

SECCIÓN MONOGRÁFICA «CONVERSION AND PERSUASION IN MEDIEVAL ISLAMICATE CULTURES»

Introductory Essay

Ensayo introductorio

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Introduction

The four articles in the present monographic volume explore various usages of Arabic and Aljamiado oratory and homiletics in religious conversion, in conversion narratives, and as a device of religious and political persuasion in the premodern period based on data spanning from Yemen to the Iberian Peninsula. The publication is one of the outcomes of a Spanish- and European-funded research project,¹ the goals of which included cross-cultural comparisons of the ways that writing and orality have shaped religious and cultural boundaries between Jews, Christians, and Muslims, reinforced internal sectarian divisions, and provided a vehicle for trans- and cross-cultural encounters among the three “textual communities”² in the pre- and early modern period. Toward this end, the editor of the present volume organized

the 22nd International Symposium of the International Medieval Sermon Studies Society (IMSSS) on the theme of “Conversions and Life Passages through the Mirror of Medieval Preachers”. The symposium was celebrated entirely online in July of 2021 due to the COVID-19 SARS pandemic.

Some of the specific topics addressed in the IMSSS Symposium that are reflected in the articles in this volume include the role of homiletics in religious conversion and political persuasion; the analysis of homiletic and rhetorical strategies of persuasion; and the “conversion” of textual genres. Several important observations resulted from the Symposium’s exploration of these themes that require further scholarly attention. For instance, the diversity of the persuasion strategies that Jews, Christians, and Muslims developed and employed in their religious discourse has been underappreciated due to the scholarly tendency to privilege the reception of Aristotle’s works on rhetoric and the theory of persuasion. This is not to deny the varying degrees of influence of ancient Greek rhetoric on Jewish, Christian, and Islamic discourse or the utility of applying Aristotle’s fa-

¹ “Writing Religious, Transcultural, and Gender Identities and Alterities in the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean”, acronym: “RELGEN” (PGC2018-093472-B-C32 AEI/FEDER, UE; Principal Investigator, Linda G. Jones).

² Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*.

mous theory of persuasion based on ethos, pathos, and logos³ to the study of Jewish, Arab-Islamic, as well as Christian oral and literary genres. Yet as Josep Puig Montcada, citing Ibn Ḥaldūn, reminds us, the Arabs' well-known division of knowledge into the sciences of the Ancients and the sciences of Islam, the latter of which is based on the Qur'ān and the Sunna, also included rhetoric:

the science of rhetoric, *'ilm al-bayān*, which is the science that studies the figures and conditions of speech and is divided into three branches. The first is the science of eloquence, *'ilm al-balāḡa*, which studies the aforesaid figures and conditions; the second is *'ilm al-bayān*, as stylistics, which includes metaphor and metonymy; and the third is *'ilm al-badī'*, which deals with the devices—rhetorical tropes and figures—used to embellish and beautify speech.⁴

While considerable scholarship has been dedicated to the traditional Islamic rhetorical sciences as they relate to the study of the Qur'ān and Arabic poetics,⁵ the study of rhetoric in relation to Arabic oratory, homiletics, and preaching has lagged behind.⁶ In furtherance of this research, several of the Symposium participants showed that there are traditional Arabic, Aljamiado, as well as Judeo-Arabic, and Hebrew persuasive elements and strategies that must be understood “in their own terms”, which aligns with recent research conducted by scholars such as Brandon Katzir, Erika Falk, Hany Rashwan, and Tahera Qutbuddin within the framework of comparative rhetoric studies that are challenging the Eurocentric universalization of Graeco-Roman rhetoric.⁷

The Symposium also revealed the need for further investigation of the various ways that Jewish,

Christian, and Islamic homiletics were themselves transformed through cross-cultural contacts. For instance, we observed that the persuasive strategies and tools employed by one group could be susceptible to external influences, furnishing further evidence of the multiculturalism, “interconnectivity and interdependence” of certain Jewish, Christian, and Arab-Islamic homiletic techniques of persuasion.⁸ Finally, presentations based on coetaneous data from several Muslim countries highlighted the need for a greater understanding both of the diverse usages of Islamic oratory as an element of persuasion in different regions of the Islamicate world, and the techniques of persuasion characteristic of the Arab-Islamic rhetorical tradition. The monographic volume, “Conversion and Persuasion in Medieval Islamicate Cultures” was conceived to address some of these topics. The articles chosen for this issue feature case studies from the Iberian Peninsula and the Arab East that analyze the interconnectivity between Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, explore novel ways of conceptualizing conversion, and contrast the persuasion strategies and political usages of different genres of Islamic oratory, as well as its impact on other oral and literary genres.

Antecedents in the Study of Homiletics, Persuasion, and Conversion in the Islamicate World

With the advent of Islam Arabophone Muslims perfected a rhetorically sophisticated oral tradition in which prose and poetry played complementary functions as the primary instruments of persuasion in one's community or polity.⁹ In the premodern period the Arabs utilized a variety of oral-literary genres, principally poetry (*šī'r*), oratory (*ḥiṭāba*), homiletic exhortation (*wa'z*), storytelling (*qaṣaṣ*), and proverbs (*amṭāl*) as instruments of persuasion to spread political propaganda, encourage religious, political, or societal reforms, or inspire intra- or inter-religious conversion. From

³ For instance, Mahmoud Munes Tomeh has convincingly argued that Islamic Law derives its authority and legitimacy not only or even primarily from the Qur'an and the Sunnah but rather from its *persuasiveness*, which he analyzes from an “Aristotelian rhetorical perspective”. See Tomeh, “Persuasion and Authority in Islamic Law”, p. 143.

⁴ Puig Montcada, “La retórica en Averroes”, p. 10.

⁵ On the study of rhetoric and the Qur'ān, among the numerous publications that could be cited, see Heinrichs, “Poetik, Rhetorik, Literaturkritik”; Wansbrough, “Arabic Rhetoric”; Abdul Raof, *Arabic Rhetoric*; Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qur'ān*; and Abdel Haleem, “Rhetorical Devices”. On rhetoric and classical Arabic poetics, see Harb, *Arabic Poetics*; Heinrichs, “Rhetoric and Poetics”; and van Gelder & Hammond, *Takhyīl*.

⁶ Halldén, “What is Arabic Rhetoric?”; Qutbuddin, “The *Khuṭba*”; and Jones, “The Poetics of the *Khuṭba*”.

⁷ Katzir, “The Truth of Reliable Tradition”, see also Falk, “Jewish Laws of Speech: Toward Multicultural Rhetoric”; Rashwan, “Arabic *Jinās*”, and Qutbuddin, “The *Khuṭba*”. To these we may also add Puig Montcada, “La retórica en Averroes”.

⁸ In addition to Mao, “Writing the Other” and Katzir, “The Truth of Reliable Tradition”, see also Falk, “Jewish Laws of Speech: Toward Multicultural Rhetoric”; and Jones, “The Role of Homiletics”.

⁹ Among the abundance of studies on the social and political functions of classical Arabic poetry, see, for instance, Zwettler, *The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry*; Sperl, “Islamic Kingship and Arabic Panegyric Poetry”; and Latiff, *The Cutting Edge of the Poet's Sword*. For the homiletic and oratorical genres, see ‘Athamina, “Al-Qasas”; Berkey, *Popular Preaching*, especially pp. 53-69; Jones, *The Power of Oratory*; and Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, pp. 333-368.

the Abbasid period onward, influential Arabic rhetoricians such as al-Ġāhiz (d. 255/868), 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī (d. 474/1081), al-'Askarī (d. c. 400/1010), al-Sakkākī (d. 626/1229), and al-Ḥaṭīb al-Qazwīnī (d. 724/1338), among many others, theorized about the importance of studying rhetoric (*balāġa*) as the key to grasping the inimitable perfection of the Qur'ān (*i'ġāz al-Qur'ān*).¹⁰ Arabic rhetoricians would apply the various branches of *balāġa*—the science of meanings (*ilm al-ma'ānī*), the science of eloquence (or elucidation) (*ilm al-bayān*), and the science of embellishment (*ilm al-badī*)—not only to the study of the Qur'ān, but also to scriptural exegesis (*tafsīr*), poetics, and oratory.¹¹ Regarding the latter, rhetoricians focused especially on *ilm al-ma'ānī* and *ilm al-bayān* to identify the most effective methods for the orator to articulate, elucidate, and convey his intended meaning and produce the desired effect on the listener or reader.¹² They devised the “art of eloquence” (*fann al-balāġa*) in order to unveil the “secrets” (*asrār*) necessary to move the soul and elicit the desired emotions in the intended audience.¹³ Their writings stressed that the quintessence of effective persuasive speech was encapsulated in the principle of “conformity of speech to the context of the situation” (*muṭābaqat al-kalām li-muqtaḍā al-ḥāl*)¹⁴ or “to each station/situation its speech” (*li-kull maqām min al-maqāl*).¹⁵ In other words, the orator's precise choice of words, adequate word arrangement, vocal forms, choice of themes, and non-verbal gestures were determined by the consideration of the context and occasion of delivery and the socio-cultural profile of the intended audience. The Arabic orator had to take all these elements into consideration to determine how best to persuade his audience by appealing to their emotions, rational intellect, ethical values, or other considerations.¹⁶

As is well known, the expansion of Islamic rule across the Mediterranean and beyond profoundly transformed the cultures of the Jews and Christians residing in those regions through religious conversion and/or the gradual adoption of Arabic as a language of daily communication, liturgical usage, and oral and literary expression.¹⁷ With regard to the latter, we have seen that research has been dominated by the study of the reception and influence of the Greek rhetorical tradition upon Arabic rhetoric.¹⁸ Yet in recent years the history of rhetoric is being re-written by scholars who have departed from the Eurocentric paradigm that universalizes Greco-Roman rhetoric at the expense of others rhetorical traditions. Beginning with the pioneering work of Robert T. Oliver, successive scholars such as Mary Garret, LuMing Mao, Erika Falk, Tahera Qutbuddin, Hany Rashwan, Rebecca Gould, and Nasrin Askari have spearheaded the study of non-Western rhetorics “in their own terms”.¹⁹ LuMing Mao and Brandon Katzir particularly emphasize the “interconnectivity and interdependence” across multiple rhetorical traditions.²⁰ Nevertheless, the majority of the publications ensuing from cross-cultural explorations of rhetoric have been based on the analysis of religious polemics, philosophical treatises, and other non-homiletic sources. With respect to the study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim rhetoric and homiletics, the few notable exceptions have been heavily skewed toward the study of Jewish-Christian homiletical encounters.²¹ By comparison, the

¹⁷ On these linguistic processes, see Hary, “Judeo-Arabic in the Arabic-Speaking World”; Shohat, “The Question of Judeo-Arabic”; Vicente, *El proceso de arabización de Alandalús*; and Rubenson, “The Transition from Coptic to Arabic”.

¹⁸ For a synthesis of the issues and the scholarship, see Halldén, “What is Arabic Rhetoric?”

¹⁹ Oliver, *Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China*; Garrett, “Some Elementary Methodological Reflections”; Qutbuddin, “The *Khutba*”; and Rashwan, “Arabic *Jinās*”; Rashwan, Gould, & Askari, *Arabic, Persian, and Turkic Poetics*. For a summary of this history of the paradigm shift toward studying non-Western rhetorics “in their own terms” see Mao, “Reflective Encounters”, pp. 411-416; Falk, “Jewish Laws of Speech”, and the collective volume by Gruendler & Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Humanities in Their Own Terms*.

²⁰ Mao, “Writing the Other”, and Katzir, “The Truth of Reliable Tradition”.

²¹ The topics most often treated include the respective shaping of Jewish and Christian homiletics by Greco-Roman oratory, transformations in Jewish homiletic practices in response to the 13th-century “modern” or novel style of preaching introduced by the Catholic mendicant orders, and Christian conversionary preaching targeting Jewish and, to a lesser degree, Muslim (Mudéjar) communities in the Iberian Peninsula and elsewhere. See, for instance, Adams & Hanska,

¹⁰ al-Ġāhiz, *Naẓm al-Qur'ān*; al-Ġāhiz, *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*; al-Ġurġānī, *Dalā'il al-i'ġāz*; al-Ġurġānī, *Asrār al-balāġa*; al-Qazwīnī, *al-Idāh fī 'ulūm al-balāġa*; al-'Askarī, *Kitāb al-Šinā'atayn*; and al-Sakkākī, *al-Idāh fī 'ulūm al-balāġa*.

¹¹ According to Abdel Haleem, it was al-Sakkākī who divided *balāġa* into the three sciences of *ilm al-ma'ānī*, *ilm al-bayān*, and *ilm al-badī*, whereas al-Ġāhiz identified *ilm al-ma'ānī* and *ilm al-bayān* as the two most essential disciplines. See Abdel Haleem, “Rhetorical Devices”, p. 329.

¹² Seyidov, “Proverbs”, p. 2.

¹³ Harb, “Arabic Literary Theory”. The term, “secrets of eloquence” alludes to the eponymous title of the celebrated treatise by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Ġurġānī, *Asrār al-balāġa*.

¹⁴ Abdel Haleem, “Rhetorical Devices”, p. 332.

¹⁵ Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, vol. 1, p. 56.

¹⁶ Harb, “Arabic Literary Theory”; Jones, “Medieval Islamic Rhetoric, Oratory and Preaching”.

various rhetorical encounters between Jewish and Muslim or Christian and Muslim oratorical traditions have been insufficiently studied. As a prime example of what Samuel Edelson called the “practical application” of rhetoric,²² the role that Arabic and Jewish homiletics and oratory have played historically as a form of mass communication and as an instrument of religious conversion and political persuasion merits further investigation.

With regard to conversion studies, it should be noted that we have applied a more capacious interpretation of the notion of religious conversion, in keeping with the advances in the field that have occurred in the past two decades. Previous models that privileged either the inner, subjective, affective, or psychological experience of the individual convert or the social, institutional, or ritual aspects of religious conversion have given way to more nuanced approaches that recognize not only that narratives of the experiences of individual converts must be historically and socially contextualized, but also that these individuals play ideological and symbolic roles within society.²³ More scholars are combining interdisciplinary approaches since no one approach or discipline alone suffices to comprehend fully the phenomenon of religious conversion.²⁴

Conversion studies scholars have increasingly moved toward introducing comparative and global perspectives, acknowledging that the processes, experiences, and factors contributing to conversion differ from one religion to another, change over time or in response to inter-religious interactions, and are inflected by other identity markers such as gender, ethnicity, or social status.²⁵ Traditional images of passive converts and of conversion as a sudden radical change—epitomized by the biblical story of Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus

(Acts 11:6-21)—have given way to considering the convert as an active agent, and conversion as a lengthy process that is not necessarily permanent or unidirectional, and may be subject to reversals. Finally, new themes have emerged as foci of study: alongside inter-religious conversion, research has also come to include the study of intra-religious and sectarian conversion, “deconversion,” and “internal conversions,” especially the deepening or intensification of one’s own faith tradition and the transitions from one life stage or status to another through rites of passage.²⁶

The following synopsis of the articles of this special volume will highlight their main findings and indicate how each advances our understanding of the nexus between homiletics, conversion, and persuasion in the premodern Islamic world. We will also comment on the various connections among the individual contributions and suggest further areas of research. The first two articles deal with various facets of conversion (Siebeking and Brisville-Fertin), while the latter two focus more on the role of homiletics in religio-political persuasion (Hsien Liew and Jones). The contributions are also balanced geographically, since two authors discuss sources from the Iberian Peninsula (Brisville-Fertin and Jones), while Hsien Liew and Siebeking analyze eastern Arabic materials.

Case Study 1: Textual Conversion between Christianity and Islam

The article by R. Brian Siebeking, “Converting the Story: Toward a Theory of Narrative Conversion in a Muslim Homily on St. George” adopts a truly innovative approach to conversion studies by analyzing the narratives that crossed boundaries between Christianity and Islam. Rather than focus on how preachers used stories of the saints and the prophets as tools of persuasion in the conversion to Christianity or Islam, Siebeking interrogates how the stories themselves underwent processes of conversion, asking: “What would happen if we approached the boundary-crossing editorial process as a type of *conversion*, and the story itself as a *convert*?” In response, Siebeking traces the “conversion” of a Christian hagiographic literary genre, the *passio* or martyrology, represented by *The Acts of St. George*, into an Islamicized religious story (*qiṣṣa*), “The Tale of Ġirġīs (St. George)”. The story of Ġirġīs appears in numerous historical and geographical

The Jewish-Christian Encounter; Deeg, Homolka, & Schöttler (eds.), *Preaching in Judaism and Christianity*; Retsö, “Framework of Islamic Rhetoric”; and Jones, “‘Sermo ad conversos, christianos et sarracenos’”. By comparison, research on the Arabic-Islamic imprint on Christian and Jewish oratory and homiletics and on the interconnectivity among the three oratorical traditions has garnered less scholarly interest. See Jones, “Homiletic Interactions”; and Jones & Dupont-Hamy, *Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Preaching*.

²² Edelman, “Ancient Traditions, Modern Needs”, p. 117, cited in Katzir, “The Truth of Reliable Tradition”, p. 168.

²³ Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative*.

²⁴ Jindra, *A New Model of Religious Conversion*.

²⁵ Hames, “Approaches to Conversion”; Yisraeli & Fox, *Contesting Inter-Religious Conversion*; Jindra, *A New Model of Religious Conversion*; Rambo & Farhadian, *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*; and Buell, *Why This New Race*.

²⁶ Rambo & Farhadian, *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*.

works including al-Ṭabarī's (d. 310/923) *Ta'rīḥ al-rusul wa-l-mulūk* (Annals of the Prophets and Kings), which, according to Siebeking, "contains the oldest complete version" of the Islamicized story and is "clearly based on the Christian *Acts of St. George*" since it shares the same narrative structure as the oldest extant Christian versions in Syriac and Coptic. Yet for the purposes of this volume Siebeking focuses on the "Tale of Ġirġīs" that the Qur'ān commentator and exhortatory preacher (wā'iz) al-Ṭa'labī (d. 427/1035) included in his *Arā'is al-maġālis fī qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* (The Brides of the Sessions in the Tales of the Prophets).

Siebeking argues that al-Ṭa'labī's version culminated the successful conversion of the Christian tale of St. George into the Islamic *qīṣṣa* of Ġirġīs by placing his story within the *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* genre. The author hypothesizes that the *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* narratives had the greatest impact in Muslim societies since they were routinely disseminated to the public through recitation in the hortatory preaching assemblies (*maġālis al-qāṣaṣ*) to instruct and guide the people.

Siebeking uses the narrative conversion of the Christian *Acts of St. George* into the Islamicized "Tale of Ġirġīs" to test his theory concerning "the heuristic utility of *conversion* as a framework for revealing the subtle ways that stories can be 'active' in their own transformation". To explain this process Siebeking draws upon Lewis Rambo's pioneering work, *Understanding Religious Conversion*,²⁷ according to which "(a) conversion is a process over time, not a single event; (b) conversion is contextual and thereby influences and is influenced by a matrix of relationships, expectations, and situations; and (c) factors in conversion are multiple, interactive, and cumulative". He then maps the George-Ġirġīs narrative transformation onto Rambo's multi-staged process of conversion. The first stage is the "context", which refers to "the unique pattern of symbols, circumstances, and relationships that enable the conversion to take place in the way that it does". The second stage is the internal or external "crisis" that serves as the proximate cause of the conversion. The third stage is the "encounter" between the missionary and the potential convert. Siebeking traces the initial narrative encounter to the ascetic Yemeni scholar Wahb b. Munabbih's (d. c. 110/728) rendering of the George-Ġirġīs story in his *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*,²⁸ which was pivotal in establishing the continuity

of Islam with the salvation histories of Judaism and Christianity.

Siebeking correlates the fourth stage of "interaction", in which the catechumen begins to immerse him/herself in the new group's beliefs and practices, to the redaction process and specifically to the transition from the Christian *passio* to the Islamic *qīṣṣa*. He argues that al-Ṭa'labī's incorporation of the Ġirġīs tale into the *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* genre cemented the story's Muslim identity since it could now be used for Islamic pedagogical, exegetical, theological, and hortatory purposes. Siebeking identifies the fifth and final stage of the "formal commitment" of the convert to the new religion with the social function of ritual, specifically with the preaching of the Ġirġīs tale in the storytelling and hortatory preaching assemblies (*maġālis al-qāṣaṣ* or *maġālis al-wa'z*). Critical to Siebeking's argument is his observation that the *Arā'is al-maġālis fī qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* was not only a collection of al-Ṭa'labī's sermons and stories; it was intended to serve as a manual for preachers and storytellers and indelibly shaped the *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* as a hortatory genre that was meant to be narrated and preached in ritualized storytelling and hortatory preaching assemblies.

On the basis of these preliminary investigations, Siebeking outlines his theory of narrative conversion: "A story 'converts' from one literary tradition to another when (a) there is a contest for influence between opposing religious, cultural, or political options and (b) the conversion helps the receiving tradition gain an upper hand in that contest". Siebeking insists that "the convert story is not completely passive in this process" since its "distinct socio-historical milieu and embedded literary features" "actively shape the redactor's editorial choices". Furthermore, "the conversion is not complete until the proselyte story is ritually received within the new tradition and recognized among its canon". Siebeking theorizes that narrative deconversion can occur when "the reception process ends, either through active rejection of the story or passive neglect". In his conclusion, Siebeking posits that active rejection could explain why the Ġirġīs tale disappeared from the major Sunni historiographic works by the fourteenth century. He links this process to the Crusades, that emblematic conflict between Christians and Muslims in which the former converted the figure of St. George into a Crusader fighting on behalf of the Christians. According to Siebeking's theory, this transformation of St. George into an enemy of the Muslims would have "greatly diminished" the

²⁷ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*.

²⁸ Khoury, *Les légendes prophétiques*, p. 84.

benefit to Islam that Muslim historians, preachers, and storytellers derived from continuing to narrate the story of Ġirġis to Muslim audiences.

Case Study 2: Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Muslim Hortatory Preaching

Olivier Brisville-Fertin's article presents examples of cross-cultural encounters between Muslims and Christians and between Jews and Muslims in Islamic conversion narratives, together with further instantiations of textual conversion. In "Conversion to or Within Islam in Some Aljamiado Exhortatory Texts: *"Fizose creyente [...] i fue buena su creyencia con Allah"*", Brisville-Fertin's point of departure is that in the context of the forced mass conversion of Muslims to Catholicism in early 16th-century Iberia, Muslim preaching would have acquired the "pragmatic functions" of strengthening the faith, inciting repentance or internal conversion²⁹ of Muslim believers, and encouraging resistance to Catholic evangelizing efforts. To illustrate how the Moriscos utilized Islamic preaching toward these ends, Brisville-Fertin analyzes the motif of conversion to and within Islam in Morisco hortatory sermons preserved in Aljamiado. Employing a philological approach and discourse analysis, the author interrogates how the Morisco *alfaquih*-preachers repurposed traditional Muslim narratives of conversion from the first centuries of Islamic history for the crypto-Islamic aims of "support[ing] their mission of inciting belief in and obedience to" the Unitarian God within the context of Trinitarian Catholic domination, and "discursively promot[ing] an internal conversion of repenting and deepening one's Islamic faith and practice or counter[ing] the surrounding Christian discourse". He also considers the potential socio-cultural and pragmatic effects of these conversion episodes and their possible significance within the Morisco context in which they were actualised.

Brisville-Fertin divides his study into three parts. He first considers some well-known antecedents of conversion narratives in Aljamiado doctrinal and apologetic literature, simultaneously providing a state-of-the-art on the subject. The examples he selects derive from the *masā'il wa-aġwiba* or "*demandas*" in Aljamiado, which recount interreligious dialogues in the form of "questions from and answers to Jews or Christians about Islam". In these narratives the non-Muslim

requester typically converts to Islam as a result of the responses from the Prophet Muḥammad or other prominent early Muslims to their religious queries. Brisville-Fertin suggests that narratives of the *demandas* were repurposed or "converted" into doctrinal material and tools of persuasion to continue to adhere to Islam, since the answers to the questions are expositions of Islamic doctrines and orthopraxy "intended to persuade the asker-recipients to convert to Islam". The author posits that the *demandas* could thus be regarded as "*a mises en abyme* of inter-religious conversions" no longer to convert others to Islam, but rather to promote internal conversion by transmitting the principles of Islamic faith and practices to the Moriscos. He concludes that the narratives ultimately served to remind the Moriscos of "the supremacy of Islam over the other monotheistic traditions and reaffirm Muḥammad's prophethood". Of significance for the history of Islamic homiletics, he argues that "their doctrinal exposition in the form of dialogues makes them particularly suitable for being used as para-liturgical exhortations to instruct the believers" since the dialogical structure simulates the oral event of instructional and preaching sessions.

In the second part of the article Brisville-Fertin examines conversion narratives in unedited manuscripts of Aljamiado hortatory preaching sessions (*monestaciones*), which serve the self-reflexive function of "illustrat[ing] the purpose of the admonition into which they are inserted, in this case, repentance (Ar. *tawba*): 'Monestación i dēxenplo en la repintencia'". The first episode recounts the reassurances received by an idolatrous sinner who initially doubted that his conversion to Islam would be accepted. The second episode narrates the repentance and "inner conversion" of a Jewish (*Isrā'īliyya*) prostitute who, seeing how one of her clients, "fearing divine punishment, turned away from her and repented", imitated his example, repented her sins, and devoted the rest of her life to serving God. Brisville-Fertin underscores the complementarity of the two narratives: both "establish ... analogies between outer and inner conversions"; both "establish a virtuous model of the repenting believer trusting in God's mercy", and both episodes feature interfaith contacts.

Brisville-Fertin devotes the remainder of the article to the analysis of the Islamicization of a pre-Islamic conversion narrative of Christian origin that appears in an Aljamiado instructional preaching session (*asiento* = Ar. *maġlis*) from an unedited Morisco sermonary. The exegetical sermon is based on Qur'anic verse 36:13, "And

²⁹ Cf. Rambo & Farhadian, *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*.

he gave them as an example the people of the city of Antioch [Anṭāqiya] (*sic*) when the messengers came to it". According to traditional Islamic exegesis, God sent the angel Gabriel to two apostles—John (Yahyā b. Zaydin) and Simon Peter (Samʿān)—to dispatch them to Antioch to admonish its idolatrous king and convert the people to monotheism. Due to their aggressive tactics, the apostles failed and were severely punished. Subsequently, God sent a third apostle, Yūliyus (or Būlus = Paul), who resorted to subterfuge, feigning idolatry to befriend the king, and employing "gentle and merciful preaching" to try to persuade him and the people to convert. Consequently, a man named Ḥabīb al-Nağğār converted to monotheism but was martyred when the king ordered his execution for preaching monotheism.

Brisville-Fertin makes several cogent observations about the significance of the incorporation of this tale into a Morisco sermon, given the context of interfaith contacts and conflict stemming from the forced conversions. This episode (as well as the story of the repentant Israelite woman) "illustrates Islam's ... integration of the legacy of the previous monotheistic traditions, as well as its primacy, as the last revelation". It further "establishes the atemporality of Islamic truth" against the falsities of "polytheism and idolatry and the 'deviations of Judaism and ... Christianity'". Finally, the author underscores the counter-discursive function that such stories might have played within an "underground" Islamic society, given that the Moriscos would have been inundated with images of crucifixes and Christian saints.

Of particular relevance here is Brisville-Fertin's analysis of the two apostolic preaching episodes: while the aggressive preaching of the first two apostles failed, the softer approach of the third apostle, who feigned belief in idolatry to gain the king's favor, likely provided the Moriscos with a model of *taqiyya*, vindicating their dissimulation of Islamic beliefs in a hostile environment. The article concludes with an annex providing the author's transcription of the Aljamiado homiletic narrative of the "three apostles in Antioch".

Case Study 3: New Perspectives on Islamic Hortatory Preaching (*Waʿz*) as an Instrument of Political Persuasion

With the article by Han Hsien Liew, "A Preacher's Mirror: Mixing Advice and Panegyric in Ibn al-Ġawzī's *al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍīʾ*", we transition to the first of two examples of the usage of Arabo-Islamic oratory as an instrument of political per-

suasion. Liew's article examines the first chapter of *al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍīʾ fī ḥilāfat al-Mustaḍīʾ* (The Radiant Lamp in the Caliphate of al-Mustaḍīʾ), a homiletic text that the Ḥanbalī scholar and preacher Ibn al-Ġawzī (d. 597/1201) composed and dedicated to the Abbasid caliph al-Mustaḍīʾ (r. 566-575/1170-1180) as a mirror for princes. Liew presents the novel argument that the *Miṣbāḥ* should also be read as an extended hortatory sermon (*waʿz*) addressed to the caliph. He bases his thesis on a close reading of the first chapter's introduction, structure, and organization, which exhibit the authorship "of a hortatory preacher (*wāʿiz*) who wished to induce in his reader an emotional movement from a feeling of pride at the beginning of the work to fear and anxiety at the end". As evidence, he shows how the *Miṣbāḥ*'s structure closely resembles "the structure proposed and followed by Ibn al-Ġawzī for hortatory preaching assemblies (*mağālis al-waʿz*)". Liew frames his article as a study on "the intersection between hortatory preaching (*waʿz*) and political thought in classical Islamic civilization" and as a contribution to the recent scholarship on Islamic mirrors-for-princes literature.

His research is informed by scholars such as Louise Marlow, Julie Scott Meisami, and Aziz al-Azmeh,³⁰ who have shifted the focus from mirrors written by court functionaries to those written by authors from non-courtly backgrounds, including religious scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) and preachers who "place more emphasis on the ruler's moral and spiritual commitments than on practical matters related to governmental administration". Of particular relevance for our purposes, Liew demonstrates that Ibn al-Ġawzī's art of hortatory preaching (*waʿz*) "influenced the writing of mirrors and, by extension, political discourse in the medieval Islamic world".

The section on Ibn al-Ġawzī's relationship with the Abbasid caliphate provides useful historical and political context. Liew shows how Ibn al-Ġawzī's rise to public fame as a hortatory preacher occurred when the Abbasid leadership was actively "cultivat[ing] relationships with traditionalist Ḥanbalī preachers to win over Baghdad's traditionalist-leaning populace". Little is known about the circumstances surrounding the composition of *Miṣbāḥ*, except that it was written sometime during the caliph's ten-year reign, although the exact date is unknown.

³⁰ Marlow, *Counsel for Kings*; Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*; and al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*.

Liew begins with an analysis of the content of the *Miṣbāḥ*'s seventeen chapters. The pronounced emphasis on exhortation (*wa'z*) and admonition (*taḍkīr*) as seen in the titles of ten of the seventeen chapters, suggests that the *Miṣbāḥ* "is less [a work] on statecraft and more on soulcraft". Moreover, the structure of the *Miṣbāḥ* coincides with the tripartite structure of the hortatory preaching assembly that Ibn al-Ġawzī described in his preaching manual, *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ wa-l-muḍakkirīn*³¹ ("The Book of Storytellers and Reminders"): (1) a recitation of the Qur'ān, a prayer, and the praise of God, appealing to the congregation's spiritual sensitivities; (2) exegesis of the Qur'ānic verses recited and a didactic question-and-answer session, appealing to the intellectual interests of the audience; and (3) the exhortatory sermon (*wa'z*) proper, which addresses the audience's moral concerns, summons them to follow the *ṣarī'a*, and warns of the eschatological consequences of disobedience.

Informed by Merlin Swartz's characterization of the structure of the *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ* as "a kind of movement from the emotional/spiritual, to the didactic/reflective, to the practical/moral", Liew illustrates how Ibn al-Ġawzī similarly applied "emotional movement" as a technique of persuasion in the *Miṣbāḥ*. Liew describes the structure of this emotional movement as follows: appeals to "the caliph's sense of pride by glorifying the office of the caliphate" (chapter 1); incitement of the caliph's desire to heed the subsequent admonitions and counsel (chapters 2-5); and didactic chapters admonishing al-Mustaḍī about the importance of ruling justly and governing himself and his subjects (chapters 6-15). Liew singles out chapter eleven on "the reports about the conduct of caliphs" because it is "the longest chapter and constitutes the heart of the *Miṣbāḥ*". The emotional movement consists of eliciting "in the caliph a desire to emulate past caliphs, especially his Abbasid ancestors," or to feel shame and guilt if he failed to measure up to their examples. The final chapters are "saturated" with exhortations derived from prophetic *ḥadīṡ*s and sayings by other early Muslims about the certainty of death and the terrors of the last judgement and the afterlife meant to elicit intense feelings of fear, anxiety, and remorse, thereby indirectly warning the caliph that his manner of rule in this life would affect his fate in the afterlife.

Liew's detailed analysis of chapter 1, "On demonstrating the dignity of the caliphate and the

felicitation of its incumbent", includes a discussion of Ibn al-Ġawzī's five essential qualifications required of the caliph: "(1) religious knowledge (*'ilm*); (2) profane knowledge (*ma'rifa*); (3) administrative skill (*tadbīr*); (4) the upholding of religious ordinances (*muḥāfiẓat ḥudūd al-ṣar'*); and (5) Qurayṣ lineage. He interprets the priority Ibn al-Ġawzī gives to the caliphal qualities of knowledge, his de-emphasis on the qualities of statecraft, and the absence of references to the duty to wage *ghihād* as symptomatic of how Caliph al-Mustaḍī and his father al-Mustangīd had "removed themselves from political and military affairs and allowed members of the court" to take charge of these duties. He interprets Ibn al-Ġawzī's oft-repeated references to the benefits of "associating with people of knowledge and goodness" as an indirect form of persuasion, "a subtle plea for al-Mustaḍī to seek the counsel of pious and knowledgeable scholars" by attending sermons, among other means.

Most of chapter 1 is devoted to a genealogical legitimization of the Abbasids written in the style of laudatory biographies (*manāqib*). Liew ventures that Ibn al-Ġawzī intended his narratives of the laudatory deeds of the Abbasid ancestors Ibn 'Abbās and 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh to serve as "external prodding" for al-Mustaḍī by reminding him "that the Abbasid line is imbued with the virtues of religious knowledge and ritualistic piety and that he ought to emulate the qualities of his ancestors to continue this legacy". Liew argues that Ibn al-Ġawzī's strategy of invoking virtuous exemplars from the past to persuade the caliph to reform his conduct was "a more effective technique of persuasion than admonishing him directly on how he should act". This accords with the advice Ibn al-Ġawzī gave in his *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ* advising preachers to "proceed with tact (*talaffuṡ*), admonish by way of allusion (*iṣāra*), and avoid direct criticism (*taṣrīḥ*) of the ruler". For an admonition to be truly effective and persuasive, the preacher had to appeal to "the ruler's emotional and moral sensitivities" by using an "eclectic approach" that combined praise with warnings.

In sum, for Liew, the *Miṣbāḥ* exemplifies Ibn al-Ġawzī's persuasive strategy of blending of advice and panegyric to indirectly admonish rulers and convince them to modify their conduct through the evocation of deliberately structured emotional movements from appeals to pride, to incitements of desire, to provocations of fear. Liew associates this politically motivated invention of the homiletic mirrors for princes with the late

³¹ Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Kitāb al-Quṣṣāṣ*.

Abbasid period when the situation of political instability disinclined the caliphs toward exposure to public admonishment.

Case Study 4: The *Ḥuṭba* as an Instrument of Persuasion in Almohad Propaganda

The article by Linda G. Jones, “Knowledge as Persuasion in the Oratory of an Almohad Qāḍī: Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar al-Sulamī al-Aḡmātī”, analyzes a case study of the political uses of the Islamic oration (*ḥuṭba*) during the Almohad period that complements Han Hsien Liew’s analysis of the political functions of homiletic exhortation (*wa‘ẓ*) under the Abbasids. Jones assesses whether al-Sulamī’s oration was part of what scholar Muḥammad Ibn Šarīfa dubbed the “propaganda campaign” in which, with the assent of Caliph al-Manšūr Ya‘qūb b. Yūsuf (r. 580–595/1184–1199), the study of Graeco-Islamic philosophy and the “sciences of the Ancients” was prohibited and Ibn Rušd (Averroes) (d. 595/1198) and his fellow travelers were exiled or relieved of their official positions. The first part of the article addresses the source problems related to al-Sulamī’s *ḥuṭba*, examines the biographical details of his life, and attempts to reconstruct a portrait of his relations with the Almohad authorities and their religious policies. The second part analyzes the *ḥuṭba* using Arabic discourse and rhetorical analysis and speech acts theories to illustrate al-Sulamī’s techniques of persuasion and to demonstrate how they were put to the service of Almohad policies and ideology. As such, the article seeks to build upon previous research by Muḥammad Ibn Šarīfa, Delfina Serrano, Maribel Fierro, and others on the circumstances surrounding Ibn Rušd’s political disgrace³² by shedding light on the particular role oratory played in the “propaganda campaign” to sway public opinion against philosophy during the period of transition in Almohad policies away from its previous support and patronage of the philosophers.

The article begins with a brief explanation of the problems surrounding the primary source, namely the fact that al-Sulamī’s *ḥuṭba* does not survive in manuscript form, none of his works seems to have ever been assembled into a *diwān*, nor is there any literary or biographical account of him delivering the sermon. Instead, the two versions of the *ḥuṭba* used in Jones’s article are

preserved in texts that were composed by Moroccan scholars centuries after his death: the *Rihla* (travel diary) of Muḥammad al-‘Abdarī (fl. 688/1289) and the biographical dictionary of Ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik al-Marrākuṣī (d. 702/1302). Moreover, although neither author comments on the circumstances of the composition or delivery of the *ḥuṭba* or the reception it might have received among the audience, Jones suggests a possible connection between the two texts.

Regarding the biographical details about al-Sulamī, Jones highlights the distinguished pedigree of the al-Sulamī family, Moroccans of Andalusī origin who had served in the judiciary under the Almoravids and continued under the Almohads. Al-Sulamī succeeded his father as judge (*qāḍī*) of Fez and was occupying the prestigious qadiship of Seville during the controversy over the study of philosophy. While in Fez he also held the positions of chief prayer leader and liturgical preacher (*ḥaṭīb*). Although most of al-Sulamī’s biographers consistently extolled his erudition and probity as a judge, his piety and virtue, and his outstanding literary talents, he also faced accusations of sexual immorality, which threatened to sully his reputation. Since the caliph exonerated al-Sulamī of these accusations prior to Ibn Rušd’s ordeal, Jones speculates that the need to ingratiate himself with the ruler was probably not what motivated al-Sulamī to compose the sermon.

The section on al-Sulamī’s relations with the Almohad leadership briefly traces the evolution of the Almohads’ educational policies regarding Graeco-Arabic philosophy, which culminated in Caliph al-Manšūr’s official decree issued in 593/1196 banning the study of philosophy and condemning the philosophers as “worse than Christians and Jews”. Among the few biographical details that specifically link al-Sulamī to the Almohad rulers, Jones notes that al-Sulamī’s most famous poem was a panegyric dedicated to Caliph Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf, which elegized his wisdom, knowledge (*ilm*), light (*nūr*), and guidance (*hudan*), employing the traditional Almohad symbolism attached to the founding figure Ibn Tūmart and the early Mu‘minid caliphs. She suggests that the verses elegizing the caliph’s magnanimous patronage of all “seekers of knowledge” and “all fields of knowledge” reflect the *zeitgeist* of the Almohad court at a time when the study of philosophy was still in vogue among the elites and received official patronage due to the vital role rational philosophy played in legitimizing the Almohads’ claim to the caliphate based in part

³² Ibn Šarīfa, *Ibn Rušd al-ḥafīd*; Fierro, “Ibn Rushd’s (Averroes) ‘Disgrace’”; and Serrano Ruano, “Explicit Cruelty, Implicit Compassion”.

on their divinely-endowed superior knowledge and perception.

In discussing the events that led to Caliph al-Manṣūr's summons (*da'wa*) "to adhere only to the Book and the Sunna" and his official decree banning philosophy and the philosophers, Jones identifies two difficulties in establishing al-Sulamī's direct involvement in the "propaganda campaign" that the Almohads waged against Ibn Ruṣd and his ilk for "deviating" from the Qur'ān and the Sunna. First, none of the historical accounts mentions al-Sulamī by name among those who intervened in the public assembly held in the Great Mosque of Cordoba that condemned Ibn Ruṣd. Although it is plausible, as several scholars have posited, that al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* may have been among the "writings" (*al-kitābāt*) that the historian Ibn Ġamr said were read aloud in the Cordovan assembly, Ibn Ġamr did not name any of the authors. Secondly, in the extant versions of the *ḥuṭba* neither Ibn Ruṣd's name nor the term "philosophy" (*falsafa*) appears. Rather, the term is mentioned in Ibn 'Abd al-Malik's descriptive title of the "*ḥuṭba* exhorting clinging to the Book and the Sunna and avoiding philosophy and the sciences of the Ancients". That said, the *ḥuṭba* contains statements echoing al-Manṣūr's "*da'wa* to adhere only to the Book and the Sunna".

For his part, al-'Abdarī also omits any reference to the original Almohad context and instead inserted al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* in a chapter describing his journey to Cairo in 688/1289, in which he lambasted the Cairenes for "submerging themselves" in the "errors of philosophy". Jones deduces from this that al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* was indeed transmitted and preserved for posterity as an emblematic instrument of persuasion in the scholarly debates between those who defended adhering only to the Qur'ān and the Sunna and those intellectuals of various persuasions, not only in al-Andalus, but also in the Maghreb and the Mashreq, who permitted using sources of knowledge from "the Ancients" in the search for ultimate truth and legal interpretation.

Regarding the immediate *Sitz-im-leben* of al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba*, Jones proposes that it could have been intended to settle lingering divided opinions among certain Almohad elites who acknowledged that philosophy had beneficial and negative properties. Against this more nuanced stance, the Sevillian court preacher Ibn Ḥaġġāġ argued that all the philosophers and their writings should be condemned. At the same time, given the polysemy of the Arabic language and al-Sulamī's use of double-meaning, Jones suggests that the *ḥuṭba*

could also reflect the coetaneous ongoing disputes between Malikis and Ṣāhiris: Al-Manṣūr's *da'wa* to purify Islam by favoring the literalist (*ẓāhirī*) interpretation of the Qur'ān and the Sunna over certain Maliki writings had been issued in close proximity to his decree against the philosophers.

In her analysis of al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* Jones examines the rhetorical strategies, linguistic devices, and oratorical embellishments al-Sulamī deployed presumably to convince all sectors of society, but especially the supporters and beneficiaries of Ibn Ruṣd's knowledge and teachings, that philosophy and the philosophers as a whole merited condemnation. Central to Jones's analysis is scholar Abu Rumman's distinction between argument and persuasion. Whereas with argument "the speaker admits the existence of opposing claims and attempts to justify why his claims deserve to be adopted", with persuasion "the persuader tries to convince the addressee [that][there are no other claims that are worth adopting other than his or hers".³³ Jones illustrates how al-Sulamī endeavored to construct discursive binary oppositions contrasting the true knowledge found only in the Qur'ān and the Sunna with the "lies", "falsities", and "filth" of philosophy and the sciences of the Ancients. He used rational argumentation to discredit and polemicize against philosophy and the sciences of the Ancients as sources of knowledge. He deployed ridicule by referring to the philosophers as ignoramuses and their knowledge as lies and delusions. He appealed to the emotions by arousing disgust for the philosophers in comparing them to filth and pollution and terrorizing them with threats of the danger the sciences of the Ancients would afflict upon their souls, hearts, and minds. Al-Sulamī's persuasion strategy of combining rational arguments with calibrated emotional movements concluded with the nullification of the philosophers and the sciences of the Ancients altogether by shifting the focus of attention entirely upon God, the Qur'ān, and the Prophet Muḥammad as the only legitimate sources of knowledge, wisdom, and guidance.

Concluding Remarks and Future Directions

The four articles in this special volume make valuable contributions to the study of homiletics, oratory, and rhetoric in the Islamicate world. Beyond the particulars of the conversion of the George-Ġirġīs story, Siebeking's theory of narrative conversion provides a compelling alternative

³³ Abu Rumman, "Persuasive Strategies".

paradigm for analyzing instances of textual cultural boundary crossing between religious traditions that may prove to be a more useful heuristic tool than other notions such as appropriation, borrowing, or influence. The validity of this theory of narrative conversion could be tested in several ways, beginning with the analysis of the origins and transformation of other figures in the *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* writings or expanding the analysis to include other narratives and genres in other areas of the world, such as the Iberian Peninsula and the Maghreb where there were also long centuries of contacts between Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities. Siebeking's hypothesis attributing the late medieval Muslims' "active rejection" of the Ġirġīs story to the context of the Crusades and the Christian re-transformation of St. George into a crusader could be tested on Christian and Muslim narratives circulating in the Iberian Peninsula within the context of the Iberian Crusades. Siebeking's innovative approach to narrative conversion illuminates the dynamic relationship between Islamic hortatory preaching and the *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* in its facet as a performative oral-literary genre and contributes to the understudied topic of connections between Christian and Muslim homiletics.

In this respect, Siebeking and Olivier Brisville-Fertin's articles are complementary. Both contributions expand our knowledge about a little-known or understudied aspect of the interconnectivity between Christianity and Islam with regard to the practical usage of Islamicized Christian and Jewish narratives in Muslim preaching. Despite the chronological and geographic distance separating the primary sources discussed in the two articles, the authors arrive at similar conclusions suggesting that the conversion of non-Muslim *exempla* or narratives into Islamic preaching materials confirms the "pragmatic plasticity" of such texts and explains the *longue durée* of their usage in Islamic homiletics. Siebeking and Brisville-Fertin also coincide in underscoring that the transformation, repurposing, or "conversion" of such narratives often occurred in response to situations of conflict. By situating his analysis of the motif of conversion in Aljamiado hortatory sermons within the context of the inter-religious conflict produced by the forced conversion to Catholicism of Iberian Muslims—Moriscos—in the 16th century, Brisville-Fertin has provided a convincing explanation of the motivations or desired effects of the incorporation of such narratives in Morisco

preaching assemblies. The author vindicates the importance of conducting research on the mostly unedited manuscripts of Islamic homiletic and exhortatory texts in Arabic and Aljamiado not only because these sources increase our understanding of Mudejar and Morisco religiosity. They also elucidate the role of preaching in transmitting and perpetuating Islamic beliefs and practices even among crypto-Muslim communities, where, as Brisville-Fertin illustrates, homiletic narratives could potentially have been deployed for the purposes of internal conversion—strengthening and deepening Muslim faith in the unicity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad in the face of Trinitarian Catholicism—or resistance to Catholic evangelization by resorting to dissimulation (*taqiyya*).

For their part, Liew's article on Ibn al-Ġawzī's homiletic mirror for princes and Jones's study of al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* against the philosophers make two important contributions to Islamic oratorical studies. First, Liew's discussion of the circumstances surrounding Ibn al-Ġawzī's composition of the *Miṣbāḥ* furnishes new data and insights into the political context and functions of hortatory preaching (*wa'z*). Since the political oration (*ḥuṭba siyāsiyya*) is a well-established sub-genre of Arabo-Islamic oratory, the bulk of the scholarship on Muslim political oratory has tended to focus on the *ḥuṭba* rather than the *wa'z*.³⁴ It is also essential to underscore the implications of Liew's argument that the art and particularly the persuasive strategies of Ibn al-Ġawzī's hortatory preaching method "influenced the writing of mirrors and, by extension, political discourse in the medieval Islamic world". The influence of Arabic oratory (*ḥiṭāba*) on other literary genres such as chancellery epistle writing has been acknowledged for some time by scholars even if detailed studies are still lacking.³⁵ Yet the influence of *wa'z* upon other Arabic oral and literary genres is less well known and therefore Liew expands our knowledge in this regard.

Jones's article clarifies the religio-political context of al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* against the philosophers and furnishes additional evidence of the (semi)official propagandistic usages of oratory to advance the Almohads' policies and political agenda. The author found there was insufficient evidence to link al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* directly to the

³⁴ In addition to the references cited in note 9, see Viguera, "Un sermón político de Šurayḥ al-Ru'aynī".

³⁵ See Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration*, pp. 406–431.

events surrounding the trial and exile of Ibn Rušd and the suppression of philosophy, or to account for the circumstances surrounding the preservation and transmission of the sermon. Yet her close reading of two versions of the *ḥuṭba* illustrates the specific theological arguments, religious motifs, and persuasory rhetorical strategies employed in propaganda targeting the broader public, in which binary discourses vilifying philosophy and exalting the Qurʾān and the Sunna, couched in emotive language, played a central role. This research complements the scholarship on the shift in Almohad policies regarding the patronage of philosophy, which has focused mainly on explaining the theological, intellectual, and political motivations underlying Ibn Rušd's ordeal. Through her analysis of al-ʿAbdarī's version of al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba*, Jones was also able to shed light on the influence of this sermon in an analogous situation of conflict between the defenders of the Qurʾān and the Sunna and proponents of the sciences of the Ancients elsewhere in the Muslim world.

Liew's identification of the "emotional movements" in the *Miṣbāḥ* as the core of Ibn al-Ġawzī's persuasion strategy and Jones's analysis of the emotional language in al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* open up further avenues for research on Islamic sermons as a contribution to the study of the history of the emotions in Islamic societies.³⁶ Yet Jones's discussion of the homiletic strategies in al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba* against the philosophers offers an interesting contrast with Liew's study. While emotional movements inciting fear and disgust toward the philosophers played a key role in al-Sulamī's *ḥuṭba*, the deployment of emotional rhetoric in tandem with appeals to the rational intellect in order to create binary oppositions between true knowledge, wisdom, and guidance derived solely from the Qurʾān and the Sunna, and the "falsities" and "delusions" of the philosophy of the Ancients was the focal point of his persuasion strategy. Further research is needed to determine whether or the extent to which such differences in persuasion techniques correlate to generic differences between the *ḥuṭba* and the *waʿz*, or whether they respond, as I suspect, to the Arabic rhetorical principle of "to each situation its speech" (*li-kull maqām min al-maqāl*), whereby the orator adapts his message, emotional language, and rhetorical techniques to the target audience, objectives, and historical, sociocultural, and political circumstances.

³⁶ For research in this field, see Blatherwick & Bray (eds.), *Arabic Emotions*.

Declaration of competing interest

The author of this article declares that she has no financial, professional or personal conflicts of interest that could have inappropriately influenced this work.

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Linda G. Jones: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Writing—original draft and Writing—review & editing.

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