Sabbāgh al-Djudhāmī used the *muwashshaḥ* to “compos[e] ‘love poems’ addressed to the Prophet” (Schoeler).

The *zajal*, meanwhile, did not gain literary status until the twelfth century. Although broadly speaking, *zajals* are written in the vernacular, they were generally written by educated poets, who “endeavored to speak like the people but also tried hard to bestow literary quality on their poems,” leading to a hybrid register (Schoeler and Stoetzer). Like many *muwashshaḥs*, *zajals* begin with a “common rhyme” section, what we might call the “refrain” or chorus of a modern-day pop song (Schoeler and Stoetzer). Like the *muwashshaḥ*, *zajal* poetry was sung, although uniquely to the *zajal*, this genre may have begun as “a popular or minstrel request song, introduced into élite literature by Ibn Rashid and Ibn Quzman” (Schoeler and Stoetzer). Both *muwashshaḥs* and *zajals* were composed in languages other than Arabic; some *muwashshaḥs* for example were composed in Hebrew with Romance *kharjahs*, while Romance *zajal* poetry was also popular (Schoeler, Schoeler and Stoetzer). We also know that medieval *zajals*, both Arabic and Romance, were sometimes adapted and used for religious purposes, e.g., “mystical” *zajals* by Andalusī poet al-Shustari, the *Cantigas de Santa María* of Alfonso el Sabio, and the Archpriest of Hita’s *Libro de Buen Amor* (Schoeler and Stoetzer, Chejne 150). Ibn al-‘Arabi, the

famous Sufi mystic, “composed *zajals* for devote purposes, so that his faithful [followers] could reproduce them in the chorus” (Fuente Cornejo 90). Returning to the *Mawlid al-Nabī* holiday and the role of poetry in its celebration, Fuente Cornejo also mentions that the Andalusī poet Ibn Zamrak composed a *mawlidiyyah* in the *muwashshah* form for Muhammad V (90). So as early as the medieval period, we see examples of religious use of these poetic forms, particularly by Sufi poets, and in the context of *Mawlid al-Nabī* celebrations.

The *zajal* lends itself well to the celebration of holidays, given its musical form. Fuente Cornejo explains, “The structure of the *zajal* is that of popular song, destined to be sung. The soloist intones the refrain [*estribillo*], which in its turn is repeated by the chorus, then the *mudanza* [change/modification], and the verse once again, with which the chorus is alerted to keep joining in...” (88). Moriscos persevered the *zajal* form and adapted it to their own use, which given the *zajal*’s structure and its history, was likely a collective or group use. Chejne writes, “Although Arabic versification died out as a result of de-arabization, the *zajal* and *muwashshah* forms of versification, which had become common among Arabic and Romance speaking people from about the eleventh century, endured among the Mudejars and, subsequently, the Moriscos, who perpetuated their songs, *zambbras*, and other poems” (150). Chejne hits on two central themes here – first, the fact that *zajal* was a continuation of a medieval Arabic/Romance genre through the Mudejar period (in places like Aragón), to the Morisco period. Secondly, Chejne lists *zajal* poetry alongside “songs, *zambbras*, and other poems,” pointing out that for Moriscos, many of the traditional medieval forms of poetry they clung to were in fact musical, performed in group settings on important occasions (as we know *zambbras*, for example, were) (Chejne 150, Fuente Cornejo 96).

The *zajal* that Chejne refers to as “*Praise and Exaltation of the Prophet Muhammad*” appears in Fuente Cornejo’s collection of religious Morisco poetry as transcriptions of three separate manuscripts: “Almadħa de alabança al-annabī Muħammad” (Escorial Ms. 1880 fols. 15v-28v); “Coblas en alabança del profeta Muħammad” (Junta Ms. XIII, fols. 188r-192r; 244v-249r); and “Poema en alabanza de Muħammad” (Junta Ms. IX, fols. 15v-16r). Manzares de Cirre’s 1970 article contains the same poems and cites the same manuscript sources. Like Fuente Cornejo and Chejne, Cirre emphasizes the musical and choral (read: collective) nature of the poem. In reference to the statement in the Escorial manuscript that this poem was “sacada de ‘arabī en ‘ajamī” (translated from an Arabic original to Romance), Cirre explains:

The translation [of this poem] from Arabic to Spanish has been done according to the technique of sung poetry. The strophes, independent of the refrain, develop the theme of praise of the prophet in a continuous manner, while the refrain forms a kind of litany. It is chorally-based poetry, traditional in mosques, with the refrain introduced by Muhammad's name at the end of each strophe to grab the attention of the public, who then join in the chorus. (Manzares de Cirre 315)

The refrain in question is: “Ya ḥabībī, ya Muḥammad / Wa-aṣṣalātu ‘ala Muḥammad” (Chejne 154). While some manuscripts contain an introduction, this refrain is essentially how the poem begins. This very simple, repetitive Arabic-language refrain is followed by verses in Romance (up to 81 verses total, in the Escorial manuscript!). The Escorial manuscript contains only the first line of this refrain (“Ya ḥabībī, ya Muḥammad”), written only at the very top of the poem, which Fuente Cornejo speculates may have been done “intentionally, since it would have been well-known by Moriscos how this song worked, and to copy the song faster” (88). He rules out the idea that *this copy* of the poem may have been intended for a lone singer or reader, arguing that “we know, as I have tried to demonstrate through Granadan documents, that the collective singing of these compositions was a habitual practice even in the moments of greatest Inquisitorial pressure” (89). The two Junta manuscripts, which combine to form an almost-complete version of the same text (minus several stanzas), *do* include the complete refrain at the beginning of the poem and at the end of every stanza. This heavily implies a sung, collective performance of the poem.

The content of the poem is typical of the *mawlid* genre but also unique in several ways that would appeal to Moriscos. As would make sense for ceremonial use, the first stanzas are an invitation for God to bless the prophet Muhammad, in the name of “we/us” (“nos”), a collective that would have included the singer and their audience/chorus. From the Escorial MS<sup>60</sup>:

<p><i>¡Yā ḥabibi! ¡Yā Muḥammad! //</i> <i>[Wa a'ṣṣalātu 'ala Muḥammad].</i></p> <p>Señor, fes tu a'ṣṣalā sobr-él, i fesnos amar con-él, sácanos en su tropel, jus la seña de Muḥammad.</p> <p>Façed a'ṣṣalā de conçençia sobre la luz de la creyençia,</p>	<p>O my beloved, O Muḥammad And prayer be upon Muḥammad.</p> <p>O Lord, pray upon him And make us love him, Make us join his suite At the sign of Muḥammad.</p> <p>Make prayer with knowledge Of the light of belief,</p>
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<sup>60</sup>. I am citing the Escorial MS here for ease of reading, since it omits the refrain except at the very beginning.

<p>e sillaldo con revenençia i dad a'ççalām sobre Muḥammad.</p> <p>Tu palabra llegará luego, e será reçebido tu ruego, e-abrás a'ççalām entrego esos son los fechos<sup>61</sup> de Muḥammad. //</p> <p>Quien quiera buena ventura, i -alcançar grada de altūra porponga en la noche escūra l-aşşalā sobre Muḥammad.</p> <p>(Fuente Cornejo 228)</p>	<p>Seal it with reverence And peace on Muḥammad.</p> <p>Your word will then come forth And your supplication will be heard And you will have full peace: Thus are Muḥammad's deeds.</p> <p>Whoever wishes good fortune And to attain great heights, Stop [...] <sup>62</sup> in the dark night And [...] prayer upon Muḥammad.</p> <p>(Trans. Chejne 155-156)</p>
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The “tú” (singular, informal “you”) being addressed here is God, while the “nos” would appear to be the Morisco community present for the singing of this poem. While the soloist refers to a “we” that included the singers of the chorus present with him, he also starts to offer them advice in verse 4: “Whomever wants good fortune / and to reach a degree of greatness / propose in the dark night<sup>63</sup> / prayers upon Muḥammad.”

This brings us to the pedagogical tone and role of this poem; while the chorus repeats “O my beloved, O Muhammad,” over and over, the soloist often urges his listeners (who are also his chorus) to action, especially to prayer. A second example can be seen in stanzas 36-37:

<p>Mis-ermanos que soes presentes, asimesmo a los absentes, lešad<sup>64</sup> todos los esturmentes e trovad<sup>65</sup> ell-alabança de Muḥammad. //</p> <p>Sobr-él a'şşalā faredes,</p>	<p>My brothers who are present, as well as those who are absent, leave all the instruments and [sing/find] the praises of Muḥammad. //</p> <p>Over him you will make prayer</p>
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<sup>61</sup> “ch” sound (as in “fechos”) is indicated in Fuente Cornejo’s transcription by “j” with tashdid

<sup>62</sup> Chejne is using a different manuscript here in which these lines read “Kiyen kiyera puwena bentura / I y-alkansar gharado de altura / pospongha **la torpeza** en la noche eskura / i **fagha** aşşala sobre Muḥammad” (Chejne 156). This is why he translates the last 2 lines as “Stop **impurity** in the dark night / And **utter** prayer upon Muḥammad.” I have omitted “impurity” and “utter” here because the Escorial MS does not include these words.

<sup>63</sup> The “dark night” is another Sufi concept that appears in this poem, according to López-Baralt (Fuente Cornejo 228, footnote 4c).

<sup>64</sup> lešar = dejar (*Glosario de voces aljamiado-morisca* p.389)

<sup>65</sup> trovar = hallar, encontrar (*Glosario* p.587). However, the word “trovar” could alternately be related to the modern Castilian “trovador” (troubadour), especially within this context. Menocal discusses the probably medieval Arabic root (from *taraba*) of the Provençal words “troubadour” and “trobar” in her 1982 paper, “The Mysteries of the Orient: Special Problems in Romance Etymology.” It seems logical that *aljamiado*, with its tendency to preserve Arabic and local dialectical terms, would use “trobar” in such a way.



<p>mucho e non lo olvides,          porque su rogarya alcançedes,          de nuestro a'nnabī Muḥammad.</p> <p>(Fuente Cornejo 234)</p>	<p>much, and do not forget,          so that you may reach his intercession,          [that] of our prophet Muḥammad.</p> <p>(My translation)</p>
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The audience/chorus is addressed as “my brothers who are present,” and the singer then adds, “as well as those who are absent,” implying an inclusion of the larger Morisco or even Islamic community outside this particular location and/or time period. As Barletta emphasizes in his book, *Covert Gestures*, one important lens through which to read Morisco literature is through context clues that indicate how the Moriscos envisioned their own community – the ties of belonging that they imagined connecting them to a larger Islamic world both over space and over time. Barletta cites Ottmar Hegyi’s assertion that the use of the Arabic alphabet in *aljamiado* manuscripts “functions as a cultureme, an external sign that signals its pertinence to the *umma*, the Muslim community” (qtd. Barletta 136). Barletta adds that this sense of belonging can be framed in terms of *time* as well as space: “[...] the use of Arabic script situated Morisco scribes and readers within a thousand-year tradition of God’s relationship with Muslims” (137). Which is all to say that the “absent brothers” indicated here by the soloist’s “Mis-ermanos que soes presents, / asimesmo a los absentes” may be referring to not just a larger Islamic community spread across sixteenth-century *dār al-Islām*, but also possibly evoking a sense of belonging that harkens back to the earlier days of Islam and even forward to an anticipated Day of Judgment (as implied in the line “so that you may reach his [Muhammad’s] intercession”).

The order to “leave all the instruments” in order to sing Muhammad’s praises is an interesting, seemingly paradoxical one; I believe it shows a tension between the *alfakí* class’s desire to claim authority through Sunni orthodoxy, on the one hand, and its reliance on a Sufi-influenced popular musical genres like the *mawlid* (and the *zajal* meter/verse form), on the other. We know from Francisco Núñez Muley’s *Memorandum* that while *zambras* and *leilas* were popular musical forms of celebration among Granadans both before and after 1492, religious men during the Nasrid period strongly disapproved of these songs:

Your Lordship should know that in the past any good Muslim would not go near the instruments of the *zambra* nor take pleasure in it; and if any religious teachers [*alfaquíes*] or judges [*alcaldes*] were present at a wedding, those in attendance would cease playing the *zambra* or the instruments associated with it until these men left the wedding or celebration. (Núñez Muley 78)

Perhaps the *alfakís* who would have been copying out this *mawlid* and organizing its collective use felt this tension between their role as religious teachers, and the usefulness of this genre of poetry as a teaching tool and tradition, useful for preserving Islam in the clandestine, often rural contexts in which they now worked.

The lines “over him you will pray / much, and do not forget” exemplify the pedagogical bent of this poem: it instructs Moriscos to pray, and explains how to act as good Muslims. Aside from the exhortations to pray, the poem leaves aside its litany of praises for Muhammad in order to, for example, list the names of the four rightly-guided caliphs, in a clear effort to instill this basic Islamic information in easily-memorized, poetic form:

<p>Aquí alabo los tus grados; lonbraré a l-aṣṣiḥaba onrados, qu-ellos fueron los alabados pues ayudaron a Muḥammad. //</p> <p>Apiade Al.lah el cuerpo dell-alimām Abī akr i ‘Umar i ‘Uzmān i ‘Alī ell-albado tanbién miembro de los miembros de Muḥammad.</p> <p>(Stanzas 33-34, Fuente Cornejo 233-4)</p>	<p>Here I praise your degrees; I will name the honorable <i>ṣiḥabah</i><sup>66</sup> for they were the ones who were praised since they helped Muḥammad. //</p> <p>May Allah take pity on the body of the <i>imam</i> Abī Bakr and ‘Omar and ‘Uthmān And ‘Alī, the praised one, as well One of the family of Muḥammad.</p> <p>(My translation)</p>
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While other parts of the poem focus on *madīḥ* or praise of the Prophet, these two stanzas are straightforwardly pedagogical: “here are the names of Abu Bakr, ‘Omar, ‘Uthman and ‘Ali – memorize them!” For Moriscos, listing names in a poetic, musical form, which would be sung by a soloist during regular ceremonial performances, with audience participation in the performance of the song, would have been an ideal way to impart list-form knowledge of the names of important people and places.

The poem makes use of listing and repetition, common recourses in folklore and folk-storytelling, to help make the religious information “stick” in the minds of listeners. And as the *form* of the poem tends toward the folkloric, so the *content*, too, strays from strict Sunni orthodoxy in its superhuman portrayal of Muhammad, following the Sufi doctrine that Muhammad “pre-existed” Adam and all other prophets, and that indeed, God created this world

<sup>66</sup> Companions of the Prophet Muhammad.

“for [his] great love of Muhammad” (stanza 43, Fuente Cornejo 235). This section of the poem expounds on the virtues of Muhammad by naming a long list of the prophets who came before him, and ascribing to each of them a positive attribute, all of which were then collected and embodied in the person of Muhammad:

De los a’nnabíes la buena ventura, del padre Edam la su fegura, de Içmā’íl su lengua pura, estos son los dones de Muḥammad.	From the prophets, his good fortune from the father, Adam, his figure, from Isma’íl his pure language these are the gifts of Muhammad.
De Ibrāhīm Alkhalīl su vestidura, de Yā’qūb la su albriçadura, de Yūçuf la fermosura, todo pertenece a Muḥammad	From Ibrāhīm the Companion <sup>67</sup> his vestment, from Yā’qūb his good tidings, <sup>68</sup> from Yūçuf his beauty, all belongs to Muḥammad
(Stanzas 56-57, Fuente Cornejo 238).	(My translation)

These comparisons continue in the same rhythm and format for the next five stanzas, listing the positive traits of various prophets and attributing them all to Muhammad. This repetitive listing lends a memorable structure to the poem, making it function as a sort of pneumonic device – Adam’s figure, Isma’íl’s pure language, Yusuf’s beauty, etc. By attaching each attribute to a specific prophet and naming them all in the same rhythm, the poem makes it easy to memorize this list of names. Repetition, a common feature of folklore, would no doubt have helped the poem fulfill its pedagogical goals by easing memorization for Morisco singers/listeners.

Oral and memorization-based culture was strong among Moriscos, as we see in many individual cases of Moriscos with long memories, particularly for poetry. Ibrahim Taybili was able to cite long passages from Lope de Vega and Góngora in his *Tratado*, despite decades having passed since his expulsion from Spain. Figueroa posits that this points to a culture of memorization among the Morisco who were expelled from Spain in 1609-14: “Despite the fact that the author misremembers the title [of Lope’s *Las mudanzas de fortuna*], his ability to recall passages and paraphrase some of the dialogue [in verse] is impressive” (Figueroa 289). Harvey, meanwhile, cites the accusations brought against the Morisco storyteller Román Ramírez for his “devilish” or “supernatural” ability to memorize and retell chivalric books (289). Harvey characterized what Ramírez was actually doing in this instance as essentially folk-storytelling:

<sup>67</sup> Khalīl Allah is the epithet of Ibrāhīm, meaning dear friend or companion of God. (Hans Wehr 4<sup>th</sup> ed. p.292)

<sup>68</sup> From the *Glosario de voces aljamiado-moriscas*: albriçiar: dar una buena noticia (p.52)

“improvised narrations of known stories in a known style, but not in a fixed form” (qtd. 289). Ramírez, Taybili, and other Moriscos would no doubt have relied upon memory devices like the repetitive structure quoted above to recall details (like the names and virtues of various prophets, or, in Ramírez’s case, the names and deeds of fictional knights).

Aside from listing and repetition, the poem incorporates several other folkloric elements, which would have made it even more memorable for the Morisco audience/chorus participating in *Mawlid al-Nabī*, even as they deviated from strict Sunni Orthodoxy. After the initial call to pray for Muhammad, the poem moves into a mythical, folk-heroic, semi-deifying depiction of Muhammad. For an example of how embellished this gets, here are stanzas 5-6, which first describe Muhammad as “the height of nobility,” then detail how good he smelled:

<p>El-es cunbre de la nobleza, corona de gran riqueza, cunplimiento de leal alteza, estas son figuras de Muḥammad</p> <p>De su olor fue ell-almiçke de grada, relunbró la luna aclarada, e naçyó la rosa onrada de la sudor de Muḥammad</p> <p>(Fuente Cornejo 229).</p>	<p>He is the height of nobility, crown of great wealth, fulfillment of loyal nobility, these are the features of Muḥammad</p> <p>Of his smell, musk was a degree, the clear moon shone, and the honorable rose was born from the sweat of Muḥammad</p> <p>(My translation)</p>
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The use of hyperbole (“of his smell, musk was one degree / the clear moon shone, / and the honorable rose was born / from the sweat of Muhammad”) is a typical folkloric element of Morisco-*aljamiado* literature. Another such element is the miraculous description of Muhammad’s birth:

<p>Los almalakes lo ministraron, i tres días lo çelaron<sup>69</sup>, que ojos non lo miraron, todo por onor de Muḥammad.</p> <p>Con graçya naçyó khatenado, tanbién su onbligo tañado, presona no ubo a él llegado, por la alteza de Muḥammad. //</p>	<p>The angels ministered to him, and for three days they hid him, so that no eyes looked upon him all for the honor of Muḥammad.</p> <p>By grace, he was born circumcised, and with his umbilical cord cut, no person had reached him because of the nobility of Muḥammad. //</p>
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<sup>69</sup> From *Glosario de voces aljamiado-moriscas*: “çelar”: ocultar, esconder

<p>Como del vientre sallió la nube blanca lo cubrió, i -ell-almalake lo prendió, e redró<sup>70</sup> d-ende<sup>71</sup> a Muḥammad.</p> <p>Muy apriesa fue tornado, en paño de seda abrigado, con filo d-almiçke rodeado todo el cuerpo de Muḥammad.</p> <p>Luego vino otra nube mayor e cubriólo enderredor, e los almalakes con grande onor reçibieron a Muhammad.</p> <p>Dišeron: ‘Tomad este deligente i levadlo a sol salliente, i después a sol poniente, i dad esta onor a Muḥammad’.</p> <p>(Stanzas 50-55, Fuente Cornejo 237).</p>	<p>As he left the womb the white cloud covered him, and the angel took him, and hence carried Muḥammad away.</p> <p>Very quickly he was changed, in silken cloth he was cloaked, with threads of musk surrounded the whole body of Muḥammad.</p> <p>Then came another larger cloud and covered him, surrounding him and the angels with great honor received Muḥammad.</p> <p>They said: ‘Take this diligent [person] and carry him to the rising sun, and after that to the setting sun, and give this honor to Muḥammad.’</p> <p>(My translation)</p>
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The baby Muhammad in this telling is born magically circumcised with his umbilical cord already sealed. During his birth, he is surrounded by angels, perhaps echoing the role of angels in both Biblical and Qur’anic retellings of the birth of Jesus. We know of many instances in Morisco literature which attempt to replace the figure of Jesus with Muhammad, and that of Mary with Amina (see Barletta p.97 on depiction of baby Muhammad in *Libro de las Luces*; p.82 on conflation of Mary and Amina in *Libro de las Luces*). This may be an example of the same pattern, meant to navigate the Moriscos’ tricky relationship with Jesus as a respected prophet within Islam but also the God and emblem of their Catholic oppressors in Spain.

Another folklorizing element here are the personified clouds which come to cover the baby Muhammad. These clouds appear to have agency similar to that of the angels who perform the (again folkloric) feat of flying the baby Muhammad to the farthest East and West points of the Earth. This mixture of natural and supernatural elements (here, sentient clouds and angels) can be seen in other Morisco poems and *hadith* (folktales/legends) from the sixteenth century, e.g., in the *Libro de las luces*, which describes “a debate between the clouds, the angels [...], and

<sup>70</sup> *Glosario* p.508: “rredrar, ‘apartar, alejar’”

<sup>71</sup> *Glosario* p.240: “ende, ‘ende, de donde, de ello, por ello

the birds, in which they argue over who should be in charge of the early care of the newborn Muhammad” (Barletta 91). The *Libro de las luces* and this *mawlid* in praise of Muhammad share a similar folkloric, almost animistic view of the world, in which clouds and nature can participate in a miraculous event like the birth of Muhammad alongside heavenly beings.

Folkloric recourses like hyperbole and repetition would have served a similar purpose, then, to poetry itself – offering a *form* to aid in memorization and internalization of an Islamic message. And just like the internal tension of this poem’s instructions to “put down your instruments” and pray for the Prophet Muhammad, the use of folkloric style would have been double-edged for *alfakís* attempting to preserve Islamic orthodoxy. On the one hand, there is nothing orthodox about talking clouds and the portrayal of Muhammad as super-human and super-natural; on the other, these elements were *precisely* what allowed their Islamic teachings to “stick” in the minds of their followers for over a century of Inquisitorial persecution and clandestine religious practice.

Other sixteenth-century *morisco-aljamiado* poems employ similar linguistic tools and styles. For example, the following poem in praise of God and Islam is not a *mawlid*, but it employs a similar structure and themes, and could have been used for *Mawlid al-Nabī* celebrations, or other similar religious holidays and life events. Manzares de Cirre considers this all one poem, by grouping together Junta Ms. LII, fols. 575v-578v and Junta Ms. XXXVII fol.272r-276r, while Fuente Cornejo lists each manuscript separately but together under the heading of “Poemas en Alabanza de Allāh” (Manzares de Cirre 321, Fuente Cornejo 263). Chejne describes this poem as “written in *zajal* form and in *cuaderna vía* with an Arabic refrain,” and says that the verses in question were “probably sung along with the praises to God and Muhammad” (157). The poem begins:

<p>!/[Yā] Al.lah! j Yā rabbi! /  j Yā Muḥammad d’arabi!  j Yā verdadero a’nabi /  de arrabi, de arabbi!</p>	<p>O God my Lord  O Muḥammad, my guide,  O True Prophet  Of the Arab and from the Arab.</p>
<p>Es Al.lah solo I se/ñero,  de sin ningún aparçero,  i Muḥammad // su mensajero,  qu-en todo fue verda/dero,  y-el-Aliçlām mi Adīn.  j/[Yā] Al.lah! j Yā rabbi! /</p>	<p>God is One and Alone,  None resembling Him  And Muḥammad His messenger  That all was true.  And Islam is my religion  O God my Lord</p>

<p><i>¡Yā Muḥammad-e arabi! ¡Yā verdadero a'nnabi / de arabbi, de arabbi!</i></p> <p>Y-es Al.lah mi gra/n Señor, altísimo y de valor de todas / cosas criador, i d-ellas feneçe/dor. Y-el-alkaba es mi alkibra, y-el-Aliçlam / mi Adīn. ! [Yā] Al.lah! ¡Yā rabbi! / ¡Yā Muḥammad de ara/bi! ¡Yā verdadero a'nnabi / de arabbi, de ara/bi!</p> <p>(Junta Ms. LII: fols. 575v-576r / Fuente Cornejo 265-266)</p>	<p><i>O Muḥammad, my guide O true prophet Of the Arab and from the Arab. (Trans Chejne 157)</i></p> <p>And God is my great Lord, Almighty and Valorous Of all things Creator And of them Destroyer. And the <i>Ka'bah</i> is my <i>qiblah</i>, And Islam is my religion [<i>ad-dīn</i>]. <i>O God my Lord O Muḥammad, my guide, O True Prophet Of the Arab and from the Arab.</i></p> <p>(My translation)</p>
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The poem continues for 18 more stanzas, but already here we can see a similar structure to the “Almadḥa de alabança al-annabī Muḥammad”: a refrain which begins the poem and repeats at the end of each stanza, while the verses develop the theme. So again, we could imagine the verses being sung by a soloist and the refrain by the chorus. As with the previous poem, it aims to construct a positive group identity in a difficult environment, and to instill basic Islamic principles, through the less-than-orthodox but highly accessible means of poetry and song.

Highlighting the central tension between the desire to preserve orthodox Sunni Islamic belief and the *non-orthodox* means needed to do so, we can mention here another poetic and musical form, the *zambras* and *leilas* of Granada. Like the *zajal* poetry we have seen so far, the *zambra* was musical and popular (*sha'bi*) in nature, dates back to the Middle Ages, and was used to celebrate special occasions and holidays. *Zambras* and *leilas* are often mentioned together in documents from the period; *zambras* generally refers to the traditional Granadan musical genre, while *leilas* refers to “the party or [...] the nocturnal dances of the Moriscos” (Fuente Cornejo 93). With the evolution of ecclesiastical and government attitudes toward the conquered Granadans beginning in 1492, we see an evolution of attitudes toward their *zambras*. Francisco Núñez Muley tells us in his 1567 *Memorandum* that the archbishop Talavera (known for his “gradual” approach to converting Granadans, when compared to his successor, Cisneros) actually incorporated *zambras* into his efforts to draw in Granadan converts to Christianity:

[...] I served for just over three years as a page to the holy archbishop [Talavera], and I accompanied him on a visit that he made to all of the Alpujarras. In the town of Ugíjar, he stayed in a house located at the highest part of the city [...] And it was a *zambra* that waited for him at his door, and a *zambra* that accompanied him as he left the house to walk to mass, with all the instruments playing and the people walking ahead of him [...] And when His Holiness said mass in person, there was a *zambra* in the choir with the clerics. (Núñez Muley 79-80)

Núñez Muley wrote this *Memorandum* in 1567, in an attempt to convince the Spanish government at that time not to outlaw the *zambras* and other Granadan Morisco practices (e.g., traditional clothing, public baths, and the Arabic language) that Núñez Muley argued were *regional* and *cultural*, rather than religious. It was very much in his interest, therefore, to emphasize the Granadan *alfakís*' dislike of *zambras*, as being outside the bounds of orthodox Sunni Islam, and Talavera's ability to recast *zambras* (and the Arabic language itself) to a Catholic mold, for use in his evangelizing.

Nevertheless, the Inquisition was from an early date suspicious of the *zambras*, associating them with Islamic practices. Granadans had traditionally used them for weddings and holidays - occasions whose celebration was at least partially religious in nature (Fuente Cornejo 93) - so these suspicions may not have been totally unfounded. This ambiguity between the religious and the secular is similar to what we have seen with the *zajal*; while it began in the Middle Ages as a genre of "begging" or minstrel "request" poetry (Stoetzer), Moriscos clearly used it for religious purposes. However, Núñez Muley was astute to frame such practices as regional and cultural, rather than religious, arguing that "the *zambra* and its instruments are wholly unlike the singing and instruments found in Fez, Morocco, Barbary, or Turkey" (78). The obvious flaw in this argument is that "regional" and "religious" are not mutually exclusive traits; however, it poses them such in response to the Church's obvious *conflation* of cultural and religious practices when it came to policing the Moriscos (e.g., Arabic language, clothing, food ways, bathing habits, etc.). These things all bear a relation to Islam and Islamic culture, but the Inquisition's use of them as "proof" of Islamic heresy was clearly flawed logic.

Fuente Cornejo explains that "the *zambras* included two types of songs, some about love or *anexires*, and others in praise of Muhammad" (97). This is reminiscent of *zajal* and *muwashshah* poems adapted for use in the *mawlid* genre – *muwashshahs* began as love songs, then certain Sufi poets like Ibn al-'Arabi adapted them for religious purposes, which the Moriscos later embraced. The Inquisition struggled with this duality when it came to Granadan



*zambras*. Talavera's incorporation of *zambras* into his preaching was reflective of his overall assimilationist approach (for example, he also used Arabic in his attempts to convert Granadan Muslims). However, his successor Cisneros (who infamously oversaw Arabic book-burnings) would mark the beginning of a shift away from assimilationist tactics, and indeed, would preside over the forced conversions of Granadan Mudejars into "New Christians," or Moriscos. By 1526, we see the first restriction aimed at "eliminating the Muslim religious component in these musical practices, permitting *zambras* so long as there not be sung in them any songs against the Christian religion" (Fuente Cornejo 95). At the same time, Old Christians were urged to testify against their New Christian neighbors for "having sung Moorish songs and having done *zambras* or dances, and *leilas* or songs with prohibited instruments" (95). In 1538, for example, a Morisco from Toledo was brought before the Inquisition for "playing music at night, dancing the *zambra*, and eating couscous" – none of these overtly religious in nature, reflecting a "new inquisitorial and administrative attention to Morisco ritos, costumbres, and supersticiones [rites, customs, and superstitions]" (Remie Constable qtd. 134, 11). This early "permitting" of a Morisco *zambras*, then quickly criminalizing them, reflects the Inquisition's overall difficulty dealing with poetic and musical forms that could be both secular *and* religious in their use – merely "regional culture," as Núñez Muley would argue, or cultural markers of Islamic belief.

The Moriscos fought hard for their continued ability to perform *zambras*, as in 1530 when a Granadan archbishop attempted to ban all *zambras* outright, and Granadan Moriscos sent a reply to the queen, asserting that their *zambras* were purely "para regocijar y solemnizar las fiestas de los matrimonios" ("to rejoice and solemnize the celebrations of marriages"; qtd. Fuente Cornejo 96), and again 1539, when they wrote to Carlos V to ask him not to deem the *zambras* a "sin" (96). That same year, the Junta de Toledo ruled that Moriscos should not be punished for singing *zambras* unless "in the said *zambras* are sung praises of Muhammad or anything else that is an offense to our faith" (96-97). The Moriscos' repeated assertions to various Catholic monarchs that their *zambras* were purely secular conveys a sense of "the lady doth protest too much," and the Toledan Inquisition's mention of "praises of Muhammad" implies the church was familiar with the *mawlid* genre of sung poetry and the religious uses of *zambras*. Ultimately, this would all lead to the pragmatic that Núñez Muley was attempting to stall with his 1567 *Memorandum*, in which Phillip II mandated that the Moriscos "no hiciesen *zambras* ni *leilas* con instrumentos ni cantares moriscos en ninguna manera, aunque en ellas no cantasen ni dixesen

cosa contra la religion Cristiana ni sospechosa de ella” (“not perform *zambras* nor *leilas* with instruments, nor Morisco songs in any way, even those in which nothing against or suspicious of the Christian religion is sung or said”) (qtd. 98). The religious-secular duality of these poems and the collective Islamic uses to which they could be put were clearly “too dangerous” in Phillip’s mind to allow their continued existence in the second half of the sixteenth century. And these poems and related practices around and language, clothing, bathing, and so on were important enough to Granadan Moriscos to spark a bloody, three-year rebellion that would end in a long, forced march out of Granada and scatter them across the rest of Spain, until their second and final exile in 1609-14.

In this example, Muslim religious leaders’ disapproval of Granadan *zambras* before 1492 contrasts with the Granadan Muslim community’s *embrace* and passionate defense of *zambras* after their forced conversion, with strong evidence pointing to the Islamic nature of many *zambras*. Likewise, in the Morisco period, *mawlid* poetry used traditional Andalusian forms like the *zajal* to convey an Islamic message. However, these poems did not *only* incorporate Andalusian forms; as we saw with the “Poemas en Alabanza de Allāh”, they also sometimes made use of the medieval Christian clerical meter, *cuaderna vía* (Chejne 157). This seems contrary to the goal of Islamic cultural preservation at first glance, but Barletta argues that in fact, the choice of *cuaderna vía* may have been sending a message about *class*, rather than religion. Barletta reminds us of the special role of *alfakís* as a “learned minority” *within* the Morisco minority. The majority of Moriscos in places like rural Castile and Aragón would never have been involved in copying out or writing *aljamiado* manuscripts; their engagement with these texts could have been oral or even totemic, Barletta suggests (138-9). *Alfakís* would have been in charge of teaching children, and played a central role in “regimenting” ritual Islamic practice, including the celebration of holidays (139). So, “when we speak of the ‘Morisco use of Arabic script,’” Barletta argues, “we are to a large extent speaking of the socially embedded (and therefore ideologically situated) practices of this particular subset of crypto-Muslim society: paid semi-professionals whose very livelihood depended upon the preservation – and perhaps more importantly the regimentation – of Islamic knowledge within sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Aragon and Castile” (139). In this rendering, the *alfakí* class, a minority within a minority, play a role similar to Sartre’s medieval “clerks,” who copied out manuscripts by the church and for the church, in the interest of class self-preservation.

The use of *cuaderna vía*, Barletta argues, may have been fulfilling for morisco *alfakís* the same function it did for medieval Christian clerics: conveying the authority of the religious establishment in question (147-152). Barletta quotes the medieval Christian *Libro de Alexandre*, which offers a definition and series of value judgments about *cuaderna vía*:

<p>Mester traigo fermoso, non es de joglaría,  mester es sin pecado, ca es de clerezía;  fablar curso rimado por la cuaderna vía,  a sílabas contadas, ca es gran maestría.  (Ed. Jesús Cañas 130).</p>
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<p>I bring a poetry of great beauty, one not of minstrelsy,  A poetry without flaw, as it is of the clergy;  To speak at length in the rhyme of <i>cuaderna vía</i>  With regular meter – this requires great mastery.  (Trans. Barletta 149)</p>
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Based on these verses, Barletta argues that *cuaderna vía* presents itself as a sign of religious authority, and “serves to marginalize other, less learned forms of poetic practice”: it is “not of minstrelsy,” it is “of the clergy,” and it is “rhyming” with “counted syllables,” framing its *regular* meter as more perfect or valuable than other “irregular” meters (150). During the Middle Ages, *cuaderna vía* was used by men of the church to impose their caste’s authority over that of popular or secular poets. *Cuaderna vía* in the Morisco context, Barletta extrapolates, may have been serving a similar function of strengthening the authority of a learned minority, the clerical caste of *alfakís*: “[...] what appears as cultural resistance on the part of the Moriscos from the Christian (or historical) perspective can also be approached as more locally targeted modes of institutionally situated structuration that work to shape the cultural habitus of the members of Morisco communities in Castile and Aragon” (142).

This understanding of Morisco use of *cuaderna vía* recalls the same tension visible in the “Almadħa de alabança al-annabī Muħammad”’s urging to “leave the instruments” and pray to Muhammad – the clerical caste pushes from its end for traditional Sunni orthodoxy, while the community pushes back with its embrace of music and folklore, and the clerical caste must bend in order to preserve its own status, as well as the continuing Islamic character of its embattled community. The portrayal of Muhammad as a supernatural being, the animistic characterization of clouds and birds, the embrace of music in the *mawlid* and *zambra* genres – all these elements

of Morisco poetry demonstrate the power of audience expectations. *Alfakís* needed to assert their own class status as preservers of religious knowledge (as in their use of *cuaderna vía* to signal authority and orthodoxy), yet they also had to bend somewhat to the values and needs of their listeners. And so, within each poem we see certain elements that push for orthodoxy, and others that push back with a “folk” understanding of Islam and Islamic culture – one that comes purely from the collective, the very people who would never touch these manuscript copies but instead would have participated in the singing and recital of such poems, their ritual use and performance. As with modern-day “committed,” “resistance” or “minor” literature, early modern Morisco poetry betrays an internal tension between the interests of those who wrote these verses down on paper, and the implied demands of the larger community they served.

### III. Authorship and Expulsion: The Poetry of Muhammad Rabadán and Ibrahim Taybili

In the early seventeenth century, written on the eve of expulsion, we see one of the best-known examples of “assimilated” Morisco poetry, the *Discurso de la luz* of Muhammad Rabadán. Where the *alfakí* class of the previous century had struggled to balance their desire for orthodoxy with the musical and folkloric forms that enabled them to maintain Islam among their community, in Rabadán we see a member of this same learned elite who was immersed in the Siglo de Oro culture of his Christian contemporaries, and more so than his predecessors, adopted “Christian” Golden Age forms to convey an Islamic message. *Zajal*, *cuaderna vía*, Granadan *zambros*, and *mawlid* poetry were all medieval forms that the Moriscos made use of in the early modern period, in *resistance* to the cultural markers being forced on them by their Catholic rulers. So Rabadán’s *Discurso* marks an important shift in Morisco poetry: “Rabadan [...] wrote in Spanish, used traditional forms of Spanish poetry, included topics learned from the literature that was contemporary to [him], and structured his texts, like the books [he] had read, with prologues to the reader, dedications, and preliminary laudatory poems” (Vázquez 238-239, my translation). With this change in form came a change in the writer’s self-perception: “[...] in its tone, Rabadán’s work marks an unequivocal break with tradition, since it reveals his authorial consciousness, consciousness of style and consciousness of the historical context in which he wrote” (“El Morisco” 306, my trans.).

In writing the *Discurso de la luz*, Rabadán was both versifying and modernizing an older *aljamiado* text, the *Libro de las luces*, itself a translation of al-Bakri’s thirteenth-century Arabic

*Kitāb al-Anwār*. Like the *mawālīd*, al-Bakri's text was meant to be read aloud to celebrate the Prophet's birth, and was a popularization of more scholarly accounts of Muhammad's lineage and birth ("The Versification" 77, Barletta 80). The aljamiado *Libro de las luces* was popular among Moriscos during the early and mid-sixteenth century, and like the *mawālīd* we have seen, it was written in *aljamiado*, and employs many Aragonisms and Arabisms, including prayers purely in Arabic ("The Versification" 97). However, Phillip II's 1567 Pragmatic and the Second Alpujarras Revolt (1568-1570) that broke out in response to it marked a turning point in Spanish crypto-Islam. At the end of this revolt, Granadan Moriscos were forcibly expelled from Granada and scattered across the Peninsula, and discussions of a possible final expulsion of all Moriscos began in earnest (Harvey 238, 263, 270, 294-300). In this tense atmosphere, the Moriscos' ability to continue utilizing *aljamiado* texts and holding large group celebrations for occasions like *Mawlid al-Nabī* attenuated, to the point where Islamically-educated Moriscos like Rabadán found themselves leaving behind medieval models and turning to the types and uses of literature being produced by their Catholic contemporaries, viz., Spanish "Siglo de Oro" ("Golden Age") poetry. The audience's grasp of *aljamiado* was either dubious or entirely lacking, yet both audience and poet had been exposed to Spanish Siglo de Oro literature, meaning that it could act as a vessel for Rabadán's Islamic message.

Rabadán finished composing the *Discurso* in 1603 in the Aragonese town of Rueda de Jalón, seven years before the Moriscos of that town would be exiled by royal decree (in 1610) (Lasarte López 13, "El morisco" 304). Like many Morisco communities, Rueda de Jalón was a rural one, and Rabadán tells us that he had been "criado para romper la tierra tras el arado y las mieses" ("raised to break the soil behind the plow and the harvests"; Lasarte López 19, Stanley 82, my translation). Yet Rabadán had a level of Islamic education and knowledge that indicate he belonged to the *alfakí* class described by Barletta. He describes in his "Prólogo al creyente lector" ("Prologue to the believing reader") how he engaged in "pláticas y cobersaciones con hombres de claros juycios de nuestra nación y reyno donde ví tratar y arguya sobre las exelencias de nuestro caudillo y bienaventurado profeta Mohamad" ("chats and conversations with men of clear judgment from our nation and kingdom, where I saw [them] deal with and make a case about the excellent qualities of our leader and blessed prophet, Muḥammad") (*Discurso* 3). This indicates that he engaged in "colloquiums with wise men of his time" (Lasarte López 19, my trans.), similar to the Mancebo de Arévalo's meetings with *alfakís* and other prominent

Moriscos. Rabadán also had access to texts in Arabic and *aljamiado*: “[...] he cites famous authors from the past like Abū-l-Ḥasan ‘Aballāh al-Bakrī (s.XIII), al-‘Abbās and Ka’b al-Aḥbār (s.VII); before writing he attempts to document himself by ‘looking for scriptures and *xarḥes*’ (commentaries)...” (Lasarte López 19). In his “Prólogo,” Rabadán frames himself as a reader of the *Libro de las luces* whose goal is to fill in a genealogical gap between Seth and Hashim, in order to refute the “imputations” of the “infieles xpanos” (“heretic Spanish”) that Muhammad came from a “bastard line,” and to shore up the faith of those “weak people” who had begun to believe such imputations (*Discurso* 3-4). There are a number of “sermon-like passages and prayers” in the *Discurso*, which “suggest that Rabadán was at the least a very pious individual and perhaps quietly held a more formal position as imam amongst his people” (“The Versification” 96). In other words, Rabadán appears to have been a member of the *alfakí* class in the sixteenth-century mold, with access to similar oral and written sources.

However, Rabadán would have been “uno de los pocos moriscos que en su tiempo, al comenzar del siglo XVII, sabia tal vez la lengua árabe y cultivaba aún la literatura islámica” (“one of the few Moriscos of his time, at the start of the seventeenth century, who may have known the Arabic language and still cultivated Islamic literature”; Vespertino Rodríguez, qtd. “The Versification” 87). Zuwiyya explains that “with the declining knowledge of Arabic among Moriscos at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Rabadán was concerned that Arabic would not have been understood” (87). He argues that Rabadán adapted the *Libro de las luces* for an essentially Castilian-reading public – Moriscos at the turn of the century who purchased or borrowed and read the same Siglo de Oro literature as their Christian peers, but had less and less access to instruction in Arabic and Islamic teachings:

Rabadán sought to bring the *Libro de las luces* closer to his readers than *aljamía* permitted. By the turn of the seventeenth century, fewer Moriscos than ever were knowledgeable of the Arabic language and script. His choice to use the Roman alphabet for the totality of the *Discurso*, as well as to translate into Romance any passages that were in Arabic in his sources, eliminated any linguistic barrier for his readers. (“The Versification” 97).

Rabadán’s linguistic and stylistic shift in the early seventeenth century is emblematic of a shift in concepts of authorship and audience. Rather than reaching its audience orally through speech or song, or else reaching male pupils through the instruction of a local *alfakí*, as the *Libro de las luces* did (see Barletta Ch.4), this *Discurso* copied the form of the printed books that Rabadán

and his peers would have seen in their local bookshops, the “classical” literature of Spain’s Golden Age. Rabadán addresses his prologue to “el creyente lector” (the believing *reader*), and his choice of Latin script shows that he had a Spanish-speaking crypto-Islamic *readership* in mind as his audience. Rabadán exemplifies a shift from oral literature preserved on paper by the clerical caste, to an attempt to make this material more widely accessible for the larger Morisco community to read on a personal, individual basis. In other places Rabadán addresses the “discreto lector” (*Discurso* 5), or the “lector muslim / a cuyo poder mis bersos / llegaren...” (7). He anticipates “Muslim readers” who are able to receive his poem only in Latin letters and in modern language, or what Rabadán calls “en término tan moderno...” (7). The *Discurso* marks a shift in poetic style from medieval *aljamiado* to a more “modern” form (“romance” verse, Latin alphabet, and several other linguistic and stylistic changes we will examine below).

Several *linguistic* changes from the *Libro de las luces* to Rabadán’s *Discurso de la luz* show a shift in purpose as Rabadán adapts his source text to his more “modern” conception of his audience as “readers.” Older *aljamiado* texts have a vocabulary all their own, full of Hispanic archaisms, Aragonisms, and Arabisms (Vespertino Rodríguez 884). Rabadán modernizes the language of his source text, using fewer archaisms and incorporating learned or literary words in Romance, taken from contemporary Christian writers (886, 888). Rabadán outlines his preference for “modern” language in his preface:

<p>[...] asi por esta racon  se deue dar tanto premio  al que saca a luz la historia  como al patron della mesmo  pero el que acertó a estampalla  <i>en termino tan moderno</i>  que en musica se cantase  en dulce y sabroso acento  este merecio más gloria...  (<i>Discurso</i> 7, my emphasis)</p>	<p>[...] so for this reason  as much reward should be given  to he who brings history to light  as to the master of that same history  but he who managed to stamp it  in such modern terms  that it could be sung in music  in a sweet and delicious accent  this one merits more glory...  (My translation)</p>
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The *Discurso* moves away from Aragonisms, and toward the language of “modern” (contemporary) Castilian literature. Castilian was the “language of expansion and prestige” in the sixteenth century, the language of the educated and ruling classes, while Aragonese was receding at this time, maintained by the lower classes and used as “a kind of social dialect” for Aragonese

Moriscos (Vespertino Rodríguez 884-5). In Rabadán, we can see the shift from Aragonese terms like *kabdiello* (used in the *Libro*) to the Castilian equivalent, *caudillo* (“The Versification” 87). A second example comes from the passage in which Adam, after having been expelled from The Garden of Eden, becomes aware of the divine light that God has endowed him with and which is emanating from his forehead. Here the words “kurrukas” and “frente” from the *Libro de las luces* are replaced in Rabadán’s *Discurso* with the more modern Castilian “arrugas” and “frente” (“El morisco” 311). In Zuwiyya’s side-by-side reading of the *Libro* and the *Discurso*, he argues, “The transformation of Aragonese terms into Castilian can be interpreted as an important indicator of the author’s push to lift the literature of the Moriscos out of its medieval mold and up to the level of the dominant literature of the age” (87). Nevertheless, it is important to qualify that Rabadán was Aragonese, using an Aragonese *aljamiado* source, and so his *Discurso* still reflects some of that language (Vespertino Rodríguez 886).

Related to this “modernizing” bent is the tendency to cut passages from the *Libro* that were written entirely in Arabic (e.g., prayers) and to use fewer Arabisms, particularly proper nouns that Moriscos in the early seventeenth century may not have been familiar with (“The Versification” 87-88, “El morisco” 311). In his prologue, Rabadán cites the Moriscos’ quickly-diminishing knowledge of Arabic and Islam as one of his main reasons for composing this poem:

<p>y como Alla fue servido  que los moros destos reynos  con tantas persecuciones  fuesen pugnidos y presos  las cosas de nuestro adin [<i>ad-dīn</i>]  an benido a tanto extremo  que ya no se administraua  en público ni en secreto  ya el acala [<i>aṣ-ṣalāh</i>] se olvidaua  ni se hacía caudal dello  y si se hacía hera poco  diminuado y sin respecto  el ayuno interompido  mal guardado y descompuesto  el acaque [<i>al-zakāt</i>] sepultado  las alftras [<i>al-fiṭr</i>] y sus diezmos  y el nombramiento de Alla  con el de su mensagero  ya casi no se nombrauan  con sus nombres los perfectos</p>	<p>and as God was [best] served  that the Moors of these kingdoms  with so many persecutions  be punished and imprisoned  The things of our religion [<i>ad-dīn</i>]  have come to such an extreme  that it was no longer administered  in public nor in secret  Already prayer [<i>aṣ-ṣalāh</i>] was forgotten  nor was it treated as a treasure  and if it was, it was little  diminished and without respect  Fasting was interrupted  poorly kept and broken up  almsgiving [<i>al-zakāt</i>] was buried  and the holidays [<i>al-fiṭr</i>] and their tithes  And the naming of Allah  with that of his messenger  were almost no longer named  with his perfect names</p>
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<p> porque siendo baplicados  a fuerca con tantos miedos  perdieron los alquitebes  no quedando rastro dellos  los alimes acauados  quales muertos quales presos  la Inquisición desplegada  con grandes fuerças y apremios  haciendo con gran rigor  cruecas y desafueros  que casi por todas partes  hacía temblar el suelo  aquí prenden allí prenden  a los baticados nuevos  cargandoles cada día  galeras tormento y fuego  con otras adbersidades  que a solo Alla es el secreto  pues entre tantos trabaxos  e intolerables tormentos  que hasta oy an caulebado  setenta y seis años ciertos  y siempre con mas rigor  ba su coriente siguiendo  que luz se puede tener  del adin [<i>ad-dīn</i>] y su cimientto  si en el servicio de Alla  andan tibios y perplexos  [...]  esto es lo que me a movido  esto medio atrucimiento  a emprender tan gran jornada  con tan pequeño talento  yo declararé el origen  [...]  de do mi sancto adin [<i>ad-dīn</i>]  tomo el principio primero  para que los mucelimes  reciuan este contento  biendo las grandes mercedes  que el señor hico por ellos  en guiarlos a una ley  a un camino tan derecho  que nace en el parayso  y buelue a su nacimiento  (<i>Discurso 8-9</i>) </p>	<p> Because being baptized  by force and with so much fear  they lost the books  no trace remaining of them  The '<i>alimes</i> [religious scholars] finished  some dead, some imprisoned  the Inquisition deployed  with great force and pressure  Committing with great rigor  cruelties and outrages  so that in almost every region  they caused the ground to tremble  Here they capture and there they capture  the newly-baptized  punishing them every day  with gallies, torment and fire  And with other adversities  of which only God knows;  since among so many difficulties  and intolerable torments  That to this day they have suffered  seventy-six years, certainly  and always with more rigor  its current continues  What light could one have  of religion [<i>ad-dīn</i>] and its foundations  if in the service of Allah  they are tepid and perplexed?  [...]  This is what has moved me  this half-concealment  to undertake such a great journey  with such small talent  I will declare the origin  [...]  from which my sacred religion [<i>ad-dīn</i>]  took the first beginning  So that Muslims  receive this happily  seeing the great mercies  that the lord did for them  In guiding them to a law  to such a straight path  which is born in Paradise  and returns to the place of its birth  (My translation) </p>
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Here Rabadán expresses his desire to restore Islamic knowledge and his distress about how quickly the Inquisition has been able to cripple it, by burning books, imprisoning and killing ‘alimes (‘ulamā’), and by hounding the Moriscos continuously, threatening them with death or galley-slavery. Among the Islamic knowledge Moriscos have lost are the ninety-nine names of God (“sus nombres los perfectos”), which Rabadán includes in his *Discurso* (*Discurso* 5). And in the above passage we can see how Rabadán “let many Arabisms stand [...] in the context of cultural and religious preservation” (“The Versification” 87), e.g., with words like “adin” [*ad-dīn*], “mucelimes” [*muslim* + -es], “Alla,” “alfitras” [*al-fiṭr* + -as], “acaque” [*al-zakāt*], and “acala” [*aṣ-ṣalā*]. However, overall, Rabadán is not so committed to Arabic as earlier *aljamiado* texts (Vespertino Rodríguez 886). For example, Vespertino Rodríguez notes that the words “Allah and Dios are interchangeable throughout Rabadán’s work. The same can be said for *alchanna*, *paraíso*, and *cielo*” (890). The same also goes for *almalaque/ángel*, *arroh/alma*, *arrizque/sustento*, *annabi/profeta*, *alarx/trono*, and in some cases, a Spanish word is even preferred over Arabic, as in Rabadán’s use of *castigo* rather than the *aljamiado* *adeb* [‘*idhāb*] (890).

Rabadán modifies the *Libro de las luces* in order to bring it closer to “the Christian poetry of his age” (“El morisco” 306), and this modification takes place at the macro-level of theme and structure, not just at the micro-level of linguistics. Rabadán’s *Discurso* is structured similarly to contemporary printed mainstream Spanish texts. It contains a Prologue in prose followed by one in verse, in which he lays out his reasons for composing this poem. Aside from wanting to educate his Morisco peers and refute the Church’s imputations that Muhammad came from a “bastard lineage” (Rabadán 3), Rabadán writes that he chose poetry as the best form in which to deliver his message because,

<p>es el berso reclamante  que abiu el entendimiento  y haze que con mas Juycio  la memoria remobemos  y es bien que los hechos raros  en general los cantemos  porque siempre su acordancia  nos exorta con su exemplo  (<i>Discurso</i> 7-8)</p>	<p>demanding verse is  that which enlivens understanding  and causes that with more judgment  we stir [our] memory  and it is well that strange deeds  in general be sung  because always, remembering them  exhorts us with their example  (My translation)</p>
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Vázquez points out that Rabadán's conception of literature and specifically poetry here matches that of the Catholic Spanish writers who gained fame during the sixteenth century:

Sus palabras sugieran una concepción del texto literario, en este caso poético, como *dulce et utile* como en el celebre prólogo de don Juan Manuel en el *Conde Lucanor*<sup>72</sup>: “Et esto fix segund la manera que fazen los físicos, que cuando quieren fazer alguna melizina que aproveche al fígado [...] mezcla[n] con aquella melezina que quiere[n] melezinar el fígado, açúcar o miel o alguna cosa dulce.” (Vázquez 227)

His words suggest an understanding of the literary text, in this case a poetic one, as *dulce et utile* [sweet and useful] as in the famous prologue of don Juan Manuel in the *Conde Lucanor*: “And this you must do according to the manner by which doctors do, that when they want to create some medicine that is good for the liver [...] they mix with that medicine which they wish to use to medicate the liver, sugar or honey or something sweet.” (My translation)

Vázquez ties this understanding of literature as “sweet and useful” to Rabadán's pragmatic use of *romance* meter as the easiest and most pleasant way to deliver his Islamic message: “[...] la enfermedad que padecían los moriscos era el desconocimiento del islam que Rabadán quiere curar con sus versos” (“[...] the sickness which the Moriscos suffered was ignorance of Islam, which Rabadán wants to cure with his verses”) (229). Rabadán's view of the *role* and *purpose* of poetry is not *only* the traditional *aljamiado* one of cultural preservation and passive resistance, but also matches a Siglo de Oro conception of the “sweet and useful” pedagogical (yet enjoyable) nature of literature.

In terms of form and structure of his *Discurso*, Rabadán follows his prose and verse prologues by “historias” divided into “cantos,” in the style of the *Aeneid*, *Divine Comedy*, and Garcilaso's *Eglogas*, following the “Christian” or “mainstream” models of his day (“El morisco” 312). Rabadán lays out his conception of his audience as a mass *readership* (larger than just a few *alfaquís*) in the prose Prologue, where he writes, “Pues leerás, ya kreyente lector, en este alkitab i retorna en leerlo i pensarás en entender lo ke en él leerás del eslito [elegido] bien abenutrado giyador...” (“You will read, believing reader, in this book and you will return to read it again and you will ponder what you read in it, of the chosen and blessed guide”) (qtd. 313). This conception of readership appears to be addressing the *individual reader* at the *group* level, in the same way that Cervantes, for example, addresses his “desocupado lector” (“unoccupied

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<sup>72</sup> It is also possible that Rabadán's source was the *same* source used by Don Juan Manuel – the prologue to the Arabic *Kalila wa Dimna*, or another related work. This could be a case of Arabic influence acting separately on *both* the medieval Christian settler-aristocrat and the early modern Morisco poet.

reader”) at the beginning of *Don Quixote* (a tongue-in-cheek take on the widespread Siglo de Oro practice of addressing the reader and apologizing for one’s authorial shortcomings at the beginning of any book).

Also like Cervantes, and like his Christian contemporaries, Rabadán spends much of his prologue with an invocation that asks the reader to pardon his faults as an author, and trust his good intentions:

<p>y a ti lector muclim  a cuyo poder mis bersos  llegaren ruego que suplas  mis faltas y torpes yerros  tu grande benouolencia  a cuyo onor los ofrezco  y advierte lector prudente  que son los gustos diversos  que de los que Uno aborrece  otro recieve contento  Unos gustan de la prosa  y a otros agrada el metro  quey a dios asi lo quiso...  <i>(Discurso 7)</i></p>	<p>and to you, Muslim reader,  into whose power my verses  will arrive, I beg that you make up for  my faults and clumsy errors with  your great benevolence  in whose honor I offer them  and be advised, prudent reader,  that peoples’ tastes are different  So that of those things One may hate  another receives happiness  Some enjoy prose  While others are pleased by meter  For God willed it so...  <i>(My translation)</i></p>
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and

<p>...y aunque estos bersos no puedan  ser del numero de aquellos  que con acendrada pluma  sus nombres engrandecieron  por ser mi caudal tan pobre  a lo menos estoy cierto  que la materia que sigo  serbira de contrapeso  para que con mi flaqueca  benga a hacer medio...  <i>(Discurso 8)</i></p>	<p>...and although these verses cannot  be as numerous as those  which with refined quill  their names were elevated  for my level is so poor  at least I am sure  that the material that I follow  will serve as counterbalance  so that against my weakness  it comes to balance out...  <i>(My translation)</i></p>
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This topos of false modesty, linked with authorial self-consciousness, can be found in works by Christian Medieval and Siglo de Oro writers like Juan Manuel, Fernando de Rojas, and Cervantes; it shows a heightened awareness of the act of writing and of the implied reader (“El Morisco” 317). For comparison, here is Cervantes’ introduction to *el Quixote*:

Desocupado lector, sin juramento me podrás creer que quisiera que este libro, como hijo del entendimiento, fuera el más hermoso, el más gallardo y más discreto que pudiera

imaginarse. Pero no he podido yo contravenir al orden de naturaleza; que en ella cada cosa engendra su semejante. Y así, ¿qué podrá engendrar el estéril y mal cultivado ingenio mío, sino la historia de un hijo seco, avellanado, antojadizo y lleno de pensamientos varios y nunca imaginados de otro alguno, bien como quien se engendró en una cárcel, donde toda incomodidad tiene su asiento y donde todo triste ruido hace su habitación? (Cervantes)

You may believe me without an oath, gentle reader, that I wish this book, as the child of my brain, were the most beautiful, the most sprightly, and the most ingenious, that can be imagined. But I could not control the order of nature, whereby each thing engenders its like: and therefore what could my sterile and uncultivated genius produce, but the history of a child, meagre, adust, and whimsical, full of various wild imaginations, never thought of before; like one you may suppose born in a prison, where every inconvenience keeps its residence, and every dismal sound its habitation? (trans. Jarvis 15)

*Don Quixote* employs many elements of satire, and this introduction purposely exaggerates the sly, knowing self-abasement / self-aggrandizement typical of Spanish writers during this period. However, looking past the satirical tone, we can see the trope that Cervantes was poking fun at – his “desocupado lector” and Rabadán’s “lector muclim” correspond to the same model, as do his “estéril y mal cultivado ingenio” and Rabadán’s “pobre caudal” and “faltas y torpes yerros.” Rabadán’s self-abasement is so exaggerated at times that his apology seems almost to be satire; he describes his intellectual ability as “semegante a la ormiga / con un terrible camello / o como un flaco gusano / con un elefante grueso” (“similar to the ant / next to a terrible camel / or like a thin, weak worm / next to a massive elephant”; *Discurso* 8, my translation). However, unlike Cervantes, Rabadán’s work is in deadly earnest, and his *Discurso* moves on to a description of the Moriscos’ real sufferings, which were “elephantine” enough. Rabadán cannot write a self-aware, Cervantine satire, because he is writing after 76 continuous years of Inquisitorial persecution in Aragón and on the eve of the looming mass-expulsion of his community. But he is self-aware of his role as writer, and of his intended readership, in the style of his Christian contemporaries.

Rabadán’s *Discurso* employs many poetic recourses common to his Siglo de Oro contemporaries, including anaphora, listed elements in a series, synonym pairs, and antithesis (“El Morisco” 314-315). As an example of anaphora, Zuwiyya cites the following passage in which the angel of death speaks to Ibrahim, where “en” and “mi” are repeated at the beginning of each line to heighten the dread of seeing *malak al-mawt*:

en solo berte me alteras	Merely in seeing you, you unsettle me;
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<p>en ablarne, me corrompes  en mirarme me atribulas  y causas que me acongoxe;  mi color palido [sic] y yerto  mis benas cortas y rompes  mis lados me titubean  mis junturas desconpones;  mi alterado coraçon  en su aposento no coje,  ques su morada pequeña  y no halla dó repose,  (Qtd. “El morisco” 314)</p>	<p>in speaking to me, you corrupt me;  in looking at me, you distress me;  and cause me to be saddened.  My color pale and rigid,  you cut and break my veins  my sides cause me to hesitate;  my joints you separate.  My unsettled heart  in its abode does not fit;  its home is small,  and it does not find anywhere to rest.  (My translation)</p>
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A corresponding example of anaphora (as well as listed elements in a series) in a well-known Siglo de Oro poem is Góngora’s “Mientras por competir con tu cabello,” in which “mientras” is repeated at the opening of each line to foreshadow the final dark twist at the end:

<p>Mientras por competir con tu cabello,  oro bruñido al sol relumbra en vano;  mientras con menosprecio en medio el llano  mira tu blanca frente el lilio bello;</p> <p>Mientras a cada labio, por cogello,  siguen más ojos que al clavel temprano;  y mientras triunfa con desdén lozano  del luciente cristal tu gentil cuello:</p> <p>Goza cuello, cabello, labio y frente,  antes que lo que fue en tu edad dorada  oro, lilio, clavel, cristal luciente,</p> <p>No sólo en plata o viola troncada  se vuelva, mas tu y ello juntamente  en tierra, en humo, en polvo, en sombra, en  nada.  (Góngora)</p>	<p>Now while to match your hair bright gold must  know  it seeks in vain to mirror the sun’s rays,  and while amid the fields with envious gaze  the lily regards the whiteness of your brow;</p> <p>and while on each red lip attend more eyes  than wait on the carnation, as if intent  on plucking it, and while your graceful neck  outdoes bright crystal with disdainful ease,</p> <p>enjoy them all, neck, hair, lip, and brow,  before the gold and lily of your heyday,  the red carnation, crystal brightly gleaming,</p> <p>are changed to silver and withered violet,  and you and they together must revert  to earth, to smoke, to dust, to shadow, to  nothing.  (Trans. Dent-Young 25)</p>
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Similarly, we can look at Garcilaso’s Sonnet XXIII (“En tanto que de rosa y Azucena”), where “en tanto que” repeated at the beginning of the first and second stanza is an example of antithesis (de la Vega). Zuwiyya also cites this sonnet for an example of listed elements in a series, in the line “el viento mueve, esparce y desordena” (qtd. “El morisco” 315). Rabadán’s *Discurso* is full of this sort of listing, often combined with synonym pairs and/or antithesis (opposites listed

together). For example, in the following passage, our narrator describes the many sufferings of Adam after he is expelled from the Garden of Eden:

soledad destierro afrenta desnudez inconfortable miedos temblores espantos frio calor sed y hambre trabajo pena cansaço tantos amargos enjagues todo noche todo oscuro todo negror, sin mostrarse la claredad una darra con que pudiese animarse ( <i>Poemas</i> 87; verses 1035-1044)	loneliness, exile, humiliation unbearable nakedness, fears, tremors, frights, cold, heat, thirst and hunger, labor, sorrow, tiredness, so many bitter cups everything night, everything dark everything blackness, without an atom of light appearing from which he could draw courage (My translation)
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These tools of listing, synonym pairs, antithesis, and anaphora show how deeply Rabadán had been influenced by the literary *style* of famous Siglo de Oro poets like Góngora and Garcilaso.

Rabadán’s poetic “assimilation” sometimes even extends to adopting “Christian” turns of phrase and cultural reference points. For example, in describing Iblis’s desire for vengeance after having been thrown out from heaven, Rabadán lets slip a distinctly Catholic utterance:

como el maldito Luzbel andase tan sobelante en cómo poder bengar su crueldad, rauia y coraxe, lo hauía el <i>eterno padre</i> lançado de tanta gloria... (v. 675-680, <i>Poemas</i> 82, my emphasis).	as the accursed Luzbel [Lucifer] was in such excess in how to be able to avenge his cruelty, fury, and ire the <i>eternal father</i> had thrown him from such glory... (My translation)
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Lasarte López points out in his edition of the *Discurso* that “the expression *eternal father* is Christian, totally opposed to the Islamic doctrine of the unity of God. [This is a] clear lapse by the poet, painful to Muslim ears” (*Poemas* 82, my translation). Such a slip is of course not uncommon in Morisco-*aljamiado* literature (we know for example that much earlier than Rabadán, the Mancebo de Arévalo was attempting to pass off *La Celestina* and the works of Kempis as being “Islamic” in their source; “Estudio Preliminar” 39). However, one very notable Siglo de Oro “-ism” new in Rabadán, and which would continue in Morisco literature post-exile, is the reference to Greek and Roman gods. For example, here Rabadán describes the morning of the first day after Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden:

Pasada ya esta agonía que ya el <i>febo rutilante</i>	This agony now passed now that radiant Phoebus
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deoró, con sus claros rayos la tierra, montes y valles... (v.1070-1074, <i>Poemas</i> 88, my emphasis)	gilded, with his pale rays the earth, mountains and valleys... (My translation)
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The reference to Greek gods like Phoebus was popular in “Italianizing” Spanish literature at the time but could easily have been construed by Muslim readers as *shirk* (attributing partners to God), a sin that would surely lead to Hell. Presumably by Rabadán’s time, Morisco readers were sufficiently un-orthodox (having struggled through 76 years of Inquisitorial persecution and restrictive laws) to not mind these references. Instead, they likely viewed them as similar to the Siglo de Oro poetry available in bookstores and *corrales de comedias* (open-air theaters) all around early modern Spain. As Vázquez explains, “the verses in *romance* and the Western references inscribe Rabadán’s text, even despite the Muslim subject-matter of the poems, within the Spanish poetic tradition” (229, my translation).

Finally, Zuwiyya argues that the Catholic, Castilian influences on Rabadán went deeper than form and language, and specifically can be seen in Rabadán’s insertion of the theme of free will into his *Discurso*. Zuwiyya points out that following the Council of Trent, “the theme of free will related to divine grace and predeterminism became one of the great theological themes at the end of the sixteenth century (“El morisco” 320-321). Rabadán addresses the issue of free will explicitly at various points in his *Discurso*, for example, in describing how God created Adam “dándole libre albedrío / porque donde quiera ande; / el querer, el no querer, / el salvarse, el condenarse, / todo lo puso en su mano” (“giving him free will / so that he could walk wherever he wished / to desire, to not desire / to save of condemn himself / He put it all in his hands”; v.589-593, *Poemas* 81). In another instance, Rabadán has an Islamic prophet (Alhadir / al-Khadir) voice a prayer contemplating the relationship of fate and free will. Addressing God, Alhadir says, “o Señor que tú nos diste / la influencia de tu mano / unida con la razón / de nuestros fechos causarios” (“O Lord, you gave us / the influence of your hand / united with reason / which causes our actions”; qtd. “The Versification” 93-4). Here the speaker advocates a view of the world in which God’s power and fate can coexist with man’s free will and use of reason. Similar themes and discussions can be seen among Rabadán’s Christian peers, e.g., in Lope’s 1604 play *El peregrino en su patria* and in *Don Quixote*, and somewhat later in Calderon de la Barca’s *La vida es sueño* (“El morisco” 321). “By invoking these themes,” Zuwiyya argues, “Rabadán has shed the attachment to the medieval Arabic sources to which Aljamiado authors



preceding him had clung in their literal translations from the Arabic. He was writing plainly in the literary, religious, and philosophical currents that characterized the Golden Age of Spanish letters” (“The Versification” 94).

None of this is to say that Rabadán was not an avid proponent of Islamic doctrine in writing his *Discurso*. Quite the opposite; the *Discurso* was composed with the polemic goal of demonstrating the superiority of Ismael’s (and Muhammad’s) lineage to Moriscos who may be wavering in their faith after hearing Christian authorities dismiss Muhammad as the child of “bastard” lineage (*Discurso* 3). His explicit goal is to shore up the faith of those Moriscos who have become “tibios y perplexos” (9) under Inquisitorial pressure, and to provide basic Islamic knowledge to those who have forgotten - hence his inclusion of a chapter on the 99 names of God, and another on the lunar months of the year. Rabadán emphasizes in his prologue that passing on knowledge of Islam is a vital duty, and the impetus behind his modernization and versification of the *Libro de las luces*:

<p>... el honrado alcurham [al-Qur’an]  que manda por su decreto  a todo buen mucelim  enseñelo que enderecho  de nuestra berdad entienda  amonestando y diciendo  con palabra o alcalam [al-qalam]  el camino y fundamento  de nuestra divina ley  ques la licalem [al-Islam] perfecto  esto nos apreta y manda  que todos nos enforcemos  como mexor lo entendamos  siquiera en prosa o en berso  o como mas nos parezca  que nuestro adin [<i>ad-dīn</i>] ensalcemos (8-9)</p>	<p>... the honored al-Qur’an  that orders by its decree  each good Muslim  teach it, so that the guidance  of our truth he may understand  reprimanding him and saying  with the word or with the pen  the path and the foundation  of our divine law  truly, Islam is perfect  this presses us and commands us  that we all strive  as best we understand  whether in prose or in verse  or however it best appears to us  that our religion [<i>ad-dīn</i>] we extol  (My translation)</p>
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Precisely because he believed that Islam would provide salvation for his community if only they could remain faithful to it, Rabadán decided to “modernize” the *Libro de las luces*, bringing it closer to the culture of his persecutors, including the Siglo de Oro model of authorship and readership. He wrote for his Aragonese Morisco community, for their salvation and steadfastness, yet he did so in the voice of an individual poet appealing to an individual reader, and in a style that combined medieval Islamic and Aragonese-*aljamiado* influences with others

that were pure Castilian Golden Age literature. His voice is individual, with a peculiar mix of influences, and quite conscious of its own individuality and authorial agency, as well as its audience. Rabadán would presage the full embrace of Siglo de Oro style that would explode after the Moriscos' mass-expulsion in 1609-14, from the distance of their North African exile. There, nostalgia for their lost homeland of al-Andalus would combine with a deep resentment of the Inquisition to form a strange schizophrenia and profound displacement, embodied in the *Tratado de los dos caminos* of Ibrahim Taybili.

In the period after the 1609-14 expulsion, Moriscos who settled in North Africa faced a second, inverse process of forcible acculturation, in which their nostalgia for their lost homeland of al-Andalus was counter-balanced by the need to prove their Islamic bona-fides to their new countrymen. Whereas the goal of *aljamiado* poetry in Spain had been to preserve the separate cultural-religious identity of Moriscos and resist forcible assimilation, its nature in exile was often self-contradictory. In exile, Morisco poets abandoned *aljamiado* for the Roman alphabet, and continued to use Spanish poetic forms to convey an Islamic message, despite now residing in *dār al-Islām* (Chejne 158). In the case of the Morisco Ibrahim Taybili (or Juan Pérez, as he was known in Spain), poetry is evidence of the contradictions of exile, embodying both a stated desire to encourage assimilation into *dār al-Islām*, and a hatred of the Inquisition, on the one hand; with a deep acculturation and nostalgia for Spain and its Golden Age poetry, on the other.

Ibrahim Taybili was the author of the polemic poem, *Contradición de los catorçe artículos de la fé cristiana, missa y sacrificios, con otras pruebas y argumentos contra la falsa Trinidad* (1628), edited and published in 1988 by Bernabé Pons as *El cantico islámico del morisco hispanotunecino Taybili* (Vázquez 230). He is also likely the author of the anonymous *Tratado de los caminos* (MS S.2 of the Gayangos collection, BRAH), an Islamic prose treatise which includes many snippets of Siglo de Oro poetry interspersed throughout (Cid Martínez 162). Taybili was born in Toledo around 1562, and after expulsion settled in Testour, Tunisia (Cid Martínez, Szpiech). Reading Taybili's work, it quickly becomes apparent that when in Spain, he had been urban, cultured, and deeply immersed in Siglo de Oro literary and theatrical culture (though as an amateur, since entrance to Spanish universities was barred to Moriscos; Figueroa 282, Vázquez 233). In the *Cántico*, he recounts his memory of shopping at a bookshop in Spain:

Acuérdome que el año de mil y seys çientos y quatro, estando en la feria de Alcalá de Henares, universidad tan nombrada en España, andando paseando un día por la calle mayor, yba a mi lado un amigo de la aparçialidad de los ariba dichos y últimos en la quenta. Llegamos a una librería, que las ay muy auténticas y copiosas; yo como aficionado, entré en una y pedí los Çésares de Pedro Mexía, Relox de príncipes, Epístolas de Guebara ... (qtd. Figueroa 283)

I remember that in the year sixteenth hundred and four, being at the festival of Alcalá de Henares, a very renowned university in Spain, strolling one day through the main street, there walked at my side a friend associated with those above-named and last in the account. We arrived at a bookstore, which were very authentic and copious there, and as I was an enthusiast, I entered and ordered Pedro Mexía's *Césares*, the *Relox de príncipes*, and Guevara's *Epístolas*... (My translation)

Similarly, in the *Tratado*, the narrator includes an account of the experience of attending a *corral de comedias* in Spain: “Bide un patio muy grande, adonde, en sillas y bancos, se sentaban los hombres y las mujeres, en un sitio [51v] alto las hurdinarias, y luego muchos balcones adonde estaban los grabes con sus mujeres, y en este patio un tablado adonde todos miraban” (“I saw a large courtyard, where, on chairs and benches, men and women were sitting; the common people in a high place, and then many balconies where the serious men were with their wives, and in this courtyard, a stage at which everyone was looking”; qtd. Figueroa 288, my translation). This account is never labeled as autobiographical, but the author is most likely drawing upon his own lived experience, especially as we see him repurpose poetry and the plot of several plays by Lope de Vega, Quevedo, and other Siglo de Oro greats throughout the *Tratado* (Asín 433-450, “Estudio Preliminar” 37). López Baralt points out that within the *Tratado*, the author “came to identify himself with the prejudices of Old Christian society like ‘purity of blood,’ and with notions as complicated as literary maurophilia” (“Estudio Preliminar” 37, my translation). Consequently, she labels him a “flesh-and-blood Ricote,” after the deeply European yet always slightly suspect Morisco character in Cervantes’ *Quixote*.

Although Taybili displays deep nostalgia and internalization of Old Christian Siglo de Oro culture, his texts from exile are written with the stated goal of helping Moriscos and their descendants to become better Muslims, and to acculturate into Tunisian society. This creates internal contradictions within his works; as López Baralt states, this author and poet “found himself deeply acculturated in both dimensions of his Spanishness: the triumphant as much as the agonized [aspect of it]” (37, my translation). As much as Taybili may have been “an admirer of Lope” (as Asín calls him in his 1933 article of that name), he was also a devout Muslim, and

he cites Islamic sources in his *Tratado* while also laying out profoundly Islamic views on topics like morality, the afterlife, and even sex (see López Baralt's "De cómo hacer el amor entre azoras coránicas y sonetos de Lope de Vega"). In what follows I will attempt to briefly lay out Taybili's complicated sense of himself as an author, his anticipated readership, his goals in his use of poetry, and how he expands upon Rabadán's use of Siglo de Oro poetic style.

In Taybili's *Cántico*, he employs many of the same Siglo de Oro tropes in his introduction that we saw with Rabadán. For example, Taybili uses what Vázquez calls the "rhetoric of false modesty" (231) when he refers to his own "estéril ynjenio" and tells the reader, "...enpecé esta obra [. . .] con más faltas que yo quissiera, que no es pusible no tenerlas ni que quando le faltaran, faltara quien se las ponga" ("I began this work [...] with more faults than I would like, since it is impossible not to have them, nor that even if you lack [faults], you will lack someone who gives them to you"; qtd. Vázquez 231). In the *Tratado de los dos caminos*, meanwhile, Taybili begins his prologue with a parable of "la mentira" (lies) burning "la verdad" (truth) and using the ashes to create ink, out of which

... é sacado este libro, y aunque en él halles algunas cosas de entretenimiento sólo es para mostrarte el camino que lleban los que çiegamente ban a parar a la cueba oscura del ynfierno [...] *Mi yntención* es apartarte d'ellas, y ser causa de que bayas por el camino dichoso. (Taybili 193, my emphasis)

... I have brought this book, and although some things can be found in it that are purely entertaining, it is only to show *you* the road followed by those who blindly end up by the dark cave of Hell [...] *My intention* is to distance you from them, and to be the reason that you go down the blessed road [to Heaven]. (193, my translation & emphasis)

Here, as with Rabadán, Taybili demonstrates his perception of literature as *dulce et utile*, as well as a self-conscious awareness of the authorial "I" addressing the "you" of the imagined/implied reader. On the next page, Taybili invokes the trope of "false modesty" as he tells the reader, "Mi boluntad y deseo reçibe, que es de puro coraçón, libre de ynterés del mundo, y solo te pido suplas mi tosco estilo que bien sé que es rudo y sin puliçía. Toma el probecho que te doy y deja lo demás [...]" ("receive my good will and desire, for it is from a pure heart, free of bias of the material world, and I only as that you replace my rude style, which I well know is crude and without grace. Take the benefit from what I give you and leave the rest"; 194). He then addresses his imagined audience as "¡o, curioso lector y amigos y queridos hermanos!" ("O, curious reader

and friends and dear brothers!"; 194), speaking to his community of fellow-exiles in Tunisia, for whom he wrote this book in Latin letters and in Castilian script<sup>73</sup>.

Similarly, as we saw Rabadán invoke Greek mythology with a reference to Phoebus, Taybili includes in his dedication a mention of the muses, which he quickly qualifies as *shirk* (attributing partners to God):

[. . .] y si fue costumbre de los sabios de la antigüedad guardada con no menos piedad y Relijión que superstición y banidad después de edificar templos, consagrar aras, ençender fuegos y quemar ynsensios a *la mentirossa deydad de las fabulossas muças* [. . .] no parecerá en mi [sic] despropósito, ya que no puedo edificar altares, lebantar pirámides, consagrar colossos debidos no a las mussas que finjió la jentilidad, sino a las fieles, a las berdaderas y llanas del conoçimiento, fe y yslam [. . .]. (Qtd. Vázquez 231)

[...] and if it was a custom of the wise, preserved from antiquity with no less piety and religion than superstition and vanity after building temples, consecrating altars, lighting fires and burning incense to *the false deity of the fabulous muses* [...] it will not seem inappropriate of me, since I cannot built altars, raise pyramids, consecrate colossi owed not to the muses whom heathendom imagined, but to the faithful, to those truthful and complete in their knowledge, faith, and Islam [...] (My translation)

The contradiction is very clear here, as the Siglo de Oro models which Taybili had imbibed urged him to invoke the muses before embarking upon his poem, while the Islamic teachings he held dear classified polytheism as the gravest of sins. Unlike Rabadán, who wrote for highly-integrated Moriscos in Christian Spain, Taybili needs to qualify the muses as *shirk* in order to properly instruct his Morisco readers and aid in their assimilation with Muslim Tunisians.

Perhaps as a way of having his cake and eating it too, Taybili inserts a “novela ejemplar,” *El arripentimiento del desdichado*, into his *Tratado de los dos caminos*, ostensibly showing the reader what *not* to do, while struggling to hide his nostalgia for Spanish Siglo de Oro culture. In *El arripentimiento*, we follow a man’s journey through a Spanish city, where he observes the flirtations, affairs, and celebrations of various people. The narrator describes him passing

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<sup>73</sup> Cid Martínez points out that the *romances* (genre of poetry) contained in Taybili’s *Tratado* were quoted by him from memory (163), and that they all can be dated as “de fecho anterior a 1609, año en que Pérez-Taybili abandonó a España” (“prior to 1609, the year in which Pérez-Taybili left Spain”; 163, my translation). However, Cid Martínez continues, “La obra fue redactada décadas más tarde, pues Taybili da a entender que deseaba conservar la memoria de la llegada de los exiliados a Túnez cuando eran ya muy pocos los superviventes de esos primeros años...” (“The work was edited decades later, since Taybili gives us to understand that he had wanted to preserve the memory of the exiles’ arrival in Tunisia, [at a time] when the survivors of those early years were already few...”; 163, my translation). This timeline is in line with Taybili’s statements and with other scholarly readings of the text e.g., by López-Baralt in her “preliminary study” to the printed edition that I use here.

through a garden where he sees “entre todos, Benus y Cupido tirando flechas” (“among all, Venus and Cupid shooting arrows”), and where he quotes (semi-accurately, i.e., probably from memory) a song from Lope’s play, *El último godo*:

<p>Bámonos a la playa  noche de San Juan,  <i>que retumban los remos</i>  <i>y se alegra el mar.</i>  A la playa vamos,  donde las arenas  son de plata y oro  y cristal su piedras,  mezclados con ellas  perlas y coral,  <i>que retumban...</i>  El dorado Febo  con su carro buela,  y la noche tiende  su manto de estrellas [...] <p style="text-align: right;">(Tratado 225)</p> </p>	<p>Let us go to the beach  on the night of Saint John  <i>the oars resound</i>  <i>and the sea delights</i>  To the beach we go,  where the sands  are of silver and gold  and its stones are crystal  mixed with them  are pearls and coral,  <i>the oars resound...</i>  Golden Phoebus  with his chariot flies,  and night hangs up  its mantle of stars [...] <p style="text-align: right;">(My translation)</p> </p>
<p>Vamos a la playa,  noche de San Juan,  que alegra la tierra  y retumba el mar.  En la playa hacemos  fiestas de mil modos,  coronados todos  de verbena y ramos;  a su arena vamos,  noche de San Juan,  que se alegra la tierra  y retumba el mar. <p style="text-align: right;">(De la Vega, qtd. Szpiech)</p> </p>	<p>Let us go to the beach,  on the night of Saint John  the land rejoices  and the sea resounds  On the beach we make  celebrations of a thousand kinds,  all crowned  with verbena and branches;  to its sand we go,  on the night of Saint John  the land rejoices  and the sea resounds <p style="text-align: right;">(My translation)</p> </p>

*El arripentimiento*, then, includes plenty of references to Greek mythology, e.g., Venus and Cupid “shooting their arrows,” or “golden Phoebus” in the above poem. Here, unlike in his invocation of the muses, Taybili does not need to denounce these references as *shirk*, because this whole section of his “exemplary novel” is meant to show the dangers of the broad and sinful path that leads to Hell. Certainly, he avoids attributing such poems to Lope or other Spanish authors directly, instead introducing Lope as “el poeta,” apparently out of “religious scruples” (Asín 419). However, as López Baralt points out, “[...] tantos pasajes del manuscrito como los

romances, los sonetos, y la novela ‘El arrepentimiento del desdichado,’ deja[n] entrever un amor mal disimulado por España y por su literatura” (“[...] so many passages of the manuscript, like the *romances*, the sonnets, and the novel, “The Repentance of the Unfortunate” allow us to glimpse a poorly-concealed love for Spain and its literature”; “Estudio Preliminar” 53).

Let’s consider the sheer volume of Spanish literature that Taybili quotes, paraphrases, or imitates in his *Tratado*. According to Asín, the *Tratado*’s author “makes use, in the creation of his work, of passages, summaries, and events from Spanish theater and novels, besides copying various poems from classical poets [...] there are other [verses] that are almost certainly taken from Lope’s theater” (443). For example, the moralizing lines “Por cierto es linda cosa / a no haber muerto en el mundo” are taken from Lope’s *El animal de Hungría* (Asín 444), a play which tells a story of banishment which may have appealed thematically to this Morisco author and poet (Figueroa 290). Similarly, in the scene in which Taybili describes his visit to a *corral de comedias*, he recounts the actors performing a play he calls “La rueda de la fortuna,” which is in fact his memory of a Lope play, *Las mudanzas de fortuna y sucesos de don Beltrán de Aragón*, which again deals with a nobleman’s forced exile from his homeland of Aragón (Figueroa 290). Figueroa argues that the selection of Lope plays in the *Tratado* may have been a way for its Morisco author to reflect on his own personal and collective experience of exile: “The desperation of finding oneself in a new land and the desire to return to one’s native land likely resonated with Moriscos’ own circumstances” (290).

In “El arrepentimiento del desdichado,” the snippets of Spanish song and poetry Taybili includes often make reference to specific locations and holidays in Spain, and are all sung by glamorous young men and women as they flirt and enjoy themselves, painting a picture of “sin” but also one of joyous festivity. In response to the Lope poem “Bámonos a la playa / noche de San Juan,” another group of young people respond:

<p>Noche de San Pedro          ban a la bega.  <i>Damas de Toledo</i>  <i>que al campo alegran.</i>          [...]          Las aguas de Taxo          por rubies y perlas          para sus corrientes          d’estas damas bellas,          porque cojan jaçintos</p>	<p>On the night of Saint Peter          they go to the meadow.  <i>Ladies of Toledo</i>  <i>who bring joy to the countryside.</i>          [...]          The waters of the Tajo          for rubies and pearls          it pauses its currents          for these beautiful ladies          because they pick hyacinths</p>
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de sus riberas ( <i>Tratado</i> 226)	from its banks (My translation)
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Saint-days would evoke the memory of Spain and Spanish culture in Moriscos living in exile in *dār al-Islam*, as would the naming of specific places like Toledo and the Tajo River, and even of the plants that grew there, like hyacinths (*jacintos*). “Rubies and pearls” help portray the lost Spanish homeland as a paradise, where nature itself is akin to precious gems. In the *novela ejemplar*, the recitation of this idealizing poem is met with yet another, also evoking Toledo and the Tajo:

Cómo retumban las palas de los remeros en las claras aguas del sacro Texo La barca dichosa, donde ba mi çielo, que lleba por lastre corales y ençençio, de oro la popa, de plata los remos, beo desde el monte que mira a Toledo. (226-7)	How the oars of the rowers resound in the clear waters of the sacred Tajo The fortunate boat where my heaven is, which carries for ballast coral and incense the stern is of gold the oars of silver I see [it] from the mountain that looks toward Toledo. (My translation)
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Here, the place itself becomes “sacred,” home of “mi çielo” (“my sky” or “my heaven” – i.e., the beloved) and the speaker narrates while looking down on the scene from afar, “desde el monte.” As in the previous poem, “gold and silver” form part of the landscape itself. It is hard to avoid the sense that the longing for the beloved here has become conflated with longing for the homeland, hearkening back to classical Arabic *rithā’ al-mudun* poetry.

*El Arrepentimiento del desdichado* abounds with poetry portraying Taybili’s lost homeland, especially the “great” city of Toledo: “Por la Puerta del Cambrón, una de las más nombradas, / que adorna la gran Toledo, ynperial çudad d’España, / con grande aconpañamiento entra el baleroso Bamba / a reçibir la corona con su mujer doña Sancha” (“Through the Gate of Cambrón, one of the most-famed, / which adorns the great Toledo, imperial city of Spain, / with great accompaniment enters the valiant Bamba / to receive the crown with his wife, lady Sancha”; 235). This example is especially jarring as it invokes “imperial Spain” in a positive light, nor is it the only instance in which Taybili appears to parrot the racist myths of his



oppressors. Later in the same chapter, he has characters sing a poem about Zayde and “la valentía del moro Tarfe” (240), itself an example of exoticizing, romanticizing *maurophile* Spanish literature:

<p>Si tienes el corazón, y a medida de las manos si en la guerra escaramuças y en el caballo rebuelbes [...] si respondes en presençia sal a ber si te defiendes y si no osas salir solo, alguno de tus amigos que los buenos caballeros, se aprovechan de la lengua, Este el moro Tarfe escribe, que donde pone la pluma y llamando a un paje suyo y en secreto al moro Zayde y dirásle que le espero del cristalino Xenil</p>	<p>Zayde, como la arrogancia dejas bolar las palabras, como entre las damas hablas el cuerpo como en la çambra  como en ausencia te ablas, como en el Alhambra hablas, aunque lo está quien te aguarda, para tu defensa saca, no en palacio ni entre damas que es donde las armas callan. con tanta cólera y rabia, el delgado papel rasga, le diçe: ‘Bete al Alhambra, da, de mi parte, esta carta, donde las Corrientes aguas a Jeneralife baña.’ (239-240)</p>
<p>If you have the heart, and you let your hands fly if in war you skirmish and on horseback you writhe [...] if you respond in [my] presence come out and see if you defend yourself and if you do not dare to come out alone, some one of your friends for good knights, make good use of their tongue, This the Moor, Tarfe, writes, that where he places the quill and calling to one of his pages and in secret to the Moor, Zayde, and you will tell him that I await him of the crystalline Genil (My translation)</p>	<p>Zayde, as you have the arrogance like you do your words as you speak among the ladies your body as you do when dancing the <i>zambra</i>  as you speak in [my] absence as [well] as you speak in the Alhambra though he who awaits you does, may come to your defense neither in the palace nor among ladies rather, it is where weapons silence. with such anger and rage, the thin paper is torn, he tells him: ‘Go to the Alhambra, give, on my behalf, this letter, where the Flowing waters bathe the Generalife<sup>74</sup></p>

<sup>74</sup> The summer palace / country estate of Nasrid Granada

This is an example of a “romance morisco,” in which the fictional “Zayde” and “Tarfe” are embellished by Christian Spanish poets to portray an idealized model of chivalry – as we see here in the Arab knight Tarfe challenging Zayde to a duel. It is place-specific, located in Nasrid Granada, with Zayde occupying the Alhambra and the duel to be held in the palace of Generalife. The machismo in Tarfe’s challenge to Zayde exemplifies the norms and expectations of Spanish “chivalric” literature. “Caso curiosísimo,” López Baralt calls it – “tenemos que un morisco, musulmán hasta el tuétano y víctima de la España inquisitorial, usurpa el clisé del moro gallardo y valiente pero falso de la maurofilia literaria” (« a most curious case ... we find a Morisco, Muslim to the core and victim of Inquisitorial Spain, usurping the cliché of the dashing and valiant but false Moor of Maurophile literature”; “Estudio preliminar” 54).

But as she quickly points out, the *Tratado* deals in some even more disturbing Siglo de Oro tropes, including an obsession with “purity of lineage” that López Baralt sees as an example of “the racist tendency of the idealizing Spanish literature of the Golden Age,” (54, my trans.). I would add that we already see this concern with purity of lineage in Rabadán’s *Discurso*, where the Morisco poet is anxious to prove that Muhammad, Ismael, and Islam in general do not stem from a “bastard lineage,” as so many Catholic Spaniards claimed. In refuting these accusations, Rabadán swings full-circle to the assertion of a *superior* lineage, one endowed with heavenly light as a mark of approval by God. It is not shocking that Taybili would have internalized the same (Christian) Spanish prejudices. He uses Morisca women and their gold or “vanity” as scapegoats for the hostile reception Moriscos received from some Tunisians, so gender is another area in which he was happy to echo Siglo de Oro prejudices (*Tratado* 208).

Taybili’s internalization of Spanish Siglo de Oro prejudices and norms appears in a second “maurophile” poem from the same scene in *El arrepentimiento del desdichado*:

<p>Con aquellas blancas manos, curando Angélica estaba deteniéndole está el alma, respeto las blancas manos El moro la está mirando y, regalando la boz, 'Ay, dulce bida mía,</p>	<p>que quitaron tantas vidas, de Medoro las heridas; que hasta la muerte enemiga y sus Milagros le admiran. con enterneçida bista, así le diçe y suspire: <i>detén el alma que a salir porfia</i>'. (240)</p>
<p>With those white hands, Angélica was curing his soul is pausing,</p>	<p>that took so many lives, Medoro’s wounds; for even the enemy, death,</p>

respects the white hands  
The Moor is watching her  
and, giving voice,  
'*Oh, sweet life of mine*

and their Miracles astonish it.  
with softened gaze,  
so he says to her and sighs:  
*arrest the soul that endeavors to leave*'.

(My translation)

These verses not only exemplify the *maurophile* sub-genre (written by Christians, for Christians) within Spanish chivalric literature, but they also show us something about Christian Siglo de Oro beauty standards with their repetition of the image of Angélica's "blancas manos" ("white hands"). In these verses, the "white hands" are capable of healing and of taking life, are "admired" by "the Moor" (who is male), and belong to "Angélica," whose name associates her with Christianity and with angels. This is typical of maurophile Spanish literature, which "celebrate[s] the extreme whiteness – as exaggerated as it seems, doubtless, desiderative – of the fictionalized moriscos," painting Spanish Muslims within these safe fictional contexts as what Edward Said calls an "approved, revised other" ("Los moriscos ante el Espejo" 74-75).

Is this adoption of Christian Spanish beauty standards common within Morisco literature? López-Baralt answers that it is, in part – she argues that rather than painting their characters blond and blue-eyed, most Morisco texts put characters through "a mysterious process of decoloration," in which animals and objects are described in brilliant color but human beings generally are not (84). Perhaps in this way many Moriscos avoided both Spanish and Arabic models of beauty. Taybili's extensive citation of maurophile poetry and the whiteness it exalts may be fairly unique; it is more extreme than what we see in Rabadán and in other, earlier Morisco texts. It may also be another form of expressing nostalgia: Taybili names Spanish cities, landmarks, plant-life, and holidays; he repurposes Siglo de Oro poems and plays, and he also echoes the prejudices and physical ideals of the society which had ejected him and his countrymen. In reality, given the Inquisition's difficulty in identifying Moriscos, it is unlikely that Taybili himself looked this pale; he and his New Christian fellows probably ran the same gamut of appearances as their Old Christian neighbors ("Los Moriscos ante el Espejo" 73).

As López Baralt argues, the *Tratado* was written to teach Islamic practices and morals to an audience of second- or even third-generation Moriscos in exile, people who had no personal memory of Spain, yet had still not fully assimilated (or been accepted) as Tunisian. Therefore, Taybili's desire to acculturate his readers is accompanied by a fear of speaking ill of his Tunisian benefactors 'Uzman Dey and Citi Bulgaiz ("Estudio Preliminar" 47-49). This self-censorship is

counterbalanced by the deep nostalgia Taybili clearly felt for his homeland, and the real difficulty his community had in being accepted by Tunisians. It did not help that the Ottoman governor, ‘Uzman Dey, treated the Moriscos as a separate and privileged minority of “janissaries without pay,” whom he could play against his native Tunisian subjects (*Tratado* 204). On top of all this is Taybili’s real trauma and hatred of the Inquisition, which adds yet another layer to his performance as author and poet. The “*lector*” he addresses in his prologue is a Castilian-speaking and -reading Morisco, born in exile, to whom Taybili can pass on the Siglo de Oro poetry and theater that he had loved and remembered for at least twenty years. Simultaneously, he wants to acculturate his readers into orthodox Islam. Taybili employs the works of many Muslim authors in his *Tratado*, particularly al-Ghazali’s symbolic depiction of man and his virtues in battle against the world, vanity, appetite, and the devil (Asín 446). Whereas Rabadán, writing from inside Spain, could imitate Siglo de Oro poetry *and* convey an Islamic message without appearing to contradict himself, for Taybili, writing from exile, both his host society and the trauma of expulsion framed these two cultural influences as diametrically opposed.

By the time of their expulsion, Morisco communities, many of them the descendants of Mudejars who had already spent centuries under Christian Castilian or Aragonese rule, had become acculturated in many ways, not least due to the sixteenth-century efforts of church and government officials to forcibly assimilate New Christians. It is hardly surprising that Taybili should have preserved a love for the literature he grew up with, even while loathing Inquisitorial oppression and framing the Moriscos’ expulsion from Spain to *dār al-Islam* as divine salvation from “poder de faraones y malditos érexes ynquisidores” (“the power of Pharaohs and damned heretic Inquisitors”; *Tratado* 205). In exile, pressure from his host-society pushes Taybili to self-censor whenever he begins to voice unhappiness with the treatment Moriscos received at the hands of their Muslim hosts:

[...] fuemos bien reçibidos y ospedados, que, *aunque al bulgo hallamos ser alhunos fasçinerosos*, había muchos santos y hombres justos [...]; pero *basta* que esa fue culpa nuestra en seguir a los que no fue justo; y *basta* que de cualquiera suerte oymos en altas boçes la palabra de la unidad, que tan occulta la decíamos, y *basta* que venimos a profesar y mostrar la ley de Dios... (*Tratado* 205).

[...] we were well-received and hosted; *even though we found some of the common people to be criminals*, there were many saintly and just men [...]; but *enough*<sup>75</sup>, this was

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<sup>75</sup> In this context, “basta” could also be read as “anyway,” “even so,” or “in any case”.

our fault for following those who were not just; and *enough*, in any case we hear aloud the profession of [God's] unity, which we used to say so secretly; and *enough*, we came to profess and show the Law of God... (My translation)

López Baralt identifies this repetition of “basta” (“enough”) as a kind of “self-censorship” dishearteningly similar to what Taybili and his fellow-Moriscos had been forced to practice in Spain (“Estudio Preliminar” 48-9). In Spain, the moral imperative to preserve Islam for the sake of the community had been paramount, while the often-unorthodox means used to do so (including music, folklore, and even Siglo de Oro-style poetry) were necessary tools in the fight. In North African exile, “European” cultural markers were red flags, and the poetry that Rabadán and his predecessors had used to deliver an Islamic message was suspect of Christian heresy.

Taybili’s *Arrepentimiento del desdichado* embraces Castilian poetry and courtly culture, under the cover of exemplifying “sin” that leads to Hell. Yet Taybili forgets himself at times in this remembered Spain of his own creation. In the middle of *El Arrepentimiento*, in the midst of a nocturnal musical gathering, where poem after poem is recited, the singers call for a group performance on the subject of memory and forgetting:

<p>Bajo: Jil, ¿por qué no das un medio que remedie tu pesar?          Terçerilla: <i>Era el remedio olvidar y olvidóseme el remedio.</i>          Bajo: Aprende olvido, pastor, no estés tan rudo y dormido.          Ter[çerilla]: ¿Cómo é de aprender olvido si la memoria es amor?          Tiple: Otros an hallado medio, No as sido solo en amar,          Todos: <i>Era el remedio olvidar y oldibóseme el remedio.</i>          Ba[jo]: Deja baguíos de cabeça, que amor es gran pesadumbre.          Ter[çerilla]: Dejáralo, a ser costumbre, mas es ya naturaleça.          Tiple: Pues si no buscas un medio, amores te an de acabar.          To[dos]: <i>Era el remedio olvidar y olvidóseme el remedio.</i>          (Tratado 241-241)</p>	<p>Bass: Jil, why don't you suggest a means to remedy your regret?          Tercet: <i>The remedy was to forget and I forgot the remedy.</i>          Bass: Learn forgetfulness, shepherd, don't be so crude and asleep          Tercet: How can I learn forgetfulness if memory is love?          Tiple: Others have found a means, You have not been the only one to love,          All: <i>The remedy was to forget and I forgot the remedy.</i>          Bass: Let your heads stay idle for to love is great sorrow.          Tercet: I would by custom leave it, but it happens by nature          Tiple: then if you don't look for a means, loving will bring about your end.          All: <i>The remedy was to forget and I forgot the remedy.</i>          (My translation)</p>
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This collective performance, imagined and described by a single, aging author in exile, strikes at the heart of Taybili's conflict – his own performance of happiness in *dār al-Islam* and his inability to consciously vocalize his dissatisfaction there, or his love-hate relationship with Siglo de Oro Spain and its literature. “The solution” to this conundrum, in Taybili's judgment, was indeed “to forget” – to forget and forgive the wrongs of various Tunisians against the Morisco refugees, to assimilate, and thereby to forget the very culture that created the above poem. But, the chorus, continues “I forgot the solution.” Taybili “forgot to forget” his homeland and its poetry, as strenuously as he attempts to denounce it. “Learn to forget,” another voice advises, and the Terçerilla, replies, “How can I learn to forget, if memory is love?” It is as if Taybili is struggling through the verse and through his novela ejemplar to abandon his love for Siglo de Oro Spain, his love for Lope, his love for the culture that oppressed and rejected him. The song goes back and forth – love is memory, one voice argues, and another responds, “love is great sorrow.” Taybili leaves things on an undecided note, repeating the chorus: “The solution was to forget / and I forgot the solution.” This very much sums up Taybili's own paradoxical situation, caught between the desire to forget and the desire to remember; a strange echo of the dilemma of his Mudejar and Morisco ancestors, caught between the need to assimilate in order to survive occupation, and the psychological need to preserve their Islam.

The *communal performance* of this song similarly embodies the nesting contradictions at play. By the time he writes the *Tratado*, Taybili is likely in his sixties, and he seems unsure what he wants to memorialize for the next generation, and what he wants to overlook. His act of authorship is individual – like Rabadán and like his Siglo de Oro models, he writes as a single, “falsely humble” author for an imagined readership. Reading is a similarly solo act, although it can be performed by many individuals and even recited aloud and thereby made communal (as we know Rabadán's *Discurso* was by Tunisian Moriscos as late as 1719 – see Stanley). The scene imagined by this solo writer for his solo reader is one of collective poetry and collective joy, undertaken in the language and style of his persecutors, and remembered after decades of exile. The subject of the poem is pain and love involved in the act of remembering. The layers of memory, love, and trauma here are deeper and more complex than those of early Morisco *zambros* and *mawālīd*, which fought to preserve the memory of Islamic Spain in a newly hostile environment. After yet another forcible process of acculturation, Taybili struggles to decide how to process the poetic memory of his former persecutors, which was also the poetry of his lost

homeland. With the *Tratado*, the individual voice of the poet comes through in his self-betrayals, his failure to forget. Much as he strives for his readers to fully assimilate to life in Tunisia, he is unwilling to let his memories of Siglo de Oro Spain and its poetry die. His goal for the collective future of his community fights with his personal attachment to his and their complicated, mixed identity as exiles.

#### IV. Conclusion

This chapter has tracked how hostile laws and Inquisitorial pressure exposed fissures between popular Morisco folkloric-poetic styles, and the more orthodox Islamic teachings probably favored by the educated *alfakí* class. I have also traced a shift from early Morisco poetry that was straightforwardly Islamic and pedagogical, to an increased Siglo de Oro (Christian) influence by the seventeenth century in the poetry of Muhammad Rabadán and Ibrahim Taybili. Rabadán and Taybili's Siglo de Oro tendencies posit authorship and readership as individual rather than a collective undertaking, and raise the question of how much their poetry was influenced by their own preferences, as well as their audience's shifting ability and expectations. Rabadán and Taybili were writing for an audience that most likely could not read *aljamiado*, so their use of Latin script was born of necessity. But was their embrace of Siglo de Oro poetry a reflection of their audience's cravings, or of their own personal intellectual formation and preferences? I would argue, particularly in Taybili's case, that personal background and preference was the main motivator behind using the poetic style of the conquerors, a reflection of highly-assimilated yet devoutly Muslim poets who struggled to untangle their conflicting cultural influences. The tension between a poet's preferences and their audience's needs and expectations was one that would similarly haunt Palestinian "resistance" poets of the 'fifties and 'sixties. Building on a groundwork of oral and written pre-Nakba political poetry and reacting to the circumstances of military rule, these poets often struggled to balance audience demand for strident, defiant verse with personal inclinations to write more private poetry, for example love poetry.

## Chapter Five

### The Personal and Political in Palestinian Poetry

#### I. Palestinian Poetic Contexts: Pre-Nakba *Iltizām* and Post-Nakba Military Rule

Castilian, Aragonese, and Valencian Muslim communities had lived under Christian rule for centuries as Mudejars before their forcible conversions in 1501-1526 transformed them into Moriscos. During the Middle Ages, Islamic city-states like Toledo, Seville, and Valencia did not welcome Christian conquest and colonization, and subsequent Mudejar resistance took military, political, and cultural forms. Mudejar literature was in many ways the cultural ancestor of Morisco literature, which was able to change and adapt to newer, harsher circumstances in the sixteenth century. Similarly, when discussing modern Palestinian poetry, it is important to note that the circumstances of outside oppression and occupation that led to a kind of obligatory *iltizām* or political “commitment” in Palestine did not begin with the Nakba of 1948<sup>76</sup>. The communal, politically engaged poetry which emerged in the Galilee in the 1950s and flourished there during the 1960s in fact has clear roots in Mandate-era Palestinian poetry, both formal (*fushā*) and popular (*sha’bī*), which spoke to the nationalist aspirations of the Palestinian community, against British and Zionist colonialism. In *Adab al-Muqāwamah fī Falasṭīn al-Muḥtallah: 1948-1966*, Ghassan Kanafani finds the roots of Palestinian “resistance poetry” in the popular (*sha’bī*) *ahzāj* and *sahjāt* of the 1920s and 30s (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 17).

These poems used Palestinian *‘amiyyah*, or dialect, which set them apart from formal “literature” and placed them in the realm of common knowledge, especially in the heavily rural

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<sup>76</sup> The late Ottoman period (when the first stages of Zionist colonization and land-purchasing began) and British Mandate period (when physical and legal harassment of Palestinians and separate legal and physical structures for Jewish settlers developed with the help of British authorities; Lera 19-21) can be compared to periods of Castilian/Aragonese rule and subordinate Mudejar status for conquered Muslims in some, but not all, of the Iberian Peninsula. Both are situations of foreign occupation and military rule (Ottoman and British, in the case of Palestine, with Zionist paramilitary organizations like the Haganah, Palmach, Irgun, and Lehi/Stern Gang existing under the British Mandate). Both pre-1492 Iberian Christian “Re-” conquistadors and Mandate-Era Zionist organizations and settlers were laying the physical, legal/administrative, military, and narrative roots for later ethnic-cleansing, building narratives of “return” to a God-given homeland based on ethno-religious homogeneity and purity. It was the Mudejars in al-Andalus and the Ottoman- and Mandate-era Palestinians in Palestine who lost the land, originally.



and class-stratified society of Mandate Palestine. As a form of poetry that springs “from the people,” they tended to be anonymous “collective production[s],” which, as Kanafani points out, is a useful feature when it comes to avoiding retaliation from an oppressive regime (23).

Kanafani gives the example of the following lines attributed to an unknown Palestinian who was hanged by the British in 1936 for his role in the peasant-led anticolonial 1936-9 uprising:

<p>Do not think my tears are fear; my tears are for my homeland          And for a few little and hungry chicks at home          Who will feed them after me,          Since my two brothers have already gone to the gallows?          [...]          And tomorrow, how will my wife spend her day:          Crying ‘woe’ over me, or over her little children?!          If only I had left her golden bracelets with her          The day struggle called me to buy its weapons!          (My translation)</p>	<p>لا تظن دمعي خوف، دمعي على وطني          وعا كمشة زغاليل بالبيت جوعاني          مين رح يطعمها بعدي؟          وإخواني تنين قبلي عالمشقة راحوا؟          [...]          ويكره مرتي كيف راح تقضي نهارها؟          ويلها عليّ أو ويلها على صغارها!          يا ريتني خلّيت في يدها سوارها          يوم الدّعتني الحرب تا اشترى سلاحها!          (18)</p>
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The themes here include nationalism, poverty, and the poet’s willingness to die for a cause. In terms of form, not only is the verse familiar, simple and singsong; it also uses Palestinian ‘*āmiyyah*, which while placing it outside the realm of what was generally considered “literature” at the time, reflects a class and nationalist consciousness. The use of ‘*āmiyyah* for nationalistic purposes recalls Benedict Anderson’s observations about literature’s role in the formation of “imagined communities,” particularly the way in which early “national” literature speaks in the vernacular to an unquestioned, imagined national community (Anderson 32, 39).

During the first few decades of Zionist rule in Palestine following 1948, Palestinians would continue to employ the *sahjah* and *ahzūjah* forms for similar purposes of resistance. It was recited at important life-events, like weddings, which through the prompting of the poetry would sometimes morph into protests (*Adab* 19). It was also recited at political events, like the 1958 May Day protests in Nazareth when protestors clashed with police and chanted,

<p>Nazareth is the cornerstone of the Galilee /          The police there are crushed          The land of Arabism has been liberated /          Dayan, get out and leave          Our brothers in Port Saeed /          Have a radiant record          Even if the seventh heaven falls /          We won’t leave our land</p>	<p>والناصرية ركن الجليل / فيك البوليس مدحولي          أرض العروبة تحررت / دايان شيل وارحل          إخواننا في بور سعيد / إلهم تاريخ مسجلي          لو وقعت سابع سما / عن أرضنا ما بنرحل          (qtd.19)</p>
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(My translation)	
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As seen in these lines, *sha'bi* poetry was able to respond in real time to political events, both the local protests in Nazareth against military rule and Western colonial powers, and Israel's humiliating defeat against Egypt in 1956. Similarly, the following *sha'bi* poem was chanted at clashes responding to Moshe Dayan's attempt to appropriate lands from three Palestinian villages in the area known as Shaghour:

A caller called in the Galilee / The land of Arabism is for the Arabs Our Shaghour, you are second to none / And your soil is worth more than gold And with the unity of the men of Shaghour / The confiscation order has been erased Dayan, your order is null and void / Through unity, it will be revoked (My translation)	نادى المنادي في الجليل / أرض العروبة للعرب شاغورنا مالك مثيل / وترايك أعلى من الذهب ويوحدة رجال الشاغور / أمر المصادرة انشطب دايان أمرك مستحيل / بالوحدة راح ينشطب (qtd. 20)
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The above examples show *sha'bi* poetry being put to practical use at protests, where a defiant, heroic, and sometimes mocking tone would serve to unite and embolden protestors. As in the case of Morisco religious poetry and polemics, this was an inward-facing discourse meant to shore up collective confidence (not to somehow “convince” a soldier of their wrongness by insulting them). And finally, as we have seen in Chapter One, *sha'bi* poems in occupied Palestine during this period were also used to rebuke and mock collaborators, attempting to shame them into changing their behavior and discouraging others from collaboration with the Zionist occupier in the future. The “mysterious” murder of a well-known *sha'bi* poet named Hamid from Umm al-Faḥem in the 1950s could be considered a recognition by the Israeli government of the *power* such poetry held (23).

The above examples of *sha'bi* poetry, pre- and post-1948, are taken from Kanafani's *Adab al-Muqāwamah fī Falasṭīn al-Muḥtallah*, which valorizes not only the more “literary” poetry from occupied Palestine, but also the role of *sha'bi* poetry as a form of grassroots cultural resistance. *Adab al-Muqāwamah* discusses both *sha'bi* and *fushḥā* poetry from the occupied Galilee during the first few decades after 1948, and the decision to focus on *both* was in itself radical. Kanafani praises the “bitter sarcasm that cuts to the bone” found in *sha'bi* poetry,

explaining, “This steadfast sarcasm [*al-sukhriyyah al-ṣāmidah*] may seem surprising, but there is no doubt that it springs from a deep feeling that what is happening is temporary, and that change will come one day, and the nightmare will pass, and it will turn out to have been just a story” (50). As Abu-Remaileh points out, “This was in 1966, when many believed the liberation of Palestine was possible” (178). This not to say that an appreciation of irony as a tool of resistance, or of *sha’bī* poetry as a weapon of cultural resistance, vanished after 1967. On the contrary, Abu-Remaileh argues that after 1967, irony became a “strategy of counter-narration” for Palestinian writers like Emile Habiby (178).

Like Kanafani, Palestinian poets on the “inside” acknowledged the power and importance of folk-literature. In 1967, Tawfīq Zayyād (himself featured in Kanafani’s *Adab al-Muqāwamah*) published an article in *al-Jadīd* titled “Save Our Folk Literature from the Danger of Disappearing” in which he argues that “there are summits that no individual artist or poet has been or will be able to reach. And the inadvertent poet of these heights, the outstanding creator, is the *people* – as a *group*” (qtd. Hoffman 309). Zayyād expands on *sha’bī* literature’s role in resistance: “We do not look at [folk literature] as a corpse to embalm and entomb. Rather we see [it] from the point of view of the present and future, as part of our march toward political and social freedom” (qtd. 309). He views folk literature as *stronger* than formal literature written by individual authors precisely because of its collective nature: “It has evolved over epochs, and various generations have added to it but have ‘preserved its essential form and content, so that it arrives in our age pure, distilled, strong, and powerfully expressive’” (qtd. 309). Zayyād, like Kanafani, focused on the utility of folk poetry for the Palestinian community it came from - the same community it served. By attributing value to *sha’bī* poetry, Zayyād and Kanafani, who both identified as members of the cultural resistance, were advocating self-respect, against a Zionist as well as a classist narrative which saw Palestinian culture and literature as “primitive” (to quote Jewish Israeli writer Gabriel Moked’s assessment of Palestinian resistance poetry; Hoffman 271, Somekh and Tlamim 18). Both very much ascribed to the principle that poetry served a collective, political need for the community, and that this went for both folk- and more formal or “literary” poetry.

Like their folk-poet contemporaries, the “resistance poets” of the 1950s and 60s Galilee (including Tawfīq Zayyād) had Mandate-era predecessors – specifically, the poets Ibrahim Tuqān, ‘Abdelraḥīm Mahmoud, and Abdelkarīm al-Karmī (Abu Salma) (*Al-Adab al-Falasṭīnī*

10, Jayyusi “Introduction”). These poets took on communal roles, acting as “spokespeople” for their countrymen and directly addressing political issues in their poetry, decades before *iltizām* became a popular literary term in the 1950s: “they were all first and foremost committed to political verse and to acting as resounding spokespersons for their country and its plight” (“Introduction” 8).

Ibrahim Tuqān wrote bitterly about the *samāsirah* who were busy during the Mandate era selling Palestinian lands to the Zionists: “In Beirut they say: You live affluently / You sell them land, they give you gold” (“In Beirut” 319). Jayyusi sees Tuqān’s penchant for irony, sarcasm, and the tragicomic as a precursor to Emile Habiby’s *The Pessoptimist* (8). We can also view it as related to the “steadfast satire” that Kanafani saw in Palestinian *sha’bī* poetry. At the same time, Tuqān wrote patriotic verses in the heroic mode that would remain prominent in Palestinian literature for decades to come: “Do not consider his safety - / He bares his life on the palms of his hands. / Worries have substituted / A pillow for his shroud / As he waits for that hour / That ushers in the terrible hour of his death...” (“Commando” 317).<sup>77</sup>

‘Abdelraḥīm Mahmoud, in addition to creating a similar character of poet-fighter-martyr and extolling the virtues of self-sacrifice in defense of the homeland, actually took up arms in the 1936-39 Revolt against the British, and again in 1948, when he died fighting for his country. His poems are militaristic and patriotic, full of bravado, and his poem “the martyr” seems to eerily foretell his own death in action: “I shall carry my soul on the palm of my hand, / tossing it into the cavern of death! / Either a life to gladden the hearts of friends / or a death to torture the hearts of foes! / [...] / Otherwise, what is life? I want no life / if we’re not respected in our land” (209).

Abu Salma, who continued to write after 1948 from his place of exile in Damascus, wrote similarly patriotic verses, as in his poem “My Country on Partition Day,” written in response to the 1947 U.N. Partition Resolution to award large swathes of historical Palestine to the Zionist movement:

<p>وطني! عش أبا العروبة واسلم          وتأبى العلى له أن يقسم</p>	<p>وطني! حلية الزمان تبتسم</p>
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<sup>77</sup> Ibrahim Tuqān also famously wrote Palestine’s national anthem, *Mawṭinī* (“My Homeland”), which employs the same “heroic” tone: “Will I see you [my homeland] / Will I see you / Safe and sound, blessed with prosperity, successful, revered? / [...] / The youth will not weaken in its will to gain independence, or to perish / We draw water from ruin, and we will not be to [our] enemies /As slaves...” (My translation).

قد نسجنا ثياب عرسك حمرا      إنها من قلوبنا ومن الدم  
ورفعنا الرايات في جبل النار،      وسرنا إلى القضاء المحتم  
(‘Abd al-Karīm al-Karmī)

My country! Live in safety, an Arab country,  
may the jewel of your tradition continue smiling  
Though they’ve partitioned your radiant heart  
our honor denies partition.  
We’ve woven your wedding clothes with red thread  
dyed from our own blood.  
We’ve raised banners on the Mountain of Fire [Nablus]  
marching toward our inevitable destiny!” (*Anthology* 95).

The familiar themes of self-sacrifice and heroism are here (e.g., “we’ve woven ... dyed from our own blood”), but we can also see in the allusion to “wedding clothes” a reference to Palestinian folk-culture and traditions, indicating that even before 1948, there was a conscious connection being made between anticolonial struggle and the preservation of Palestinian folk-culture, decades before Kanafani and Zayyād.

The Nakba of 1948 caused the issue of *iltizām* to become even more urgent than previously; ethnic cleansing, colonization, and oppressive military rule were no longer threats on the horizon; they had become lived, everyday reality. In Chapter One, we discussed how Arabic-language publications inside occupied Palestine, like Maki’s *al-Ittihād* and *al-Jadīd*, the short-lived Arab nationalist *al-Ard*, and even the collaborationist, middle-brow *al-Mujtama’*, offered a space for Palestinian writers and “resistance poets” of the 1950s and 60s to publish their early works. Within the world of these publications, the issue of *iltizām*, whether or not that word was used, was central. In 1955, Michel Haddad published in *al-Mujtama’* a conversation held at his house under the title “Whither Literature,” addressing the following questions: “Does the writer write for himself and for his own pleasure or does he write in order to improve [others] and enlighten? Must literature be committed [the Arabic word also means ‘obliged’ or ‘compelled’] or free?” (Hoffman 250). In the article, the Palestinian poet Taha Muhammad ‘Ali, who would begin publishing his poems later on in the 1970s and who generally took a more indirect tact than the ‘resistance’ poets of the 50s-60s, argued that while “all writers are influenced by the lives of the societies in which they live, [...] ‘the true writer is the writer who writes his own feelings and ideas. In other words, he writes for himself’” (252). ‘Ali was arguing that while one

must take the poet's historical context into consideration, there is some aesthetic value to poetry that makes it endure and which can exist with or without *iltizām*.

In the context of '48 Palestinian intellectuals in the 1950s, this attitude “put him squarely on the fringe. The year before, for instance, [...] Emile Habiby had held forth on the pages of *al-Jadīd*, saying, in essence, the opposite” (252). Habiby called for a “literature of the people” which “awakens consciousness of itself in the souls of the people and grants the people an understanding of its role and an understanding of the basic conflict that exists between those who seize hold of a morsel by the sweat of their brow and those who steal that morsel” (252). This was very much in keeping with Habiby's communist ideology and activism, and was also in keeping with the general attitude at the time, in which “the Palestinians in Israel in the first decade after the Nakba understood and fostered the power of poetry to galvanize their community” (Mattawa 25). This understanding of poetry is the logical extension of the pre-Nakba work of Ibrahīm Tuqān and his peers, as well as in the *sha'bi* poetry both before and after the Nakba; it also is in line with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of “minor literature” in which the danger of communal erasure prompts the creation of a political and communal poetry.

However, as discussed in Chapter One, the press was subject to censorship and easily coopted, meaning that the real home of the “resistance poetry” that developed in the decades after 1948 would be the “poetry festivals” held in Galilee villages, to partially illiterate audiences and in spite of government roadblocks and curfews:

Denied permission to organize to fight for their rights as citizens and residents of the state of Israel, and refusing to submit to government censorship for publication, Palestinian communities in the 1950s began to instead organize political rallies in which poetry featured prominently. During these rallies, the poets and political organizers involved were often harassed or arrested. [...] thousands attended these gatherings where the poets persistently focused on themes of the land and village life, elucidating the concerns of Palestinian agricultural workers and farmers who had been deprived of their land, their social support networks, and their right to work independently and be taxed fairly. (Mattawa 25)

These gatherings played a vital role for the community in establishing and strengthening a positive collective identity, not unlike the poetry and song used in Morisco sermons and celebrations like *Mawlid al-Nabi*.

And just as the Moriscos held both a local sense of community as well as a larger sense of themselves as part of the Islamic *umma* and early modern Mediterranean world<sup>78</sup>, Palestinian resistance poetry from this era forged a collective identity which both focused on local issues, and voiced solidarity with broader pan-Arab and global anti-colonial struggles (Hoffman 259, Kanafani 36-9). In the older generation of festival poets, for example, we can find Ḥabīb Qahwajī responding to the 1956 Egyptian victory against Israeli/U.K./U.S. aggression by reciting the following lines at a gathering in Haifa:

<p>تفجر من صميمي يا قصيدي / جريء اللحن تسخر بالقيود  وأرسلها مجلجلة تدوي / إلى أرض القتال وبور سعيد  إلى الأبطال قد طاروا خفافا / لصد الغزو كالقدر المبيد  (Qtd. <i>Adab al-Muqāwamah</i> 37)</p>	
<p>Burst forth from my silence, O my poem / brave of melody, mocking the chains  And send a reverberating cry / to the land of fighting in Port Said  To the heroes who flew nimbly / to block the invasion, like destructive fate  (My translation)</p>	

And we can likewise see Hanna Abu Hanna’s poem from the same period circulating, similarly drawing strength from Nasser’s ability to publicly humiliate Israel:

<p>Port Saeed the Steadfast, harbor of pride  In you our honeyed dreams have anchored  And on the rock of the Gulf on your two shores  All foreign armies perish  Glory called to the men, so they rose up  .... What free [man] could stand a servile life?!  (My translation)</p>	<p>بور سعيد الصمود ميناء عز  بك رست أحلامنا المعسولة  وعلى صخرة الخليج على شطيك  تفنى كل الجيوش الدخيلة  هتف المجد بالرجال فهبوا  ... أي حر يطبق الحياة الذليلة!  (Qtd. <i>Adab al-Muqāwamah</i> 38)</p>
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The younger generation of poets rising to prominence at these festivals embraced and called for solidarity with global anticolonial struggles in their poetry, and in doing so helped to frame and validate the Palestinian experience in Israel as comparable to that of colonized people worldwide; this in turn allowed these poets and their audiences to reclaim a *national* Palestinian identity. Examples include Darwish’s “Night in Gaza,” in which the poet’s empathy with an imagined girl in Gaza victimized during the Tripartite Aggression draw the national connection between Israel’s victims in the Galilee and those in southern Palestine, even though they were at

<sup>78</sup> See Mayte Green-Mercado’s *Visions of Deliverance*, specifically her introduction, and chapters 3 and 4, for an explanation of the larger Mediterranean framework around Moriscos, and how reading Morisco texts within this framework can help to illuminate Morisco attitudes and actions.

that time (and are still) under two separate regimes (*Adab al-Muqāwamah* 42). Samīḥ al-Qāsim, Darwish's classmate and another member of the rising generation of "resistance poets", shows a pan-Arab apprehension of events in his poem "My sister, Sanaa", in which he connects Yemen's anticolonial struggle with that of Nasser's Egypt against the Tripartite Aggression, and with the poet's speaker as a Palestinian in occupied Palestine:

لا يعبر بالشباك صباح  
 إلا وتطل من الأفق المعبود جراح:  
 جرح في صدر صعيدي أسمر  
 جرح في صدر حديدي أسمر  
 وجراح في صدر تعز السمراء  
 تسقي زنبقة الحرية  
 في سفح الجبل الأحمر  
 وتسيل ربيعاً في عطش الصحراء..  
 صحرائي العربية  
 [...]
 كهوف الشاي الأسود والقهوة والقات  
 صارت ثكنات  
 ورجالي من أسبوط وبور سعيد  
 كثر كثر  
 والنصر أكيد

(Qtd. *Adab al-Muqāwamah* 43)

There doesn't pass through the window a morning  
 without there extending from the worshipped horizon a wound:  
 a wound in a brown Ṣa'īdi<sup>79</sup> chest  
 a wound in a brown chest from Hudaydah<sup>80</sup>,  
 and wounds in the chest of brown Ta'izz<sup>81</sup>  
 they water the lily of freedom  
 at the foot of the red mountain  
 and flow as spring in the thirst of the desert  
 my Arab desert  
 [...]
 the caves of black tea and coffee and qat  
 have become barracks  
 and my men from Asyut and Port Saeed  
 have increased, increased  
 and victory is certain  
 (My translation)

<sup>79</sup> From the rural area of Egypt south of Cairo, Ṣa'īd

<sup>80</sup> Al-Hudaydah, a city in Yemen

<sup>81</sup> From Ta'izz, the city in Yemen



The poem ends on a high note: the revolutionaries rising up are increasing quickly (implied by the repetition of “*kuthr*”), and “victory is certain.” This poem is typical of resistance / festival poetry in acting as a cheerleader, both offering hope and urging a course of action.

Rashid Hussein (another member of the rising generation of poets, himself a few years older than Darwish and al-Qasim) assumes a similar tone in his poem “Min Asia Ana,” which he recited at a 1958 May Day rally at the Empire Cinema in Nazareth and “set all hearts afire” (Hoffman 267). The poem begins with a tone of defiance and bravado:

من آسيا أنا من بلاد الدم والحب والأمني بلد الرجال الثائرين على مفاظلة الزمان بلد اللظى ومناجم الثوار لا بلد الغواني بلد اللذين تمرّدوا في وجه رب الصولجان.. (Hussein, “Min Asia Ana”)
I am from Asia, from the countries of blood and love and wishes country of men revolting against procrastinating Time country of flames and mines of revolutionaries, not of beauties country of those who rebelled in the face of the Scepter-holder (My translation)

It ends with a similar tone, issuing a claim of solidarity and identification with Africa, Asia, and Algeria specifically, which amounts to a call to action for its Palestinian listeners:

يا آسيا يا مصنع الأبطال يا قبر الطغاة صبّي يواقيت الدماء سيوف موت للغزاة أفريقيا سمعتك فانطلقت تدوس على الجناة وإذا الجزائر شعلت حمراء تشعل أغنياتي يا آسيا لن يُشترى بالفلس أبناء الحياة (Hussein, “Min Asia Ana”)
O Asia, O creator of heroes O grave of tyrants Pour forth rubies of blood, swords of death to invaders Africa has heard you, and set out to trample on the criminals And now Algeria is a red flame that lights my songs O Asia, the sons of life will not be bought for a penny (My translation)

These last two lines in particular are a call to action: the Algerian Revolution “lights the flame” of the Palestinian poet’s songs, leading him to assert (and presumably the audience with him) that “the children of life will not be bought for a penny” - in other words, a broad call for struggle against colonial rule.

One clear collective function of this poetry, then, was to call for action in the broader context of global anticolonial struggle. While some poets like Tawfīq Zayyād hewed to the “communist” emphasis on global class struggle, rather than Palestinian nationalism specifically, others, like Mahmoud Darwish, used their poetry explicitly to argue that Palestinian nationalism, while being perhaps aligned with these other struggles worldwide, was its own distinct entity. In the following poem from this period, Darwish refutes his communist comrades’ emphasis on a global class reading of events, and instead works to validate a specific, local Palestinian nationalism:

<p>Do not tell me I wish I were a bread baker in Algeria to sing with a fellow revolutionary...</p> <p>Do not tell me I wish I were a waiter in a café in Havana to sing of the victories of the downtrodden...</p> <p>My friend, The Nile will never pour into the Volga or the Congo, or the Jordan into the Euphrates. Each river has a source, a stream, a life.</p> <p>My friend, our land is not barren. Each land will have its birth. Each dawn will have a rendezvous with a rebel.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Trans. Mattawa 50)</p>	<p>لا تقل لي: ليتني بائع خبز في الجزائر لأغني مع ثائر! لا تقل لي: ليتني راعي مواشي في اليمن لأغني لانتفاضات الزمن! لا تقل لي: ليتني عامل مقهى في هفانا لأغني لانتصارات الحزاني! لا تقل لي: ليتني أعمل في أسوان حملاً صغيراً لأغني للصخور يا صديقي! لن يصيب النيل في الفولغا ولا الكونغو، ولا الأردن، في الفرات! كل نهر، وله نبع ... ومجرى... وحياء! يا صديقي! .. أرضنا ليست بعاقرة كل أرض، ولها ميلادها كل فجر؛ وله موعد ثائر (Darwish “<i>An al-Umniyāt</i>”)</p>
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While more explicitly nationalistic than certain other examples of “festival” poetry, we can see that this poem falls into a broader spectrum of festival poetry, which ranged in focus from the very local (specific to certain Galilee villages), to the national or Palestinian, to the pan-Arab and indeed global anticolonial view of events.

The bravado and heroic tone of the above poems were part and parcel of that poetry’s social function; as Mattawa writes, “The fusion of poetry and political expression created in the minds of the Palestinians an association between the poetry they wrote and recited and the emergence of their political will to power” (25). This poetry encouraged young poets and young listeners to seek an empowering discourse which uplifted Palestinians, as opposed to the Zionist

discourse which attempted to degrade and make them subservient (25). This is what Hoffman calls instilling “communal pride” which had been lacking since 1948, or what Kanafani calls a tone of “defiance” (Hoffman 258, *Adab al-Muqāwamah* 60). It is a tone that is central to the poetry of this era and that is explicitly communal/collective in its function of restoring pride to a downtrodden and devalued community. One classic example is Tawfīq Zayyād’s “The Impossible”:

<p>Easier a thousand times...  for you to thread an elephant through the eye of a needle,  for you to catch grilled fish in the galaxy  for you to plough the sea  for you to make crocodiles speak  Easier a thousand times  than for you to kill with your oppression the spark of an idea  and to sway us from our path that we have chosen  even a hair’s breadth  As if we were twenty impossibilities  in al-Lidd, ar-Ramleh, and al-Jalīl<sup>82</sup>  Here, on your chests, we shall remain like a wall  in your throats  like a shard of glass... like the <i>ṣubbār</i>  and in your eyes  a whirlwind of fire  Here, on your chests, we shall remain like a wall  we clean the dishes in the bars,  fill glasses for the masters,  wipe the floors in the blackened kitchens  so that we may snatch a morsel for our children  from between your blue fangs...  Here, on your chests, we shall remain like a wall  we grow hungry, we go naked, we defy  we recite poems  we fill the angry streets with demonstrations,  we fill the jails with pride,  we create children, rebellious generation  after generation  As if we were a thousand impossibilities  in al-Lidd, ar-Ramla, and al-Jalīl</p>	<p>أهون ألف مرة...  أن تدخلوا الفيل بنقبة إبرة  وأن تصيدوا السمك المشوي في المجرة  أن تحرثوا البحر  أن تنطقوا التمساح  أهون ألف مرة  من أن تميتوا باضطهادكم وميض فكرة  وتحرفونا عن طريقنا الذي اخترناه  قيد شعرة  كأننا عشرون مستحيل  في اللد والرملة والجليل  هنا، على صدوركم باقون كالجدار  وفي حلوقكم  كقطعة الزجاج.. كالصبار  وفي عيونكم  زوبعة من نار  هنا، على صدوركم باقون كالجدار  ننظف الصحون في الحانات  ونملا الكؤوس للسادات  ونمسح البلاط في المطابخ السوداء  حتى نسلّ لقمة الصغار  من بين أنيابكم الزرقاء..  هنا على صدوركم باقون كالجدار  نجوع، نعري، نتحدى،  ننشد الأشعار  ونملا الشوارع الغضاب بالمظاهرات  ونملا السجون كبرياء  ونصنع الأطفال جيلا ثائراً  وراء جيل  كأننا عشرون مستحيل  في اللد والرملة والجليل...</p> <p>(Qtd. <i>Adab al-Muqāwamah</i> 119-121)</p>
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<sup>82</sup> The Arabic, Palestinian names for these cities and regions, taking a stand in the linguistic struggle between Arabic and Hebrew placenames. Al-Jalīl is Arabic for “the Galilee.”

Aside from the style, which lends itself to emotion through simple language, and to memorization through its use of repetition and refrain, we can see the central theme of defiance, a refusal to vanish or move or become a servant class, and a determination to raise a younger “avenging generation” that will not have to simply be “steadfast” but can seek its revenge outright. The poem’s speaker acknowledges the current degraded state of Palestinians in its description of the menial service jobs they are forced to work in the Israeli economy (which as we have seen, worked to prioritize “Hebrew labor” and marginalize Palestinian farmers). But it turns this humiliation on its head in the assertion that the money earned from these jobs is used to feed that “rebellious generation.” Direct reversal is also used to describe how Palestinians “fill the jails, proudly” (which calls to mind Emile Habiby’s later description in *Saeed the Pessoptimist* of a jail cell morphing, in the narrator’s eyes, into hanging gardens and a royal court, due to the honor it restores to that character; or Sahar Khalifeh’s description in *al-Ṣubbār* of jails as the schools of Palestinian revolutionaries).

Zayyād’s poem above also fills the function of “speaking truth to power” quite literally in being aimed at a Palestinian audience, but in framing itself as a defiant speech to an imagined Israeli listener (the “you” of “It is a thousand times easier for you to thread an elephant through the eye of a needle [...] than for you to kill the spark of an idea with your oppression”). In this, it is quite similar to Mahmoud Darwish’s “Identity Card,” which takes a personal experience of humiliation (a private discussion with a jailer while Darwish was under house arrest for a poem he had published in the mid-60s) and transforms it into a public and collective affirmation for both speaker and audience (Mattawa 10). Mattawa elaborates how the poem transformed private humiliation into communal pride, reclaiming what had been a derogatory term in the mouth of the jailer:

“‘Write it down: I am Arab!’ I said that to a government official,” Darwish explained. “I said it in Hebrew to provoke him, but when I said it in Arabic (in the poem) the Nazareth audience was electrified” [...] The audience was electrified because the poem succeeded in expressing in Arabic a private conversation that each humiliated Palestinian had

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<sup>83</sup> My translation is as literal / close to the source text as I could manage, for the purpose of this dissertation. However, other available translations include Naseer Aruri’s “We Shall Remain” (pub. 1970 in *Enemy of the Sun: Poetry of the Palestinian Resistance* by Drum and Spear Press); Alaa’ Abu Dheer’s “Here We Shall Stay” (published as epigraph to *Nakba Eyewitnesses* in 2007); Adib S. Kawar’s “Here We Shall Stay” (pub. 2010); and Sharif Elmusa and Charles Doria’s “Here We Will Stay” (pub. 2011). (Hussein pp.24-25, Annex).

experienced while facing Israeli officials and soldiers. Darwish turned private anguish into a public testament, evoking a collective feeling that broke down the barriers between I and We and between the poet and his audience. (10-11)

The poem begins with both the line “Write it down, I am Arab” from Darwish’s personal experience and with biographical details similar to those of Darwish’s father (who after the destruction of his village of al-Birweh went to work in a quarry, and had eight children) - starting from these testimonial details, the poem moves in tone to defiance with the lines “I do not beg for alms at your door / and I do not belittle myself / on the tiles of your threshold / so are you angry?” Much like Zayyād’s poem quoted above, “Write it down, I am Arab” sets out to turn the Palestinians’ existence on their land into resistance, and to glorify and honor that experience, as well as to issue a challenge to the occupiers and thus help set collective boundaries for what Palestinians will or will not accept with passive versus active resistance.

Both poems extol the virtues of *ṣumūd* (steadfastness), elevating a kind of passive resistance (via existence) in the lines describing the menial labor that Palestinians perform in the new Zionist nation state (washing dishes in bars, mining rocks in a quarry); yet they also carry a threat of violence, drawing a line in the sand beyond which active resistance begins. In Zayyād’s “The Impossible,” the threat lies in his “rebellious generation,” as well as in the imagery of sharp/heavy objects as stand-ins for Palestinian existence: “a wall on your chest,” “a shard of glass,” and the spikes of the *ṣubbār*. As discussed in Chapter Three, these images looked at one way evoke rootedness - but they also contain the threat of active, violent resistance in their sharpness – they can draw blood. Similarly, Darwish’s repetition in “Identity Card” of “So are you angry?” is issued as a challenge, and the poem ends with the clear delineation of boundaries beyond which mere passive endurance becomes active resistance: “So / write it down at the top of the first page / I do not hate people / and I do not steal / but if I grow hungry / I will eat my usurper’s flesh / So beware, beware of my hunger / and my anger.” In this way, these poems could truly serve a therapeutic function for Palestinian listeners in occupied Palestine, not only forging a positive sense of self and collective identity in which the listener could take pride, but also helping to model resistance by delineating the contours of passive resistance *and* the boundaries beyond which the Israeli regime *could not pass* without awakening active, necessary, and indeed honorable resistance from Palestinians.

In addition to modeling boundary-setting, pride, and anger, the poet’s role was also to model *grief* – to acknowledge it, and to suggest ways to transform it into positive, productive action. The following poem by Samīḥ al-Qāsim, for example, was recited in 1965, on the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kufr Qasim massacre, when a “delegation of youth” made its way to the village and found it surrounded, on military lockdown. Rather than being deterred, Kanafani says, “[...] the youth who had been prohibited from entering the village gathered behind the [barbed] wires: one after the other, and one car after the other, so that the [barbed] wire turned into a festival, and the poet Samīḥ al-Qāsim from al-Rāmah recited a poem that every Galilean now memorizes...”:

<p>رغم ليل الخنى و ليل المظالم  حل وفد الكفاح يا كفر قاسم  رغم عسف الطاغوت يزيد سما  رغم صد الأسلاك في الدرب جاثم  رغم حقد الرشاش يشهره الظلم  أتينا.. فليلعق الخزي حاكم  يا قبور الأحباب ألف سلام  [...]  نحن جننا نهيب أن تستقيقي  فلتلي النداء يا كفر قاسم!  (Qtd. Kanafani 59)</p>
<p>Despite the night of treachery, the night of injustices  the delegation of the struggle has alighted, O Kufr Qasim  despite the injustice of the false idol whose mouth froths with poison  despite the hindrance of barbed wire crouching on the path  despite the hateful bullets that oppression makes famous  we have come... let the governor lick disgrace  O graves of our loved ones, a thousand greetings  [...]  We have come to call upon you to awake  So answer the call, O Kufr Qasim!  (My translation)</p>

As is clear from phrases like “despite the hindrance of barbed wire crouching on the path / despite the hateful bullets that oppression makes famous / we have come...,” al-Qasim seizes the opportunity to respond directly and with defiance to Israeli attempts to shut the memorial procession down. The memorial tone is there as well, for example in the line, “O graves of our loved ones, a thousand greetings,” and al-Qasim quickly morphs his verses honoring the dead

into a call for action: “We have come to call upon you to awake / So answer the call, O Kufir Qasim!” Similarly, in Darwish’s poem “*Wa ‘Āda... fi kafan*” (about an imagined / symbolic martyrdom), it is the poet’s job to “choreograph grief,” and the poem ends in a call to action: “Do not ask what will happen to the victim [...], he orders; rather, ask yourselves when will the men among you wake up” (Mattawa 35).

Festival poetry, then, became a communal function, a way of forging a positive collective identity in the face of a Zionist narrative which attempted to do the opposite. And as the poems’ themes reflected this communal, nationalistic purpose, so did this poetry’s *form*. In general, the resistance poetry that developed in Palestine started with traditional meters and a more conservative idea of what counted as poetry, compared to the avant-garde experiments taking place among Palestinian poets in exile and other Arab poets during the 1950s (“Introduction” 17, *Adab al-Muqāwamah* 16). Hoffman describes how traditional meters filled the needs of the people and of this new poetry, as their familiarity made the verses easily accessible for peoples’ emotional response, and also easier to memorize and pass along orally:

... in the early years, most of the poets [...] preferred to retain the constraints of the classical, two-hemstitch ode or to employ standard strophic modes. Both of these forms pulsed in the “festival poetry” with what one observer called “oratory stress.” He also describes the way these familiar sound patterns brought the poetry “close to the feelings of the people,” who were, whether literate or not, steeped in the rhythms of the traditional Arabic meters almost from birth. Most of them had also absorbed a tremendous amount of oral folk poetry – *zajal* – to say nothing of whole lifetimes of Qur’anic recitation, and they knew that book’s rhymed prose cadences like their own heartbeats. The classical forms were obviously musical and easily committed to memory, both excellent qualifications for the soapbox poetry the situation demanded. (259)

Just as we have seen in Green-Mercado’s and Barletta’s focus on Morisco use and reception of the texts their community produced, Hoffman here points to the way that resistance poetry’s function in its community shaped its form. This is not to say that poets did not push back against the perceived collective need for traditional meter; Hoffman describes how Michel Ḥaddād was openly mocked when he came out with his first experiments in free verse (*shi’r al-nathr*) during this time period, by neighbors who “perceived [*shi’r manthūr*] as a plain *inability* to employ the standard meters” (229), and how later nationalist critics like Hanan Ashrawi wrote Ḥaddād off as one of a group of “individualistic, personal poets who are totally detached from their people and setting” (228).

Other poets were more cautious than Ḥaddād about the gradual process of experimenting with meter and structure. For example, as early as November of 1948, Hanna Abu Hanna recalls how he recited a poem in the traditional Arabic ‘heroic’ (*ḥamāsa*) style at a Maki gathering at the Empire Cinema in Nazareth - he explains that he felt at the time that such a traditional style was no longer enough for the changed circumstances, that he felt the poem “didn’t blaze like a live coal but rather looked at it through a windowpane” (Hoffman 257). This is when his thoughts started turning to the “committed” soviet poet Mayakovsky, and to “the idea of a new, ‘realistic’ verse, appropriate to the political and social context [...] that would be, in his words, ‘a platform,’ ‘transparent,’ and ‘easily grasped by the listeners’” (257). Meanwhile, in what we might call a case of parallel evolution, the Iraqi Jewish poet Sasson Somekh had brought some scraps of *shi’r ḥurr* clipped from Arabic newspapers with him to Israel, and was willing to lend them to his Palestinian communist friends at *al-Ittiḥād* and *al-Jadīd*; “He passed these clippings on, to be read, hand-copied, and circulated, and gradually the new forms began to seep into the local literary imagination, soon coming to dominate” (208). Hoffman adds that “Indeed, much of the most famous Palestinian ‘poetry of resistance’ that would be written in later years would take its cues from the so-called Iraqi style of free verse, though Mahmoud Darwish, Samīḥ al-Qasim, and the other poets [...] were, for the most part, still children when Somekh arrived with the word from Baghdad” (208-9).

In other words, though the exposure to these modern forms of verse may have been second-hand, through literal copies, or else merely in the zeitgeist of the time now that social fragmentation caused by the Nakba led people to slowly let go of traditional meters, Palestinian resistance poetry would over time “adopt some of the more recent elements in Arabic poetry as [these poets] understood them (shorter lines, opposition to classical diction, and the use of everyday images and common objects as symbols)” (Mattawa 25). And as Mattawa and Kanafani emphasize, whereas modernist style *alienated* many readers in the larger Arab world when it came to the works of poets on the *outside*, for the resistance poets *inside* occupied Palestine, “These modern approaches brought the Palestinian poets closer to their people [...] The largely semiliterate Palestinian population respected classical Arabic poetry”; “but their poetry, the one in which they saw themselves most closely represented, was the vernacular form” (Kanafani 1966, 109; Mattawa 26). So, for example the more “modern” poetic form visible in the work of Darwish, al-Qasim, Zayyād, and their peers, was able to speak directly to their audience



as its simplicity and straightforwardness “...exhibited a proximity to the vernacular poetry and evoked a sense of exuberance and youthfulness rather than the somber authoritativeness of classical Arabic poetry” (Mattawa 26). By drawing on traditional meters and rhythms, and then by using more modern forms to move closer to the “language of the people,” resistance poetry was able to fulfill its emotional role in nation-building, in coordinating grief, in transforming suffering into action, and in “speaking for” while also speaking *to* the collective.

At the same time, however, the stars of “resistance poetry” and of these festivals were aware of the tension between the collective duty they felt to their community and the individual freedom they often sacrificed to craft their festival poetry. Darwish later described these festivals as “true happiness” and “folk celebrations to which people would look forward,” but he also admitted to more ambivalent feelings about them:

On the one hand, they offered the people a terrific feeling of hope and provided them with a crucial means of expressing themselves politically; on the other, more sinister hand, they limited the poets drastically in terms of themes and tone. It would, he later said, have been impossible to have stood up at a festival and recited a love poem. (Hoffman 262-3)

They fulfilled their communal function, that is, but made it difficult for poets to move beyond that specific function. Salem Jubrān, another resistance poet of the same generation and high school classmate of Darwish’s, “also comments on the thematic limitations imposed by the festival setting,” while remembering with fondness “the thrill the poetry would bring to people like his mother, who had never gone to school and could not read, but when she sat in the main square, under the mulberry tree, and the poets were reciting [...] she’d get more excited than me!” (Hoffman 263). Similarly, Samīḥ al-Qāsim (a friend of Darwish and Jubrān, himself just a year older than them) remembered the festivals as a type of “popular passive resistance” (qtd. Hoffman 263); for him, they were important not just in building a sense of Palestinian nationalism but in giving him a sense of himself as “as a member of the wider Arab nation” (263). Personal inclination shaped poets’ feelings about this catch-22; while certain resistance poets like Tawfiq Zayyād proudly embraced a conception of poetry as a collective, “committed” endeavor done in service of the people, others like Darwish would struggle with the collective demands being made upon them as poets (“Introduction” 65, Mattawa 2-3). In the final section of this chapter, I will take a closer look at two very different resistance poets, Mahmoud Darwish and Rashid Hussein, and examine how this tension manifested for each of them.

## V. Mahmoud Darwish and Rashid Hussein: Seeking Balance in Commitment

Mahmoud Darwish was born in 1941 in al-Birweh<sup>84</sup>, and as we have seen, became involved in the “poetry festival” scene as a teenager, becoming one of a generation of rising stars highlighted by Kanafani as “resistance poets.” During this time period (1950s-60s), Darwish’s poetry like that of his peers focused on valorizing the concept of *ṣumūd* or steadfastness as a mode of passive resistance for Palestinians living under Israeli rule. The sense of pride and defiance in Darwish’s poetry from this period is extolled by Kanafani as being characteristic of resistance poetry emerging from “inside” occupied Palestine:

Shall I go hungry, O my country, while full is the usurper who made the remnants of my bones into tables? I am revolting for your sake, O earth of our country I am revolting for your sake, O my returning brother And so that the river may remain a roaring torrent I have called upon tributaries to flow toward the river’s mouth (My translation)	أجوع يا بلدي ويشبع غاصب جعل البقايا من عظامي موائد أنا ثائر لك يا تراب بلادنا أنا ثائر لك يا شقيقي العائدا ولكي يظل النهر ثراً صاحبا ناديت أدفع للمصب روافدا (Kanafani <i>Adab</i> 40)
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Darwish counters Zionist discourse of entitlement to Palestine by labeling Zionist settlers as “*ghāṣib*” (usurper) and reinforces the Palestinian discourses of *ṣumūd* and rootedness through his emphasis on “the soil” (*turāb*) of the Palestinian homeland (and again, he uses *bilādina*, “our” country, emphasizing the collective nature of Palestinian national identity).

In these passages, Darwish attempts to forge a unified national identity, calling out to his “returning compatriot” as well “the soil of our country,” creating the “we” that he is speaking both *to* and *for*: “Emerging in the early 1960s [...] he set about to speak for his community as well as to reach out to his community’s adversaries” (Mattawa 30). Mattawa adds that this understanding of poet-as-spokesperson fits well inside the framework of *iltizām*: “Darwish’s voice was emboldened by his adherence to the basic contours and duties of *adab al-iltizām* [...], whereby the larger cause of the community supersedes the individual’s suffering” (30). In *Adab al-Muqawāmah*, Kanafani emphasizes this tactic of “speaking back” to Zionist narratives as a

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<sup>84</sup> The Galilee village of al-Birweh was destroyed by Zionist forces in 1948, when Darwish was still a child.

central aspect of “resistance poetry,” and cites the following lines from Darwish’s 1964 *‘Ashiq min Falasṭīn* as an example:

<p>I know the Romans’ horses          Though the battlefield has changed          But I also know          That I am the jewel in the crown of youth and the knight of knights!          [...]                   The eggs of ants do not hatch eagles          And the shell of an adder’s egg          Conceals a snake.</p> <p>(Adapted from Bessissou and Bennani, verse-order modified to match Arabic)</p>	<p>خيول الروم أعرفها          وإن يتبدل الميدان          وأعرف قبلها أني:          أنا زين الشباب وفارس          الفرسان          [...]                   ..فبيض النمل لا يلد          النسور وبيضة الأفعى          يخبىء قشرها          ثعبان</p> <p>(Qtd. Kanafani 65)</p>
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Rome’s horses represent old conquerors, while “snakes” represent the new, more all-encompassing and insidious European / Zionist colonialism. Kanafani explains that in these lines, Darwish “responds to an Israeli claim that the new Jewish generations that will be born on the land of occupied Palestine will have deeper roots and more ties [to the land] [...] than the rootless generation that is passing/leaving” (64-5). The lines speak *to* and *for* Darwish’s community, countering colonial narratives and establishing an alternative “resistance” narrative that alludes to past colonizers who have come and gone (e.g., Rome) and implies that these ones, too, will be a temporary phenomenon. The poet-speaker above very much matches the model of poet-prophet-warrior that Elias Khoury alludes to in his analysis of the Romantic *mahjar* (diaspora) writers and the development of *iltizām* in Arabic literature (Khoury 79).

Darwish also exemplifies resistance poetry in the way his poems “coordinate” grief for the collective, honoring it and redirecting it into a call to action. His poem “*Wa ‘Āda... fi Kafan*” begins as a theatrical address to the audience, guiding them through the process of mourning an imagined, archetypal martyred friend:

<p>They say in our country,          they say with sadness          about my friend who passed          and returned in a shroud.</p> <p>His name was. . .          Don’t mention his name!          Let’s keep it in our hearts.          Let’s not let the word          get lost in the air like ash.</p>	<p>يحكون في بلادنا          يحكون في شجن          عن صاحبي الذي مضى          وعاد في كفن</p> <p>كان اسمه...          لا تذكروا اسمه!          خلوه في قلوبنا...          لا تدعو الكلمة          تضيع في الهواء كالرماد</p>
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(Trans. Mattawa 32)

(Darwish “Wa ‘Āda...”)

Later in the poem, the poet-speaker issues a call to action when speaking to his mother-figure (another stand-in figure with whom Palestinian listeners could identify):

O mother! Do not pull up your tears by the root Leave a few tears in the well! For tomorrow his father might die... or his brother or I, his friend (My translation)	يا أمه! لا تقلعي الدموع من جذورها خلى بئير دمعتي! فقد يموت في غد أبوه... أو أخوه أو صديقه أنا (Darwish “Wa ‘Āda...”)
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Essentially, Darwish calls on listeners (identifying with the speaker’s mother) to feel their grief and not hide it; he reassures them that fear and grief are proper emotions given the circumstances. And then in the final stanza, he issues a call to action which demonstrates how these very justifiable emotions can be transformed into positive action:

Friends of the departed, don’t ask, “When will he return?” Don’t ask too much, but ask: when will our men wake up! (trans. Mattawa 33-4)	يا أصدقاء الراحل البعيد لا تسألوا: متى يعود [...] بل اسألوا: متى يستيقظ الرجال! (Darwish “Wa ‘Āda...”)
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Mattawa comments, “That the poet turns his private grief into a call for collective action is to be expected in resistance literature” (35).

The literal call to “wake up” is one that can be seen across the range of “resistance poetry,” for example in Samīḥ al-Qāsim’s “*Misk al-Khitām*,” with forms the epigraph to Emile Habiby’s 1974 *The Pessoptimist*. This poem ends much like “*Wa ‘Āda*,” calling out to the poetic audience to awaken:

And you, men! And you, women! Don’t wait still more, don’t wait! Now, off with your sleep-clothes And to yourselves compose Those letters you so anticipate! (Qtd. Jayyusi and LeGassick)	أنتم، أيها الرجال! وأننن، أيتها النساء! لا تنتظروا، بعد، لا تنتظروا! اخلعوا ثياب نومكم واكتبوا إلى أنفسكم رسائلكم التي تشتهون... (Qtd. Habiby)
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Such calls to action are characteristic of “resistance literature” and of *al-adab al-multazim*; their bravado also brings us to a “gap” that Mattawa points out in Palestinian “resistance” literature in general and in Darwish’s poetry from this period in particular:

Darwish’s affirmative approach to literature falls into what advocates of *iltizām* literature have considered a necessity, mainly instilling heroism among the common people and inspiring optimism and faith in the oppressed people’s just causes. The difference, however, between the hope raised by revolutionary precepts and rhetoric and the reality of the situation at hand naturally points to the gap that literature has to bridge. (38)

Mattawa sees “this split between the need to depict a harsh reality and the equally important need to create literature that helps people imagine a way out of that reality” as having been resolved in Palestinian literature of this period largely by designating the *testimonial* task of portraying reality to realist prose like that of Ghassan Kanafani, and the inspirational and imaginative task to poetry, particularly resistance poetry like that written by Darwish, al-Qasim, and their peers (38). This poetry had its function within the shattered and demoralized society that produced it: a communal, collective, therapeutic function of channeling traumatizing experiences into positive calls for action.

Nonetheless, as we have seen in his comments on the restrictive nature of the Galilee poetry “festivals,” Darwish from a very early date showed ambivalence about the communal role his poetry was playing - or rather, about the perceived obligation to perform such a role. He comments on this tension in his poetry from the time, for example in the poem “Ila al-Qāri” (To the Reader), part of his 1964 collection *Awrāq al-Zaytūn*:

<p>Black irises in my heart and on my lips . . . flame. From what forest did you come to me O crosses of anger?</p> <p>I have allied myself to sorrows, I have shaken hands with banishment and hunger. My hands are anger, my mouth is anger the blood of my arteries a juice of anger. <i>O my reader</i> <i>do not ask me to whisper,</i> <i>do not expect musical delight.</i></p> <p>This is my suffering, a wild shot in the sand</p>	<p>الزنبقات السود في قلبي وفي شفتي ... اللهب من أي غاب جئتني يا كل صلبان الغضب؟ بايعت أحزاني .. وصافحت التشرود والسغب غضب يدي .. غضب فمي .. ودماء أوردتي عصير من غضب! يا قارئ! لا ترج مني الهمس! لا ترج الطرب هذا عذابي .. ضربة في الرمل طائشة وأخرى في السحب! حسبي بأني غاضب</p>
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and another to the clouds. My fate is my anger and all fire starts out in anger. (Qtd. Mattawa 3-4)	والنار أولها غضب!  (Darwish “‘Ila al- Qāri’ ”)
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As Mattawa points out, Darwish’s apparent need to “excuse himself” for writing angry (committed) poetry is on its face quite odd; “Readers are aware that the poet is a Palestinian who has begun to write after being exposed to decades of angry Palestinian poetry preoccupied with the travails of the homeland under British colonial rule and Zionist neocolonialism. Why would we not expect the poet to be angry?” (4). Mattawa uses this poem as an example of Darwish’s early awareness of a tension between his own personal artistic desire to write a more private, lyrical sort of love poetry, and his perceived duty to speak for and to his community, to help forge a Palestinian subjectivity, to guide people in their mourning, to restore a collective sense of pride, and to create heroic models of behavior for a devastated community. This is not to say that Darwish shied away from commitment in his early poetry, quite the reverse. It is just to show that this sense of *division* of purpose as a poet was always there for him. Mattawa in fact frames his study of Darwish around this binary:

To understand Darwish’s career as a major search for poetic agency, this study outlines the evolution of Darwish’s poetry, keeping in mind these two contending forces, or rather these two definitions of the role of poetry [private/contemplative versus collective/committed] as a means toward agency, while operating within it. (Mattawa 12)

In Mattawa’s analysis, Darwish is able (and seeking throughout his career) to *balance* the private and collective aspects of poetry for himself as a Palestinian poet, committed by his very identity as an occupied and marginalized person within the Israeli state.

A similar longing for balance can be seen in Darwish’s reaction to the rise of “resistance poets” to fame following the publication of Kanafani’s *Adab al-Muqāwamah* in 1966 and the perverse *reconnection* experienced after the “six-day” war of 1967, when Palestinians living “inside” historical Palestine were able to suddenly communicate with their countrymen in the West Bank and Gaza, from whom they had been cut off for nearly two decades. As Hoffman explains, “[...] the celebrity of Darwish and Samīḥ al-Qāsim in particular would grow exponentially after the war, turning them into the poetic equivalent of rock stars” (315). Kanafani initially condemns the *ghazal* poetry that emerged in the immediate aftermath of the Nakba as being silly and superficial; totally disconnected from the reality Palestinians were living. Yet

upon reflection, he explains that “Arabs in the conquered territory, following the ripping apart that came with the disaster, faced an immediate division in their everyday relationships,” which “struck them in the organization of their daily relationships, much more than what had happened to the refugees” (30-31, my translation). With this in mind, Kanafani considers love poetry published after the Nakba to be a response to loneliness and the feeling of *ghurbah* (estrangement), a way to try to (re)establish new relationships in this newly-fractured society (31). Kanafani then lauds Darwish’s mixture of land/beloved in ‘*Āshiq min Falasṭīn*, saying:

In ‘*Āshiq min Falasṭīn*, Darwish brings back the explanation of the first stage of poetry by the youth of the occupied territories, who poured their efforts into love poetry directly after the Nakba. It was impossible for [this poetry] to yield results [as it did] with Darwish at this level of artistic maturity, until after experience had taken its course and the tragedy had deepened down to the core, and it became more pervasive, bigger in size, with deeper roots. (57-8, my translation)

In this vein, Mattawa points out that by mixing the traditionally private, individual *ghazal* style of poetry with the collective, nationalist voice of *shi’r al-muqāwamah*, ‘*Āshiq min Falasṭīn* in particular blends and balances the public and private roles of poetry. Kanafani’s praise of the “resistance poets” and particularly Darwish in *Adab al-Muqāwamah*, combined with the “opening up” of occupied Palestine to the rest of the Arab world after the losses of ‘67, led to waves of praise for Darwish and his peers.

Darwish’s response to this overbearing praise shows the distinction he made between “the cause” on the one hand, and artistic achievement on the other. Two years after the war of 1967, and as the editor of *al-Jadīd*, Darwish published an editorial titled “Save Us From This Cruel Love,” in which he argued that the praise being showered on Palestinian “resistance” poets was exaggerated given their modest artistic achievement, and that “[it] is no excuse that this stance stems from good will and genuine excitement, and deep feelings for the circumstances of the poetic movement in our country” (qtd. Hoffman 317). Essentially what Darwish argues here is that *iltizām* alone is not enough to make praiseworthy art; artistry must be present as well. This is not an argument against *iltizām* but rather against the artless use of *iltizām* - a balance between artistic freedom and the poet’s duty to their community. Hoffman explains:

Although [Darwish’s] words may sound sharp, they seem fairly prophetic in retrospect. While the period of hero-worship passed after a few years, to this day it seems that Darwish was right and that the usual critical standards tend to evaporate where Palestinian writers are concerned. At least in popular or journalistic contexts, they are most often judged not as artists but as individual spokesmen for a cause. (318)

In the 60s, then, Darwish was already concerned with finding a balance between *iltizām* and artistry, searching for ways to combine the two and thereby fulfil both individual poetic creativity *and* obligation to the Palestinian community. In later years too, Darwish would “cautio[n] against a kind of ‘state of exception’ that worships everything that comes out of the occupied land” and against “artistic merit being only a virtue of ‘geography as a non-negotiable gift’” (Abu Remaileh 179).

However, by the late sixties, after a series of arrests by Israeli police for his poetry, Darwish was struggling to maintain this balance inside occupied Palestine. Having been shuffled back and forth continuously to and from prison by Israeli police and Shin Bet (Israeli Security Services), he left Palestine on a communist party-funded trip to study in Moscow, from which he made his way to Cairo and then Beirut; “When asked about how he viewed, in hindsight, his decision to leave, he said it wasn’t easy but that he didn’t feel he had a real choice. He had realized he could either spend the rest of his life writing poems about jail and jailers or he could leave” (Hoffman 319). As Mattawa points out, Darwish’s fifth imprisonment by the Israeli government “took place after militants blew up several houses in Haifa” and therefore could potentially have been used to deem him a “terrorist” and charge him under a different set of laws (non-civil) that would have kept him in a contrast cycle of imprisonment (66). Reflecting on this a year after leaving Palestine, Darwish wrote that “I had become filled with a feeling that I was no longer able to fill my obligations as a citizen first and as a poet second. I had become paralyzed in terms of mobility and the freedom of expression, and I had become an easy morsel in the jaws of Israeli racism...” (qtd. 66). Visible in this quote is Darwish’s own sense of the connection between his roles as “citizen” (part of the collective) and poet, and the dangers of losing balance between the two. When he felt this collective/individual balance had been pushed out of whack by the pressures of Israeli occupation, Darwish left Palestine altogether to attempt to write about and for his Palestinian community from the relative freedom of exile.

After Moscow and Cairo, Darwish traveled to Beirut in 1971 to join the Palestinian resistance. In Beirut, “Darwish quickly joined the PLO structure, directing one of its cultural research centers and editing *Shu’ūn Falasṭīniyyah* [...]. There he came into close contact with Yasser Arafat, becoming one of his leading speechwriters” (Mattawa 76). During this period, Darwish and Palestinian poet Mu’in Bsiso vied (at Arafat’s prodding) for the position of



“unofficial poet laureate of the Palestinian resistance,”; Darwish’s poetry saw a shift in focus to the figure of the *fidā’īy* (freedom fighter), who had not appeared in his poetry written inside Israeli during the 1960s, and he “became a producer of what Barbara Harlow defined as resistance poetry in its strictest sense” (77). In Beirut, with his official PLO roles and his closeness to Arafat, Darwish became more “compelled” towards *iltizām* in the sense used by its critics; “Darwish’s poetry during the Beirut period makes it seem that he felt his poetry should be obliged to the arena of struggle. [...] later, he would say that he felt a strong tension between the poet and the politician in him, a split that did not seem to exist when he lived in Israel” (78). So for example in response to the Tel al-Zaatar massacre, Darwish wrote “*Aḥmad al-Za’tar*,” a poem which lays out a heroic prototype for the Palestinian refugee/*fidā’ī*:

<p>I am Ahmad the Arab—let the siege come. My body is the walls—let the siege come. I am the edge of fire—let the siege come. And I now besiege you with my besiegement, I now besiege you (Qtd. Mattawa 84)</p>	<p>أنا أحمدُ العربيُّ فليأتِ الحصارُ جسدي هو الأسوار فليأتِ الحصار وأنا حدود النار فليأتِ الحصار وأنا أحاصركم أحاصركم (Darwish “Aḥmad al-Za’tar”)</p>
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Ahmad is the poem’s speaker and also a fighter/martyr/refugee prototype, a larger-than-life Palestinian hero following the mold of *iltizām*, and fulfilling the inspirational function that Mattawa gestures to when he describes a divide in function between Palestinian poetry and prose during this period.

Harlow points to another poem written by Darwish in 1972, “Blessed be that which has not come,” to illustrate how during his Beirut period and prior to the Israeli invasion in 1982, Darwish stuck very much to the “resistance poetry” and “committed” models, in his by then official role as national poet:

<p>This is the wedding without an end In a boundless courtyard, On an endless night. This is the Palestinian wedding: Never will lover reach lover Except as martyr or fugitive.  Their blood is always before me,</p>	<p>هذا هو العرس الذي لا ينتهي في ساحة لا ينتهي في ليلة لا ينتهي هذا هو العرس الفلسطيني لا يصل الحبيب إلى الحبيب إلا شهيدا أو شريدا!  دمهم أمامي..</p>
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It always inhabits the following day.  
 Through their death... my body has turned into a rose;  
 I withered on the day before the bullet came,  
 And I blossomed at dawn when the bullet completed my  
 corpse.  
 I contained my voice, for I must be calmer than the blood  
 That covers my own blood.  
 (Trans. Harlow 36)

يسكن اليوم المجاور  
 صار جسمي وردة في موتهم...  
 وذبلت في اليوم الذي سبق الرصاصة  
 وازدهرت غداة أكملت الرصاصة جثتي  
 وجمعت صوتي كله لأكون أهدأ من دم  
 غطى دمي...  
 (Darwish "Tūbā li-Shay' in lam  
 Yaşil")

Though written four years earlier, this poem has similar themes of heroism and self-sacrifice to "Ahmad al-Zaatar." However, as Harlow examines in her article "Palestine or Andalusia," the horrors of the Lebanese Civil War and particularly the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, its occupation of Beirut and the Sabra and Shatila massacres conducted by the Lebanese Forces under Israeli watch - all of these things made the old forms of "resistance poetry" and *iltizām* obsolete to Palestinian and Lebanese poets. These forms would simply no longer ring true after the atrocities visited on Palestinians in Lebanon and the ruin of the Palestinian armed resistance. Harlow begins her article by describing Lebanese poet Khalil Hawi's suicide the day of the Israeli invasion; and indeed, how could anyone write a poem like "Ahmad al-Zaatar" after such a crushing and prolonged defeat?

While pushing Darwish away from the classically *multazim* poetic forms he had been using, this overwhelming catastrophe also pushed him to openly admit to the political nature of poetry - its inherent *iltizām*:

[After 1982,] I preferred to remain in Beirut because the agreement concerning the departure from Beirut required the departure of the fighters and the leaders. As you know, I am neither a fighter nor a leader; I am only a poet. But then, when the Jewish army reached West Beirut, occupying its streets and laying siege to its houses and when with my own eyes I saw them in the roads, in front of my home, in the same way they had driven me from Haifa to Beirut, then I had to leave. I knew that to stay in Beirut was a mistake and that I was not a poet only. (Qtd. 35)

In *Memory for Forgetfulness*, Darwish would resort to prose to "tell it like it is" and testify to his experiences of Beirut - this brings us back again to Mattawa's dichotomy of the inspirational function of poetry versus the testimonial function of prose in Palestinian literature (Mattawa 90).

By the late 80s and early 90s, Darwish had acted upon his "rising misgivings" with the *iltizām* framework and found a new poetic mode exemplified in *Lesser Roses* and in *Eleven Planets*, which would draw upon myth and history from a variety of locations and time periods

to create a more “universal” image of the Palestinian experience, one hopefully more capable of combatting biblical Zionist myths of ownership (Mattawa 94-9). For example, *Eleven Planets* (1992) draws on the stories of the Nasrid exile from Granada in 1492, to the defeat of the Seattle chief Duwamish, to the discovery by a Palestinian shepherd starting in 1946 of the Dead Sea Scrolls, to the Bible itself and the story of Joshua’s aggression upon Jericho. In mixing myth and history to provide universal metaphors for the Palestinian experience, Darwish was appealing to a much broader audience than just the Palestinian community, though still in his 1992 “Canaanite Stone on the Dead Sea” we can see him drawing that same line in the sand that he drew decades earlier in “Identity Card”:

<p>Stranger, hang your weapon in our palm tree and let me plant my Wheat in Canaan’s sacred soil. [...] Stranger, take the stars of our alphabet and together we’ll write heaven’s message to man’s fear of nature and man’s fear of himself. Leave Jericho under her palm tree but don’t steal my dream, don’t steal my woman’s breast milk or the ant’s food stored in the cracks in the marble. Did you come to kill then inherit so that you add salt to the sea? (Trans. Mattawa 121)</p>	<p>... يا غريب عَلَّقْ سلاحك فوق نخلتنا، لأزرع حنطتي في حقل كنعان المقدّس.. {...} وخذ منا نجوم الأبدية، يا غريب واكتب رسالات السماء معي إلى خوف الشعوب من الطبيعة ومن الشعوب، وأترك أريحا تحت نخلتها، ولا تسرق منامي وحليب امرأتي، وقوت النمل في جرح الرخام! أأتيت... ثم قتلت... ثم ورثت، كي يزداد هذا البحر ملحا؟  (Darwish “Ḥajr Kan’ānī fī-l-Baḥr al-Mayyit”)</p>
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In this use of history and myth to create a more “universally” comprehensible poetry Darwish found a way to retrieve his balance between personal artistic liberty and obligation to the community. After having been an “official” poet of the PLO in the 1970s and suffering a trauma in 1982 that both individually and communally made art impossible for a time, he was able to reclaim this balance in *Fewer Roses* and *Eleven Planets*, through the use of myth and history to create a “universal” poetry that spoke to a broader (global, Western) audience, while maintaining the (by necessity) “committed” Palestinian message and experience at its core.

While Darwish’s poetic career represents a successful and evolving balancing act between individual artistic freedom and a feeling of obligation to the community, other “resistance” poets of his generation struggled to achieve this balance. Rashid Hussein was a few

years older than Darwish and al-Qasim; Hoffman calls him “the first celebrity poet to emerge on the Arab-Israeli stage,” and Jayyusi concurs that he “was one of the first post-1948 Palestinian poets writing in Israel to gain recognition in his own country” (Hoffman 267, Jayyusi “A Personal Holocaust” 138). As Hoffman describes it,

...Mahmoud Darwish would, decades later, call him “the star” [...] his poems themselves marked a watershed in the development of local Arabic poetry, and when other poets speak of him now, they do so in almost unanimously elegiac terms. Samih al-Qasim describes “the new atmosphere” Rashid created by lacing nationalism into his verse, and he has written of being dazzled by Rashid’s recitations. Rashid was, as Samih puts it, the oldest brother in his “family of many poet-brothers” that was then taking place. (267)

Rashid Hussein was, in other words, perhaps the first of his generation of Palestinian resistance poets to grow up under military rule and to develop a poetic style and voice that strove to combine the personal and communal aspects of this situation. He put the personal to the service of the communal: Darwish described, for example, how “Rashid showed them that it was possible to write about ‘human things’ – refugee camp tents, bread, and hunger” (Hoffman 267). At the same time, as a “festival poet,” Hussein wrote his verses to be recited out loud to an audience; “Salem Jubran recalls in particular the way that Rashid declaimed his poems: ‘It was more beautiful than singing,’ he says, and people would come to festivals specially to hear him reciting his work.” (Hoffman 267-8). In other words, Hussein was one of the first to try to strike this delicate balance between the collective need for “committed” verse and the poet’s own need to speak to individual personal experience. This contradiction between personal and collective was accompanied by other contradictions felt by Hussein’s generation between their identity as Palestinian and their familiarity with the Hebrew language (they were the first generation to study in Israeli schools) and with individual Israeli people and culture (Hoffman 266). Accounts of Rashid Hussein’s life and work vary greatly depending on who is writing them and which aspects of his history they chose to highlight.

Rashid Hussein was born in the village of Muşmuş in the “little triangle” in 1936 and went to school in the post-Nakba environment of land confiscation and military rule; he was able to attend high school in Nazareth through the wealth and connections of his uncle, the *mukhtar*, and this is where his political consciousness and his interest in poetry really developed (Boullata and Ghossein 28-29). He wrote his first poems while in school, and some were published by Michel Haddād in small book, ألوان من الشعر العربي في إسرائيل, *A Variety of Arabic Poetry in Israel*

(Somekh and Tlamim 2). As a student, Rashid was influenced in several directions at once. On the one hand, his early poems include certain examples that fit squarely into the “resistance poetry” genre, such as “*Min Āsia Ana*,” (“I am from Asia”), discussed above, which shows the same sentiments of international anti-colonial solidarity that we have seen in Samīḥ al-Qāsim’s poetry from that time. Yemen, Syria, Algeria, and Iraq all went through anti-colonial struggles in the 1950s, and *Min Āsia Ana* celebrates global anticolonial struggles as related to that of the Palestinian poet-speaker. Another of Rashid Hussein’s early poems, written in response to an Israeli law aimed at confiscating land from all “absent” (refugee) Palestinians, takes a more localized approach to resistance poetry (“A Personal Holocaust” 139):

<p>God has become an “absentee,” Sir, so seize even the carpet from the mosque and sell the church – it’s one of His properties and sell the <i>muezzin</i> at public auction even the father of our orphans is an “absentee” seize our orphans, then, Sir if I squeezed your loaf of bread with my hands, I would see from it only my blood... flowing over my hands (My translation)</p>	<p>الله أصبح غائبا يا سيدي صادر إذن حتى بساط المسجد وبع الكنيسة فهي من أملاكه وبع المؤذن في المزاد الأسود حتى يتامانا أبوهم "غائب" صادر يتامانا إذن يا سيدي أنا لو عصرت رغيف خبزك في يدي لرأيت منه دمي .. يسيل على يدي (Qtd. al-Manāšra 9)<sup>85</sup></p>
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This defiant response to Israeli “present-absentee” laws exemplifies a common strategy in resistance literature and indeed in Rashid Hussein’s poetry: to take the ideology of his occupiers to its logical extremes and thereby show its ridiculousness and its cruelty (this would be Emile Habiby’s tactic in *The Pessoptimist*).

However, despite early poems like “*Min Āsia Ana*” and “*Allahu Aṣbaḥa Ghā’iban*” that fit squarely into the “resistance poetry” camp, Jayyusi argues that “the bulk of Rashid’s poetry up to the mid-sixties was less militant than the poetry of the major poets writing there at the time,” such as Darwish, al-Qasim, Zayyād, and Jubrān (140). She argues that Rashid Hussein’s early poetry focused on “other aspects of the human condition” and “had weaker links with the traditions of the Palestinian poetry connected with the political and national life in Palestine prior to 1948” than did the other poets of his generation (140). For example, Jayyusi describes Hussein’s first published collection of poetry, *Ma’ al-Fajr* (published in Nazareth in 1957) as

<sup>85</sup> True to this poem’s oral roots in the genres of “festival poetry” and “resistance poetry,” Palestinian singer Rim Banna put the poem to music in the 2010s, though she changed the 50s/60s-specific term “*ghā’ib*” (a reference to Israel’s “present-absentee” law) to “*lāji*” (refugee), to more universally reflect the Palestinian experience both “inside” and “outside” ’48 borders.

“an indictment of bloodshed and wars, an indictment approaching satire where peace is celebrated as an ideal to strive for, albeit an ideal slippery and difficult to hold on to” (141). This volume begins with the poem “A Message from an Arab to a Jewish Poet,” which Ghossein and Boullata describe as “dedicated to brotherhood between Jew and Arab,” and which Jayyusi similarly characterizes as “speak[ing] of brotherhood and unity, of friendship and love. It is not the bloodied and terrible past that is now important, the poem pleads, but the future” (141). It had been first published, unsurprisingly, in Michel Haddad’s *al-Mujtama’*, the paper Hoffman describes as both a platform to young “resistance poets” and to Zionist panegyrists and “Arabists,” a price of publishing under occupation that Haddad had accepted.

Around the same time and in a similar vein, Hussein wrote his poem “*Sinya*,” based on a contemporary news story about Israeli soldier retreating from Sinai who “found” a little girl and brought her to “Israel” to be raised, where she “bec[ame] a symbol for Arab and Jewish reconciliation” (Boullata and Ghossein 32). This was during the same time period that Rashid was writing nationalistic verse like “*Min Āsia Ana*,” and also the same year when Israeli authorities began planting bombs around public spaces in Arab urban areas and villages, including Um al-Faḥem where Hussein had gone to school, and the village of Sandalah, where a bomb planted in a school courtyard killed 14 Palestinian children (32). Yet, as is visible in *Ma’ al-Fajr* and in his 1958 *dīwān*, *Ṣawarīkh*, Rashid Hussein at this time still held a “firm belief in the essential brotherhood of man”; as Jayyusi writes, “his basic disposition was gentle, and his inborn reverence for life confirmed his belief in the evil of the all-mutilating [...], all-devastating machinery of war” (141). His private disposition towards collaboration and cooperation, and his respect for life, led him in a direction opposite to that of the communal lived experience of ethnic cleansing and military rule, and Rashid’s work from the 50s and 60s, as well as his personal life, reflected this struggle. “Later,” Jayyusi adds, “his personal crisis would appear in the inner conflict he would experience between his original, non-belligerent stance, and his final realization [in the 1970s] that the world had indeed lost its meekness and was, in fact, a world of sheep and wolf” (141-2). Hoffman concurs, writing that “[...] of all the poets who emerged during this period, he was the one who appears to have suffered most for the contradictions he struggled to embrace” and that “[a]s he grew older, he was also fascinated – and almost desperate to be accepted – by Israeli Jewish society” (269).

Rashid's desire for and belief in "brotherhood" with Hebrew-speaking Jewish Israelis led him to the field of translation, where he took part in some intriguing collaborations. Just after the 1967 war, he and the Hebrew poet Natan Zach published their jointly-translated and edited anthology of Arabic folksongs in Hebrew, *Palms and Dates* (Amit-Kochavi 163). In the book's Forward, Hussein and Zach nostalgically evoked past "days of greater liberalism and empathy, a time of calm and peace," in contrast with present (1967) "days of hatred and violence," and wished, "May these collected translations, produced by an Arab poet and a Hebrew one, attest to the possibility of cooperation, dialogue and respect for the Other's literary work that we expect all civilized human beings to adopt" (qtd. 163). Hussein viewed the act of joint-translation as proof that his longed-for understanding between colonizer and colonized was possible (qtd. 163).

Similarly, and around the same time period, he published his translations of the "Jewish national poet," Haim Nahman Bialik. Bialik is one of the most-translated Hebrew poets into Arabic, and a collection of his poetry in Arabic (translated by Zaki Benyamin) had already been published and even incorporated into textbooks for Palestinian schoolchildren in Israel<sup>86</sup> (Somekh 72, 73). Hussein's translation of Bialik was part of an initiative from the Translation Office of the Institute for Asian and African Studies at the Hebrew University<sup>87</sup>, and several Jewish Israeli professors assisted Hussein, for example composing the collection's introduction (73). However, in these translations, Hussein experiments with using avant-garde *shi'r hurr*, which had become popular in the larger Arab world in the 1950s and spread during the 60s and 70s, in order to deal with the challenges of translating rhyme and meter. Somekh argues that by "resorting to *shi'r hurr*" in his translations, Rashid Hussein had issued the "opening invitation" to this [literary] revival in the country [Israel/ Palestine], and in Rashid's own poetry, since he had not used this style in either of his two poetry collections *Ma'a al-Fajr* (1957) and *Ṣawārīkh* (1958)" (74, my translation). Somekh calls it "interesting" that "one of the most talented poets to write Arabic Palestinian nationalist poetry in the mid-sixties became the most important translator of the poet of the nationalist Jewish-Hebrew renaissance" (74, my translation) and in doing so, showcased *shi'r hurr* to his fellow-Palestinian poets. Rashid Hussein's nationalist

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<sup>86</sup> Recall Esmail Nashif's remarks on Israeli government's control of the "means of production" of Arabic literature in Israel; also Mar'i's assessment cited above that "Arab literature [was] valueless, at least according to the [educational] planner's intentions. Jewish literature, on the other hand, appear[ed] quite valuable" (qtd. Mattawa 20).

<sup>87</sup> The Hebrew University, as mentioned above by Kanafani, was notoriously difficult for Palestinian students in Israel to access.

sentiments, which concurred with the collective Palestinian poetic needs discussed throughout this chapter, were strange bedfellows with his personal desire for acceptance by Hebrew-speaking Jewish Israeli writers and poets who also made up his milieu.

Jayyusi points to another tension or internal contradiction in Hussein's early poetry, namely his attitudes toward women, which could be alternately feminist and chauvinistic, "reflecting the unsure attitudes of the period" (144-145). Class played an important role in this duality. Hussein was "a peasant who loved the city" (Hoffman 266), and since the 1936-39 Revolt, while wealthy urban Palestinian families honored certain *fellāhīn* who had gained fame and respect as freedom fighters, class stratification remained firmly in place, especially for those Palestinians who remained after 1948; "Rashid had, therefore, to suffer, as is apparent in his work, the harsh experience of class distinctions" (Jayyusi 146). This clearly was connected to his perceptions and treatment of gender, as in his early poems "*al-Ḥasnā' wal-Qaryah*," and "*Risālah min al-Madīnah*," which idealize the village and blame urban women characters for looking down at it (147).

Rashid Hussein was, then, struggling as an emerging poet in his 20s to find balance between the pressure to speak for his community and his own personal tendency to seek peace at all costs, as well as the societal tensions and changes taking place around gender and class. And of course, as Hoffman emphasizes, he was from the first Palestinian generation to study at Israeli schools, speak Hebrew, and therefore have access to and identify somewhat with Israeli literature. Although he contributed to *al-Ittiḥād* under the penname of Abu Iyyas, he was most closely associated with Mapam, a "socialist" Zionist party which during the 50s and 60s began a push to draw away Arab voters from Maki (Hoffman 266). His recital of his poems at the May Day rally at the Empire Cinema in 1958 led to his arrest along with that of roughly 500 others, and ultimately to the loss of his teaching job<sup>88</sup> (which was, of course, dependent on the approval of the Israeli state; Ghossein and Boullata 33). And so, the patently nationalist act of reading "resistance poetry" led to Hussein moving to Tel Aviv to head the Zionist socialist Mapam's Arabic literary magazine *al-Fajr* (named after Rashid's 1957 *diwān*). The 1958 Qasim Revolt in Iraq had widened the gap between communist Maki supporters and younger Palestinians like

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<sup>88</sup> This was common for Palestinian nationalists. 'Issa Loubani was one of the Palestinian poets who attended the 1958 meeting Rashid helped organize between Palestinian and Jewish Israeli writers; his nationalist, anti-colonial poem "Tale of a Struggle," recited at the meeting, had lost him his teaching position when it was first published (Somekh and Tlamim 16).



Rashid who identified with Arab and Palestinian Nationalism; “MAPAM tried to exploit the discontent of many Arabs with MAKI and to win them over to the MAPAM camp by enabling young people who held clear nationalist leanings to play in its political field” (Somekh and Tlamim 2). Despite Mapam being a Zionist party, “the heads of the party’s Arab Section [...] tended to overlook Rashid’s blatant pro-Nasser overtones [in their magazine, *al-Fajr*]” (2). In Tel Aviv, Rashid lived in company housing provided by the party, because no one in the area would knowingly rent to an Arab (34).

In the autumn of 1958, he “helped to organize the country’s first formal meeting between Arab and Jewish writers” at the studio of Benyamin Tammuz, “designed to foster understanding between the two utterly separate literary communities” (Hoffman 269). As most involved acknowledge, however, this attempt to foster connections between the two groups was a dead letter from the start, due to what Hanna Abu Hanna called “the Jewish writers’ ignorance about the problems of our people,” and what Hoffman concedes was a lack of “basic empathy” for the Palestinian writers and their situation<sup>89</sup> (271). And while some Palestinian poets seemed all too well aware what kind of response they should expect from their Jewish counterparts (Taha Muhammad Ali later dismissed the meeting as “nonsense”), Hussein himself seemed surprised and defiant. When Hebrew literary critic Gabriel Moked wrote off the Resistance Poets’ work (in the style of true colonial discourse) as “lagging more than a hundred years behind” and “primitive and simplistic” (qtd. 272; Somekh and Tlamim 18), Hussein responded with an essay defending the validity of the Palestinians’ *multazim* poetry, explaining that “These poems [...] come from the pain and bitterness that well up from a certain situation in which certain people live” (qtd. 272). His response balanced an apologetic attitude (“in this [Loubani’s] and other poems there were *ideological errors*, at odds with the intentions of the meeting”) with a

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<sup>89</sup> The Hebrew writers present did not speak Arabic, though all but two of the Palestinians spoke Hebrew; Hebrew writer Haim Goury claimed he and his fellow Jewish writers were “dumbfounded” when Arab writers had to leave early to beat the military government’s curfew on their villages (qtd. Somekh and Tlamim 11). Such privileged ignorance is only matched by the Hebrew writers’ condescension and colonial attitudes toward Rashid Hussein, ‘Issa Loubani, and Hanna Abu Hanna’s poems read at the gathering. Shamir paternalistically brushed off accusations of colonialism, remarking, “we must understand that the Arabs here are part of a great nation now going through a crucial stage in its historical development. But they should not compare today’s situation to the days of the Crusaders and Saladin” (qtd.10). Haim Gouri displayed either a naïve or a disingenuous ignorance of the colonial power dynamics at play, asking, “We came here to talk peace, but is there anyone in Damascus willing to print an article in the newspaper about peace with Israel?” (qtd. 10). Aharon Megged objectified Palestinians (to the Palestinian writers’ faces) as no more than scenery: “the Arabs are part of the exquisite landscape of the country, and we must become familiar with that part of the scenery” (qtd. 10).

bewildered and indignant defense of his countrymen (“How can a Palestinian-Arab write poetry detached from his immediate reality?”) (qtd. Somekh and Tlamim 18, my emphasis). In organizing this gathering and doggedly responding to the endless Israeli attacks on Palestinian poetry, Rashid Hussein was trying his best to act as a go-between, to “beam [... his message] in two directions,” acting as “the shepherd, the morale booster, the teacher” to a Palestinian audience, and appealing to Jewish readers as “the emissary, the mark of mutual toleration and the symbol of a new ‘Palestine/Israel,’ in which a priori claims and divine rights are totally excluded” (Aruri xii).

The obvious limitation of such an attitude is that it tends to fall on deaf ears, at least the half of it directed towards those in power (as seen with Núñez Muley’s 1567 *Memorandum* in the Morisco example). Hussein’s nationalist fervor and desire for freedom for himself and his community are of course not in doubt; he contributed secretly to the nationalist movement *al-Ard* and participated in countless rallies and protests against the military regime (Boullata, Ghossein 35-36). Yet the desire for syncretism, and to be accepted by Israeli society, led him to do other things like campaigning in Arab villages for his friend Uri Avnery when the latter formed a new political party in the 1960s, apparently in part as “a means for taking Arab votes from the communist party” (37). Having fallen in love with a Jewish woman from the United States, Ann Lavee, Hussein was able to use Mapam connections to help him travel to the U.S. to live with her not long after (38).

Exile, however self-imposed, did not suit him, and seems in fact to have sparked the final change in his poetry to a more militant tone, as Hussein experienced both 1967 and 1973 wars from the helpless and isolated position of an exile. His relationship fell apart, he struggled with alcoholism, and in general lived beyond his means, buying food and alcohol for friends with money he didn’t have (Hoffman 274, 277). Despite his work in the Hebrew department of Damascus National Radio during the 1973 war, he was quickly deported by Syrian police back to New York (Boullata, Ghossein 45), and despite his work for *Wafa* and the PLO in New York, he clearly never felt too attached to that sort of fame or power. He spent Arafat’s 1974 U.N. speech among the crowds of Palestinians outside in the streets, reciting his poems, rather than meeting with Arafat or other political figures (46). He was found dead in his New York apartment in 1977, from smoke inhalation due to a fire caused by a cigarette that had fallen into his mattress

(49). His last years were marked by depression and a profound sense of disconnect from his community back in Palestine.

This later period of exile is also the time in which his poetry shifted from a tendency towards the personal and the pacifistic (as in his first two *dīwāns* from 1957-58) to a more nationalist and militant voice, now solidly in the “resistance poetry” genre. Specifically, his third and last *diwān*, *Ana al-Ard la Taḥrimīnī al-Maṭar*, was published in 1976 and written from exile in the U.S. In this *diwān*, we see a clear shift from more personal poetry (about love, the village, etc.) to explicitly communal, national concerns:

[...] the poet, now expelled from his country by the Israelis and living in exile, can think of little else in his poetry but the many problems of the Palestinian situation. He now joins the battle of the resistance, writing at the same time for a better poetry, stronger in phraseology, well-woven, with more original imagery and with a new approach to the use of diction. (“A Personal Holocaust” 149).

The sympathy Rashid had expressed for his occupier in his first few *dīwāns* (for a crippled soldier, for “A Jewish Poet”), is now replaced by poems like “*Jerusalem... and the Clock*,” in which Palestinian children, although maimed and surveilled, take part in armed struggle:

<p>The clock struck... it struck the clock cried out of love... and torment and it hoped and then the child without legs... began walking on his hands and on his eyes, walking, carrying a dream and bread and greetings – to a fighter whispering the simplest thing a child ever prayed for: “They killed my legs and assassinated my road and so... there is nothing left for me to do, except to remain here even as a grave... and resist.”</p>	<p>دقت الساعة .. دقت بكت الساعة حبا .. وعذابا وتمنت وإذا الطفل الذي من دون رجلين .. على كفيه يمشي وعلى عينيه يمشي حاملًا حلمًا وخبزًا وسلامًا - لمقاوم هامسًا أبسط ما صلاه طفل: "قتلوا رجلي واغتالوا طريقي ولهذا .. لم يعد لي غير أن أبقى هنا حتى ولو قبرا .. يقاوم."</p>
<p>[...]</p> <p>And so... Whenever a little girl passes by the eyes of the occupiers of Jerusalem a child... a little girl their eyes search, their weapons search her chest her womb her mind... for a bomb.</p>	<p>[...]</p> <p>ولهذا ... كلما مرت بمحتلي عيون القدس طفلة طفلة .. بنت صغيرة فتشت أعينهم، آلاتهم في صدرها في رحمها في عقلها ... عن قنبلة. وإذا لم يجدوا شيئًا أصروا:</p>

<p>And even if they found nothing, they would insist:          “This little girl          was born in Jerusalem          and anyone who is born in Jerusalem          will become a bomb.”          They were right... anyone born in the shadow of bombs          will become a bomb.          (My translation)</p>	<p>"هذه البنت الصغيرة          ولدت في القدس          والمولود في القدس          سيضحى قنبلة"          صدقوا .. المولود في ظل القنابل          سوف يضحى قنبلة          (Hussein 45-9)</p>
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This is a complete volte-face towards the same tone used by Tawfīq Zayyād when he recited “ هنا ... باقون على صدوركم كالجدار ” - an insistent refusal to die or vanish silently, a stubborn determination to fight against extermination. The boy above is maimed so thoroughly that he has to walk “on his hands” and even “on his eyes,” but mythically or magically through strength of will does so in order to “bring bread - and peace - to a fighter.” Instead of lamenting the loss of life caused by war, Hussein now sees armed resistance as the only way to halt an insatiable enemy and thereby achieve final peace. It is a new focus on the Palestinian self, rather than the search for a connection with those exercising violence upon it. His attention now is on the next generation, as with the “little girl” who “will become [a] bomb.” This phrase in particular, “those born in the shadow of bombs ... will become bombs,” recalls Fanon’s description of violence as the natural and inevitable response of the colonized to colonial rule, something like a force of nature, the equal and opposite reaction of Newtonian physics. It is a signal of how far Hussein shifted during his decade-plus of exile, from a tendency towards the personal, pacification, and collaboration, to the strident tones typical of “resistance” poetry.

Yet his final *dīwān*, *Ana al-Ard*... is more complex in the balance it seeks between communal commitment and individual freedom. For example, in “*al-Ḥubb... w-al-Ghetto*,” the poet takes the resistance poetry trope of conflating land/city with woman and uses it to offer a portrayal of an individual female Jewish refugee-beloved, named “Yāfā,” who flees the Holocaust to Palestine and attempts to replace the Palestinian city/beloved, Yāfā. The Palestinian original’s name is left as is, while the recent arrival’s name is put in quotes. She is introduced as an incredibly sympathetic figure, a refugee floating into harbor on a wooden plank, fleeing the fires of the Holocaust, looking for somewhere to start a new life. But as she and the poet-speaker attempt to fall in love and build a life together, they find themselves choking on the smoke of a new Holocaust, an “oven” whose “baker” tells them, “This oven is mine, / and its warmth is for

my people / [...] / My law here is: / Love has a nationality...” (Hussein 67-76, my translation). As we have seen Darwish do, Rashid Hussein draws a line here past which love cannot reach - a boundary beyond which “love” is just abuse from a colonizer towards their colonized. He connects the circle of violence by next referring to the Jewish refugee/beloved/city as “‘Yafa,’ whose history / has built over Yafa, my city, / a ghetto without doors” (67-76, my translation). The refugee has become a jailer in her own right; the victim of the Holocaust now victimizes another. And while he sympathizes with her past suffering and loss, this poet is able to recognize what she is now doing to him (and by extension, his people):

<p>“Yafa,” who came with the waves, believes that she is God ... and that I am the sacrifice O, our night... In a little while dawn will break over the hills of stones And the stones will wound its chest ... and the bird will laugh Then “Yafa,” the emigrant, “Yafa,” the adventurer, Will raise the cross for me On the mountain’s summit And I will carve the grave for her At the mountain’s foot.</p> <p>(my translation)</p>	<p>"يافا" التي جاءت مع الأمواج تؤمن أنها الله ... أنني القربان يا ليلنا... بعد قليل يصعد الفجر على ربي الصخور وتجرح الصخور صدره ... فيضحك العصفور ساعتها - "يافا" المهاجرة "يافا" المغامرة سترفع الصليب لي في قمة الجبل وأحفر القبر لها في أسفل الجبل</p> <p>(66-76)</p>
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Hussein references here both Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Ismail (in the Qur’an) / Isaac (in the Torah), and Jesus’s crucifixion. In doing so, again like Darwish, he blends the religious symbols of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, using his occupiers’ biblical mythology to illustrate their mistreatment of him and his countryfolk. “Love and the Ghetto” demonstrates a control over mythology, a sympathy for Israelis on an individual level, and an ability to set boundaries, so that empathy ends where harm/colonialism begins. There are limits, now, to the poet’s empathy.

The poem “Opposed” (*Didid*) - also in this *dīwān* - is essentially a statement of commitment, laying out the poet’s rationalization for this shift in tone:

<p>I’m against the rebels of my country harming a blade of wheat against a child – any child – carrying a grenade against my sister studying the muscles of a rifle against whatever you want... however what could even a prophet do when the horses of the killers</p>	<p>ضد أن يجرح ثوار بلادي سنبله ضد أن يحمل طفل - أي طفل - قنبلة ضد أن تدرس أختي عضلات البندقية ضد ما شئتم .. ولكن ما الذي يصنعه حتى نبي أو نبيه حينما تشرب عينيه وعينيها</p>
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<p>drink out their eyes? *** I'm against a child becoming a hero at the age of ten against the heart of a tree giving fruit to landmines against the branches of my orchard becoming gallows against beds of roses on my land transforming into trenches against whatever you want... however after they razed my country and my friends and my youth how could my poems not become rifles? (My translation)</p>	<p>خيول القتلة *** ضد أن يصبح طفل بطلا في العاشرة ضد أن يثمر الغاما فؤاد الشجرة ضد أن تصبح أعصان بساتيبي مشانق ضد تحويل حياض الورد في أرضي خنادق ضد ما شئتم .. ولكن بعد إحراق بلادي ورفاقي وشبابي كيف لا تصبح أشعاري بنادق. (Hussein 25)</p>
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While full of original imagery (e.g., the murderers' horses "drinking out" the poet's eyes), this poem offers a straightforward statement of commitment, a "final acceptance of undiluted anger as a valid reaction to the Palestinian situation" ("A Personal Holocaust" 151). It is reminiscent of Pablo Neruda's poem, "Explico algunas cosas," which defends Neruda's decision to shift from love poetry to "committed" verse as a result of the atrocities he witnessed during the fascist takeover of Spain in the 1930s-40s, describing massacres committed by Franco's forces and commanding the reader, "come and see the blood in the streets." In "Opposed," Rashid Hussein lays out how circumstances (repeated massacres, defeats, and tragedies) have *pushed* him to write committed, communal poetry, even if it is not his first nature to do so.

Finally, in this last *dīwān* (1976), Rashid Hussein deals with the guilt he feels as a poet in times of war, being unable to fight himself. We saw a similar internal struggle in Darwish's realization after the Israeli invasion of Beirut that he "was not a poet only," and that *as* a poet, he belonged with the fighters - that cultural struggle was part and parcel for Palestinians of the larger struggle to survive, as was armed struggle. Rashid's poem "Damascus Diaries" ("Yawmiyyāt Dimashq") is based on the period he spent in Damascus during the 1973 war, writing for *al-Ard* newsletter (a revival of the original Palestinian publication) and composing Hebrew-language dispatches for Damascus National Radio (Boullata & Ghossein 35). It reflects quite a bit of guilt and self-doubt about the poet's role (as a non-fighter) in colonial settings; Hussein seems to have experienced Israeli-Syrian armed conflict as just one aspect or instance of the larger struggle against Zionist colonialism, and in the poem, he writes:

<p>You come to Damascus and after... you are born in Damascus you grow twice in two minutes with poetry you hunt down two stars the rose and beauty grow in you and you envy the love that children experience And suddenly war comes and you are ashamed not to be one of the heroes for war is in the sky and war is in the mountains and you are sitting writing poetry in Damascus? By what right? By what right? (My translation)</p>	<p>تأتي إلى دمشق وبعدها ... تولد في دمشق تكبر مرتين في دقيقتين تصطاد بالأشعار نجمتين يكبر فيك الورد والجمال وتحسد الحب الذي يعيشه الأطفال وفجأة تجيء حرب وتستحي ألا تكون واحدا من الأبطال فالحرب في السماء والحرب في الجبال وأنت جالس تكتب شعرا في دمشق؟ بأي حق؟ بأي حق؟ (Hussein 84-79)</p>
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This feeling of guilt for being “just a poet” is repeated throughout the poem, and echoes the horror at war and at the loss of human life that Hussein expressed in his earlier *dīwāns*:

<p>O my beloved, I am ashamed to love in the moments of war in Damascus The most handsome men have gone to the trenches in the North My trench is a newspaper and my gun an article I am ashamed to love in the absence of the most handsome men (My translation)</p>	<p>أخجل أن أحب يا حبيبتي في لحظات الحرب في دمشق فأجمل الرجال سافروا إلى خنادق الشمال خندقنا أنا جريدة وبندقيتي مقال أخجل أن أحب في غياب أجمل الرجال (Hussein 84-79)</p>
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It is interesting, even in Hussein’s most “militant” *dīwān* (“A Personal Holocaust” 149), to see the same deep reverence for individual human lives - now redirected toward the collective cause of armed and cultural resistance. “Damascus Diaries” grapples with the place of cultural resistance, at a time when full-out war has broken out and armed resistance fighters are lionized. The poet draws some equivalence, at least, between the sword and the pen by the end of the poem, writing “... and I know that I am without weapons / except for a pen, O Damascus” (79-84). As ‘Izz al-Dīn al-Manāṣrah reaffirms in his introduction to the first (PLO-published) edition of *Ana al-Ard*, cultural resistance was a vital part of Palestinian resistance to Zionist colonialism, “[...] or else the Zionists would not have assassinated Abdelrahim Mahmoud, Ghassan Kanafani, and Kamal Nasir; and if the word was without [the force of] the bullet, the occupation authorities

would not have imprisoned dozens of our *muthaqqafīn*, nor would it have assassinated others” (14). Another sign that Rashid Hussein recognized this fact was his inclusion of a poem titled after Kamal Nasir in the same *dīwān*.

Even before the shift toward the more collective and combative tone in his final *dīwān*, however, Hussein’s earlier focus on love and the village still helped to shape and define Palestinian “resistance” poetry. Although none of his work was included in Ghassan Kanafani’s 1966 *Adab al-Muqāwamah*, his poems were able to reach the outside world sooner rather than later, as evidenced by Lebanese author Halim Barakat’s statement:

What I recall most vividly was how Rashid Hussein helped us redefine our conception of what we called ‘the literature of resistance.’ Adonis had then published an article on what he believed was the true ‘literature of resistance,’ and this article was generating heated arguments. Rashid told us that, as Arabs living since 1948 under Israeli occupation, even writing *ghazal* (love-poetry) in Arabic constituted ‘literature of resistance.’ By writing anything in Arabic these poets and writers asserted their language and culture, at a time when attempts were being made to crush them. His words helped us see things in a new light. (Barakat 124)

A similar point had been made by Kanafani in *Adab al-Muqāwamah* about Darwish’s “synthesis” of *ghazal* with nationalist sentiment. Barakat, at least, took the same lesson from Hussein’s love poetry, written under military rule and cultural siege during the first decade of Israeli occupation. Hussein’s final 1976 *dīwān* incorporated the bitter experience of exile, achieving a more nuanced balance between personal inclination and communal duty. Yet the excess, generosity, and profound sadness of Hussein’s personal life led many to consider his death a sort of “martyrdom,” an indirect death-by exile. Like the narrator of “Love and Ghetto,” I.F. Stone argues, Rashid Hussein realized too late that that survival entails setting boundaries, not allowing oneself to become the “sacrifice” to Zionism’s “god” - and by the time he recognized this, his own mental health had deteriorated too much. He died the stupid, careless death of someone who places no great value on his own life. For Hussein, Darwish, and the other Palestinian “resistance” poets, the whole crux of the issue was the inseparability of art and life. Occupation and colonization defined life and therefore art as well; personal inclination and collective commitment would always remain a balancing act, as inextricable and contradictory in the twentieth century as they had been for Rabadán, Taybili, and the nameless *alfakí* scribes centuries earlier.



### III. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the tension, in the context of Palestinian poetry written inside Israel in the 1950s and 60s, between individual artistic freedom and the perceived duty of the poet to speak to and for the collective, in modes that audiences expected and craved. The expectation for *iltizām* or commitment in such an occupied context is a given, not an individual artistic choice; this is what Kanafani explained with his term “resistance literature” and what Deleuze and Guattari address with their definition of “minor literature.” Already during the British Mandate, folk- and “official” poets were “committed” by the circumstances of British colonial rule and increasing Zionist colonization at the expense of native Palestinians; these early poets modeled a Palestinian poetry in which the poet acted as a spokesperson for his people, challenging colonization and issuing calls to action<sup>90</sup>. This highly political and collective sense of the style and function of poetry would continue after the Nakba, particularly in the large gatherings that became known as the Galilee poetry “festivals.” Festival poetry served the vital function of creating and shaping a positive collective identity in response to Zionist narratives that strove to negate any such identity; their bravado and heroism instilled a sense of “communal pride” and crafted a “political will to power” for a people deeply degraded and disempowered by the ethnic cleansing that tore their society apart, and by the ensuing military rule and marginalization at the hands of the Israeli state. Festival poetry filled a deep psychological and social need for the community, modeling boundary-setting, grief, and action in the face of an oppressive regime, and allowing people to “speak back” to those in power on a communal, collective level. Yet at the same time, the poets involved expressed their regrets at the *limitations* that these functions/expectations of festival poetry put on them. Poets like Mahmoud Darwish were quite explicitly aware of the restrictions of “minor” literature, as well as the essential function it fulfilled. I examine the lives and works of Mahmoud Darwish and Rashid Hussein in greater depth, because both poets rose to prominence in the communal environment to the Galilee festivals, and both soon came to struggle with the tension between collective expectations of committed poetry, and individual desires to write about more personal subjects,

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<sup>90</sup> Their early poetry can even recall comparable Iberian Arabic poetry from the medieval/Mudejar period, urging independent kingdoms to resist Christian conquest and colonization before it was too late (e.g., Ibn Ghassal’s response to the 1085 loss of Toledo, “O people of al-Andalus, spur your mounts, / for our place here is but a deception. / The fabric of the peninsula is unraveling from the edges, / and the cloth even unravels from the center.”)

particularly love poetry. Darwish in his interviews and even his poetry (e.g., “‘Ila al-Qāri’” / To the Reader”) shows a very explicit awareness of this tension, which may be what allowed him to navigate and balance it successfully by the eighties and nineties, with his shift toward a more universal and metaphorical use of myth and history in his poetry. Rashid Hussein, by contrast, visibly struggled more to achieve such a balance. Particularly as a young man in occupied Palestine, he embodied a host of contradictions typical of his generation; he recited and published nationalistic verse at the same time that he was enmeshed with a network of Jewish Israeli intellectuals whose acceptance and respect he craved. As a resistance poet, he was the first to rise to popularity; yet among Jewish Israeli intellectuals, many derided the value of his and his peers’ work. The spectacular failure of the meeting he organized at Benyamin Temmuz’s house would seem to indicate the futility of such efforts, while his translations of Bialik into Arabic actually brought him closer to poetic innovation, giving him a first platform on which to experiment with free verse. His 1976 *dīwān*, written in exile a year before his death, evinces more self-awareness both about the folly of seeking acceptance from an abuser (or colonizer) and about the nature of *iltizām* in poetry. Poems like “Opposed” and “Love... and the Ghetto” show Hussein self-awareness of how repeated Palestinian losses and defeats have led him to a new political consciousness and new sense of the role of poetry; he may *want* to write about love and peace, but active aggression against himself and his community demands a “committed” poetry, one capable of boundary-setting and self-preservation. Neither Hussein nor Darwish, as individual artists, would have “chosen” commitment to define their poetic work. They were “impressed” (as Camus once said) by the circumstances of their birth as Palestinians in the occupied Galilee, “forcibly converted,” as it were, into the political and the collective – into minor literature.

## CONCLUSION

### Directions for Future Study

This examination of literature post-conquest, written by the conquered, has focused on a series of thematic dichotomies: collaboration and resistance; myth and testimony; and finally, within the genre of poetry, individual artistic liberty versus the perceived communal duty of the poet. Hopefully, the reader has come away with an understanding of how these dichotomies quickly become muddled, given the exigencies of daily life under military occupation and colonial rule. The sharp, Manichean boundaries imposed by colonialism become almost-immediately *blurred*, as individual bodily survival and the cultural survival of the collective are pitted against one another. A constant balancing act ensues. It is visible through the microscope-lens of literature, as ideological outlines (religious, nationalist, cultural) are drawn and frozen in sharp black-and-white, then become fuzzy and blurred again as the subject moves in pursuance of its own survival, and the lens jumps, follows, and refocuses.

Often the author betrays him or herself, as we see in Emile Habiby's guilt later in life, or in Ibrahim Taybili's intense love, despite himself, of Spanish Siglo de Oro culture with all its prejudices. And of course, authors struggle and evolve, as with Mahmoud Darwish and Rashid Hussein, or with Núñez Muley in his old age, responding to trauma and political failure with new literary strategies. These may be more confrontational, as in the case of Hussein and Núñez Muley, or more indirect and metaphorical, as with Darwish's turn to myth in the mid-1980s.

This study has attempted to function as an initial survey, taking a big-picture view in order to open conversation on this particular comparison, of Morsico and occupied Palestinian literature. The focus has been on a shared experience, more than anything – the use of literature by *al-baqiyah al-bāqiyah*, a population who due to colonial conquest suddenly finds itself an unwanted minority in its own homeland. However, in the attempt to paint with broad strokes, I have omitted many important details. For one thing, my choice of literature has been based on selecting major works from each field which lend themselves to each given topic – for example, Habiby's *Pessoptimist* and Núñez Muley's *Memorandum* in a discussion of collaborators and collaboration. But of course, there are many other works which I did not discuss and which

would lend themselves to these conversations, adding depth and further complications. Like much English-language scholarship, I have focused on certain Palestinian literary figures like Darwish and Kanafani at the expense of others like Samīḥ al-Qāsim, Tawfīq Zayyād, Muʿīn Bsīsū, and Taha Muhammad ʿAli. I would love in the future to devote more time to the work of these poets, as it could bring further nuance to the dichotomies/spectrums I discuss. Taha Muhammad ʿAli, for example, occupies an altogether more “individual” space on the individual freedom / collective duty spectrum described in relation to *iltizām* than do either Mahmoud Darwish or Rashid Hussein. Similarly, in the field of Morisco literature, where I have focused on texts that have been studied and taught at length, like the works of the Mancebo de Arévalo and Muhammad Rabadán, rather than manuscripts that have as yet receive little attention. In both Palestinian and Morisco cases, this is because this dissertation is an attempt to initiate a broad discussion *connecting* these two fields. I hope that in the future, this discussion can continue to form part of the growing cluster of literature such as Eric Calderwood’s *Colonial al-Andalus: Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture*, which focuses on modern Arabic - medieval al-Andalus connections; I believe the Morisco - Palestinian connection is a fascinating part of this cluster, one which can tell us a great deal about literature in its interactions with military occupation and colonial rule.

In my brief series of blurred dichotomies, there are several interesting lenses that I have omitted or at least not centered. These include elements of *class* and even more so, *gender* within the Palestinian and Morisco communities at hand. Ted Swedenburg’s *Memories of Revolt* is one example of a book within Palestinian studies that centers class and gender in its analysis of how Palestinians perceive narrate the events of their own history. Elizabeth Perry’s *Handless Maiden* takes a gendered approach to Morisco history and literature, examining lived cultural practices and material culture and focusing in particular on the folk/oral aspects of Morisco literature, to account for widespread Morisca illiteracy. Perry also looks for female characters within Morisco mythology and folk-literature as models of behavior for Morisca women. Such gendered approaches to “minor” and “resistance” literature offer *much* more depth to the basic picture we have drawn here of occupation and collaboration/resistance. As an undergraduate student, I studied the very basic outlines of Palestinian history only to move to Palestine and realize I had been ignorant of all sorts of internal ideological, class and gender struggles, and these became

much more central to me the more I learned. I hope to say the same in the future about Palestinian and Morisco literatures as I continue to examine the connections between them.

As with Perry's *Handless Maiden*, a gendered lens can bring up the subject of *material* culture, which is another fascinating field that I have ignored here for brevity's sake. But anyone who has lived in occupied Palestine/Israel is aware that foodways, music, dance, visual art, posters, museums and memorials, agriculture, architecture, urban planning, and all sorts of other manifestations of material culture are quite as central as literature to the experience of *al-baqiyah al-bāqiyah*, and many books and articles have been written within the field of Palestine studies about Palestinian material culture under Israeli rule. In the field of Morisco studies, Perry is certainly not alone in centering material culture. Remie Constable's *To Live Like a Moor* examines Christian perceptions of Morisco material culture (clothing and appearance, bathing practices, and foodways); this helps to illuminate the Christian colonial ideology and concepts behind "purity of blood" which lay behind harsh laws and policies, as well as areas of appropriation or mixing. And scholars of medieval "Reconquista colonialism" and Mudejarism like Ecker and Burns frequently address the ways in which the existing architectural and administrative structures of conquered Andalusian cities exerted an influence *on the Christian colonizers*. In the Morisco period, writers like Katie Harris continue this strain of thought, following the attempts of Moriscos and settlers to each exert influence over the narration of history and identity, in a tug-of-war where ultimately, settlers won out and Moriscos faced mass-expulsion, even as Islamic civilization left its unacknowledged influence on settler society. So again, it remains to be seen how a study of, for example, Palestinian olive-farmers and Granadan silk-growers; or Palestinian *dabkah* and Morisco *zambras* and *leilas* could add to and deepen this comparison.

In terms of scope, this study has largely limited itself to the Morisco period in Spain and the immediately post-Nakba period in Palestine. However, the roots of the colonial dynamic in both situations lie earlier, in the medieval Reconquest/Mudejar period in Spain and the Mandate and even Ottoman periods in Palestine. In the Iberian case in particular, a deeper look at the Mudejar roots of Morisco culture and the Reconquest roots of sixteenth-century Spanish state and cultural practices would add depth and nuance to the Morisco-Palestinian comparison. Specifically, it could help to distinguish which parallels discussed in the dissertation were *shared* by both Mudejar and Morisco communities - such as the tension between the colonizer's desire

to assimilate the remaining minority, and the impulse to control or expel them as a polluting element – and which were specific to the Moriscos alone – such as the Morisco use of oral culture / recitation in response to state censorship. *Aljamiado* script was a Mudejar innovation that was embraced and became widespread during the Morisco period. Deeper research into the Mudejar period, and an effort to untangle which dynamics and practices were applicable to *both* Mudejars/Moriscos and which were Morisco-specific, could in turn help clarify the parallels with the occupied population of 48 Palestinians in the ‘fifties and ‘sixties. One could imagine, in a similar way, looking further into the Ottoman- and Mandate-Era roots of the Zionist colonial dynamic in Palestine, and Palestinian literary responses to it, as background for the post-Nakba period.

A deeper and more focused dive into specific areas of theory could also be a useful area for future exploration; I have sampled a hodgepodge of theories here, from Reconquista historians’ use of postcolonial theory to Granara’s use of Bakhtin’s “chronotope” to discuss al-Andalus in modern Arabic literature. In discussing myth and testimony, I have relied largely on Goldberg’s discussion of myth and testimony, and Boym’s work on nostalgia. I have referenced Sartre’s “commitment” and the Arabic “*iltizām*” that drew on Sartre, Kanafani’s “resistance literature,” and Deluze and Guattari’s concept of “minor” literature, to discussions in the Arabic world of the 1950s and 60s around literary “commitment” or *iltizām*. Other theories I have simply brought up in passing, as with the idea of translation-as-betrayal. While this has been part of my effort to offer a broad survey of lenses and topics, a more in-depth study using any one of these theories, in connection to specific works of Palestinian and Morisco literature, could offer a deeper and more nuanced picture.

I hope, then, to open a conversation. Plenty has been written about Palestinian solidarity with Ireland, South Africa, pan-Arab nationalism, and other contemporary struggles. Likewise, more and more is being written about al-Andalus in modern Arabic literature, and specifically its connection to modern-day Palestine. But I hope that this discussion of Moriscos and 48 Palestinians – specifically the literature they produced under occupation and colonial rule – can open up a new window of comparison; or as Darwish would say, a new “mythic writing of the quotidian real,” so that “Palestine not limit itself to Palestine” (81) – and vice versa, so that Morisco literature not limit itself to the already-finished story of past loss and defeat. In writing her *Granada Trilogy*, Radwa Ashour implied a parallel between the Morisco experience and that

of present-day Arab and Palestinian readers. She did this within the field of fiction, but I hope that this can be broadened to an explicit academic comparison, connecting the literatures of *al-baqiyyah al-bāqiyah* in al-Andalus and in Palestine to illuminate modes of cultural survival past and present.

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