



Maria Portmann (ed.)

# 'Otherness' in Space and Architecture

Jews, Muslims and Christians in Western  
European Art (1200-1650)



PETER LANG

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This conference proceeding (Sessions on "Otherness in Space and Architecture", International Medieval Conference, Leeds, 2017 and 2018) is a compilation of articles written by both young and senior scholars, who are working on the question of the 'self' and the 'other' in Christian, Jewish and Islamic cultures. The articles examine how material, 'oriental' objects and knowledge originating in non-Western communities helped building and strengthening the identity of Iberia's, southern France and northern Italian nobility and its lineages. It is shown how, in the perception of Christians, the public image of Jews and Moslems became constructed as that of adversaries, while their cultural knowledge, at the same time, would be integrated into Christian culture in a paradox manner, in which the 'self' necessarily depends on the 'other' and how visual tensions in art and space have been used as symbols of power.

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Conference Proceedings: Selected Papers Presented  
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Andrea di Buonaiuto, *Pentecost*, 1356, Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Spanish Chapel. © Maria Portmann





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## Synopsis

The chapters of these conference proceedings have undergone a double-blind peer review process. This book is written by both young and senior scholars, who are working on the question of the 'self' and the 'other' in Christian, Jewish and Islamic cultures. The chapters examine how material, 'oriental' objects and knowledge originating in non-Western communities helped building and strengthening the identity of Iberia, southern France and northern Italian nobility and its lineages. We will point how, in the perception of Christians, the public image of Jews and Moslems became constructed as that of adversaries, while their cultural knowledge, at the same time, would be integrated into Christian culture in a paradox manner, in which the 'self' necessarily depends on the 'other' and how visual tensions in art and space have been used as symbols of power.



*Maria Portmann*

## 1. Introduction

These conference proceedings have been written by both young and senior scholars, who are working on the question of the ‘self’ and the ‘other’; they reevaluate the social and political roles of the Christian, Jewish and Muslim religions in Art and Architecture in Italy, France and Spain during the Middle Ages and the early modern period.<sup>1</sup>

### ‘Otherness’

The meaning of ‘otherness’ much depends on its use and the objects of study. Jacques Lacan once pointed out that the psychological process of constructing one’s ‘self’ is always closely related to the signification of the localized place from where ‘otherness’ in terms of emotional and physical emptiness is.<sup>2</sup>

A similar spatial ontology of ‘self’ has been used by Michel Foucault, who understood it as a localized area set apart from the enveloping environmental system by the different types of relations it maintains in respect to its temporal, social, political or ritual functions:

[...] the heterotopias include a system of opening and closing that separate them from their environmental. [...] A heterotopia is an open space, but with the property of keeping you outside.<sup>3</sup>

Foucault thus defines ‘heterotopias’ as types of localities where deviations from given norms become possible and that can be created but also erased

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- 1 On ‘otherness’ see among others Bregoli 2019, pp. 1-19; Dodds, Menocal, Krasner (Eds.) 2008, pp. 1–5; Bell 2008, pp. 2–10; Goetz 2013, pp. 10–20; Goetz and Wood (forthcoming), pp. 1–31; Saurma-Jeltsch 2012, p. 9; Stoichita 2014. Regarding the question of ‘identity’, see Braude 1997; on ‘Orientalism’ see Saïd 1978 and Kalmar and Penslar 2005. Regarding the state of the research of Sephardis, see more specifically Bregoli 2019, pp. 11–12 and 17.
  - 2 Lacan 1973, pp. 227–238.
  - 3 “[...] les hétérotopies ont toujours un système d’ouverture et de fermeture qui les isole par rapport à l’espace environnant. [...] L’hétérotopie est un lieu ouvert, mais qui a cette propriété de vous maintenir au dehors.” Foucault 2009, p. 32. Translation Maria Portmann and Michael A. Conrad.

by society. These are spaces that can be related to the lives of foreigners enclosed by walls and pushed to the margins of centres that are thought of as the reserved locations of ‘self’. The difference of their social identities is mirrored by their spatial identities at the extremities or margins of urban topography,<sup>4</sup> and in some cases marked as the body of a non-place called ‘*u-topie*’.<sup>5</sup> Equally, the objective of signs imposed to distinguish bodies or clothes, such as certain colours and shapes, or operative interventions, such as tattoos, circumcision or scarification, is to re-signify the bodies as whole, to make them readable and visible to their environment, to make their corporeal spaces become spatial markers of their ‘otherness’.<sup>6</sup> However, Foucault does this way not imply the body should thus be fully reduced to the Utopian ‘non-place’: its various re-significations aside, there can be little doubt that human identity beyond Utopian ascriptions does exist, for example when we place ourselves in front of a mirror or when we part from life.

It is thanks to them, thanks to the mirror and the cadaver, that our body is not purely and simply just a utopia. Now, if we bear in mind that the mirror’s image is out of reach for us and that we can never be where our cadaver will be, and if we further consider that the mirror and the cadaver are themselves home to an inaccessible elsewhere, what we then discover is that only utopias can isolate themselves and hide the profound and sovereign utopia of our body for a moment.<sup>7</sup>

Accordingly, there is a tendency among scholars to focus on and highlight the relationship between distinctive signs and the margins of spaces and architectures, which they interpret as spatial representations and objects of ‘otherness’. The most complex definition of ‘otherness’ to be found in Christian culture is that of the ‘Jew’: according to Julia Kristeva, Jews would, on the one hand, be regarded as predecessors to Christianity, while they would be treated as outsiders and excluded from the divinity of the Church in Christ, since Saint Paul had established the concept of its spiritual unity. Consequently, Jews were pushed to the margins of Christian society throughout the Middle Ages and considered as ‘foreign people’ by its

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4 Foucault 2009, p. 27.

5 Foucault 2009, pp. 9–10.

6 Foucault 2009, p. 15.

7 “C’est grâce à eux, c’est grâce au miroir et au cadavre que notre corps n’est pas pure et simple utopie. Or, si l’on songe que l’image du miroir est logée pour nous dans un espace inaccessible, et que nous ne pourrons jamais être là où sera notre cadavre, si l’on songe que le miroir et le cadavre sont eux-mêmes dans un invincible ailleurs, alors on découvre que seules des utopies peuvent refermer sur elles-mêmes et cacher un instant l’utopie profonde et souveraine de notre corps.” Foucault 2009, p. 19. Translation Maria Portmann and Michael A. Conrad.



two branches of jurisdiction (worldly and spiritual law), implying that their bodies were clearly stigmatized as belonging to the sphere of ‘otherness’.<sup>8</sup>

Who is a stranger?

One who is not part of the group, one who is not *one of or within* it (*qui n'« en est » pas*), the *other*.

Of strangers, we have noted often, we only have negative definitions.<sup>9</sup>

However, Julia Kristeva’s assertion is not unique at all. In quite a similar vein, Joshua Paul Dale already wrote that ‘self’ and ‘other’ tend to live in tension, and that, therefore, there is as much space of and for the ‘other’ as there is space of ‘otherness’ in art and architecture.<sup>10</sup>

Although this theme has been studied widely from a philosophical, historical and anthropological viewpoints, a multidisciplinary approach which reconsiders the question from the viewpoints of art history and the history of architecture is as yet as not been used. This collection of chapters focuses on Arabic and Hebrew scriptures, on Jewish and Christian images, and on Arabic knowledge regarding the techniques of construction and astronomy. For us, the main question is how Western Christian culture has included or rejected such ‘differences’ in its own concept of the ‘self’ and which political, social, cultural, economic, philosophical and religious roles it has given to the ‘other’. Although the ‘other’ shall be related to ‘foreign’ people and cultures, some chapters will point out the ‘scientific’ and ‘intellectual’ knowledge of the ‘other’ and related to Antiquity.<sup>11</sup> On one hand, such aspects had been included to show the ‘otherness’ as something new and scientifically good; on the other hand, images and scripts of the ‘other’ have the aim to show an exclusion of what has been considered having bad moral behaviours and discrediting the social, political and religious system of that time. This book is divided into four sections.

## ‘Otherness’ in Space and Architecture

The first part is dedicated to Jews and, more precisely, to Jewish and Sephardic architecture and scripture and visual depiction and compares Jewish and Christian images. The focus will be on Jewish culture, their inclusion and exclusion of the Jews by the Catholic Church from the second half of the 14th

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8 Kristeva 1988, p. 120 and p. 139.

9 “Qui est étranger? / “Celui qui ne fait pas partie du groupe, celui qui n'« en est » pas, l'autre. / De l'étranger, on l'a souvent noté, il n'y a de définition que négative.” Kristeva 1988, p. 139. Translation Maria Portmann and Michael A. Conrad.

10 Dale 2003, p. 65

11 Muzzonigro, Boano 2013, pp. 10–13.

century until their expulsion from Spain 1492. Starting with the reinterpretation of topographies and of situations, the question of the conversion of Jews to Christianity is reconsidered. The role given by the Catholic Church and the Spanish kingdoms to distinctive signs (either scripture or images) is reconsidered in order to highlight the intellectual demand for the integration of Jewish knowledge into Christian culture and religion, an issue to be discussed from social and political viewpoints. Based on a multidisciplinary methodology, the objective is to demonstrate how this and related issues was treated, by involving the anthropology of images and art history, the history of architecture, literature, laws and theology in order to point towards the questions of 'otherness' in architecture and space during the Middle Ages and the early modern period. The aim is to show not only physical gaps but also intellectual encounters.

The second part of this book will focus on the influence of Arabic techniques in architecture, known in Al-Andalus which were exported into Christian world and integrated into religious and civil architecture in Avignon and in Portugal. The most interesting point of view of one chosen by the author, who reconsiders this question from both points of view, shows their equal interest in the construction of civil and religious buildings. It reconsiders the spatial disposition of rooms and gardens in palaces as well as the relationship between cities and sacred places. The importance of such places will be newly emphasized in Islamic and Christian cultures thanks to first-hand sources and technical analysis. These chapters question the 'inclusion' of Islamic scientific knowledge in architecture as objects of 'otherness' and 'identity', and as 'disturbing' architectural elements.

The third part reconsiders the depiction of the Muslim 'others:' hybrid, animal and mythological figures, as well as their figurative human 'disappearance'. Their interpretation by Christian viewers had been related to criticism of their bad moral behaviour in Spain (from the 12th century to the 17th century). The choice of images focuses on the need to include the 'other' in in Christian architecture and manuscripts,<sup>12</sup> while at the same time, they are considered as political 'enemies' and would be expelled from the Spanish kingdom.

The fourth part opens another kind of inclusion of the 'other' in Italian Christian culture, as a proof of interest in Antiquity during the Renaissance. Thanks to the depiction of exotic animals (special gifts offered by foreign embassies), in order to commemorate Antique battles over Africa and the East, the Medici would include animals of the 'other' in their palaces to prove to the viewers their politic importance in the world. In Ferrara, the Este family would depict on the walls of their main rooms, proof of their

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12 Wirth 2008, p. 14.

interest in a higher scientific level of Arabic culture with regard to cosmology and astronomy. Such a reading would become part of the creation of a modern Renaissance image of the 'self'.

As the reader will note, the construction of otherness does not only have negative connotations. In space and architecture, visual and architectonic conceptions of the 'Christian self' must reconsider the place given to the 'other' and the Antiquity within the framework of the reception of ancient and oriental art in the history. This study aims to understand the functions of the relationships and the interpretations given to the religions and cultures of the 'others' during the Middle Ages and the early modern periods. In Spain and Italy, the influence of the non-Christian cultures around the Mediterranean world had had a mere impact on the complex construction of the collective memory of the 'self', showing their intellectual heritage but rejecting their religious and moral differences. This observation is marking visual tensions in art and space, although scientific achievements of the 'others' have been fully integrated in Western architecture, both as symbols of power over the 'other'.

This book is a collection of chapters that mirror different ways of how the question of 'otherness' can be analyzed academically in architecture and space. Departing from today's mainstream of research, it aspires to discuss the phenomenon of 'otherness' not only in Christian, but also in Jewish and Islamic perspective, particularly by focusing on building and other architectural sites that are the results of influences, the concrete reuse or, at times, even destruction of elements stemming from other, non-European cultures. The chapters furthermore examine how material, 'oriental' objects and knowledge originating in non-Western communities helped building and strengthening the identity of Iberia, southern France and northern Italian nobility and its lineages. Another aspect related to these issues is how, in the perception of Christians, the public image of Jews and Moslems became constructed as that of adversaries, while their cultural knowledge, at the same time, would be integrated into Christian culture in a paradox manner, in which the 'self' necessarily depends on the 'other'.

## Synopsis of the Chapters

Accordingly, the book opens with a chapter (*The Castle and the Lily: Samuel Ha-Levi's Synagogue and the Crises of 14th-Century Castile*) discussing the underlying political reasons for Samuel Ha-Levi's choice of Mudéjar as the style for his private synagogue in Toledo, a 14th-century building that would later be converted into a Church known as 'El Tránsito'.<sup>13</sup> The author

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13 Ruiz Souza 2002, p. 239 in Conrad p. 34.

identifies it as a functionally hybrid building. The richness of its decorative system suits a double, sacral-secular function as both a place of worship and a stage for the ostentation of Ha-Levi's high social and political status, thereby simultaneously mirroring the historically exceptional, ambiguous and very often precarious, realities of Castile's Jewish communities.<sup>14</sup> By comparing the synagogue to two of the most influential palaces completed during the same period – i.e. some of the most famous and splendid parts of the Alhambra in Granada, Pedro I's Alcázar in Seville and the royal palace in Tordesillas – he not only stresses the stylistic similarities as the result of cross-cultural influences but also analyses how architecture that belonging to 'others' would be adopted and integrated into prevalent Christian frameworks to establish a style to suit the multicultural social realities of the royal city of Toledo. In this way, he asserts how this architectural syncretism, with its characteristic integration of 'Islamic otherness', became an essential part of the self-constructions of Jews and Christians, at a time when non-Christian communities experienced frequent outbreaks of violence and general interreligious tensions. He stresses that the genealogy of these resentments belongs to a larger history that received first official legitimization through anti-Jewish laws proposed by Alfonso X in light of those promulgated at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. From here, further increasing political and economic tensions during the first half of the 14th century would increasingly back anti-Jewish hardliners among Castile's Christian population to pressure the kings to crack down harder on non-Christian communities, a process that eventually led to legal segregation and the expulsion of all Jews from Castilian soil in 1492.<sup>15</sup> Being aware of the multi-layered complexity of the historic situation, the author departs from the mainstream of current research by examining the ambiguous role of Samuel Ha-Levi as a court Jew endowed with enormous political power, and how this status, along with the precariousness of Jewish communities, was an important precondition for some of the architectural decisions manifest at his synagogue. Accordingly, at the end of his chapter the author furthermore examines how some of its concrete Mudéjar elements, such as the combinations of Hebrew inscriptions, Christian ornaments and praises in Arabic scripture, mirror and reply to said political, economic and social tensions, and how the harmonious aesthetic balance sought for this building might have been conceived as a means for transcending these and all other perplexing earthly conflicts.

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14 Dodds 1992, pp. 126–128 in Conrad pp. 34 and 35.

15 Muñoz Garrido 2014 in Conrad pp. 38–39 and 41–42.

The next chapter, *Jews and Conversos in Christian Space: Distinctive Signs of the 'Other' in the St. Blaise Chapel in the Cathedral of Toledo in Spain*, focuses on the depiction of Sephardic and Jewish distinctive signs depicted by painters who had been in close contact with Gherardo Starnina, an Italian artist who travelled from Florence to Toledo through Valencia at that time and who came back to Italy with new knowledge learned abroad.<sup>16</sup> This inclusion of the culture of the 'other' is emphasized by the depiction of the 'others' in Toledo. Departing from the mainstream of the research,<sup>17</sup> the author focuses on the question of 'otherness' in the Saint Blas Chapel in the Cathedral of Toledo (Spain). This case study was chosen because of its artistic and intercultural influences. A multidisciplinary, comparative methodology aims to point towards the question of conversion in the scenes of the Last Judgement (compared to examples taken from churches in Florence and in the Camposanto in Pisa, where Starnina lived) and in Jewish books such as the *Haggadah of Sarajevo*, whose illustrations could have been done by a Jewish-Christian workshop.<sup>18</sup> The focus is set on the Christian interpretation of clear distinctive signs in the light of biblical verses in the context of the conversion of Jews during the second half of the 14th century.<sup>19</sup> The question of the use of distinctive signs within an iconographic cycle that promotes Christian faith in the chapel of Bishop Pedro Tenorio will be compared to the political and social context, by analysing the inclusion and desire/intention to convert Jews. In that chapel, three iconographic cycles were depicted in parallel. In the upper part are scenes from the life of Jesus and from saints that were used to proclaim the Christian faith. Their spiritual conversion and the baptism of the first Christians explain the reason why Jews are depicted in different ways in the scenes from the Last Judgement: on one hand, they have been shown as Christian forerunners and on the other hand, they are cited as sinners, because they worked as moneylenders and did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God. Therefore, the focus is on the depiction of the spatial use of distinctive signs: a comparison of the colour and shape of the Jews' clothes and of architectural and physical details is given in order to help us understand the influence they could have had on the viewer at that time. The spatial disposition and the quotations from Latin and Hebrew scriptures, as well as distinguishing signs on clothes, will also be re-examined. Within the context of Jewish conversion to Christianity, other

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16 Vasari 1971 – 1978, pp. 193–195, Miquel Juan 2013; Nickson 2015; Blanco Mozo 2014 in Portmann pp. 54, 60–61 and 67.

17 García García 1981, p. 108; Bizzarri 2001, p. 171; Nirenberg 2015 in Portmann pp. 51 and 62.

18 Sabar 2018, pp. 104–126 in Portmann pp. 54–55.

19 Baer 1970, p. 241 in Portmann pp. 52–54.

comparisons were made with the Pauline exegesis, that opposes the carnal to the spiritual body<sup>20</sup> and focuses on Jewish and Christian moral behaviour at that time, as well as the salvation of souls.<sup>21</sup> Such comparisons will be enlarged by the interpretation of artistic influences and the need to show the intercultural relationships between Jews and Christians in Spain and Italy.

The fourth chapter, *Between Public and Private Spheres: The Valencian Jewish Quarter in Christian Space*, deals with the depiction of Jews in Valencia and with the question of the division of spatial topography between two distinctive social groups: Christians and Jews. Departing from the main stream of research, the author shows Jewish ‘otherness’ in Christian paintings and ‘identity’ in Jewish art.<sup>22</sup> Then, the author takes up to the question of the artistic relationship, focusing on the depiction of Jews in Sephardic books used for the eve of Passover (called *Haggadah* [‘the telling’]), in order to underline the details of Sephardic customs.<sup>23</sup> The author underlines how Christian preachers had an influence on the iconography of Jews, on the topography of the cities and, in the society, on the exclusion of the Jews. Within this context, the author analyzes the question of the *converso* (‘converted Jews’)<sup>24</sup> through the lense of the *damnatio memoriae* (‘destruction of the memory’), which was used to erase the religious and social memory of the Jews, after they had been expelled from Spain in 1492.<sup>25</sup> This chapter focuses not only on iconography, but also on the geographical question of the Sephardic ‘other’. It analyses the construction of ‘otherness’, as well as its use, compared to the Christian space in the city of Valencia.

The fifth chapter, *Never Was Raised Such a Monument of this Stature: The Alhambra and Palace of the Popes in the 14th Century*, deals with the influence of Alhambra’s architecture in Granada, Spain, and of the Palace of the Popes in Avignon, France. Reconsidering the focus placed on Western Christian palaces from both Christian and Islamic viewpoints,<sup>26</sup> the author explains the similarities between both palaces, whereas scholars have emphasized their differences.<sup>27</sup> This analysis points out the similarities in the architecture, in the placement of private and public spaces, as well as in

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20 Kristeva 1988, p. 120.

21 Caspary 1979, p. 86 ; Hammele 2012; Orlov 2007; Mellinkoff 1970, pp. 86–90 in Portmann pp. 58, 59, 62 and 65.

22 Sartre 1954, p. 81 in Gregori p. 84.

23 Kogman-Appel 2002, 2009 and 2011; Metzger and Metzger 1982 in Gregori pp. 91–92.

24 Nirenberg 2014, pp. 104–105 in Gregori p. 92.

25 Jiménez and Mata 2001, p. 29 in Gregori p. 64.

26 Mollat 1949, p. 315 ; Torres-Balbás 1956, pp. 131–146 in Najjaj, pp. 103, 105.

27 Colombe 1928 ; Gagnière 1988 ; Fernández-Puertas 1997 in Najjaj, pp. 106–108.

their connections to each city nearby. The main difference is in the distribution of streets around the palace and in the meaning of such a vast place for the inhabitants. The social and economic purpose of both places will be analyzed, in order to show the role they each played at that time for the king or the pope. Although the number of people living in these city-palaces was not the same, the need for water was greater in the Alhambra than in Avignon. Therefore, the author explains how fewer people in Granada needed more water than in Avignon. Regarding the religious architecture, the author points to the religious needs, the sanctuary, its use and location. Finally, the symbolic meaning of each monument is compared. This analysis offers a new viewpoint, on the political, social and economic levels, showing the influence the ‘other’ had on each type of architecture and use of space in both Avignon and Granada.

The sixth chapter – *Sacred Places: The Cubas from Southern Portugal* – focuses on the architecture of *cubas* (‘small square plane buildings covered with hemispherical domes’), and on their interaction with the biophysical space in which they are inserted. These buildings are involved in some polemic discussions, with many questions still being debated regarding their origins and purpose of location. Are they an original typology from Northern Africa built in the Iberian Peninsula during Islamic rule?<sup>28</sup> Or are they the expression of a type of funerary architecture originated in the Iberian Peninsula and later transferred to Northern Africa?<sup>29</sup> Are they Mozarab temples during the *Al-Andalus*? Were they a military line of defence along the administrative borders of the territory?<sup>30</sup> Or were perhaps shelters for Sufi saints? The main purpose of this project is to clarify the functions (religious/funerary and/or military/territorial) and the chronological origin of the *cubas* from southern Portugal. Starting with the state of the research, the author analyzes their spatial disposition (GIS analysis), architecture,<sup>31</sup> and archaeometry in order to cast some light into these questions.<sup>32</sup>

The seventh chapter, *Allies of the Order: Guilt-Projecting Witticism and Moral Discredit through Fantastic Non-Human Appearances Referring to Religious Others*, reconsiders mixed anthropomorphic, mythological and animal figures that were depicted on the margins of French- and English-illuminated manuscripts or sculpted in Spanish Romanesque churches. Taking in consideration the state of research that shows that physical troubles

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28 Correia de Campos 1970.

29 Pires Gonçalves 1964 in Ferro, pp. 114–115.

30 Torres Balbás 1957 in Ferro, p. 116.

31 Martos 1994 ; Borges 1985 ; Pires Gonçalves 1964 in Ferro, pp. 113–114.

32 Candeias et al. 2006 in Ferro, pp. 116–117.

and moral disorders were considered together,<sup>33</sup> the author reconsiders with an interdisciplinary methodology, the questions of the upside-down world and the monsters. It is an anthropological and visual analysis showing that such images were not only used as apotropaic items, but also associated with non-Christian cultures, in order to criticize the potential social and religious disorder caused by the Jews and Muslims at that time.<sup>34</sup> The author compares illustrations with medieval texts, either religious or profane, in order to underline the context of the creation of such figures and their use within the propaganda for the Crusades at that time.<sup>35</sup> We also reconsider the question of the visual construction of a Christian ‘self’ vs. the diversity of the representations of ‘otherness’.<sup>36</sup> The study has been extended to include an analysis of physical deformity and anatomical diseases, using as example animals and moral pollution of the ‘other’.<sup>37</sup> Such a context had a great influence on the ‘disguised’ or ‘erased’ image of the Jews, the Muslims and the Black people in medieval and early modern art, on the margins of manuscripts and in religious architecture at that time, because of their animal-like depiction, which enhanced a negative interpretation of their religious ‘otherness’.<sup>38</sup> The chapter explores how the process of stigmatization involves effects of surprise and wonder, as well as contempt and discredit, dwelling on how the artistic invention of non-human and post-human figures has been charged with solving political and social problems and disorders, providing support not only for religious propaganda, but also for attempts at moral normalization.

The eighth chapter, *Ephemeral Art and Otherness: The Image of the Muslim in Valencian Festivities and Triumphal Entries in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, is dedicated to the depiction of the Muslim ‘other’ in Iberia in civil and religious public celebrations. The author departs from the research regarding the history of *Moriscos* (‘Muslims forced to become Christians’) in 16th century Iberia and their conversion influenced by the Catholic Church, to analyze images depicting Muslim ‘others’ on ephemeral arches of triumph, created to honour the king, his deeds and the long-lasting memory of their victories.<sup>39</sup> The focus here is on the influence such images had on

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33 Müller 2014, pp. 737–790 ; Kendrick 2006, pp. 286–289 in Spissu, p. 125.

34 Camille 1992 ; Bakhtin 1968 in Spissu, p. 126.

35 Kahn 1997, pp. 337–372; Morrison 2007, p. 70 in Spissu, p. 128.

36 Frojmovic 2002 ; Lipton 1999 ; Strickland 2003, pp. 52–59 in Spissu, pp. 129, 131–132.

37 Lapina 2017; Monteiro Arias 2012 ; Losada 2015, pp. 206–227; Patton 2016, pp. 213–238 in Spissu, pp. 193.

38 Patton 2017, pp. 492–503 in Spissu, p. 140.

39 Arciniega 2006 ; Perceval 2017, p. 16 ; Ballester 2010, p. 303 in Franco, pp. 149–150.



the Christian viewers of that time, on their knowledge of the culture of the ‘other’ and on the impact such images had on their lives. The author focuses on the city of Valencia in this case study, because of the presence of *conversos* (‘converted Muslims’) at such event during the 16th century. Many *Moriscos* were living together with old Christians in this city<sup>40</sup> and the author reconsiders the fact that it was thought the ‘others’ had a rude and violent manner. He shows how the image of the ‘other’ was influenced by literature and mythological sources from the 15th century, and also how some programs were created taking into account the possible viewers, modifying some iconographies depending whether there were descendants among the public.<sup>41</sup> These ephemeral images also took in consideration the victories over the ‘other’ in the Mediterranean area, mainly focusing on the war against the Ottoman Empire.<sup>42</sup> The second part refers to a later triumphal entry, quoting the first one; it was one hundred years later, when the Muslims had been expelled from the city.<sup>43</sup> The author puts the visual representations in parallel, before and after the expulsion, by showing in which cases there were many representations of mythological<sup>44</sup> and animal figures that alluded to the Muslim ‘other’ and underlined how the images of saints (such as Saint James the Moor Slayer<sup>45</sup>) changed over the time on the ephemeral altars, due to the political intentions of the city council. The author also shows what role contemporary literature,<sup>46</sup> as well as Dominican and Jesuit preaching,<sup>47</sup> and emblematic literature played in the depiction of the Muslim ‘others’ on the triumphal entries during the 16th and the 17th centuries. He reconsiders the question of the construction of a collective memory<sup>48</sup> in Valencia.

The ninth chapter is dedicated to a *Tribute to Caesar: The Medicis’ Giraffe*. This chapter reconsiders the figurative impact of the giraffe, donated from the Mamluk to Lorenzo de Medici in 1487, in Florentine Renaissance painting. The exotic gift was to become a figurative anecdote, documented at the beginning of the 16th century by chroniclers and celebrated in the paintings of Ghirlandaio, Piero di Cosimo and Filippino Lippi, but also by the Venetian painter Gentile Bellini, who had been sent to the court of the

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40 Epalza 1998, pp. 149–162 in Franco, p. 150.

41 Checa 1992, p. 283; Falomir 1996, p. 415 in Franco, pp. 152 and 153.

42 Franco and García García 2019; García Bernal 2006, p. 91 in Franco, p. 153.

43 Falomir 1993 and 1996 ; Checa 1999 ; Olivares 2016 in Franco, pp. 151–152 and 153.

44 Ortí 2005, p. 48 in Franco, pp. 155.

45 Pizarro 1998, p. 415; Ortí 1640 (repr. 2005), p. 48 in Franco, pp. 155, 160 and 162.

46 Pizarro 1999, p. 23; Lope de Vega 1599, pp. 62–63 in Franco, pp. 156–157.

47 Callado 2009 in Franco, p. 157.

48 Assmann 2008 in Franco, p. 157.

Turks in Constantinople. The author underlines how the giraffe had been used in religious and historical images, as well as in political events, in order to quote the ‘otherness’ of the figures depicted, their relation to Antiquity and in relation to political power (such as the Magi and Caesar to whom Lorenzo de Medici had been compared).

The tenth chapter, *Survivals of Otherness: Astrological Frescoes in the Palazzo of Schifanoia in Ferrara, Italy*, reconsiders the heritage of Antiquity and Arabic Astronomy according to Aby Warburg’s methodology of reading Renaissance art.<sup>49</sup> According to the state of research on medieval Arabic astronomical books as known at the court of Ferrara<sup>50</sup> and the Antique legacy in Cosme Tura’s paintings, the main point of this chapter is to read the cycle of the months depicted in the Palace of Schifanoia.<sup>51</sup> The author departs from the main stream of research, which has shown the differences between the original and the Latin translation of astronomical manuscripts. By focusing on the month of March (depicted as a black man, interpreted as a figure of ‘otherness’), the study reveals the legacy of the Arabic language in images in astronomical books, translated into Latin in Italy. Showing the reverse sense of the reading of such images, the author reconsiders the sense of the reading of the entire cycle in the palace in Ferrara and demonstrates how, thanks to this method, the painter reveals a new and modern way of building images, like Andrea Mantegna and Albrecht Dürer at the same time, as well as reconsidering Antique visual and mythological sources.<sup>52</sup> Finally, this chapter concludes with the inclusion of figures of the ‘other’, as the best way to show how scientific knowledge of the ‘other’ related to Antiquity is included in Western Christian culture of the Italian Renaissance to show its power. But this would not be possible without the spatial inclusion of the viewer, whose emotions have been enhanced by the changes in the reading of the illustrations.<sup>53</sup> This dramatization of the scene uses ‘otherness’ in space and architecture at that time in the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara to show the political power of Borso d’Este in the Mediterranean context of the Renaissance period, as a heir of medieval intercultural exchanges between East and West that prefigured the Baroque aesthetic.

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49 Forster 2002, p. 6; Hagelstein 2010, p. 257 in Schaller, p. 195.

50 Warburg 1999b in Schaller, p. 198.

51 Bentini 2004, pp. 106–107 ; Boll 1903 ; Federici Vescovini 2006 in Schaller, pp. 196–197.

52 Lippincott 2006 ; Vaisse 1995 in Schaller, pp. 199–202.

53 Warburg 1999a ; Vaisse 1995 ; Posèq 1996, p. 17, notes 18–20 in Schaller, pp. 205 and 207.

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Michael A. Conrad

## 2. The Castle and the Lily: Samuel Ha-Levi's Synagogue and the Crises of 14th-Century Castile\*

Quite similar to the rest of Europe, 14th-century Castile was marked by a multitude of political, social and economic crises.<sup>54</sup> Not only did the Black Death eradicate large portions of the population, with King Alfonso XI (r. 1312–1350) ranking among one of the most famous victims, but also a simultaneously raging agricultural crisis would cause many survivors to starve. While social tensions, especially those related to the coexistence of Jews, Christians and Muslims, had been appeased during the past century, they would now intensify. Tensions between the high nobility (*grandes*) and the Kingdom of Castile increased as well and eventually exploded in a civil war during the reign of King Pedro I (r. 1350–1369). Sometimes referred to as the “Primera Guerra Civil Castellana,” this conflict started off as a local war of succession initiated by Pedro’s half-brother, Enrique de Trastámara, but soon spread over the whole realm, eventually resulting in a proxy war connected to the Hundred Years’ War between France and England. At its end, Enrique would emerge victorious, thereafter reigning as Enrique II (r. 1367–1379)<sup>55</sup> and establishing a new dynasty. Together with the other crises of the 14th century and other forms of continued violence, such as the “War of the Two Peters” between Castile and the Kingdom of Aragon (1356–1375), Pedro’s reign was a time of great domestic instability.

In spite of such events, it was during this period that three key buildings of Mudéjar style emerged. In fact, Pedro unfolded intense architectural advancement by completing palaces in Tordesillas, Astudillo, Carmona

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54 Oliva Herrero 2016; Valdeón Baroque 1966, pp. 2–82, names four major crises in Spain: “La crisis demográfica,” “los trastornos económicos,” “la tensión social,” and “la lucha política,” repeated in Valdeón Baroque 1986. However, to generalize that the 14th century was a time of crisis in all areas of life is problematic. Valdeón 2003, pp. 17–46, e.g., adds that the period saw progress in international trade and commerce of the time.

55 Enrique had already been declared king on March 13, 1366, but stayed in power only until April 3, 1367. As this period is disputable, I did not add it here.



Fig. 1: The decoration on the eastern wall of Samuel Ha-Levi's synagogue.  
Photo: © Michael A. Conrad, 2014.

and Seville.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, his reign saw the completion of some of the most celebrated parts of the Alhambra by Emir Muḥammad V of Granada (r. 1354–1359 and 1362–1391) and of Samuel ben Meir Ha-Levi Abulafia's (ca. 1320–1360) private synagogue (*Beit Kneset Sar Shmuel Halevi* and *Nasi Yisrael*), known as “El Tránsito” (Fig. 1).<sup>57</sup> As has been often observed, the interior decorations of these three buildings show great stylistic similarities and served representative functions,<sup>58</sup> which is also true for Ha-Levi's synagogue, which had not only been built as a space of worship, but as a display of his splendor, which is why Jerrilyn Dodds has compared it to a “palatine chapel.” The emergence of these three “palaces” marks an apex of

56 Almagro 2013. There is a building in Toledo known as “Palacio de Pedro I,” but the name seems a misattribution, as it probably was the home of Teresa de Ayala, the wife of Fernán Álvarez de Toledo.

57 Samuel was born in Úbeda, where a house ascribed to him still exists in the street of la Gradeta de Santo Tomás. Dodds 1992, pp. 126–128: “Samuel Halevi Abulafia had built a kind of ‘palatine chapel’ for himself, a grand private oratory of the type Christian kings often built for their private worship and that of their courts.” As for the stylistic similarities, see Ruiz Souza 2002, p. 239. Gerber 2012, p. 40, mentions the Hebrew name of the synagogue.

58 Gerber 2012, pp. 47–48; Dodds 1992, p. 128.

Mudéjar, which at the time had evolved into the preferred style for representative civic architecture in Castile.<sup>59</sup>

The similarities go even deeper, since the interior decorations of the Alcázar in Seville and the synagogue copy the Alhambra's Nasrid stylistic vocabulary. There are different theories, but it is most likely that the good diplomatic relations between Pedro I and Muḥammad V played a crucial role here.<sup>60</sup> Pedro had helped Muḥammad reclaim his throne in 1362, after his dethronement in 1359. According to some accounts, Muḥammad later sent Pedro artisans as a reward that had worked at the Alhambra and would now help him with the construction of the Alcázar in Seville. Juan Carlos Ruíz Souza, on the other hand, argues that artisans from Granada had already been present in Castile during the reign of Alfonso XI, who had initiated the works for the Mudéjar palace in Tordesillas, known today as the Monasterio de Santa Clara, which his son Pedro would complete later.<sup>61</sup>

Souza points out that the time of the interregnum of 1359–1362 in Granada coincided with a new wave of works in Castile influenced by Nasrid art, which was exactly when Samuel Ha-Levi erected his private synagogue with its characteristic syncretism of Islamic, Jewish and Gothic elements.<sup>62</sup> Given the growing tensions between Christians and non-Christians, its existence may seem astonishing. What one has to bear in mind though is that while a “persecution society,”<sup>63</sup> with tendencies to vilify and segregate marginal groups such as heretics and Jews, had already been forming beyond the Pyrenees during the 11th and 12th centuries, Castile had taken a different, more tolerant path. This does not imply that Jews had not been the targets of hostility – even in Castile, their lives were often precarious – but that Christian-Jewish coexistence had generally experienced greater stability during the second half of the 13th century.<sup>64</sup> This balance, however, was more often than not merely the result of political pragmatism: Jews officially belonged to the crown as its “assets” and therefore entertained its special protection; moreover, the king also depended on them as tax collectors and moneylenders.

During the 14th century, however, anti-Judaism increased in Castile as well, which can be probably best observed in the development of anti-Jewish legislation. Alfonso X, whose reign is often still considered the epitome of

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59 Dodds 1992, pp. 126–128.

60 Cp. María Casciaro 1946.

61 Ruiz Souza 1996; Ruiz Souza 2002, p. 237; Almagro 2005; Andrés Ordax 2010; Guillén 2010.

62 Ruiz Souza 2002, p. 237.

63 Moore 2009.

64 Irish 2016, pp. 257–261, esp. p. 259.

a more or less successful coexistence among the three religions of the book, had added some discriminatory laws to his *Siete Partidas*, many of which were modeled after the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). The respective laws for instance forbade sexual contacts between Christians and non-Christians, and determined that Jews should wear signs in public by which they would be easily identified. Some laws furthermore prohibited the building of new synagogues without royal consent.<sup>65</sup> However, Alfonso X never enforced these laws during his lifetime. At the Cortes of Zamora of 1301, Fernando IV (r. 1295–1312) would tighten already existing anti-Jewish regulations, which then would be reinforced by his son Alfonso XI in the *Ordenamiento de Alcalá* (1348). Both kings made it very clear that “the ultimate goal of coexistence between Christians and Jews” had by now become “the conversion of the latter.”<sup>66</sup> Apparently, these laws were not enforced either,<sup>67</sup> but their mere existence alone already accentuates how much anti-Jewish sentiments had gained ground in the meantime.<sup>68</sup> Even though such resentments knew many roots, the *caballeros villanos*, the urban “non-noble knights,”<sup>69</sup> were “the group most responsible for channeling and shaping the anti-Jewish sentiments emanating from a broad cross-section of the urban population of Castile.”<sup>70</sup> Many complaints brought forth at the Cortes attempted to squeeze Jews out of certain businesses, including trade, tax-collecting and moneylending, in which the *caballeros villanos* had become active as well. The “Jewish question” became an effective political leverage against the king, with the effect that the social tensions expressed through anti-Judaic resentments would more and more overlap with general conflicts of power.<sup>71</sup>

This intersection of weakening royal power and the increase of anti-Judaism created an explosive mix that eventually erupted in aforementioned civil war during the past years of Pedro’s reign. The actual Civil War actually only spanned the years 1366–69, yet its roots lay much deeper, in a dynastic crisis that had been overshadowing Pedro’s reign from the very beginnings. What one has to consider here is that Enrique de Trastámara and his twin brother Fadrique Alfonso were Alfonso XI’s oldest sons, yet only technically, since they were the offspring of the long-term, illegitimate

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65 *Siete Partidas*, VII, t. 24, l. 11.

66 Estow 1995, p. 161.

67 Estow 1995, p. 162.

68 Irish 2016, pp. 226, 236.

69 Irish 2016, p. 230.

70 Irish 2016, p. 233.

71 Herbers 2006, p. 251.

relationship between the king and his concubine Leonor de Gúzman (1310–1351).<sup>72</sup> Encouraged by the members of the high nobility, Enrique would later claim the throne and stage several rebellions against Pedro, beginning almost immediately after Alfonso XI's sudden death.<sup>73</sup>

Apart from various military actions, during which he even formed alliances with Castile's enemies Aragon and France, Enrique's main strategy consisted in undermining Pedro's legitimacy by manipulating public opinion with slanderous propaganda. One vantage point was that Pedro had persecuted and severely punished resistant members of the high nobility, which had earned him the cognomen "el Cruel," while his allies would refer to him as "el Justiciero."<sup>74</sup> Enrique exploited these emotions by portraying Pedro as a tyrant, under whom the country suffered, while at the same time fashioning himself its liberator.<sup>75</sup> He intensified this rhetoric by tapping into prevailing anti-Jewish sentiments and fostering the notion that "the Jews were driving Christians to poverty and profiting from their misery."<sup>76</sup> In a catalog of complaints presented at Burgos on April 13, 1363, Enrique accused Pedro of being an "evil tyrant" and an "enemy of God and the Holy Mother Church," abandoning "the Catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ [. . .and] promoting, enriching and ennobling Jews and Moors (*acrecentando e enriqueciendo los moros e los judios e enseñorandolos*)."<sup>77</sup>

The propagandistic machine Enrique had set into motion did not stop here. A legend circulating at the time even claimed that Pedro was the bastard son of Queen Doña María and Juan Alfonso Alburquerque, Pero Gil, a rumor based on the name of Albuquerque's legitimate son, Martín Gil, who would later find an unfortunate end by being executed on Pedro's command. Referring to this legend of "Pero Gil," Enrique's party would occasionally

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72 Herbers 2006, p. 254; Estow 1995, pp. 5, 8, 21, 24, and 28–36. If the recorded dates are correct, Pedro was born on August 30, 1334, while Enrique and Fadrique were born in the Alcázar of Seville in the January of 1333 or 1334.

73 For a summary of these events, see Deimann 2012, pp. 271–284.

74 In defiance of such ascriptions, Pedro's rule did in fact not differ much from any other of his time, cp. García Fernández 2016.

75 Herbers 2006, pp. 255–256 adds that Pedro had no legitimate heir, which weakened his position even further.

76 Estow 1995, pp. 155–179; Irish 2016, pp. 221–222.

77 Serrano 1907, pp. 217–219, written in Burgos, April 13, 1366; cp. Estow 1995, p. 175; Devia 2011. Enrique's use of anti-Jewish propaganda to delegitimize Pedro has been researched intensively, cp. the list of literature given in Irish 2016, pp. 221–222, n. 2; more current study is Montes Romero-Camacho 2016. On the anti-Jewish discourse in Castile in general, see Irish 2016, pp. 221–261.

vilify Pedro's supporters as *emperogilados*.<sup>78</sup> Another legend went even further, accusing Pedro of Jewish ancestry. Even though it is not likely that such slander was taken very seriously, it was nonetheless popular – not only in Castile, but also among those French and English mercenaries who would come to Spain, offering their services to one or the other warring party. These soldiers would carry such stories with them on their itineraries through Castile and beyond, thus serving as the voluntary “messengers” for Enrique's propaganda.<sup>79</sup> This way Enrique succeeded in passing on his own illegitimacy to Pedro. A byproduct was the erosion of the principle of royal descent, now replaced with a new one, according to which the king had to prove his qualification through his deeds first. Origin alone was not sufficient anymore – a novelty in Spain.<sup>80</sup>

Pedro I eventually died on the battlefields of Montiel in 1369; later accounts claimed he had been slain by Enrique, but this might be a literary invention. After stabilizing his power, Enrique, however, would not turn out as anti-Jewish as feared. Instead, he would show a pragmatism similar to his predecessors and again employ Jews at court.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, his campaign had opened Pandora's Box, poisoning public discourse and making it as good as impossible to return to a more pacific mode of coexistence between Christians and Jews. Eventually, Enrique gave in to the frequently uttered demands of the nobility and enforced anti-Jewish legislation, making him probably the first Spanish ruler to do so since the Visigoths.<sup>82</sup> There are accounts stating that, before his death, he even requested Jews should no longer hold any public office.<sup>83</sup> Although this did not happen immediately, it would become the final stage in a gradual process of excluding Jews from public life. Such segregation made it even easier for persecution to take hold, resulting in the most severe series of pogroms against Jews that had ever taken place in medieval Iberia, beginning in 1391 and spreading across

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78 Amador de los Ríos, José 1875–1876, pp. 143–256; Ríos y Ríos 1900; Valdeón Baruque 1966, pp. 6–7. esp. p. 207; Herbers 2006, p. 255; Nirenberg 2006; Montes Romero-Camacho 2016, pp. 126–128.

79 Montes Romero-Camacho 2016, p. 126, who refers to Valdeón Baruque 1968 and Suárez Fernández 1988.

80 Cp. Montes Romero-Camacho 2016, p. 126.

81 Valdeón Baruque 1966, pp. 332–334; cp. Estow 1995, p. 175.

82 Most important in this regard were the Cortes in Toro (1369) and Burgos (1374 and 1377), cp. Valdeón Baruque 1966, pp. 329–330.

83 Cp. N. N. 1879(?), pp. 14–15, Petición X: “Que los judios non sean almozarifes nin mayordomos de ningund cavallero nin escudero, non ayan oficios suyos; pero que puedan bivar con ellos.”



many cities of Castile, Aragon and Navarre, and preparing the ground for their eventual expulsion in 1492.<sup>84</sup>

## The Seam of the Worlds

Enrique's accusation of Pedro "ennobling" Jews and Muslims is in many ways reflected in the person of Samuel Ha-Levi himself,<sup>85</sup> who served as Pedro's treasurer (*almojarife*) from 1353 to 1360.<sup>86</sup> The king bestowed upon him several privileges, including royal seal-bearer and occasionally serving as royal judge and diplomat.<sup>87</sup> These privileges probably made him the most powerful Jew in Christendom and an easy target for Enrique's anti-Judaic propaganda. However, Enrique never makes explicit mention of the treasurer's name, even though he must have known him from court. For reasons unknown, Pedro imprisoned Ha-Levi around 1360 and had him tortured at the royal dockyards of Seville (*atarazanas reales*), where he would eventually die. The fact of torture seems to imply that Pedro had suspected Ha-Levi of conspiring against him, whereas Ha-Levi's downfall also had the beneficial, albeit certainly not intended, side effect for Pedro that he could thus prove his independence from Jewish influence.

If and how exactly this event relates to Enrique's anti-Jewish propaganda is unclear, particularly because of the lack of appropriate records. Ha-Levi's powerful position will have not only displeased members of the Castilian nobility, but some co-religionists as well. At the time, the Jewish community of Toledo, numbering between 3,600 and 12,000 individuals organized in about fourteen synagogues and schools,<sup>88</sup> suffered from many internal conflicts.<sup>89</sup> There was, for instance, a social tension between the Jewish "aristocracy," to which Ha-Levi belonged, and the rest of the Jewish population living in urban centers and rural regions. Moreover, there were

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84 Herbers 2006, pp. 307–310.

85 The building dates are still a matter of debate, mainly due to a lack of sufficient documentation. Many records of Pedro I's reign disappeared after his death, maybe the result of *damnatio memoriae* (s. Estow 1995, pp. xxii–xxvi). Even though Samuel Ha-Levi is introduced as the king's treasurer in Pedro López Ayala's *Chronicles* (esp. in chapters XV and XXII, Ayala 1779, pp. 195–197, 322–323), no mention is made of his synagogue. Muñoz Garrido 2014 assumes the building was completed in 1361–1362.

86 Gerber 2012, p. 44.

87 Muñoz Garrido 2014, p. 242.

88 Gerber 2012, p. 190; Baer 1966, p. 190.

89 Yitzhak Baer dedicated two subchapters of his seminal work to the internal conflicts of the Jewish community, see Baer 1966, pp. 212–231 and pp. 236–242.

religious conflicts, which mostly were the result of the growing influence of Ashkenazic traditions and the Maimonidean Controversies.<sup>90</sup> Consequently, Jewish identities were quite diverse and complex, which is why the term “coexistence” does not only apply to and reflect Christian-Jewish, but Jewish-Jewish relations as well,<sup>91</sup> thereby creating a landscape of “individual Jews of different backgrounds, rationalists as well as mystics, who developed antinomian attitudes – and some of whom finally broke away from Judaism.”<sup>92</sup> A general development was that the Jews of Castile would, in contrast to previous centuries, become increasingly detached from the Islamic world and orient themselves more toward northern Europe.<sup>93</sup>

The first sentences of an inscription on a memorial plaque on a panel to the right of the ark of Ha-Levi’s synagogue relate to the complicated political situation (Fig. 2): “Of the graces of the Lord let us sing and of the works of the Lord according to what he has bestowed on us and hath done great things with us. . . instituting judges and ministers to save his people from the hand of/Enemies and oppressors.”<sup>94</sup> In 1355, only a few years before the works on the synagogue began, Enrique’s troops had sacked the Alcaná, the lesser Jewish quarter of Toledo, massacring many of its inhabitants and plundering their possessions. Pedro’s army arrived just in time to prevent the *enriquistas* from entering the main *judería*.<sup>95</sup> It might well be that this event persuaded Pedro to give Ha-Levi the special permission for building his synagogue on the remains of an older one from Muslim times.<sup>96</sup> Ha-Levi’s achievements at court will have played a crucial role as well.<sup>97</sup> The way by which the quoted

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90 Zimmels 1958, pp. 21–35, esp. p. 21; Assis 1995. As for the harsh critique of kabbalists against the moral lifestyles of wealthy Jewish courtiers, especially in the *Zohar*, see Bossong 2016, pp. 44–45. The arrival of Rabbi Asher ben Yehiel in Toledo in 1304 is considered a peak of Ashkenazic influence in Spain.

91 Zimmels 1958, p. 1, explicitly uses the term “coexistence” for describing the relationship between Ashkenazim and Sephardim in Spain.

92 Assis 1995, pp. 120–121.

93 Irish 2016, p. 152.

94 For a general analysis of the inscriptions of synagogues on the Iberian Peninsula, see Muñoz Garrido 2014, pp. 133–152. Translations of the Hebrew inscriptions of Ha-Levi’s synagogue to Spanish can be found in Roth 1948, here p. 19; the English translation follows Gerber 2012, p. 51.

95 Cp. Estow 1995, p. 155; Ayala 1779, pp. 185–186.

96 Gerber 2012, pp. 39–40, who quotes Palomero Plaza et al. 1992; cp. Dodds 1992, pp. 124–128; Estow 1995, pp. 167–169.

97 Muñoz Garrido 2014, p. 242. Gerber 2012, pp. 39–40 considers a few more possibilities, such as bribing; furthermore, the legal prohibition maybe “did not apply to synagogues dedicated in private homes, a favored method in both Christian and Muslim territories to circumvent the ban against the erection of new synagogues.” The synagogue was indeed in swinging distance from what is



Fig. 2: The memorial plaque on the right side of the ark with the coat-of-arms of the King of Castile and León. Photo: © Michael A. Conrad, 2014.

inscriptions address Pedro as protector of the Jews fit this interpretation and are reminders of how much they depended on the king's goodwill, who is accordingly praised as "the great eagle with great wings, the man of war and of battle [. . .] the great king, our shelter and lord, the King Don Pedro."<sup>98</sup>

Some of the more private motives for erecting the synagogue are addressed in the inscriptions as well; they, for instance, state that Samuel had dedicated the building to the commemoration of his father Rabbi Meir Ha-Levi.<sup>99</sup> Other inscriptions support Samuel Ha-Levi's desire for displaying

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believed to be Ha-Levi's former house, which today accommodates the Museo del Greco. Gerber 2012, p. 44, mentions that Samuel built even more synagogues, especially in Toledo and Seville.

<sup>98</sup> Roth 1948, p. 20.

<sup>99</sup> Muñoz Garrido 2014, 2014, pp. 234–237.



Fig. 3: Samuel Ha-Levi's coat-of-arms in close-up. Photo: © Daniel Muñoz Garrido.

his power and accentuating his self-esteem, for instance by addressing him as a “Prince of Israel” (*Nasi Yisrael*)<sup>100</sup> and alluding to his noble lineage.<sup>101</sup> Underpinning such claims of aristocracy, he even appropriated Christian heraldry: a repeated decorative element on the interior walls consists of Ha-Levi's proper coat of arms, which combines the castle of Castile with two *fleurs-de-lis* (Fig. 3).<sup>102</sup> Although the *fleur de lys*, actually an iris, is nowadays associated with the Kingdom of France, the symbol had in fact been used in Jewish art since antiquity.<sup>103</sup> The lily (*shoshan*) is even mentioned in the Bible, most prominently in the *Song of Songs*<sup>104</sup> and as a decorative element of Salomon's Temple.<sup>105</sup> *Fleurs de lys* also appears on Jewish signet

100 Roth 1948, p. 20: “príncipe entre los príncipes del cuerpo levítico, Samuel Ha-Levi.”

101 Muñoz Garrido 2014, p. 244.

102 Muñoz Garrido 2014, p. 249, who dedicates a chapter to the use of *fleurs de lys* by Jews (pp. 153–170).

103 It is, for example, found on a Jewish coin dating back to ca. 320 B.C., cp. Meshorer 1966, pl. 1, x.

104 Song 2:1.

105 1 Kgs 7:19–20. Ilia Rodov makes an important visual-semantic difference between the depictions of lilies enface (*shoshanah*), and in profile as *fleurs de lys* (*havatzelet*), see Rodov 2003, p. 106. A more detailed analysis of the floral symbol and its iconographic, literary and mystic traditions in connection with

rings from medieval Iberia<sup>106</sup> and in the corners of the painted framework of a miniature in the *Rylands Haggadah*.<sup>107</sup>

Daniel Muñoz Garrido recently suggested an interpretation for the deeper symbolic meaning of the synagogue that he based on correspondences between the decorations and inscriptions.<sup>108</sup> Accordingly, the architectural order would reflect the medieval understanding of the creation account as an intimate relationship between terrestrial and celestial Jerusalem.<sup>109</sup> The arboreal decorations of the lower ornamental zones of the walls would thus symbolize terrestrial life in its fertility and lushness.<sup>110</sup> The surfaces of the walls generally entail a horizontal orientation, whereas the series of highly decorated horseshoe arcades of the window zone show an emphatically vertical orientation. Double columns with varying capitals frame the alternately open and closed arcades, with the open arcades serving as windows covered with *transennae*, translucent lattices of stone (Fig. 1). The geometrical patterns fracture the entering light and create a mythical illumination that refers to the omnipresence of God. Corresponding to Talmudic tradition, windows were important constructive parts of synagogues, although it must be added at this point that the practice of fenestration was recommended but not mandatory.<sup>111</sup> Other commentators furthermore added that the windows should face toward Jerusalem and that it would be best if synagogues

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Halevi's synagogue would be a very promising endeavor, but must be, due to the comprehensiveness of its nature, left to future research.

106 Muñoz Garrido 2014, p. 169. One striking example that combines *fleurs-de-lys* and the castle of Castile in a way similar to Ha-Levi's coat of arms is kept at the Museo Sefardí in Toledo, inv. nr. 216, cp. Bango Torviso 2002, pp. 126–127.

107 John Rylands Library, Manchester, Hebrew Mss. 906, f. 15r. In his dissertation, Ilia Rodov has analyzed the frequent use of the *shoshan* in Azkhenazi synagogues between Worms and Cracow, see Rodov 2003, vol. 1, esp. pp. 105–106. With reference to Song of Songs 2:1 the *shoshan* was in rabbinical literature often understood as an allegory of “God's bride,” that is, “the people of Israel.” Rodov also mentions a 4th-century eschatological interpretation that associates the *shoshanah* with the redemption of the world (p. 105). Victor Klagsbald has furthermore pointed out the possibility that *shoshanah* and *havatzelet* could both symbolize the Shield of David (Magen David) as a hexagram, see Klagsbald 1997, pp. 25–38.

108 Muñoz Garrido 2014, p. 139.

109 Grabar 1992.

110 Cp. Muñoz Garrido 2010.

111 Berachot 34b, which refers to Dan 6:10. Maimonides (1138–1204), for example, relates that windowless synagogues did in fact exist and asserts that windows were only required for those who pray at home (Maimonides, *Responsa* 216); I thank Ilia Rodov for having pointed out this source to me.

had twelve windows.<sup>112</sup> The inscriptions surrounding the ark of Ha-Levi's synagogue explicitly praise the windows, referring to them as the "windows of Ariel," that is, Jerusalem.<sup>113</sup> Due to their position high above floor level, the whole interior appears as if submerged, reminding spectators of their earthliness and distance from God. Through the excessive decoration of the windows, the gaze opens up to the anticipation of the Messiah's soon arrival and the things to come in the glory of God.<sup>114</sup>

The window frames consist of very narrow horseshoe arcades with pointed upper ends, which resemble the abstract shape of the human body as the material link between the terrestrial and celestial. A seven-foil blind arch frames the head-like shapes like a gloriolate, thereby highlighting the theological significance of the number seven. This window form was widespread in Toledo – it is, for instance, found at the church of San Román. A drawn reconstruction by Basilio Pavón Maldonado illustrates that each arch was filled with one strongly textured pinecone enclosed with a bipartite leaf ornament (Fig. 4).<sup>115</sup> A similar motif is known from the plasterwork decorations at the Patio de los Arrayanes of the Alhambra. Protruding sculptural pinecones also adorn the capitals of Toledo's other still extant synagogue, today known as Santa María La Blanca.

If one takes Muñoz Garrido's cosmological interpretation at face value, the simple fact that the decoration is composed of separate panels becomes relevant as well. Hebrew inscriptions, mostly psalms, run around the whole building, simultaneously connecting and separating the panels. Like a seam, the Word of God that created and separated the Heaven and the Earth similarly separates and connects the decorative elements. This dialectic of separation and connection accounts for the central aesthetic principle that organizes the diverse materials and establishes an analogy between architectural disposition and biblical teaching.

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112 Orach Chayim 90:4: "It is necessary to open openings or windows in facing Jerusalem, so as to pray opposite them. And it is recommended for a synagogue to have twelve windows," cp. Beyth HaK'neseth 1969–2000, pp. 82–84. There are earlier mentions that the windows should be opened toward Jerusalem, including the aforementioned verse Dan 6:10 and the *Book of Zohar*, periscope *Pekudei* 2:251.

113 Roth 1948, p. 19; Gerber 2012, p. 50.

114 "And there is no King in Israel, he hath not left us without a Redeemer," Roth 1948, p. 19; Gerber 2012, p. 51.

115 Pavón Maldonado 1988, p. 184. Today these pinecones are alternately colored in red and green.

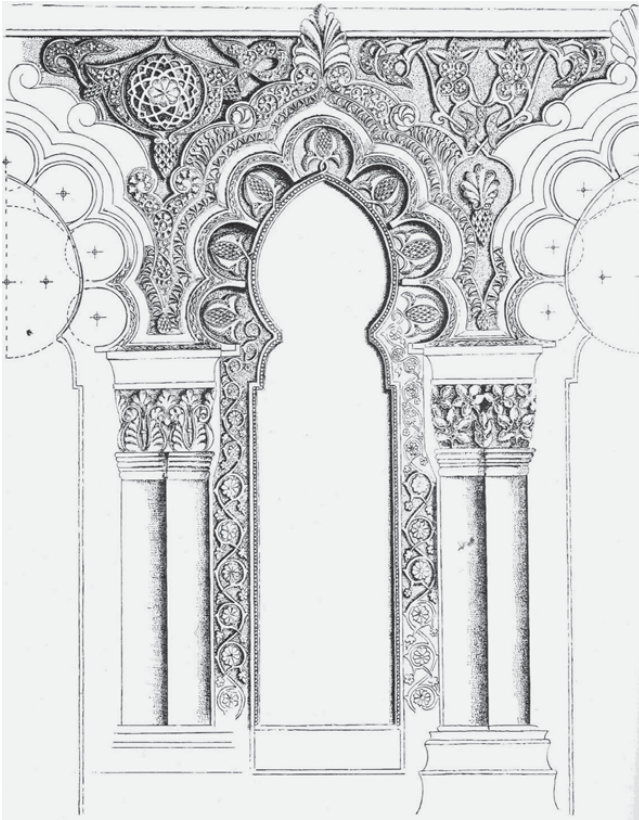


Fig. 4: Basilio Pavón Maldonado's drawn reconstruction of a seven-lobed window of the eastern wall in Samuel Ha-Levi's Synagogue, in Pavón Maldonado 1988, p. 184.

### A Monument of Unity?

The ominous situation of the Jews of Castile during the fraternal strife between Pedro and Enrique appears to be an important key for a deeper understanding of the motivation and purpose of Samuel Ha-Levi's synagogue. Instead of only saying that it was built *in spite* of the many crises of 14th-century Castile, it seems just as justified to say that it was built *because* of them. Ha-Levi's ostentatious exposition of self-confidence is a statement of the Jewish community's belonging to Castile and its loyalty to the crown. Siding with Pedro was a question of survival for Ha-Levi and his co-religionists, who must have very much feared Enrique's accession of power. Yet even apart from this general crisis of power, it still holds true that

Ha-Levi identified with the Crown of Castile, as proven by his appropriation of Christian heraldry, which was also intended as an expression of his political equality in relation to the nobility, in spite of being similarly aware of prevailing inequalities. This did not come without certain dangers, as this pride apparently confirmed Enrique's claims according to which Pedro would "ennoble" Jews.

The ambivalence of appropriating Christian symbols relates to the complexity of Jewish identity at the time. Ha-Levi uses the vocabulary of Christian aristocracy for expressing his elevated social and political status. Such behavior was not perceived as problematic per se, for the halakhic principle *dina de-malkhuta dina* – "the law of the country is binding" – determined that Jews living in Diaspora (*Galut*) should comply with the laws of the local non-Jewish – in this case: christian – powers.<sup>116</sup> Showing too much closeness to or even affection for the Christian rulers and nobility of Iberia, who would at times kidnap Jews for ransom money and began to prosecute them more openly than in previous centuries, still would not have been appreciated and met with suspicion, at least by some. Ha-Levi's synagogue therefore also testifies the politically challenging task of trying to balance his belonging to the local Jewish community, the loyalty to the Crown of Castile, and his own search for an architectural vocabulary that would suit his desire of self-representation as an authoritative figure within that same community.<sup>117</sup> Accordingly, as a compound of stylistic elements of different cultural origins, the complex decorative system of his synagogue also represents an evocation of unity in times of increasing segregation. Together with the sporadic use of Arabic, which still served as a *lingua franca* in Castile,<sup>118</sup> the synagogue reached out to other Diasporic communities.

However, public evocations of unity often indicate a lack thereof. In this view, the emphasis of unity also underlines the discordances within the Jewish community due to internal and external conflicts. There undoubtedly is pride in how Samuel Ha-Levi, the "Jewish Prince," presents his synagogue as a monumental palace, yet this does not come without constant reminders of how deeply his power depended on the grace of the Castilian king. The choice of Mudéjar style itself was a concession to the Christian rulers, since Pedro and his father Alfonso XI had chosen the style as a preferred architectural vocabulary for their display of power. This connection between

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116 Goldberg 2008. I follow Ilia Rodov's translation of the phrase, see Rodov 2009, p. 457.

117 Dodds 1992, p. 128.

118 Assis 1995, p. 112: "The encounter with Islamic culture [. . .] produced nothing less than a revolution. The Jewish world became essentially Arabic-speaking"; cp. Dodds 1992, p. 125.



aesthetics and politics was maintained even long after Pedro's unfortunate reign. With the Capilla Real at the Mezquita-Cathedral of Córdoba, even Enrique II himself would complete a Mudéjar work,<sup>119</sup> which was rather unproblematic though, for it was not the style that would have been identified with the "other." Enrique's propaganda had targeted Jews as a religious group, but left their architectural aesthetics untouched. This might also help explain why Vincente Ferrer, whose vitriolic sermons paved the way for the atrocious pogroms of 1391, would still be able to appreciate the beauty of Ha-Levi's synagogue and spare it from destruction.<sup>120</sup>

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119 For more information on the Capilla Real, see Ruiz Souza 2006 and Giese 2018.

120 *Primera parte de la Córónica general der toda España, y especialmente del reyno de Valencia*, Valencia, 1546, chapter. XXIV, f. 78v. Cp. Gil 2009, p. 135. On the fate of Ha-Levi's synagogue after his death, see Cadiñanos Bardecí 2011 and Palomero Plaza 2007.

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### 3. Jews and *Conversos* in Christian Space: Distinctive Signs of the ‘Other’ in the St. Blaise Chapel in the Cathedral of Toledo in Spain

#### Introduction

#### Political and Social Context

After 1085, the Jews in Toledo belonged to the Kingdom of Castile.<sup>121</sup> The *aljama* (Jewish community) was the largest one in Castile (i.e. one quarter of the entire population of the city). Jews lived among Christians and Muslims and took part in the political and economic life of the city. Although the relationships between Jews, Christians and Muslims in Spain has been interpreted as positive and often romanticized as the *convivencia*, there were violent outbursts against the Jews. These worsened at the end of the 13th century when Andalusia was reconquered from the Muslims. During that period, the legislation changed for Jews, who were considered ‘foreign’ people.<sup>122</sup> While the Church condemned usury, Talmudic interpretations of the Bible<sup>123</sup> allowed Jews to lend money to non-Jews, which would have been a very interesting situation for them.<sup>124</sup> Their activity was meant to cover the financial needs of Christians.

The Catholic Church had prohibited moneylending and usury for Christians in 1215; it considered them as deadly sins and the sign of an unwillingness of the Jews to convert to Christianity. According to St. Augustine, their refusal to believe in the Incarnation and in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist was considered as *acedia* (“the deadly sin of sloth”) or as blindness.<sup>125</sup> The Church stated that Judas was responsible for Jesus’

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121 The question of ‘otherness’ on the choir-screen of Toledo is published in the conference proceedings of IMC 2017 in Leeds “Otherness” ed. by Hans-Werner Goetz and Ian Wood.

122 Soifer Irish 2016, pp. 2–12; Mann 2010, 2011; Bale 2000; Nirenberg 2002a; Nirenberg 2002b; Patton 2012, p. 32; Constable and Zurro 2012, p. xxxi.

123 Deuteronom XXIII, 19–20; Ray 2012; Roth 1994; Toaff et al. 2007, p. 146.

124 Cassandro 1996, p. 15.

125 Fredriksen 2008, p. XII.

death and considered him a traitor, because he had sold Jesus to the priests of the temple. By extension, all Jews were held responsible for Jesus' death. Since that time, Jews were no longer permitted to have any type of relationship with Christians, and they had to wear a clear distinctive sign on their clothes when they were walking the streets in Christian cities.<sup>126</sup>

In the Kingdom of Castile, in 1219, Pope Honorius III allowed the bishop of Toledo not to impose this distinctive sign on Jews, in order to prevent them from fleeing to the Kingdom of the Moors.<sup>127</sup> But King Alfonso X's laws, in the *Fuero real* and *Las Siete Partidas* (1263), imposed distinctive signs on Jews and on servants, in order to regulate the life of the inhabitants in Castile.<sup>128</sup> (Jews were considered as property of the king.) In 1313, the Infant Don Juan accepted the decisions of the Cortes of Palencia and imposed a round, yellow, distinctive sign on all Jews to be worn on their mantles as in France.<sup>129</sup> After 1391, a round red distinctive sign is depicted on the left shoulder of Jews in Castile, in Christian manuscripts.<sup>130</sup>

From the 13th century onwards, Catholic missionaries were begged to talk with Jews and Muslims in order to convert them. Dominicans and Franciscans played an essential role in the conversion of these others (i.e. Jews and Muslims) and in the spread of anti-Jewish theology, images and legends. The monks rejected the works of Jewish philosophers and criticized new Jewish spiritual currents such as the *Kabbalah*.<sup>131</sup> Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews also had contact with each other, since Ashkenazic philosophy was introduced into Spain during the Middle Ages. Religious relationships between both communities would never have been possible without the legislation that implied Jews could lend money to Christians. Although Jews and Christians had had economic contacts since the 10th century, during the 13th century anti-Jewish legislation was passed to regulate moneylending, to forbid Christians to use the services of Jewish wet nurses,

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126 Schroeder 1937, pp. 290–291; García García 1981, pp. 107–108; A. García García 1981, p. 108.

127 Baer 1970, § 46.

128 Alfonso el Sabio 1972, Partida 7.

129 Baer 1970, § 138; Fierro 2011, p. 92.

130 Bizzarri 2001, p. 171 For the image, see *Jews Paying the Tribute in Coins* in AA. VV. 1391, fol. 25r prov. San Lorenzo el Real. Portmann 2016, p. 332 See also 'Rabbi Moisés Arragel de Guadalajara discussing with Brother Arias de Encinas, the Superior of the Franciscan monastery in Toledo', in the *Bible of Alba*, finished in Maqueda in 1430–33, Madrid, Biblioteca del Palacio de Liria, fol. 11v in Nordström 1967, pp. 13–16 about the colophon and p. 17 about the scrutiny which seems to have been similar with public disputation. Fellous 2001.

131 Derbes 1996; Ben-Aryeh Debby 2000; Füllenbach 2015; St. Thomas Aquinas 1947; Vose 2009; Idel 1992; Caputo 2007; Di Giacomo 2009.

to have sexual relationships with Jews, or even to own books forbidden to Christians (e.g. the *Talmud*).<sup>132</sup> These regulations restricted Jewish dealings with Christians. They were followed by pogroms and forced conversion of the Jews during the 14th century. This context influenced the manner of portraying not only medieval Jews, but also of depicting the Protoplasts, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Hebrew people, etc. Our purpose here will focus on the question of the visual construction of the Christendom vs. of the ‘Otherness’ of Jews and *Conversos*.

### **Otherness and Architecture in the Cathedral of Toledo**

In the cathedral of Toledo, which had been built on the site of a former mosque and also on the site of a former Jewish cemetery, architectural elements from earlier buildings had been reused, e.g. the columns of the choir enclosure. The depiction of ‘otherness’ – as opposed to, but still being part of Christian identity – was influenced by a rich and complex history that involved the three religions of the book. Although the representation here was intended to define a proper Christian identity as opposed to Jews (as enemies), Jewish patriarchs and prophets were still considered positive moral models of faiths and as forerunners of Jesus and of Christians themselves. Therefore, their distinctive signs are not as evident as are those worn by bad Jews, who wore a headdress or yellow robes. Distinctive marks of ‘otherness’ had been reproduced on artworks commissioned by Bishop Pedro Tenorio (1377–99) in the Cathedral of Toledo among others.

Bishop Tenorio had been engaged by the papacy to deal with the Spanish kingdom in Italy and Portugal.<sup>133</sup> He travelled to the Kingdom of Aragon, where he might have been in contact with Jewish illuminated manuscripts and with Christian artists.<sup>134</sup> A Valencian sculptor, named Juan de Valencia, was employed in the cathedral in 1355. Similarities with the north transept portal in the Cathedral of Valencia have been noted by Nickson, illustrating the fact that Valencian sculptors had worked on that choir screen. The sculptures are similar to those in the Santa Caterina Chapel, on the southern tympanum and at the entrance to Bishop Tenorio’s burial chapel. Ferrand González, whose name had been found on the frescoes in the funerary chapel before the last restoration, and Esteve Rovira from Cyprus had been influenced by Italian painters such as Starnina, who travelled from Florence

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132 Nirenberg 2014; Nirenberg 2015; Mann 2010; Bale 2006; Soifer Irish 2016, pp. 183–186.

133 Foster 2010, p. 100.

134 Regarding the origin of the person who made the miniatures of the *Golden Haggadah* (British Library, Add. Ms. 27210), see Shatzmiller 2013, pp. 132–133.

to Valencia and Toledo.<sup>135</sup> They painted the main altarpiece and the frescoes in the St. Blaise Chapel in the Cathedral of Toledo.

Not only the bishop's travels, but also his letters regarding Jews,<sup>136</sup> and his wide biblical knowledge had an impact on his artistic commands – as the donation of his library in 1383 shows.<sup>137</sup> Finally, it is possible that Bishop Tenorio's own Jewish doctor, Rabbi Hayyim,<sup>138</sup> who converted in 1390 and took the name of Pedro, could have had significant influence on the choice of the scenes depicted on the choir screen, because they quote the Old Testament in two ways: they refer to both the text of the *Haggadah*, to *The Talmud* and to Jewish and Patristic exegesis, to Adamic exegesis, as well as to a *Bible of Saint Louis* and to descriptions of the wall paintings in the Old St. Peter in Rome.<sup>139</sup> Therefore, we can assume that the commendatory on the choir screen (or at least the sculptor) had a certain knowledge of Jewish interpretations of 'the Old Testament' and of the depiction of Jewish otherness; these negative features are always linked to bad moral behaviour.<sup>140</sup>

### The Main Altarpiece

The main altarpiece in Toledo was dedicated to St. Eugene. On the panels, Esteve Rovira from Cyprus painted the *Adoration of the Magi*, the *Presentation in the Temple*, the *Flight into Egypt*, *Jesus among the Doctors of the Law* and the *Baptism of Jesus*. On the *predella* ('serie of panels in the lower part of the altarpiece'), *The Prayer of Jesus in Gethsemani*, *The Arrest of Jesus* and scenes from His Passion are placed side by side and may have been inspired by Starnina.

In the *Presentation in the Temple*, the architecture of the Temple is octagonal. In the middle, Simeon is shown receiving the Infant Jesus. Simeon is wearing a long robe like a priest and a pointed headdress with a crown, which resembles a tiara and the high priest's headdress. The columns of the Temple divide the sacred from the profane spaces. Behind the high priest, a

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135 Esteve Rovira and workshop, *Main Altarpiece*, c. 1387–1418, Cathedral, Toledo, in Miquel Juan 2013; Nickson 2015, p. 202; Cedillo and Revuelta Tubino (introd.), Matilde 1919, p. 234; Blanco Mozo 2014, p. 321.

136 AA. VV. 2016, p. 348.

137 Lop Otín 2008, 256; Faulhaber 1987, p. 169.

138 Archivo Catedralicio de Toledo, A.8.H.1.4. (1383, October 15) in Baer 1970, 241.

139 Nickson 2011, 73 and 80; Lipton 1999; María Ángela Franco Mata, María Ángela Franco 1993; Portmann forthcoming, p. 7 Regarding the *Haggadah of Sarajevo* and the *Bible of St. Louis* (Morgan Bible, Paris, ca. 1240s, New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms M. 638) see Sabar 2018, pp. 96–98.

140 Nickson, pp. 46–50.



man with red hair and a crooked nose is depicted in profile and, on the left side, St. Joseph has been placed behind the Virgin Mary: they seem to be mirroring each other, revealing their Jewish identity as being a part of but at the same time different from that of the central figures. Joseph is shown looking at Jesus and, at the same time, gesturing to a young man in profile behind him. On the other side, a woman, wearing a long blue headdress is holding her left hand, as though she is welcoming a speech. In the front row, three young persons can be seen from the back, as the so-called *repoussoirs* ('figures that lead the viewers to look into the scene'). Behind them are two houses set apart from the Temple, the architecture of which is not completely visible. The woman's gesture and the placement of the Jew (in profile) can be interpreted as a welcoming of the Christian interpretation of Jesus' double nature – man and God – which is repeated on the other side by Joseph (who underline His human nature and recall the Incarnation). Finally, the gesture of the woman on the right is repeated by the high priest who is welcoming Jesus. The importance of the Infant is emphasized by the baldachin that was pictured and placed in the middle of the composition over Jesus' head, in order to enhance the focus on Him. This scene shows Jewish figures, who are welcoming Jesus as the Son of God. The depiction of Jewish otherness in this altarpiece was linked to the question of the conversion of the Jews at that time.

In the middle of the scene depicted below a cupola, *Jesus among the Doctors of the Law*<sup>141</sup> is focusing on the teenager (Fig. 1). The space is framed by two aisles ornamented by semi-circular arcades. In the front row are wise men wearing a *tallit* ('a white prayer shawl adorned with stripes') and an oriental headdress; they are sitting on the edge of a stone barrier. The Jews in profile are grimacing and looking at Jesus. The man on the right is holding a book like Jesus. One man is shown wearing a turban, in order to emphasize his oriental origin. Their discussion could be also understood as a contemporary image of Jewish-Christian disputes. Philosophical and theological discussions were often held to convince Jews to convert to Christendom.<sup>142</sup>

The first discussion took place in Barcelona in 1263. It was between Moses ben Nahmam, called Nahmanides (whose exegesis influenced the *Haggadah of Sarajevo* and indirectly also the Toledan choir screen),<sup>143</sup> and Pablo Christiani, who was under pressure from the Catholic Church – which had rejected the Talmud (*aggadah*) but not the Torah (*halakah*) and in 1240,

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141 Pilato and Tironi 2007.

142 Sadik 2015, pp. 203–204.

143 Schreckenberg 1994, pp. 208–219; Sabar 2018, pp. 104–126.



Fig. 1. Esteve Rovira from Cyprus and Starnina's workshop, "Jesus in the Middle of the Doctors of the Law" panel taken from the *St. Eugene Altarpiece*, 1385, Toledo, Cathedral, St. Eugene Chapel. © Photo: Maria Portmann

had permitted the *Talmud* to be burned in Paris by King Louis IX. In another dispute in 1285, Abraham ibn Adret answered Raymond Marti (author of the *Pugio Fidei*, 1278), who recognized the legacy of Hebrew scripture, but not its interpretation by the Jews, saying that their false interpretations were due to their long exile. Only Jews who observed the Commandments as the prophets had done were proof of the legitimization of Holy Scripture since Moses.<sup>144</sup> Therefore, the Jewish doctors of the law were depicted wearing clear distinctive signs that emphasize their negative moral behaviour.

On the *predella* ('lower part of the altarpiece'), scenes from the *Passion* recall *Jesus' Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane* (Luke 22: 39–46), *The*

<sup>144</sup> Shalev-Eyni 2010, pp. 45–48.

*Arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane* (John 18: 1–10), *The Denial of Saint Peter* (Luke 22:54–57), *Pilate Washing his Hands* (Matthew 27, 24) and *The Way to Calvary* (Luke 23: 26–31).

Two scenes have been reproduced in the *Arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane* (John 18: 1–10; Fig. 2): Judas' kiss and St. Peter cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant (named Malchus). On the left side, a Jew is shown wearing a yellow headdress. He is grasping Jesus' arm. On the right side, Judas is pictured wearing a yellow shawl around his shoulders. Their distinctive signs are enhanced by their violent gestures against Jesus. In the background, are soldiers looking at the scene. In the foreground, St. Peter has been depicted wearing a yellow mantle and a blue robe; he is cutting Malchus' ear off. Both scenes are linked with Jesus' arm which is set in the diagonal.

Although Judas was depicted as a Jewish usurer and traitor, Judas's gesture points to Jesus, who will cure the servant by reattaching his ear.



Fig. 2. Esteve Rovira from Cyprus and Starnina's workshop, "The Arrest of Jesus" detail from the *predella* from the *St. Eugene Altarpiece*, 1385, Toledo, Cathedral, St. Eugene Chapel. © Photo: Maria Portmann

Jesus' arm, Peter's sword and Judas's back form a narrative triangle that, emphasizes on the drama of the scene and raises of the question of 'otherness' and conversion.

For St. Ambrose, the amputation of the servant's right ear is an example of spiritual deafness.<sup>145</sup>

The abscission of Malchus' ear, though blameworthy and condemned by the Lord on the literal level, is nevertheless filled with « sacramental » meaning: for it is an allegory of the spiritual deafness of the Jewish people who from now on will only be able to listen with the left and sinister ear of literal hearing. This sort of « *allegoria per antitheism* » was much to the taste of the subsequent tradition.<sup>146</sup>

This abscission can also be related to Jean Gerson's commentary on the circumcision, which he presented in Paris in 1392. '[...] Jesus himself circumcised, might circumcise the ears of the mind of the preachers [...]'<sup>147</sup> Origen<sup>148</sup> was far more negative, because he underlined that St. Jerome alone<sup>149</sup> explained Malchus' name (which refers to Israel).<sup>150</sup>

Augustine in *Iohannis Evangelium Tractatus* (112.5, CC 36.635), gives the same etymology of Malchus as [does] Jerome (« *Malchus autem interpretatur « regnaturus »* »), but for him there is no historical reference to Jews but simply to those who before baptism were « slaves to the letter », but after conversion will become kings through the spirit of grace.<sup>151</sup>

The violent gesture with the sword predicts a coming time of violence against people who do not defend themselves physically; therefore, it is opposed to the Zelotes' dream. Although in this image, all three violent and saving gestures take place at the same time, the narration takes place at different times, which have been depicted in a triangle. This violence, which was followed by healing, had also been commented on by St. Vincente Ferrer in his *Tratado de la oración mental o meditación* ('Treatise on Mental Oration or Meditation').<sup>152</sup>

The pagans' deafness was compared to those Jews who do not want to recognize Jesus' divinity. Jesus' gesture was recalled as a blessing that was linked to Malchus' conversion by St. Augustine. For Augustine, this healing

145 San Ambrosio, *Serm. V De Passione* in *ibid.* "Reformat Christus quod ipse formaverat. Nec tarda caro sequitur ejus imperium cujus erat ipsa figmentum."

146 Caspary 1979, pp. 104–105.

147 Izbicki 2008, p. 196.

148 Origenes, *Commentariorum Series* 101, in Caspary 1979, p. 86.

149 Jerónimo, *Commentariorum* in Mattheum Libri IV, 26, 51, CC 77, p. 257.

150 Caspary 1979, 86–87, n. 124.

151 Caspary 1979, p. 7.

152 Ferrer 1863, p. 236.

hand proved His humanity and His divinity by the cure. Jesus' hand was made of the same earth as Adam's body, and therefore it showed the power of His salvation<sup>153</sup>. According to Matthias Hammele, St. Thomas Aquinas also opposes Judas' kiss with the cure of Malchus. Malchus was associated with the Jews who would not listen to Jesus' word until their conversion. According to St. Augustine, the Jews could hear in another manner as could Malchus after he had been cured.<sup>154</sup> So they no longer lived according to the flesh but rather according to the spirit.<sup>155</sup> The references to the Old Testament show a typological manner of reading the Bible. According to St. Augustine, Malchus' name was meant to be linked with the Hebrew word *melek* ('king') and was mentioned by St. Paul with regard to Jesus (Rom. 6, 4). Jesus is a new king, and thanks to His death and Resurrection, the possibility of renovation and of a new life exists for Christian believers. In the *Meditations on the Life of Jesus* (1217–1221), Pseudo Bonaventure centres his comment on Judas' treason. The reader had to visualize the pain in Jesus' life and the footprints of His feet during His Passion.<sup>156</sup> In the *Auto de la Pasión* (15th century), the viewer was meant to see the physical pain of Malchus, which recalls St. Peter's feelings when he saw Jesus taken away by the soldiers and the Jews.<sup>157</sup> In the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (first quarter of the 14th century), the author focused attention on the healing of Malchus' ear. According to another legend, Malchus would convert with other Jews when Jesus died on the cross<sup>158</sup>. His healing reveals a theology of conversion and of salvation in places where the Jews had lived as usurers; therefore, we can assume that this scene was influenced by the context of the conversions in Toledo (like the rabbi, most Jews converted in Toledo).

In the last scene, Jesus is shown leaving His mother and the Daughters of Israel. A soldier pictured from the back, is a *repoussoir* ('a figure seen from the back that is leading the viewer to look into the scene') and divides the composition: the Virgin Mary is wearing a *maphorion* ('a blue headdress adorned with golden stars in Byzantine art') and is looking toward Jesus. He is wearing a purple mantle, the crown of thorns and carrying His cross. St. Luke mentions His farewell, referring to verses from the Old Testament, knowing that the quotation from St. Luke was for the Jewish community

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153 Sancti Ambrosii 1836, p. 118 which text is quoted by Di Raulica 1853, p. 177 and by da Bergamo 1766, p. 459.

154 Hammele 2012, pp. 280–284.

155 Hammele 2012, pp. 292–293.

156 About spirituality, see Kupfer 2008, pp. 105–106.

157 *Auto de la Pasion*, in Torroja Menéndez et al. 1977, pp. 169–170.

158 Pedrizet 1908, 45, XIX, 7.

in order to reaffirm their faith in Christendom and in the promise of the Salvation that would be brought by Jesus.

On the main altarpiece, the references to the conversion of Jews and to discussions between Jews and Christians are due to the contemporary religious and political context. Similar references were also depicted in the St. Blaise Chapel in the cathedral of Toledo, which had been built by Bishop Pedro Tenorio at that time.

## St. Blaise Chapel

In the *Statutum capelle sancti Blasi*, on 9th November 1397, an inscription testifies to the foundation of the celebration of St. Blaise in that chapel by Bishop Pedro Tenorio.<sup>159</sup> The frescoes in the St. Blaise Chapel had been attributed to Italian artists (Gherardo Starnina, Nicolao di Antonio from Pisa and Simone di Francesco<sup>160</sup>) and to Spanish painters (Ferrand González and Esteve Rovira). According to Giorgio Vasari, Starnina travelled to Spain and came back to Italy with new knowledge and courtly behaviour he obtained in that foreign country.<sup>161</sup> In 1395, after he had fled the revolt of the *Ciompi* in Florence, Starnina<sup>162</sup> was engaged to paint “scenes from the Passion” in the cathedral of Toledo.

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159 Blanco Mozo 2014, p. 319; Olivares Martínez 2013; Yuste Galán and Passini 2011.

160 Matilde Miquel 2008, p. 157; Miquel Juan 2007.

161 Gherardo Starnina’s name had been recorded for the first time in 1387 in Florence. Since 1401, he is documented in Toledo and in Valencia in Spain. His paintings from his journey in Spain are recorded by Giorgio Vasari: ‘Verily he who journey far from his own country, dwelling in those of other men, gains very often a disposition and character of a fine temper, for, in seeing abroad diverse honourable customs, even though he might be perverse in nature, he learns to be tractable, amiable and patient, with much greater ease than he would have done by remaining in his own country. And in truth, he who desires to refine men in the life of the world need seek no other fire and no better touchstone than this, seeing that those who are rough by nature are made gentle, and the gentle become more gracious’. Vasari 1971–1978, pp. 193–195.

‘Veramente chi camina lontano da la patria sua fermandosi nelle altrui, fa bene spesso nello animo un temperamento di buono e di garbato spirito, perché nel vedere i costumi buoni impara da quegli ad essere trattabile, amorevole e paziente. Né lo grava per la caldezza del sangue la superbia, e nascendo bisogno de’ suoi piaceri, si sforza ad altri far cortesia, acciò intravenendogli i sinistri che nascono da una ora a l’altra, possa ancor egli da altri ricevere il medesimo. Et invero, chi disidera affinar gli uomini nel vivere del mondo, altro fuoco, ne miglior cimento di questo, non cerchi perché quegli che sono rozzi di natura ringentiliscono, et i gentili in maggior gentilezza e grazia riescono’. Vasari 1912–1914, p. 41.

162 Vegue y Goldoni 1930, pp. 277–279.

I, Gerardo Jacopo, painter from Florence, proxy of Nicolai de Antonio, also a painter from Florence, grant and know that I received from you, Pero Ferrandez de Burgos, treasure from the archbishop of Toledo, forty gold florins, from the mint of Aragon, which said forty florins you gave me and I received from you so that I and the aforesaid Nicolai de Antonio should paint for you a cloth with the Passion of Jesus Christ that you have placed in your chapel of Saint Salvador, which you made inside the cathedral church of Saint Mary here in Toledo [...].<sup>163</sup>

Although we do not know if Starnina painted the walls of the St. Blaise Chapel, his style and images influenced the Spanish painters who worked there. They depicted the lives of Jesus and of Saints Peter, Paul and Blaise. Juan Rodríguez de Toledo finished the paintings.<sup>164</sup> Some of these works are frescoes; stylistic differences appear in the upper and in the lower parts of the walls. The upper part is dedicated to scenes of the New Testament, which refer to the verses from the Apostles' Creed,<sup>165</sup> when the lower register is dedicated to scenes from the *Last Judgement* and to the lives of various saints.

### The Credo and the Life of Saints in the St. Blaise Chapel

The Holy Creed begins with the *Annunciation* and is followed by the *Nativity*, *Jesus Being Judged by Pilate*, the *Crucifixion* (Fig. 3), two scenes of the *Resurrection*, the *Last Judgement*, the *Resurrection of the Flesh*, the *Transfiguration*, the depiction of two evangelists – John and Matthew – the *Assumption* and *Pentecost* (Fig. 4). Some scenes have been lost or partially damaged.

The *Annunciation* was meant to underline the divinity of Jesus and the Incarnation of the Word of God (John 1: 1).<sup>166</sup> In the background, behind an angel is a polylobed arch similar to those built in the former mosque; it could be understood as a distinctive sign of 'otherness'.<sup>167</sup> This detail should be read as a sign of the oriental origin of David's lineage from which the Virgin Mary comes.<sup>168</sup>

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163 Nickson 2015, p. 205.

164 Olivares Martínez 2013, p. 147; Miquel Juan 2013, pp. 52–54.

165 Foster 2010.

166 Zimmermann 2003, pp. 87–89. In Spain, the liturgy of the Transfiguration (Matt. 17, 1–9; Mark 9, 1–8; Luke 9, 28–36) had been introduced in a process of cultural transfer coming from the East and specially from Byzantium. The Byzantine liturgy was known only since 1004, when Llobet Benet wrote a sermon dedicated to it.

167 José Méndez 2005.

168 Arera-Rütenik 2017.



Fig. 3. Starnina's Workshop (Antonio da Pisa, Esteve Rovira, Ferrand González), *Scenes from the Holy Creed: from the Annunciation to the Resurrection and the Last Judgement*, 1394–1404, Toledo, Cathedral, St. Blaise Chapel. © Photo: Urs Portmann

The *Transfiguration* (Matt. 17, 1–9; Mark 9, 1–8 and Luke 9, 28–36), a parallel to the *Annunciation*, was meant to underline Jesus' divinity and His Incarnation (Fig. 5). Moses is depicted clasping his hands in prayer. His horns recall the radiance of his face when he received the Tables of the Law (Ex 34, 1–29).<sup>169</sup> This should be related to Adam's '*tselem*' the luminous image of God's glory [. . .]. Some scholars argue that the likeness that Adam and God shared was not physicality – in the usual sense of having a body – but rather luminescence'.<sup>170</sup> In Makarius' homilies, both Adam and Moses' brightness had been regarded by scholars as a prefiguration of Jesus in the *Transfiguration* (Matthew 17. 1–9; Mark 9. 1–8 and Luke 9. 28–36) on Mount Tabor, although only Jesus was capable of saving souls.<sup>171</sup> Moses was

169 About Adam's and Moses' radiances in the *Targums* and in Makarius' exegesis see Orlov 2007, p. 329; about Moses' radiance and horns see Mellinkoff 1970, pp. 86–90; about the prefiguration of the *Transfiguration* see Lee 2009, 55, p. 95; Idel 2014, p. 106; 2 Corinthian 3 and 2 Corinthian 4.

170 Orlov 2007, p. 329.

171 Orlov 2007, pp. 338–339.





Fig. 4. Starnina's Workshop (Antonio da Pisa, Esteve Rovira, Ferrand González), *Scenes from the Holy Creed (from Pentecost to the Resurrection of the Flesh)* and *St. Peter Enthroned*, 1394–1404, Toledo, Cathedral, St. Blaise Chapel.  
© Photo: Urs Portmann

depicted as a forerunner of Jesus, who testifies to the veracity of His divinity. Between the *Transfiguration* and the *Annunciation*, two evangelists are shown writing verses in Latin. In the lower register, one of the three scenes was dedicated to the *Last Judgement* (which has been partially destroyed; Fig. 5).

On the lower part of the wall, the *Last Judgement* has been depicted. The Virgin Mary and the Saviour are pictured sitting on two chairs, and they are framed by two haloes as in Italy. In a side chapel in the Camposanto in Pisa, Buonamico Buffalmaco depicted the *Triumph of Death* and the *Last Judgement* (1330–36). Both paintings were made in accordance with



Fig. 5. Starnina's Workshop (Antonio da Pisa, Esteve Rovira, Ferrand González), *Scenes from the Holy Creed (Transfiguration) and the Last Judgement*, 1394–1404, Toledo, Cathedral, St. Blaise Chapel. © Photo: Maria Portmann

Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1349–53)<sup>172</sup> and Dante's *Divine Comedy*.<sup>173</sup> In Pisa, on the left side of Jesus, is a Jew, portrayed wearing a prayer shawl, with the souls of the damned. His distinctive sign may have been inspired by a real headdress Jews were forced to wear in Pisa. On the left are Adam and Eve, and what they are saying has been written on a phylactery. On the right were the damned. Among others, we can recognize a Jewish moneylender, whose

172 Fariña et al. 2005, p. 47.

173 Buonamico Buffalmacco, *The Triumph of the Death and The Last Judgement*, 1335–40, Pisa, Camposanto, side chapel. Blume 1989, p. 50; Ahl Cole 2003; Bolzoni 2002; Bucci and Bertolini 1960; Carletti and Polacci 2014; Wille 2001.



Fig. 6. Buonamico Buffalmacco, *Jewish Moneylenders* detail taken from *The Last Judgement*, 1335–40, Pisa, Camposanto. © Photo: Maria Portmann

white headdress is decorated with geometric signs that recall the unreadable Hebrew letters (Fig. 6). Such headdresses were imposed on Jews as a sign of punishment by contemporary legislation in order to stress the bad moral behaviour of such Jews.<sup>174</sup> This painting could have been inspired by Italian art, because of the presence in Toledo of Italian painters (Antonio of Pisa and Starnina).

In the St. Blaise Chapel, the composition and spatial disposition of the *Last Judgement*<sup>175</sup> may also have been inspired by Nardo di Cione's *Last Judgement*, in the Strozzi's Chapel (1354–1357), in Santa Maria Novella Church in Florence. Nardo di Cione was Starnina's master.<sup>176</sup> For the first

174 Opitz 1998, p. 181.

175 Andrea di Buonaiuto (called Andrea da Firenze), *The Descent of Jesus into the Hell*, ca. 1356, Firenze, Santa Maria Novella, Capellone degli Spagnoli.

176 Regarding Nardo di Cione, *The Last Judgement*, ca. 1350, Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Strozzi Chapel, *Detail of Saints and Angels*, see Borsook 1970; Kreytenberg 2000. It had been preceded by the decorations of Paradise and Hell in the Bargello Chapel in Florence, which had been painted by a Giottesque workshop in the late 1330s. Another earlier picture is Andrea di Cione (Orcagna)'s *Triumph of Death and Hell* (1344–1345) in the nave of Santa Croce Church in

time, the Hell was depicted there according to Dante's *Divina Commedia* ("Divine Comedy") (1306/07–1321).<sup>177</sup>

In the St. Blaise Chapel and in the Strozzi Chapel, the elected souls have been depicted in a line that mixes saints with prophets. In both cases, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Francis of Padua, bishops and cardinals, as well as the donors, are also portrayed. Another source of inspiration may have been Andrea di Buonaiuto's (called da Firenze) *Jesus' Descent into Hell* (1356), which is located in the Spanish Chapel in Santa Maria Novella, in Florence. Although in both scenes, David was pictured playing the lyre, in Toledo, he has been accompanied by St. Cecilia. In both scenes, an old man has been illustrated wearing a conic headdress.<sup>178</sup> It is a Jewish religious, ritual object, called *teffilin* ('phylacteries'): a box containing biblical verses written on phylacteries, which has been misinterpreted in Christian art. This depiction of a *teffilin* as "small pieces of parchment" comes from the *Vulgata* ("Latin translation of the Bible") in which the word *phylacteria* is defined as 'preservation and protection in the sense of magical magic amulets [...] [which is] basically a rejection of Jewish customs'<sup>179</sup> This is similar to Giotto's depiction of the High Priest in the *Life of the Virgin* in the Arena Chapel in Padua (1304).<sup>180</sup> In Florence and in Toledo, *teffilin* have been painted to underline the importance of the man as the one who preserved the Law. Therefore, it might be Aaron that was represented here. In the middle of the scene are Adam and Eve, the name of the latter was written on the headdress. Their proximity to the Saviour is similar to that of the Florentine models. On the contrary, in Pisa, Jews have been depicted among the damned souls.

Before the paintings in Toledo were damaged, inscriptions in Castilian similar to those in the Camposanto in Pisa and in Santa Croce Church in Florence could be seen.<sup>181</sup> They invited the viewer to convert and to pray

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Florence, which had been partially destroyed by Giorgio Vasari during the 16th century.

177 Giles 1977, p. 118.

178 Luzzati 1998, pp. 3–4.

179 "[...] d. h. Bewahr- und Schutzmittel im Sinne magischer Zauberamulette [...] im Grunde eine Ablehnung jüdischer Bräuche." in Hartmann Schedels, *Register des buchs der Chroniken und geschichten mit figure und pildnussen...* Nürnberg, 1483, fol. XCVI v in Boesten-Stengel 1990, p. 50.

180 Revel-Neher 1992, p. 65 is showing similar examples in byzantine illuminations and in Giotto's works which depict the *teffilin* ("small boxes with biblical verses (Ex 13,1–10; Ex 13, 11–16 and Dt 6, 4–9; Dt 11, 13–21)"). For example see Giotto di Bondone, *Scene of the Life of the Virgin Mary*, 1304–1306, Cappella Scrovegni, Arena, Padua); see also Frugoni 1988, p. 163.

181 Buonamico Buffalmaco, *Triumph of Death, Last Judgement and Hell*, 1330–36, Pisa, Camposanto; Andrea di Cione, *Triumph of the Death and Last Judgement*

for his own soul. Such texts recall the teachings about purgatory, hell and the mass:

He who is guilty of pride, gluttony, lust, treachery, bad speech, whoring, stinking simony or wretched hypocrisy will join Satan, Lord of Hell, in fiery pain and sorrow of body and soul"; "By God's divine justice anyone who negligently talks during the Divine Office will die without a word.<sup>182</sup>

The sins of simony and sloth are mentioned in both sentences.<sup>183</sup> The last quotation may refer to priests and to Catholic faith, but the other one criticizes the sins of the Jews also: they needed to convert, like those Jews in the upper register.

After the depiction of the *Annunciation*, the *Judgement of Pilate* and the *Crucifixion*, the *Pentecost* (Acts 2) is depicted on the third wall (Fig. 4). Jews and Muslims are pictured outside the Apostles' houses. In the *Pentecost*, the vertical division of the scene has been adapted to the architecture. The composition shows an enclosed hall divided by three arches. The Virgin Mary and the Apostles compose an enclosed circle. In the upper left corner, Jesus appears to the Apostles; they are shown looking at Him. On the right are two persons looking at the people who are standing outside of the house. Instead of depicting oriental people, the Toledan painters depicted 'others' who were living among the Christians in Toledo. Their distinctive headdresses and positions contrast with those of the Apostles and the Virgin Mary. A man, wearing a pointed red headdress is depicted looking at the viewer. His right hand is pointing towards a closed door and, with his left hand, he is making a sign to pay attention. His headdress is like those worn by the Jews in the scene from the Passion and in the *Life of St. Peter and St. Paul*. His distinctive sign is a *capa juhega* ('Jewish headdress') which was imposed on Jews in Spain after 1215. Although neither the colour nor the shape of the distinctive sign was described by Pope Innocent III, during the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, Pope Alexander IV stated in 1257 that a round yellow piece of cloth must be worn by Jews as a distinguishing sign.<sup>184</sup> King Alfonso X's laws, in the *Fuero real* and *Las Siete Partidas* (1263), imposed distinctive signs on both Jews and servants, in order to regulate the life of the inhabitants of Castile.<sup>185</sup> Distinctive signs underline that Jews

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(fragments), 1343–68, Florence, Santa Croce. Regarding the texts, see Kreytenberg 2000, pp. 41–44.

182 Nickson 2015, p. 200.

183 Regarding usury, which is not mentioned, but had been depicted for the first time in the Collegiata of San Gimignano in Italy see Opitz 1998, p. 179.

184 Ansbacher 2008; Roth 2014, p. 68.

185 Alfonso el Sabio 1972, Partida 7.



Fig. 7. Andrea di Buonaiuto, *Pentecost*, 1356, Florence, Santa Maria Novella, Spanish Chapels. © Photo: Maria Portmann

and Muslims have not been elected to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). They show their distinctive faith, as does Andrea di Buonaiuto in the Spanish Chapel (1354), who had been inspired by Giotto in Assisi (1320).<sup>186</sup> The composition of such a scene was meant to be interpreted as an affirmation of the existing order, because *St. Francis Enthroned* and the *Virtues* are pictured support the Franciscan order. In the St. Blaise Chapel, scenes from the life of St. Peter, the *Pentecost*, the *Prophets*, the *Conversion of St. Paul* and the *Angel Freeing St. Peter from His Jail* support the role of Bishop Pedro Tenorio and of the Church and the papacy. This topic has been also used by Andrea di Buonaiuto in Florence to show the importance of the Dominican order. He painted the *Pentecost* on the vaults of the Spanish Chapel in Santa Maria Novella (Fig. 7). The main difference between the artworks by Giotto, Buonaiuto and the Toledan painters consists in the introduction after the Black Death (1348) of both Jews and Orientals. This detail recalls travels of the Dominican friar, Riccoldo da Monte Croce, to the East, as well as his criticism of the sin of avarice, which Jewish moneylenders were supposed to perpetrate, the consequence of which was thought to be the plague.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>186</sup> Thiébaud 2013, pp. 40–45.

<sup>187</sup> Riccoldo da Monte Croce OP 1300; Polzer 1995; Baldini 1981; Dieck 1997.

Riccoldo described the Jews as people who read texts in Hebrew, who did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, and who were to be considered “blind” regarding Christian faith, which was considered to be due to the sin of sloth. Riccoldo based his criticism on St. Augustinus’ comments and on the remarks about the prophecies from the Old Testament. Since this Dominican knew neither Jewish tradition nor Hebrew, his comments were based on a Latin translation of the Bible, the so-called *Vulgata*.<sup>188</sup> His chapter on the Jews is written after the ones on pagans, because in the New Testament, the Jews do not want to recognize Jesus’ divinity. Therefore, in order to erase their deadly sins, people commissioned paintings that emphasized their bad moral behaviour, which was to be punished by Hell. If the Jews converted, they could be saved on the model of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and Dante’s *Divine Comedy*.<sup>189</sup> In the Spanish Chapel, *Jesus’ Descent into Hell* and a *Vision of Paradise* were influenced by such Dominican comments, as those by St. Thomas Aquinas about moral theology. St. Thomas of Aquinas also referred to Origen,<sup>190</sup> when he called the Jews blind men, because they did not want to understand Jesus’ words.<sup>191</sup> St. Thomas’ references to Jewish tradition had also been transmitted by Raimundo de Peñaforte in Spain,<sup>192</sup>

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188 Riccoldo da Monte Croce OP 1300, ff. 219r–244r, Volgarizzato da Emilio Pannella, [www.smn.it](http://www.smn.it). ‘E la ragione è che contiene esplicitamente quei due elementi essenziali nei quali dissentono da noi, anzi dalla verità: il primo, perché dicono “il Cristo non è ancora venuto, e non è compiuto il tempo della promessa”; il secondo, perché dicono che il Cristo non è vero Dio o Figlio di Dio. Circa questi due punti, dunque, i nostri frati inviati presso di loro devono premunirsi dei testi biblici del solo antico testamento’. Translation by the author of this text: ‘The reason why they are different from us [i.e. Christians] is due to two things: first of all, because they are saying “Christ does not yet have come, and the time of the promise is not completed”; the second one is due to the fact that they are saying that Jesus Christ is not really God or the Son of God. Because of these two points, our friars are invited to go to them [i.e. Jews] with biblical texts, but only from the Old Testament’.

189 Giles 1977, p. 120; Tolan 2012, p. 137.

190 Hammele 2012, p. 189.

191 Hammele 2012, p. 186.

192 Schoot and Valkenberg 2004; Cohen 1982, 52–60 and 103–169 Raimundo de Peñaforte opened schools in Murcia and in Tunis, where Arabic and Hebrew were taught. The Dispute of Barcelona in 1263, the *Pugio Fidei* (ca. 1278) and Raymond Martini’s *Capistrorum judeorum* (c. 1267) opened new confrontations and discussions between Jews and Christians. Raimondo Lull’s scriptures depict also a relation to Talmudic scripture as Cohen explained (p. 200–202). On the contrary, Nicolas of Lyra included Jewish commentaries in his *Postilles*. Dahan 1989, 6, 20–29; Vose 2009, 113 and pp. 126–130 Schreckenberg 1994, pp. 293–294.

who organized the first discussion in Barcelona in 1263 between Moshe ben Nahman and Pablo Christiani, but who was one of the first Dominican friars to learn Hebrew in order to translate the Bible.<sup>193</sup> Although Hebrew was the language of the ‘others’, educated theologians had to learn it, if they wanted to understand and translate the Old Testament. On the one hand, readable Hebrew was depicted to show the high intellectual level of Christian clergy, but on the other hand, unreadable Hebrew scripture was used to criticize Jewish rituals and oral traditions, such as the Talmud. In the St. Blaise Chapel in Toledo, no Hebraic scripture appears on the wall, contrary to pseudo-Hebraic scripture and to Latin letters and words as in the depiction of St. Peter’s life.

In the lower register, St. Peter is pictured sitting on a throne under a vaulted baldachin and, flanked by a dome and a church (Fig. 4). He was being venerated by saints, and his importance can be related to the identity of Pedro Tenorio himself, who had been elected a bishop and had worked at the papal court.

On the left, is a Jewish man wearing a yellow prayer shawl (Fig. 8). He has been depicted in profile, parallel to the frame of the image – an inconvenient position.<sup>194</sup> In the front row is a man wearing a black hat and a white shawl around his shoulders. This is a *tallit*, because of the Hebraic inscription on its border and the *tsitsit* (‘fringes’). The man is holding his hand up in surprise. His robe is blue with red sleeves. Women are pictured wearing red, blue and yellow headdresses and, in the background, a black man is shown standing. All the people are looking at St. Peter speaking to a nude man. Either it is the story of the healing of a disabled man (Acts 3 and 10) or the conversion of Corneille (Acts 10, 24–27). On the other side of the throne, Philip is pictured baptizing Jews and non-Jews (Acts 8, 12–13). The Jews are depicted wearing a white headdress without ornaments or fringes, which may be interpreted as an antique *tallit* (‘a prayer shawl’) on the model of Florentine examples. Both scenes recall St. Paul’s letter explaining the central place of Baptism in becoming a member of the Church (Rom 6, 4) and underlining the power of the Holy Spirit as part of the belief in the Holy Trinity. The division between Christians and ‘others’ is underlined here by architectural frames and distinctive signs. Jews are clearly shown as people different from Christians. In the scenes from the *Passion* and the *Life of St. Paul*, they are pictured as enemies, who persecute Christians. But in both *Miracle of St. Peter* and *Pentecost* scenes, Jews are shown as opposed to Christians (who testify to miracles). But only the man wearing

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193 Vose 2009, p. 111; Krauss 1996, pp. 97–101.

194 Portmann 2016, p. 333.





Fig. 8. Starnina's Workshop (Antonio da Pisa, Esteve Rovira, Ferrand González), *The Jews waiting to be baptised* taken from *St. Peter Enthroned and St. Paul Baptizing Jews and Non-Jews*, 1394–1404, Toledo, Cathedral, St. Blaise Chapel. © Photo: Maria Portmann

a contemporary *tallit* will convert to Christianity, because he is depicted standing and holding his hands. Referring to the *tallit* worn by the Jewish man in the *Last Judgement* in Pisa, the unreadable ornaments on his prayer shawl underline his 'otherness,' because the Jewish faith and rituals were different from those of the Christians.

The next scene recalls a Latin verse in the *Credo* 'sedes ad dexteram de patris' ('sitting at the right of His father') (Fig. 4). In the upper part of the composition are two figures sitting on a throne; over their heads are angels playing music. On the right, God is represented wearing a blue mantle and a red robe, decorated with golden embroideries. He has a golden halo like the angels and is holding a closed book in His hand. He is blessing the figure on His right. In the lower part of this composition, the Saviour is shown judging the dead and the living (Mt 25: 31–46). This composition is interesting for our purposes, because it shows contemporary people waiting to be judged. Jesus is depicted wearing a red mantle; He is sitting in the sky in a glory. Four angels are also pictured holding the symbols of His Passion. On His right are the living: among them, in the foreground, is a woman wearing a white headdress and a dark yellow dress and holding her hand

towards God. Behind her is a man, wearing a light blue robe and crossing his hands on his chest. The rest of the people are pictured kneeling and praying God in order to be saved. On the other side is a woman sitting on the floor; her shoulders are naked, and a demon is pulling her by her hair. She is depicted wearing a light yellow and red dress. Behind her is a monk held by a demon. God is turning His hand towards the ground, signifying that they are damned. Both women frame the composition with their distinctive positions and colours. Both figures in the foreground were inspired from Tuscan examples: Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Bad Government* in Siena and Giotto's *Last Judgement* (1304) in Padua were mainly cited by the artists' scholars, as well as the *Last Judgement* that was depicted by Orcagna in Santo Spirito Church, and by Nardo di Cione and Andrea di Buonaiuti in Santa Maria Novella Church in Florence. Before the Black Death (1348), Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Giotto had been inspired by antique sculptures and reliefs, which were no longer understood and used later.<sup>195</sup> The desire to convince people, who are behaving badly, to convert and learn the *Credo* is obvious in this scene. The moral content is similar to that in later texts, such as Jacopo Passavanti's *Lo Specchio di Vera Penitenza* (1354) ('The Mirror of the Right Penance') which influenced depictions of the Hell and showed the horrors of the souls of the damned. According to Dante's description of sloth and to the figure with crossed arms in the fresco depicted by Nardo di Cione in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella Church in Florence, the woman with crossed arms wearing a yellow robe might be either a figure of *acedia* ('the deadly sin of sloth'), because of the negative connotation of the yellow colour and of her arms crossed on her chest, or of the deadly sin of lust because her shoulders are nude.<sup>196</sup> The position of both the female figures and of the demon are also similar to those in a fragment that Orcagna depicted in Santa Croce in Florence (which was partially destroyed during the 16th century). However, they are hard to identify because of the loss of the inscription.<sup>197</sup> Contrary to the saved souls, the damned were depicted lying on the ground. The deadly sin of sloth is also part of one of the main topics of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* (5th circle) in the *Divina Commedia*.<sup>198</sup> Although there are different images of the *Last Judgement*, in this scene, the people on the left want to be saved, and the people on the right will

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195 Wolf 2013, pp. 42–44; Giles 1977, pp. 114–116; Meiss 1964, pp. 70–71.

196 Giles 1977, p. 121.

197 Gronau 1937, p. 30; Kreytenberg 2000, pp. 48–50.

198 Alighieri et al. 1988, pp. 89–91. According to Gert Kreytenberg, the first depiction of Dante's *Inferno* is the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella Church in Florence which composition is also influenced by earlier pictures of the Triumph of the Death like in the Camposanto in Pisa. Kreytenberg 2000, p. 39.

be damned. There is one distinctive sign of moral 'otherness' that should be related to distinctive signs and colours on the Jews' robes. Contrary to ornaments on robes, Latin verse was meant to be read and understood by Christians. Latin was a part of Christian roots just as Hebrew was fundamental for Jews. The depiction of a Christian identity was part of a spiritual program.

Below, the lives of St. Blaise and St. Anthony the Abbot were meant to show that idolatry, magic and temptation are mortal sins that can only be erased by Christian faith (Fig. 4). In this cycle, the unity of the Catholic Church and the conversion of the 'others', before the end of the Great Schism (1417) and the expulsion of Jews from Spain (1492) were emphasized and desired. The composition of the *Resurrection of the Flesh* is similar to another painting (depicted by Starnina in the upper register of the altarpiece from the private chapel of Fray Bonifacio Ferrer in the monastery of Porta Coeli in Valencia). Although in the Valencian altarpiece, the Virgin and St. John are pictured praying to the Saviour, in Toledo, Adam and Eve have been depicted kneeling on either side of God. They are shown as the first humans who have been saved and resurrected by Jesus. In the background, a fictive image of the city of Toledo has been painted, as was the case in the Valencian altarpiece (the city of Valencia is depicted) in order to show the importance of that place to the salvation of the souls.

The cycle was not completed, because of its destruction. It is possible, in view of the visual Florentine and Pisan sources, that it also contained a depiction of Hell.

## Conclusion

'Otherness' was considered as being a part of a Christian's identity, and the Jews were depicted as their forerunners. The construction of a Christian identity, based on both the Old and the New Testaments, was considered important. According to the Catholic Church, Jews were to be depicted wearing distinctive signs, because of their bad moral behaviour and their blindness towards Christendom, which caused them to be criticized by the artists. Only Jewish prophets were not depicted in a negative way, because they prophesized the appearance of Jesus, nor could they know Him before He had lived.

Behind the visual questions are the questions about good moral behaviour as related to the construction of memory in a multicultural society. The assimilation of Jewish culture and tradition into Christian visual art in the cathedral of Toledo underscored the ambivalence of intercultural relationships between Jews and Christians at the end of the 14th century.

Beyond the materiality of Hebrew associated with the flesh and with the Jews was a spiritual goal. A consequence of such assimilation was the expulsion of the Jewish community out of Toledo in 1449. Therefore, these images and where they are located are unique and show a new Christian identity, using visual signs of otherness to distinguish ‘others’ from the ‘self’.

Scenes from the New Testament and criticism made against negative moral behaviour underline the desire of the Church to convert others, guiding them into believing in the Apostles’ Creed by visual and exegetical references they already understand. Jews had to be converted by force, although that was forbidden and such iconographic programs could have helped the ecclesiastical authorities to emphasize the importance of Christianity. In the San Blas Chapel, Jewish objects rooted in the Old Testament – like *teffilin* – are worn by the Patriarchs, which recall the roots of Christianity and its forerunners. But Jewish headdresses were quoting a ritual object: they were meant to be imposed to Jews in order to distinguish them from Christians. Jews were forced to live on the margin of Christian society at that time – before they were expelled in 1492. The significance of Jewish distinguishing signs was influenced by the context of the image. In the St. Blaise Chapel and in the main altarpiece, a negative significance was given to prayer shawls, when a person had a negative moral behaviour, a vice, such as sloth or usury. Therefore, such scenes are very interesting, because they depict the complexity of the interreligious relationships between Jews and Christians at that time, within the context of the artistic relationships between Castile and Tuscany.

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## 4. Between Public and Private Spheres: The Valencian Jewish Quarter in Christian Space<sup>199</sup>

As Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in his essay *Réflexions sur la question juive* '[...] *Ce n'est ni leur passé, ni leur religion, ni leur sol qui unissent les fils d'Israël. Mais s'ils ont un lien commun, s'ils méritent tous le nom de Juif, c'est qu'ils ont une situation commune de Juif, c'est-à-dire qu'ils vivent au sein d'une communauté qui les tient pour Juifs.*'<sup>200</sup> Despite that this sentence was not drawn up thinking in the Valencian medieval context, Sartre set out a question that revealed the situation of medieval Jews that lived in Christian spaces. Moreover, he wondered if: '[...] *A-t-on réfléchi à la situation intolérable de ces hommes condamnés à vivre au sein d'une société qui adore le Dieu qu'ils ont tué?*'<sup>201</sup> Jews of the Kingdom of Valencia are among many examples of Jewish people sharing with Christian cities and villages of Iberia. Since the conquest of the Taifa of Balansiya and the foundation of the new kingdom by James I (1208–1276) in 1238, Jews were forced to live not only among Christians, but also in a space that became Christianized. Each community had their own space and whereas Christians lived freely, Jews were established in the *juheria* or *aljama*, the Jewry.<sup>202</sup> However, the segregation of Jews is not particular to the Christian world, given that they had a neighbourhood near the gate of Exerea or Xerea in the former Balansiya. This was the same place where Jews lived during the Christian domination.<sup>203</sup>

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199 This chapter is the result of part of the author's doctoral dissertation that was conducted within the framework of the pre-doctoral grant 'Atracció al Talent' of the Universitat de València. Also, it has benefitted from the research project under the title 'Memory, Image and Conflict in Renaissance Art and Architecture: Germanias revolt in Valencia' (HAR2017- 88707-P), financed by MINECO/AEI/FEDER, UE. Moreover, the author wants to thank Amadeo Serra, his PhD supervisor, for his advice and guidance.

200 Sartre 1954, p. 81.

201 Sartre 1954.

202 This word refers both to the neighbourhood where Jews lived and the people who lived in there.

203 Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 194–198. As this will be overmuch for this short paper, there will not an analyse of the Jewish quarter under the Islamic rule. For more information see Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 16–19. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 28–46.

The siege and the subsequent entry of James I on 9 October 1238 in Balansiya initiated a new era where Jews passed from Islamic domination to a subjugation by the followers of Christ.<sup>204</sup> However, the reign of James I and the first years of Peter III (1240–1285) have been considered as the Golden Age of the Jewry in the Crown of Aragon (1213–1283).<sup>205</sup> James I allowed the restitution of the Jewish quarter in the refunded Valencia in 1244, and confirmed in 1273.<sup>206</sup> He also strengthened the attraction of Jews from different lands following a clear settlement policy,<sup>207</sup> giving them many facilities.<sup>208</sup> Yet, due to the revitalization of the religious anti-Judaism campaign and the animosity of the nobles who saw how Jews became the King's counsellors, Peter III finally began to suppress certain privileges given to Jews. However, he tried to protect them because of political interests.<sup>209</sup>

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204 According to Katrin Kogman-Appel, acculturation to Islam was easier than to Christianity, since the first had secular aspects more readily adopted by Jews. Kogman-Appel 2002, p. 248. Yet, as Charlie Bailey indicates, Jewish people were subjugated under either Christian or Muslim government depending on where they were located. It has typically been argued that the Islamic period constituted a Golden Age for Jews of Iberia. Nevertheless, this argument should only apply to Jewish life before the arrival of Almohads to Al-Andalus because they were very oppressive. The text can be found on the Internet. Bailey 2015, pp. 4–7, for the quotation p. 5.

205 Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 24. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 38–47. Azulay and Israel 2009, p. 200.

206 Cfr. Danvila y Collado 1886, p. 381. Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], p. 6. See also Piles Ros 1991, p. 8. Magdalena Nom de Déu, José Ramón 1992, p. 176. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 19–20. López González 2014, pp. 7–31.

207 The interest of James I and Peter III to protect them were due to demographics. As Jews were a property of the monarchy, they were an important source of income. For example, when Peter III started the conquest of Sicily demanded on 3 November 1282 funding to the Jewries. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999a, p. 19. David Nirenberg sums up the relation between monarchy and Jews saying that in all of the western Europe monarchies, Jews were considered as subject to royal power: 'serfs (or slaves) of the king's chamber' (*servi regie camerae*) or the king's 'private thing'. Nirenberg 2014, p. 76. In addition, Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 23. Azulay and Israel 2009, p. 207. Riera i Sans 2009, p. 142. Nirenberg 2013, pp. 191–196.

208 The king, for example, allowed them to stay in the city with all their properties and authorized them to buy Christian houses inside the boundaries of the ghetto or to acquire Christian farmlands and plots. Baer 1998 [1945], pp. 157–162. Régné 1978, num. 31, 141, 142, 160, 161, 566, 652, 654. Piles Ros 1991, pp. 16–28. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 20–26.

209 Yitzhak Baer analysed accurately the Jewish problem and how Peter III faced it. Baer 1998 [1945], pp. 177–190. Additionally: Baer 1985 [1913]. Piles Ros 1991, pp. 29, 40–71. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 26–28. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007,

The following kings continued ratifying the privileges of the Valencia Jewry, even though anti-Judaism was getting stronger and the monarchy was forced to fight against the outbreaks of violence as the Crusade of Shepherds, the Black Death of 1348 or the War of the Two Peters (1356–1369) and the prescriptions of the 4th Lateran Council (1215) about segregation marked in Jewish robes.<sup>210</sup> In spite of that, the most aggressive and rough attack against the Jewish community was the pogrom of 1391, because this supposed the enclosure and reduction of the Valencian *aljama*.<sup>211</sup>

## The Broken Jewish Space

According to José Rodrigo, the Jewish quarter should have been located in the parish demarcation of Saint Thomas, although it was expanded and entered the parish district of Saint Andrew.<sup>212</sup> Many hypothesis have been given by various researchers about the exact location of the ghetto,<sup>213</sup> due to the fact that there were different phases of expansion since 1244<sup>214</sup> that were interrupted by the Black Death and the war with Castile. However, when these were overcome, the ghetto continued expanding both in demography and urbanization, with the Jews buying new houses beyond the boundaries of the Jewish quarter.<sup>215</sup> In the *Cortes* (parliament) of 1369–1370 and 1371,

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pp. 47–49. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 207–208. See also the study of the Jewish quarter of Tortosa. Barton 2015.

210 Piles Ros 1991, pp. 81–82. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 28–32, 125–127. Nirenberg 2001, pp. 67–134, 191–192. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 46, 209–215. Glick 2010, pp. 10–43. Nirenberg 2014, p. 100.

211 Many papers, articles or contributions have been written about the assault of the Valencian *juheria*, but due to limited space, the author only cites some of the most accurate works in relation to the subject. Danvila y Collado 1886, pp. 371–380. Piles Ros 1991, pp. 95–123. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 33–41. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 69–100. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 259–275. Narbona Vizcaíno 2012, pp. 177–210. Nirenberg 2014, pp. 75–88. Gampel 2016.

212 Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992, p. 6.

213 Azulay and Israel, Hinojosa and López have collected every known sources about the delimitation of the Jewish quarter and the authors who studied it. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 415–448. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 217–248. López González 2014, pp. 10–11.

214 The first permission to extend the Jewish quarter was given by James I on 19 September 1273. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 218, 230.

215 For a study about the phases of expansion and development of the Valencian *aljama*, see Danvila y Collado 1886, pp. 358–396. Danvila y Collado 1891, pp. 142–159. Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], pp. 3–27. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 122. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 217–248.

the *síndics* (delegates) demanded to the future John I (1350–1396) the relocation of Jews in the traditional space.<sup>216</sup> But to their misfortune, with the *fuero* (law) established on 1 December 1389, the king allowed the expansion and the closing of the *aljama* – the *juhería nova* – to avoid possible attacks against the Jewish community.<sup>217</sup> The works, which started on 8 March 1390, provoked the reproach of the Christians who lived in the neighbourhood of Exerea, especially the friars of the Monastery of Preachers of Saint Dominic who argued that they would be isolated.<sup>218</sup>

Yet, the extension was stopped by the tragic events of 9 July 1391, the riot to the *aljama*. Only 200 Jews remained from a community of 2500–3000 people before the attack.<sup>219</sup> Around 230 Jews were killed whereas the rest of them left the city or accepted to convert to Christianity.<sup>220</sup> Their houses were assaulted, their gold and jewellery were stolen and the documents of Christian debts were vanished.<sup>221</sup> In addition, the main Synagogue was

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216 Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 33, 123. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 62–69. Azulay and Israel 2009, p. 232. Narbona Vizcaíno 2012, p. 184.

217 «*En lo nom de Deu e de la sua gracia, amen. Dimarts que era comptat VIII dies del mes de Març en lany de la natiuitat de Nostre Senyor MCCCXC. Com per acte de Corts generals en la Vila de Monço en lo present any celebrades sia estat provehit que la Juheria de Valencia sia ampliada limitada e closa... E los Batle e Jurats... hajan declarat la ampliació e limitació de la dita Juhería, e eser aquella dita Juhería eser closa de mur de III pams de gros e ben alt. etc. (Cuenta del cercado de la Judería. Libro en el Archivo municipal de Valencia.)*» Cfr. Danvila y Collado 1886, p. 381. See also Danvila y Collado 1891, p. 150 and footnote 16. Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], p. 9. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 232–233.

218 They exposed to the *Consejo* (Council) on June, 4, 1390 that the closing of the *aljama* would be: «[...] *molt perjudicial e dampnosa á la cosa publica e senyaladament al monestir de frares preicadors de la dita ciutat e a tota la Exerca la qual es notable partida e majorment als anants e venints a e del grau de la mar; los quals e lurs carretgs eren embargats en lur liberal en lo acostumat pasatge que solien fer per lo dit carrer ara tancat, els convenia anar per altres vies molt lungadanes e embargades. (Libro de actas de 1390)*» AMV, MC A-19, fol. 145v. Cfr. Danvila y Collado 1891, p. 149 and footnote 14. In addition Teixidor 1895 [1767], p. 154–155. Danvila y Collado 1886, p. 365 and footnotes 5–6. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 123. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 425–426. Narbona Vizcaíno 2012, pp. 184–186, 197, 200.

219 Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 89–90. Azulay and Israel 2009, p. 264.

220 Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 39. Narbona Vizcaíno 2012, pp. 179–180. Some of them were protected and hidden by Christians, especially by the nobles, and even by the governor of the realm. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 93, 97.

221 Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, p. 35. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 77–78.



converted into the Church of St. Christopher<sup>222</sup> since a Jew saw a figure on the roof of that Synagogue in the fashion that one paints this saint.<sup>223</sup>

On 2 October 1392, the king dissolved the *juheria*.<sup>224</sup> The Jewish space vanished and despite the king restored the ghetto on 31 December 1392 – the new *aljama* had a very reduced space – Jews lost almost completely their public sphere (Fig. 1).<sup>225</sup>

## Inside the Jewish Quarter

Dana E. Katz in her study of the Venetian *aljama* refers to this process as *ghettoization*, which '[. . .] became an early modern spatialization of power that evolved outside the ghetto by dominating (Christian) forces that sought to minimize the Jews' presence'.<sup>226</sup> Besides, she adds that the Jewish quarter was an instance of religious architectural sequestering, due to the fact that Jews were excluded from the rest of the city.<sup>227</sup> They were segregated in other neighbourhoods and their market and economic activities restricted in order to separate them from Christians. The trade between ones and others was usually forbidden and punished, although it was inevitable the relations between them and sometimes it derived in violent acts as the pogroms of 1391.

In Valencia, as in other areas of Iberia and Europe, this segregation allowed the maintenance of Hebrew religious precepts and traditions. The Torah and Talmud ruled the lives of Jews inside their domestic space, becoming the way to survive in a society of Christian majority. Both offered answers, values and ideals to deal with daily questions and problems of the Jews' life.<sup>228</sup>

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222 Teixidor 1895 [1767], pp. 171–177. Orellana, Marcos Antonio de, 1985–1987 [1923], pp. 415–417. Boix 1980 [1849], pp. 162–163. Danvila y Collado 1886, p. 147. Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], pp. 21–22. Azulay, Israel 2009, pp. 131–133. Nirenberg 2014, pp. 85–86.

223 «[. . .] *un Juheu, al començament del dit esvaiment, veu sobre la sumitat de la dita Sinagoga un Hom, fort gran e soberch, ab una Creatura en lo coll, a semblant que hom pinta Sent Christofol*». Cfr. Teixidor 1895 [1767], p. 171.

224 «[. . .] *totes les tanques e clausures fetes en les Juheries vella e nova, sien derrocades e ubertes del tot, encara tots portals per xichs e grans que fossen entrada en la Juheria, sien del tot desfets e totes les entrades sien sens tot embarch carrers publichs sens senyal de tanca o portal*». ACA, Reg. 1905, fol. 32v. Cfr. Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], pp. 16–17. Also Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 103–104. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 245, 276, 278.

225 Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 245–247, 276.

226 Katz 2011.

227 Hinojosa Montalvo 2007s, pp. 257–271. Katz 2011, p. 248. Nirenberg 2014, p. 106.

228 Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 54–59, 63–65.

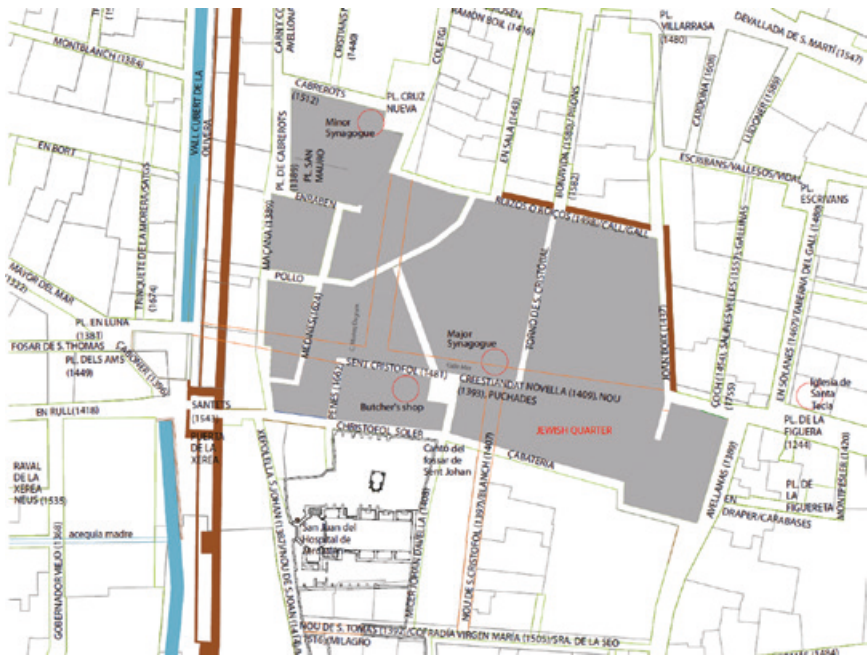


Fig. 1. Possible distribution of the streets of the Jewish Quarter of Valencia before the assault of 1391, published in López González, M. Concepción (2014): “Nuevas aportaciones al estudio del recinto de la judería de Valencia delimitado en 1244.” In *Sefarad* 74 (1), p. 23.

This could be tested in the Crown of Aragon Haggadot,<sup>229</sup> plural of Haggadah, which contains the narrative and illumination of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and a variety of biblical themes, specifically related to the Passover feast. These are formed by a compilation of biblical texts, rabbinical commentaries, poems and religious songs.<sup>230</sup> Thanks to these works, we are able to imagine how Jews could have lived their privacy in Christian space, especially during this celebration.<sup>231</sup>

229 Luxurious manuscripts, some of them illuminated, made for wealthy Jews of the Crown of Aragon.

230 Kogman-Appel 2002, pp. 254–256.

231 Due to the fact that Passover often coincided with the Christian Holy Week, during this feast Jews suffered the worst attacks by their neighbors. For that reason, Jews were often forced to remain into the *aljamas* to avoid the Christian violence. Batterman 2002, pp. 69–70.

Because of the Christian domination and the hermetic thought of the heirs of Israel who tried to maintain the cohesion of the community and the collective identity,<sup>232</sup> Jews translated their models into a specific Jewish idiom. As they knew the Christian typological interpretation of the Old Testament, Jews filtered out elements of particular Christological meaning and modified the iconography correspondingly.<sup>233</sup> Adopting these figurative rules, Jews generated a cycle to represent the *Pesach*, the Passover dinner that commemorates the liberation of the sons of Israel from Egypt.<sup>234</sup> With this, they tried to revive the past and link it to the present. Although Haggadot cannot reflect every aspect of Jewish life, the representations of the *Pesach* offer us examples of different scenes of family events (births, circumcision and marriage or funerals), the rooms of the house, the interior of the synagogues, etc.<sup>235</sup> As an example, the Golden Haggadah (London, British Library, Ms. Add. 27210, f. 15r, Fig. 2) contains the tidying-up of the house, the distribution of the *matzah* and the preparation of the lamb, and cleaning of dishes for the Passover Seder.<sup>236</sup> The Sister Haggadah (London, British

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232 Kogman-Appel 2002, p. 258. Kogman-Appel 2009, pp. 81–85.

233 Kogman-Appel 2009, p. 77. See also Kogman-Appel 2002, p. 263. Kogman-Appel 2011, p. 23. This could open a discussion about the Jewish non-figural tradition, but Kogman-Appel defends that the avoidance of figurative motifs, could be an influence of the Islamic aniconic attitude rather than a narrow interpretation of the biblical rule of Ex 20,4. On the constitution of the Jewish visual culture, the art of non-Jewish environments has been contributed heavily. Kogman-Appel 2002, p. 246. Kogman-Appel 2011, pp. 4–12, 17–18. Besides, she adds that: «What had changed by the 1230s was not the theoretical halakhic basis but rather the Jewish perception of Christianity, which hitherto had been considered an idolatrous form of worship. This change in perception had economic, social, and apologetic, rather than halakhic, roots». Kogman-Appel 2009, p. 106.

234 «After the account of the biblical exodus from Egypt, the Passover haggadah turns to a consideration of the three central festival symbols, reminding the reader, in the words of Rabbi Gamaliel, that anyone who neglects to refer specifically to these three things on Passover fails to fulfill his religious obligation. They are: the paschal lamb (*pesah*), the unleavened bread (*matzah*), and the bitter herb (*maror*)». Batterman 2002, p. 54.

235 Barceló Plana 2015, pp. 166–167. Thanks to Alba Barceló for her help and advice in this part of the article.

236 «The creators of the *matzah* images in the Haggadah manuscripts found various ways to represent this concept. The general character of the illustrations as described above certainly projects a grandeur or magnificence inexplicable for a mere illustration of a wafer of *matzah* but appropriate to an artistic evocation of the mystical Shekhinah. Understood as a representation of divine glory, the *matzah* appears appropriately ‘glorified’ and monumentalized through its artistic elaboration». Batterman 2002, p. 64.



Fig. 2. *Preparation for Seder*, in *Golden Haggadah*, Ms. Add. 27210, f. 15r, 2nd quarter of the 14th century, London, British Library <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=19108>

Library, Ms. Or. 2884, f. 18r) and *Barcelona Haggadah* (London, British Library, Ms. Or. 1404, f. 28v, Fig. 3)<sup>237</sup> depict the interior of a house with

<sup>237</sup> In the f. 17v, 19v and 20v there are other representations of the Passover dinner. Barceló Plana 2015, pp. 170–171.



Fig. 3. *Seder Table, Barcelona Haggadah*, Ms. Or. 1404, f. 28v, 2nd quarter of the 14th century, c. 1340, London, British Library <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=19109>

hanging lamps and five adults and a child around the dining table, since in this feast the parents read the Exodus to their children.<sup>238</sup>

These images about the *Pesach* are only some of the examples that testify the importance of private life. This is the world where Jews could appear and

<sup>238</sup> Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 101–106. Barceló Plana 2015, pp. 169–171.

act as real Jews, without trying to go unnoticed, whether going to the synagogue (Sister Haggadah, fol. 17v, Fig. 4) or preparing for the Seder (Sister Haggadah, fol. 17r).<sup>239</sup> It was hard for them to live in a society where they were forced to be marked with symbols and badges, as the *rodella*, a circle piece, to be identified.<sup>240</sup> Inside the Jewish quarter, they were free to behave and dress in their own way and honour the Jewish feasts, without being judged. Therefore, the Haggadot are solid visual examples of the Jewish intimacy, windows to show how they would be in the privacy of their community and homes. Although the Jewish private sphere was maintained, with the dissolution of the Valencian Jewry and the new reduced *aljama*, Jews were on the way to lose definitely not only their space in the city, but also their land and identity.<sup>241</sup>

### New Christians and New Obligations

The flip side of the coin was all the Jews that were converted to Christianity after the 1391 riot, the Conversos.<sup>242</sup> These new Christians must live separately from Jews to avoid the potential continuity of their former religion. Saint Vincent Ferrer was the bravest paladin and defender of the Conversos' segregation and his provocative sermons demanded the relocation of neophytes far from the ghetto. His preaching focused on the segregation and transformed from a marginal strategy to a central touchstone of a well-ordered Christian polity. The saint, as king Joan I, was conscient of the lack of a truly Christian education. However, in his sermons, Saint Vincent Ferrer did not centre the attention in this point. He was really worried not about the integration of Conversos in the Christian society, but rather in the separation of them from their former coreligionists, especially in sexual terms.<sup>243</sup>

Therefore, it could be proven that the interest of the Iberian Church at the beginning of the 15th century was the segregation of Jews from Conversos.<sup>244</sup>

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239 Despite the Haggadot were not Valencian, these offer a great approach to the Valencian Jewish daily life. About the Valencian Jewish dwelling and their furniture, see Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 439–448. T. Metzger and M. Metzger provide a detailed summary about the representations of Jewish houses in Hebrew manuscripts. Metzger and Metzger 1982, pp. 87–109.

240 García Marsilla 2012, pp. 572–573.

241 Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], pp. 16–17. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 41–53. Hinojosa Montalvo 2001, p. 65. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 268–286.

242 About the situation of the Conversos in Valencia see Narbona Vizcaíno 2009, pp. 101–146.

243 Nirenberg 2014, pp. 104–105.

244 Over time the hatred against Jews moved towards the Conversos as a result of the ability of these to access Christian trades and social positions and by the fear



Fig. 4. *The Synagogue*, in *Sister Haggadah*, Ms. Or. 2884, f. 17v, 2nd or 3rd quarter of the 14th century, London, British Library <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=19290>

Maybe, this could be one of the reasons to Christianize the former *juheria*, because of neophytes usually occupied houses near the *aljama*, the same

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that they could attack Christianity from inside. This did not mean that the Iberian Church did not forget Jews, but it began to focus on Conversos and this resulted in the instauration of the Inquisition. Narbona Vizcaíno 2009, pp. 110–111. Narbona Vizcaíno 2013, pp. 17–42. Nirenberg 2013, pp. 217–245.

places where they lived before the pogrom. Conversos had relatives that did not converted to Christianity and they were still important for them. For example, some of them were even married to Jewish women. Moreover, for many years they maintained their financial affairs with Jews. Such proximity made it impossible the distinction between the two groups and that threatened the Christian society and its identity. As David Nirenberg sums: 'It was this destabilization, this narrowing of the gap between Christian and Jew, that Old Christians were reacting to when they complained that it was now impossible to distinguish Christian from Jew'<sup>245</sup>.

For that reason, segregation and Christianization of the ghetto became a priority to end the Jewish presence and its pernicious influence on Conversos.<sup>246</sup> For instance, after the closure of the Jewish quarter, at the beginning of the 15th century, Mar street was prolonged as a result of complaints from Christians who had to branch off to avoid crossing the Jewry.<sup>247</sup> They also suppressed their synagogues, because, besides the main synagogue was transformed into the Saint Christopher Church, there were at least two other ones that were converted into private houses after 1391.<sup>248</sup> But the most striking example of the Christian conquest was the expropriation of the Jewish cemetery, the *fossar dels juheus*.

The necropolis was located southeast of the *juheria*,<sup>249</sup> out of the walls after 1356 when Peter IV (1319–1387) widened the city's walls during the conflict with Castile.<sup>250</sup> After the 1391 assault, this space was abandoned and

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245 Nirenberg 2014.

246 '[...] Saint Vincent and his sponsors sought to reinstate necessary distance between Christian and Jew in three ways. One focused on the religiosity of the conversos, seeking to integrate them as fully as possible into 'Old Christian' society and thereby distance them from 'Jewishness.' A second strategy was to sharpen the boundaries between all Christians and Jews through a massive program of segregation. The third possibility was that of eliminating the Jewish antithesis to Christianity altogether, by achieving the conversion of all remaining to Christianity'. Nirenberg 2014, p. 112.

247 Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992 [1913], p. 21. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, p. 427. Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 132, 328. López González 2014, p. 8. In addition, the reforms on the *aljama* would solve the old problems of urbanization.

248 It seems that the Hermitage of the New Cross was a synagogue in the last period of the Valencian Jewry. Rodrigo y Pertegás 1992, pp. 22–24. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 106. Azulay, Israel 2009, pp. 133–134.

249 There was a former graveyard near the cathedral, in the parish of Saint Peter. Hinojosa Montalvo 1999b, pp. 84–85. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 322–323.

250 The building of the walls started before the conflict with Castile, but it was in that time when the construction was accelerated and finished urgently. Serra Desfilis 2008, pp. 84–90.



bought by Caterina Boil, wife of the noble Pere Boil, lord of Manises and the tailor Joan Francesc, who parcelled it up and sold the ground.<sup>251</sup> The difficulties and slowness to urbanize the space provoked the abandonment of the promoters<sup>252</sup> and, maybe, for this reason the king Ferdinand II (1452–1516) donated part of the land to the Dominican friar Sayol, who founded in 1491 the Convent of Dominican Nuns of Saint Catherine of Siena.<sup>253</sup> Presently, the former *fossar* is a mall and an underground station and the convent was transferred to another neighbourhood of the city (Fig. 5).<sup>254</sup> Nevertheless, more important than the Christianization of the space was the fact that, according to the traveller Hieronymus Münzer, this convent housed the *sambenitos* of the Inquisition.<sup>255</sup> These penitential garments were the punishment for Conversos who were accused by the Holy Office of Judaizing. Moreover, Münzer added that before the erection of the convent there was a church dedicated to Saint Christopher. This was the place where neophytes buried their dead. To Münzer, Conversos still maintained the Mosaic Law and its traditions, although they tried to hide them. For that reason, when they buried someone, the coffin was covered with fabrics embroidered with gold and with an image of Saint Christopher. This information about the chapel could be a confusion with the former main synagogue that was transformed into the St. Christopher Church. Nevertheless, by the triumph of Saint

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251 Between the new owners, most of them Conversos, were Daniel Pardo, merchant, Francesc Baldomar, stonecutter and “*maestro de obras de la ciudad*”, Antonio d’Anyo, apothecary, Joan Fornés, tailor and Joan Donat, spice seller. Iradiel 2007, p. 399.

252 Iradiel 2007, p. 400.

253 Orellana, Marcos Antonio de, 1985–1987 [1923], p. 387. Boix 1980 [1849], p. 163. Jiménez and Mata 2001, pp. 28–29. There was another cemetery since May, 26, 1394 when John I authorized Jews to erect a new ossuary out to the walls of the city. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, p. 322.

254 Unfortunately, when the archaeological excavation started, the Jewish community demanded respect to the bodies found. The Valencian government granted this request and it was impossible to thoroughly analyse and study the remains. Calvo and Lerma 1996, pp. 261–276. Jiménez and Mata 2001, pp. 27–40. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, p. 324.

255 “[...] desde el suelo hasta el techo, hállanse cubiertas de sambenitos de los marraños que sufrieron condena, incluso los de aquellos que fueron quemados; cada uno lleva escrito el nombre del que lo vistió y habrá más de mil, debiendo advertirse que son muchos los que se sustraen oculta y diariamente.” Münzer 2002 [1494–1495], pp. 51–53. Münzer visited Iberia between 1494–1495 and he arrived to Valencia October, 5, 1494.



Fig. 5. Partial plan of the necropolis in the plot of Saint Catherine of Siena. From: Ribera i Lacomba, Albert (2011). “Les intervencions arqueològiques al barri de la Universitat”. In: Rosselló, Vicenç M. (Ed.). *L'Universitat i el seu entorn urbà*. València : Universitat de València, p. 56.

Christopher as a symbol and protector of the Conversos' community, that chapel could be a different church with the same saint as a patron.<sup>256</sup>

Maybe it was not a coincidence that the convent where they were sanctioned for maintaining their former religion was the same place where their ancestors rested. It is a total declaration of interest: Christianity has replaced Judaism.<sup>257</sup> The symbolic appropriation of those places is a prominent theme in Christian thought and it is reflected on a variety of ancient legends.

256 Another example would be the brotherhood of Conversos of Gandia (July, 1403) under the protection of the same saint. Hinojosa Montalvo 2007, pp. 81–105.

257 As a memory of the former Jewish cemetery, the doors that allowed the entrance in the intramural space were known as *Portal dels Juheus*, the Doors of the Jews. Jiménez and Mata 2001, p. 29.

Mitchell Merback points out that the Christian sacred spaces occupied by infidels would be restored by the will of God through miracles. Also, the appropriation of the significant places to Judaism (also to Islam during the conquest of Al-Andalus) was a strategy to suppress the influence of other religions and to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity and the falsity and incapacity of the defeated.<sup>258</sup>

Moreover, it could be ventured that besides the interest to Christianize the plot, there was another strong reason to erect the convent on the Jewish cemetery: the *damnatio memoriae*. After the conquest of Granada in 1492 and the expulsion of Jews the same year from the Crowns of Aragon and Castile – they would be expelled from Portugal and Navarre later – Iberia became finally a Christian land, although there was still a minority of Muslims and Conversos.<sup>259</sup> So that, it was necessary to suppress the footprints of the defeated to promote their forgetfulness, and building on the cemetery became a big step to relegate the Valencian Jewry to oblivion.

Therefore, when Jews were expelled at the end of the 15th century, Conversos became the last testimony of the Jewish presence in Valencia. Christianity had triumphed and Conversos were ‘integrated’ in the Christian society. The Inquisition tried to control that they behaved as Christians not only in the public sphere, but also in private: presence and veneration of images in their houses, honour Sunday, leaving Torah’s precepts, etc.<sup>260</sup> The ghetto was also abandoned and buildings erected on its remains: the University in 1499 and the *Real Colegio del Corpus Christi* promoted by the archbishop of the city, the Patriarch Juan de Ribera (1532–1611)<sup>261</sup> around 100 years later. However, by that time, the Jewish problem was only a former shadow and the heirs of the Mosaic Law, Conversos, were already integrated in the bosom of Christian society. Now, the problem was the Moriscos.

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258 Merback 2008, p. 318. Patton 2012. Serra Desfilis 2014, pp. 283–306.

259 Baer 1998 [1945], pp. 869–893.

260 Unlike Seville, studied by Felipe Pereda (Pereda 2007, especially pp. 27–144), there are no documents in Valencia that certify the obligations to use images in their private homes, although an approach to this topic can be found in García Marsilla 2012, pp. 586–595.

261 Azulay and Israel 2009, pp. 220, 329.

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April L. Najjaj

## 5. “Never Was Raised Such a Monument of this Stature”:<sup>262</sup> The Alhambra and Palace of the Popes in the 14th Century

### Introduction

During the rule of the Nasrid Sultan, Yusuf I (1333–1354 CE), Muslim forces from the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada and Marinid North Africa defeated Christian armies off the coast of Gibraltar in 1340 CE. Six months later, under the command of Alfonso XI (1325–1350 CE), the king of Castile, the Christians counter-attacked at the southern port of Tarifa, resulting in a Christian victory that essentially ended North African intervention in the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>263</sup> Later that year, a delegation from Alfonso traveled to the papal court of Pope Benedict XII (1334–1342 CE), in Avignon to bring the papacy’s share of the proceeds, including standards and shields taken from the battlefield, which were subsequently displayed on the walls of the papal palace.<sup>264</sup> Whether considered by the sources or by later historians as reconquest, crusade, or jihad, the Battle of the Rio Salado in 1340 CE, and the successful two-year Christian siege of Algeciras four years later, established the *status quo* in medieval Iberia for the next one hundred and fifty years.

The capitals of this 14th century drama were the palace-cities of the Alhambra and the Palace of the Popes; these two locations have more often been considered as settings for medieval adversaries rather than as dynastic structures serving similar purposes. Both places are distinct from other locations in that they served as royal permanent residences but also as physical symbols for the leaders of their respective faiths, whether Muslim or Christian. A detailed examination of both locations reveals similarities in both the physical, social, and sacred constructs that reflect the needs and desires of any medieval society, regardless of religious or cultural affiliations.

A permanent royal residence such as the Alhambra can be classified as a palace-city, which included multiple residences, gardens, baths, and religious spaces, and is juxtaposed to a larger urban center. Dating back to the

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262 Ibn al-Jayyab in García Gómez 1985, p. 103.

263 Housley 1986, p. 59.

264 Mollat 1949, p. 315.

5th century BCE, the adjacent city of Granada, the capital of the Nasrid kingdom, can be described as a spontaneous or vernacular city, constructed over time with no overall plan and its location determined by other factors, such as trade routes or the confluence of rivers. In addition, a palace-city is separated from the urban center by a physical barrier, a system of walls, as well as a location on top of a hill above the city. Within the walls resides a permanent ancillary population to fulfill the needs and desires of the sultan, his family, and their guests. Lastly, this specialized population works at the urban elements of the palace-city—markets and other business enterprises; the prison and courts; the mint; and upkeep of the various gardens and cemeteries. Most of the construction done during the Nasrid period at the Alhambra was finished by 1391.

As a cross-cultural study to the Alhambra, the Palace of the Popes is also an aggregative complex with little sense of overall planning constructed over the course of several decades and largely completed by 1362. The buildings sit on an outcrop of rock on the north side of the city of Avignon and adjacent to the Rhône River. The original palace was a bishop’s residence and sometimes used for General Church Councils since the mid-13th century. With the increasing unrest in Italy by the early 14th century, Pope Clement V (1305–1314 CE) decided to move the papal court to Avignon in 1309 CE in hopes that the court would be safe but still close enough to observe the troubles in Italy.

Within the extended walls of the Palace of the Popes can be found residences for the cardinals and other Church officials, a fish and meat market, gardens, banking and money changing services, two courts of justice, a pillory and prison with papal police, notarial offices and other administrative functions, a school of theology, small chapels, the mint, the treasury, and a library.<sup>265</sup>

## A Population Consideration

In the Tower of the Infantas in the Alhambra, there is a poem inscribed on the wall from the era of the Nasrid sultan, Muhammad VII (1392–1408 CE), that reads:

1 You that enter, stop for God’s sake, contemplate

how much perfect and rare beauty shines

2 Release your eyes to my charms

they send us whiffs of perfumed wood

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<sup>265</sup> Rollo-Koster 2003, pp. 75, 13.

3 But grace – you will say, if you look for it – resides in the inhabitants, not in the house.<sup>266</sup>

In a palace-city, whether the Alhambra or the Palace of the Popes, the ‘grace’ of the inhabitants resided in a permanent population tailored to implement the ruler’s vision, whether a pope or sultan. At both places, the residents differed from a spontaneous urban location in that there is no ‘general population’, and the ruler’s greater control over the people within the walls made for restrictions of access and movement into and out of the palace-city.

Census records are lacking for the city of Granada as well as for the Alhambra, so it is difficult to draw a complete picture of the numbers of people who lived there; informed estimates are required. For example, at the Alhambra within the medina area, where the service population resided, the walled space entailed approximately half of the site, 81,400 m<sup>2</sup>. In his studies of medieval Granada, Leopoldo Torres-Balbás suggests that the standard measurement for housing, what he refers to as a *vivienda media* (an average-sized house), is 450 m<sup>2</sup>, rendering a figure that as many as 181 dwellings could have existed within the medina area. However, in the case of a Muslim setting, the possibility of as many as four wives and a tradition of extended families residing together allows for larger households, and Torres-Balbás uses a larger index number – 6 persons per household – that gives a permanent population of 1,086 people living in the medina area, not including the members of the royal household, whether family members of the sultan or of the higher-ranking members of the royal court, who lived in other areas of the palace-city.<sup>267</sup>

Although the functions and duties of the ancillary populations in both locations would have been similar, the size and makeup of the population at the Palace of the Popes was significantly different, for a majority of the ‘courtiers’, as the sources refer to members of the papal court, had largely taken vows as members of religious orders; therefore, a population estimate based upon the size of households is not appropriate at the Avignon location.

Much better records are available for the population at the Palace of the Popes than at the Alhambra, and during the pontificate of Gregory XI in the 1370s, the population inside the walls of the old city of Avignon

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266 García Gómez 1986, pp. 146–147.

267 Torres-Balbás 1956, pp. 131–146; a second method for calculating population is based on the size of the congregational mosque which allows for 2.15 persons per square meter, the space reasonably needed to perform the genuflections required for prayer. See Lézine 1971.

that included the Palace of the Popes, was estimated at 2,359 “courtiers” (*cortesani*, meaning anyone directly connected with the papal curia) and 11,471 “citizens,” (*cives*, meaning everyone else who lived within the old walls), making for a population total of 13,830<sup>268</sup>; therefore, 17 % of the population worked directly for the pope while the other 83 % were ancillary personnel and their families.<sup>269</sup>

The specific and intentional nature of the permanent populations within these palace-cities played an important role in maintaining these sites as physical and symbolic focal points of their respective kingdoms. Avignon and the Palace of the Popes, as the residence of the spiritual leader of Western Christendom, had a population perhaps as much as ten times bigger than at the Alhambra, the residence only of a small dynasty on the western edge of the Islamic world; however, similarities in the intentions, expectations, and actions of those populations can be found in both locations.

### Water Use and Gardens in a Palace-City

In addition to a permanent population, both sites are similar in that the necessities of water are greater than with a short-term or seasonal residence. The demands for drinking and cooking as well as for agricultural spaces result in the need for a stable and plentiful water supply. However, a difference between the two can be seen in the comparison of the utilization of their bathing and latrine facilities. The Palace of the Popes had the Tower of the Latrines in the Old Palace, a multi-storied tower on the east side measuring 18m<sup>2</sup>, and a second latrine facility in the New Palace on the far west side. The tower contained a cesspool at the bottom that drained into the river and a sewer system that ran through the kitchen area, allowing rain-water to filter through the drainage pipes for cleaning.<sup>270</sup> Aside from the top floor that housed the captain at arms, the several floors of the tower included latrines with stone seats on wooden floors. The cesspool at the lowest level is approximately 22 meters deep and included two windows for ventilation about five meters above the ground.<sup>271</sup>

At the Alhambra, bathing facilities were more elaborate. The performance of *wudu*’ (ablutions) before prayer, as well as the greater standards of cleanliness expected in the Muslim world than in a medieval Christian context, put a greater demand on the availability of water than at the Palace of the Popes. In the oldest area of the Alhambra, the Alcazaba, a *hammām*,

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268 Mollat 1949, p. 281.

269 Rollo-Koster 2003, p. 78. *See also* Tomasello 1983, p. 31.

270 Colombe 1928, pp. 46–48.

271 *Ibid.*

including both baths and latrines, is found there and measures 322 m<sup>2</sup>, much larger than the Tower of the Latrines.<sup>272</sup> The largest of the multiple baths at the Alhambra is located adjacent to the Patio of the Myrtles and the Hall of the Ambassadors, the royal precinct of the palace-city, and thus intended for use by the sultan's family and guests. Measuring approximately 700 m<sup>2</sup> and decorated with tile work, inscriptions, and fountains, the size and design of this *hammām* alone indicates a difference in priorities of cleanliness and bathing in medieval Islamic and Christian cultures.

Aside from the obvious needs of cooking, bathing, and waste elimination, multiple garden spaces also required water, and both sites contained agricultural and ornamental gardens, and in the case of Avignon, an animal menagerie, too. One garden space at the Palace of the Popes measured 1008 m<sup>2</sup> and was referred to as either a *verger* (orchard) or a *jardin* (garden), built by Benedict XII on the east side of the Old Palace.<sup>273</sup> Clement VI, the other great builder at the palace, extended the garden in 1344 CE to add 704 m<sup>2</sup> more space.<sup>274</sup> He adorned the garden with fountains, trellises, bowers, and arbors, and during the pontificate of Gregory XI, a noria with 25 buckets was added to supply well water for various ornamental plants.<sup>275</sup>

In another quarter of the papal palace, the popes kept an animal menagerie started by John XXII, and papal accounts record the purchase of cages, iron chains, and food for what can only have been a sad collection of 'animaux sauvages'. The animals listed in the papal inventory included a lion and lioness, a camel, a boar, a wild cat, a bear, and ostriches; the aviary included 17 peacocks, starlings, nightingales, and Pope Gregory XI's pet parrot.<sup>276</sup>

Although other Islamic palace-cities did include a zoo or animal park, the Alhambra only had ornamental or vegetable gardens. Two of the remaining original garden spaces from the Nasrid period are the Patio of the Aqueduct and the Water Staircase in the Generalife, an adjacent palace constructed across a ravine but still part of the Alhambra site. The Patio of the Aqueduct is an ornamental garden measuring 196 m<sup>2</sup>, approximately 25 % the size of Benedict XII's garden space.<sup>277</sup> The jets of water that spout from the edges of the rectangular reflecting pool are a modern-day addition, but the Water Staircase and the *miradores* (scenic overlooks) along the western side and

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272 Fernández-Puertas 1997, p. 229.

273 Okey 1971, p. 229.

274 Colombe 1928, p. 98.

275 Gagnière 1988, p. 106.

276 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

277 Fernández-Puertas 1997, pp. 87, 12.

the first floor of the palace at the northern end of the garden both date from the Nasrid period.<sup>278</sup>

### Sacred Spaces in the Palace-City<sup>279</sup>

Spaces reserved for religious observance are another similarity found with these two sites. The first chapel of significant size at the Palace of the Popes was located on the north side of the Old Palace on the opposite wall from the Notre-Dame-des-Doms cathedral. Built by John XXII and extended by Benedict XII, this chapel had a 50-meter long apse and measured 8 meters across (400 m<sup>2</sup>).<sup>280</sup> The smaller chapel space, as well as the proximity of the cathedral just outside the walls, only sufficed for the early years of the papal residence in Avignon, resulting in the later construction of a much larger Great Chapel built by Clement VI that doubled the size of the sacred space within the walls of the site.

At the Alhambra, the largest worship space within the walls was converted into a church after the Christian conquest in 1492 and re-named Santa María de la Alhambra. The site measured 212.8 m<sup>2</sup>, making the mosque at the Alhambra a smaller sacred space than either of the religious buildings within the Palace of the Popes. With a larger mosque located down the hill in Granada constructed in the 11th century, the requirements for sacred space at the Alhambra were less, and with a choice of locations, less pressure existed to accommodate the entire male population of the Alhambra at any given prayer time.

In a more private side to worship, both locations included very small chapels and prayer niches. At the Palace of the Popes, several such small religious spaces can still be seen, such as the chapel of St. Martial, only 30 m<sup>2</sup>, adjoining the Great Dining Hall in the Old Palace; a slightly smaller chapel, 25 m<sup>2</sup>, dedicated to St. John, is found within a tower of the same name, also near the Great Dining Hall and jutting out into the garden.

A comparable small worship space found at the Alhambra is with the Oratory of Yusuf I. Only measuring 15 m<sup>2</sup>, the oratory has a decorative wood ceiling and is perched on the northeast wall of the palace-city and adjacent to the Partal palace, the oldest remaining residence in the Alhambra.<sup>281</sup> The location gives a beautiful view of the surrounding countryside on the

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278 Malpica-Cuello 2002, pp. 332–333. For further reading, see Bermúdez Pareja 1965, pp. 9–46.

279 For a more detailed look at sacred spaces at these locations, see Najjaj 2018, pp. 31–47.

280 Colombe 1928, pp. 28–30.

281 Fernández-Pusertas 1997, p. 14.

backside of the Alhambra and presented an ideal position to face towards Mecca for prayers.

Both locations had provisions for private as well as public worship, and for both pope and sultan, religious authority defined their legitimacy and would be physically expressed in their respective palace-cities. Although also a secular ruler, the pope, more importantly, served as God's representative on earth; with the Nasrid sultans in Granada, as was typical for Muslim rulers of the time, they claimed their religious authority dating back to 7th century Arabia and the beginnings of Islam with an ancestor believed to have been a Companion of the Prophet Muhammad, Sa'd b. 'Ubāda.<sup>282</sup>

### The Greater Purpose of a Palace-City

A last similarity to consider between the two locations is their greater purpose, which is implementing the vision of the ruler in both sacred and secular contexts, and serving his everyday needs, as well as for his family and guests. Both the Alhambra and the Palace of the Popes lost that greater purpose literally overnight. The end of the pope and his court residing at Avignon is traditionally considered to mark the end of the medieval papacy. The Palace of the Popes lost its greater purpose on March 12, 1403, when Pope Benedict XIII escaped after being a virtual prisoner there since 1398; the era of the popes residing at Avignon had ended. However, the site retained its social and cultural milieu even after the loss of that greater purpose, and it would continue to symbolize, although in a diminished capacity, the wealth and power of the papacy. The site simply reverted back to its previous role – an occasional residence for provincial Church officials.

The Alhambra served its greater purpose as the seat of government and home to the Nasrid dynasty, but it lost that purpose when Muhammad XII (1486–1492 CE), the last Nasrid sultan, surrendered the Alhambra and the last of the kingdom of Granada, to the Catholic king and queen, Ferdinand and Isabel, on January 2, 1492 CE. Distinct from the Palace of the Popes, the Alhambra lost its original social and cultural context on that day. The Islamic palace-city would no longer be the residence of a Muslim ruler or a physical manifestation of an Islamic society, and acquired a new purpose, symbolically as the triumph of Christianity over Islam, as a temporary tomb for Isabel when she died in 1504 CE, and as an occasional residence for Spanish royalty until the later 16th century.

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282 Arié 1992, p. 20.

## Conclusion

A palace-city generally served two purposes: a permanent residence for the ruler and his entourage and a physical symbol of both sacred and secular authority with the resources to build and maintain these structures. Both of these purposes, however, must be broadly interpreted for the Palace of the Popes. On the one hand, even in the modern day, scholars cannot agree whether the popes in Avignon ever intended to stay in Avignon permanently, or whether they only determined to reside there as a short-term re-location. In addition, as a symbol of authority, Avignon as a papal residence never acquired that same symbolic aspect as the Alhambra. The stay in Avignon actually represented a loss of prestige for the papacy, with the existing palace expanded during a time of declining authority, rather than at the height of the dynasty, as happened with the Alhambra. Residence at Avignon led to a questioning of papal legitimacy, and regardless of where the pope actually lived, the symbolic capital of Christianity in Europe stayed where it had always been – in Rome.

In the final analysis, these two structures are two of the best-preserved medieval palace-cities in what is today Western Europe, for both managed to withstand the political, social, and religious upheavals of the late medieval Mediterranean world and have survived to the modern day. By considering such aspects as population, land and water usage, sacred space, and overall or greater purpose, future comparisons of medieval palatial architecture in any location can be done that consider equally their similarities and differences, regardless of their doctrinal affiliations.

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## 6. Sacred Places: The Cubas from Southern Portugal

### Introduction

The landscape of the south of Portugal is punctuated by hundreds of small square plane buildings covered by a hemispherical dome (Fig. 1). These buildings are commonly identified by the word *cuba*, which corresponds to a semantic evolution of the Arabic word *qubbâ* and the Latin word *cupa*, both meaning dome, with visible similarity to the Portuguese word *cubo*, which means cube. Therefore, the substantive *cuba* synthesizes the geometrical composition of this type of construction: a cubic base covered by a hemispherical dome.

On the contrary, interiorly, the cubic volume has four pendentives that perform the gradual and ascendant passage of the square plane of the base to the circular plan of the dome. This transition is constructive, spatial and symbolic. In ancient cosmogonic theories, the cube is associated with the earth, while the hemispherical shape is compared to the celestial welkin, the sky. Thus, the earth and the sky, the juxtaposition of the cube and the dome, symbolize the Cosmos<sup>283</sup>.

Nowadays, the vast majority of these buildings can be found integrated in bigger and more complex architectural assemblies, such as rural chapels and churches (functioning as an altar space, sacristy, nave, narthex of entry and/or baptistery) or, more rarely, in castles towers, watchtowers, rural houses, barns and storehouses.

The image of some small-domed buildings isolated in the landscape, although rare, keeps alive the idea that some of these buildings could have been independent constructive modules, as it is still visible in other geographical contexts such as the North of Africa and the Middle East. The specific shapes of the base and the dome can vary from region to region, as well as the 'solutions to the transitions from the base to the dome can be more or less simple or complex'.<sup>284</sup>

Although the original use(s) of these buildings is still debatable, the majority of the researchers defend the *cubas* 'were sanctuaries that housed

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283 Martos 1994, p. 13

284 Borges 1985, p. 199



Fig. 1. São Vicente seen from N.ª S.ª da Natividade, Ferreira do Alentejo, 2013.

the remains of a Muslim saint, thus immortalizing and perpetuating his symbolic power.<sup>285</sup> However, the clear tie that exists between the *cubas* and the surrounding landscape has been raising many doubts and has led to many hasty conclusions. For example, the historian Artur Goulart sees the location of these constructions – on the top of the highest mountains in Southern Portugal – as a functional alliance between places of worship and military surveillance.<sup>286</sup> According to Jorge Feio, some *cubas* are located on the official administrative borders of the Alentejo county, which can be seen as evidence that these constructions were both religious in nature and had an administrative function of defining the territory. José Pires Gonçalves adds the hypothesis that the *cubas* marked Islamic necropolis.<sup>287</sup>

The debate over the *cubas* goes far beyond their original(s) purpose(s); the origin(s) of this architectural typology and the precise dating of construction is still a matter of dispute in the scientific community. Pires Gonçalves asks: were the *cubas* an architectural typology imported from Northern Africa built during the period of Muslim occupation in Portugal, between 711 and 1191 A.D.? Or were they ‘the expression of a very common type of

285 Pires Gonçalves 1964, p. 12.

286 Borges 1985, pp. 199–200.

287 Pires Gonçalves 1964, pp. 14–27.



Fig. 2. *São Brás, Serpa, 2013.*

funeral construction in the Iberian Peninsula during the period that preceded the Reconquista and then taken to the Maghreb by the Moorish architects that were expelled from the regions of Estremadura and Andalusia in 1502, and later in 1610?’,<sup>288</sup>

The study that comes closer to being an introduction to the problematic of the *cubas* and their connection to the surrounding landscape is Rui Miguel Carreteiro’s work from 1997 entitled ‘“Cubas” no Alentejo’. Carreteiro made a series of architectural and photographic surveys that show a deep link between geography and the *cubas* located within the Southern district of Évora.

### Spatial Analysis of the *Cubas* from Southern Portugal

Firstly, it is important to mention that most of the *cubas* were never studied or inventoried so it is unknown the precise number that exist in southern Portugal (Fig. 2).

However, on the course of this investigation it was possible to locate, identify, survey and catalogue two hundred and fifteen *cubas* located on the south or Portugal.

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288 Pires Gonçalves 1964, p. 13

Through spatial analysis (GIS) it was possible to denote two centers of gravity for the location of the objects of study: human settlements and the Atlantic coast. Of the two hundred and fifteen cases analyzed, one hundred and ninety nine are located within the perimeter of a human settlement, in places of high altitude, near ancient roads, water lines and springs, rocky outcroppings and inside cemeteries; six cases are located away from these settlements but on the more prominent capes of the Atlantic coast.

The location of several *cubas* inside cemeteries, ancient or still in use, establishes the link between these constructions and the funerary cult. In the South of Portugal, so far, were identified twenty *cubas* located within existing cemeteries. However, there are archaeological and bibliographic evidences/studies that suggest the existence of more *cubas* over ancient necropolis.

In 1957, the article ‘Cementerios Hispanomusulmanos’, from Leopoldo Torres Balbás, defined the key elements that characterize the Muslim cemeteries in the Iberian Peninsula: (1) proximity to a urban settlement, (2) location at east of a settlement, (3) proximity of a path/road that leads to the entrance of the settlement, (4) presence of the following vegetation: olive trees, palm trees and/or ‘azufaifos silvestres’. The set composed by São Sebastião, São Vicente and Nossa Senhora da Natividade is located to east of Ferreira do Alentejo, featuring the four points indicated by Torres Balbás, and, recently, an archaeological prospection found a Roman *stelae* inside the south elevation of the *cuba* of São Sebastião.

### **Some Reflections on the Archaeometry Component of the Research and Preliminary Observations on the Analytical Data**

In the ambit of this investigation, five radiocarbon dating tests were done with the collaboration of the HERCULES Laboratory, to achieve a firmer ground on the debate over the origin(s) and the precise dating of construction of this architectonic typology.

The archaeometry component of this project entails the study of forty-seven mortar samples from ten selected *cubas* for chronological dating and material characterization. Mortars are mixtures obtained by mixing one or more type of binders, one or more type of aggregates, water and natural or artificial additives.<sup>289</sup> As building materials, mortars can be used to bind various types of building blocks (stone, masonry etc.), smooth walls, floors and ceilings and, as surface finishing. Generally speaking, they can be classified as (a) filling mortars, (b) joint mortars and (c) grouting mortars. Because mortars are artificial amalgams, they have diverse compositional, material

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289 Miriello et al. 2010, Candeias et al. 2006.

and physical characteristics in response to different construction needs and the technological skill of the craftspeople who produced them.<sup>290</sup>

Within the context of this project that aims to provide insights into the architectural and cultural history of *cubas*, the study of these structures through a materials science perspective can yield significant data to test, support and enrich the ongoing discussions put forth by social sciences. Because the buildings in question underwent centuries of modifications and generally it is not possible to find chronologically datable artefacts within, (such as wooden furniture) mortars have the potential to serve as the prime source of information.

In this view, the main research questions behind the archaeometric analysis of the mortar samples in a hierarchical order are: (a) dating of the first phase of construction, (b) raw materials used in production and (c) building technology (such as mortar recipes and binder to aggregate ratios).

The methodology employed during the analysis of the samples consists of a multi-analytical setup that functions through the corroboration of data acquired from several different techniques yielding information at the mineralogical and elemental levels.<sup>291</sup>

As a crucial step of the investigation, the sampling is carried out using a hammer and a small chisel and the location is documented before and after the extraction of the sample.<sup>292</sup> The size of the sample is carefully determined to ensure all the required analyses, in addition to another “reserve” amount for possible confirmation analyses.<sup>293</sup>

At the laboratory, the samples are dried at 40 °C, followed by a visual inspection under stereo-zoom microscope and photographic documentation both with a macro lens and through a stereomicroscope with image acquisition capabilities. The main aim of the visual inspection is the identification of characteristic properties of the mortar, such as lime lumps or additives (fibres, pozzolans, charcoal etc.) and the separation of different layers.

A small amount of sample is embedded in low-viscosity epoxy resin (Epofix Fix, Struers A/S) to create polished cross sections and thin sections to be observed through optical microscopy. The optical microscopy (OM) analyses of the polished cross sections allow the determination of the structure and texture of the mortar, morphology and dimension and type of the aggregates, additives, visible porosity, cracking and secondary or decay products.<sup>294</sup> Furthermore, the OM inspection of the samples can give

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290 Mirello et al. 2010.

291 Candeias et al., 2006; Santos Silva et al., 2006; Chiari et al. 2006.

292 Chiari et al., 1996; Candeias et al., 2006.

293 Candeias et al., 2006.

294 Candeias et al., 2006; Middendorf et al., 2005.

information about the spatial distribution of binders and aggregates, as well as the interfacial reactions between the mortars' components.<sup>295</sup>

Following, the mineralogical observations of the OM inspection are supplemented and corroborated with X-ray diffraction analysis of the mortar ground to pass through a 106 $\mu$  sieve. This analysis allows the identification of the crystalline phases of the mortars' components, pozzolanic reaction materials as well as the post alteration/degradation products.<sup>296</sup> In other words, the mineralogical data obtained through the X-ray diffractograms allows the identification and differentiation of the binder types, as well as the kinds of aggregates used during production.

The next step of the investigation, the scanning electron microscopy coupled with energy dispersive X-Ray spectroscopy (SEM – EDS) analysis allows a further insight into the structure and components of the mortar. In particular, it is used to determine binder morphology, the interrelationship between the binder and aggregates, aggregate identification and morphology and detection of components that are too small to be visible to OM such as salts, pozzolanic components and organic/biological microstructures such as seashells.<sup>297</sup> Furthermore, the EDS spectra acquired provide elemental 1D and 2D analysis of the components, complementing the X-Ray diffraction analysis.

Acid attack is performed in two 10g sub-fractions of the mortar samples previously separated and disaggregated for chemical analysis. In this technique, two fractions of the mortar sample are digested in hydrochloric acid solution (1:3), to separate the siliceous aggregates from the lime paste.<sup>298</sup> The insoluble residue (siliceous component/aggregate) is then weighed to determine its ratio to the initial weight of the untreated 10g sample (similarly, the binder/aggregate ratio of the mortar sample is analyzed through thermogravimetric analysis – TGA).<sup>299</sup> The weight of the insoluble siliceous fraction therefore provides information about the binder/aggregate ratio used to produce the mortar. Subsequently, this insoluble fraction is sieved through different sieves to determine the particle size distribution of the aggregate fraction.<sup>300</sup>

Within the particular methodology employed for this project, the previously mentioned techniques are used to establish a firm characterization for

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295 Candeias et al., 2006.

296 Candeias et al., 2006; Middendorf et al., 2005.

297 Candeias et al., 2006; Middendorf et al., 2005.

298 Candeias et al., 2006.

299 Bakolasa et al., 1998; Pires et al., 2007.

300 Candeias et al., 2006.



the selection of samples for radiocarbon dating. Dating mortars by radiocarbon dating ( $^{14}\text{C}$ ) is regarded as a promising technique for the absolute dating of archaeological remains and architectural structures. Provided that the collected samples remain uncontaminated until analysis, the determination of the  $^{14}\text{C}$  age of the atmospheric carbon dioxide trapped within the mortar while it hardened will reflect its age.<sup>301</sup> In this view, during sample collection, the mortar specimens were extracted from locations such as structural columns or domes that are less likely to have undergone modifications during the structure's life.

*Binders:*

The data provided by the elemental maps (SEM-EDS), thermogravimetric measurements (TGA) and X-Ray diffractograms indicate that generally the analyzed mortars were prepared using calcitic limes with clay minerals inclusions (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4). Furthermore, thermogravimetric analyses and post acid-attack weight measurements yielded varying values for the binder to aggregate ratios among the samples. The absence of any uniformity in terms of binder to aggregate ratios suggests that there may not have been a specific mortar recipe for this particular architectural form.

*Aggregates:*

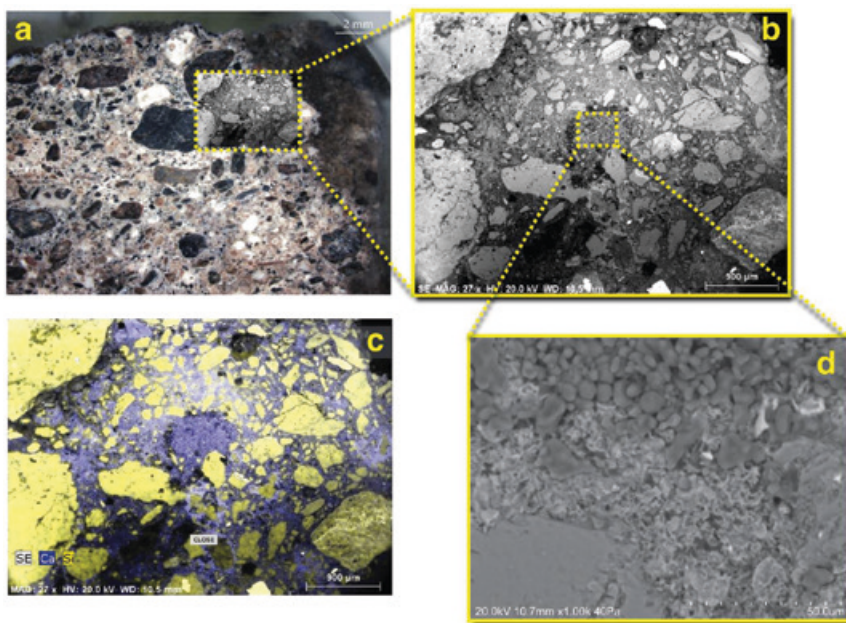
In the analyzed samples, the aggregate component of the mortars has mainly been siliceous sands, most likely to have been derived from local sources (Fig. 5).

A few examples to these sub-rounded to rounded silicates can be named as quartz, potassium and plagioclase feldspars. Within the mortar matrix, an even distribution of varying sizes of aggregate particles is a desirable property for the strength and efficient performance of the mortar. In the samples analyzed, the HCl-insoluble (siliceous) fraction of the mortar that represents the aggregate component did not indicate a decisive sieving effort that would ensure a balanced mortar matrix (Fig. 5).

Following a preliminary characterization of 15 samples (out of 47), 5 samples were selected for radiocarbon dating, based on their material properties and the history of their respective architectural structure. The preliminary results of this absolute dating analysis that provides key chronological data in relation to the structures' first phase of construction, the mortar analyzed samples provided varying dates, beginning from the 14th century CE until 20th century.

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301 Hayen et al., 2013; Al-Bashaireh, 2013.



**Fig. 3.** Polished cross section of a mortar sample from the cuba located at the Santa Luzia Church of Alvito, Portugal. In 7.8 times magnification, the stereo-zoom microscope image (a) of the sample yields information about the mortar matrix hence, the spatial distribution of the binder and aggregates, as well as allowing a preliminary identification of the aggregate particles. The backscattered electron image (BSE) of the scanning electron microscope (SEM-EDS) (b) is used to corroborate and complement the OM data, providing information in high magnification about the aggregate distribution and morphology, binder structure and presence of organic inclusions (such as seashells). The elemental maps (image c) acquired through SEM – EDS (energy dispersive X-Ray spectroscopy) provide information about the spatial distribution of the mortars' components (binder vs. aggregate) as well as providing clues for binder and aggregate identification. In this image, the blue areas indicate calcium (Ca) and calcitic aggregates and yellow areas represent silicon (Si) that constitute the previously mentioned siliceous aggregates. Finally, the high magnification (1000x) BSE image of the binder matrix (d) is used to determine its morphology and post-degradation products.

## Final Considerations

After analyzing the thirty-two *cubas* from the south of Portugal that we have selected as objects of study for this chapter – and even though this is still a working paper and definite answers are not yet possible to be provided to

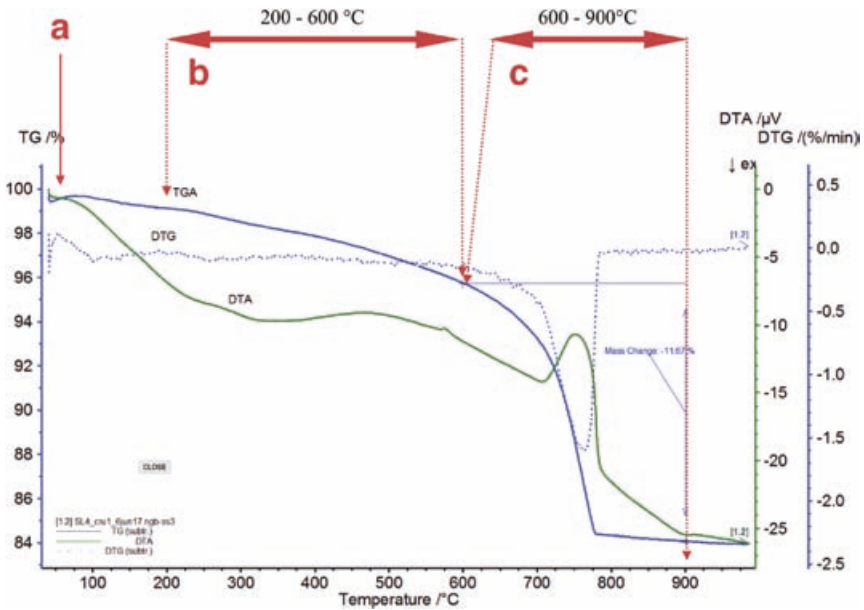


Fig. 4. The thermogram of the mortar global fraction after the TGA analysis. At the 50 °C level, the mass loss corresponds to water adsorption (a), the mass loss that takes place between 200 – 600 °C level yields data indicates the presence of clay minerals (b) and the mass loss that takes place at the 600 – 900 °C level corresponds to calcite decomposition (lime).

all the questions in debate – we are able to put forward some preliminary considerations.

Firstly, it is becoming clear that human settlements, sea coast, bodies of water, rocks, trees, roads, natural springs, high altitude locations and cemeteries compose the main structure of the theoretical nature of the *cubas* since they define the elements that influenced the decision behind the choice over building sites.

Secondly, after a thorough analysis of the architectonic data collected during the course of this investigation another consideration can be put forward. The *cubas* are a specific type of architectonic building that was continued over time, having become a product of temporal agglutination in various forms and spaces. The concept of temporal continuity of these buildings was supported by the characterization of a large group of mortars belonging to 10 different *cubas* and the radiocarbon dating data.

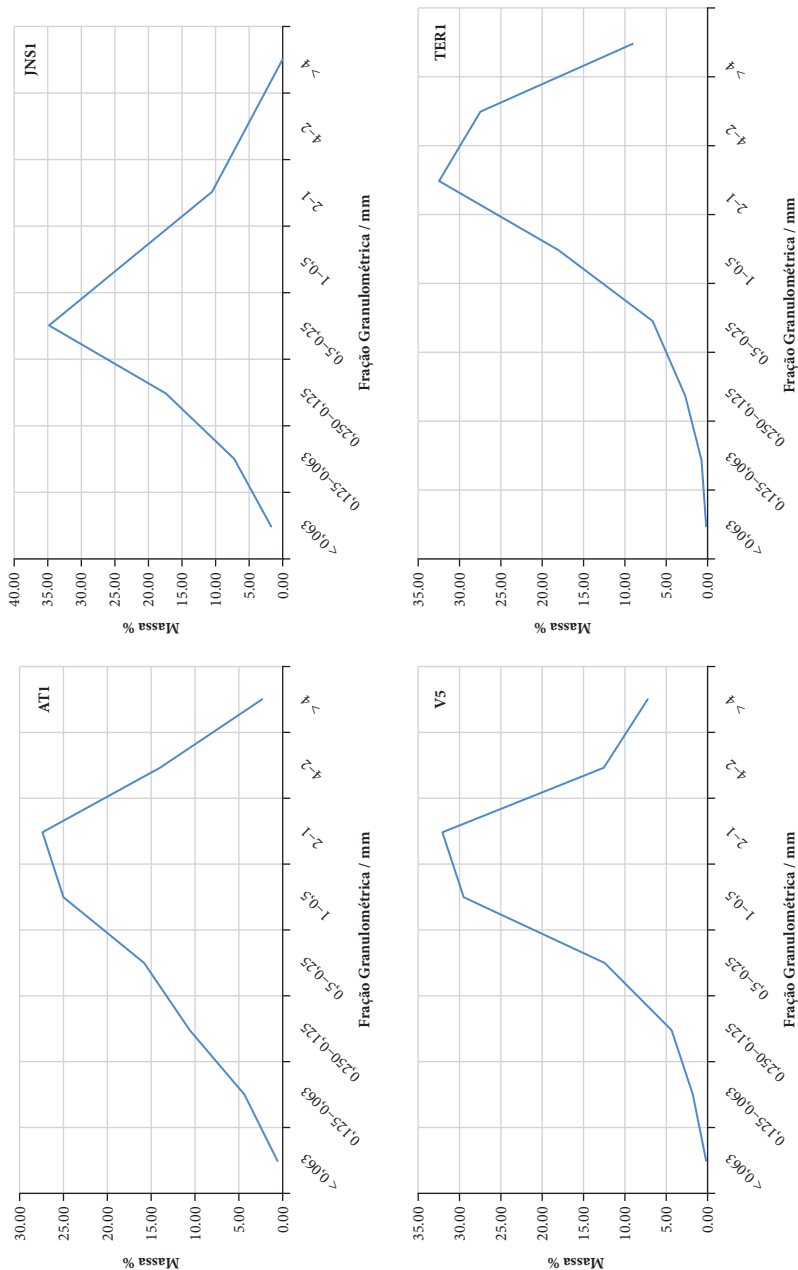


Fig. 5. The particle size distribution graphs of the HCl – insoluble fractions of the mortars, representing the siliceous aggregates.

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*Maria Vittoria Spissu*

## **7. Allies of the Order: Guilt-Projecting Witticism and Moral Discredit through Fantastic Non-Human Appearances Referring to Religious Others**

Anthropomorphic animals or beasts, in illuminated scenes and as sculpted iconographic devices, not only reflect social imagery and collective emotional<sup>302</sup> context in the Middle Ages and the early modern period, but also can incorporate learnings and applications that endure today through sedimented and combined patterns.

Migratory figurative motifs intended to stigmatize religious Others – as well as social outcasts<sup>303</sup> and people from just-discovered and faraway geographic worlds – stem from ideas and visual culture concerning supposed faults and flaws blamed on Jews and Muslims. Quite apart from the strictly religious controversies, caricatures or grotesque features can also hide or even incite the fear of moral subversion,<sup>304</sup> while attempting to exorcise social disorder. What is important to note is that there are also recognizable points of contact between the satirical and discrediting function of animal presences or wild behaviour in illuminated books, on the one hand, and the alienating and derisory effect introduced into religious architecture by the transfiguration of the ‘infidel’, on the other.

The placement of fantastic or non-human figures in marginal or liminal spaces points to the fact that the role of those to whom those figures allude must be scaled down and humbled. They belong to the ‘world upside down’ and are relegated for the most part to the edges of medieval buildings, church furniture, and pages of illuminated prayer books. Their subordinate presence in the social context is represented by their emergence in capitals or at the margins of pages.

It may seem arbitrary to make an association between stone and parchment,<sup>305</sup> but the sought-after effect on the faithful is quite similar: a passer-by of a church as well as a reader of a manuscript must have been fascinated,

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302 Miller et al. 2017.

303 See the collection of essays, in Nichols 2007.

304 On the paradigm of subversion, although examined with reference to early modern painting, see: Müller 2014, pp. 737–790; Vandenbroeck 2009, pp. 162–211.

305 The association is also effectively explored by Kendrick 2006, pp. 286–289.

disconcerted or repulsed by the witty, bizarre, and monstrous figures; the carved, illuminated, or drawn characters alluding to Jews or Muslims, or indeed anything else animated, bewilderingly moving and peeping out from pages or cathedral walls.

Considering that both iconographies – the apparently profane themes in the margins of Romanesque architectural sculpture and the sensational figures in Gothic illuminated manuscripts – can serve as a ‘litmus test’ or indicators of fundamental issues relating to the medieval social, political, and economic order<sup>306</sup>, by examining marginal figures in illumination or sculpture, we can pinpoint<sup>307</sup> some important meanings behind the strategic insistence on alterity and the concurrent combinatory fantasy.<sup>308</sup> The choice to represent a specific hybrid figure can not only stem from a stylistic expressiveness – as with the Renaissance grotesques – but also obey cunning principles that aim to build and generate<sup>309</sup> aversion or terror<sup>310</sup> as well as an imitative attitude in the community.

Romanesque cloister capitals, Gothic cathedrals, and illuminated manuscript pages speak for the institutions at the ideological centres of society: the traditional monastery, the institutional Church, the aristocratic court, the feudal castle, and the medieval city.<sup>311</sup> Besides the concepts of ‘carnival’, the ‘grotesque body’, and the ‘material bodily lower stratum’, Michael Camille<sup>312</sup> rightly expanded the scope of marginality to encompass hybrids, *monde renversé* figures, animal parodies, and obscene and scatological images. If for Mikhail Bakhtin<sup>313</sup> carnival was ‘genuinely liberating, regenerative, a space of ritual release and dissent, or a time of compelled confrontation of the powerful with the variety of the powerless’, in the present cases, it seems that medieval marginal images may not be exclusively or truly subversive, but rather that they ‘reinstatate the very models they oppose’.<sup>314</sup>

More recent studies reflect on how ‘character defects and moral failings’ are conveyed through ugliness – here, physical deformity and/or dark skin – intended as a mirror of the sins of non-Christians. In this regard, Debra Strickland has well explained:

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306 Schapiro 1970, pp. 684–86.

307 Baltrušaitis 1955.

308 Randall 1966, pp. 482–488.

309 Randall, 1966. See also: Freeman Sandler 1981, pp. 51–66.

310 Mitchell 2011; Ginzburg 2015.

311 Kanaan-Kedar, 1992, pp. 15–24.

312 See the pioneering work by Camille 1992.

313 Developed by the Russian literary critic Bakhtin, 1968.

314 Quoted in the enlightening survey of the significance of margins by Smith 2012, pp. 29–44.





Fig. 1: ‘Winchester Psalter’ or ‘Psalter of Henry of Blois’, London, British Library, ms. Cotton Nero C IV, f. 18r.

Monstrous Races, with their deformed bodies, strange dwellings, barbaric habits, and sinful behaviours provided the basic template for later medieval Christian representation of rejected, non-Christian groups. We shall see that, in the medieval imagination, Monstrous Races, black Africans, Jews, Muslims, and Mongols share many of the same physical, moral, and behavioural characteristics.<sup>315</sup>

This sharing and visual connection can be seen in the non-human analogy between *The Three Temptations* (Fig. 1) (London, British Library, ms. Cotton Nero C IV, mid-12th century/second half of 13th century, ‘Winchester Psalter’ or ‘Psalter of Henry of Blois’, f. 18r) and the bestial figure assaulting the soldier (Fig. 2) sculpted on a capital of the Royal Palace of Estella (Navarra). Here we are dealing with moralizing scenes in which the diabolic and disrespectful figures that act the role of temptations can be compared with the brutal enemies in the capital in which Roland fights the Saracen paladin and giant Ferragut.<sup>316</sup> Demonized Muslims can be recognized in this reduction to animal features: the process was extensively adopted also in colonial contexts, and at the same time it entered the iconographic agenda in order to create a safe distance between the Jewish world and Christian homogeneity, which was an area of great concern. In addition, the monstrous, non-human features that Muslims were given in the *chansons de*

<sup>315</sup> Certainly rich in reference imagery is the impressive work of Higgs Strickland 2003.

<sup>316</sup> Gaudio 2002, pp. 72–91.



Fig. 2: Capital of the Palace of the Kings of Navarre, Estella.

*geste*<sup>317</sup> were a means to spread the idea that they were allies of the Wicked, by disputing their humanity.

Moreover, on the basis of beliefs concerning the negative implications of climatic, humoral, and astrological theories, the inhabitants of Africa, India, and the Near East or Far North came to be perceived as ‘aliens’ and ‘barbarians’, as we can see in ‘The Luttrell Psalter’,<sup>318</sup> London, British Library, Add ms. 42130, 1325–40, f. 157r. Therefore, the very same ready-made stereotypes are employed in the demonization of non-Christians, and this is how the Saracen infidel came to be given the same accoutrements as the monstrous alien, like the skirt-wearing and drum-beating barbarian in *Grandes Chroniques de France*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, c. 1370, ms. Français 2813, f. 119r.

The distinguishing images devised to portray wild people, foreigners, and the diabolical Jews are retrieved, re-designed, and transformed to be used in

317 See: Bancourt 1982; Kahn 1997, pp. 337–372.

318 Morrison 2007, p. 70; Reeve 2007, p. 151; Brown 2006; Camille 2004, pp. 377–386; Strickland 2003, p. 13, pl. 4, Fig. 86; Bovey 2002, pp. 47 and 50, pl. 40; Camille 1998.

the visual propaganda of, and apologia for, Crusade. On account of this premise, pejorative traits manifest a dread-laden view of alterity. And fantasy's mud-slinging machine, by mutating the Other into morally horrifying forms, is inexorably driven by an iconographic programme bent on social control over identities – both collective and of the Self.<sup>319</sup> Its goal is to manipulate the consensus of the faithful, who were to isolate and shun 'diversity'. This kind of programme and these forms of discredit are connected to political unrest, social disorders, or breakthrough events such as pogroms, edicts, trials, and impending military expeditions.

Non-human fantastic features, found by leafing through treatises on marvels, encyclopaedias, literary epics, sermons, collections of *exempla*, psalters, bestiaries, and Bibles<sup>320</sup> are enlisted in the Christianization and moralization of society. Therefore, among the bestiaries and catalogues containing images of the inhabitants of Other worlds, it is possible to identify the representation of a Jew next to hybrid figures, or figures with abnormal or weird organs (ms. Douce 88, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, XIII-XIV century, f. 70r).<sup>321</sup> The crucial aim or consequence is to forge a precise idea of salvation as unearthing the need to preserve social/ethnic homogeneity and encouraging the segregation of alterity, by linking physical defects with sins and menace.

The overlap between physical defects and the immoral customs<sup>322</sup> of wild peoples, as well as Muslims, leads to an agenda that included a missionary mandate and a call to Crusade from the Iberian Peninsula, and from the Mediterranean, to the Spanish Viceroyalties in the Americas.<sup>323</sup> Such an imperialistic view of supposedly hostile and non-human lands was used to justify colonial imposition and forced baptisms. In the Iberian atlas, in particular, the exaltation of the *Reconquista* and Crusade legitimizes territorial fighting against Islam, through military campaigns both against the Al-Andalus Sultanate and towards the Holy Land,<sup>324</sup> and later similarly extending the Spanish Empire's sphere of activity – that is to say, 'engagement with Other humanities' or alterity – as far as the New World territories.<sup>325</sup>

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319 For this twofold and complementary perspective, see: Frojmovic 2002.

320 Lipton 1999.

321 Strickland 2003, pp. 52–59.

322 See for instance the accusations of cannibalism and idolatry as conveyed by prints: Kolrud 2010, pp. 271–284.

323 García-Arenal 1992, pp. 153–176.

324 On the success and popularity of the crusading visual imagination, see: Lapina, et al. 2015.

325 Glick, Malpica, Retamero and Torr6, 2018.

And in any case, the anti-Islamic and anti-Judaic propaganda that would lead to the 1492 edict of expulsion of Jews from the territories of the Crown of Aragon – and prior to that, to a number of pogroms – determines the deliberate defamation of all non-Christians – and even of *conversos*<sup>326</sup> and *moriscos* – while 1492 was also the year of the defeat of Islamic Granada and its annexation to the reign of the so-called Catholic Monarchs.

In an analogous long-distance perspective, zoomorphic features intersect with blame for idolatry<sup>327</sup> in the depiction of remote lands and the customs of their inhabitants, as in the *Cérémonie religieuse des habitants de l'Île espagnole* (Fig. 3), published by Jean Frederic Bernard, a French-language bookseller in Amsterdam, and illustrated by the engraver Bernard Picart,<sup>328</sup> where – within a global comparative survey of world religions – in the part on the religious ceremonies of the Americas, moral decay is connected with religious oddness as exemplified by worship of multi-zoocephalic gods, savage dances, and brutal ceremonies, in stark contrast to the principles of modern European enlightenment.

The relationship between text and image is so intertwined for this purpose, and the exegetical interpretations of Psalms and biblical passages are counterfeited in such a way that they unequivocally convey the ‘dangerous difference’ of the Other’s body, character, nature, and mindset. Marginal figures interact with the words of the Psalm, but just as much with the meaning behind them: this reinforces the text and heightens personal engagement, in order that the reader will meditate more fully on the content of the Psalm. The biblical imagery is mingled with widespread fears regarding Otherness, every facet of which had been denigrated. At the same time, preachers joined the political-economic expansionism of drives to defend Christianity.

Following a precise visual system, crusading sermons used these figures to fight against internal vices and external enemies of the Church: Jews, Muslims, pagans, heretics, and schismatics<sup>329</sup>, as we can see in some examples: the capital of the Romanesque tomb (Fig. 4), in the church of Saint Mary Magdalen (Zamora, second half of the 12th century) displays two harpies<sup>330</sup> with broad

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326 See for example: Bravo Lledó, et al. 1999, pp. 57–84. I am grateful to Rubén Gregori for bringing my attention to this very important source.

327 Davies 2016, pp. 217–56. See also: Fumaroli 2011, pp. 32–40.

328 Picart 1723–28, T. I. 1, pp. 142–143; Hunt 2010. Veldman 2008, pp. 94–111.

329 See the very useful *esemble* of essays: Lapina 2017.

330 The exaggerated facial features alluding to racially stereotyped characteristics diverge from the soberer emblematic images that would later be widespread by mythological compendiums like *Le immagini de i dei de gli Antichi: nelle quali si contengono gl'idoli, riti, ceremonie, & altre cose appartenenti alla religione de gli Antichi, raccolte dal sig. Vincenzo Cartari*, In Venetia, appresso Giordano Ziletti,



Fig. 3: Picart, Bernard (1723–1728): *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses des peuples idolâtres*, Amsterdam: Jean Frédéric Bernard, 1723–1737, I.1, pp. 142–143.

noses, bulging eyes and thick lips like those characterising the representation of black people; also eloquent is the black man's head on the corbel in the façade's cornice in the church of Saint John the Baptist, Moarves Ojeda (Palencia, c. 1185), depicted with donkey ears<sup>331</sup>. Saracens were described as donkeys, in keeping with the accusation of their being lustful, and

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e compagni, 1571, or the encyclopaedic collection of natural malformations represented by Ulisse Aldrovandi's work, for which see: Olmi 2018.

331 See the wide-ranging and exhaustive research by Monteiro Arias 2012. See also: Riley-Smith 2001.



Fig. 4: Capital of the Romanesque sepulchre, church of Saint Mary Magdalen, Zamora.

irrationally persistent in being mistaken, and eluding recognition of their faith as an ‘unlawful’, ‘impure’, and ‘criminal’ doctrine.

Moreover, Muslims were conflated with the Jews of the Temple of Jerusalem depicted in the Gospels, because they were perceived as illegitimate occupiers and thus associated with avarice and idolatry, as indeed were bad Christians involved in profiteering and guilty of simony. The representations of the Saracen enemy in the Latin Chronicles tradition connect avarice with heresy, and idolatry with pollution of the sacred. In the same way, Crusaders defended their actions as an attack on wrong and unlawful Muslim idolatry<sup>332</sup>, while Christian moral problems concerning the use of money were shifted to and blamed on Jewish moneylending, accusing Jewish people of avarice, idolatry, carnality, and, again, of ‘pollution’<sup>333</sup>. In fact, the very notion of Crusade worked as a dramatization of such an idea, as a virtuous Christian Self opposing a sinful Muslim/Jewish Other, to be cleansed from

332 Akbari 2012, pp. 121–132.

333 On the idea of ‘pollution’, see for instance the subject matter of Ferrer’s sermons: Losada 2015, pp. 206–227.

the Temple and from the body of humanity. This construction, equating people deemed to be living in sin with polluting agents, had a long tradition in biblical exegesis, so that a Christian account of the 1099 conquest of Jerusalem describes the slaughter of the city's Muslim inhabitants as an 'act of purification'<sup>334</sup>.

Monastic works and chronicles of an anti-Islamic nature, preaching<sup>335</sup>, and *chansons de geste* all contributed to creating pejorative notions of Muslims that became strongly rooted in the Christian mindset. The idea of Muhammad as the Antichrist, for example, was based on the doctrine of sacralized war, and was used to legitimize the occupation of Islamic territory. This was an implicit demonization of the adversary, because this campaign had to be regarded not as a confrontation between political entities or groups of human beings, but rather as a necessary war against the enemies of God. Muslims were portrayed as vile adversaries in battle, as lustful, bestial sinners, and as monstrous beings, with negative political connotations. According to such anti-Islamic ideology<sup>336</sup>, the followers of Muhammad suffered from the same flaws attributed to the prophet, whom monastic tradition accused of being 'luxurious' and 'deviant', an 'adulterer', a 'sodomite', an 'idolater', a 'heresiarch', the 'forebear of the Antichrist'.

The image of blacks or of Berber slaves arose as a direct reference to the image of Muslim Enemy. Their sculpted or illuminated faces often show bulging eyes and open mouths; the heads display exaggerated features – wide noses and thick lips – as excellently pointed out by Inés Monteiro<sup>337</sup>. These abnormal features can be seen in the Church of Valdeoceda, Burgos, with a captive 'black', formerly a soldier of the Andalusian army, and in a similar figure illuminated in the *Beatus a Liebana, Commentarius in Apocalypsin*<sup>338</sup>, ms. Latin 8878, BnF, fol. 145v, where the somatic differences between Christians and Muslims are emphasized. The over-expressive and coloured-in black and red Spanish sculpted face from the second half of the 12th century lays the foundation for even the offensive and mocking black-face<sup>339</sup> in American minstrel shows of the early 19th century.

What was being ridiculed and alienated in Spain was still its neighbour: Al-Andalus had been ruled by North African dynasties (first by Almoravids and later by Almohads) since the second half of the 11th century,

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334 See the case studies in Blanks et al. 1999.

335 Maier 2000.

336 Tolan 2002.

337 See Monteiro Arias 2019, pp. 29–35.

338 See Wilk 2017, pp. 35–51.

339 On the 'blackface' phenomenon and its sociopolitical meaning and consequences, see Cockrell 1997; Nowatzki 2010.



Fig. 5: ‘*The Rutland Psalter*’, London, British Library, Add MS 62925, f. 107r.

and the armies of Al-Andalus also included Sub-Saharan slaves as part of the African contingents. The *Cantigas de Santa Maria*<sup>340</sup> discredited this neighbour in many ways<sup>341</sup> while the *chansons de geste* often describe Saracens as mostly people with black skin. In this respect, there are images that stigmatize the blasphemy attributed to Jews and Muslims, pointing to it by giving them distinctive inconsiderate behavioural traits like a stuck-out tongue and an undignified attitude. The features here described are reminiscent of the deformations of jesters’ faces (see for example the blue-dressed figure with stuck-out ears in ‘*The Gorleston Psalter*’, 1310-24, London, British Library, Add ms. 49622, f. 123r), whose countenances are twisted by mouths forced open in farcically unnatural expressions.

Hybrid and clumsy beings, such as the vivid feathered figure with black skin and dazed stare, in BL, Add ms. 62925, f. 107r (Fig. 5), rather than filling a void or being a nonsensical presence, can represent a mirror of deeply-rooted intolerance against religious Otherness inasmuch as it gives clues to discriminations affecting other marginalized groups, each group arbitrarily associated with a common fault or a negative aspect. Fantastic hybrids may thus reveal stratified preconceptions and ideas affecting a particular social class – such as for instance peasants, stereotyped as unrestrained and coarse, or cripples or the insane. With a playful tone and satirical register, therefore, it can simultaneously convey a structured and rational idea and view of the Normal, the Allowed, the Tolerated, and thus of the Excluded, the Condemned, the Rejected.

<sup>340</sup> See Nirenberg 2017, pp. 147–170.

<sup>341</sup> A very intriguing and representative case is examined in depth by Patton 2016, pp. 213–238.



It should be noted that Jews and Muslims were often attributed faults and negative characteristics deriving from the conventional and mythological imagery of the animal world: hence, for example, the transformation of codes deriving from representations of the peoples of the marvellous new worlds of Marco Polo, in which a dog's head can allude to turpitude or deviance, as in *Les Cynophales d'Angamanam*, from *Le Devisement du monde* or *Livre des Merveilles*, 1410–1412, BnF, ms. Français 2810, fol. 76v. Such astonishing figures serve not only as tropes underscoring ethical and religious touchstones to shape Christian behaviour, like the hybrid figure in the margin of the *Sin of Achan* scene (fol. 75r), in the Book of Hours, ms. H.5, at the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, but also as visual narratives based on non-human forms that bring about an imaginary colonization of Other Worlds – the way to which was paved by the circulation of travel literature such as *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*<sup>342</sup> and the *Voyage d'Outremer* or *Gran conquista de Ultramar*<sup>343</sup>.

The early modern era would see a similar mobility and migration of negative characterizations, with their consequent moral judgements. It follows then, for example, that the inhabitants of the New World are accused of unregulated behaviour like that attributed to wild peoples. They are also put on the same level as that in the satirical and disparaging depictions of 'the Fool'<sup>344</sup>. In addition, this new era would recycle discriminatory and conspiracy theories, using the infamy applied to one category and throwing it at another – easily leaping from the anti-Semitic to the anti-*morisco*<sup>345</sup>. Many are the pejorative characterizations that leap from one social group to people stigmatized for religious reasons, so that one can recognize a rigorous and articulate system of political ordering behind such contrivances and fabrications, where identity construction and violence are inseparably bound together. Emblematic characterizations and iconic identifications become representations of categories that do not stand for an identity but rather project an identification.

A revealing example of this way of conceiving alterity is the Contortionist, the impressive and bizarre image in the 'The Rutland Psalter', BL, c. 1260, Add ms. 62925, f. 73r, where the face of the evasive and unpredictable turned-in-on-itself figure calls to mind that of the Jews depicted in the '*Moralised Bibles*'. Also, it holds in its hand a sort of little hat, which

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342 See for example, the case studied by Silver 2014, pp. 223–238; Olk 2012, pp. 211–230.

343 Roumier 2015.

344 See the outstanding study by Leitch 2010, pp. 147–244.

345 See the intriguing case studied by Soyer 2016, pp. 233–255.

very much resembles the pointed headdress usually identifying Jews. The Contortionist twists himself up, alluding to a subversion of reality, since it is not so much the demonstration of a circus skill or comical position as it is a reversal of the normal state of things, practised by means of the Contortionist's turning of his own body upside down. This can refer to the deceitful aptitude for turning reality upside-down ascribed to Jewish people, and the accusation of 'negating the truth'. In addition, the figure seems to be holding a plate, as if serving a meal, while mimicking the gesture of a beggar, who is, together with the peasant, a frequently stigmatized outcast.

The Contortionist's alterity functions as an indicator of marginality, visualizing its tendency to err, i.e. to not see reality from the right and proper angle. Contortions such as, for example, the convulsive and acrobatic poses sculpted in the Church of Santa María de Uncastillo, Zaragoza, and in the Church of Saint-Nicolas de la Chaize-le-Vicomte, Poitou, may refer to the tradition of Muhammad<sup>346</sup> being subject to epileptic attacks, which in the Christian world were not perceived as connected to mystical visions, but as symptoms of the Wicked – an interpretation reported by the Dominican Riccoldo da Montecroce, in his '*Contra legem Saracenorum*'. In which he also condemned Islam and the Qur'an.

A further case alluding to religious Others is connected with the representation of Woman as a seductress, or an enchantress, as a Mermaid – symbolically the emblem of Vanity and Self-Absorption – here being given extremely coarse features and an exasperated expressiveness because of the traits, used in Spanish Romanesque sculpture and recalling the stereotyped images of Moors and Muslims. The figure of the female Moor<sup>347</sup>, projecting out of the wall like a figurehead at the prow of a ship, evokes the sin of lust ascribed to Muslims.

The image of Lust<sup>348</sup> outside the Cathedral of Valencia wears a turban-like headdress, most likely a reference to Muslims and the alleged Muhammadan legacy, which was thought to include inclination towards vice. The social and aesthetic alienation represented by the lunatic expression of the over-the-top woman on the façade of the Llotja de la Seda in Valencia – and the necessary moral and physical distance from religious Others represented by Muslim Woman's jutting movement – are also contrived by attributing

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346 A reliable report can be found in Tolan 2010, pp. 226–250; see also Reeves 2016; Coffey et al. 2013; Tolan 2019.

347 On this iconographic subject, see: Monteiro 2013, pp. 28–39. See also the well-identified cases of the exterior window of the church of San Pedro de Cervatos, Cantabria, and the detail of a window capital, in the church of Saint John the Baptist, Cerezo de Arriba, Segovia, both carved in the late 12th century.

348 See Weir et al. 1986.



Fig. 6: ‘*The Maastricht Hours*’, London, British Library, Stowe MS 17, f. 9r.

a behaviour that already distinguishes another marginalized category, the Prostitute. The depiction of the Mermaid with a turban or veil – recognized symbols of ‘Muslimness’ – combined with its being a symbolic embodiment of Lust allows for the attribution of such sin to the abhorred neighbour and religious Enemy. The posture of the Muslim woman, intended to represent a lustful creature or a prostitute, also evokes certain images of monkeys and apes<sup>349</sup>, as in the ‘*Prayer Book of Charles the Bold*’ (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, c. 1469, ms. 37, f. 41v), used as emblems of Usury or Lust, of Mischief or Malice<sup>350</sup>.

Other figures, playing musical instruments or behaving suspiciously, are shown with little, Jewish-like pointed hats (Fig. 6), as we can see in a detail from ‘*The Maastricht Hours*’ (Netherlands, Liège, first quarter of the 14th century, London, BL, Stowe ms. 17, f. 9r). Sometimes they have hybrid or monstrous bodies, so that they will provide a distorted and dissonant version of the music, in which foolishness and playfulness blend together with paradox and disharmony.

The hybrid Musician, with its pointed headdress, then evokes a further marginalized character: ‘the Fool’, mentioned above. The ‘*insipient*’

349 Freeman Sandler 1981, pp. 51–65.

350 See the *Prayer Book of Charles the Bold*, Malibù, J. Paul Getty Museum, c. 1469, ms. 37, fol. 41v; Church of Saint Facundo and Saint Primitivo, Silió, Cantabria.



Fig. 7: ‘*The Taymouth Hours*’, London, British Library, Yates Thompson MS 13, f. 140r.

Musician has become, with its bizarre music, ruffled dance, and now also dark skin, a symbol of Folly, Nonsense and Evil, in the Yates Thompson ms. 13<sup>351</sup>, f. 140r (Fig. 7). So much so that its sonorous body plays the ‘unsound’, the opposite to Universal Harmony and God’s Wisdom<sup>352</sup>.

Such figures appear also anthropologically belittled, like the inhabitants of other worlds, imagined headless (*acephali*), or rather, with no neck and their heads set in their trunks. The ‘Rutland Psalter’<sup>353</sup> shows in particular one figure, the tiny melancholic character with a red pointed hat (Add ms. 62925, London, British Library, f. 49v), with a cloth under the chin, which in all likelihood represents a Jew.

Hats, moustaches, drums, as well as harpy-shaped, locust-shaped, savage satyr-like or centaur-like bodies (Fig. 8), are here interwoven with the collective fantastic imagery relating to Saracens and Muslims, just as beards and pointed hats can refer to Jews, assumed to be wicked like snakes, as in the eloquent example of the protruding figure with an irritated grimace and wrapped in a snake on the façade of the *Carrer del Bisbe*<sup>354</sup> in the *Barrio Gótico* of Barcelona.

351 Smith 2012; Bovey 2002, pp. 57–59; Klingender 1971, pp. 408, 409, 411, 415, 416, 417, 466, 472, figs. 242, 247, 248.

352 For an extensive, in-depth interpretation, see Clouzot 2014.

353 Freeman Sandler 2000, pp. 67–86; Strickland, 2003, figs. 17, 55, 59.

354 Carbonell i Buades 2015, pp. 97–109.



Fig. 8: Sculpture from Valencia, Llotja de la Seda, 1492–1498.

The small half-bird body in the illumination with the Musician wearing a pointed hat is a recurring motif that we can also see as in the representation of black Muslims with harpy-like bodies carved in the capital of the sepulchral monument in Zamora.

It is a sign that hybridization with the animal world had become a common and effective device in the strategy of exclusion from Humanity<sup>355</sup>, while such images could be easily readjusted as a useful visualization of Crusade apologia sermons. According to preaching and figurative interpretations, Saracens are therefore non-humans<sup>356</sup>, rejected by God, as destructive as a host of locusts, as stupid as fools and infidels.

All these figures are deviations from a norm or canon, whereas with their appearances they are in keeping with the principle of inversion and movement, which makes them quite suspicious, unpredictable, and potentially dangerous; while their body becomes not just ridiculous or funny, but strange and uncanny, and is certainly perceived as immoral. The sharing of

355 Pfisterer, 2011, pp. 217–243.

356 For a new approach to non-human and post-human, see the contributions (focused on the Renaissance era) included in Campana et al. 2016.

defects and the transformation and crossing of faults, from one group to the other allows for further negative connotations, such as the case of Muslims being given donkey ears so as to depict them as Fools, who heed the Devil.

The images in the margin – beyond being just a simple artistic *topos*, and although peripheral in position – therefore have a semantic significance, pertinent to propaganda, thoughts, and ideas, concerning social control and moral order.

In the cases presented here, there is a permeable, moveable, ever-thinning border between monsters alluding to religious outsiders (Jews and Muslims) and monsters implying Christian insiders (sinners and fools), or *monde renversé*, while zoomorphic features with their allusion to sins imply the moral need to put distance between oneself and potentially subversive others<sup>357</sup>.

Hence, the margin connotes liminality and deviation, and therefore, as a sociological concept, such representation indicates a group isolated from the dominant society or culture. In the cases considered here, and in particular in the sculptures on the walls of Iberian architecture, marginality or alterity not only calls for mockery by all, but even defines what is to be mocked by creating the collective perception of an Other to be excluded and fought against, since the social and political situation was quite far off from the ideal of *convivencia*<sup>358</sup>.

The marginal figures sticking out of churches along the pilgrimage routes or the *Seu* of Valencia walls – that is, places that are institutional, public or mercantile in nature – actualize and complement the collective ‘Identification’<sup>359</sup>, and the construction of Self, by imposing an authoritarian emotional regime among the community of the faithful onlookers, and postulants.

Paradoxically, non-human and fantastic figures, to their disadvantage, deeply embody the world-view of elite patrons over minorities even more, by posing as their regrettable opposites.

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357 Nevertheless, zoomorphic images can convey positive connotations, as for example the *dog-headed* representations of St. *Christopher* in Byzantine and post-Byzantine iconography and zoocephalic images in Jewish art: see Narkiss 1983, pp. 49–62; Epstein 2001.

358 We refer, in particular, to the leading studies by Nirenberg 2015. See also Kimmel 2015; Fernández-Morera 2016.

359 Most certainly worth reading is: Patton 2017, pp. 492–503. See also Walker Bynum 2001.

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## 8. Ephemeral Art and Otherness: The Image of the Muslim in Valencian Festivities and Triumphal Entries in the 16th and 17th Centuries<sup>360</sup>

### Introduction

Valencia was a city key to the Habsburg Dynasty's Mediterranean policy. It boasted a port facilitating great commercial activity by connecting the city to the main Mediterranean ports, and was also a thriving intellectual and artistic centre.<sup>361</sup> However, if something truly characterized the city it was the problematic dynamics there stemming from its great number of Moriscos: Muslims forced to convert to Christianity after the Revolt of the Brotherhoods in the 1520s. These Moriscos were considered a serious impediment to political and religious stability, not only in this area, but across the entire Iberian Peninsula. In the view of many civil authorities, and also certain ecclesiastical leaders, they were considered potential allies of the Turks, and there was fear that they might come to constitute a dreaded "Fifth Column", fighting on behalf of the Ottoman Empire as it would eventually lay siege to the Spanish coast, alongside the Barbary pirates themselves.<sup>362</sup> Not surprisingly, a whole series of evangelical campaigns, ranging from assimilation to repression, were soon undertaken, with a view to solving the problem and bringing about the genuine integration and conversion of the Moriscos into Spanish society.<sup>363</sup> These two attitudes and approaches, the

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360 This text is part of the HAR2016-80354-P Research Project, "Before Orientalism: Images of the Muslim in the Iberian Peninsula (15th–17th Centuries) and Mediterranean Connections." PI: Borja Franco. Within this project I have published several papers related to his topic. Firstly, a brief state of art of the presence of Muslim in the ephemeral decorations in Europe was presented in: Franco 2017. More recent is the text in which I analysed the importance of the tapestries and warfare paintings in the royal entries to represent the victory over the infidels. See: Franco 2019. Taking into account these precedents, in the following pages I will focus on the case of Valencia, which was unique in its strategic importance to Mediterranean policy.

361 Arciniega 2006.

362 Hess 1968, Pardo 2001, Benítez 2001. See also Franco 2018.

363 Bernabé 2009, Cardaillac 1979, Domínguez-Vincent 1978, Ehlers 2006, García Arenal 1975.

more peaceful one vs. the tendency to expel the group, were two sides of the same coin, as indicated by Perceval:

they both had the same objective: the extinction of the “other”, who was either to be converted into a new being, or be expelled from the Peninsula entirely. The former Muslims faced the alternatives of potential ethnocide, as their history, characteristics and customs were systematically obliterated; or virtual genocide, as they ceased to have any future as identifiable communities. The final outcome was expulsion, after alternative solutions were thought to have failed.<sup>364</sup>

This religious and political tension is a very interesting element when it comes to defining the attitude of the Crown, and even of the Archbishopric, as manifested and expressed through the various celebrations that took place in Valencian territory. According to Carrasco Urgoiti,<sup>365</sup> these religious and civil local festivals, including royal entries, had an edifying influence, serving to shape the collective mentality.<sup>366</sup> These festivities, with their finely decorated carriages, dances, mock battles and combats, arches presenting allegories and theatre and music, ended up constituting a cultural phenomenon and a process of communication.<sup>367</sup> Although I will not delve into a discussion here of the extent to which the population actually participated actively and understood the whole celebration itself,<sup>368</sup> what is certain is that these events yielded a rapprochement between the city and the monarchs visiting it. Festive events, therefore, functioned as mediators in the reconstruction of the social system, as the symbolic social construction (festivity) impacted real social construction (daily life), and vice versa.<sup>369</sup> The symbols that appear in exhibitions of the modern public celebration functioned as factors shaping perceptions of the world, provoking and domesticating emotions such as hatred, fear, affection and pain.<sup>370</sup> As Ballester points out,<sup>371</sup> it was not a question of acquiring support for a concrete idea, or a specific political or religious position, but rather achieving socialization into a set of values, configuring a mentality that would guarantee the individuals’ full adherence to the prevailing system.<sup>372</sup>

As is typical of every communication process, there is always an emitter (in this case it could be the Crown, the Archbishopric or the municipal

364 Perceval 2017, p. 16.

365 Carrasco Urgoiti 1996, p. 25.

366 Turner 1989, p. 14 and p. 53, García Bernal 2006, p. 131.

367 Ruiz 2012, p. 35.

368 Lopes Don 2000.

369 Gómez García 1990, p. 58.

370 García Bernal 2006, p. 131.

371 Ballester 2010, p. 303.

372 Jacquot 1975, pp. 413–495.



councils themselves, depending on the type of festivity),<sup>373</sup> a channel (ephemeral and festive manifestations) and receivers, and it is here where I find certain peculiarities in the Valencian context. Amongst the spectators there were not only Old Christians, faithful defenders of the orthodoxy of the faith and, in many cases, participants in attacks against Islam; but also New Christians, recently converted Muslims who, in the Valencian case, were a belligerent collective.<sup>374</sup> The selection of the images and messages in this communication process had to take into account the particularities of the receivers so that they would have a real effect on them. How could victory over the enemy, amongst them the Great Turk, be represented, when a portion of the audience was composed of sympathisers and possible allies of that enemy? To date many publications have dealt with the complex ephemeral devices developed in Valencia over the course of two centuries,<sup>375</sup> and even, specifically, their relationship to some political events linked to Islam;<sup>376</sup> but there has been no diachronic study of how the representation of this enemy was developed, not only taking into account the role of the emitter, and the message, but also of the possible receivers, amongst them the Moriscos. In the following pages, I will provide a selection of the main ephemeral manifestations where this subject appeared, or was omitted, in order to reveal its multiple faces.

### Triumphal Entries and the Conformation of the Enemy

The Royal Entry was a custom that was simultaneously legal, economic, political, religious and aesthetic, encompassing the entire society and its institutions. It involved the practical and voluntary application of the artistic/cultural production of a community that, via the celebration, asserted, and, at the same time, reflected itself, revealing its interests and concerns to the monarch while exalting him as a defender of the nation.<sup>377</sup> As López has pointed out,<sup>378</sup> royal ceremonies projected an image of the monarch and

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373 “Caught in the social and political logic of these cultural constructions, kings, princes, bishops, and municipal officials accepted their roles and performed again and again for the benefit of each other and of the people whom they sought to instruct and bind to their service.” Ruiz 2012, p. 35.

374 Epalza 1998, p. 149–162.

375 Falomir 1993, Fernández Castilla 1981, Ferrer 1993, Ferrer 1991, Juliana 2013, Juliana 2017, Massip 2003, Mínguez 1990, Mínguez 1991, Mínguez 1997, Mínguez-González-Rodríguez 2010, Pedraza 1982.

376 García Arranz 2012, Irigoyen 2017, Mínguez 2017.

377 Martínez Hernández 2009, Strong 1998, p. 22.

378 López 1999.

the monarchy that rendered them present in a symbolic way, especially in those places where the king was usually absent, thus serving to alleviate the distance between the king and his subjects: the king was not present physically, but images of him were, and very effectively. For several days, all artisanal and commercial activity was halted, and any manifestations of suffering (such as mourning) that would hamper the desired atmosphere were prohibited. Proof of the interest that the monarchy assigned to royal entries is the attention that both Philip II and Philip III seem to have devoted to the preparations for them in the great cities of the Iberian Peninsula and, especially, at court.<sup>379</sup>

Although some authors believe that the kings did not visit Valencia frequently,<sup>380</sup> it is true that we have evidence of different festivities celebrating the monarchs' arrival to this territory, including Philip III's royal wedding. Valencia and Seville can be considered, together with the different capitals of the kingdom (Toledo, Madrid and Valladolid) the cities hosting the most celebrations during the period.<sup>381</sup> Even so, the main problem affecting studies is the scarcity of written sources on the first ones held during the Modern age; mainly, that of Ferdinand the Catholic (1507, the first sign of the erection of triumphal arches in the city) and that of Charles V (1528, when he visited to swear the rights and privileges of the Kingdom), both studied by Falomir,<sup>382</sup> which served to create a regal ceremonial scheme in the city.<sup>383</sup> In both cases most of the information is extracted from the *Manual de Consells* itself and not, as in other cases that I will analyze later, from the *Relaciones festivas*. The first of the aforementioned sources is much sparer, covering mainly economic matters, while the latter usually presents a more exhaustive description of the composition of the ephemeral decorations, although they are sometimes described in a hyperbolic fashion.<sup>384</sup> This fact hampers our study of sets of anti-Islamic iconography at these first two events.

Sixty years would pass between the visit of the Charles V and the entry of Philip II to Valencia (1586), years after his victory at Lepanto and his quelling of the rebellion of the Moriscos in Las Alpujarras. Thus, the city organized his arrival with a great sense of expectation, after so many years since the monarch's last visit.<sup>385</sup> In it, the customs of the triumphal entry were revived in Valencia, although it stood out for its marked representation

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379 Ferrer 2000, p. 45.

380 Mérimée 1985, p. 396.

381 Mardsen 1960, p. 390.

382 Falomir 1993 and 1996, pp. 398–409. See also Juliana 2017.

383 Narbona 1993.

384 Mínguez 1999.

385 Cock 1876, p. 252.

of the fight against Islam, much more pronounced than with other enemies of the faith, such as the Protestants, to whom reference was barely made.

The main authors who have analyzed this festive manifestation in a comprehensive way insist that its composition was eminently classical, as it highlighted themes that previous events celebrated in other territories under the Spanish crown had already stressed.<sup>386</sup> Valencian spectacles revolved, thematically, around historical themes, such as the taking of Saint Quentin, Peñón de Vélez, Malta, Granada and Lepanto, on the first arch (depicted in an allegorical way); along with other (in this case theatrical) allusions to these same victories at a range of highly visible locations around the city. Cock also mentions some beautiful tapestries of battles were displayed, undoubtedly referring to the ones designed by Vermeyen, celebrating Charles V's victory in Tunisia, a vital achievement toward Mediterranean expansion.<sup>387</sup>

Along with mock battles and allegories, also appearing on the arch of Serranos, were those kings who had most contributed to the city's prestige. Those chosen were Remus (or Romulus, according to other authors), Scipio Africanus, The Cid and James I the Conqueror, with whom the monarch was compared. The first of them alluded to the founding of Rome. The second was used repeatedly on the triumphal arches of Charles V for his North African campaigns;<sup>388</sup> thus, it was normal at the time to use it to refer to his son. The Cid had also appeared in the iconography of his father, as occurred in Burgos<sup>389</sup> at the entry of Philip II's wife, Anne of Austria, into this same city<sup>390</sup> and would continue to be a constant fixture in the Valencian entries, there being evidence of his appearance well into the 18th century, on the third centenary of the canonization of Saint Vincent Ferrer.<sup>391</sup> Obviously this reiteration was due to the feats of said figure in his different victories against Islam in the territory.

Finally, James I was also an essential figure with whom Phillip II was to be associated, thereby underscoring the community's loyalty to its king and evoking memories of his ancestors who had fought against the infidels, so that he, as king, and his people, would persevere in their struggle.<sup>392</sup> James I the Conqueror appeared in other enclaves of the Old Crown of Aragon,

386 Checa 1992, p. 283, Falomir 1996, p. 415, Pizarro 1998, p. 38, Ruiz 2012, pp. 182–183.

387 Cock 1876, p. 225. See also Franco and García García 2019.

388 Jacquot 1960, p. 429–430, Deswarte-Rosa 1988, p. 108, Checa 1999, p. 204, Carrasco 2000.

389 Checa 1987, p. 111.

390 *Relación verdadera...*1571, p. 15.

391 *Individual noticia...*1755, p. 10, see also: Olivares 2016, p. 616.

392 García Bernal 2006, p. 91.

like the reception of Phillip II organised by Barcelona, along with the arrival of the princes of Bohemia, in which there were images alluding to the taking of Valencia.<sup>393</sup> In the Valencian festivities celebrating the betrothal of Phillip III, he was represented on two occasions: first, on the very Gate of Serranos along with other illustrious monarchs such as Ferdinand the Catholic, Emperors Maximilian and Rudolf, and Archduke Ernest of Austria, who were important, due to the origins of Queen Margaret, as well as paladins in the fight against the infidel (whether Turks or Protestants).<sup>394</sup> He also appeared on the Gate of Saint Vincent, in this case paired with a portrait of Philip the Handsome.<sup>395</sup> Along this line, in all the celebrations of the conquest of Valencia, and even in other beatifications, James I was the monarch most depicted, as the utmost symbol of the victory over Islam. What was done, then, was to transmit in images a set of intellectual relationships between monarchs that appeared in the history books by Beuter and Escolano, but which were accessible to the general public only through these ephemeral decorations.<sup>396</sup>

Also of interest was the representation of victories through nymphs on the Gate of Serranos. These were various women who symbolized victories against Islam at different sites. From the whole group, three stood out. Firstly, Granada, represented by a female figure carrying a pennant in her hand, with the monarch's weapons painted on it, and, in the other, a pomegranate, symbol of the city. Her inclusion refers not only to the conquest of the city, but also the quashing of the revolt in Las Alpujarras, years prior, as indicated by the accompanying text.<sup>397</sup> Secondly, the Great Siege of Malta, in this case represented by a figure of a woman, with a pennant bearing the cross of Malta and a castle, alluding to the taking of the territory in 1565. Thirdly, the naval Battle of Lepanto is symbolized by a woman with a pennant featuring the figure of John of Austria, in one hand, and, in the other, a galley. This figure alludes to the victory of the Papal and Spanish squadrons, commanded by Philip II's bastard brother.

I find the selection of these nymphs very significant. A close reading of all the sources that describe this entry allows me to verify the absence of a complete programme of paintings of historical events, of battles against the Islam, produced *ex profeso* for said event. As I said before, the tapestries of Vermeyen were showed (where also appear the figure of the "Moor friend",

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393 Hierro 1564.

394 Esquerdo 1599.

395 Esquerdo 1599, Gauna 1926, p. 129.

396 Kagan 2001, p. 146.

397 Cock 1876, p. 153, Fernández Castilla 1981, p. 59.

representing the allies troops of Muley Hassan), but the visual references to the war were less than in other similar events held around Iberia. In addition, it is curious how there were not even any illustrations of Saint George or Saint James the Moor Slayer treading upon Turks, something common in regal entries, where even the monarchs themselves, mainly Charles V and Philip II, could be represented in this way.<sup>398</sup> It is interesting to see that this happens in other subsequent events in this same territory, fact that proves that the Valencia case is very specific. For example, on Saint Martin's altar, on the occasion of the Fourth Centenary of the Conquest celebrated in 1638, 29 years after the expulsion of the *moriscos*, we find the two aforementioned holy warriors (James and George) surrounding the figure of Martin, creating what is clearly an anti-Islamic iconography.<sup>399</sup> But this has not happened in the Royal entry of Philip II in Valencia, when the new Christians were still living in the city.<sup>400</sup> In addition, as it was mentioned, the victories over the infidel were represented in the most important arch (at the Serranos Gate), mainly through nymphs, with inscriptions (incomprehensible for most of the population). Where are, then, the direct and easily understandable allusions to victory over Islam? Where do Turkish prisoners or captives appear, something standard in other royal entries since the period of Charles V? And why Saint James and Saint George were not represented? Could this omission have been due to a careful selection of the iconography as a result of the large number of Moriscos living in the city, who, during the middle of the assimilation and integration campaigns undertaken, mainly after the battle of Las Alpujarras, might have been offended by such a direct attack and humiliation, through the figure of the Moor Slayer or the Christians slaughtering them?

It could be argued, contradicting my hypothesis, that the sources tell us of various simulated battles, of events featuring mock galley battles and land combat. Obviously, all of them represent the subjugation of Islam, as does the selection of monarchs who decorated the Gate of Serranos, but such *naumachia* and war games were thoroughly integrated and ingrained into society,<sup>401</sup> to the extent that even Moriscos actively participated in them,<sup>402</sup> so it should not be assumed that they were considered a direct attack on the newly converted. As Massip points out,<sup>403</sup> if these battles were originally confined to the generic celebration of the Crown's maritime power, and the

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398 Van Puyvelde 1960, p. 287–296, Rosier 1990–1, p. 24–38, Pizarro 1998, p. 415.

399 Ortí 2005, p. 48.

400 Cock 1876, p. 232.

401 González Hernández 1999.

402 Irigoyen 2017.

403 Massip 2003, p. 43.

exaltation of the triumphs scored by the king and his subjects, at the same time they were symbols of good government. With the advent of the absolutist monarchies of the early modern period, these traditional spectacles become dated symbols, shedding their initial value, and being reduced to something merely recreational.<sup>404</sup> In fact, Quevedo even criticized them in his famous work *El Buscón* (1640). I do not deny that these types of theatrical representations portray a confrontation between two worlds,<sup>405</sup> but at the time when these struggles between Moors and Christians began to take on importance, and especially when the Moriscos participated actively in them as part of the festivities – mainly in places where there were great numbers of them – there occurred a process involving the standardization of the battle,<sup>406</sup> as a result of which they may have begun to lose their symbolism. They became a festivity, a vehicle of sociability, in which everyone, new converts and old Christians alike, participated, in an act of revelry and distraction. In fact, the Christian nobility preferred to dress as a Moor more than wear their own typical attire.<sup>407</sup>

My hypothesis, which may seem bold, does not deny an anti-Islamic component to these mock battles held on the Peninsula,<sup>408</sup> but rather suggests that in places like Valencia, with a high concentration of *Moriscos*, the iconography was carefully calculated: victory over the infidel was represented using drawings and allegories, together with theatrical manifestations that were totally standardized. No new battle paintings were commissioned, however, as was the case for most of the main royal entries at the time, nor were there any figures of saints treading upon Muslims. In this way, they averted a more direct and degrading set of images, in the face of a religious minority that was in the process of being converted, and that could have revolted, as had happened in Granada a few years before.<sup>409</sup>

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404 Jordan 2004, p. 102.

405 Pizarro 1999, p. 23, Cardaillac 1999, p. 83.

406 Carrasco Urgoiti 1996, p. 79.

407 Irigoyen 2017.

408 Mínguez 2012, Canova-Green 2013, Sánchez Cano 2013.

409 This attitude of moderation, or a certain “maurophilia”, has been noted in other parties by authors like Carrasco. This researcher cites the case of the festivities organised by the Marquis of Mondéjar in 1601, in which he included in his entourage 40 Moriscos, on foot, in Moorish garb, and with rattles and tambourines, to play the strictly-prohibited *zambra*. The question is posed of whether, through this action, he adopted a position of moderation in relation to the Moorish problem; an attitude along the line traced by the Mendoza family tradition, which also manifested itself when in 1569 the Count of Tendilla went to Granada to receive John of Austria, accompanied by 200 horsemen, half of

Following with the next royal entries in Valencia, Philip III arrived there in 1599 on the occasion of his betrothal to Margaret of Austria. This is a celebration very well documented, due to its great importance. In fact, some literary figures, including Lope de Vega (1599), actively participated in the event. The monarch toured the Valencian area in the company of his sister Isabella Clara Eugenia. His trip began in Denia, a city forming part of the territories belonging to Francisco Sandoval y Rojas, the monarch's *valido*,<sup>410</sup> who wished for the monarch to appreciate the richness of his lands.<sup>411</sup> In it, theatre played an essential role, as staged battles were held on numerous occasions, including landings on the beaches, or simulated ambushes, on the way to Valencia that actually surprised the monarch,<sup>412</sup> who did not expect such displays.<sup>413</sup> Dressed as Turks, with lavish attire and leather shields,<sup>414</sup> different Alicante nobles and residents paid by the city's own Council<sup>415</sup> acted out one of the most original skirmishes that we have found in Spanish celebrations from this period, reflecting the fear of a Fifth Turkish Column and demonstrating the ubiquity of Muslims in the festive culture, widely disseminated in Europe through the drafting of different written accounts.<sup>416</sup>

This royal entry featured many elements concomitant with that of his predecessor on the throne: the depiction of various monarchs who had fought against the infidel, thereby urging Philip III to continue doing so. In this case there was also an image of an armed Isabella the Catholic riding in a triumphal carriage with a pomegranate in her hand;<sup>417</sup> the display of tapestries (probably also those by Vermeyen), and the absence of the images of the Moor Slayer found on Saint Martin's altar. It featured, however, an important peculiarity: the production of battle paintings *ex professo*, just

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whom appeared, according to Mármol Carvajal, dressed in the Morisco manner. Carrasco 1996, p. 78.

410 Alvar 2010, p. 50.

411 Ferrer 1991, p. 114–115.

412 Lope de Vega 1599, p. 62–63, Esquerdo 1599, Gauna 1926: 94, BNE. Ms. 2346, p. 169.

413 Ferrer 1991, p. 44, Carrasco 2004. It is necessary to understand that at that time the situation on the coast was very tense, which is why these types of skirmishes could have masked a real landing. Gauna pointed this out, indicating how in Cullera, a coastal city on the road between Denia and Valencia, there were some actual landings of pirates to plunder the city, a fact which may have magnified the monarch's surprise and dismay at such theatrical manifestations. Gauna 1926, p. 107.

414 Ruiz 2012, p. 145.

415 González Hernández 1999, p. 26.

416 Andrés 1999, p. 12.

417 Confaloniero 1599, p. 5.

for the event. In this regard of special note is the arch at Puerta del Real, one of the city's most important gates, which bore a series of oil paintings by Sariñena representing Charles V fighting the Turks, surrounded by allegories and four goddesses: Athena, Diana, Juno and Venus.<sup>418</sup> Gauna describes them as follows:

“in the one [painting] he gave the crown of the empire to his brother, the Queen's grandfather, featuring an inscription, and in the other painting was the army of the Turks, fleeing from the army of Emperor Charles, likewise featuring an inscription, indicating what it was.”<sup>419</sup>

This description does not concur with that of another of the chroniclers, who insists on the bravery shown in the battle:

“In the other painting there was a fierce and bloody battle, in which the Turks were being defeated, and divided, the Christians enjoying a great advantage over their enemy, which was fleeing from them.”<sup>420</sup>

Be that as it may, the inclusion of these paintings is fundamental. Firstly, they relate Philip III to his grandfather, Charles V, in their fight against the Turks. Secondly, they are significant for the direct message transmitted in them, taking into account that there were still Moriscos in Valencian territory. Although only a few years separated his entry and his father's, the situation with regard to the newly converted was different. There were more and more voices calling for their expulsion: the Dominicans, led by Jaime Bleda,<sup>421</sup> and Juan de Ribera himself, then archbishop of the city.<sup>422</sup> The Duke of Lerma, one of the masterminds of the whole movement, was a great critic of the Moriscos, and possibly behind their expulsion, as they constituted a very important problem in his Denian territories. Hence, the rhetoric against the infidel intensified, especially taking into account their participation in the event. They are only two paintings, but they already mark a change from the entry of his predecessor, a shift that emerged, as indicated, due to the increasingly tense situation involving the Moriscos. These works were most probably related to the king's *valido* and his belligerence toward said group. Hence, the passive subject (the Moriscos) did not matter when it came to devising the carefully arranged visual elements, as they were but a nuisance to the Valencian religious elites and the Crown itself, both related to the creation of the festive decorations. It can be seen, then, a trend in

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418 Rodríguez-Mínguez 2013, p. 290.

419 Gauna 1926, p. 22.

420 Esquerdo 1599.

421 Vincent-Benítez 2001.

422 Benítez 2001.



the perception and representation of Islam, which became cruder over the course of the years, just years before of the Morisco final expulsion, which was celebrated by this king as the final victory over the Islam. It was considered, by some contemporary historians, as the only one “heroic” decision that could be attributed to this monarch: to ‘cleanse’ the territory of impure infidel blood.<sup>423</sup>

### The Commemorations of Victories at Battles and the Centenaries of the Conquest of Valencia

In spite of the military and commercial importance that the city boasted, the celebrations held to mark its different military conquests were hardly grand. The first news that we have of a commemoration of victory is that of the conquest of Granada, where arches of triumph were not erected. Rather, festive lights were placed, rockets were fired, and serenades were sung by the minstrels, as had been done for the celebrations of the victories in the different cities leading up to the conquest of the Nasrid capital. This lack of ostentation, according to Carreres Zacarés<sup>424</sup> was due to the monarch’s thrift in view of his kingdoms’ penury; the king wrote to city authorities, instructing them to squander nothing on such festivities, this surely explaining why the end of the Spanish *Reconquest* was celebrated so sparingly. The victories of Charles V in North Africa were celebrated in a similar way, despite extensive participation by Valencian nobles.

As far as Lepanto was concerned, the celebration was somewhat grander, mainly thanks to the involvement of Miguel de Moncada, at the head of a *tercio* of Valencian soldiers, and the intervention attributed to Our Lady of Good Remedy, whom John of Austria is said to have embraced. There were four days of festive lights, ringing of bells, mock battles, and a procession to Our Lady of Grace.<sup>425</sup>

Very different were the celebrations to mark the centenaries of the conquest of Valencia, held, as it was aforementioned, after the expulsion of the Moriscos. The tradition of celebrating this anniversary dated back to 1338, just 100 years after the wresting of the city from the Muslims, and featured

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423 Benítez 2001. For the visual representation of the expulsion in the royal celebrations after 1609 see Franco and Moreno 2019, specially chapter 5.

424 Carreres Zacarés 1926, p. 96–98. For a comparative study with other territories in this regard, see: González Alcantud and Barrios Aguilera 2000.

425 Carreres Zacarés 1926, p. 139. Neither was the celebration held in Madrid very grandiose, due to disagreements between Philip II and John of Austria. See: Mínguez 2011, Mínguez 2016, Rivero 2008. In contrast, events in Italy were more spectacular; see Canova-Green 2013, Checa 1992, p. 172, Jordan 2004.

participation by the monarch himself, King Peter IV the Ceremonious, and Queen Mary. However, there are no written records of this one, or those of 1438 and 1538, though accounts were preserved via oral tradition. It would not be until 1640 that the first written records narrating the celebrations held two years before were produced.

In this case, any subtlety in anti-Islamic expressions was dispensed with, mainly for two reasons: first, the nature of the event, who commemorated the conquest of the city; and, secondly, the non-existence of any community of converts in the city, as they had been expelled three decades prior. Only Christians enjoyed this event, marking a significant change relative to the festivities cited previously.

In the first altars described, James I was stepping on a Turk, at the door to the archbishop's palace,<sup>426</sup> an image accompanied by the prophet Elijah, sword in hand, beheading the false prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18), traditionally identified with Islam. On Saint Martin's altar, as indicated, appeared the saint surrounded by Saint George and Saint James treading upon Moors;<sup>427</sup> and at Saint Michael's and Saint Dionysius altar, where both holy warriors accompanied the archangel in his struggle against the infidel.<sup>428</sup> Meanwhile, at the Convent of Saint Gregory sculptures were built representing a battle scene depicting James I against the Moorish king, who finally hands over the keys of the city to him.<sup>429</sup> The iconography of this event is similar to that on the Mercedarians' altar, in this case the scene being crowned by Our Lady of Puig,<sup>430</sup> patroness of the order and standard-bearer of the conquest, who appeared to the Aragonese monarch just before the taking of the city. As it was exposed, all these battle scenes, which were omitted from the first triumphal entries, or timidly painted in oil on two canvases for the betrothal of Philip III, appear here in all their splendour, boldly celebrating the Christians' triumph.

In any case, these images were eclipsed by the creative explosion of the hieroglyphics that adorned two important enclaves of the city: the Jesuit School of Saint Paul (where 32 of them were displayed),<sup>431</sup> and the Palace of the Dukes of Mandas (where 17 were placed). In all of them the Muslims and Moriscos are represented allegorically, in many ways, always under the yoke of Christian power, particularly that of the monarchy. For example, in hieroglyphic XI of this second series a lion appears splitting a crescent

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426 Ortí 1640 (repr. 2005), p. 29–34.

427 Ortí 1640 (repr. 2005), p. 48.

428 Ortí 1640 (repr. 2005), p. 106.

429 Ortí 1640 (repr. 2005), p. 61.

430 Alejos 1996, p. 279.

431 Mínguez 2015.



Fig. 1. *Iam totum replevit orbem. Siglo Quarto de la Conquista de Valencia.*  
Valencia: Iuan Bautista Marçal.

with his feet (Fig. 1), in a way very similar to how the monarch himself is represented in the first of the Jesuit series, also on a crescent moon, sword in hand.

Of particular interest is number IV of the Jesuit set (Fig. 2), in which Muslim weapons are shown on the ground, among which are leather shields bearing crescent moons, evocative of the triumphal entries of Alfonso the Magnanimous in Naples, but chiefly those of Charles V in Italy after his victory in Tunisia, where the Turks appeared as prisoners and the Christian figures trod their leather shields, scattered as trophies of war – an iconography that, as indicated, had not been well received in Valencia, and we find at these festivals for the first time in the territory.

As I indicated in previous publications,<sup>432</sup> the portrayal of Muslims and Moriscos as animals was customary in these celebrations commemorating the Christian conquest of various cities. In fact, in these paintings they are symbolized by a cat that is trying to lay hold of a bat, which was a symbol of James I (Hieroglyph XVI, Jesuit program) (Fig. 3) and which also fought against other unspecified birds (Hieroglyph IX, Jesuit program) that, again,

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432 Franco 2017.



Fig. 2. Fructus respondet aratro. Marco Antonio Ortí. *Siglo Quarto de la Conquista de Valencia*. Valencia: Iuan Bautista Marçal.

symbolize the infidel.<sup>433</sup> Lastly, in these same celebrations the Muslim is portrayed as a mouse (Hieroglyph III, Duke of Mandas palace), in a facile attempt to make him appear ridiculous, in spite of the complexity involved in these kinds of emblematic representations in the culture of the modern world.<sup>434</sup>

Finally, I find of great interest that showing a Turkish and a Christian king in a wheel of fortune (Hieroglyphic XX, Jesuit program) (Fig. 4), whose text reads: “*La que boltaría atropella el mas remontado ser, perdió todo su poder con quien pudo dentella*”. It represents, as Ortí himself indicates, the good fortune that James I always enjoyed<sup>435</sup>. It must be said that this type of hieroglyph (although not exactly the same) was of some importance at

433 Mínguez 1997, p. 36.

434 It is possible to find allusions to Muslims linked to other mythical animals like the Hydra of Lerna, a topic we will not focus upon, as it was already covered in previous articles (Franco 2017). Also worthy of mention are those that depict the monarch associated with solar deities and vanquishing Islam; on this see Mínguez 2001, pp. 146–148.

435 Ortí 1640 (repr. 2005), p. 201.



Fig. 3. *Altior in Regibus animus est.* Marco Antonio Ortí. *Siglo Quarto de la Conquista de Valencia.* Valencia: Iuan Bautista Marçal.

that time, mainly in the fight against Islam. We can find it, for example, at the coronation of Ferdinand I of Aragon in 1414, and later at Charles V's entry into Bruges (1515), where from the wheel hung six shields in the miniature and six crowns in the engraving, representing the kingdoms of Spain (Castile-Leon, Aragon, Naples-Jerusalem, Sicily and Granada), a wheel that was gripped forcefully by the virtues of Fortitude and Temperance, to halt its impetuous course.<sup>436</sup> This idea was revived for his entry into Seville marking his betrothal to Isabella of Portugal in 1526.<sup>437</sup> Sorce also studied other emblems in which the wheel features dragons and serpents, alluding to Islam, these originating in the sermons of Bernardo de Claraval.<sup>438</sup>

But there are more sources in which the hieroglyphs were based: Pierio Valeriano, Andrea Alciato, Juan de Borja, Sebastián de Covarrubias, Juan de Horozco and Paolo Giovo.<sup>439</sup> All of them made reference, more or less explicitly, to the Turkish enemy.<sup>440</sup> Although these texts were not accessible

436 Massip 2003, pp. 164–166.

437 BNE. *Varios Especiales* 52/53: 4.

438 Sorce 2007–8, pp. 190–191.

439 González de Zárate 1979, p. 111.

440 López-Pelaez 2014, p. 104.

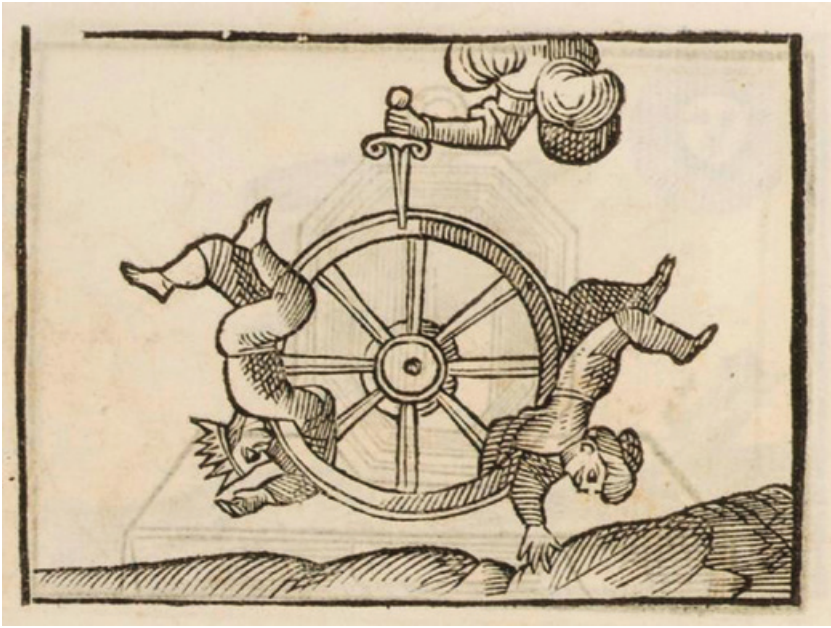


Fig. 4. Fortunae domitor. Marco Antonio Ortí, *Siglo Quarto de la Conquista de Valencia*. Valencia: Iuan Bautista Marçal.

to all, I should not assume that these hieroglyphs were not understood by the people, especially by the Valencians, as they were accustomed to these types of representations.<sup>441</sup> On these altars, the images are clearly synthetic, based on the previous tradition and designed for the people to view and understand them. As stated by Mínguez,<sup>442</sup> the creators of festive hieroglyphs were not theorists, but rather people who, based on the books of emblems written by theorists, came up with their own compositions. These were people with some culture, or those making up the local community of intellectuals. These festive hieroglyphics were characterized by their transparency, as they were intended for a broad audience mostly composed of people not versed in the subtleties of emblematic literature, which meant that their combinations of elements had to be understandable by even the most ignorant viewer, who will only have to read the image and the words; hence their value in creating the image of “the other” once he had been expelled, following a triumphalist

441 Mínguez 1991, p. 332, Mínguez 2009, p. 99.

442 Mínguez 1997, p. 22.

tradition that intensified after religious unification, when Christianity was the sole faith on the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>443</sup>

I must also underscore another important issue. The Jesuits were one of the orders that most contributed to the conversion of the Moriscos. Thanks to the actions of Francis of Borgia, first as Duke of Gandía and later as general of the order, they took charge of their evangelization, even facing off with the Dominicans, who considered their conversion impossible.<sup>444</sup> It is extremely interesting that, once the Moriscos had been expelled, these same Jesuits presented the most spectacular anti-Islamic iconography. To understand this, it is necessary to recall the importance of the Company's statutes documenting clean Christian bloodlines and its internal debates on how to administrate evangelization campaigns.<sup>445</sup> At Lepanto the main commanders even had chaplains belonging to this order: Martín Bencingucci, with Barbarigo; Cristóbal Rodríguez, with John of Austria; and Juan de Montoya, with Andrea Doria,<sup>446</sup> a fact that may have shaped their position once the Moriscos were expelled, as they became the fiercest defenders of the orthodoxy of the faith.

Although it exceeds the chronological parameters, I would like to include some notes on the events of the fifth centenary of the conquest of the Kingdom of Valencia (1738) in order to close the cycle initiated in this section. Though Monteagudo stated that there were few references to victory against Islam,<sup>447</sup> this event continued to feature some elements already found in previous celebrations: the College of Jesuits continued to portray Islam in a very critical way, but with a smaller number of representations, and lacking in originality. The Church of Saint Martin eliminated Saint George and Saint James surrounding its patron, and returned to the representational structure used prior to the fourth centenary, though the figures do appear in oil paintings on the altars of Saint John of the Clergy.<sup>448</sup> Muslims reappeared as animals (foxes or wolves), in this case on the altar of the Convent of Saint Sebastian.<sup>449</sup> Peculiar, however, was the novel depiction of more figures linked to Spanish, more precisely Valencian, ecclesiastical history fighting against Islam: Saint Thomas of Villanueva, a mid-16th century bishop who participated in the campaigns to convert the Moriscos, appears giving money to Charles V for the construction of galleys at the

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443 Gállego 1991, p. 125.

444 Franco 2011.

445 Medina 1992.

446 Mínguez 2011, p. 278.

447 Monteagudo 1995, pp. 100–119.

448 Ortí Mayor 1740, pp. 195–196.

449 Ortí Mayor 1740, pp. 216–217.

Convent of Santo Socorro.<sup>450</sup> Cardinal Cisneros, meanwhile, is represented in a free-standing sculpture in a very curious way: on horseback, like Saint James the Moor Slayer, at the gates of the Fortress of Oran, which he conquered. Also depicted is the Infant Jesus, dressed as a general, just in front of him. This scene adorned the Convent of Jesus.<sup>451</sup> As Barriocanal pointed out,<sup>452</sup> the association of Cisneros and Saint James had already been drawn on other occasions, mainly referring to his writings related to the capture of this Muslim fortress (1509), or to the triumphant entries that took place in Alcalá de Henares in the 16th century,<sup>453</sup> a city where he exercised his patronage, such that it does not represent any iconographic novelty. What interested me is how, for the first time, it was used in the Valencian context, as there are no previous references to this. The ideological architects of these festivals always tried to impress the spectator, introducing aspects absent from previous events, and that dramatized the idea of a celestial army against Islam. Above all, their inclusion was surely related to the Christian re-conquest of Oran in 1732 (after having been under Ottoman rule between 1708 and 1732), such that this city was returned to the spotlight, prompting Cisneros to focus upon it.

Finally, there was another novel element forming part of these festivities honouring the Conquest: the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception was represented victorious against the Muslims, who lay strewn about her at the Convent of the Purity,<sup>454</sup> this being explained by the devotion professed to this Virgin in Valencia and the defence of dogma that prevailed on the Peninsula during the 16th and 17th centuries, as we will see in the following section.

## Canonizations and Other Valencian Festivities

Beatification festivals usually combined a religious aspect with another propagandistic function.<sup>455</sup> Thus, I considered it appropriate to introduce, as an epilogue, these festivities to indicate how views of Islam were manifested in these celebrations. In this regard, I also find it worthwhile to address both representations of the enemy and their omission. I find very significant, for example, that in the festivities for the canonization of Raymond of Penyafort,<sup>456</sup> one of the saints most frequently associated with the conversion

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450 Ortí Mayor 1740, p. 158.

451 Ortí Mayor 1740, p. 154.

452 Barriocanal 1998, p. 187.

453 Cámara-Gómez 1993.

454 Ortí Mayor 1740, p. 209.

455 González García 2015, p. 203.

456 Gómez 1602.



of Muslims, and to Christian captivity in Islamic territory, there were no allusions to his work against the infidel. Rather, a stress was placed on how the Dominicans, the order to which he belonged, fought heretics. Perhaps this may be due to this order's attitude before the Moorish expulsion: in the last years of the 16th and at the beginning of the 17th centuries, they were staunch detractors of converting the minority. Renowned preachers like Luis Bertrán even refused to preach to them.<sup>457</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that in the celebrations for the beatification of the latter,<sup>458</sup> it was indigenous people from America who were represented, and not Muslims, whom he had fiercely criticized. Only Turks appear, together with blacks, in the traditional and festive dances of Giants and Big-Heads, a dance that arose in the late Middle Ages as a criticism of otherness, but in the 17th century was indiscriminately used as an element for revelry and distraction.<sup>459</sup> I do not believe that this omission of representations of Muslims was due to the public itself, still including many Moriscos, but rather to the Dominicans' disinterest in the newly converted, as mentioned. In this regard, I refer to the concept of collective memory set forth by Assmann,<sup>460</sup> which asserts that omission represents a forgetting, which, in turn, entails contempt.

This Dominican attitude endured into the late 17th century. At the celebrations of the second centenary of the canonization of Saint Vincent Ferrer (1655), a clergyman renowned for his preaching to Jews and Moriscos, producing thousands of conversions. The only allusion to Islam would be the image of said saint preaching to the king of Granada.<sup>461</sup> It would be, as indicated earlier, at the commemorations of the third centenary (in the 18th century) when a triumphal image of victory over Islam was revived, with images of *The Cid* and the conquest of the city.

As for the canonization festivities of Saint Thomas of Villanueva: in that of 1620 I find hardly any references to Turks or Moriscos, even though they formed part of his pastoral work.<sup>462</sup> In contrast, at the 1659 festivities a landing of Turkish pirates in the city of Cullera was depicted. Obviously, Christians successfully repelled their attack.<sup>463</sup> This is the only reference that I find in the entire festivity. There were no references to Muslims on the Jesuit altars or those of Saint Martin. Memory of them was dissipating, even though those being honoured had been engaged in their conversion.

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457 Callado 2009, Callado-Esponera 2008

458 Gómez 1608.

459 Ferrer 1991, p. 164.

460 Assmann 2008.

461 Ortí y Ballester 1656, pp. 176–178.

462 Martínez de la Vega 1620.

463 Ortí and Ballester 1659, pp. 100–111.

At the festivities of the Immaculate Conception, however, held to celebrate the defence of Catholic dogma, the exaltation of the struggle against Islam reappears. The aim was to demonstrate her intercessory and defending role against all enemies of the faith. This manifest omission disappears here, and the interreligious struggle is once again represented. Two triumphal carriages, following somehow the style of the traditional “*rocas*” of the Valencian Corpus Christi celebrations, presented this battle. The university’s one took the form of a frigate and featured “a company of Turkish riders, with their Captain in front, showily dressed in rich *marlotas* and *capellares*, turbans and *enjaezados*”.<sup>464</sup> It was designed to celebrate the Virgin Mary’s intercession in maritime victories. The second one belonged to the tanners, and showed two galleys squaring off, with Barbary pirates vs. Christians.<sup>465</sup> In essence: allusion was made to the sea, the frequent site of clashes between Turks and Christians, along with insistence on the role and value of the Virgin as a “captain”. The entire motif was one of Marian exaltation, in which the Muslim enemy served as an “excuse” to demonstrate why the Church should uphold the dogma of the Immaculate Virgin, based on her protective role in the past.

## Conclusions

In summary, at these festivals representations of Muslims served the objectives of those who devised them. Their representation, or omission, at times reflected an attitude of contempt or disinterest, or an intention to commemorate, once again, the fierce struggles of the past. Certainly, as was found in studies of the entries of Philip IV and Charles II – which I have not included in this text for reasons of space – the Muslim progressively faded from all religious and royal public imagery. I do not believe that in this case the reason for this trend had to do with the audience, as in the first ephemeral manifestations of Philip II, but rather with the political situation in the mid-17th century. At the entries of Charles V’s successor on the throne great care was taken when depicting victory over the Muslims, avoiding elements that would be extremely offensive towards them. There is a notable absence of battle scenes like those displayed during other royal entries held in places like Madrid, where the Morisco problem was not as pressing. In contrast, in the latter cases analysed here the use of these kinds of images was much more utilitarian: they were omitted, or highlighted, as necessary, to obtain different aims.

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464 Valda 1663, pp. 57–58.

465 Valda 1663, pp. 535–539.

In this text, I have endeavored to compare three typologies of different events: royal entries, celebrations commemorating victories and beatifications or religious celebrations. My intention was to show, in a diachronic and parallel way, the perception and representation of the infidel, how it varied, and the factors that gave rise to such changes. Obviously, I could have gone into greater depth with each of them, but the aim was to create an overview of iconographic motifs, demonstrating the need to include these studies of the ephemeral in the reconstruction of the visual culture of the modern world, and, with it, views of otherness in said period.

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## 9. Tribute to Caesar: The Medicis' Giraffe

The preamble to this story: after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Turks approached Italy, conquering Otranto in 1450. In the European public life of the time, the hostility manifested in words against the Turks was secretly accompanied by a conciliatory approach, justified by the hope of conquering a promising market there and of forming a new political alliance that could prove to be strategic. In Florence, Lorenzo de' Medici had maintained relationships with the Ottoman Sultan Bayazid II; however, he also maintained them with the *Mamluk*, the sultan of Egypt, thus benefiting from a not dissimulated rivalry between them.

As a result of these relationships, on November 11, 1487, Ibn-Mahfuz, ambassador of Qa'it Bey the *Mamluk*, arrived in Florence, guiding a diplomatic mission<sup>466</sup>. The Florentine chronicler Luca Landucci remembers the gifts that he brought. Most of them were exotic animals and among them were a big lion, goats, very strange geldings and a very beautiful giraffe, which is still visible today, according to the chronicler, in several places in the city of Florence.<sup>467</sup> The iconographic fortune of such a rare animal was emphasized by the commentator who recalled the magnificent staging that the Florentine people had been witness to a few days later, when the official delivery of the gifts had taken place:

On November 18, 1487, the embassy from the sultan already cited [...] was sitting on the terrace of the lords, in the middle of the Signoria place, talking with and thanking each other through the intermediary of an interpreter. This morning there was a large crowd who had come to see this thing. For this occasion, the balustrade had been decorated with trellises and carpets on which all the prominent citizens

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466 Meli 2009, pp. 243–273.

467 “Gli animali furono questi: una giraffa molto grande e molto bella e piacevole; com’ella fussi fatta se ne può vedere i’ molti luoghi in Firenze dipinte. E visse qui più anni. E uno lion grande e capre e castroni, molto strani”; Landucci 1883, pp. 52–53. The chronicler specifies that, after a few days, he offered to Laurence the Magnificent not only animals but also spices, balms, pottery and a pavilion in Moorish style: “E a dì di novembre 1487, el detto ambasciatore presentò Lorenzo de’ Medici di certe cose odorifere, in begli vasegli alla moresca; e fiaschi pieni di balsamo, e un bello e grande padiglione vergato alla moresca, che si distese, e vidilo.” Meli 2009, pp. 243–273.

were sitting. The ambassador stayed here [in Florence] for several months. His costs were borne by the Florentines, and he received many gifts.<sup>468</sup>

On the main plaza in the city, a crowd of curious people could, consequently, have been present at the event. The occasion had been a true choreography: the speech by the ambassador was pronounced in Arabic and translated by an interpreter, the stage had been decorated with oriental carpets and unusual gifts offered by the oriental emissary. During such an embassy, it was not rare to offer animals, often falcons, dogs or horses intended for the hunting, but on this occasion, the Egyptian envoy presented rare and savage animals, probably meant for an exotic zoo in a seraglio;<sup>469</sup> some years before, the Marquise Malaspina had given to the wife of Lorenzo de Medici a live bear.<sup>470</sup>

As expected, the visual impact of the ceremony on the imagination of the Florentines was hard to settle, considering that the chronicler had observed that the most unusual member of this diplomatic mission, the giraffe, had been almost immediately painted. We find an early example in the frescoes of the Tornabuoni Chapel in Santa Maria Novella Church. This cycle, illustrating the life of the Virgin and of St. John the Baptist, patrons of the city, had been painted by Domenico Ghirlandaio between 1485 and 1490, at the same time as the Egyptian delegation arrived in Florence. Ghirlandaio might very probably have attended the arrival of the giraffe in Florence: moreover as a chronicler of contemporary life, he had probably also assisted at his crossing, depicted it in the procession of the Magi. Unfortunately the *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 1) is the most damaged scene in this cycle, but we can recognize the main subject in the middle and to the right side, in the foreground, a group of people dressed in the Florentine manner. There we can see a man with a very elaborate hairstyle and another nearing a white turban. In the background, precisely, corresponding to this Orientalist situation, we can see the procession with the giraffe. Along with the men on the hill, the animal is accompanied by a group of oriental men: walking on foot or riding on horseback, they are wearing turbans, and the man who is leading opens the retinue. He seems to have dark skin.

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468 "E a dì 18 di novembre 1487, el sopraddetto anbasciatore del Soldano [...] stette a sedere in mezzo della Signoria, in sulla ringhiera de' Signori, parlando e ringraziando per bocca d'uno interpreto. Fu, per questa mattina, in piazza un grande popolo, a vedere tale cosa. Era parata la ringhiera colle spalliere e tappeti, e a sedere tutti e principali cittadini. Stette qui quello inbasciatore molti mesi. Fugli fatto le spese e i doni assai." Meli 2009, pp. 243–273.

469 We have to question if the Medici had a menagerie, regarding this subject see: Loisel 1912, vol. I, pp. 197–201.

470 To contextualise the case of the giraffe, see: Delort 1984.



Fig. 1. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Adoration of the Magi*, 1485–1490, fresco. Tornabuoni Chapel, Santa Maria Novella Church, Florence. Photo Credit: Taken from the Séminaire d’Histoire de l’Art, Archives of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

This is a return to an event that had marked Florentine imagination. In fact, the presence of the giraffe is justified by the necessity of giving an exotic aspect to the depiction of the Magi<sup>471</sup>, but the composition takes into consideration a figurative tradition that has begun to take form, leaning on literary or scientific sources, that are sometimes illustrated.<sup>472</sup> Ghirlandaio seems to have been inspired by such a book, perhaps the account of the travels of the Italian epigraphist, Cyriaq of Ancona, who had made many trips in the eastern Mediterranean between 1427 and 1432, visiting Syria and Minor Asia. This can be deduced by looking at a book in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence, where illustrations, accompanying Ciriaco’s text, include a giraffe and an elephant (probably from around 1490) by a Florentine artist (Fig. 2).<sup>473</sup> The zoological fact had become a

471 See Nagel who, analyzing the Orientalism of the Mantegna’s *Adoration of the Magi* (Los Angeles, Getty), examines the circumstances that contributed to the characterization of Eastern in the Italian Renaissance culture, as in the courts of the Gonzaga and of the Este: Nagel, 2013, pp. 4–45.

472 Cuttler 1991, pp. 161–179. Laufer 1928, pp. 79–82.

473 Ibid, p. 169.



Fig. 2. Unknown painter, *The Giraffe after a Drawing by Cyriaq of Ancona*, 1475–1500, Medicea Laurenziana Library, Florence, Ms. Ashb. 1174 fol. 143v. Photo Credit: Taken from the Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Archives of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

model to reproduce and was quite unknown in Europe. Giraffe often appears in such books under the Latin name, *camelopardalis*: half-camel, half-leopard<sup>474</sup>. The Latin name of the animal betrays his mysterious nature, difficult to decipher like a fantastic animal. In fact, although the painter Ghirlandaio is basing his depiction on a true encounter, he needed the help

474 Since ancient times, the arrival of giraffes in Europe, as gifts or as war booty, has been documented by artistic images, so it is possible to reconstruct an iconographic history of the giraffe in Western art. See the monograph: Williams 2010.



of a literary quotation, as he had difficulty believing his real own eyes. The giraffe, which figures in the text by Ciraq – who is indicated by his Arabic name, *zarafa*, translated into Greek letters – and the one that is depicted by Ghirlandaio, have both a long neck and a red coat, stained with yellow. The colour, the shape and the placement are all similar and both are being shipped by a sail, the one in the fresco, accompanied by an oriental type of man.<sup>475</sup>

The giraffe sent from Egypt was the first one that had ever been in Europe after a long period without real giraffes and public curiosity was high.<sup>476</sup> Besides, the chronicler Landucci, who has already been mentioned, another Florentine, the cauldron-maker Bartolomeo Masi, described the giraffe, paying little attention to its physical characteristics. Lorenzo de' Medici had, in fact, received:

A real animal, the most beautiful and most marvellous we have ever seen, among them there was an animal called a giraffe, who had a head like a cow without horns, a reddish coat; its front legs were three arm-lengths long, those in the back two arms-lengths, the tail like a cow and the neck three arms-lengths long. She ate all kinds of things and was as agile as a bird. The animal mentioned above is died after a short time because, when it raised its head, it hits it against the jamb of the door and because of that, the giraffe died.<sup>477</sup>

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475 An illustration, engraved ca. 1490 by Bartolomeo Fonzio, is depicted in the *Codex Ashmolensis* in Florence, and seems to be the source used by Ghirlandaio, coming from the fact that in the engraving and in the fresco the giraffe is being guided with a leading rein, by an oriental man wearing a turban (*ibid.*, p. 168). Regarding the iconographic history of the giraffe of Lorenzo of Medici: Donati 1938, pp. 247–268. To have an overview of this iconographic story we can also read: Belozerskaya 2006, pp. 87–129.

476 Buquet 2012, pp. 65–90. In fact, probably at the same time other giraffes were being presented in Italy during the same time, in Ferrara and in Calabria. The king of Naples received a specimen, and the humanist Antonio Costanzi relates the presence of a giraffe in Fano, whose head, as the high as the windows of the upper level, could take the food offered by inhabitants of the city. He stated that he had seen the animal going so fast that horsemen could not follow him: Costanzi 1502, ff. 1–2. And regarding the giraffe during the Renaissance in Italy see the article by Thierry Buquet and the bibliography cited in Buquet 2012, pp. 19–22.

477 “Animali vivi, de’ più begli e de’ più maravigliosi che mai si vedessimo in queste parte; fra’ quali v’era uno animale che si chiamava giraffa, che aveva la testa sua come una vitella, senza corna, e aveva el pelo rossigno, e aveva le gambe dinanzi alte circa tre braccia, e quelle di dietro circa due, e aveva la coda sua come una vitella, el collo lungo circa di quattro braccia; e mangiava d’ogni cosa, ed era agievole quanto un aguiello. Morì il sopradetto animale in ispazio di poco tempo, perché alzando el capo percosse in uno cardinale d’uno uscio, e di quello si morì”; Masi 1906, p. 18.



Fig. 3. Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, *St. Mark Preaching in Alexandria*, 1504-1508, Pinacoteca of Brera, Milan. Photo Credit: Taken from the Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Archives of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

The tragedy had become grotesque: the giraffe had been a victim of his height, because it died by slamming its head against the jamb of a door. However, we could wait everything because it is such a surprising animal and has never been seen before as Masi remarks.

The theme of a fantastic being is tightly linked to the image of this giraffe, as the animal is mentioned by Piero di Cosimo, writing about the most original painters of the Medici family in Florence.<sup>478</sup> In his *Vulcan and Aeolus*, now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Ottawa (Fig. 3), the mythological subject is imprinted with complex symbolism. Vulcan, assisted by Aeolus, is working in a primitive forge showing who is a man riding a horse how to utilize fire and work metal. In the background is a house built of logs and, in the foreground, a man is asleep, which makes an allusion to the future of human beings, when he will awaken in a new era of civilization. Among the numerous symbols in the picture is the giraffe: beside the house in construction, it expresses what, according to Giorgio Vasari, interests Piero di Cosimo the most: “things that nature makes on account of their strangeness”.<sup>479</sup> In fact, the indecipherable nature of the giraffe will inevitably be put into relationship with the idea of a strange bestiality, since the accent is

478 Panofsky 1937, pp. 12–30. On the painting of Piero di Cosimo see: Bacci 1976 and Geronimus 2006. The catalogue of an important exhibition in Washington D. C. has to be mentioned: Geronimus, Hirschauer et al. 2015.

479 “Recavasi spesso a vedere o animali o erbe o qualche cosa, che la natura fa per stranezza.” Vasari 1993, p. 577.

put on the gigantic height of the animal, which dominates the other figures and is associated with a house under construction. The giraffe with its symbolism offers us some of crossed references where life and art are knotted together. If in tracing a portrait of primitive humanity, Piero di Cosimo uses a giraffe to evoke the savage nature that human beings have not yet tamed, we must observe that in his turn, Vasari noticing the Cosimo's pronounced taste for the bizarre, described him as an exotic cloistered, a "man who resembles a beast more than a human being"<sup>480</sup>.

However, in addition to being an eccentric animal, the giraffe is often linked to a specific political discourse. Ghirlandaio's *Adoration of the Magi*, already cited, offers us an example, because the submission of the oriental kings is framed by a broken triumphal arch, which symbolizes the ruin of paganism. Here the Latin inscription mentions the Roman Emperor August.<sup>481</sup> Consequently the reference is linked to historical times, as the giraffe is, playing the role of a mediator between the world's time (of the Magi) and real time (of Lorenzo de' Medici). Still some decades later, the animal reappears in the background of a masterpiece with a message of its own: *The Predication of St. Mark in Alexandria*, painted by the brothers Gentile and Giovanni Bellini between 1504 and 1508 (Fig. 4). The main painting given to the Scuola Grande of St. Mark in Venice, and today in Milan, celebrates the patron saint of the Serenissima and puts the accent on an Orientalist theme, a theme manifestly adapted well to a political and contemporary context. The Bellini brothers are expressing the dream of any Universalist Venetian by painting a place full of curious people: men of different faiths, languages and cultures. Venice, considered as the center of Mediterranean exchanges, is depicted as the new Byzantium, the new capital of an empire which unifies East and West. At that time, when the Turks were even more bitter enemies of the West, St Mark, conquers them without arms, by the mere strength of his speeches.<sup>482</sup> In this painting, the East can be recognized by the architecture and the details on the costumes. Traces are disseminated everywhere: robes, turbans, palaces, palm trees and exotic animals (among them, monkeys and dromedaries disguised in the landscape and a giraffe, crossing the plaza in the background). The localization of the story imposes an Orientalist setting, but it must not be forgotten that, during

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480 "egli del continuo stava rinchiuso e non si lasciava veder lavorare, e teneva una vita da uomo più bestiale che umano." Vasari 1993, p. 577.

481 The engraved inscription on the arch states: "CAES [AR] AUGUSTO XXXVIII AP".

482 In keeping with Venetian universalism in painting, we must also mention Carpaccio's artworks: Gentili 2006. However, the underlying theme is the confrontation with alterity and on this subject, we can refer to: Stoichita 2014.



Fig. 4. Piero di Cosimo, *Vulcan and Aeolus*, ca. 1490, Museum of Fine Arts, Ottawa. Photo Credit: Taken from the Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Archives of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

some negotiations between the Venetian Senate and the Ottoman court, Gentile Bellini had been sent to Constantinople, where he had lived between 1479 and 1481. It was then that he painted the renowned *Portrait of the Sultan Mehmet II* which is in the National Portrait Gallery in London.<sup>483</sup> The notes taken during this trip had no doubt contributed to the setting, but

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483 Regarding Bellini's travel to Constantinople, we can mention the catalogue of the exhibition in London: Campbell, Chong et al. 2005. Regarding the cultural and artistic exchanges between Venice and the East, see the catalogue of the rich exhibition organized in Paris and in New York: Carboni 2006. Furthermore, regarding this subject, the Italian context during the Renaissance has been studied by: Mack 2002.

the giraffe was probably inspired by the one offered to Lorenzo de' Medici; on the other hand, as the event is taking place in Egypt, the giraffe from the *mamluk* would also be justified.

The arrival of a giraffe in Europe had been a historic event without precedent. The interest it awakened in the regent of France, Anne de Beaujeu, attested to it. In 1489 in a letter addressed to Lorenzo de' Medici, she asked the master of Florence to send the giraffe to her, pretexting that there was no animal in the world that she "desired more to see"<sup>484</sup>. She asked it him in vain for the gift of his zoo: Lorenzo refused to separate himself from this precious gift even for a moment. The giraffe was taken to the stables of the pope in Florence, and during the winter, they maintained a continual fire there to keep it warm her. Nevertheless, the giraffe does not seem to have lived more than a year. In January 1489, after its death, only its fur, carefully preserved remained and its memory, immortalized in a painting. Another Florentine, Filippino Lippi, painted it between 1488 and 1493, in the Basilica of Minerva in Rome. In the fresco in the Carafa Chapel, showing the *Annunciation* and the *Assumption of the Virgin*, a giraffe is walking in a procession with the Magi in the background: men wearing turbans stay around it, and a lion is pacing in front of it (Fig. 5). One more time, the flow of historical time to mythical time was marked by visual means: the lion is one of the animals that the ambassador of the Mamluk had offered to Laurence de Medici but could also be associated with the *Marzocco* (the statue of a stone lion that was the symbol of the city of Florence)<sup>485</sup>.

During gigantic festivities that had been organized in Florence in 1459, in order to celebrate the visit of Pope Pie II, an impressive false giraffe had been made. It resembled a big horse of Troy and had men hidden inside the wooden structure to move it. The giraffe had "walked" in procession through the streets of the city, until it stopped on the Signoria plaza, where the Medici had organized a fight between fierce beasts. To commemorate the Roman games, the main plaza contained a lion, wolves, a wild boar, bulls and Corsican dogs.<sup>486</sup> Unfortunately, no picture has survived, but the event

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484 Cloulas 1983, pp. 73–82. The French had to wait a long time, because the first giraffe arrived in France in 1826, as the gift of the Egyptian Pacha to King Charles X. Regarding this episode, see: Dardaud 2006.

485 In Florence, lions have been signaled by documentary sources since the 13th century. Between 1550 and 1777, a cage of lions existed near the botanical garden of San Marco; Lazzaro 1995, pp. 203–208.

486 The pope was accompanied by Galeazzo Maria Sforza, duke of Milan. The combat, which took place on April 29, 1459, is explained by Muratori 1755, t. II, pp. 718–752 and Volpi 1907. We can also cite Trexler 1980, p. 263.



Fig. 5. Filippino Lippi, *The Procession of the Magi* (detail), in *Annunciation and Assumption of the Virgin*, 1488–1493, fresco. Carafa Chapel, Minerva Basilica, Rome. Photo Credit: Taken from the Séminaire d’Histoire de l’Art, Archives of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

recalled the story of Julius Caesar, who took a giraffe from Egypt to Rome in the 46 b. C. The animal, symbolizing African conquests, had walked in a procession that also included his chariots full of the spoils of war. In the end, it served as a supper for the lions.<sup>487</sup>

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<sup>487</sup> The episode is mentioned in the *Natural History* by Plinius the Elder and in the *History of Rome* by Diodorus of Sicily.

The comparison between Laurence and Caesar holds true: Laurence had just crushed the rebellion in Volterra and had conquered Sarzana (where he had miraculously escaped Pazzi's conspiracy and he had been highly criticized for the authoritarian and anti-republican turn that his government had taken. In his virtues and vices, Laurence the Magnificent consequently resembles a new Caesar. On the other hand, even his collection of antiquities reflected the same model, for he possessed many additional portraits of Roman emperors, such as the marble statues of Augustus and Agrippa, won in Rome in 1471.

The decoration of the ceiling of one of the rooms in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence is based just such a comparison. In the fresco, painted by Vasari between 1556 and 1562 which shows *Laurence the Magnificent Receiving the Tribute of the Ambassadors*<sup>488</sup> (Fig. 6), the lord of Florence is surrounded by the most important envoys of the Italian states. The decorative details make the construction of the event effective:<sup>489</sup> the men, clothed in Renaissance fashion and uniforms of soldiers were inspired by the Roman world. The amphora on the shoulders of a figure wearing on the right side, the turbans, the monkey and the dromedaries are generic references towards Orient: the giraffe, however, is a clear allusion to the gifts from the Egyptian ambassador to the Florentine lord in 1487. The visual memory is precise, because the Corsican dogs in the foreground on the left refer to another time and to the tribute from the *Mamluk*. The giraffe is held by a long lash and led by a black-skinned man who has put a strange exotic headdress on his head. With its long neck, the giraffe is at the top of the composition and, taking into consideration its form and its position in the picture, the figure is complementary to the one of Laurence. As an actualization of this classical story, this image shows a new Caesar, and the tribute is being offered by modern Egypt. The giraffe makes a decisive contribution, because it is quite a mythical animal as Vasari observed: "considering that, in Italy, such creatures had never been seen and it attracts more than mere attention because neither Portuguese nor Spanish people have ever found such an animal in India or in the New World".<sup>490</sup>

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488 Joost-Gaugier 1987, pp. 91–99.

489 The humanist, Cosimo Bartoli who probably had suggested the subject to Vasari, speaks of it in 1556 in a letter addressed to the painter; *ibid.*, p. 97. Before 1537, Alessandro Medici had commanded to Vasari some paintings for the Palazzo Medici, illustrating the life and triumphs of Julius Caesar.

490 "Soldano del Cairo, il quale fu allora grandissimo nelle imprese di guerra, che gli mandò (come vedete) a presentare fino in Fiorenza que' vasi, gioie, pappagalli, scimmie, cammelli, e, fra gli altri doni, una giraffa, animale indiano non più visto d persona, e di grandezza, e di varietà di pelle, che in Italia simil cosa no venne mai; e tanto più era da tenere in conto, quanto né i Porthoghesi, né gli Spagnuoli



Fig. 6. Giorgio Vasari, *Lorenzo the Magnificent Receiving the Tribute of the Ambassadors*, 1556–1562, fresco, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Photo Credit: Taken from the Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Archives of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

In the iconographic tradition, Laurence the Magnificent is often associated with Julius Caesar; both historic figures respond well to the wish to depict the

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nell'India, e nel nuovo mondo, non hanno mai trovato tale animale"; *ibid.*, p. 94. Vasari had gone back on the theme of the giraffe in the fresco of the Hundred Days, in the Palazzo della Cancelleria, in Rome. The animal appears in fact among the gifts received by the pope in: *The Homage of the Nations to Pope Paul III*, conceived in 1546.



lord of Florence, which Andrea del Sarto uses as his avatar. Among the many people in *The Tribute to Julius Caesar* (a fresco by Andrea del Sarto and Alessandro Allori from ca. 1520), in the large room in the Medicean Villa in Poggio a Caiano in the Province of Prato, we can recognize Julius Caesar Laurence's alter ego crowned with laurel and receiving the ambassadors.<sup>491</sup> The envoys are offering him a lot of gifts: some are common animals such as horses and geese and others are more exotic animals such as apes, oriental parrots or turkeys from the New World. Among them, in the background on the left side, is the renowned giraffe a gift from the Egyptian sultan.<sup>492</sup>

The giraffe was not only considered as being symbolic of power, but it was also a visual sign of colonial conquests. Julius Caesar had occupied the Egypt of Cleopatra militarily; Laurence of Medici did not need an army to conquer the *mamluk's* state: the giraffe here is a symbol of Egypt's political rendition. The colonial allusion is also present in the animals decorating the garden of the Medicean residence situated on the hill of Florence in Castello. The residence goes back to the time of Cosimo de Medici, who had taken the power in 1537. Vasari's decoration dates to 1565 and 1572. The iconographic program of the *Cave of Animals* is, consequently, associated with Vasari's name: he is the author of this cave covered with chalk-stones and mosaics. It contains three fountains with marble basins, surmounted by groups of animals sculpted in stone.<sup>493</sup> The animals, inserted in three niches, are a mixture of both exotic and domestic animals. Among the non-Western animals, we can recognize the giraffe and an elephant, a camel, an ape, a rhinoceros, a gazelle and a cheetah, besides a turkey from the New World. The garden was inspired by a story by Agostino del Riccio, which goes back to the end of the 16th century, and celebrates the bucolic life and describes an ideal place dominated by harmony and where inoffensive domestic animals coexist with fierce, savage beasts.

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491 The mansion of Poggio al Caiano, in the Province of Prato had been built by Giuliano da Sangallo, under the command of Lorenzo de' Medici. The fresco of the main room depicts *The Tribute to Julius Caesar*, and he had been painted by Andrea del Sarto in 1521 and completed by Allori in 1582. If apparently the decoration of the fresco is classical, there is no reference to the Florence of the Magnificent. Besides the giraffe, the figures of Judith and Holofernes are citing Donatello's statues, whom everyone knew.

492 Regarding the *topos* of the giraffe offered to an emperor see: Gatier 1996, pp. 903–941.

493 Lazzaro 1995, pp. 197–227. In the middle of the grotto, there was very probably the statue of Orpheus who, with his music enchanted the animals. The author of the animals seems to be the less known Antonio di Gino Lorenzi, but the niches were decorated by birds in bronze made by John of Boulogne and Bartolommeo Ammanati, actually exhibited in the Museum of the Bargello in Florence.

The colonial influence is confirmed by the assimilation in the decoration of geographic discoveries and by barbarian animals in the garden of the Medici family, besides showing how savage nature has been tamed, by aesthetics. The depiction of a giraffe confirms the visual Orientalist alterity, but does this in a scene that is politically oriented, and is also imperialist. Thus the giraffe is inevitably a metaphor for colonial tributes: a *Tribute to Caesar*.

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Catherine Schaller Perret

## 10. Survivals of Otherness: Astrological Frescoes in the Palazzo of Schifanoia in Ferrara, Italy

With reference to the notion of inalienable hereditary as heritage theorized by Aby Warburg in his conference on *Italian Art and Astrology at the Palazzo of Schifanoia in Ferrara*, 1912, I wish to enrich his work on genealogical history by referring to various sources of astrological imagery.<sup>494</sup> The Palazzo of Schifanoia marks an interesting turning point: the astrological motives are taken from various traditions and invested with a new sense, in keeping with the new Renaissance codes. These survivals cause a significant reading problem that is linked to the narrative structure and otherness of the models from Arab and Persian cultures.

In his lecture entitled *Italian Art and International Astrology at the Palazzo of Schifanoia in Ferrara*, Warburg sought to grasp the general functioning of images. As a critical iconographer, his main task was to remove the unexpected layers that had covered the symbols (of Greek origin) in order to recover the primitive image. Warburg recognized and described how this iconography survived by disguising itself.

Warburg wanted to understand the life of images, their strength, their survival and their modifications. With his objective of grasping the “survival of antiquity as a mnemonic function,”<sup>495</sup> Warburg favoured the Renaissance because of its renewal of images.<sup>496</sup> The reservoirs of images that modern artists can draw on have to be detached from their initial anchorage, and linked to a given period, in order to integrate their re-use successfully into a new socio-cultural context. The famous art historian did not want a purely formal analysis that would not take into account the anthropological components of the images and this is what I wish to explore in the staging of the frescoes in the *Salone dei Mesi* (“Room of the Months”) in the Palazzo of Schifanoia, created for Borso d’Este, future Duke of Ferrara.

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494 Warburg 1990; Fratucello and Knorr 1998.

495 Hagelstein 2010, p. 257.

496 Kurt W. Forster argues that in the Germanic world, studies of the Middle Ages were inspired by nationalist motivations, while the Renaissance period, which had already been widely studied during the second half of the 19th century, turned to the discovery of artistic forms different, in Forster 2002, p. 6.

The frescoes in the *Salone dei Mesi* are located in a room about 25 by 11 meters wide and 7.5 meters high. Each fresco is about 5 meters high by 3.2 meters wide. Dated to 1469–1470, they illustrate the good government of Borso d'Este.<sup>497</sup> They have been organized in three zones: in the upper part is the triumph of the classical deities, in the middle are the signs of the Zodiac with the decans, and the lower part presents life at the court of Ferrara. For the upper part, the cycle of the months presents the twelve planetary divinities on their chariots, according to the tradition of the “Triumphs” made fashionable by Petrarch. On both sides of the chariots are represented the “children” of the planets are represented, i.e., the categories of persons who enjoy the protection of planetary deities.

Specialists recognize the work of five workshops here, presumably under the responsibility of Cosme Tura, who was an employee at the court of Ferrara as early as 1458 at that time.<sup>498</sup> The entrance was in the north. One entered the Salon in front of the months of January and February on the south wall; then the course continued counterclockwise with the months of March, April and May on the east wall. Wooden shutters closed the windows so that the decoration was appreciated without interruption.<sup>499</sup> On this eastern wall, the months of March (under the sign of the ram), of April (with a bull, accompanied by the triumph of Venus), and of May (with the Gemini and the triumph of Apollo) are portrayed. The continuation of the months extends along the north wall to the panels on the west wall. It is also read according to the succession of the months from right to left.

The tutelary deity of the month of March (Minerva) (Fig. 1) is thus escorted on its right by a group of professors of the University of Ferrara, who participate in the wisdom of Borso d'Este.

To his left, the cart of Minerva is accompanied by a group of workers installed at their looms. Ladies twirling their distaffs accompany them. This motif is related to the legend of Arachne, who is associated with the goddess Minerva. It is an allusion to the investments of Borso d'Este made in the textile industry.<sup>500</sup>

For the astrological signs, the use of decans with their iconographic vocabulary and the distribution of space evoked for Warburg the East and India. He then ascended to the *Sphaera Barbara* written in the 1st century

497 The theme is significant because it is linked to Borso d'Este's request to obtain from Pope Paul II the title of Duke. He will receive it in 1471.

498 Bentini 2004, p. 106.

499 Bentini 2004, p. 107. There was no light, but only an artificial illumination. There are various interpretations; See as well Chabanne and Trivisani-Moreau 2010.

500 Chabanne and Trivisani-Moreau 2010.



Fig. 1: Cosme Turà, *Month of March*, Fresco, 1476–1484, Palazzo Schifanoia, Sala dei Mesi, Ferrara, 500 x 320 cm.

AD by the astrologer Teukros of Babylon.<sup>501</sup> In 1903, Franz Boll demonstrated that the Greco-Egyptian decans of the Greek sphere were contaminated by oriental models. This sphere is termed “barbarian” because of its mixture of Indian and Persian divinities. Images related to this “barbaric” tradition are identifiable in the descriptions of several works. There is the *Introductinum Maius* by Albumasar, dating from the 9th century<sup>502</sup>, and the manual of Arabic-Spanish-Latin magic, *Picatrix*, translated in the 13th century. This explains the filiation from the sources of Teukros of Babylon. His text has been modified and enriched by the Arabi Albumasar.<sup>503</sup> The *Sphaera* of Albumasar was in turn translated successively from Arabic into Hebrew by Abraham Ibn Ezra of Toledo and by Pietro d’Abano who made a translation into Latin in 1293.<sup>504</sup>

For the upper part of the fresco of Palazzo of Schifanoia, we can recognize the influence of the images of the gods of the classical world, as they appear in the *Astronomicon* by de Manilio, edited by Lorenzo Bonincontri. This scholar, poet and astrologer, was considered to be an important person in the circles frequented by Borso d’Este, as was Pellegrino Prisciani, an official, librarian and astrologer at the court of the dukes of Este. One can attribute to these two people a large part of the program for the fresco, especially in the median face, that of the signs of the Zodiac and the decans.

Warburg, who first understood the inspiring sources of the astrological program of the palace, focused mainly on the astrological doctrine of Pellegrino Prisciani. Warburg’s description of the image of the first decan of March (which is the sign of the ram), speaks for itself: the “Persian Indians” for this decan is a black man with red eyes, tall stature, a courageous man and with high feelings. He is dressed in a wide white jacket, tied in the middle with a rope. The man is angry: he is standing straight, watching and spying.<sup>505</sup>

As an appendix to his lecture, Warburg also published a letter from Prisciani, who was conducting the work at the palace and who possessed the text by Pietro d’Abano.<sup>506</sup> Dated October 26, 1487, his letter was an answer to Eleonor of Aragon, Duchess of Ferrara. Prisciani urged her to

501 It is in the book of Boll 1903. In the appendix of this book he makes a reconstruction of the barbaric sphere of Teukros of Babylon, living in the 1st century of our era.

502 Chapter 1, book 6.

503 Also named Abu-Masar or Apomasar.

504 For more details on astrological sources: Federici Vescovini 2006.

505 Warburg will then unite this sign of the ram to the classical constellation of Perseus, which is a mistake.

506 Warburg 1999b.



pray before and during the ascending knot of the moon so that her wishes could find fulfilment. For this answer, Prisciani referred to the great figures of the astrological tradition: Albumasar, Pietro d'Abano and Marco Manilio. More precisely, Marco Manilio was certainly the source of the Zodiac represented at Schifanoia, as he was the only astrologer to propose in his *Astronomica*, the tutelage of the couple Jupiter-Cybele for the sign of the Lion in July.<sup>507</sup>

In the current state of research concerning the various iconographic models for the characters of the decans present in the palace, one should not content oneself with the version of Albumasar alone, but also use other translations of his work and also various treatises of magic astrology such as *Picatrix*, already mentioned.<sup>508</sup> For those who seek to study the iconography of heaven, the analyses of Warburg, Saxl, Panofsky and Sez nec are essential and give rich rewards in teaching. They have all been interested in the *Nachleben* ("survival") of classical culture and, also add to it, to the Arab or Persian cultures as we have just seen. In order to establish an iconological science, one danger is to be concentrate only on bonds, and so to make false unions such as the link between the decan of the ram and the constellation of Perseus, put forward by Warburg, which has proven to be an error.

The astronomical and astrological manuscripts form a corpus of more than 200 works, dating from the 9th to the 16th centuries.<sup>509</sup> They are illustrated on average by 30 to 50 images. This immense corpus has still been very little studied. It is nevertheless interesting to find a phenomenon of various lateralities applied to arranging the figures, and their reading: from right to left for those in Arabic language; or from left to right for those in Latin.

Kristen Lippincott examined the problem of text and image. In particular, on the Germanicus manuscripts belonging to the family named O,<sup>510</sup> the fifteen or so manuscripts that form this O family are dated from the 9th to the 15th centuries. In most cases, a portion of the text of the poem has been cut to leave a *lacunae* (an empty space), which will contain illumination. It is possible, as Lippincott suggests, that this lack of text is due to the period of a transition from the roll to the codex and to a problem of place available to hold the text in a rather thin column to fit the width a page in the

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507 Marco Manilio (1<sup>st</sup> century BC.-1<sup>st</sup> century AC), *Astronomica* II, 439–447.

508 The Arabic text of *Picatrix*, composed in the middle of the 11th century, in Spanish land, was translated into Castilian in 1256 and diffused through a Latin version in the West. See Bakhouché et al. 2003; Garin 1983, p. 46.

509 See the articles of Lippincott 1994; Lippincott 2006.

510 Lippincott 2006, p. 8.



Fig. 2: Faesch, Remigius, Germanicus Caesar Aratus, Solensis, Erasthenes, Hipparchus, Nicaenus, Museum Faesch, Kloster St. Salvator and Bonifatius Fulda, UB Basel, AN IV 18, Claudii Caesaris, *Arati Phaenomena*, fol. 34r, fol. 35r, fol. 35v.

codex, as can be seen in a certain psalter.<sup>511</sup> But what we must especially note is the direction in which the figures of Orion, Canis Maior and Lepus are facing: Orion, the legendary hunter, the Great Dog and the Hare, all these constellations are turned to the left, which could suggest a sense reading from right to left, which would be non-Latin (Fig. 2).<sup>512</sup>

At this point, it seems important to me to question the lateral reading of images, which arose especially in the Renaissance, and, among others, at the Palazzo of Schifanoia; but had also occurred before, as with the examples of Germanicus manuscripts. Why, in these Germanicus manuscripts, do we have such exceptions to a Latin text that we would read from left to right along with images arranged to the left but not to the right? Are there any technical reasons, such as a transition from the roll to the codex – assuming a change in the run of reading as one turns of the pages? Or is the problem one of a cultural transition between the Arab-Persian world – which would involve a reading from right to left – to the Latin world, that involves a reading from left to right?

In these astronomical and astrological manuscripts, there is a category that has only entered gone into Western culture thanks to the Arab astronomical

<sup>511</sup> Lippincott 2006, p. 8. Illuminated manuscript, Basel, Öffentliche Bibliothek der Universität, Cod. An. IV. 18, fol. 34r, 35r, 35v.

<sup>512</sup> For other examples see Dekker 2010.

tradition. A known example is the treatise by Claudius Ptolemaeus, an astronomer from Alexandria, written between 127 and 148-149 AD. It has been translated and post-dated later by several authors including Thabit, Alfraganus, Geber, and also by the best known, author Sufi.<sup>513</sup>

Some of the illustrations present the constellations frontally, as recommended by Hipparchus.<sup>514</sup> While other illustrations in the text include reversed images, as if a mirror had been used, (Fig. 3) this is problematic because these reversals no longer correspond to Ptolemaeus' text. Ptolemaeus states that Perseus holds a weapon in the right hand and in the left the head of Medusa (head of a demon in the Arab world) (Fig. 4). This kind of mirror-like reversal probably originated from manuscripts copied by Persian or Arab astrologers in the 8th and 9th centuries. However, specialists do not understand why these astrologers provided an inversed imagery to the text they retained!

The same Arabic manuscripts contain errors of translation, such as the constellation of Andromeda, represented by a chained woman, or a woman awaiting Perseus. Since her celestial place coincides with that occupied in the Arab world by a fish bench, she seems to have with a double symbolism.<sup>515</sup>

It was in the 13th century that the Arabic version of the Ptolemaic treaty was published in Latin, thanks to the translation of Gerard de Cremona and the translators' school of Alfonso X of Castile, which left some terms in Arabic (since they probably not know their equivalent). It is thus that we find later manuscripts of the *Almagest* with the representation of the constellation Cepheus *inflamatus* (which excites, inflames) and not as a king or a shepherd which would be according to Arab tradition) and that of the Cowherd is *ululans* (who screams and shouts) and not a ploughman with his two dogs. In this manuscript in Bergamo, the characters representing the constellations are all also turned to the left.<sup>516</sup>

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513 Lippincott 2006, p. 12: Abu l Hasan Thabit ibn Qurra (Thabit), Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Kathir al-Farghani (Alfraganus), Gabir ibn Aflah (Geber), Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, Nasir ad-Din at-Tusi, Muhammad ibn Jabir al-Battani, Zakariya ibn Muhammad al Qazwini (Kazwini) et Abu l-Husayn Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi (Sufi).

514 Date of – 190- 120, Claudius Ptolemaeus had these writings.

515 Lippincott 2006, p.15, fig. 11: Perseus, illuminated manuscript, 13th century, London, The British Library, MS Or. 5323, fol.21v. ; Arabic version, mirrored and p.16, fig. 12: Perseus, illuminated manuscript, 13th century, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms lat. 1036, fol. 10r., with the feet turned to the right.

516 Illuminated Manuscript, 2/2 XV<sup>th</sup> century, Bergamo, Biblioteca civique Angelo Mai, Σ. II.2, fol. 92v.



Fig. 3: *Perseus*, 13th century, London, The British Library, Ms Or. 5323, fol. 21v.

The influence of this iconographic Arabo-Persian tradition was widespread. Lippincott has listed some sixty works from the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance that contain Arabic elements in their illustrations.<sup>517</sup>

What interests us here is not the errors of translation that persist, but the figures inverted, as in a mirror. According to David Summers, these “*figure come fratelli*” were common during the Renaissance.<sup>518</sup> At the palazzo of Schifanoia, the two upper parts, concerning the pagan deities above the signs

<sup>517</sup> Lippincott 2006, p. 16.

<sup>518</sup> Summers 1977.



Fig. 4: *Perseus* (globe view), 13th century, London, The British Library, Ms Or. 5323, fol. 10r.

of the zodiac, are clearly meant to be read in the same way as the Arabic manuscripts, i. e. from right to left.

Since the reading of the two upper parts of this fresco in the palazzo of Schifanoia is from right to left, let us examine the system of the lower zone. For the month of March, which interested Aby Warburg so passionately, the composition by Francesco del Cossa is complex. The fresco is divided into three parts. Two of them are marked by Renaissance-style arches. The divisions are made of a small arch in the center, a large one on the right and finally the left part. In the foreground, at the bottom left is a figure from the court sitting and leaning forward, his back is turned to the right. The place and position of this figure introduce us into the fresco. This figure is below a young rider (a falconer) who also appears in the foreground on the left. In his axis, a dog has stopped. Turned in the other direction, toward the left, Borso d'Este and his suite are leaving for the hunt. One sees them then riding at the top of a hill, above the group of the peasants who are working the

vine. The image seems to be cut in the middle by two arches. On the right, is an arch, from which Borso is leaving. It has a vault on which one can read *Justicia* (“Justice”). Borso is facing a group of people, on either side of the pillars of the arch, who are all turned toward Borso. At the back, is another arch, which has a small clearance, opening on a perspective to the right. To the left of the main arch, a second perspective marks the space. It seems to be cut off, mingling with a part of the top hill. Thus, the reading is fragmented, like the landscape.

Space is not unitary here, but rather it is composed of a mosaic of heterogeneous landscapes, which seem independent of each other, and are organized from different perspectives. Thus, we can enter the fresco on the left where the figure seen from the back, the dynamics of the hill and the view through the arch bring us up to the right. We then follow the procession of hunters, according to the principle of the very recent *Procession of the Magi Kings* by Benozzo Gozzoli. Francesco del Cossa tried to assemble the dynamics of the two upper zones, which are read from right to left, with the lower zone, which he endeavored to reconnect with a reading from left to right.

The same is true in many astrological cycles painted in fresco in Italy in the 15th century, like the one on the ceiling of the Camera di Griselda at Castello Sforzesco in Milan (1458–1464).<sup>519</sup> The Camera di Griselda was originally located on the first floor in the south-west tower of Roccabianca Castle (Parma). These frescoes were detached and transferred to canvas between 1896 and 1897. Dated to about 1458–1464, they were commissioned by the Condottiere Pier Maria Rossi, Earl of Berceto. No artist’s name has been advanced for the creation of this cycle that illustrates, on part of the walls, the last story – the one hundredth – from the *Decameron* by Boccaccio. It narrates Griselda’s role, a modest daughter of a farmer, who had married Gualtieri, the Marquis of Saluzzo. The narrative, which spans 24 compartments, insists on Griselda’s loyalty and fidelity to her husband, despite the numerous psychological tests to which he submitted her.

Above the scenes taken from Boccaccio is a vault covered with 87 celestial figures. The astrological program presents an unconventional celestial map with the northern constellations located in the center of the vault. Those in the south form eight quadrants all around. A band of figures from the Zodiac and divinities linked to the planets constitute the edge furthest from the center, in the lowest part of the vault. Without entering into the details of the positions of the stars and of the astrological symbols, but taking up the same

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519 Lippincott 1985.

signs as those in the palazzo of Schifanoia, the positions given to Taurus, Aries and the Fish, as the great majority of the signs of the Zodiac in the four squares surrounding the keystone and the majority of the constellations, are meant to be read from right to left. Here we also find the constellation of Cepheus *inflamatus* and Cowherd *ululans*.

These reversals of the direction of reading the figures also appear several times, in the examples used by Warburg to highlight his concept of *Pathosformel*. In his 1905 short essay<sup>520</sup>, *Dürer and Italian Antiquity*, he brings together a Dürer drawing (dated to 1494, preserved at the Kunsthalle in Hamburg) (Fig. 5), and an anonymous woodcut from the Mantegna workshop (Fig. 6).<sup>521</sup> The two represent the theme of The Death of Orpheus and they reproduce an ancient pathetic gestural formula that Warburg has found on two examples of ancient Greek vases.

This theme provided Warburg with a solid starting point for his studies. He proceeds to demonstrate on three levels: the pathetic formula of the ancient vases, the modern gesture of the engraving and the expressive force of the mimicry of the ancient tragedy retrieved. Let us concentrate on these obvious examples, which show an inversion of Orpheus' position. The representations on the vases are clearly run from left to right. The position of Orpheus reinforces this sense since he is being attacked from the left. Since he is trying to escape from his aggressor, his body leans to the right. He keeps a precarious balance on his left knee aided by his left hand, while he tries to protect himself from the right. In the case of the Dürer's drawing and the anonymous engraving, our gaze also flows from left to right. However, because of Orpheus' position and the gestures of the two maenads, although our eye entered at the right, we must redo the path in the opposite direction to really grasp the moment represented. Indeed, the frightened gaze of Orpheus has turned toward the maenad on the right, who is the first one, going to blow at the unfortunate Orpheus with a stick-thyrsus. The moment chosen here is not the one showed on the Greek vase in Nola – the actual attack – but rather the instant that precedes it.

Through the ingenious composition of the drawing and the engraving, our eyes make a “round-trip” left-right-left-right, returning each time through the lines of force. In particular, in the engraving, the lines of the thyrsus on the right, the semi-circular form of the ground in the foreground and even the flight of the birds in the sky construct this circular trip. For Dürer's

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520 Warburg 1999a.

521 See Vaisse 1995, p. 36, the two works independently have a common origin in a composition of Mantegna.



**Fig. 5:** Albrecht Dürer, *Death of Orpheus*, 1494, Brown Feather, 289 x 225 mm, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Kupferstichkabinett Inv. Nr.: 23006 Sammlung: KK Zeichnungen, Deutschland, 15.-18. Jh. © Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk Foto: Christoph Irrgang.

drawing, the central triangular construction of the groves dominated by the tree with the phylactery, the maenad on the right and the small tree with the top strongly leaning to the right participate in the circular movement. Thus, these two constructions dramatize the violence of the scene, not by showing the actual act itself, but by using the circularity of the staging as an effect deducted from the perpetual round-trip of the gaze, inducing the repetitiveness of the blows, which will be given on both sides.

A. Posèq, who has studied this phenomenon, interprets these inversions as a deliberate choice made by Renaissance artists, in particular in this re-use of pathetic formulas. Dürer, but also Mantegna, Leonardo or





Fig. 6: Mantegna Workshop, Master of the E-series of Ferrara, *Tarocchi Cards, Death of Orpheus*, copperplate, 146 x 215 mm, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Kupferstichkabinett Inv. Nr.: 22 Sammlung: KK Druckgraphik, Italien, 15.-19. Jh. © Hamburger Kunsthalle / bpk Foto: Christoph Irrgang.

Raphael were sensitive to the interpretive changes caused by an inversion of patterns.<sup>522</sup>

From the point of view of laterality, the reading of an image from left to right has not always been obvious. These examples, taken from astrological manuscripts, show that it is the text-image correspondence that participated in the convention of reading the image as happening from left to right in our culture, while Arabic translators of the work of Ptolemaeus twist the figures so that they go in the direction of Arabic writing from right to left.<sup>523</sup>

These two reading strategies operate according to a cognitive discourse, linked to how we learned to read and write. Renaissance artists using ancient pathetic formulas, especially in the field of astrology, soon realized that the modification of meaning – the right-left inversion of a scene – implied a

522 Posèq 1996, p. 17, notes 18, 19 and 20. About the counsels of Leonardo, Alberti and also on the reversed copies of the decapitation of Goliath of Michelangelo by Raphael.

523 H. Wölfflin published in 1941 an article on the problematic of the right and the left in the image. See Wölfflin H., “Über das Recht und Links im Bilde”, in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, Basel 1941, pp. 82 ff.

different understanding. Leonardo, among others, advised others to first practice an inversion in a mirror, in order to find out which of the versions was the most effective.<sup>524</sup>

To depict a clearly narrative scene, Mantegna did not hesitate to position all the people who are in the first part of the painting to the right. The dynamics of the people and the sense of reading were thus reinforced. The space under the arcade which composes the second plane, serves here as a frame for the narration. Accustomed as it is to visual narration from left to right, the west is disturbed when it encounters, in the Renaissance, with Arabo-Persian alterity, which proposes inverse images. Visible adaptations such as those in the palazzo of Schifanoia foreshadow an understanding and an appropriation of the unusual meanings of reading, before the dramaturgy of inversion could be fully exploited, for example in *Fall of Icarus's* Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

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<sup>524</sup> Raphael copied the decapitated head of Michelangelo's Goliath from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, but inverting it. See Posëq Avigdor W.G., *Left and Right Orientation of a Pathosformel in Dürer*, in *Sources :Notes in the History of Art*, 16,1 (1996), p. 15.

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