

## THE SACROMONTE AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE SACRED IN EARLY MODERN GRANADA <sup>1</sup>

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On April 3, 1624, the Wednesday of Holy Week, as part of a protracted tour through Andalusia, Philip IV entered the city of Granada to the sound of cheers and artillery accolades. Accompanied by his favorite, the Count-Duke of Olivares, and by an extensive entourage of grandees, the monarch took up residence in the Alhambra. The next day, in the famous *Sala de Comares*, Philip performed the ritual lavation of the feet of a dozen selected paupers. The king finally ventured out of the Alhambra on Saturday. Rather than descending into the city below, Philip took the road toward Guadix to make the “station” of the Sacromonte. Beginning in 1595, this arid hill to the east above Granada was transformed into the center of one of the city’s most cherished and emblematic devotions, when two treasure hunters seeking hidden Moorish gold uncovered a complex of underground caves containing the charred remains of Granada’s patron saint, Saint Cecilio, and writings by the saint and his brother, Saint Tesifon, inscribed in Arabic on lead tablets. During his visit, “as devout as it was admirable,” the king venerated the relics of Saint Cecilio and his companions and toured the recently established Abbey of the Sacromonte. On the following day, Easter Sunday, the archbishop and representatives of the Abbey of the Sacromonte, the Chancillería, or royal appellate court, and the municipal council brought the lead books to the Alhambra for a private viewing by Philip, Olivares, and the papal nuncio. <sup>2</sup> Over the next few days, the

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<sup>2</sup> Archivo de la Abadía del Sacromonte de Granada (AASG), leg. 5, fols. 1022r-1025r.

king visited the rest of Granada's leading religious institutions -the Cathedral, the monasteries of Saints Jerome and Dominic, the Jesuit college, and the Carthusian convent outside the city walls. He finally departed the city on Wednesday, April 10.<sup>3</sup> Philip IV's itinerary through Granada provides a snapshot image of the city's sacred geography in the seventeenth century. In it, we see both an affirmation of an older sacred territory, and a confirmation of a new site expanding and transforming the contours of that territory. With the king's visit, the Sacromonte's status as a crucial site on Granada's cultural terrain, and an essential spiritual component of Granadino communal identity, was assured.

The books and relics Philip IV venerated in 1624 both echoed and reinforced a previous set of discoveries. In 1588, laborers working on the demolition of the minaret of Granada's main mosque pulled from the rubble a box containing several important relics—a bone of the protomartyr Saint Stephen, the Virgin Mary's handkerchief, and a new prophecy by Saint John the Evangelist, with a commentary in Arabic by Saint Cecilio. Like the finds from the Sacromonte, the discoveries in the minaret, or Torre Turpiana, were clever forgeries, most likely the creation of Granadino moriscos intent on cultural survival. For Granada's Old Christian majority, however, the finds became key elements in the process by which Granada, the emblematic city of Spanish Islam, was transformed into a model Christian city. The relics and the writings of their patron saint enabled Granadinos to imagine themselves as the legitimate heirs to an ancient and now restored Christian heritage. Granadinos constituted and articulated this new communal identity through a reconfiguration of their city's sacred landscape. The potent presence of the relics, the miracles which followed their recovery, and the outpouring of enthusiasm and piety with which Granadinos responded to the finds, combined to redraw the

<sup>3</sup> Henríquez de Jorquera, F., *Anales de Granada. Descripción del Reino y Ciudad de Granada. Crónica de la Reconquista (1482-1492). Sucesos de los años 1588 a 1646*, vol. 1, ed. A. Marín Ocete, Granada, 1934; reprint, ed. P. Gan Giménez, Granada, 1987, 660-661; Herrera y Sotomayor, J. de, *Jornada que su Magestad hizo a la Andalucía*, Madrid, 1624; Cabrera, J. de, *Entrada de su Magestad en la Ciudad de Granada*, Seville, 1624, summarized in Alenda y Mira, J., *Relaciones de solemnidades y fiestas públicas de España*, Madrid, 1903, 242-243; Heredia Barnuevo, D. N. de, *Místico ramillete, histórico, chronológico, panegyrico... del... illmo. y v. Sr. Don Pedro de Castro Vaca y Quiñones*, Granada, 1741, 1863; reprint, ed. M. Barrios Aguilera, Granada, 1998, 221.

map of Granada's sacred geography. The Sacromonte, a terrain once meaningful primarily to Granada's morisco minority, became a literal and metaphorical *lieu de mémoire*—a geographical site suffused with a collective memory of an honorable Christian antiquity around which the communal identity of all Granadinos could be constituted. The Sacromonte became a new center of communal devotion and communal memory, and a principal symbol of the religious aspects of post-conquest Granadino identity.

Prior to the discoveries on the Sacromonte, Granada's sacred geography was predominantly urban, circumscribed by the city's medieval walls and articulated through the network of parishes and religious houses that extended throughout the city. In the decades that followed the conquest of Granada in 1492 by the forces of Fernando and Isabel, the "Catholic Monarchs," Granada's new rulers had Christianized the existing Muslim sacred geography of mosques and shrines, appropriating them for churches, monasteries, and hermitages. By the end of the sixteenth century, more than twenty parishes and nearly forty monasteries and convents were scattered across the city, forming a dense web of potent markers of Granada's new secular and spiritual order.<sup>4</sup> The parish churches and religious houses hosted everyday devotions—the masses, baptisms, marriages, funerals, and private prayers that constituted Granadinos' more quotidian encounters with the sacred. City dwellers also worshipped at the various shrines scattered around the city. Some, for example, visited the shrines of Saint Sebastian and Saint Anthony of Padua, on the banks of the Genil river, or the increasingly popular image of Our Lady of Anguish, located in the hermitage of Saints Ursula and Susanna; others frequented the hermitage of Saint Helen, situated on the hill overlooking the Alhambra, or the nearby shrine dedicated to those Christians who had been martyred under the Muslim regime. These last two hermitages were among the oldest and most venerated Christian shrines in the city.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Among the recent works on the creation of new religious institutions in post-conquest Granada, see the essays by F. J. Martínez Medina and M. I. Pérez de Colosia in *Historia del Reino de Granada*, vol. 2, *La época morisca y la repoblación (1502-1630)*, ed. M. Barrios Aguilera, Granada, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Henríquez de Jorquera, *Anales*, vol. 1, 240, 262ff; Gallego y Burín, A., *Guía artística e histórica de la ciudad*, ed. F. J. Gallego Roca, Granada, 1996, 154, 158, 160, 191, 194.

At the center of this network, in the newest section of the growing city, were the Cathedral, begun in 1523, and the adjacent Royal Chapel, completed in 1521. In the early decades of the sixteenth century, the latter institution outshone its neighbor; most descriptions of the city devoted particular attention to the newly-constructed Royal Chapel, which was built to house the tombs of Fernando and Isabel. For example, the account of Venetian traveller Andrea Navagero, who visited Granada in 1526, related in detail the rich decor and cult of the Chapel—the marble tombs, the harmonious choir, the precious artwork—pausing only briefly to note the Cathedral under construction next door.<sup>6</sup> By the middle of the century, however, most representations of Granada figured the dome of the still-incomplete Cathedral as the spiritual center of the city. In his Latin panegyric to Granada, Juan de Vilches, a cleric from nearby Antequera writing in the 1530s, characterized the Royal Chapel as merely adjoining the Cathedral, the geographical and spiritual heart of the city. Sebastián Martínez's 1550 description praised both institutions but gave a greater spiritual role to the Cathedral:

What shines most there [the Royal Chapel] / are the entombed kings / who are there enclosed / as those who well deserve them / since a city with such growth / with kings and in such a structure / is not to be found in all of Spain ... The Cathedral church / where Moorish men and women used to walk / there they say the hours / of the divine mystery / since another such archbishop / and who is so enlightening / is not to be found in all of Spain.<sup>7</sup>

Visual representations of the city likewise stressed the spiritual primacy of the Cathedral. In the stylized panoramic views of Joris Hoefnagel, a Flemish artist who visited the city between 1563 and

<sup>6</sup> Navagero, A., "Viaje por España," in *Viajes de extranjeros por España y Portugal*, vol. 1, ed. J. García Mercadal, Madrid, 1952, 857-858.

<sup>7</sup> "Lo que en ella más floresce / son los Reyes sepultados / que en ella están cerrados / como quien bien los meresce / pues ciudad que tanto cresce / con Reyes y en tal cavaña / no se halla en toda España... la yglesia catedral / donde yvan moros y moras / allí se dicen las horas / por misterio divinal / pues Arçobispo otro tal / y que tanto desengaña / no se halla en toda España." This passage comes from a *villancico* appended to a longer verse description of the city. Martínez, S., *Las partidas de la gran Ciudad de Granada en metro o en manera de perque... con un villancico*, n.p., 1550. On this poem, see Orozco Pardo, J. L., *Christianópolis: urbanismo y contrarreforma en la Granada del 600* (Granada, 1985), 64-70, 155-159. On Juan de Vilches, see Vilches, J. de, "De urbis Granatae rebus memorialibus," in Luque Moreno, J., *Granada en el siglo XVI. Juan de Vilches y otros testimonios de la época*, Granada, 1994, 93-100, 260.

1565, the Alhambra and the Cathedral dominate the skyline. As was common in early modern city views, Hoefnagel stressed the size of the Cathedral in relation to the surrounding buildings, and by extension, its dominance over the other churches marking the urban landscape.<sup>8</sup> Like Seville's Giralda tower, the Cathedral and the Alhambra stood together as iconic markers identifying the city as Granada.<sup>9</sup>

As the institutional center of the Granadino Church, the Cathedral had an important role as the official heart of Granada's religious life. Its miracle-working images—the Virgin de la Antigua (a “Visigothic” image symbolic of Granada's recent conquest and return to the Christian fold) and a renowned statue of Christ at the Column—attracted the veneration of the faithful, who also came to the Cathedral for daily masses, weekly sermons, annual and extraordinary festivities, and other functions.<sup>10</sup> However, prior to the discoveries in the Torre Turpiana, the Cathedral had no relics that could compete with the famous collection of holy bodies housed in the Royal Chapel.<sup>11</sup> This collection originated in a donation from Queen Isabel; and by the late sixteenth century, the Chapel's sacred treasure rivalled that of the Escorial. Highlights included fragments of the True Cross, thorns from the crown worn by Christ, dried flecks of his blood, and milk and hairs from the Virgin Mary. The treasure also included thousands of lesser relics, as well as the royal remains of the Catholic

<sup>8</sup> Gil Sanjuán, J. and Sánchez López, J. A., “Iconografía y visión histórico-literaria de Granada a mediados del quinientos,” *Chronica Nova*, 23 (1996), 101. The drawings of Anton van den Wyngaerde, who visited Granada in 1567, were idealized views but still truer to life than those of Hoefnagel, who was more concerned with creating dramatic local landscapes which captured the general spirit of a place rather than its topographical details. On Wyngaerde, see *Spanish Cities of the Golden Age: The Views of Anton van den Wyngaerde*, ed. R. L. Kagan, Berkeley, 1989. On Hoefnagel, see Nuti, L., “The Mapped Views by Georg Hoefnagel: The Merchant's Eye, the Humanist's Eye,” *Word and Image*, 2 (1988), 545-570.

<sup>9</sup> See Marcos Martín, A., “Percepciones materiales e imaginario urbano en la España moderna,” in *Imágenes de la diversidad. El mundo urbano en la Corona de Castilla (s. XVI-XVIII)*, ed. J. I. Fortea Pérez, Santander, 1997, 24-25. On representations of Seville, see *Iconografía de Sevilla, 1400-1650: tomo primero*, Madrid, 1988; *Iconografía de Sevilla, 1650-1790*, Seville, 1989.

<sup>10</sup> On the statues of Christ at the Column and Nuestra Señora de la Antigua, see Henríquez de Jorquera, *Anales*, vol. 1, 65-66.

<sup>11</sup> Prior to the discoveries in the Torre Turpiana, the Cathedral chapter apparently sought to redress the situation and supply itself with relics by petitioning the Vatican for a holy body. AASG, leg. 4, fol. 1132r.

Monarchs.<sup>12</sup> Together, these saintly and regal bodies constituted potent markers that designated the Royal Chapel as an important locus of spiritual and secular power within Granada. Securing for itself the relics recovered from the Torre Turpiana in 1588 strengthened the primacy of the Cathedral over the Royal Chapel, bolstering its position as Granada's sacred center. The Marian relic in particular became one of the Cathedral's most precious treasures, and was frequently exhibited on solemn occasions and paraded through the streets on major festivities or in times of national or local distress.<sup>13</sup>

While the Torre Turpiana finds reinforced the Cathedral's prominence within the city walls, the discoveries on the Sacromonte effected a reconfiguration of Granada's spiritual geography by establishing a new sacred center beyond the city walls. For adherents, the holiness of the hillside and the objects found there were so manifest as to easily sway the most stubborn skeptic: "Seeing the mountain, the place, the caverns, the fire, the books and relics," argued an anonymous apologist in 1617, "the mind convinces itself and surrenders to this fact, that it is true. Let them come see it; all will surrender."<sup>14</sup> Those who did come and see it thereby reinforced the sanctity of the terrain. The Sacromonte was rendered sacred not only by the relics, but by the passionate and pious response of Granadinos of all social stations—"not only the masses," according to Archbishop Pedro Vaca de Castro y Quiñones, "but also all the Chancillería and the most dignified [people], and all the religious orders, and all the other cities."<sup>15</sup> Devotees of the new discoveries hurried through the city streets and took to the countryside to see the holy caves. Juan

<sup>12</sup> Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), Patronato Eclesiástico, Memoriales y expedientes, leg. 104. See also the list compiled during a *visita* in 1590: AGS, Patronato Eclesiástico, Visitas, leg. 282, fol. 341ff.

<sup>13</sup> See Paracuellos Cabeza de Vaca, L., *Triunfales celebraciones, que en aparatos magestuosos consagró religiosa la ciudad de Granada, a honor de la Pureza Virginal de María Santísima en sus desagravios, a quien devota las dedica esta Ciudad, en todo Ilustre, en todo Grande*, Granada, 1640; Henríquez de Jorquera, *Anales*, vol. 2, 856. For some more routine exhibitions of the relics, see Archivo de la Catedral de Granada (ACG), Libros de Actas, vol. 9, fols. 274v, 283r (1601); ACG, Libros de Actas, vol. 10, fol. 98r (1611).

<sup>14</sup> "El entendimiento se convence y rinde a este hecho, que es verdad, viendo el Monte, el lugar, las Cavernas, el incendio, los libros, y reliquias: Vayan a verlo, todos se rendirán..." Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid (BN) ms 6637, fol. 200r.

<sup>15</sup> "no es la Plebe sola sino toda la Chancillería y los muy graves, y todas las Religiones, y todas las Ciudades de fuera." AASG, leg. 5, 186.

Ximénez, a peasant testifying before the panel of inquiry called by the Archbishop to ascertain the authenticity of the relics, recalled that “The people were so excited with joy that because of the crowds one could pass through the streets only with difficulty.”<sup>16</sup> Felipe Navarro, a beneficed priest of the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul, declared himself astonished at the “modesty and devotion” of the people “who go to visit the Sacromonte... with the greatest devotion, both men and women, and many of them [the women] go barefoot.”<sup>17</sup> “In Madrid they neither see nor know,” Archbishop Castro told the papal nuncio, “the devotion and tears of the people, or the piety with which they venerate these saints, or the great mass of people who come to these caverns barefoot [and] weeping.”<sup>18</sup>

The erection of large crosses upon the hillside soon rendered the holiness of the Sacromonte visible to locals and visitors alike. The first of the crosses, raised by persons unknown, appeared soon after news of the discoveries became public. Granada’s institutions, guilds, and confraternities soon followed suit; groups such as weavers, chandlers, ironmongers, tavern keepers, milkmen, Chancillería officials, Cathedral choir boys, and notaries carried crosses to the mountain in elaborate processions, often with military honor guards as escorts.<sup>19</sup> Some of the brotherhoods established annual pilgrimages and celebrations at their crosses on the Sacromonte. In the 1620s and 1630s, for example, the city’s gardeners celebrated a festival on the Sacromonte that included a mock military skirmish; afterwards, noted a disapproving Jesuit chronicler, “they divided up into troops of comrades in order to return to their homes, visiting first, as usual, some shrines of their scanty devotion.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> “El pueblo estaban [*sic*] alborotado de contento que con dificultad podía passar por las calles según el concurso de gente que avía.” AASG, C49, fol. 13r.

<sup>17</sup> “... que va a visitar el monte santo... en grandissima devoción así ombres como mugeres y muchas dellas... descalzas.” AASG, C49, fols. 280-281.

<sup>18</sup> “Ni en Madrid veen ni saben la devoción y lágrimas del pueblo, ni la piedad con que venera a estos santos, ni el gran concurso de gente que acude a las cavernas descalzos, [y] llorando.” AASG, leg. 5, fol. 186r; Alonso, C., *Los apócrifos del Sacromonte (Granada)*, Valladolid, 1979, 98.

<sup>19</sup> For a full description of the processions, see Centurión y Córdoba, A., *Información para la historia del Sacro monte llamado de Valparaíso y antiguamente illipulitano, junto a Granada*, Granada, 1632.

<sup>20</sup> “Hacían los hortelanos una fiesta muy regocijada a una cruz que tenían y avían puesto en el Sacro Monte, y para mayor regocijo los moços alentados ordenaron una

Attentive to the dictum that the *vox populi* is also the *vox Dei*, defenders and devotees often pointed to Granadinos' spontaneous response to the discoveries as proof of the holiness of the Sacromonte. More important than such popular devotions, however, were the miracles that, in the weeks and months that followed the discoveries, further established the Sacromonte as hallowed ground, a place marked by saintly power.<sup>21</sup> Many unaccountable cures of bodily and mental illness, supernatural rescues from peril, and other eruptions of the divine into worldly existence testified to the authenticity of the finds and the sanctity of the site. The miracles began on April 30, 1595, when a plaque documenting Saint Cecilio's martyrdom was discovered on the hill; that same day, a young crippled girl invoked the aid of the saint, and left the caves healed. In another instance, thirteen witnesses testified to the investigating panel about the miraculous cure worked on Leonor Bravo, the daughter of an official in the Chancillería. Bedridden and unable to walk for four years, Leonor was carried to the Sacromonte on May 9, 1595; after praying in the caves, she was able to get up and walk home. In another case occurring a few days later, María Rodríguez and her child fell into a mill stream and were swept into the wheel; she cried out for the aid of Saint Cecilio and his companions, and both mother and child were miraculously preserved from death.<sup>22</sup> Apologists pointed to such miracles as evidence for the authenticity of the relics, and, by extension, for the sacredness of the terrain of the Sacromonte.

Marvelous cures and popular devotion were not, however, the only evidence for the sanctity of the Sacromonte; the dossier of the official inquiry into the discoveries also includes many depositions about signs seen *before* the relics were revealed. These presages consisted primarily of strange lights seen upon the mountain—some alone, some in procession. Witnesses from all walks of life, from shepherds to tradesmen to Archbishop Castro himself, described

soldadesca y sacaron una compañía de muy lucida gente, y después de aver cumplido con su paseo dejando la vanderá se dividieron en tropas de camaradas para irse a recoger a sus casas, visitando primero, como suelen, algunas hermitas [taverns?] de su poca devoción." *Historia del Colegio de San Pablo, Granada 1554-1765*, transcribed J. de Béthencourt, ed. E. Olivares, Granada, 1991, 121.

<sup>21</sup> On saintly *praesentia* demonstrated through displays of *potentia*, see Brown, P., *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, Chicago, 1981, 107ff.

<sup>22</sup> AASG, C49, fols. 69-99, 102-114.



mysterious resplendences either at the place where the caves were later uncovered, or moving toward it.<sup>23</sup> Some, like the silk merchant Diego de Angulo, a resident of the parish of Saint Mary Magdalene, claimed to have seen strange lights travelling out from the Albaicín—the neighborhood nearest the Sacromonte—towards the uninhabited hillside only a few months before the discoveries. Similarly, the morisco translator Miguel de Luna reported that some eight months prior to the revelations, while recovering from illness in his home near the Sacromonte, he twice witnessed a great light reflected on the hillside across the valley, opposite the Sacromonte. Neither lightning nor a comet, the light “seemed to flash like an eagle taking flight before a big fire.”<sup>24</sup> Others reported resplendences occurring years before the discoveries. Juana de Loaysa, the elderly prioress of the Dominican convent of Saint Catherine of Zafra, together with several of her nuns, testified to having seen strange lights on the mountain many times over the previous sixteen years; Francisco de Molina, a beneficed priest of Saint Mary of the Alhambra, claimed to have seen such phenomena repeatedly during the last twenty-five years.<sup>25</sup> The report of such portentous luminous apparitions strengthened the case for the relics’ authenticity, establishing the Sacromonte as a place of supernatural power *before* the discoveries.

Grounded in time, the Sacromonte was also grounded in tradition. The marvelous lights tied the previously unremarkable hill to existing local legends about Saint Cecilio and the location of his body. While local tradition held that Saint Cecilio’s resting place was lost and unknown, his body was thought to lie somewhere near Granada, perhaps near the Roman ruins in the nearby hills known as the Sierra Elvira. One witness, the shoemaker Francisco Gómez, reported that, while visiting the Descalced Carmelite monastery near the Alhambra one night in 1593, he saw across the plain on the distant Sierra Elvira a luminous procession similar to those he had also seen on the Sacromonte. One companion suggested that “it is the body of Saint

<sup>23</sup> Castro claimed that on several occasions during his tenure as president of the Chancillería, he had seen processions of lights upon the mountain. Centurión y Córdoba, *Información*, fol. 57v.

<sup>24</sup> “... parecía que había visos como si una águila alease delante de un grande fuego.” AASG, C49, fol. 28v-29r, 31r.

<sup>25</sup> AASG, C49, fol. 30r, 58v-62v.

Cecilio, which shows itself around those parts.”<sup>26</sup> Other witnesses asserted that Saint Cecilio’s body lay somewhere within the city of Granada. When questioned about the legends surrounding the location of the saint’s body, Cathedral canon Diego Maldonado replied that the common tradition, which he had learned from his relatives and from older residents of the city, was that the body was in Granada, “and this is as clear as the noonday sun.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, within Granada’s majority Old Christian population there does not seem to have existed any tradition linking the saint to the Sacromonte—that is, to the specific place where his relics were found; instead, the connection was made retrospectively through the strange luminescences reported to have been seen there. The hill seems to have been little valued prior to the finds. The board of inquiry asked many witnesses what they knew about the site and whether they knew of caves existing there before the discoveries. Most respondents replied that they knew nothing about the hill, nor had they ever heard of any caves there before 1595.<sup>28</sup> Their descriptions of the Valparaíso, as the area of the Sacromonte was known before the discovery of the relics and the lead books, tended to stress the barrenness of the terrain, unfit even for livestock and producing nothing but wild thyme and other herbs.<sup>29</sup>

Some testimony, however, suggests that for Granada’s morisco minority, the Sacromonte had a longstanding reputation as a sacred site. Juan Trincado de Montoya, a resident of the Albaicín parish of San Juan, reported that, before the morisco uprising of 1568, the site where the caves were later revealed was known as for its healing powers. Friends and family would bring articles of clothing of sick persons to the site and then return them to their owners in the hopes of obtaining a cure.<sup>30</sup> The constable (*alguacil*) Luis de Contreras

<sup>26</sup> “es el Cuerpo de S. Cicilio que se demuestra hazia aquella parte.” AASG, C49, fol. 35v.

<sup>27</sup> “y esto es claro como el sol de medio día.” AASG, C49, fol. 178r-179r. Maldonado mentions a hermitage dedicated to Saint Cecilio, but I cannot verify or locate this shrine. He may be referring to the parish church of Saint Cecilio, located in the Antequeruela neighborhood.

<sup>28</sup> E.g., AASG, C49, fol. 16r, 27r, 33v, 36r, 38r-46v, 48v, 50r, 52r, 57v, 58v, 59v, 246-257.

<sup>29</sup> E.g., AASG, C49, fol. 42v-43v.

<sup>30</sup> AASG, C49, fol. 46v. Similar cures were sought at a spring at the foot of the hill, known to Granada’s moriscos and Old Christians alike for its healing powers. Bermúdez de Pedraza, F., *Antigüedad y excelencias de Granada*, Madrid, 1608; reprint, Granada, 1981, fol. 13v.

testified that he had heard from a morisca folk healer that herbs collected from the same location were particularly potent remedies. Moreover, according to the constable, old moriscos had told him that there had been a *rábita*, or Muslim hermitage, on the hill, which they called “Ravine of the Christians” and “Hill of the Burned One.”<sup>31</sup> Other witnesses before the board of inquiry corroborated and elaborated on these accounts. Salvador de Mendoza, a morisco, informed the panel that while he had never heard of any caves on the hillside, about fifty years before, his late uncle had told him that the ruins then standing on the mountain were the remains of a *rábita* called “Abenfodail,” constructed by a reformed bandit once much feared as a rapist. Further up the slope, his uncle told him, on the site of the holy caves, had been another hermitage called “*Rábita del Maxoroch*,” or “Hermitage of the Burned One,” “but they did not tell him why they called it the Hermitage of the Burned, nor if the person who had been burned was Moor or Christian, nor whether burned for good or ill, nor did he ask.”<sup>32</sup> Two other witnesses, Juan Fernández Megía and Alonso Melgarejo, both elderly residents of the Albaicín parish of San Juan de los Reyes, testified that the moriscos had called the area where the caves now stood “*Andacachene*,” or “Gully of the Christians.”<sup>33</sup> Hieronymo de Escobar, a beneficed priest in the parish of Saint Gregory the Great, reported that

the common people native to the city, the moriscos, commonly called that hill “*Gar Almahroc*,” which means “burned cave” or “the cave of the burned one,” the reason for which he does not know, and that the morisco laborers and peasants, natives of the kingdom, called it “*Raz Alnar*,” which means “the hill or head of fire,” because the peasants said that they often saw fires and resplendences there at night... and that the Old Christians conducted no business on this mountain, and there was never livestock on this mountain, nor did [the livestock] rest or sleep there.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> “cañada de los Xianos,” “cerro del quemado.” AASG, C49, fol. 50r.

<sup>32</sup> “pero que no le dixerón porque la llamavan hermita del quemado, ni si avía sido moro o christiano el que avía sido quemado, ni si quemado por bien o por mal, ni lo preguntó.” AASG, C49, fol. 36r-37r.

<sup>33</sup> “Barranco de los Christianos.” AASG, C49, fols. 39v, 41r.

<sup>34</sup> “llamavan aquel cerro todo comunmente la gente bulgar de la ciudad naturales moriscos *Gar Almahroc*, que quiere dezir la queba quemada o la queba del quemado, el por qué no lo sabe, y que los labradores y gente del Campo naturales del Reyno moriscos le llamavan *Raz Alnar*, que quiere dezir el cerro o cabeza del fuego porque deçían la gente del campo que veían muchas vezes allí fuegos y Resplandores de noche... y que por este monte no tenían tracto los christianos viejos y que nunca uvo en este Monte ganado, ni Reparava ni dormía en él.” AASG, C49, fol. 38r.

Alonso Flores, an elderly morisco gardener, confirmed that the morisco taboo against grazing livestock on the Sacromonte was due to the rumor that the mountain contained “*Zulaba*, which in our language means saints.”<sup>35</sup> None of the witnesses interviewed had ever heard of caves on the Sacromonte, though two witnesses did mention that there had been caves both at the foot of the hill and further up the slope, above the site where the relics and lead books were found. Cristobál de Palacios, a morisco, testified that the upper caverns had once been home to a Muslim hermit called Hábito.<sup>36</sup>

The testimony collected by the board of inquiry into the authenticity of the relics suggests that the Sacromonte’s status as a locus of the sacred had deep roots in Granada’s morisco community. The Sacromonte was no mere barren hillside; it was charged both with myth and with the memory of a sacred geography quite different from that imagined by their Old Christian neighbors. A century after the conquest of the city, and some twenty-five years after the exile of most of the minority population in the wake of the Revolt of the Alpujarras, the remnant of Granada’s moriscos recalled a hermitage or shrine long since vanished and a terrain made sacred by the hidden presence of holy bodies, perhaps Christian, perhaps Muslim—the *zulaba* referred to by Alonso Flores.<sup>37</sup>

The witness testimony offers several leads for possible identifications of the name and nature of the remembered sacred site. Witness Salvador de Mendoza’s hermitage “Abenfodail” appears in a 1503 list of the *habices*—urban and rural lands dedicated to the upkeep of medieval Granada’s mosques and community institutions, later confiscated by the Christian authorities after the Muslim uprising of 1499—as a rábita named “Ibn Fodayl.” While a list from 1505 locates the rábita of Ibn Fodayl within the city walls, in the Axares sector of the Albaicín, the 1503 list of *habices* situates the hermitage “upon the hills of the Darro [River]”—a general description that includes the Sacromonte and its environs.<sup>38</sup> “Andacachene” offers

<sup>35</sup> “los llamavan ellos en su lengua Zulaba, que en nuestra lengua quiere dezir sanctos.” AASG, C49, fol. 16r.

<sup>36</sup> AASG, C49, fol. 46v, 48v, 50r.

<sup>37</sup> The meaning of this word remains unclear, but may be *sulahā*, saints.

<sup>38</sup> “ençima de la syerra de Darro,” quoted in Hernández Benito, P., “Toponimia y sociedad: la ciudad de Granada a fines de la Edad Media,” *Cuadernos de la Alhambra* 28 (1992): 253-270. See also Seco de Lucena Paredes, L., “De toponimia granadina. Sobre

greater difficulties. The name may appear in the lists of *habices* as “Handachaçena,” a piece of confiscated land assigned for the upkeep of the church in Cenes de la Vega, a small town on the Genil River, not far from Granada.<sup>39</sup> While the early sixteenth-century *habices* lists do not specify the exact location of the property, a 1572 inventory of confiscated morisco properties in Cenes de la Vega alludes to a site called “Handacacenegi,” on the left side of the river, “at the beginning of the route to Granada”—which is nowhere near the Sacromonte. Emilio de Santiago Simón suggests that the name may be derived from the Arabic *Khandaq al-sinhājī*, a place name marking the ravine as the property of the Berber tribe of the same name.<sup>40</sup> The name does not seem to have any connection with Christians.

The place name “Rábita del Maxoroch” or “Gar Almahroc”—that is, *Gār al-Maḥrūq*, Cave of the Burned One—is likewise puzzling. In his account of his visit to Andalusia in 1350, the famous traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa describes a visit to the sufi leader Abū ‘Alī ‘Umar, “son of the pious shaikh, the saint Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad b. al-Maḥrūq (the burnt),” in whose lodge or *zāwiya* outside the city he stayed for several days.<sup>41</sup> Could the Gar Almahroc described by the witnesses in 1595 be the sufi lodge visited by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa?<sup>42</sup> The question is complicated by conflicting references to similarly-named or related sites within Granada. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa also relates a visit to another, different *zāwiya* of a member of the same eminent family. This

el viaje de Ibn Baṭṭūṭa al reino de Granada,” *Al-Andalus*, XVI (1951), 84. Respondent Salvador de Mendoza’s tale about the repentance of Ibn Fodail may reflect hagiographic accounts of the bandit saint al-Fuḍail ibn ‘Iyād, who died in 803 AD in Mecca. See *Vita e detti di santi musulmani*, ed. V. Vacca (Torino, 1968), 115-117.

<sup>39</sup> Villanueva Rico, C., *Habices de las mezquitas de la ciudad de Granada y sus alquerías* (Madrid, 1961), 228.

<sup>40</sup> “principio de termino que parte por Granada.” Quoted in Santiago Simón, E. de, “Algunos datos sobre la posesión de los bienes raíces moriscos en el lugar de Cenes de la Vega de Granada (1572),” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 22 (1973), 159.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354*, vol. IV, ed. C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti, trans. H. A. R. Gibb, C. F. Beckingham, London, 1994, 943. See Lévi-Provençal, E., “Le voyage d’Ibn Battūta dans le royaume de Grenade (1350),” in *Mélanges offerts à William Marçais*, Paris, 1950, 205-224. The Maḥrūq clan was well-known in Granada. One member, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Maḥrūq (d. 1328), became vizir to the kingdom’s Nasrid rulers. Harvey, L.P., *Islamic Spain, 1250-1500*, Chicago, 1990, 185-187.

<sup>42</sup> According to Torres Balbás, L., “Rábitas hispanomusulmanas,” *Al-Andalus*, 13 (1948), 481, late medieval and early modern Arabic speakers in Iberia tended to treat the terminology of *rábita* and *zāwiya* as interchangeable.

*zāwiya*, called al-Lidjām, or the Bridle, was located “at the top of the suburb of Najd outside Granada and adjoining Mount Sabīka (the Ingot).”<sup>43</sup> Luis Seco de Lucena Paredes has pinpointed the location of a different *rābita* called *rābitat* al-Wazīr al-Maḥrūq, or the *rābita* of the Vizir al-Maḥrūq, within the city in the Najd district, now known as the Realejo.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, Fr. José de Sigüenza, a sixteenth-century chronicler of the Hieronymite Order, records the existence of a *rābita* called “la ermita del quemado,” upon the foundations of which was founded Granada’s Hieronymite monastery shortly after the conquest of the city. This monastery was located on the other side of the city, outside the city walls.<sup>45</sup> Finally, a *rābita* called “Maharoc” appears in the lists of *habices*; but its location is unspecified.<sup>46</sup>

These multiple and contradictory references suggest that there may have been more than one site in Granada associated with the Maḥrūq name. However, it may also be that the appellation is tied not to the Banū Maḥrūq, but to the name’s parallel connection to burning and fire. The name “Raz Alnar,” or “Rās al-Nār,” mountain of fire, appears to be tied to the hillside’s longstanding reputation for strange lights and resplendences at night. In the Christian tradition, mysterious lights were common signs that indicated ground sanctified by the blood and bodies of martyrs. Perhaps the best known Iberian example of such luminous markers were the supernatural lights that, in 813, revealed the location of the remains of the apostle James, patron saint of Spain. In early modern Andalusia, witnesses in Córdoba in 1575 saw similar illuminations indicating the locations of

<sup>43</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battūta*, 944. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited Abū ‘l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. al-Maḥrūq, nephew to Abū ‘Alī ‘Umar. According to the fourteenth-century Granadino historian Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the nephew was the author of a now lost mystical treatise, *Nukat al-Nāji*. Viguera Molins, M. J., “La religión y el derecho,” in *El reino nazarí de Granada (1232-1492)*. *Sociedad, vida y cultura*, ed. M. J. Viguera Molins, Madrid, 2000, 172.

<sup>44</sup> Seco de Lucena Paredes, “De toponimia granadina”; *id.*, *La Granada nazarí del siglo XV*, Granada, 1975, 160-161.

<sup>45</sup> Torres Balbás, “Rábitas hispanomusulmanas”, 481-482. Following Sigüenza, seventeenth-century historian Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza notes that the *rābita* “avia sido tres vezes quemada de Christianos, y otras tantas reedificada por el Morabito; pero la ultima fue quemado él y la hermita estando el campo de los Reyes en Santa Fe, y fue en el sitio donde aora está el Hospital de san Iuan de Dios.” Bermúdez de Pedraza, F., *Historia eclesiástica. Principios, y progressos de la ciudad, y religión católica de Granada*, Granada, 1638; reprint, Granada, 1989, fol. 174v.

<sup>46</sup> Hernández Benito, “Toponimia y sociedad.”

the relics of saints Fausto, Ianuario, and Marcial; in Arjona in the 1630s, dozens of townspeople reported the appearance of strange lights marking the site of the martyrs Bonosus and Maximian<sup>47</sup>. Granadino historian Pedro Guerra de Lorca reported that he himself had seen the marvelous lights that descended from the sky each May to illuminate the place in ancient Acci (Guadix) where Saint Torcuato had suffered martyrdom.<sup>48</sup>

Muslims too associated supernatural lights with the graves of saints and prophets. Across the Muslim world, saints and prophets both living and dead exercised *baraka*, or spiritual power. After death, the tomb became the center of the saint's continuing power, revealed in portents and miracles. In medieval Muslim hagiography, mysterious illuminations commonly announced the locations of lost and forgotten holy tombs, revealing loci of *baraka*. A bright light shining out of a grave near the town of Biskra, in northeastern Algeria, revealed the site to be the tomb of the prophet Khālid.<sup>49</sup> Late medieval Egyptian guides to the holy tombs in Cairo's famous al-Qarāfa graveyard related many stories of holy tombs revealed by strange illuminations. A column of light marked the lost tomb of al-Sayyida al-Sharīfa Maryam, for example; whereas the tomb of the unknown saint known as "ṣāhib al-nūr," the "possessor of the light," was indicated by the shaft of light that marked his tomb on Friday nights. Mysterious candles and lamps marked the graves of still other unknown saints.<sup>50</sup> Even some opponents of the cult of saints, like the reforming Hanbalite scholar Ibn Taimiyya (d. 1328), admitted that "the miracles of prophets and saints, such as the descent of lights and angels upon their graves,... these things are all true."<sup>51</sup> Similar tales of

<sup>47</sup> On Córdoba, see Roa, M. de, *Flos Sanctorum. Fiestas, i santos naturales de la Ciudad de Cordova* (Sevilla, 1615). On Arjona, *Relación y memorial sacado de las ynformaciones que se an hecho, acerca de los prodigios, y maravillas que se an visto al pie de la muralla y torres del Alacaçar de la Villa de Arjona, Diocesis de Jaen, y en los huessos y cenizas que alli se hallaron* (Jaen, 1630); Rus Puerta, F., *Historia eclesiástica del Reino y Obispado de Jaen* (Jaén, 1634).

<sup>48</sup> BN M, ms 1499: Guerra de Lorca, P., *La Historia de la Vida y martyrio de Sant Cécilio y sus seis compañeros llamados los Apóstoles de Nuestra Hespaña*, fol. 265r-267r. Internal evidence suggests this text was written some time between 1581 and 1588.

<sup>49</sup> Goldziher, I. "Veneration of Saints in Islam," in *Muslim Studies*, vol. 2, ed. S. M. Stern, London, 1971, 321.

<sup>50</sup> Taylor, C. C., *In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyāra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt*, Leiden, 1999, 55.

saintly lights were told in early twentieth-century Morocco. The shrines of Sidi Boqnadel and Sidi al-Mahfi shone at night, as did trees associated with the saints Sidi l-Hosni and Sidi Ahmed Marrui. In Dukkala, “*ignis fatuus* in a desert place is often taken for the sign of an unknown saint having died there; the people make a *mzâra* on the spot and worship the saint under the name of Sîdi l-Grib, ‘My lord the Stranger’.”<sup>52</sup>

Across the Muslim world, such holy graves and other sites associated with saints were the focus of *ziyâra*, local pilgrimages or visits by pious individuals. In medieval Granada, too, local people regularly visited the many shrines and hermitages outside the city.<sup>53</sup> During his stay in Granada, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited one “of renowned sanctity,” located on the nearby Sierra Elvira—precisely the place where witnesses reported seeing mysterious lights nearly two hundred and fifty years later.<sup>54</sup> Their testimony, like that of the other respondents before the panel of inquiry, strongly suggests that, long before the discovery of Saint Cecilio’s body, the Sacromonte was known to moriscos as a locus of the sacred, a place infused with saintly *baraka*. The witnesses’ depositions suggest that the hillside was remembered as the site of some kind of religious structure, perhaps associated with a Sufi sage whose name is now lost. Could it also have been the site of a holy tomb? Burial practices in medieval al-Andalus generally called for interment either in public cemeteries or on private land in or near the cemeteries, and none of Granada’s Muslim cemeteries had been located on the Sacromonte.<sup>55</sup> However,

<sup>51</sup> Memon, M. U., *Ibn Taimīya’s Struggle Against Popular Religion: With an Annotated Translation of his Kitāb iqtidā’ as-sirāt al-mustaḳīm mukhālafat aṣḥāb al-jahīm*, The Hague, 1976, 294.

<sup>52</sup> Westermarck, E., *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, vol. 1, London, 1926; reprint, New Hyde Park, NY, 1968, 161-162. Equivalent beliefs are found in hagiographical accounts of Jewish saints from Morocco. See Ben-Ami, I., *Culte des saints et pèlerinages judéo-musulmans au Maroc* (Paris, 1990), 29-30.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Correspondencia diplomática entre Granada y Fez (siglo XIV): extractos de la “Raihana alcuttab”* (mss. de la Biblioteca del Escorial), ed. M. Gaspar Remiro, Granada, 1916, 17.

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battūta*, 943; AASG, C49, fol. 35v; leg. 3, pt. 1, fols. 207-230.

<sup>55</sup> See Fierro, M., “El espacio de los muertos: fetuas andalusíes sobre tumbas y cementerios,” in *L’urbanisme dans l’Occident musulman au Moyen Âge. Aspects juridiques*, ed. P. Cressier, M. Fierro, and J.-P. Van Staëvel, Madrid, 2000, 153-189. The panel of inquiry was very concerned with the possibility that the Sacromonte had been the



while most saintly sepulchers were found in cemeteries, it was not unknown for venerated holy men to be buried in or near the rábitas associated with them.<sup>56</sup> The evidence is too fragmentary to support any definitive identifications; at the very least, the hill's curious morisco names and its reputation for healing powers and mysterious lights hint at a reputation as a locus of the holy that long predated the discoveries of 1595.

The witnesses' depositions situate the Sacromonte as part of a lost Muslim sacred geography, existing now only in legend and memory. The site's morisco names and legend probably account for the forgers' decision to present Saint Cecilio's martyrdom as one by fire, and to confect his relics as the calcified remains of an incinerated body. Just as the fabricators of the lead books and relics sought to preserve morisco culture by coating it with the veneer of Catholicism, so too did their choice of location both invoke and preserve the traditional holiness of the mountain—at the cost of transforming it from a sacred site meaningful primarily to the morisco population to the center of an Old Christian cult. The division between the two communities is not absolute; the accounts of luminous apparitions and Hierónimo de Escobar's reference to Old Christian avoidance of the hill offer tantalizing clues to a possible shared body of popular superstitions attached to the Sacromonte before the discoveries. With the recovery of the relics, however, the character of the site was fundamentally transformed. The saint metamorphosed from a mysterious, hidden, and unnamed absence to a tangible presence, named and known; the hill's wonder-working powers came now not from the *baraka* of a Muslim holy man, but instead through the *potentia* of Saint Cecilio, made present in and emanating from his physical remains.<sup>57</sup>

site of Muslim burials. Witnesses were asked whether they knew of any graves on the site; most answered no. One respondent, however, offered other possibilities. Hierónimo de Escobar (cited above) testified that during the uprising of 1568, rebel moriscos had unearthed their dead from the parochial cemeteries and reburied them on the mountain. For the text of his testimony, see García Pedraza, A., *Actitudes ante la muerte en la Granada del Siglo XVI. Los moriscos que quisieron salvarse*, vol. 2, Granada, 2001, 636, 1007.

<sup>56</sup> E.g. Caro Baroja, J., *Los moriscos del Reino de Granada: ensayo de historia social*, 5th ed., Madrid, 2000, 130.

<sup>57</sup> Aigle, D. and Mayeur-Jaouen, C., "Miracle et *karāma*. Une approche comparatiste", in *Miracle et Karāma*, ed. D. Aigle, Turnhout, 2000, 24-27. For an example, see Bermúdez de Pedraza, *Historia eclesiástica de Granada*, fol. 38r-v; also fol. 29r, fol. 34v.

These redefinitions effected a reconfiguration of Granada's sacred geography, as the Sacromonte became the extramural complement to the intramural sacred terrain dominated by the Cathedral. As the sixteenth century gave way to the seventeenth, the Arabic toponyms and the rapidly vanishing world they recalled were forgotten, and the Castilian nomenclature shifted from Valparaíso to Sacromonte, a name redolent of a new memory of an ancient Christian past. What had been, for the Old Christian population, a relatively undifferentiated and amorphous *space* became instead a specific and specifically Christian *place*—a locus of memory and local significance.<sup>58</sup> Once sacred to Muslim Granada, now sacred to Catholic Granada, the Sacromonte became a key site in the city's symbolic landscape, a literal *lieu de mémoire*.<sup>59</sup> Throughout the early modern era, the Sacromonte stood as a primary symbol of the religious dimensions of Granadino identity. The hillside became the origin of Granadino history, and an obligatory touchstone for all would-be chroniclers of the city's past.<sup>60</sup> Lauded by poets both native and non-native alike, the Sacromonte became for visitors like king Philip IV an obligatory stop on the itinerary of important local monuments and institutions.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> See, among others, Tuan, Y.-F., *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, Minneapolis, 1977; Norton, W., *Explorations in the Understanding of Landscape: A Cultural Geography*, New York, 1989, 119ff.

<sup>59</sup> Nora, P., "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," *Representations*, 26 (1989): 7-25; *Les lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols., ed. P. Nora, Paris, 1984-1992. A revised and abridged version has also been published in English: Nora, P., ed., *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 3 vols., English language ed. L. D. Kritzman, trans. A. Goldhammer, New York, 1996-1998.

<sup>60</sup> See Harris, A. K., "Forging History: the *Plomos* of Granada in Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza's *Historia eclesiástica*," *Sixteenth Century Journal* XXX:4 (1999), 945-966; Barrios Aguilera, M., *Granada morisca, la convivencia negada*, Granada, 2002, 482-490.

<sup>61</sup> Poets: Góngora, L. de, "Al Monte Santo de Granada," in *Obras poéticas de D. Luis de Góngora*, vol. 1, New York, 1921, 194; Antequera y Arteaga, P. de, *Excelencias de Granada, expressadas en un epigrama*, Granada, n.d.; Orozco Díaz, E., *Granada en la poesía barroca. En torno a tres romances inéditos. Comentarios y edición*, Granada, 1963; idem, *El poema "Granada" de Collado del Hierro*, Granada, 1964; Rojas Villandrando, A. de, *El viaje entretenido*, Madrid, 1603; reprint, ed. J. Joset, Madrid, 1977, 186-192. Visitors: papal nuncio Camilo Borghese (1594-1595) and Diego de Cuelvis (1599) in Luque Moreno, *Granada en el siglo XVI*, 344-345, 362; François Bertaut (1659) in *Viajes de extranjeros por España y Portugal*, vol. 2, ed. J. García Mercadal, Madrid, 1952, 589-591; Grand Duke Cosimo de Medici (1668) in *Viaje de Cosme de Médicis*, ed. A. Sánchez Rivero and A. Mariutti de Sánchez Rivero, Madrid, 1933, 203-206.

Perhaps the most striking graphic representation of the Sacromonte as a key element of Granada's new sacred geography and of the iconography of Granadino civic self-consciousness was the series of four maps created in the decade that followed the discoveries upon the hillside. The engraved maps were based on drawings made by the architect Ambrosio de Vico at the behest of Archbishop Castro. Collectively, they are the product of a larger program to remake Muslim Granada not merely into a Christian and Castilian city, but into a model Counter-Reformation community.<sup>62</sup> The maps were probably directed primarily to local consumers, but may also have circulated more broadly; the first three may be those used by Archbishop Castro in a presentation about the Sacromonte that he delivered to Philip III in 1609.<sup>63</sup> Together, the four maps offer what Richard Kagan has termed a "communicentric" rather than "chorographic" view of Granada: a view that seeks not to represent the city in precise detail, but rather to present an idealized topography, laid out in accordance with the imperatives of Granada's new communal imaginary.<sup>64</sup>

Engraved between 1595 and 1604 by Alberto Fernández, a local silversmith, and published in *Relación breve de las reliquias* (Granada, 1608), the first three maps offer a detailed look at the city together with the holy terrain of the Sacromonte.<sup>65</sup> The first map of the series, "Plan of the city of Granada to the Sacromonte de Valparaíso," (Fig. 1) offers a vista of the city and the Sacromonte oriented by the two pilgrimage routes from the city—one passing next to the gardens bordering the Darro River, the other traversing the hills—to the site of the discoveries, where the subterranean caverns are laid bare for the viewer. Located beyond the walls that enclose the

<sup>62</sup> See, among others, Bonet Correa, A., "Entre la superchería y la fe: el Sacromonte de Granada," *Historia* 16, 16 (1981), 50, 52; Orozco Pardo, *Christianópolis*; Barrios Aguilera, *Granada morisca*, 514-519.

<sup>63</sup> Heredia Barnuevo, *Místico ramillete*, 133.

<sup>64</sup> Kagan, R. L., "Urbs and Civitas in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Spain," in *Envisioning the City: Six Studies in Urban Cartography*, ed. D. Buissaret, Chicago, 1998, 76-77; idem, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793*, New Haven, 2000.

<sup>65</sup> *Relación breve de las reliquias, que se hallaron en la ciudad de Granada en una torre antiquísima, y en las cavernas del monte Illipulitano de Valparaíso cerca de Granada: sacado del processo, y averigüaciones, que cerca dello se hizieron*, Granada, 1608. On Fernández, see Moreno Garrido, A., "El grabado en Granada durante el siglo XVII. I. La calcografía," *Cuadernos de arte de la Universidad de Granada*, 13 (1976), 52-55.

city, yet tied to the urban center by the pilgrimage routes, the newly sacred site is shown to be the target of the devotion of pious Granadinos. While the city itself seems empty, its churches, monasteries, and medieval walls its only landmarks, the paths appear crowded with penitents making their way towards the Sacromonte. The sacred spot is distinguished by its remoteness from the mundane sphere of the city, and by the thick forest of crosses marking its territory and differentiating it from the adjacent barren hills.

The second map, "Description of the Sacromonte de Valparaíso," (Fig. 2) zooms in on the Sacromonte hill itself, depicting the paths up the mountain and across the hillsides to the crosses and caves. The road from Granada to Guadix in the lower half of the map separates the farms and gardens from the mountain; in doing so, it distinguishes the profane sphere of human activity from the sacred sphere of divine action. In 1633, Franciscan Tertiaries transformed this road into a *via sacra*—a ritual route for commemoration of the Passion—further sacralizing the route from the city to the Sacromonte.<sup>66</sup> The third map of the series, "Description of the caverns of the Sacromonte of Granada in which they found the relics and the books of the saints," (Fig. 3) focuses still closer, examining in minute detail the layout of the caves. Letters and a key decorated with the "Solomonic" seals from the lead books mark the original locations of the books and relics.

Together, the three maps document and advance the establishment of the Sacromonte as a religious center for Christian Granada. The Sacromonte described in these cartographic texts is steeped in an ancient Christian past, and imbued with a miraculous present. It has become a terrain replete with local meaning: *here* lay the ashes of the city's founder in the faith, *here* the strange and holy texts, *here* the paths beaten by the bare feet of the thousands who came to pray in the caverns. These specifics mark the represented territory as a locally

<sup>66</sup> Henríquez de Jorquera, *Anales*, vol. 1, 255, 267-268; vol. 2, 735-736. On Granada's *via sacra* to the Sacromonte, see Vander Hammen y León, L., *Via sacra, su origen, forma, y disposición, y lo que se deve meditar en ella. Principio, fundación, y antigüedad de la Venerable Orden Tercera de Penitencia del Seráfico P. S. Francisco. Excelencias y Prerrogativas suyas. Hijos que ha tenido, y Indulgencias de que goza*, Granada, 1656; Gullián Marcos, E. and Villaranca Jiménez, M., "El Sacro Monte granadino. Un itinerario ritual en la España del XVII," in *Los caminos y el arte: actas, VI Congreso Español de Historia del Arte, CEHA, Santiago de Compostela, 16-20 de junio de 1986*, vol. III, Santiago de Compostela, 1989, 183-191.

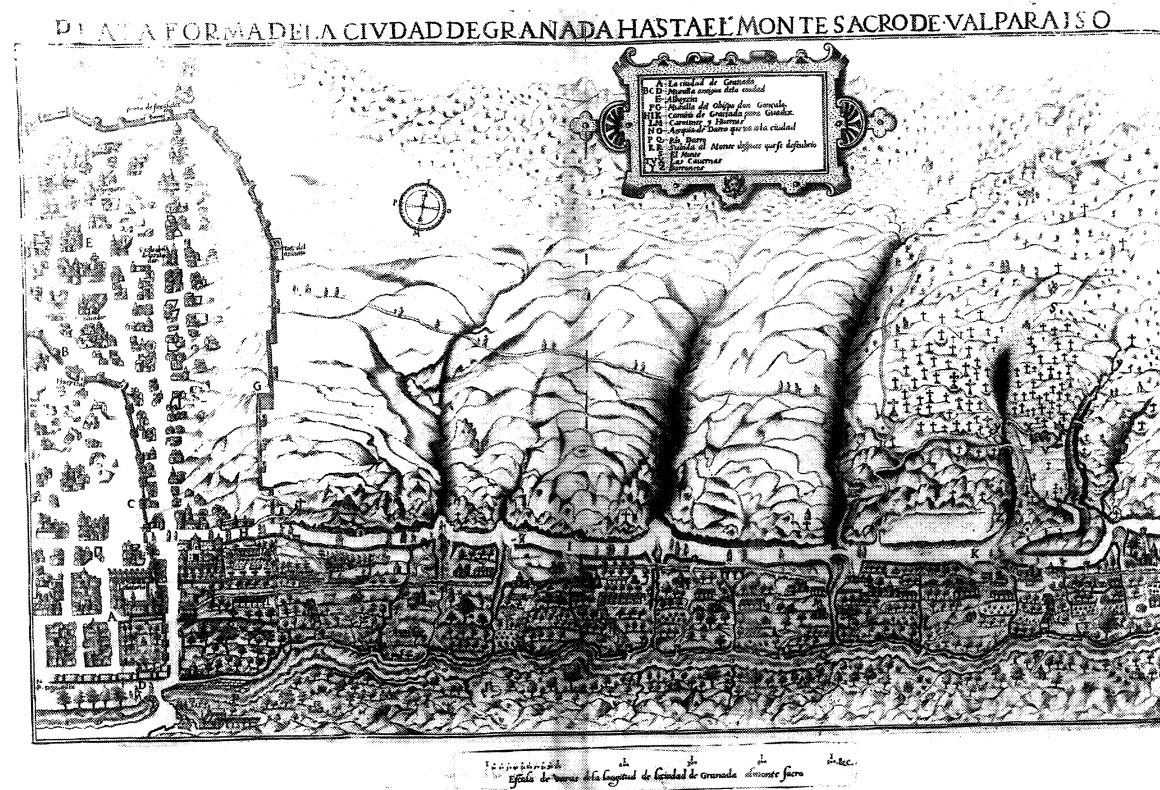


Figure 1. Alberto Fernández, *Plan of the city of Granada to the Sacromonte de Valparaíso*, Reproduced from Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, BX2315.R4.

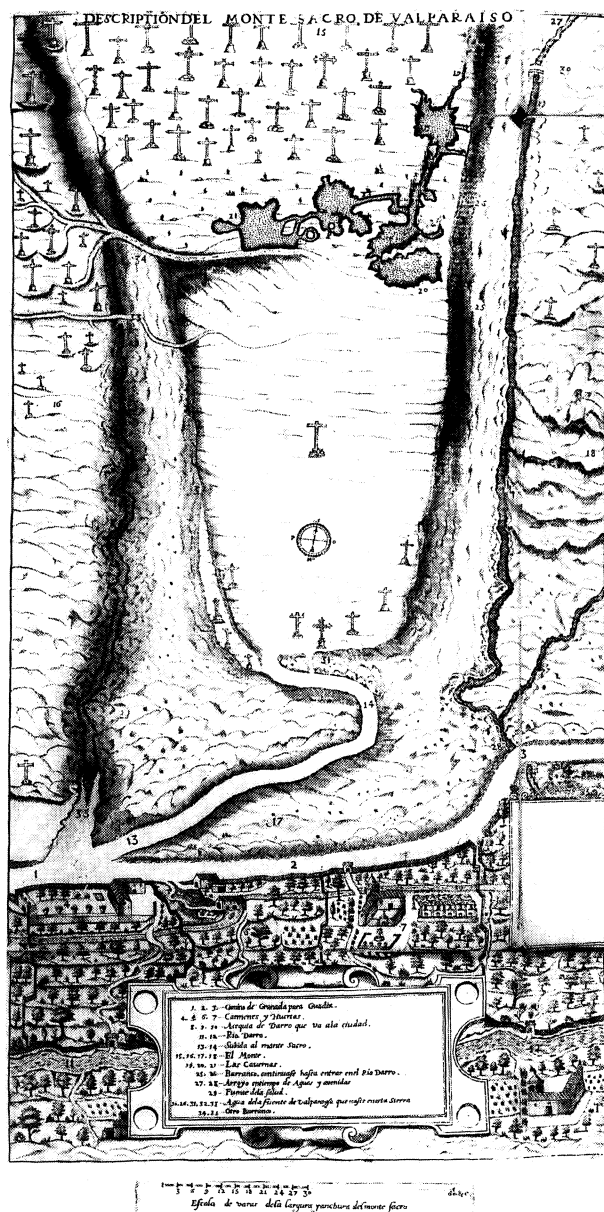


Figure 2. Alberto Fernández, *Description of the Sacromonte de Valparaíso*. Reproduced from Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, BX2315.R4.

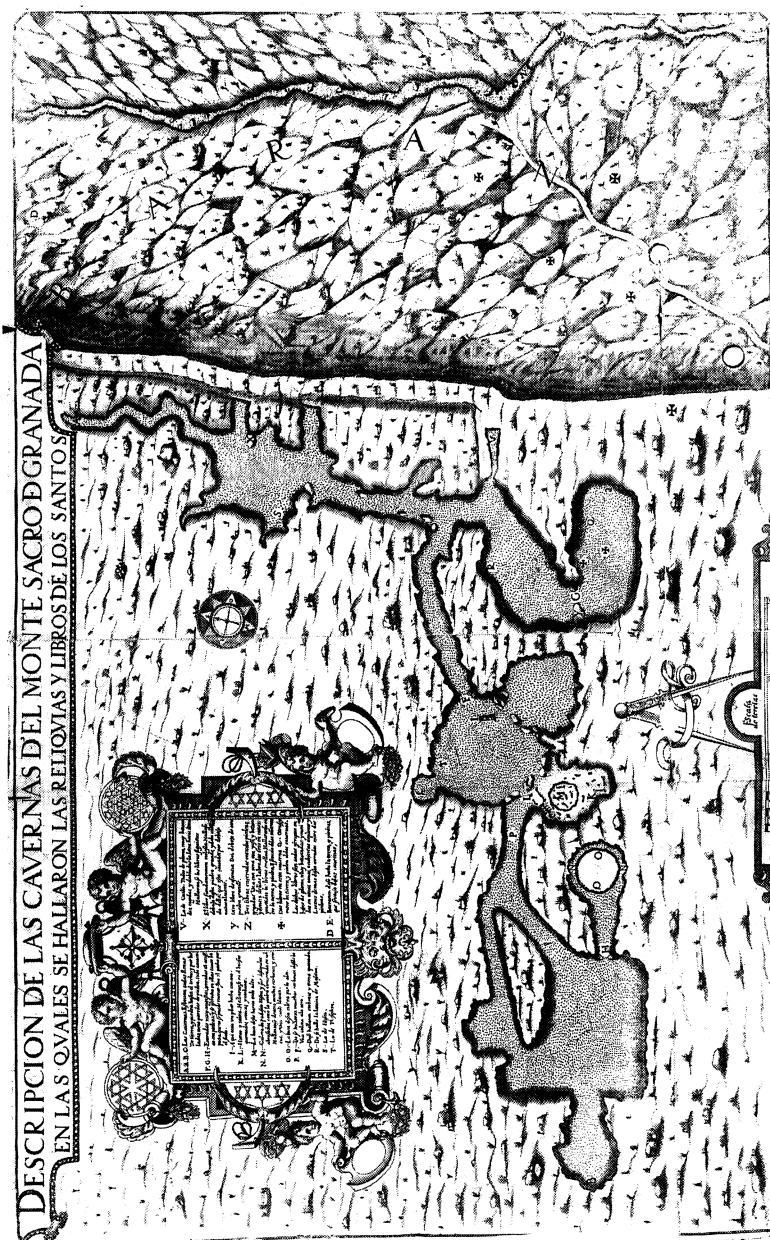


Figure 3. Alberto Fernández, *Description of the caverns of the Sacromonte of Granada in which they found the relics and the books of the saints*. Reproduced from Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, BX2315.R4.

meaningful place, and record the modes by which those meanings, and that place, were created. The careful depiction of the pilgrimage routes and the crosses marking the hillside recall the practices—processions and festivities—and experiences—miracles and illuminations—that transformed the Sacromonte from a site of morisco meaning into a place laden with significance for Granada's Old Christian population. Places, as Edward Casey has reminded us, are also events—meetings of space and time experienced in the body.<sup>67</sup> These maps recall those experiences, the lived stuff out of which Granadinos created the Sacromonte and, with it, a new communal self-consciousness.

The fourth map, the famous “Plataforma” of the city of Granada (Fig. 4), was created by engraver Franz Heylan in 1613 and intended for inclusion in Justino Antolínez de Burgos's ecclesiastical history of the city.<sup>68</sup> This map, which remained the only full cartographic representation of Granada until the late eighteenth century, depicts the city in minute detail, from the Hospital of Saint Lazarus at the northwestern limit to the Hermitage of Saint Sebastian and the Gate of the Mills in the southwest, and from the outer walls and the Tower of the Olive above the Albaicín at the northeastern edge to the irrigation canals and gardens that mark the transition from urban to rural terrain in the southeastern part of Granada. Reflecting the didactic and propagandistic aims of his patron, Castro, Vico presents a municipal vista marked by consecrated sites. Walls and rivers break up the urban expanse; but it is Granada's religious institutions—its parish churches, religious houses, hospitals and shrines—that orient and organize the interior space of the city. At the center of the map, and first on the list of identified monuments, is the Cathedral—a huge, incomplete building dwarfing all of the surrounding structures. The city bears the marks of the urban changes of the sixteenth century, with new plazas—the scene of religious festivities and *autos da fe*—and new neighborhoods on a nearly regular grid beyond the boundaries of the old city. The streets of the Albaicín, actually narrow and twisting in the manner of

<sup>67</sup> Casey, E. S., “How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time: Phenomenological Prolegomena,” in *Sense of Place*, ed. S. Feld and K. H. Basso, Santa Fe, NM, 1996, 13-52.

<sup>68</sup> Antolínez de Burgos, J., *Historia eclesiástica de Granada*, ed. M. Sotomayor, Granada, 1996.





Figure 4. Ambrosio de Vico, *Plataforma of Granada*. Reproduced from Antolínez de Burgos, J., *Historia eclesiástica de Granada*, ed. M. Sotomayor (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1996).

medieval Muslim cities, appear unusually straight, as if Castilianized and Christianized through cartographic artifice.<sup>69</sup>

Vico's map describes Granada's urban terrain as a sacred space, the extension and complement of the rural symbolic landscape of the Sacromonte, which lies just beyond the margins of the map, its direction indicated by a small caption. Vico's city is a spiritual landscape, centered on the Cathedral and imbued with religious meanings both parochial and universal: parochial in that its landmarks are local, significant primarily to the inhabitants of this landscape, participants in the local religion enacted in the city's shrines and churches; universal in that, like the city history it was originally meant to illustrate, the propagandistic portrayal of Granada as a contemporary *civitas christiana* was intelligible by an audience of both natives and outsiders.<sup>70</sup> Like the first three maps, the Plataforma gives no hint of any contestatory or alternative geographies; while the landscape described in the witness testimony is a palimpsest of different and overlapping memories and meanings, the maps depict a terrain that is univocal and wholly Old Christian in character. There are no mosques or *rábitas* in the Plataforma or the Sacromonte views; they depict a Granada in which, a contemporary annalist noted, "the morisco [street] names have already been abandoned by its Christian settlers, who orient themselves by means of the parishes."<sup>71</sup>

Together, the four maps sketch the contours of the geography of sanctity in Granada as it developed in the wake of the finds on the Sacromonte, as the discovery of the lead books and relics and the marvellous phenomena that accompanied them extended the territory of the sacred from the urban into the rural. They both reflect and foster the

<sup>69</sup> My discussion here is informed by Orozco Pardo, *Christianópolis*. The labyrinthine character of the Albaicín is not the only information suppressed in the map. Also missing or unlabelled is the Madraza, the seat of Granada's city council. On the Plataforma, see Moreno Garrido, A., Gómez-Moreno Calera, J. M., and López Guzmán, R., "La Plataforma de Ambrosio de Vico: cronología y gestación," *Arquitectura de Andalucía Oriental* 2 (1984): 6-11; Gómez-Moreno Calera, J. M., *El arquitecto granadino Ambrosio de Vico*, Granada, 1992, 144-158.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Hills, H., "Mapping the Early Modern City," *Urban History* 23 (1996), 145-170.

<sup>71</sup> "con nombres moriscos que ya se han dexado por sus pobladores Christianos que no se gobiernan sino por las parroquiales." Henríquez de Jorquera, *Anales*, vol. 1, 32-33. See Harley, J. B., "Maps, knowledge, and power," in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, ed. D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels, Cambridge, 1988, 277-312.

ongoing reorganization of Granada's sacred landscape from a terrain in which the physical legacy of Islam must have been constantly evident, into one evocative of the uniquely Granadino spiritual heritage constituted and made present in the Sacromonte. This shared heritage was a vital element in the constitution of Granadino civic identity—that is, the symbolically constituted sense of belonging to a deep-rooted community. Membership in that community, however, was limited; ironically, while the forgers of the lead books chose a site and a saint that might have guaranteed morisco cultural survival by merging the separate pasts of the two communities, minority and majority, the discursive elaboration of the finds in local culture—in the maps, for example—offered little room for the morisco community or its history. The alternative sacred terrain recalled by the morisco witnesses before the panel of inquiry—marked by the half-remembered rábitas, the ambiguous placenames, the curious legends—left few traces in the new sacred geography of Granada.

#### ABSTRACT

In the last decades of the sixteenth century, a series of forged documents and supposed saints' relics were discovered in the Spanish city of Granada. This article examines how the Sacromonte, the site of the most prominent of the finds, became the symbolic landscape of Granadino spiritual identity. The relics and the miraculous events associated with them reconfigured the city's sacred geography, transforming a morisco holy site into a center of Christian holiness and a principal symbol of the religious aspects of early modern Granadino civic identity. This article also considers how this new sacred landscape found graphic expression in contemporary cartographic representations of Granada.

#### RESUMEN

En la últimas décadas del siglo XVI, se hallaron en la ciudad de Granada una serie de documentos falsificados y unas supuestas reliquias. Este artículo examina cómo el Sacromonte, el sitio de los hallazgos más destacados, fue convertido en el paisaje simbólico de la identidad espiritual granadina. Las reliquias y las circunstancias milagrosas con las cuales estaban relacionadas efectuaron una reconfiguración de la geografía sagrada de la ciudad, transformando un sitio sagrado de los moriscos en un centro de la santidad cristiana y un símbolo principal de los aspectos religiosos de la identidad cívica de la Granada moderna. Este artículo también considera cómo este paisaje sagrado fue expresado gráficamente por medio de representaciones cartográficas de Granada.