

ANTONIO URQUÍZAR-HERRERA

# Admiration

*Morisco Buildings and  
Identity Negotiations in  
Early Modern Spanish  
Historiography*

# & Awe



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*Negotiations in Early Modern*  
*Spanish Historiography*

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OXFORD  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,  
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.  
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First Edition published in 2017

Impression: 1

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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press  
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016960181

ISBN 978-0-19-879745-6

Printed and bound by  
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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*I think this summer I shall take an eight-day trip to rummage among old stuff, for out of such darkness comes the light I seek.*

Ambrosio de Morales, *Letter to Alvar Gómez de Castro*

\*\*\*\*\*

Writing this book would have been much more difficult without Leire, who did not need to read it because she already had heard all about it, or without Léa, who learned to read while I was writing it.



## *Acknowledgements*

This book has been present in my life intermittently for over a decade. As a result, I owe a debt of gratitude to many people whose help or opinion I have sought. The original idea was born during a road trip with Manuel Pérez Lozano, who was the first person I discussed the subject with while I was teaching at Córdoba University. Some very basic initial results were presented at a CEHA conference in Málaga, where Fernando Marías' comments helped me considerably flesh out my approach. Subsequently, I had the opportunity to discuss my work at an SCSC conference in Geneva, as well as in the course of two stays at the EHESS and the INHA in Paris, with Bernard Vincent, Jean-Paul Zuñiga, Zahia Rahmani, and Mercedes Volait, and during seminars at the universities of Lisbon (Luis Afonso), Seville (Luis Méndez), Córdoba (Enrique Soria), Barcelona (Cesc Esteve and María José Vega), and Valencia (Borja Franco). I am particularly grateful to Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano for inviting me to present my research at the CSIC CORPI seminar in Madrid on two occasions, which were crucial to its development into a book.

I was able to finish writing it thanks to a Visiting Fellowship at Clare Hall, University of Cambridge. I have to thank this institution for the resources it makes available to scientific work and exchange. I also thank UNED, the university where I have worked over the past few years, for the flexibility it offers researchers (thank you, Veva Tusell and Consuelo Gómez, for your support in Madrid during my sojourn at Cambridge) and for the funding that has made this book possible.

This work has also benefitted from Enrique Soria's friendship and intellectual support within the Morisco research projects that he leads at Córdoba University. I am deeply indebted to those colleagues and friends who offered or agreed to my request to read and discuss the manuscript: Yayo Aznar, Alicia Cámara, Jesus Cuéllar, Borja Franco, and Inés Monteiro. They have all made valuable suggestions, although I have not always been able to give them the response they deserved. I owe a debt of gratitude to Peter Burke, Nicholas Paul, and Antonio Sánchez Jiménez, who read my publication proposal to OUP. Without their help, I would have had difficulty explaining where the book's real interest lay.

At different points, I have received good ideas and references from Paloma Aguilar, Luis Bernabé, Elizabeth Drayson, Ana Echevarría, Francisco Javier Escobar, Miguel Falomir, Juan Luis González, María Íñigo, Richard Kagan, Alfredo Morales, Víctor Nieto, Katrina Olds, Eduardo Peñalver, Felipe Pereda, Carmen González Román, and Ana Verdú. This is probably not a complete list. Jeremy Roe not only revised my English and translated some sections of the book, but made a great effort of intellectual discussion that was extremely gratifying to me. Gilla Evans, briefly, and above all the team made up of María Fernández and Nicola Stapleton, completed this work and enhanced my ideas with their English and their patience. Finally, I would like to mention the readers at OUP for their timely suggestions and the editors Terka Acton, Stephanie Ireland, and Cathryn Steele for their constant support.





## *Preface: The Islamic Stones of Spain, Today*

Interest in this book today essentially derives from its aim of recovering interpretations of Spain's Islamic monuments that have been pushed aside by the cultural and ideological power of the modern Orientalist myth. Awareness of those early modern discourses is significant because they did not vanish overnight, but merely became superficially less visible. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they were common currency in parallel with other complementary or even contradictory narratives. Eventually, their very ability to integrate guaranteed their survival, however out of focus they might be.

The same ideas are still active today. They re-emerge now and again, reconstituting the readings of Islamic architecture that arose in the wake of the taking of Granada, once the conquest and conversion stories had been told, *Aljama* mosques had begun to be called cathedrals (*iglesias mayores*), and the possibility of their being pre-Islamic foundations had started to be entertained.<sup>1</sup> The endurance of these old Christianizing and antiquarian arguments is probably a consequence of the parallel survival of the agenda that gave birth to them almost 500 years ago.

For the past few decades, Córdoba Mosque has been an ideological micro-battlefield where popular perception of Spain's multicultural Islamic past and the Christian essentialism of the bishops and clergy responsible for the building cross swords. Consciously or otherwise, the latter have echoed, word for word, the Christian appropriation arguments created in the Early Modern Period.<sup>2</sup> The cathedral chapter, for instance, has fostered academic research into the primitive Visigothic church that may or may not have stood on the site of the mosque.<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, tourist information on the monument issued by the Church today refers to the Islamic construction as an interruption in the temple's Christian nature and history. This attempt to interfere with visitors' interpretation of the building, when most of them are precisely seeking encounters with the Islamic past, is usually unsuccessful and many find it preposterous. It can be understood as an example of the staying power of sixteenth-century thinking.

Seville's Giralda, formerly the minaret of the *Aljama* Mosque and today the cathedral's belfry, enjoys an iconic power that goes well beyond its original Islamic identity. This is a consequence of several centuries of narrative emphasis on the metonymic identification of the tower with its patron saints as the visible embodiment of the city. While the Christian *genii loci* incarnate the presumed eternal spirit of a city dominated by Catholic liturgy, the Islamic builders are but a small part of a mythical discourse in which the issue under debate is not religion. Since

<sup>1</sup> Main mosques were usually known as *Aljama Mosques*.

<sup>2</sup> See Marcos Pous, 'Moros'; González Alcantud, 'Un locus-axis'; Urquizar Herrera and Haro García, *La escritura*, pp. 35ff.

<sup>3</sup> See Arce, 'La supuesta'; Fernández-Puertas, 'Mezquita', pp. 33ff.

the nineteenth century, Seville's romantic exoticism has never been essentially or exclusively Islamic.<sup>4</sup>

Lastly, in Granada, the sixteenth-century debate on the model of interconfessional religious coexistence is today livelier than ever. Washington Irving's legacy seems to have obliterated all possibility of escaping the city's natural identification with Islam. Even as it benefits from this image, however, local identity has never abandoned the Christianization discourse. Granada holds its controversial celebration of the Christian conquest year after year, and the myth of the Sacromonte Lead Books still thrives in the twenty-first century because some of the population believes that both narratives are necessary to counter the dazzling power of Granada's Islamic heritage.<sup>5</sup> These strategies were designed many years ago because, like other buildings of al-Andalus, the Alhambra was an icon that made it impossible to ignore the nation's hybrid past.

Generally speaking, Spain's Islamic legacy is more alive today than ever as a cultural and tourist commodity for international consumption. It is also at the heart of the multiculturalism debate that arose in the wake of September 11, 2001. This background feeds, to this day, the need for ideological negotiation through the monuments that embody our remembrance of the past.<sup>6</sup>

## NOTES ON ORIGINAL SOURCES

The rule of thumb I have followed with regard to sources used in researching this book has been to access the original texts in their first editions and in the language in which they were written. In the few cases where it was possible, as in Ambrosio de Morales' *Las antigüedades de las ciudades de España* and Rodrigo Caro's *Antigüedades y principado de la ilustrísima ciudad de Sevilla*, both manuscript and printed text were consulted. In the case of works that had several reprints in the author's lifetime, the second or third edition has been quoted, as a general rule, as these tend to be the most complete and widely read versions. This is the case, for example, of the histories of Spain written by Esteban de Garibay and Juan de Mariana, where the edition quoted has been checked against the first (shown in the footnotes as 'quoted from', followed by the publication year). Similarly, in the case of medieval manuscripts given to the press in the sixteenth century, these printed versions have been chosen because they were the most widely read in the Early Modern Period. For example, the quotes from Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *De Rebus Hispaniae* (*Historia Gothica*) are from the Latin edition printed in 1545, although, on account of their impact on historiography, certain fragments of this work have been taken from the medieval Castilian translation by Gonzalo de Hinojosa subsequently annotated by Jerónimo Zurita.

<sup>4</sup> Reina, *La pintura*; Méndez, *La imagen*; Méndez, Zoido, and Plaza, *Viaje*.

<sup>5</sup> See González Alcantud, 'La experiencia'; Coleman, 'The Persistence'; Drayson, *The Lead*, pp. 193ff.

<sup>6</sup> See Marzo, *La memoria*; García Cárcel, 'El concepto'; García Sanjuán, *La conquista*. See also Schülting, Müller, and Hertel, *Early*, pp. 167ff.

With regard to manuscripts that did not go to press until recently, both versions have usually been consulted. Quotations refer, where possible, to the manuscript, as in Luis de Peraza's history of Seville. In a dozen secondary cases, such as Francisco de la Cueva's *Relación de la guerra de Tremecén*, the most recent edition has been used (shown in the footnotes as 'ed.' followed by the date). Among the core texts, only the Pablo de Céspedes manuscripts kept in Granada Cathedral were unavailable for consultation due to archive accessibility issues; in this case the modern editions were used instead. Fortunately, the edition by Jesús Rubio Lapaz and Fernando Moreno Cuadro replicates the amendments, crossings-out, and drawings of the original text.



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# Introduction

*The account of a city given by a native will always have something in common with memoirs; it is no accident that the writer has spent his childhood there*

Walter Benjamin, *The Return of the flâneur*

The manuscript collection in Spain's Real Academia de la Historia conserves an important legacy of Spanish historiography. A number of these manuscripts offer striking insights into the process of writing history and the development of historiographical concepts, tropes, and traditions. One significant example of the latter is the manuscript of *Las antigüedades de las ciudades de España* (*The Antiquities of the Cities of Spain*) by Ambrosio de Morales, which went to press in 1575. The text's rare historiographical value is apparent from the deletions and insertions on the recto of folio 168. On the page in question is Morales' description of Córdoba's renowned mosque and he makes more amendments to his account of this building than to any other part of the text.<sup>1</sup> A detailed review of the passage reveals the intellectual, political, and moral tensions that the mosque evidently created for the writer. Morales was by no means just any writer: he was the official chronicler of Castile, professor of Rhetoric at the University of Alcalá de Henares, and the author of some of the most important historical works written during the reign of Phillip II. He was also born and raised in Córdoba. *Las antigüedades* laid the foundations for antiquarian literature throughout the Iberian Peninsula. Morales' work is therefore a fundamental point of departure for studying the reception of Morisco buildings and their crucial role in the negotiation of Hispanic identity in early modern Spanish historiography. Indeed, 'admiration and awe', the title of this book, is taken from the words Morales used to express the impact Córdoba Mosque had on him. Yet, apart from admiration and awe, Morales also developed a more complex and critical response to Córdoba Mosque, and to fully gauge his thinking on this seminal example of Morisco heritage requires a close reading of the amendments he made to his own text.

Morales referred to Córdoba Mosque, which had been built by the Umayyad kings, as 'our main church', by which he meant the city's cathedral. In the original text, he went on to say that it was 'one of the largest and most sumptuous buildings . . . in the world', but he later added two further adjectives, namely 'strangest' (*más extraños*)

<sup>1</sup> Morales, *Las antigüedades*. The amendments to the manuscript are reproduced in its facsimile edition by Juan Manuel Abascal.

and 'awe-inspiring' (*espantos*), though shortly afterwards he changed his mind again, crossing out 'awe-inspiring' and correcting the phrase to read 'one of the largest, strangest, and most sumptuous buildings'. The next sentence was originally 'the splendid building of the cathedral of Córdoba is rightly praised and esteemed as one of the most distinctive things in the world', but this was also edited by replacing 'splendid' with 'strange and famous' and 'distinctive things' with 'wonderful works'. He then concluded that despite its 'great grandeur and majesty, it is its strangeness that produces the greatest admiration and awe', although he later changed 'strangeness' to 'diversity'. The next sentence reaffirmed the notion of the building's strangeness, but Morales was apparently not convinced this was the word he was looking for: it began with the 'strange and unheard-of form of the building', but then he deleted the adjective 'strange', only to reinsert it. '*Estraño*', according to Sebastián de Covarrubias' dictionary *Tesoro de la lengua castellana* (1611), meant 'singular and extraordinary', but also 'that which is not ours'.<sup>2</sup> An indication of what prompted such uncertainty over this choice of term is provided further on in the text, where Morales explains that the building's peculiarities are due to its being 'a construction founded by the Moors, and because the two Kings who had founded it had done so purposefully to display their grandeur'. This time he crossed out the two uses of 'founded', replacing them with 'built' and 'erected'.<sup>3</sup> Other amendments explicitly erased the term 'mosque' when referring to the building's original use.<sup>4</sup>

The significance of Morales' revision of his text cannot, in my view, be reduced to the simple correction of style or accidental errors. Instead, it should be read as an indication of his conscious concern as to the best way to word his presentation of the mosque. It should also be noted that the section on Córdoba Mosque was extended onto an extra page in the manuscript on which Morales was clearly deciding how to describe the building even as he wrote; indeed, he crossed out words before he had finished writing them.<sup>5</sup> His amendments point to the intellectual and ideological dimensions of his account. On the one hand, his hesitation on the notions of strangeness, wonder, awe, and diversity suggests a sense of unease about describing such otherness. On the other, his underscoring the opposition

<sup>2</sup> Covarrubias, *Tesoro*, p. 387r.

<sup>3</sup> '[Deleted: *nuestra*] *La iglesia mayor, y por ser uno de los mayores*, [inserted: *más estraños*] y más suntuosos [inserted and deleted: y espantos] edificios, que se halla en el mundo, será mucha razón escrevir aquí della, todo lo que conviene, para que quien no la ha visto, la pueda en alguna manera gozar. El [deleted: *sobervio*] [inserted: *estraño y famoso*] edificio de la iglesia mayor de Córdoba es con mucha razón alabado y estimado, por una de las más señaladas [deleted: *cosa*] [inserted: y maravillosas] obra que ay en el mundo. Y aunque su grandeza y magestad es mucha: la estrañeza [deleted: y nunca] [inserted: y diversidad] [deleted: y po] pone más admiración y espanto. Y la [deleted: *estraña*] [inserted: *estraña*] y nunca vista forma del edificio está en todo junto el bulto y cuerpo del, y también en todas sus partes y particularidades. Y eso es así por aver sido [deleted: *fundada*] [inserted: *fabricada*] para mezquita de Moros, y por aver querido mostrar en ella los dos Reyes que la [deleted: *fu*] labraron, muy de propósito su grandeza.' Morales, *Las antigüedades*, (quoted from manuscript) p. 168r.

<sup>4</sup> 'Y hase de entender, que está agora la iglesia en la misma forma en que fue edificada [deleted: *para mesqu*] entonces.' Morales, *Las antigüedades*, (quoted from manuscript) p. 168v.

<sup>5</sup> On the manuscript-writing process, see Juan Manuel Abascal's introduction to Morales, *Las antigüedades*, 1, p. 15. See also Bouza, *Corre*, and *Hétérographies*.

between the *foundation* and the *construction* of this religious building is perhaps still more significant: what was at stake was the crucial question of whether the building was originally built as a church or as a mosque. Certain authors considered the incontrovertible evidence of Islamic building work as mere rebuilding: the cathedral had been founded as such and was later turned into a mosque; following the Christian conquest it was returned to its original use as a cathedral. Subsequent developments surrounding the mosque's foundation framed the discussion of the origin of Córdoba Cathedral/Mosque within the narrative of the mythical origins of the Spanish nation and the formation of its cultural and religious identity in early modern Spain. The analysis that follows in this book traces the emergence of these ideological discourses, and explores how they underpinned some historiographical strategies used to appropriate Spanish Islamic or Morisco architectural heritage during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This early modern vision had a unique profile which had little in common with the later Romantic image of Islamic architecture.

Why *Morisco* buildings? Whereas today we use the term primarily to refer to former Muslims who were converted to Christianity after the taking of the Islamic kingdoms, as well as their descendants who remained in the Iberian Peninsula until their expulsion between 1609 and 1614, in early modern Spain, it appeared in a variety of contexts.<sup>6</sup> *Morisco* was the Castilian adjective used in the Middle Ages to refer to contemporaneous Islamic buildings. During the Early Modern Period, it was used by antiquarians such as Ambrosio de Morales to invoke the remnants of Islamic architecture that provided a physical testimony of the Iberian Peninsula's multicultural past.<sup>7</sup> This early modern usage covered both the architectural legacy of the early medieval Muslim kings as well as the more recent fourteenth-, fifteenth-, and

<sup>6</sup> As Carrasco Urgoiti has demonstrated the *Cantar del Mio Cid* (written in the late twelfth–early thirteenth century) provides a terminus *post quem* for the medieval use of the word 'Morisco', above all in literature, as an adjective to refer to any object or action associated with the Muslims of the Peninsula, who were then usually called 'Moros'. On occasion, depending on the date, context, and especially the degree of antipathy felt, later Christian sources also referred to the past inhabitants of al-Andalus as Saracens, Ishmaelites, Arabics, Mudejars, and Barbarians. According to Ana Echevarría, the term 'Saracens', taken from St Jerome, was linked to religious contexts; 'Arabs' was used in the ethnic and linguistic sense; 'Moors' was applied to North African Berbers and Peninsular Muslims; 'Barbarians' was used following the influence of classical authors; and finally, 'Mudejars' was used to refer to the Muslim vassals of Christian kings. As Amaro Centeno made clear in his *Historia de las cosas del Oriente* (1595), the term *moros* or Moors was the most widely used and understood in early modern Spain, as elsewhere in Europe. It should be noted that his fifteenth chapter was entitled 'About the Empire and Origin of the Saracens, to whom we Refer as Moors' (*Del imperio, y principio de los Saracenos a quien llamamos Moros*). Carrasco Urgoiti, 'Apuntes', pp. 187–210; Echevarría, *The Fortress*, p. 103. See also Brann, 'The Moors?', pp. 310ff; Tolan, Veinstein, and Laurens, *Europe*, p. 3. Centeno, *Historia*, pp. 12v ff. On the meaning of 'Moor' in Renaissance English literature see Bartels, *Speaking*, pp. 4ff. According to the comparison table drawn up by Javier Castillo Fernández on contextual usage of the terms used by Luis de Mármol Carvajal in *Rebelión...*, 'Moor' (*moro*) is used descriptively 285 times, as opposed to 1,408 times where it is used in a pejorative sense, whereas 'Morisco' and 'Arab' only appear in a general descriptive sense on 570 and 107 occasions respectively. Castillo Fernández, *Entre Granada*, p. 331.

<sup>7</sup> For example, see Ruiz Souza, 'Le style', pp. 277–86, and 'Architectural', p. 364. For one archetypical example of the use of the term *Morisco* in relation to the architecture of the Alhambra, see Marías, 'La casa', p. 207.

sixteenth-century noble palaces and churches that had traditionally been classified as Mudejar by nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians. This second usage of *Morisco* was at times ambiguous. As has been said, it is unclear, for instance, whether Italian diplomat Andrea Navagero, who served at Charles V's court in Seville and Granada (1526), used the words '*alla morescha*' and '*lavori moreschi*' to refer to architectural form or to a builder's origin when speaking both about the Castilian Alcazar of Seville and the Nasrid Alhambra.<sup>8</sup> Whichever the case, by the time both Navagero and Morales were writing, these medieval Islamic buildings had been given a new Christian use, just as the descendants of their Muslim builders had been baptized. The book seeks to show how historical discourse on these buildings played a key role in the process of Christian transformation of Islamic architecture.

Morisco architecture was just one facet of the visible cultural legacy that survived once the centuries-long Muslim rule of Spain came to an end in 1492. The physical, social, and cultural landscape of Christian early modern Spain was populated with numerous reminders of the Islamic era. Indeed, Spain clearly illustrates Peter Burke's notion of the boundaries of hybridity.<sup>9</sup> Besides the presence of descendants of Muslim settlers, this hybridity consisted of buildings, ruins, words, and a host of cultural practices, such as the use of particular garments, court entertainments, and domestic furnishings.<sup>10</sup> Regrettably, almost nothing is known about the views held by sixteenth-century Moriscos with regard to the Christian appropriation of Islamic buildings. Nevertheless, on entering Seville in 1495, German traveller Hieronymus Münzer was surprised to see that the city was still full of '*infinita monumenta et antiquitates Sarracenorum*'.<sup>11</sup> The survival of these architectural mementoes was in fact a legacy of the protocol the Christians implemented as they captured the Islamic cities of al-Andalus: it concerned such symbolic gestures as flying the flag of the Christian forces from the top of castles, and the purification and consecration of mosques; the reuse of these buildings by the victors was a later phase in this process. Castles and palaces required no major changes to adapt them to military uses or accommodate the symbolic language of their new courtly occupants. A key illustration of this is the careful restoration of the Nasrid architecture of Granada's Alhambra, for which Muslim craftsmen were employed. During the sixteenth century, a number of alcazars were used by the Inquisition, but even this emblematic function did not result in any substantial architectural or decorative transformation.<sup>12</sup> By contrast, mosques were subjected to significant changes in order to adapt them to Christian worship and ensure their suitability for Christian liturgy. Above all, they were given a new symbolic decorative makeover that underscored their conversion. Such practices were soon deemed insufficient and a more stringent approach was taken: most of the mosques were destroyed and new Christian churches were built on their sites. Eventually, only one major mosque survived, the *Aljama* Mosque of Córdoba, although it was by no means

<sup>8</sup> Navagero, *Il viaggio*, pp. 13v, 18v. See Marías, 'Haz y envés', pp. 107–8. Also see Brothers, 'The Renaissance', and 'Un humanista'.

<sup>9</sup> Burke, *Cultural*, and *Hybrid*. <sup>10</sup> Fuchs, *Exotic*, pp. 60ff.

<sup>11</sup> Münzer, *Itinerarium*, p. 74. Lleó, *Nueva Roma*, (quoted from 2012) p. 209.

<sup>12</sup> The alcazars of Córdoba, Triana in Seville, and Zaragoza were among these castles.

left untouched. A large Christian nave was built at the centre of it which completely changed its spatial configuration. At the same time, damage to the minaret was repaired with classical-style facings. The general perception of the building was also transformed, both inside and out.

The differing fates of Islamic buildings—survival, architectural palimpsest, or complete or partial demolition—mediated the architectural memory of the period. Córdoba, Seville, and Granada were the cities where it was most vividly preserved in three major monuments: Córdoba Mosque, into which a cathedral had been inserted; Seville's Giralda—a minaret—a remnant of a destroyed mosque, which had been transformed into a Christian belfry; and Granada's Alhambra, which became the site of an exemplary Renaissance palace. Each of these three monuments had been a central feature of cultural imagination in their respective cities since the Middle Ages and have continued to be so right up to the present day. Other cities, such as Toledo, Zaragoza, and Valencia, did not preserve such iconic buildings and the visibility of their Islamic past varied greatly. The memory of Toledo's Islamic period was preserved in the history of its cathedral's foundation as well as in the remaining medieval cityscape, including some minor temples. Zaragoza's Aljafería palace had survived, as had Málaga's Alcazaba, but the most discernible Islamic remains of these buildings were not easily accessible.<sup>13</sup> Of all these cities, it was Valencia that had most successfully erased its Islamic past. Having been one of the Peninsula's major Islamic capitals, barely any traces of its architecture were identifiable.<sup>14</sup>

The vast majority of the corpus of early modern sources about these buildings may be classified as either historiographical or antiquarian in terms of subject matter. Morales' *Las antigüedades* was an appendix to a larger project on the history of Spain, the *Corónica general de España* (1574–1586). In passing, it is worth noting that Morisco architecture was completely absent from emerging art and art-theory writing at the time. As Alicia Cámara has stated, humanist interpretations of Spain's past architecture were based primarily on historical rather than aesthetic interests.<sup>15</sup> In this regard, it is important to clarify that the regional tensions resulting from the union of Castile and Aragon were not a major issue in the historiographical negotiation of the cultural memory of the Islamic past. Although the most prominent Islamic monuments were eventually incorporated into Castile, both Castilian and Aragonese national histories focused on the ideas of conquest and restoration.<sup>16</sup> It was commonplace for accounts of the Islamic period in city histories to be told exclusively as a history of Christian resistance in which Muslims were considered only in confrontational terms.<sup>17</sup> The historiography of all the

<sup>13</sup> Regarding the latter, see the description of the transformation of the former Islamic royal palace into the new Inquisition building, which is included in Diego Murillo's history of Zaragoza (1595). Murillo, *Excelencias*, p. 182. See also López, *Tropheos*, pp. 330, 343–6.

<sup>14</sup> Arciniega, 'Miradas', pp. 75–7.

<sup>15</sup> Cámara, *Arquitectura*, p. 23; Marías, 'Memoria'.

<sup>16</sup> For an introduction to Aragón and Castile in early modern historiography, see García Cárcel, *La construcción*, and *La herencia*. For the Mudejars of Aragón, among many other references, see Catlos, *The Victors*. For more detailed bibliography about Aragon and Castile, see p. 34 n. 33.

<sup>17</sup> Kagan, 'La corografía', p. 52.

Spanish kingdoms was arranged around the key events of the loss of Spain due to the Arab invasion and subsequent Christian liberation of the territory. The latter was understood by all concerned as the restoration of the natural order that had existed prior to the Islamic invasion. In this sense, it should be noted that, although I frequently refer to the Iberian Peninsula in this book as both a geographical and a historical concept, the notion of Spain also played an important role. Morales made this clear in his book's title (*The Antiquities of the Cities of Spain*), and other sources consulted for this study have also focused on the historical identity of the Spanish state, for which the Islamic past posed a considerable hurdle.<sup>18</sup>

In Spain, as elsewhere in Europe, the historiographical and antiquarian genres played a fundamental political role.<sup>19</sup> Morales has been defined as a forthright nationalist who wrote out of patriotic duty while under protection of the Crown. Indeed, all but a few of the texts studied here are interpreted in the context of the development of a Spanish national identity that took place in the aftermath of the conquest of Granada.<sup>20</sup> Given Spain's blurred historical identity at the time of Charles V, Philip II, and Philip III, official historians related to the Crown systematically tried to build the historical idea of Spain as a nation in contrast to the previous chronicles of Castile and Aragon. They probably did not fully achieve that aim, but their struggle created an ideological frame of reference and interestingly placed the Islamic buildings at the centre of archaeological debate about the origin of the Spanish nation.

The complex process of creating a Spanish polity engaged with issues of self-determination, territorial, social, and political organization, and, finally, imperialism, both in America and in the Mediterranean.<sup>21</sup> During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, early modern historians identified a number of topics for discussion in regard to Spain's medieval religious history, such as the definition of Spain as a Christian nation in opposition to the Muslims and the Jews, the negotiation of these minorities' legacy, and the practice of religious conversion.<sup>22</sup> In this regard, see for instance the debate on the expulsion of the Morisco population from 1609 onwards. In the course of these discussions it was claimed that the Moriscos were both Spaniards and foreigners, they were also seen as willing to integrate into society as well as unyielding, and finally, despite baptism, they never ceased to be considered Moors by Spaniards.<sup>23</sup> History was, in Enzo Traverso's words on twentieth-century historiography, a battlefield over memory, violence, victors, and vanquished.<sup>24</sup> Here, as is usually the case, the vanquished were given little room for manoeuvre in the creation of their own historiographical memory. To a significant extent, it may be argued that sixteenth-century Spanish historical writing was entwined with a cultural concern to sidestep the memory of Islam as a feature of national identity. This was achieved through the recovery of the pre-Islamic ancient nation and the

<sup>18</sup> A classical definition of nations as *imagined communities* in Anderson, *Imagined*, pp. 5–6.

<sup>19</sup> On the political burden of English chorographies see Helgerson, *Forms*, pp. 146–7.

<sup>20</sup> Kagan, *Clio*, p. 109; Cuat Moner, 'La larga', pp. 45–126.

<sup>21</sup> See Johnson, *Cultural*; Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Christians'.

<sup>22</sup> Milhou, 'Desemitzación', pp. 35–6.

<sup>23</sup> Among many others, see Feros, 'Retóricas', pp. 67–102.

<sup>24</sup> Traverso, *L'histoire*.



early construction of the restoration narrative. At the heart of these issues is the question raised by Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano: was al-Andalus part of the history of Spain?<sup>25</sup> In many ways, the main issue addressed by this book builds on that question by asking: Were Islamic monuments understood as part of the history of Spain? Ambrosio de Morales' hesitations as he wrote his description of Córdoba Mosque apparently reveal uncertainty about the historical status of Islamic buildings.

Spain's Islamic architectural heritage is a particularly important example of the complex relationship between historiography and the construction of identity thanks to the physical evidence provided by the buildings. No other social minority was linked to such a powerful reminder of their culture. Although synagogues were also demolished, desecrated, and sometimes turned into churches, Islamic buildings were far more visible and identifiable than Jewish temples. In addition, Islamic architectural patterns were commonly employed in the building and decoration of synagogues. In some Spanish cities, the Islamic royal palaces and the massive main or *Aljama* mosques with their towering minarets were the most prominent monumental structures in the urban landscape. There was therefore an urgent need to control their interpretation. While historians claimed a break with the Islamic past, these physical remains provided testimony of the Islamic legacy and its significance for the construction of Spanish identity. Victor Nieto has rightly pointed out that these buildings, especially religious ones, were simultaneously exemplary monuments and symbols of a vanquished, but still living, heresy.<sup>26</sup> Readings of Morisco architecture were open to a variety of conflicting interpretations, which meant that the process of developing a stable symbolic national identity was problematic and could not be reduced to oppositional stereotypes.<sup>27</sup> Both the arguments against Islam and the favourable reception of its architectural legacy need to be considered. The range of ideological expectations frequently led to a lack of consistency in the descriptions of Islamic monuments, even in the same text.<sup>28</sup>

This book addresses the need to analyse these contradictory perceptions, not only in relation to aesthetics, but above all in terms of historical identity. Central to this approach is Pierre Nora's view of the opposition between memory and history.<sup>29</sup> Nora's ideas offer a framework to develop an understanding of how early modern history writing actively sought to intervene in the architectural memory of the Islamic past in Andalusian cities: for Islamic mosques and palaces to serve as Christian *lieux de mémoire* (realms of memory), their symbolic content had to be transformed and historical writing was used to achieve this. Indeed, Ambrosio de Morales, Alonso Morgado, or Pedro Díaz de Ribas carefully considered Islamic architecture. At the same time, however, Ambrosio de Morales' vacillations are a symptom of a broader process whereby Spanish historians and antiquarians in the

<sup>25</sup> García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient*; Rodríguez Mediano, 'Sacred'.

<sup>26</sup> Nieto, 'El mito', p. 134.

<sup>27</sup> Blanks and Frassetto, *Western*, pp. 4ff.

<sup>28</sup> See Marías, 'Haz y envés', p. 105; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient*, p. 360, (ed. 2013) p. 353.

<sup>29</sup> Nora, *Les lieux*, 1, p. XVff.



sixteenth and seventeenth centuries revised the initial reception of these monuments as architectural wonders and exotic trophies. They endeavoured to reappropriate these hybrid architectures by integrating them into a more homogeneous cultural memory focused on Spain's Roman and Christian past. Appropriation, in this case, was not achieved by assimilating influences but, as Fernando Marías has clearly shown, by transforming the interpretation of the buildings through negotiation of their symbolic meaning.<sup>30</sup> The conversion of Islamic monuments by historians was also a process of heritage fabrication which may be understood, in the sense discussed by David Lowenthal, as 'making something up'.<sup>31</sup> In a way, this strategy related to the conditions imposed by the liturgical use of Islamic objects in Christian religious settings, both in Spain and across Europe more widely, as functions had to be altered and biblical associations invoked to guarantee the Christian identity of the object in question.<sup>32</sup>

While previous analyses of the humanist reception of Islamic architecture have focused on its connections to the history of architecture and antiquarian culture, the link between these buildings and the history of the nation has not been addressed systematically. In particular, their relationship with ecclesiastical history and early modern religious forgeries has not been explored to date. In addition to a systematic exploration of the sources, this book's main contribution is to suggest that the new strategies applied to interpreting ancient Morisco buildings ranged from 1) changing a monument's presumed historical origin on the basis of archaeological judgements that erased any possible Islamic identity by appealing to a Roman or Phoenician past; to 2) the use of religious forgeries which promoted claims of pre-Islamic Christian foundation, seeking to cleanse any traces of heresy in the buildings with records of blood spilt by Christian martyrs or through the protection afforded by saints. The insertion of these buildings in antiquarian literature delivered the necessary epistemological framework to support these interpretations. As this book demonstrates, subsequent interconnections between local, national, and ecclesiastical histories favoured a further reading that turned Islamic trophies into antiquarian evidence of ancient Christianity in the Peninsula. The integration of Islamic monuments in the history of Christian Spain was pursued by all these means. Proof of the significance of this early modern historiographical appropriation is that it involved, in a variety of ways, the most prominent antiquarians and historians that were active in Spain in that period. It also identified these Islamic buildings as core evidence to be used in the debates that shaped the early development of archaeology and had a central role in the controversial historical debate that arose concerning the origin of the nation and its ecclesiastical history.

The above contents are structured in ten chapters divided into three parts and a final coda with some concluding ideas. The first part addresses the initial reception

<sup>30</sup> See Marías, 'Haz y envés', p. 110. On the concept of appropriation, see Ashley and Plesch, 'The Cultural'; Burke, *Cultural*, pp. 36ff, 70ff, and *Hybrid*, pp. 23ff; Robinson and Rouhi, *Under*, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> Lowenthal, 'Fabricating', pp. 5–25, and *The Past*, p. XXIV.

<sup>32</sup> Shalem, *Islam*, (quoted from 1998) pp. 129ff, and *The Oliphant*, pp. 125ff. See also Serra, 'Convivencia', pp. 55ff.

of Islamic monuments as war trophies. To this end, I have studied the medieval roots of the narratives of the Islamic invasion and the Christian conquest of Toledo, Córdoba, Seville, and, eventually, Granada. The second part explores the creation of an antiquarian interpretation framework by analysing the original formulation of this model in Córdoba, including the methodological debates provoked by this new subject of antiquarian study, its substantiation in Seville, and the model's limitations in the case of Toledo. The third part considers the use of the antiquarian framework for the religious appropriation of Islamic monuments, leading to the rationalization of Spain's Christian restoration on the basis of archaeological tools and forgeries associated with these buildings. For this purpose, I have explored the genealogical approaches that aimed to build bridges with the pre-Islamic past of the temples in question through the proposal of mythical origins relating to the Peninsula's early Christianity, to the Visigoths and Mozarabs, and to the various discoveries of religious icons allegedly predating the Islamic conquest. In particular, this part has focused on genealogical strategies based on the vindication of Christian martyrs in Córdoba, Seville, and Granada. The concluding ideas in Chapter 10 focus on the control of the proposed hypotheses, paying special attention to the reception of the historiographical narratives created around these buildings by their contemporaries. This has required a review of several topics: the circumstances surrounding the dissemination of ideas through literature as well as through their presence in the public milieu of feast days and liturgies; the perpetuation of these lines of thought through intellectual traditions; visual imagery as a selective filtering device for ideas; and the contrast between local ideological agendas and foreign visitors' perceptions. In all these contexts, it has been possible to perceive the interesting complexity generated by the coexistence of appropriation discourses and the enduring notion of trophy in the construction of Spain's national history.

## HOW TO STUDY THIS PROCESS: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although many researchers have shown how historic Islamic buildings played an important role in the creation of the Romantic image of Spain, no systematic analysis has been undertaken to date of the political and cultural significance of the major Islamic monuments in early modern Spain.<sup>33</sup> There is, however, a significant corpus of literature that provides a valuable foundation for this study. Six pioneering articles, written between 1984 and 1995, laid the foundations for research on the aesthetic and ideological values that shaped the humanist reception of Islamic architecture in Spain: Fernando Checa's study of the interpretation of Islamic gardens (1984); Víctor Nieto's analysis of the myth of Arab architecture (1986); Alicia

<sup>33</sup> On the Romantic reception of Spanish Islamic architecture, see Calvo Serraller, *La imagen*. Among others, see also Méndez, *La imagen*; Méndez, Zoido, and Plaza, *Viaje*; Stearns, 'Representing'; Salas, *La arqueología*; Calatrava and Zucconi, *Orientalismo*; González Alcantud, *El mito*. See also Giese, 'Quand'.

Cámara's survey of the evaluation of Islamic monuments in the context of architectural thinking (1990); Cammy Brothers' examination of Andrea Navagero's perception of the Alhambra (1994); Vicente Lleó's study of Giralda tower (1995); and finally Fernando Marías' analysis of the image of Islamic architecture in historiography and literature (1995).<sup>34</sup> Marías' work is a key text that will be constantly revisited throughout the book.

Generally speaking, the coexistence of different religions has been largely acknowledged as one of the most interesting aspects of Spanish history. In what was, to some extent, a continuation of the Orientalist fascination with the Iberian Peninsula's Islamic past, twentieth-century researchers wrote profusely about its effect on the construction of a medieval and early modern Spanish nationhood. Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz held a famous debate in the 1950s on the contribution of Islamic and Jewish heritage to the formation of Spanish identity.<sup>35</sup> In recent decades, this discussion has been developed by various lines of research on the issue of *convivencia* (or coexistence) in medieval Spain and the echoes of this cultural interaction following the conquest of Granada. On the one hand, extensive literature has been devoted to the study of the Moriscos, which the recent fourth centenary of their expulsion from Spain has further encouraged. Numerous books on this subject have shed light on the social status and living conditions of the Morisco population during the sixteenth century, as well as how they managed to remain in the Peninsula after 1609–1614.<sup>36</sup> Concurrently, the expansion of postcolonial studies has boosted interest in the study of the Muslim presence in Spain in terms of identity and culture. This line of research has focused on the reception of the Moriscos and Islamic cultural forms including Islamic literature. In addition to these, a number of studies on Mudejar architecture have also been published.<sup>37</sup>

In recent years, several studies have been undertaken, from a variety of critical perspectives, on the medieval transformation of Islamic buildings, as well as on the reception of Islamic culture and heritage in medieval and early modern Spain generally. Worthy of special note are Jerrilynn Dodds, Rafael Comes, Vicente Lleó, Fernando Marías, Thomas Glick, Julie Harris, Teresa Laguna, Ana Echevarría, Susana Calvo, Pascal Buresi, Barbara Fuchs, Heather Ecker, Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, Maria Judith Feliciano, Cynthia Robinson, Leyla Rouhi, Felipe Pereda, Borja Franco, Danya Crites, Inés Monteiro, Brian Catlos, Elena Díez, Cammy Brothers, Tom Nickson, and Francine Giese.<sup>38</sup> Together, their essays offer an overview of

<sup>34</sup> Checa, 'El arte'; Nieto, 'El mito'; Cámara, *Arquitectura*; Brothers, 'The Renaissance'; Marías, 'Haz y envés'; Lleó, 'El pasado'. See also Lleó, *Nueva Roma*; Marías, *El largo*, 'El palacio', and 'Memoria'.

<sup>35</sup> While Sánchez Albornoz's idea of Spanish genealogy had a more Christian focus, which he dated back to the Visigoths, Castro pointed out the Islamic and Jewish roots and outlined the consequences of *convivencia* and inter-religious conflict. Castro, *España*. See Linehan, *History*; García Cárcel, *La herencia*; Novikoff, 'Between'; Subirats, *Américo*.

<sup>36</sup> For an overview of recent literature about the Moriscos, see Soria and Otero, 'Una nueva'; Soria, *Los últimos*, pp. 17–23.

<sup>37</sup> See Dodds, 'The Mudéjar'; Ruiz Souza, 'Le style'; Burke, *Hybrid*.

<sup>38</sup> Dodds, *Architecture and Al-Andalus*; Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts*; Lleó, 'De mezquitas'; Marías, 'La casa' and 'El palacio'; Glick, *From Muslim*; Harris, 'Mosque'; Laguna, 'La Aljama', and

Christian attitudes towards Islam. Furthermore, selected historiographical narratives developed in response to medieval Islamic buildings have also been examined from two different points of view: Juan Calatrava, Fernando Marías once more, Luis Arciniega, Amadeo Serra, Fernando Martínez Gil, Juan Montijano, and Andrea Mariana have explored the issue of the historical experience of this type of architecture, while Delfín Rodríguez, Amanda Wunder, Heather Ecker, Jesús Salas, and Luis Arciniega have addressed antiquarian interest in the remnants of Islamic architecture.<sup>39</sup> In addition to these, I have engaged with these issues in a number of articles and book chapters.<sup>40</sup>

Another angle on Morisco heritage has been provided by the study of historical and archaeological discourse in the Peninsula.<sup>41</sup> Scholars working in this area have examined the ideological position expressed in both national and local histories. They have also stressed the relationship between issues of identity and the process of historical forgery.<sup>42</sup> Seminal contributions have been made by Richard Kagan, Ricardo García Cárcel, and others on historiography and the process of national-identity building in Habsburg Spain. The work of Albert Mas and Miguel Ángel de Bunes on the perception of Turkish and North African Islam in Spain, as well as Josiah Blackmore on Portuguese writing about Africa must also be mentioned. Significant too is the extensive literature on religious forgeries, including Katrina Olds' recent book on the Toledo forgeries. The study of the Granada Lead Books and their connection to early Spanish Orientalism by Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano is of particular importance, as are the works of David Coleman and Katie Harris on the impact of these forgeries on city identity.<sup>43</sup> The precedent of James T. Monroe's work on early Spanish Arabism must also be remembered.<sup>44</sup> Finally, in terms of antiquarian literature, Miguel Morán's book *La Memoria de las Piedras* provides a central frame of reference for this essay, as it has drawn attention to the contradictory nature of humanist approaches to

'Una capilla'; Echevarría, *The Fortress*; Calvo Capilla, 'La mezquita', and *Estudios*; Buresi, 'Les conversions'; Fuchs, 'Virtual', and *Exotic*; Ecker, 'The Great', and 'How to'; Ruiz Souza, 'Castilla y Al-Andalus', 'Architectural', and 'Castilla y la libertad'; Feliciano, *Mudejarismo*, 'Muslims', and 'The Invention'; Robinson and Rouhi, *Under*; Pereda, *Las imágenes*; Franco, *La pintura*, 'Multiculturalidad', and 'Mitología'; Crites, *Mosque*; Monteiro, *El enemigo*; Catlos, *Muslims*; Díez Jorge, 'Arte'; Brothers, 'Un humanista'; Nickson, *Toledo*; Giese, 'Quand'.

<sup>39</sup> Calatrava, 'Arquitectura', 'Encomium', 'Islamic', and 'Contrarreforma'; Marías, 'Memoria'; Montijano, 'Cartografía'; Arciniega, 'Miradas'; Serra, 'La imagen' and 'Convivencia'; Martínez Gil, 'De civitas'; Mariana, *Cultura*; Rodríguez, *La memoria*; Wunder, 'Classical'; Ecker, 'Arab'; Salas, *La arqueología*.

<sup>40</sup> See Urquizar Herrera, 'La memoria', 'Mural', 'La literatura', 'Literary', 'La caracterización', 'Gregorio', and 'El Flos'.

<sup>41</sup> Marín, *Al-Andalus*.

<sup>42</sup> For an early precedent, see Maravall, *Antiguos*. Among others, see Wulff, *Las esencias*; Gascó, 'Historiadores', in particular; Olds, *Forging*.

<sup>43</sup> Kagan, 'La corografía', and *Clio*; García Cárcel, *La construcción*, and *La herencia*; Fernández Albaladejo, *Materia*; Grieve, *The Eve*; Rojinsky, *Companion*; Juaristi, *El reino*; Mas, *Les Turcs*; Bunes, *La imagen*, and *Los Moriscos*; Blackmore, *Moorings*; Harris, *From Muslim*; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient*. See also Drayson, *The Lead*; Orellana, 'El concepto'; Álvarez Junco and De la Fuente, 'Orígenes'; García Cárcel, 'El concepto'; García Fitz, 'La confrontación'; Olds, *Forging*.

<sup>44</sup> Monroe, *Islam*.

Islamic buildings.<sup>45</sup> However, despite considerable work on the attitudes of early Spanish archaeologists towards the classical world, little research has been done on their ideological positions with regard to the Islamic past, a topic that was only subjected to systematic scrutiny in relation to archaeology in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>46</sup>

This book undertakes a threefold cultural analysis: first and foremost, it examines the treatment of Islamic architecture in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish historiography; building on this foundation, it addresses the construction of Spain's national identity; and finally, it explores the response to Islam in Spanish thought at that time. To date, the study of the early modern reception of Islam has not engaged directly with architecture, and yet this interaction provides an essential frame for the interpretation of the historical narratives examined over the following chapters. In the past 40 years, the recurrent scholarly point of reference for European responses to Islam has been Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). The extensive debate generated by Said's book has raised many questions about the validity of his ideas in the analysis of pre-modern Europe, and particularly in the case of Spain, which he did not address in his work. Above all, Said's claim that Napoleon's invasion of Egypt was 'the first time the Orient was revealed to Europe in the materiality of its texts, languages, and civilizations' has been particularly relevant.<sup>47</sup> Since this meeting of cultures had previously taken place elsewhere in Europe, most notably in the Iberian Peninsula, Venice, and the Balkans, criticism of Said's claim has led to a detailed analysis of the contact between Christianity and Islam in the medieval and early modern world.<sup>48</sup> As John Tolan has pointed out, the pre-modern vision of Islam in the West must not be automatically categorized in terms of a Saidian Orientalism *avant la lettre* and, in light of this view, careful attention must be paid to the question of how this cultural encounter evolved in early modern Spain.<sup>49</sup>

To address this issue, it is paramount to assess the validity of defining all pre-nineteenth-century relationships between European and Islamic culture in terms of colonization.<sup>50</sup> In general, the balance of power between pre-modern dominant and subaltern discourses was very different from today's.<sup>51</sup> In this regard, Jerold Frakes has argued that, while a colonial explanation may be used to discuss the Crusades, it does not apply to the case of Christians dwelling under Islamic political rule, or to Christians living in fear of being invaded by Islam, since they

<sup>45</sup> Morán, *La memoria*. See also Morán and Rodríguez, *El legado*.

<sup>46</sup> Among others see Mora, *Historias*; Díaz-Andreu, 'Islamic'. See also Greenhalgh, *Constantinople*.

<sup>47</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, p. 77, and *Culture*. A first general revision in Hentsch, *Orient*, pp. 12ff. See also Rodinson, *La fascination*, pp. 53ff. On criticism of the lack of historical knowledge and historical scope in Said, see Varisco, *Reading*, pp. 12ff, 247ff.

<sup>48</sup> For an introduction to this literature, see Turner, *Orientalism*; Varisco, *Reading*; Elmarsafy, Bernard, and Attwell, *Debating*; Kalmar, *Early*; Netton, *Orientalism*.

<sup>49</sup> Tolan, *Saracens*, p. 280.

<sup>50</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> See Matar, *Islam*, p. 12; Pick, 'Edward', pp. 8ff; Varisco, *Reading*, p. 123; Dew, *Orientalism*, pp. 5ff; Vitkus, 'Early', pp. 209ff; Malcolm, 'Positive', pp. 197–219; Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism*, p. 1; Sapra, *The Limits*. For the eighteenth century as a turning point in this balance, see Tolan, Veinstein, and Laurens, *Europe*, pp. 257ff.