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«CONVERSION AND PERSUASION IN MEDIEVAL
ISLAMICATE CULTURES»

Conversion to or within Islam in Some Aljamiado Exhortatory Texts:
«*Fízose creyente [...] i fue buena su creyencia con Allah*»

Conversión al islam o dentro del islam en algunos textos aljamiados de
predicación: «Fízose creyente [...] i fue buena su creyencia con Allah»

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Abstract

This article explores the motif of inter- and intra-religious conversion in Aljamiado texts, focusing particularly on the functions and motivations behind its use in preaching. A review of some known apologetic and doctrinal texts highlights that conversion narratives were suitable for religious instruction, thus demonstrating a pragmatic flexibility between textual genre and discursive use. The analysis of three episodes in unpublished admonitions underscores their rhetorical role as *exempla* to persuade their audience: these episodes illustrate the theme of exhortations, provide models of piety—especially of repentance or obedience—, and reaffirm the supremacy of Islam over other religions. The analysis of an early-Christian conversion story inserted into an Islamic exegetical session allows for a deeper understanding of its significance and the echoes it may have had in the Morisco context of copying and reading: by refuting idolatry, this Islamised Christian narrative condemned Catholic *dulia*; by demonstrating a case of confessional concealment, it legitimised Morisco dissimulation; recalling the reward of religious martyrdom and Allah's eventual chastisement of unbelievers, it also provided comfort and fostered the congregation's fortitude and forbearance. A transliteration of this unpublished exegetical session is provided in the annex.

Keywords: Aljamiado texts; Islamic preaching; Moriscos history; inter- and intra-religious conversions; dissimulation.

Resumen

Este artículo explora el motivo de la conversión inter e intra-religiosa en los textos aljamiados, especialmente las funciones y motivaciones de su uso en la predicación. Una revisión de algunos textos apologéticos y doctrinales conocidos destaca que las narrativas de conversión eran idóneas para la instrucción religiosa, demostrando así una flexibilidad pragmática entre género textual y uso discursivo. El análisis de tres episodios en admoniciones inéditas subraya su papel retórico como *exempla* para convencer a su audiencia: estos episodios ilustran el tema de las exhortaciones, ofrecen modelos de piedad, especialmente de arrepentimiento u obediencia, y reafirman la supremacía del islam sobre otras religiones. El análisis de una historia de conversión del cristianismo primitivo insertada en una sesión exegética islámica permite profundizar en la significancia y los ecos que pudo tener en el contexto de copia y lectura morisco: al refutar la idolatría, esta narrativa cristiana islamizada condenaba la *dulia* católica; al mostrar un caso de ocultamiento confesional, legitimaba la disimulación morisca; recordando la recompensa del martirio religioso y el castigo final de Alá a los impíos incrédulos, también proporcionaba consuelo y fomentaba la fortaleza y la paciencia de la congregación. Se proporciona en anexo una transliteración de esta sesión exegética inédita.

Palabras clave: textos aljamiados; predicación islámica; historia de los moriscos; conversiones interreligiosas e intrarreligiosas; disimulación.

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1. Introduction¹

Sermons in *Aljamiado*—i.e. literally translated from Arabic into Iberian Romance languages²—are a rare surviving case of medieval Islamic preaching in a vernacular language.³ These Hispanic translations emerged during the 14th-15th centuries at a time when the Mudejars of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon were still permitted to reside in the Iberian Christian kingdoms as subjugated Muslim vassals.⁴ After three centuries of coexistence with Romance-speaking populations, the vast majority of the Mudejars in Castile, Aragon, and in Catalonia (as well as Portugal and Navarre) had lost their command of Arabic with only a learned minority retaining Arabic and being bilingual⁵ (which was in general not the case of Valencia and, of course later, of the Kingdom of Granada). Therefore, their *alfaquíes*—or religious leaders⁶—had to elaborate an Islam in the Romance languages to continue their mission and keep their flock on the straight path of Islam.

The homiletic and exhortatory texts in Arabic and *Aljamiado* of those groups are still mostly unpublished, *a fortiori* understudied.⁷ However,

er, their analysis is in itself of great interest, as Kathryn Miller pointed out, for their internal knowledge about the Mudejar populations.⁸ It would indeed allow for a better understanding of an essential aspect of Mudejar religiosity and enable scholars to comprehend the links between the texts and practices of a religious minority and, thus, their role in interfaith contacts. Above all, the production of *Aljamiado* and its use continued after the forced conversions of Muslims to Catholicism at the beginning of the 16th century until their expulsion between 1609 and 1614.⁹ Some of these so-called “newly converted Christians from Moors” (Sp. *cristianos nuevos de moros*), who were thereafter called “Moriscos”, secretly maintained the Islamic faith of their ancestors.¹⁰ Because of this change of circumstances and status, the *Aljamiado* texts may also—though not only—be characteristic of a by then illegal cryptic Islam, hunted down by the Inquisition, and whose use opposed the situation of conversion and catechesis of the newly converted.¹¹ In addition to the philological interest of this textual preservation, it is also a question of discerning within these different contexts the motivations or desired effects of these preaching texts.

Islamic preaching aims at delivering religious and moral instruction and guidance to the believers, but also plays a socio-political role in *Dār al-Islām*, legitimising or contesting a regime or inciting to defend the community.¹² The Mudejar context was a case of a Muslim minority in daily contact with and socio-politically dominated by another confession, while the context of the Morisco period is that of an imposed inter-religious

¹ A first draft of this article was presented at the 22nd Symposium of the International Medieval Sermons Studies Society, “Conversions and Life Passages through the Mirror of Medieval Preachers”, held online in July 2021

² Mainly Aragonese in a more or less advanced stage of Castilianisation: see n. 5. I apply the distinction between *aljamía*—the vernacular Romance of Muslim minorities—and *aljamiado*—the result of a literal translation from Arabic—proposed in Brisville-Fertin, “¿Aljamía o aljamiado?”

³ For the medieval Islamic West, another vernacular used in preaching was the Berber or Tamazigt under the Almohad promotion, although no document appears to have survived. See Shatzmiller, “al-Muwahhidūn”; Jones, *The Power of Oratory*, p. 92; Jones, “The preaching of the Almohads”; Ghouirgate, *L’Ordre almohade (1120-1269)*, chap. 5; Ghouirgate, “Le berbère au Moyen Âge”.

⁴ On Mudejars’ history, see Catlos, *Muslims*; Echevarría, *La minoría*; Hinojosa Montalvo, *Los mudéjares*.

⁵ On the emergence of *Aljamiado*, see Viguera Molins, “Introducción”; Montaner Frutos, “El auge”. On the linguistic evolutions, see Vicente, *El proceso*; Vicente, “La desarabización”; Brisville-Fertin, “Le discours *aljamiado*”, sec. 4.2.

⁶ Originally, *faqīh* in Arabic refers to an expert in *fiqh* or Islamic law: see MacDonald, “Faḳīh”. Due to the socio-cultural circumstances, its meaning evolved—especially as a loanword in Spanish—into a generic term for “religious leader” of the Islamic communities: on this leading role, cf. Miller, *Guardians*, pp. 8-10, 34-36, 48, 53-54, 82-83; Brisville-Fertin, “La critique de l’alfaqui au roi”, pp. 393-396, 399-406.

⁷ For Mudejar Arabic preaching, see especially Jones, “The Boundaries of Sin”; Jones, *The Power of Oratory*; Jones, “A Community of Saints”. For an overview on Mudejar and Morisco preaching in *Aljamiado*, see Brisville-Fertin, “La predicación”; Brisville-Fertin, “Le discours *aljamiado*”, vol. 1, § 3.1.2,

5.1.2. See also forthcoming Jones and Brisville-Fertin, “The Preaching”.

⁸ Miller, *Guardians*, p. 144.

⁹ The Mudejars of the Crown of Castile had to convert or leave the lands in 1501-1502, of the Kingdom of Navarre in 1516, and of the Crown of Aragon in 1525-1526. On Morisco history, see the classic study by Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos*.

¹⁰ We consider that not all the Moriscos were crypto-Muslims and that the members of those communities were positioned on a socio-confessional spectrum between the truly converted to Catholicism, who wished to integrate with the majority, and the irredentist Muslims hiding their faith and still practicing their ancestors’ religion in secrecy: on this spectrum see de Tapia, *La comunidad morisca de Ávila*; del Olivo Ferreiro, “Religiosidad [...] de Calatayud”; Moreno Díaz del Campo, *Los moriscos de La Mancha*; del Olivo Ferreiro, “Religiosidad [...] de Tarazona”.

¹¹ Cardaillac, *Morisques et Chrétiens*; Galmés de Fuentes, *Los moriscos*; Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*.

¹² See Jones, *The Power of Oratory*, p. 8, *passim*.

conversion. In that peculiar minority context, the pragmatic function of preaching and exhorting should then have been both to strengthen the faith of the Muslim believers in their heart by inciting them to adopt a (more) pious life—i.e. to repent, a variant of intra-religious conversion—and, particularly for the 16th century, to counter the possible contamination of Christianity among the flock.¹³ With this in mind, and in line with the central theme of the present monographic volume, this article will explore the motif of conversion—external as well as internal¹⁴—in Aljamiado exhortatory texts.

How did this motif of Islamic conversion, a medieval heritage appropriated by the alfaquis in the texts they translated, copied, and used, support their mission of inciting belief in and obedience to the Creator and of fighting against unbelief—or, in Qur’anic terminology, of “enjoining the good and forbidding the evil”¹⁵—in contexts of Christian domination? How might this motif have been textually used to instruct the congregation in religious matters? Specifically in exhortations, how did conversion narratives discursively promote an internal conversion of repenting and deepening one’s faith and practice or counter the surrounding Christian discourse? In general, what were the potential socio-cultural and pragmatic effects of these episodes, i.e. what were their potential meanings in the context in which they were actualised?

This article will be divided into three parts and an annex. As a preliminary textual state of art, the first part will begin with some known antecedents of conversion narratives in the Aljamiado texts and, more particularly, in the doctrinal literature for its interest and connexion with preaching. I shall then present and analyse some of the unpublished examples I have identified so far in the different exhortative genres. The example of the narrative of the “Three Apostles in Antioch” in a paraliturgical session (*mağlis*), copied in the second half of the 16th century, will finally lead us to consider the significance of the motif of conversion from an interfaith perspective and more specifically as a discursive strategy or

a meaningful narrative instrument of Morisco religious leadership within that context of crypto-Islamic practices. A simplified transliteration of the session will conclude this paper as a valuable annex for the research on Aljamiado texts and, more generally, on Islamic textual transmission and evolution in the vernacular.

2. Conversion narratives in Aljamiado: known antecedents in doctrinal and apologetic literature

Apart from several mentions in jurisprudential texts,¹⁶ numerous known cases of conversions are found in Aljamiado texts with a more or less devotional dimension, e.g. the stories of conversion of early Islamic heroes such as the future second caliph ‘Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭab (r. 13/634-23/644).¹⁷ Among famous literary narratives, we count the pseudo-*mağāzī* story of al-Miqdād—one of the earliest Prophet’s companions—and his beloved al-Mayāsa¹⁸ or the tale of Princess Caracayona’s conversion, the latter being abundantly copied in Aljamiado.¹⁹ For our purpose, the most significant examples are cases of *masā’il wa-ağwiba* or questions from and answers to Jews or Christians about Islam. Beforehand, it should be noted that all these episodes also illustrate the textual circulations between the Islamic East and West and the preservation by the Mudejars and the Moriscos of a literature that became traditional in Islamicate lands.²⁰

These examples of questions or *demandas* in their Aljamiado version are the *masā’il* of the Jewish man ‘Abd Allāh b. Salām (d. 43/663-664)²¹ or of the ten Jewish sages addressed to the Prophet²²

¹⁶ E.g., see references and analyses in Echevarría, “Conversion religieuse”.

¹⁷ Ed. in Hegyi, *Cinco Leyendas*, p. 138.

¹⁸ Ed. in Montaner Frutos, *El Recontamiento*; Montaner Frutos, “La aljamía”.

¹⁹ Ed. in Valero Cuadra, *La leyenda de “La Doncella Caracayona”*. This story is also of special interest for the rejection of the worship of idols. See also Infante, *The Arts of Encounter*, pp. 56-60.

²⁰ Daiber, “Masā’il Wa-adjwiba”; Daiber, *From the Greeks to the Arabs and Beyond*, chap. 6.

²¹ For the manuscript witnesses, see Brisville-Fertin, “Los códigos II”, p. 640. On these *demandas*, see Corriente, *Relatos píos*, p. 43; Colominas Aparicio, *The Religious Polemics*, pp. 79-81, 186-196. On this eminent Jewish convert, see Horowitz, “‘Abd Allāh b. Salām”.

²² For the manuscript witnesses, see Brisville-Fertin, “Los códigos II”, p. 634. On these *demandas*, see Martínez de Castilla, “Edición”, p. 75; Pascual Asensi, “Las ‘demandas de los diez sabios judíos al Profeta Mahoma’”; Martínez de Castilla, *Una biblioteca*, pp. 88, 365-366; Colominas Aparicio, *The Religious*

¹³ Jones and Hanska, “Medieval Sermons and Conversion”.

¹⁴ The field of conversion studies has evolved considerably in the last few decades. For a state of art, see Rambo and Farhadian, “Introduction”.

¹⁵ In Arabic, “*al-amr bi-l-ma’rūf wa-l-nahy ‘an al-munkar*”, Q 3:104, 110, 114, 9:71, 112, *passim*. See Cook, “al-Nahy ‘an al-Munkar”; Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong*.

and of the Christian Šarġīl b. Abī Šarġūn to Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq (r. 11/632-13/634) and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (r. 35/656-40/661).²³ These narratives of inter-religious dialogue report cases of conversion to Islam through a responding process, since in all the cases the requesters converted in the end. Indeed, we read, in “Las demandas de una conpañā de judíos”, “and they all became Muslims, as well as their wives, their companions, and many people from their lineage” (*I hiziéronse todos muçlimes i sus mujeres i conpañās i muchas gentes de sus linajes*), and, in “Las demandas que hizo Šarġīl b. Abī Šarġūn”, “And he became Muslim as well as his whole company, who came with him, and their salutation was good and they were taught the Sharia and the Sunna” (*I fizose muçlim él i toda su conpañā aquellos que vinieron con él i fue bueno su açalem i demostráro[n]les la xar‘a i l’açunna*).²⁴

Above all, these dialogical narratives constitute doctrinal material, since the answers to the questions are expositions of Islamic theology, orthodoxy, and orthopraxy intended to convince the asker-recipients to convert to Islam. In this respect, these *demandas* can be seen as a *mise en abyme* of inter-religious conversions not for an external use, but rather to transmit the principles of Islam for an instructive and proselytising internal use.²⁵ They thereby establish the supremacy of Islam over the other monotheistic traditions and affirm Muḥammad’s prophethood—according to Ayman S. Ibrahim’s typology of conversion *topoi*.²⁶

From a discursive point of view, these dialogues which finally result in conversions are rhetorical instruments of instruction and of persuasion. Fur-

thermore, their potential efficacy also rests upon or is increased by a pragmatic re-enactment: indeed, these *mises en abyme* re-enact for the audience, they replay through the conversion phrases of the askers, the ritual of conversion and affirmation in Islam. We read respectively in the “Demandas de la conpañā de judíos”, the “Demandas que hizo Šarġīl b. Abī Šarġūn”, and the “Demandas de ‘Abd Allāh b. Salām”:

“You tell the truth, o Muḥammad. Give [us] your right hand”, and he gave it to them. And they said: “O Muḥammad, there is no disbelief after belief. We bear witness that there is no lord but Allah, sole and without partner, and that you are Muḥammad His servant and His true messenger.” (*«Verdad dizes, ye Muḥammad. Da ‘cá tu mano la derecha», i dióseles. I dixiéronle: «Ye Muḥammad, no ay descreyencia après de la creyencia. Nosotros hacemos testigo que no ay otro señor sino Allah solo sin aparcero i que tú eres Muḥammad Su siervo i Su mensajero verdadero»*).²⁷ Afterwards, the Christian stood up and said: “Give [me] your hand, o ‘Alī, for there is no disbelief after belief, and I bear witness that there is no other lord but Allah alone, for there is no partner unto Him. And I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His messenger whom He sent with the truth. (*Depués levantose en pied el cristiano i dixo: «Da ‘cá tu mano, ye ‘Alī, que no ay descreyencia après de creyencia i fago testimonio que no ay otro señor sino Allah solo, que no ay aparcero a Él; i fago testimoniyyo que Muḥammad es Su siervo i Su mensajero que lo envió con la verdad»*).²⁸

He said: “You tell the truth, [O messenger of Allah]”. He said: “Good fortune to the servant who will be in the shade of His Mercy and will be spared from His wrath. I bear witness that there is no lord but Allah and you, Muḥammad, [are] His servant and His messenger. And whoever will bear witness outside of these words, he already disbelieves in Allah, the Lord of all things. (*Dixo: «Verdad dizes, yā rasūlu ‘Llah». Dixo: «Buenaventura para el siervo que será en la sombra de Su piedad i será apartado de Su saña. Yo fago testigo que no ay señor sino Allah i tú, Muḥammad, Su siervo i Su mensajero. I quien fará testigo afuera d’esta palabra, pues, ya descreye con Allah, el Señor de todas las cosas»*).²⁹

The concluding *šahāda* therefore constitutes a re-enactment of the process and the ritual of conversion, pragmatically actualised by the reading performance. Indirectly, such actualised and thus actualising performances renew the audience’s adhesion to Islam upon expounding the Prophet’s

Polemics, pp. 80-82, 186-196; Suárez García, “Anónimo. Las demandas de los judíos al annabī Muhammad (BDDH=35)”; Suárez García, “Cuatro textos aljamiados”, pp. 31-49.

²³ For the manuscript witnesses, see Brisville-Fertin, “Los códices II”, p. 635. On these *demandas*, see Roza Candás, “Narraciones”, p. 142; Suárez García, “Anónimo. Las demandas de Šarġīl ibnu Šarġūn (BDDH=235)”.

²⁴ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 113r, 128r. All the translations into English are mine; I detail my transliterated regularization below, see Annex.

²⁵ On conversion narratives, see Hindmarsh, “Religious conversion”. On the uses and values of conversion (autobiographical) narratives as well as their polemical potential, especially in the Iberian Peninsula, see Szpiech, *Conversion and Narratives*. On *topoi* of conversion, see Ibrahim, *Conversion to Islam*.

²⁶ *Topoi* of supremacy in conversions of the *ahl al-kitāb* highlight Islamic superiority and hegemony, while *topoi* of affirmation in conversions after hearing the preaching of Islam or encountering the Prophet, among other cases, stress the excellence of Islam. See Ibrahim, *Conversion to Islam*, pp. xv, 6, 89-97, 130-143, 150-154, 213-215.

²⁷ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 113r.

²⁸ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 127v-128r.

²⁹ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 316v.

or his Companions’ answers and proclaiming the profession of faith.³⁰

Without dwelling further on these well-known episodes from the Aljamiado collection, I would just like to comment on the distinction between textual genres and their discursive purposes and uses. These narrative episodes of the beginning of Islam belong to devotional literature. Yet their doctrinal exposition in the form of dialogues makes them particularly suitable for being used as paraliturgical exhortations to instruct the believers during religious sessions. First, these questions-answers provides theological and doctrinal knowledge from unquestionable authorities. Second, their dialogical structure imitates or simulates in a vivid text the oral event of a teaching and edifying exchange similar to the ones which can happen during an instructional session. This very function of being actualised in literacy events is encoded in the ritualised conclusive lines of the three *demandas*, copied in the Manuscript 11 conserved at the Escuelas Pías in Saragossa:³¹

Here end the questions that the company of the ten Jewish sages made to the Prophet Muḥammad [Peace be upon him]. May Allah forgive their scribe and their reader and their listener, and the entire *ummah* of Muḥammad [PBUH], the Muslim men and women, the believers of both genders, the living and the dead. (*Acábanse las demandas que hizieron la compañía de los diez sabios de los judíos al annabī Muḥammad —ṣalā Allahu ‘alayhi wa-sallam—. Perdone Allah a su escribano i a su leidor i a su escu[ch]ador i a toda el alummah de Muḥammad —[ṣ‘m]— los muḥlīmes i muḥlīmas, los creyentes i creyentas, los vivos y los muertos.*) Let us beseech Allah to grant us understanding [what is] good and His commandments, and to keep us away from His disobedience by His mercy and grace, for He is almighty over all things [...]. Thus, call upon Him sincerely, for to Him belongs the true religion. (*Demandemos aḏa Allah que nos dé a’ntender el bien i Sus mandamientos i nos aparte de Su desobediencia por Su piedad i Su gracia que Él es sobre toda cosa poderoso [...]. [P]ues llamadlo puramente que a Él es l’adīn verdadero.*)

Here ends the story of ‘Abd Allāh b. Salām and our Prophet Muḥammad [PBUH]. May Allah forgive its writer and its reader and its listener. [Amen, amen, amen, O Lord of the worlds]. (*Acábase el alḥadīḥ de ‘Ab{u}du Allah Ibnu Ḥalema co[n] nuestro annabī Muḥammad —ṣ‘m—. Perdone Allah a su escribidor*

i a su leidor i a su escuchador. Amīn, amīn, amīn. [Y]ā rab[b]i al‘[ā]lamīna.)

To sum up thus far, numerous accounts of conversion to Islam can be found in devotion-al-doctrinal Aljamiado literature, especially in questions-responses texts. These stories exemplify cases of conversion through dialogue. When read, they discursively enacted the ritual of conversion for the Muslim audience, instructed them, and persuasively renewed their belonging to the true religion. The answers provided constitute doctrinal material, which explains their functioning as instructional exhortations. Accounts of conversion to Islam are thus quite recurrent in the extant literature; but what about in the exhortations and preaching preserved in Aljamiado?

3. Conversion episodes in paraliturgical exhortations (*mawā‘iz* and *maḡālīs*)

The corpus of preaching in Aljamiado is literarily a largely unknown and unexploited textual goldmine. I have identified a number of conversions accounts in unedited preaching texts. I will first present examples of conversion episodes inserted in an admonition—*monestación* (Ar. *maw‘īza*)—, before detailing a pre-Islamic conversion narrative, itself converted into an Islamic parenetic-exegetic session—*asiento* (Ar. *maḡlīs*).³²

3.1. Exemplary episodes in *monestaciones*

Like other narratives used as *exempla*, the two episodes that I will now present serve to support and illustrate the purpose of the admonition into which they are inserted,³³ in this case repentance (Ar. *tawba*): “Monestación i dēxemplo en la repitencia”, preserved in the manuscript BEP 11, fol. 7v-13r. Although the narrative includes anecdotes of both external conversion to Islam and internal conversion within another monotheistic confession, namely Judaism, the sermon’s topic is repentance. However, apart from conversion to Islam (Ar. *islām*) being assimilated to repenting from error and returning to God,³⁴ a believer’s

³⁰ It actually reflects the ritual wording stipulated in notarial forms, see e.g. Jones & Simonsohn, “Notarial Forms for the Conversion of Non-Muslims to Islam”.

³¹ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 113v, 128r, 316v.

³² On the different preaching genres and subgenres among Mudejars and Moriscos, see Brisville-Fertin, “La predicación”; Brisville-Fertin, “Le discours aljamiado”, sec. 1.3.4, 5.1.2. Preaching was the main textual genre on which I focused in my PhD dissertation; its publishing is forthcoming.

³³ For other illustrations of the use of *exempla* in Aljamiado texts, see Brisville-Fertin, “La production en aljamiado”; Brisville-Fertin, “La critique de l’alfaqui au roi”.

³⁴ Gardet and Jomier, “Islām”. See also Woodberry, “Conversion to Islam”.

repentance to embrace a purer and more pious life can also be understood as an internal conversion within the same faith, as accurately formulated by Marc D. Baer.³⁵

The first episode of conversion relates Waḥṣī ibn Ḥarb's doubts about his conversion,³⁶ which he describes to the Prophet in a letter.³⁷ Although willing to convert to Islam, Waḥṣī was a polytheist or associator (Ar. *muṣrik*), a murderer (of, among others, the Prophet's uncle Ḥamza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib), and a fornicator, corresponding in all three points to the sinner that the Qur'anic verse 25:68 denounces:

It was recounted by Ibn 'Abbās [...] that Waḥṣī killed Ḥamza, the uncle of the Prophet—[PBUH]—and he wrote to the Messenger of Allah—[PBUH]—from Mecca—may God honour it—to Medina saying: “I want to become a Muslim, but something restrains me, an āyah in the Qur'an that was revealed to you, O Muḥammad; it is the saying of Allah the Most High: ‘Those who do not invoke with Allah another lord or kill the person which Allah has forbidden [to kill], except rightly, and do not commit adultery [Q 25:68]’. And I have done all three of these things, so see if there is any repentance for me”. Then this āyah was revealed: “Except [those] who repent, believe, and do righteous deeds. For them Allah will accept their repentance and replace their evil deeds with good.” [Q 25:68]

(*I fue recounted por Ibnu 'Abeṣ [...] que Waḥṣīyā' mató a Ḥamzaī, 'ami del Annabī—s' m—, i escribió al Mensajero de Allah—s' m— desde Makka—ónrela Allah— al Almadīna i dixo: «Yo me quiero tornar muḥlim sino que me lo devieda una ale'a qu'está en el Alqur'ān, que fue deballada sobre tú, ye Muḥammad, i es el dicho de Allah ta'ālā donde dize: “Aquellos que no llaman con Allah a otro señor i no matan a la persona aquella que ḥaramó Allah sino con derecho i no fazen azzinā [C. 25, 68]”.* I

*yo ya é fecho todas esas tres cosas, pues, mira si ay a mí repitencia». Entonces decendió esta alea i dize: «Así sino quien se arrepiente i cre'e i obra buenas obras, pues ad aquellos reḥibeles Allah sus repitencias i truécables sus pecados por alḥaçanas [C. 25, 70]».*³⁸)

The ensuing epistolary exchange leads to the revelation of two other Qur'anic verses (Q 4:48, 39:53) until Waḥṣī has nothing to respond to the latter āyah, nor any excuse not to convert.

Waḥṣī wrote to [the Prophet] saying, “In this verse there is a condition and provision: it is the good deed, and I do not know if I shall be able to perform the good deed or not”. And the saying of Allah was revealed, exalted be He, which states that “Allah does not forgive associating partners with Him, but forgives what is less than that to whom He wills” [Q 4:48]. The Messenger wrote that to Waḥṣī, and then Waḥṣī wrote back saying, “In that verse there is a condition, which is that it depends on whether Allah wills [it], and I do not know if He will forgive me or not”. Then the saying of Allah the Most High was revealed that states: “O servants, those who have committed excesses against themselves and have committed heavy sins, do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for Allah forgives all sins, for He is the Forgiving, the Merciful [Q 39:53]”. The Prophet wrote this to Waḥṣī, and Waḥṣī found in it no covenant or condition that would excuse him from becoming Muslim, so he became Muslim.

(*I escribió a él Waḥṣīyā' que: «En esa aleya ay condición i convenio i es la buena obra, i yo no sé si podré sobre la buena obra o si no». I decendió el dicho de Allah ta'ālā diziendo que «Allah no perdona a quien mete aparcero a otro señor con Él i perdona lo qu'es a menos de aquello a quien quiere» [C. 4, 48] I escribió el Mensajero con aquello a Waḥṣīyā' i después volvió a escribir Waḥṣīyā' qu': «En aquella aleya ay condición i es que dize “si querrá Allah” i yo no sé si me querrá perdonar*

³⁵ Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, pp. 13-16. Also see Rambo and Farhadian, “Introduction”, pp. 10-11; Hermansen, “Conversion to Islam in theological and historical perspectives”, pp. 642-643.

³⁶ Waḥṣī ibn Ḥarb was an Abyssian slave soldier who fought in the Quraysh army against the Prophet Muhammad and his followers during the Battle of Uḥud in 3/625. During this battle he killed Muhammad's uncle, Ḥamza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, and subsequently converted to Islam. See Meredith-Owens, “Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib”; Robinson, “Uḥud”.

³⁷ This story is contained in Abū l-Layṭ al-Samarqandī's *Tanbīh al-Ġāfilīn* (*Warning to the neglectful*) in the first chapter on repentance: ms. BNE 4871, fol. 45v; this manuscript was edited by Busto Cortina, “El Alkitāb de Ḥamarqandī”. Although his PhD is unpublished, the transliteration was available until recently on Corpus de Textos Aljamiado-Moriscos (COTEAM): <https://www.arabicaetromanica.com/coteam/> [accessed 2024-02-28].

³⁸ CEP 11, fol. 8v. *Nota bene*: for all Qur'anic quotes, the Arabic transliteration comes from: Zirkor, “Koran - Transliteration”. The Spanish translation comes from: Cortés, *El Corán*. The English translation comes from: Droge, *The Qur'ān*. Q 25:68, cf. “and those who do not call on another god with God, and do not kill the person whom God has forbidden (to be killed), except by right, and do not commit adultery — whoever does that will meet (his) penalty”; “No invocan a otro dios junto con Dios, no matan a nadie que Dios haya prohibido, si no es con justo motivo, no fornican. Quien comete tal, incurre en castigo”; Q 26:70, cf. “except for the one who turns (in repentance), and believes, and does a righteous deed — and those, God will change their evil deeds (into) good ones, (for) God is forgiving, compassionate”; “No así quien se arrepienta, crea y haga buenas obras. A éstos Dios les cambiará sus malas obras en buenas. Dios es indulgente, misericordioso”.

o no». Pues, *decendió el dicho de Allah ta'ālā diziendo: «Ye siervos, aquellos que os sobresalistes sobre vuestras personas i esca'ecistes en los grandes pecados no os desconfi'éis de la piadađ de Allah, que Allah perdona el pecado todo, qu'Él es el Perdonador piadoso [C. 39, 53]». I escribió con esto a Wahšīⁱⁿ i no hall[ó] Wahšīⁱⁿ en esto ningún convenio ni condición para poderse escusar de volverse muçlim i volviose muçlim.*³⁹⁾

This exchange of letters from the beginnings of Islam illustrates in the *monestación* on repentance that God forgives all sins to the truly repentant servant, even the worst sinner; God's mercy is infinite. The doubtful Wahšī serves as a counterpoint to the Muslim audience, since even he will be forgiven if he truly repents. Moreover, his story seemingly provides Qur'anic exegesis, albeit on a basic level. The episode also echoes the immediately previous narrative in the exhortation: a dialogue in which Adam implores Allah to favour and increase him and his descendants regarding Iblīs' temptations to fall into sin, and whose conclusion is the same verse revealed to the first man and prophet.⁴⁰ The beginnings of human kind and of Islam are thus paired to exemplify the Almighty's infinite mercy promised in verse 39:53.

The second example relates the inner conversion of an *Isrā'īliyya* (Jewish) prostitute, when one of her clients, fearing divine punishment, turned away from her and repented, even before he fell into sin and committed adultery.

Allah the Most High reminded that woman of the blessing of that servant, and the fear descended upon her, and Allah touched her heart because of what she saw of Him, and she said in her heart: “Upon this man has entered the great fear of Allah, the Most High, in the first sin that he has sinned, and I have already committed this sin, and in this manner, and for a long time. The Lord, the One who is feared, is my Lord, just as He is his Lord.

Therefore, it is more fitting that I fear Him than he does.” So, she repented to Allah the Most High and closed her door to people. She dressed in the most worn-out clothes that she had and dedicated herself to servitude, and she remained in her servitude as Allah the Most High willed.

(*I recosiró Allah ta'ālā ad aquella mujer del albaraka de aquel siervo i cayó en ella la temorança i tocole Allah ta'ālā en su coraçón por lo qu'ella vio d'él i dixo ella en su coraçón: «A este onbre le á dentrodo sobr'él la temor grande de Allah ta'ālā en el primer pecado que á pecado i yo ya é pecado d'esta i d'esta manera mucho tienpo i el Señor Aquel que se teme d'Él es mi Señor así como es su Señor, pues, yo perteneço temerle i es más razón que yo lo tema que no él». Pues, la ora repintiose ada Allah ta'ālā i cerró su puerta sobre las gentes i vistiose las más rotas ropas que tenía i volviose sobre la servitud i est[u]vo en su servitud lo que quiso Allah ta'ālā.*)⁴¹

Although there is no mention of the Jewish woman converting anachronistically to Islam, she did repent to Allah. This fact underscores that both Muslims and Jews share the same monotheistic tradition, legacy, and belief in the same God. The inner conversion process of the Jewish prostitute is described in detail: Allah was the source of her redemption since He did remind her (“*recosiró ad aquella mujer*”) of the blessing (Ar. *baraka*) granted to the pious repentant worshipper (*siervo*, Ar. *'abd*, *'ābid*).⁴² Her aspiration for the same blessing brought about piety and fear of God (*temorança*, Ar. *taqwā*) and led her to repentance (*arripentancia*, Ar. *tawba*). Through her contrition and religious observance (*servitud*, Ar. *'ibāda*), the newly repentant woman became worthy of the Almighty's forgiveness (Ar. *gufrān*), grace (Ar. *rahma*), and blessing, since, at the end of the story, she gave birth to seven prophets of the children of Israel.⁴³ The exemplary dimension is verbally stated in a recommendation to the attentive listener to meditate on this conversion:

Thus, it is fitting to the sensible one to ponder how an adulterous and worthless woman, due to her per-

³⁹ CEP 11, fol. 8v-9r. Q 4:48, cf. “Surely God does not forgive (anything) being associated with Him, but He forgives what is other than that for whomever He pleases. Whoever associates (anything) with God has forged a great sin”; “*Dios no perdona que se le asocie. Pero perdona lo menos grave a quien Él quiere. Quien asocia a Dios comete un gravísimo pecado*”. Q 39:53, cf. “[Say:] ‘My servants who have acted wantonly against themselves! Do not despair of the mercy of God. Surely God forgives sins — all (of them). Surely He — He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate’”; “[Di:] «¡Siervos que habéis prevaricado en detrimento propio! ¡No desesperéis de la misericordia de Dios! Dios perdona todos los pecados. Él es el Indulgente, el Misericordioso»”.

⁴⁰ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 7.

⁴¹ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 12, 13r. Cf. Ms. BNE 4871, fol. 55v-56v.

⁴² The wording (e.g. “*cayó en ella la temorança*”) is somewhat similar to other Christian conversion narratives; see Stromberg, “The Role of Language in Religious Conversion”, pp. 120-121.

⁴³ Willing to know how to serve Allah from the pious client, she travelled to find him, who died instantly upon seeing her at his doorstep. She then married his brother to whom she bore seven children.

turbance and her abundant repentance and servitude, bore seven prophets, and Allah was pleased with her and made her the mother of the righteous. (*Pues esto conviene sobr' el cuerdo en que pare mientras cómo una mujer adúltera [sic] i baldera, por causa de su estorbamiento i por la mucha de su arripentancia i su servitud, parió siete annabíes y se acontentó Allah ta'alà d'ella i la puso madre de los šāliḥes.*)⁴⁴

The story of this Jewish woman offers narratively a model of utter depravation which is completely reversed by reason of an external accident and a divinely induced crisis of conscience. With some adaptation, Louis Rambo's stages of the converting process could partly be illustrated by this story:⁴⁵ the *context* is the pre-Islamic Jewish epoch, in which an *encounter* with an involuntary *advocate*, the pious client, provokes a *crisis* in the prostitute's inner-self; she leaves on a *quest* to learn from this pious man, *commits* to repent and serve the Almighty from now on, and, as a *consequence* of her true repentance and inner conversion, she bears prophets of God to her people.

Apart from the virtuous circle leading from the pious fear of the Creator to obtaining His blessing by repenting, these two episodes complement each other. Indeed, they establish a link and analogies between outer and inner conversions—rather than to and within Islam, since the second *exemplum* featured a Jewish woman—according to Baer's statement, as mentioned above.⁴⁶ Thus, they help to establish a virtuous model of the repenting believer trusting in God's mercy: whatever the circumstances, the degree of depravity, or the monotheistic confession, repentance to Allah is the key to salvation for polytheists, the people of the Book (*ahl al-kitāb*), as well as sinners.

Moreover, both episodes are related in some way to interfaith contacts: Waḥṣī's conversion refers to the very beginning of Islam, when it spread and came into contact with other religious traditions. The Jewish woman's repentance may appear as one of the Jewish exemplary traditions that were integrated and Islamised into Islamic discourses. Furthermore, it reaffirms the supremacy of Islam, as restoring the genuine monotheist religion which predates Muḥammad's revelation since the very Creation. This textual Islamisation borrowing from other religious

traditions and this atemporal supremacy are both also illustrated in the next narrative exhortation.

3.2. An exegetical narrative in an instructive session

The main extract I wish to present and comment on is the case of a well-known Islamisation of an exemplary parable (Ar. *maṭal*) of an early-Christian narrative about conversions,⁴⁷ inserted into a paraliturgical-instructional preaching session or *asiento* (Ar. *maḡlis*), itself contained in an unpublished Morisco sermonary.⁴⁸ This exegetical *asiento* on verse 13 of Surah 36 “Yā Sīn” is indeed mainly composed, after a *ḥadīṭ* and its explanatory commentary, of a version of the story of the three Christian apostles (*alḥawariyos*, Ar. *alḥawāriyyūn*) sent to the idolatrous king of Antioch and the martyrdom of Ḥabīb al-Naḡḡār (i.e. the Carpenter⁴⁹). The session is entitled “Asiento en el di[*ch*]o de Allah ta'alà: «waḍriblahum maṭalān aṣḥāba alqaryatī [i]ḍā ḡā'ahā almursalūna», que quiere dezir: «I dio por dēxemplo a ellos las conpañas de la cibdad de Alṭāqiyatī [sic] cuando vinieron a ella los mensajeros»” (Sitting [i.e. session] on Allah the Most High's saying: [Q 36:13], which means: “And he gave them as an example the people of the city of Antioch [Anṭāqiya] when the messengers came to it”).⁵⁰

Let us underscore first that, even though the name of the city is not specified in the Qur'an, exegesis (*tafsīr*) has associated Antioch to verses 36:13-29 since the very beginning of Islam.⁵¹

⁴⁷ The Islamisation of the Christian act has already been thoroughly analyzed, especially the exegetical readings and interconfessional influences: see Busse, “Antioch”; Déclais, “Les origines”.

⁴⁸ Ms. BEP 12, fol. 112r-138r. The first part of this miscellaneous codex is a collection of sessions which may be a translation of an Arabic opus—a likely *Kitābal-maḡālīs al-'aḡība* (The book of the wonderful sessions), according to the initial title translation—to be identified and located. For a presentation, see Brisville-Fertin, “Los códices I”; Brisville-Fertin, “Los códices II”. The same author is currently working on a complete edition of this text.

⁴⁹ On this figure, see Vajda, “Ḥabīb al-Naḍīdījār”; Busse, “Antioch”, pp. 160-161, 165-176; Déclais, “Les origines”, pp. 89-91.

⁵⁰ Ms. BEP 12, fol. 112r. For the Qur'anic verse 36:13, cf. “wa-ḍrib lahū maṭalān aṣḥāba l-qaryatī iḍ ḡā'ahā l-mursalūn”; “Strike a parable for them: the companions of the town, when the envoys came to it”; “Propónles una parábola: los habitantes de la ciudad. Cuando vinieron a ella los enviados”. The whole *asiento* appears as an annex: hereafter, I cite my English translation and the foliation.

⁵¹ Busse, “Antioch”, pp. 159-161; Déclais, “Les origines”,

⁴⁴ Ms. BEP 11, fol. 12, 13r.

⁴⁵ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*.

⁴⁶ See references *supra* note 35.

Moreover, during the same early period, the man who enjoins his people to follow Allah’s envoys in verses 36:20-25 and is granted access to Paradise in verse 36:26 has been assimilated as a legendary Christian martyr, killed by idolaters for professing the creed in the one God, and Islamised as Ḥabīb (al-Naǧǧār)—whose tomb was an interconfessional site of veneration in Antioch.⁵²

This Eastern pre-Islamic episode is mentioned in a number of classical medieval works:⁵³ e.g. al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) *Ta’rīḥ al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*,⁵⁴ al-Mas’ūdī’s (d. 346/956) *Murūǧ al-ḍahab wa-ma’ādin al-ǧawhar*,⁵⁵ al-Maǧdisī’s *Kitāb al-bad’ wa-l-ta’rīḥ* (c. 355/966),⁵⁶ and al-Ṭa’labī’s (d. 427/1035) *Arā’is al-maǧālis fī qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā’*.⁵⁷ All these authors report the story with some differences and specify various authorities or versions, which denote a long process of Islamisation of the parable as much as borrowings or influences from Christian traditions and hagiography,⁵⁸ indeed, at the end of his analysis, Heribert Busse states that it “has, throughout the course of centuries, become a reservoir of Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions”.⁵⁹ The insertion of this story into a paraliturgical session is understandable and expected because of the exegetical interpretation and explanation it provides—after all, al-Ṭa’labī’s work was also a collection of such instructive and entertaining sessions on the lives of the prophets and it begins with the same Q 36:13 as the Aljamiado *asiento*.⁶⁰ Let us consider this Aljamiado version in a bit more detail.

The version’s *isnād* goes back to the Prophet and mentions Ibn ‘Abbās (m. 68/687) quoted

by ‘Abd al-Malik Ibn Ḥabīb (m. 238/853):⁶¹ an exegetical *ḥadīṭ*, the story tells of Allah sending the angel Gabriel (*Ġibrīl*) to two apostles—John (Yaḥyā b. Zaydⁱⁿ *sic pro* Zabdī) and Simon Peter (Sam’ān)—to bid them to go to Antioch to admonish and convert its idolatrous king to His service, i.e. a strict monotheism or proto-Islam—“And call him to My service and to acknowledge Me as Lord, and call him to faith mercifully, for he is ignorant [*torpe*] and does not know Me” (fol. 115v-116r).⁶² After their frontal aggressive preaching failed, He sent a third envoy—Jules/Yūliyus (Alj. *يُولْيُيُس*), a likely deformation of Būlus/Paul (Ar. *بولس*), or less likely Yūnus (Ar. *يُونُس*)⁶³—, demanding a gentle and merciful preaching to turn him to Islam (“*volverlo al addīn del aliḡlām*”, fol. 119r)—I will return later to this vividly opposition between ways of preaching and converting—. Meanwhile Allah’s sending—and not Jesus/‘Īsā’s—is consistent with Qur’anic exegesis, this “combination” of apostles is the one which appears in the Christian textual tradition of the Acts of Peter,⁶⁴ as well as in the *tafāsir* of al-Ṭabrisī (d. 1154) and Ibn

⁶¹ See respectively Gilliot, “‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās”; Muranyi, “‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb”. Yet, the episode seems absent from the edition of Ibn Ḥabīb’s *K. al-ta’rīḥ* I consulted: Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta’rīḥ*.

⁶² *Torpe* may likely translate *ǧāhil*, “ignorant”, i.e. “not knowing God, the Prophet and the Law”, the pre-Islamic *ǧāhiliyya* being usually rendered by “time of ignorance”; Ed., “Djāhiliyya”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online*, Leiden, Brill, 2010, doi:https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_1933.

⁶³ According to Zotenberg’s translation, Ṭabarī says the envoys’ names were, differing between commentators, Šadūq, Šadiq, and Šalūm or Thomas, Paul, and Simeon: al-Ṭabarī, *Chronique*, vol. 2, p. 51; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *The History IV*, p. 168. Mas’ūdī specifies that most of people consider the third to be Peter (“Petrus in Latin [*rūmiyya*], Sam’ān in Arabic, and Šam’ūn al-Šafā’ in Syriac”), whereas other authors and the Christians sects (*firaq*) agreed that he was Paul (Būlus) and the other two Thomas (Tūmā) and Peter (Buṭrus): al-Mas’ūdī, *Les Prairies*, pp. 127-129. According to Huart’s translation, al-Maǧdisī gives successively, not without contradictions: John (Yaḥyā), Thomas (Tūmān), and Simeon (Šim’ūn); Nūmān, Balos/Paul (Bālūš), and Simeon (Šim’ūn); Simeon (Šim’ūn), Balos/Paul (Bālūš), and Simon Peter (Šam’ān al-šafā’): al-Maǧdisī, *Kitāb al-bad’ wa-l-ta’rīḥ*, vol. 3, pp. 5, 127, 130; al-Maǧdisī, *Le livre de la création*, vol. 3, pp. 5, 130-131, 134. Al-Ṭa’labī adds, among other many names, John (Yaḥyā) and Jonah (Yūnus), according to Wahb, for the first two, and Simon the Brass-worker or, according to Muqātil, Sam’ān: al-Ṭa’labī, ‘Arā’is Al-majālis, pp. 676-677. *Nota bene*: it seems a collusion might have happened in those texts—or for their translators—between the Syriac-Arabised form for Simon (Šam’ūn) and the Arabic form for Simeon (Šim’ūn), since both, without full vocalization, are homographs.

⁶⁴ Busse, “Antioch”, pp. 157-159; Déclais, “Les origines”, pp. 85-86.

pp. 87-91. A comparison with the preserved exegesis in Aljamiado could be of interest, although it cannot be included here due to the limit of space.

⁵² After tracing the evolution of the character of Ḥabīb, Busse states: “He is an artificial saint and his biography is a patchwork of elements borrowed from various sources”, Busse, “Antioch”, pp. 160-175 cit. pp. 174-175.

⁵³ See references in Vajda, “Ḥabīb al-Naǧǧār”.

⁵⁴ al-Ṭabarī, *The History IV*, pp. 167-170; al-Ṭabarī, *Chronique*, vol. 2, pp. 50-52.

⁵⁵ al-Mas’ūdī, *Les Prairies*, vol. 1, § 127-128; al-Mas’ūdī, *Historical Encyclopaedia*, pp. 129-130.

⁵⁶ al-Maǧdisī, *Le livre de la création*, vol. 6, pp. 5, 130-131, 134. On this author’s work, see Réd., “al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir (ou al-Muṭahhar) al-Maǧdisī”.

⁵⁷ al-Ṭa’labī, ‘Arā’is Al-majālis, pp. 676-680.

⁵⁸ Busse, “Antioch”, pp. 159-175; Déclais, “Les origines”, pp. 83-91.

⁵⁹ Busse, “Antioch”, p. 176.

⁶⁰ Rippin, “al-Ṭa’labī”; al-Ṭa’labī, ‘Arā’is Al-majālis, pp. xi-xiii, 676.

Kaṭīr (d. 1373), although with the Syriac form Šamʿūn for the first one and as Yūhanā for the second.⁶⁵

By feigning externally to worship the idols and keeping firm inwardly his faith in Allah, Yūlius befriends the king of Antioch and, thanks to the latter's affection, secures the liberation of his fellow apostles and the challenge for them to demonstrate the power of the Almighty in a duel of miracles echoing the one of Moses with Pharaoh's magicians. Yūlius pretends to be on the side of the idolaters, in this therefore false confrontation between confessions, before revealing at the end the purpose of his presence at the king's side: "I too am to you a disillusioning admonisher on behalf of the Lord of the peoples [...]. And I have been in your company until you have seen the power of my Lord and your Lord" (fol. 135).

Beforehand, among the miracles the apostles performed always thanks to Allah's power ("con el poderío de Allah", fol. 126v, 129r, 133r), a resurrected young man, Ḥabīb's son in the *asiento*'s version, offers a chilling testimony from beyond the grave to confirm the king's disbelief (*descreyencia*) and the apostles as envoys of Allah to be followed:

Yes, and it is the religion of disbelief and error. [...] O king, your possessions and your wealth, you have them here in the world, and these messengers tell you the truth, that you live in falsehood. If you knew what I found of the torment (*al-ʿaḍeb*, Ar. *al-aḍāb*) [of the afterlife], you would be amazed" (fol. 130v-131r).⁶⁶

Not only does the resurrected son give an Islamic preview of the Underworld and now believe in his past mistake as an idolater and in the divine mission of the apostles, but his father also converts to the belief in Allah: "Then, when [Ḥabīb] saw his son, he went to him, embraced him, and Ḥabīb al-Nağğār made himself a believer, and his belief

in Allah was good" (fol. 133v-134r). Afterwards, Ḥabīb goes to preach his new creed in the city and dies under the blows of the king's men as a martyr of monotheism, pronouncing the verses 36:26-27: "Would that my people had knowledge that my Lord has forgiven me and that He has placed among the honoured" (fol. 124v). The king's obstinacy and his order to put the apostles to death lead to a plea from the third apostle, the rescue of all three by the angel Gabriel sent by Allah, and the descent of the angels and the wrath of the Almighty upon the city, annihilated by one Cry (Ar. *ṣayḥa*).⁶⁷

The *asiento* version is consistent with Islamic medieval exegesis: Antioch is explicitly identified by name in the verse and the apostles are sent by Allah. Moreover, according to a closing saying from Ibn ʿAbbās, Ḥabīb is buried in Antioch—and revered as a proto-Islamic martyr⁶⁸—and his corpse was preserved from the torment of the grave because of his firm belief in Allah: "Ḥabīb al-Nağğār was buried in the city of Antioch, and no torment [of the grave] touched his body because of the goodness of his faith and his firm belief in Allah, the Most High" (fol. 137v-138r).⁶⁹

The elaboration of this session, which inserts this well-known exegetical parable—subsequently converted into a keystone of a paraliturgical exhortation—most likely is due to an Arabic version that has yet to be identified, as with many other Aljamiado translations.⁷⁰ However, this Morisco version sheds light on a traditional text known and used by Muslims under Christian domination for their religious instruction and at some time translated. Its early-Christian and pre-Islamic origin and its Islamisation seem very significant from the Mudejar and Morisco point of view. The situation of Christian socio-political and

⁶⁵ Busse, "Antioch", p. 164. See al-Ṭabrisī, *Mağmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, Arabic version online: <http://holyquran.net/tafseer/majma/index.html>, sūra: 36, ayā: 13 [accessed 2024-06-11]. Déclais, "Les origines", pp. 90-91. See Ibn Kaṭīr, *Tafsīr*, 36:13-17: English translation online: <https://quran.com/36:14/tafsirs/en-tafsir-ibn-kathir>, p. 4188 [accessed 2024-06-11]. After quoting Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī's (m. 671/1273) *tafsīr* also gives, according to other commentators, Simon—or Simeon—(شمعون) and John (Yūhanā) or Simon (Samʿān) and John (Yaḥyā), before giving Šamʿūn al-Šafā as the third one: Arabic version online: <https://quran.com/36:14/tafsirs/ar-tafseer-al-qurtubi> [accessed 2024-07-06].

⁶⁶ Although al-Ṭaʿlabī's *Arāʾis* includes this testimony, it is not as developed as in this version and the resurrected man's father, who was absent for seven days from the city, is not identified as Ḥabīb; cf. al-Ṭaʿlabī, 'Arāʾis Al-majālis, pp. 678-679.

⁶⁷ Although the destruction by a single Cry is coherent with the Q 36:29, the descent of the angels in the *asiento* seems contradictory with the previous verse; Q 36:28-29 "We did not send down on his people after him any force from the sky, nor are We (in the habit of) sending down (such a force). It was only a single cry". Perhaps a "no" was omitted in the translation or transmission of the text. See below n. 112.

⁶⁸ A likely confluence of Christian saints transformed into a legendary pre-Islamic believer, Ḥabīb have been compared to other "persons styled *ḥanīf*"; see Busse, "Antioch", p. 173, n. 101.

⁶⁹ The wording also hints at a preservation akin to the *ḡihād* martyrs' (*ṣuḥadāʾ*): see Kohlberg, "Shahīd".

⁷⁰ Most preaching and exhortative texts in Aljamiado are translations from Arabic originals: see Brisville-Fertin, "La predicación"; Jones and Brisville-Fertin, "The preaching". Because of its typical calquing formulations, the whole collection is most likely another translation.

cultural “reversed” domination according to *Dār al-Islām*, and then of forced conversions, invites us to consider the motives for copying this text, its discursive meaning, and its pragmatic effects as a discourse of preaching and instruction, in these contexts of interfaith contact and conflict.

However, before commenting on these context-text dynamics and connexions, I wish to recapitulate two points: first, the motif of conversion to or within the belief in Allah appears in preaching and exhortative texts as exemplary narratives which serve to establish not only or merely a model of virtue and piety for the believers, but also to reflect a process of becoming truer and deeper abiding servants. Second, we notice again that the textual categorisation between doctrinal literature (i.e. narratives) and instructive exhortations presents a certain fluctuation in the Aljamiado texts elaboration, and especially in their intended use. Actually, such fluctuation is nothing exceptional nor unusual in the Middle Ages and is in fact characteristic of exemplary literature and its instructional use.⁷¹

4. Conversion among Muslims in Christian lands: significance through the lens of interfaith contexts

The third part of this article seeks to deepen the links between the texts and their context of use; in other words, what were the effects and echoes these texts could have had for their audience? When read-heard, and so contextually actualised, what could have been their meaning and impact? Due to the limited extension of this paper, I shall only focus on some significant aspects.

4.1. Islam and Muslims in relation to other monotheisms and their followers

The pre-Islamic character of the story of the apostles and Ḥabīb’s martyrdom, as well as the episode of the repentant *Isrā’īliyya*, among other narratives—e.g. Ismael’s almost sacrifice by Abraham⁷²—, illustrates Islam’s claim to and assimilation of the legacy of the previous monotheistic traditions as well as its rightful primacy over them as the original faith and the last Revelation.⁷³

⁷¹ For the links and conflicts between story-telling and preaching in the Islamicate medieval world, see Berkey, *Popular Preaching*; Armstrong, *The Quṣṣās*.

⁷² See Barletta, *Covert Gestures*, chaps 4-5; Barletta, “‘Aljamiado-Morisco’ Narrative”; Barletta, “The Aljamiado ‘Sacrifice of Ishmael’”.

⁷³ See Ibrahim, *Conversion to Islam*.

The inclusion of these pre-Islamic elements and their transformation into *proto*-Islam’s narratives establish and revendicate the atemporality of Islamic true creed—e.g. claiming Adam and other prophets as Islamic prophets⁷⁴—against the misguided lies of polytheism and idolatry, of course, but also vis-à-vis the deviations of Judaism and then Christianity, the latter being polemically denounced as association or idolatry (*širk*),⁷⁵ to which we shall return.

In the account of the katabatic torment of Ḥabīb’s son, Hell description presents an Islamic point of view⁷⁶—e.g. the river of the seventh “river” (*sic pro* valley⁷⁷) of Hell is significantly called Cijīn (Ar. *siġġīn*).⁷⁸ The way to salvation that is implied is thus not only identified as monotheism against the king’s idolatry, but also as believing in Allah and His messengers, yet again according to this integration of previous traditions by Islam.

[...] and I returned from all that had been of torment (*al’adeb*), while a crier was proclaiming above my head. And I reflected and lo, the heavens had opened to me and I looked at the foot of the Throne (*Al’arx*). And there were a hanging old (*viejo*) [*sic pro* saint⁷⁹] man and two men with him, and I was told: ‘Do you know this man?’ And I said: ‘I do not know him.’ And they told me that he is ‘Īṣā [Jesus] son of Mary [PUBH]. Then they said to me: ‘Do you know the two men and the third one who is with them?’ I said: ‘I do not know [them]’, and they said to me: ‘Those are Simon and John and Yūlius [...] the messengers sent to the king.’ Then,

⁷⁴ For example, a *ḥadīṭ* associates some traditional doxologies—*taḥmīd*, *tahlīl*, *tabkīr*—to Adam’s sneezing, Noah’s warning, and Abraham’s sacrifice: see ms. BNE 4871, fol. 201v-202r; ms. BEP 11, fol. 233v-236r; ms. BEP 12, fol. 89v-90r.

⁷⁵ Hawting, “Idols and Images”; Hawting, “Idolatry and Idolaters”; Fahd, “Šanam”; Monnot, “Wathāniyya”. On Mudejar confessional polemics, see Colominas Aparicio, *The Religious Polemics*.

⁷⁶ On Islamic Hell, see Lange, “Hell”; Lange, *Paradise and Hell*; Gwynne, “Hell and Hellfire”; Lange, *Locating Hell*. For Moriscos, see Tottoli, “The Toledo Qur’ān”; Tottoli, “The Morisco Hell”. Apart from the story of Jesus and the skull below, another infernal description can be read in ms. BEP 11, fol. 275r-282r; ed. in Brisville-Fertin, “Le discours *aljamiado*”, sec. E7.15.

⁷⁷ The redundancy of a “river” in a “river” is likely due to an indistinctive translation of the seven valleys (*alwadyān*) of Hell, because of the polysemic use of *wādī*, valley and river, the second meaning being predominant in Andalusī toponymy: see Corriente, Pereira, and Vicente, *Dictionnaire du faisceau dialectal*, p. 1339, s.v. “*{WDY}”.

⁷⁸ On *siġġīn*, see Stewart, “Pit”; Zaki, “Barzakh”. See Q 83:7-8 and the *tafsīr* on these verses.

⁷⁹ Here the term *viejo*, literally old, likely translates whether *šayḥ* (old, sage) or a misread *qadīm* (old) for *qadīs* (saint).

I returned before you, as you see me now, with the power of Allah—Exalted and Glorified is He. So, follow these messengers! Know that I am your trustworthy guide”. Then the son of Habib al-Nağğār turned to the messengers and kissed their hands and feet and said to them: “I believe in you and in that you have been sent as messengers” (fol. 132v-133r).

As a brief aside, this story bears a great resemblance to another widely disseminated tale among the Mudejars and Moriscos: the story of “Jesus and the skull” also depicts an Islamised Jesus, ‘Īsā b. Maryam—also called the spirit of Allah (*rūḥ Allāh*)—who invokes the Almighty recognising the primacy of Muḥammad’s creed to revive a skull for hearing its story.⁸⁰ The skull describes to him the Islamic torment of the grave and the seven levels of Hell before begging repentantly to come back to the world to live a pious life in the obedience of Allah.⁸¹

The Islamisation of the apostles and of Jesus in these texts positions Islam in relation to other traditions in an overt confessional hierarchy between faith communities, i.e. specific confessional values and attributes enhancing Islam’s superiority. Thus, they foster—according to Social Identity theory⁸²—communal images on which are internalised collective and individual identities. The Islamic integration of other Abrahamic traditions was significant for the multi-faith society of medieval Aragon. This socio-religious categorisation and positioning and their effects on the inter-group relationships and the inner-group representations have been studied for polemics by Mònica Colominas.⁸³ It can also be mobilised for preaching, for these texts could be read as an

internal discourse: by recalling commonalities with the other monotheistic traditions and history, it also reminded the Mudejars of the primacy of Islam, as the last Revelation which rectified the previous deviations, with whose communities the Mudejars lived on a daily basis. Indeed, given the constant contact with Christians, these texts could, already in the Mudejar period, constitute an internal counter-discourse to deepen the believers’ faith and to strengthen their adherence to Islam as a righteous community; despite the Christian domination of Muslims in Aragon, their creed—and so their worldview on creation, religion, and salvation—was the true one.

However, the function of counter-discourse must have been particularly significant during the eighty-five years of underground Islam.⁸⁴ A number of elements of the *asiento* on Surah “Yā’ Sīn” merit further commentary in the light of the situation of those Muslims who had been forcibly converted to Christianity *en masse* and had to follow Catholic evangelisation and rites.

4.2. Significance in the Morisco underground: idolatry, dissimulation, martyrdom

A first element worthy of comment is that the apostles are sent to refute idolatry by Allah the Almighty—neither by the Trinitarian Jesus nor even the Islamic prophet ‘Īsā, as in other Islamic exegetical versions.⁸⁵ The envoys are the reaffirmation of a strict monotheism that banishes the worship of idols and, more generally, of any worship that is not that of God, the One and only with no associate. It is quite striking, in this respect, that the king fears and recognises the power of the Lord of Heaven’s envoys since he states verbally that the idols have absolutely no power and their worship is a mere inherited tradition:

In that way [invoking the major idol], they [the apostles] will destroy us and defeat us, O Julius, because the idols have no power to harm neither to profit, neither death nor life, neither expansion nor revival, nevertheless we worship them because our fathers worshipped them and we avoid ceasing to worship whom our fathers worshipped (fol. 124v).

In fact, the king’s words reformulate Qur’anic verses from the story of Abraham, e.g. Q 26:71-74: “They [the idolaters] said, ‘We serve idols, and continue (to be) devoted to them.’ He [Abraham]

⁸⁰ “In the name of Allah and upon the faith of the Prophet Muḥammad” (*En el nombre de Allah i sobre la creyença del annabī Muḥammad*), ms. BEP 11, fol. 83r; ed. in Brisville-Fertin, “Le discours aljamiado”, vol. 2, sec. E7.5. See Brisville-Fertin, “La production en aljamiado”, § 23-25, annex 3.

⁸¹ On the Islamisation of this story and its importance among Moriscos, see especially Tottoli, “The History”; Tottoli, “The Morisco Hell”, pp. 283-286. On its Arabic version: Hofman Vannus, “Jesús”, pp. 10-16. On Aljamiado versions: Guillén Robles, *Leyendas Moriscas*, pp. 159-170; Rodríguez, *Leyendas*, pp. 342-348; Vázquez, *Desde la penumbra*, pp. 158-164; Brisville-Fertin, “Le discours aljamiado”, vol. 2, sect. E7.5.

⁸² On social categorisation according to socio-psychology, see Tajfel, “Social categorization, social identity, and social comparison”; Turner, “Towards a Cognitive Redefinition of the Social Group”; Hogg et al., “Social categorization”; Turner and Reynolds, “The social identity perspective in intergroup relation: theories, themes, and controversies”; Turner and Reynolds, “Self-Categorization Theory”.

⁸³ Colominas Aparicio, *The Religious Polemics*, see in particular sect. 2.3.

⁸⁴ See Fournel-Guérin, “Les Morisques”; García-Arenal, “*Taqiyya*”.

⁸⁵ See al-Ṭabarī, *Chronique*, p. 51.

said, ‘Do they hear you when you call, or do they benefit you or harm (you)?’ They said, ‘No! But we found our fathers doing so.’⁸⁶” Again, although being supposedly a pre-Islamic narrative, the Qur’an constitutes a hypotext of the story-telling to refute idolatry.⁸⁷

Precisely, association, polytheism and idolatry (Ar. *širk*⁸⁸), are theological criticisms that Islamic polemics traditionally imputes to Christianity⁸⁹—in his famous 1504 *responsum* addressed to the forcibly converted Iberian Muslims (the misnamed Oran *fatwā*), Aḥmad b. Abī Ġum‘a al-Maġrīwī al-Wahrānī (d. 917/1511)⁹⁰ refers to Christian images as *aṣnām*,⁹¹ i.e. the Qur’anic term for the pre-Islamic pagan idols.⁹² The useless idols (*ídolas*⁹³) of the story must certainly have

echoed the worship of crucifixes and, in particular, of statues (Sp. *tallas*) of saints to the Morisco listeners of the 16th century. Indeed, according to the inquisitorial archives, the Moriscos particularly criticised these manifestations of Catholic *dulia* of the Counter-Reformation Spain.⁹⁴ Moreover, the story recalls the strict *latría* or worship of God of the true monotheism and early Christianity and therefore implicitly demonstrates a Catholic deviation from the true creed—if the apostles did refute the worship of idols, why did the Christians revere wooden and stone images?

A second point of interest for the context of the Morisco minority and the forced conversions to Catholicism⁹⁵ is the opposition between the two types of preaching, that of the first two apostles, confronting the king and committing offence, versus that of the third one, who is explicitly reminded to be gentle and merciful.

I have sent those two servants to the king of Antioch and commanded them to admonish him kindly. And they have committed an offense instead of bearing the prophethood [*i.e.* transmitting the prophetic message] and did not know how to speak to him kindly to turn him to the path of Islam. And he punished them and put them in prison [...]. Go to the king and have mercy on him and tell him that it is fitting for him to know Me and make him understand who I am until he knows that there is no lord besides Me. And speak to him gently and mercifully (fol. 118v-119r, 120).

In this version, John and Peter’s harsh and open proselytism is explicitly refuted by its failure, but also because it leads to physical abuses, humiliation, and imprisonment—“And they were brought to [the king] and he ordered them to be stripped of their clothes and he beat them pain-

⁸⁶ Cf. Q 21:52-53, 65-66: “(Remember) when he said to his father and his people: ‘What are these images which you are devoted to?’ They said, ‘We found our fathers serving them.’ [...] Then they became utterly confused: ‘Certainly you know (that) these do not speak.’ He said, ‘Do you serve what does not benefit you at all, or harm you, instead of God (alone)?’”; Q 6:71: “Say: ‘Shall we call on what does not benefit us or harm us, instead of God (alone), and turn back on our heels after God has guided us? [...]’”.

⁸⁷ Some wording resonates with Aḥmad b. Abī Ġum‘a’s *fatwā* that I evoke below—see note 90—: “*los ídolos [las imágenes cristianas] son madera trabajada y piedra inanimada, que no daña ni aprovecha*”, Rubiera Mata, “Los moriscos”, p. 542. However, the uselessness of idols seems a common saying also found, e.g., in the 13th century Spanish translation of Ibn Ishāq al-‘Ibādī’s *Kitāb adāb al-falāsifa* (*Libro de los buenos proverbios*), in Socrates’ mouth: “*dixieronme que tu dizies que los ydolos non tenien pro nin daño*”, al-‘Ibādī, *The Libro de Los Buenos Proverbios*, p. 77.

⁸⁸ Gimaret, “*Širk*”; Mir, “Polytheism and Atheism”. Hawting, “Idols and Images”; Fahd, “*Šanam*”; Monnot, “*Wathaniyya*”.

⁸⁹ Hawting, *The Idea of Idolatry*, chaps 2-3; Griffith, “Christians and Christianity”; Hawting, “Idolatry and Idolaters”; Mir, “Polytheism and Atheism”; Thomas, “Trinity”.

⁹⁰ Ibn Abī Ġum‘a is famous in the history of the Moriscos for his redacting a *fatwā* which allowed the converted Iberian Muslims to simulate their adhesion to Catholicism, while dissimulating their inner Islamic faith. On this author and his *responsum*, see Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*, pp. 60-64; Stewart, “The Identity”; Rosa-Rodríguez, “Simulation”; Stewart, “Dis-simulation”; Bernabé Pons, “The Mufti of Oran”.

⁹¹ *Aṣnām* in Arabic is translated by *ídolas* in Aljamiado or *ídolos* in Spanish; cf. Harvey, “The Literary Culture”, vol. 2, p. 182; Cantineau, “Lettre du moufti”, p. 7; Rosa-Rodríguez, “Simulation”, p. 167. Longás modernised اِدْوَلَس en *ídolos*, cf. ms. RAH T-13, fol. 29r, 30r; Longás Bartibas, *Vida*, p. 305.

⁹² See Q 6:74, 14:35, 21:57, 26:71 about Abraham and Q 7:138 about Moses.

⁹³ As hinted above (note 91), the feminine *ídola*—the reanalysed Latin neuter plural *IDŌLA*—instead of the maculine *ídolo* (< Lat. *IDŌLUM*, neuter sg.) is the usual form in Aljamiado texts: Galmés de Fuentes et al., *Glosario*, pp. 328-329. According to the CDH, *ídola* is the earliest preserved form of

the lemma and is apparently used alongside *ídolo* in medieval Spanish (“*Clamaron al pueblo e a sacrificio de sos ydolos, e comio el pueblo e amo sus ydolos*”, *Fazienda de ultramar*); the form appears until 1500 in Christian works, the 16th century occurrences being from Aljamiado editions: Real Academia Española, *Corpus del Diccionario histórico de la lengua española* (CDH) <https://apps.rae.es/CNDHE>, 2013 [accessed 2024-07-01], lemma: “ídolo”, form: “*dola*”.

⁹⁴ See Cardaillac, *Morisques et Chrétiens*, pp. 330-332; Fournel-Guérin, “Les Morisques”, pp. 254-255, 285-286, 287-288. Besides the gender of *tallas* and *estatuas*, perhaps another unconscious reason for keeping the feminine variant *ídolas* might have been the importance of the Marian cult in the 16th century: see Cardaillac, *Morisques et Chrétiens*, pp. 264-279. On the worship of Christian images and its interfaith use and conflict in 15th-16th-centuries Spain, see the analyses and references in Pereda, *Las imágenes de la discordia*; Infante, *The Arts of Encounter*; Valdés Sánchez, “El poder persuasivo”.

⁹⁵ Among a numerous bibliography, see Poutrin, *Convertir*.

fully and he shaved half of their head and sent them to jail” (fol. 117v). As an aside, even though the apostles of the parable were proselytising, such violence against believers openly professing their faith could well recall inquisitorial violent persecutions of non-Catholic practices. On the contrary, the “merciful” and soft path employed by Yūlius—and this is particularly striking for the Morisco context—is one of concealment and simulation in the face of polytheism. Yūlius feigns to worship the major idol in the heathen temple, while he faces in reality the *qibla* and worships Allah; in simulating external adhesion and dissimulating his inner faith, Yūlius preserves his safety. Diegetically, he attracts the admiration of the inhabitants and the attention of the king, as summed up above:

he entered the house of idols where the king and his people used to take delight. He approached a large idol, which was greatly esteemed by the king, and placed it between himself and the *qibla*, then began to worship Allah—exalted and glorious be He—and started to pray and fast until birds would enter the house of idols and alight upon his head due to his extensive prayers. People in the city and markets, and even among the nobles, spoke of this until it reached the king. The king mounted his horse and went to the house of idols and saw him. He was positioned [towards] the head of the idol, neither turning to the right nor to the left, as he was serving Allah. The king thought that he was worshipping the idol (fol. 121v-122r).

This concealment of the worship of Allah to avoid a violent conflict and manage the king’s conversion may echo the Islamic practice of dissimulation, *taqiyya*, so often associated with the Moriscos’ crypticism⁹⁶—the very name of the city Antākiya, appearing in its first occurrence as “al-Ṭāqiya” (fol. 112r), could even be read as supporting this interpretation; prudently, however, I shall not propose this reading, for various reasons, if only for fear of misinterpreting a text—. Without going into the details of the debate about the relevance or accuracy of the concept of *taqiyya* among the Moriscos,⁹⁷ the character of Yūlius does nonetheless embody a model of a servant of Allah’s dissimulating in an adverse environment and may draw a parallel, in that specific context,

with the tolerated practice that Aḥmad b. Abī Ġum‘a approved in his *fatwā*:

If, at the hour of prayer, they force you to prostrate yourself before their idols, or make you attend their prayers, maintain it as your firm intention to consider what they do as forbidden, and have it as your desire to carry out the prayer specified in Islamic law, bow down to whatever idols they are bowing to, but turn your intention toward Allah. Even if the direction is not that of Mecca, that requirement may be disregarded, as it is in the case of prayer when in danger on the battlefield.⁹⁸

Evidently, without the Arabic original of the *asiento*, no phylogenetic link can be established and, at least, one has to consider the story as older than the *fatwā*. Nevertheless, the parallelism is striking and the story may well illustrate narratively such a practice of simulation for a higher purpose—in the Morisco context, for the individuals’ safety.

Finally, two elements may have provided comfort and fostered fortitude and a suffering forbearance in the Morisco environment.⁹⁹ The death of the faithful Ḥabīb offers hope in the afterlife for the true believer who dies under the heathens’ strikes. Narratively, as already stated, while feigning may perhaps lead to some conversions but assures one’s own safety, professing overtly the true faith among idolaters could only provoke physical abuse and vexation. Unlike other versions in which the king and the whole city convert,¹⁰⁰ this one displays the idolaters’ violent bigotry: the true believer who dies for their faith is a martyr whose body will be preserved and who will be granted access to the Garden. This element should certainly have offered relief and comfort during the inquisitorial persecution, since the executed Moriscos were considered martyrs for their faith by their cryptic coreligionists.¹⁰¹

On another hand, God answers the faithful’s prayers—“They have pleaded with me, and their pleas, in My power, have the place of being an-

⁹⁶ Harvey, “Crypto-Islam”; Cardaillac, *Morisques et Chrétiens*, pp. 87-99; Cardaillac, “Un aspecto de las relaciones”.

⁹⁷ See García-Arenal, “Introducción. *Taqiyya*”; Bernabé Pons, “*Taqiyya*”; Stewart, “Dissimulation”. See Harvey’s repentance for the excessive use of this concept: Harvey, “El Islam del Mancebo”, pp. 195-196.

⁹⁸ Harvey, *Muslims in Spain*, p. 61. Cf. Rubiera Mata, “Los moriscos”, p. 543; Rosa-Rodríguez, “Simulation”, p. 176.

⁹⁹ See Hawkins, “A Morisco philosophy of suffering”; Barletta, *Covert Gestures*, chap. 5; Barletta, “The *Aljamiado* ‘Sacrifice of Ishmael’”.

¹⁰⁰ Busse, “Antioch”, pp. 160, 162-163; al-Ṭa‘labī, ‘Arā’is Al-majālis, p. 679.

¹⁰¹ A deepening of martyrdom and the differences of the concept of *ḡihād* in *Aljamiado* texts is an analysis I am conducting; for the Mudejar and Morisco communities, see Miller, *Guardians*, pp. 33, 233-234; Fournel-Guérin, “Les Morisques”, pp. 45-46.

swered. I am close to those who plead with Me and turn towards Me” (fol. 119r)¹⁰²—by sending help, rescuing His envoys, and eventually punishing the heathen hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*) who were admonished. God is with His faithful servants who invoke Him; in His almightiness, He protects or rewards them. The story illustrates a lesson of forbearance and trust. It is also interesting to note that verbal and behavioural violence in His name is not condoned by Allah in the story: iniquitous violence comes from the idolaters, meanwhile He does eventually punish them by a rightful chastisement. From the faithful’s point of view, the story does not incite to verbal or physical violence at all, but to keep firm and confident in Allah. The story could give comfort for the relatives of those who died in the Inquisition’s grasp, but mainly assures that, eventually, the erring persecutors will be punished and doomed.

As a brief recapitulation, not only does the story of the apostles offer an exegetical narrative of a Surah whose recitation is quite frequent—among other occasions, it is the one recited by or to the dying¹⁰³—but, contextually, it also offers potential analogies with the Morisco situation in which it was copied and read—e.g. dissimulation and simulation in the face of idolaters—, as well as a double comfort in oppression: dying while bearing witness to the true faith is a form of martyrdom while the unbelievers remain ignorant of the reward reserved for the pious; divine punishment eventually falls on the iniquitous unbelievers and the errant ones.

5. Conclusion

To conclude this exploratory analysis, the motif of conversion to Islam, which appears quite frequently in known Aljamiado narratives, is also present in some unpublished preaching texts. These conversion episodes serve an instrumental and rhetorical function as *exempla*, supporting the theme of exhortation, in this case on repentance or forbearance. As narratives, they illustrate the main topic and contribute to a discursive strategy aimed at convincing the audience of the supremacy of

Islam and encouraging repentance and fidelity to Allah. In this sense, they incite continuous internal conversion among their audience, urging them to become better believers and draw closer to God.

On the other hand, while textual evidence confirms the use of narratives for religious instruction, the transformation of an exegetical narrative into the cornerstone of a paraliturgical session textually demonstrates a certain pragmatic flexibility in the use of textual genres. Narratives were employed as instructive pieces, and exhortative discourses effectively utilised narratives to enhance their efficacy. In this respect, the production and use of Aljamiado texts appear analogous to popular preaching and story-telling in Islamic lands.

The exhortations in Aljamiado represent a rich source of data for deepening our understanding of Mudejar and Morisco Islam. Socio-psychologically, those texts helped establish socio-religious categorisations as positioning Islam in relation to other Abrahamic faiths, notably by reclaiming and Islamising former monotheistic traditions. Thus, they provided resources for their listeners, both before and after forced conversions, to uphold their faith and internalise devout behaviour. The story of the apostles sent to Antioch and the martyrdom of Ḥabīb the Carpenter, traditionally associated with the exegesis of Surah 36, serves as a striking example.

This Islamised early-Christian conversion narrative and refutation of idolatry allows us to explore the adapted meanings and functions of traditional Islamic texts within the context of minorities who initially openly practiced Islam but later concealed their faith clandestinely. In addition to implicitly challenging current Catholic practices of *dulia*, a significant aspect of this narrative for Morisco secrecy lies in its illustration of dissimulation and simulation in a hostile environment. Indeed, this conversion narrative presents a model of concealment and feigning among pagans that resonates with the challenges faced by the addressed congregation. To the best of my knowledge, this narrative stands as the first and only text to illustrate in this way such dissimulation. However, I deem the extent of its reception needs to be balanced given that the codex appears to be a *unicum* in the whole preserved collection.

The motif of conversion in the 15th-17th centuries-Aragonese inter-confessional context allows us to apprehend how the Muslim religious scholars and leaders endeavoured to sustain an inner dynamic for their flock to become more

¹⁰² Cf. Q 2:186: “When My servants ask you about Me, surely I am near. I respond to the call of the caller when he calls on Me. So let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright”; *Ḥadīṭ qudsī*: “I fulfill My servant’s expectation of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me”, Graham, *Divine Word*, no. 12.

¹⁰³ See Campo, “Burial”; Malone O’Connor, “Popular and talismanic uses of the Qur’ān”; Meri, “Ritual and the Qur’ān”.

abiding believers, i.e. to foment intra-confessional conversion.¹⁰⁴ This centuries-enduring process of remaining firm and devout to Allah, despite the Christian domination, was certainly reinforced by necessity, because of forced conversions, yet it remained effective by offering re-actualised models of forbearance.

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Annex

My purpose here is merely to provide a transliterated text for reading, not to offer a philological edition. Therefore, I simplify the anaptyxis in diphthongs and consonantic clusters. Brackets mark letters addition or, when the letter is italicised, *tašdīd* correction and braces mark duplography. For legibility’s sake, I distinguish the pre-palatal and alveolar uses of *šin* with <x> and <s>, despite the absence of *šadda* for this distinction in the text, and regularise as well *sīn* + palatal vowel as <c> and not <ç>. Except for Arabic words, I do not mark long vowels and I omit the scribal deletions. For Qur’anic verses, see references above in note 38.

Ms. BEP 12, fol. 112r-138r

[112r] Asiento en el di[*ch*]o de Allah *ta’alà*: «*wadri-blahum maṭalā aṣḥaba alqaryāṭi [i]ḍa ḡā’ahā almurs-alūna*», que quiere dezir: «I dio por dēxenplo a ellos las conpañas de la cibḍaḍ de Alṭāqiyāṭ cuando vinieron a ella los mensajeros». ¹⁰⁵ [...]

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Q 36:13: “*wa-drib lahum maṭalan ‘aṣḥāba l-qaryati ‘iḍ ḡā’ahā l-mursālūn*”, “Propónles una parábola: los habitantes de la ciudad. Cuando vinieron a ella los enviados”, “Strike a parable for them: the companions of the town, when the envoys came to it.”

Fizonos ^[115r] a saber ‘Abdu ‘Lmalik ibnu Ḥabībⁱⁿ por ‘Abdu ‘Llahi ibnu ‘Abbeç —apáguese Allah ḍ’él— por l’Annabī —ṣ’*m*— que él dixo:

Abía en la cibḍaḍ de Antāqiyāṭ un rey deſcreyente de grande deſcreyencia i de fuerte soberbia que aḍoraba a las iḍolas a menos del Rey sabiḍor toḍo poḍeroso i clamaba a las gentes a sus adulatoryas, faſta que fizo deſtallar el addīn del aliḍlām de la cibḍaḍ de Aṭāqiyāṭ. Pues, cuando se apretó su deſcre{re}yencia, reveló Allah ‘azza wa-ḡala a Jibrīl —‘*alayhi i’ssalām*—: «Ye Jibrīl, ^[115v] ves a Yahyā ibnu Zaydin i a Ḥam’āna i ḍiles a ellos: “El Señor de la onra t’envía [*sic pro os*] el aḷḷalem i ḍize a vosotros que el rey de Antāqiyāṭ á deſcreiḍo con Mí i Me deñega de ſeñor y aḍorā a las iḍolas a menos de Mí i allega que él no Me conoce. Iḍ a él i fazeḍle a ſaber Mi fecho i dezirle que se guarde de Mi ſaña, i de Mi fuerte fuerça deſvantaría con ella los cielos i la tierra. I clamaḍlo a Mi ſervituḍ i a que Me atuergue por ^[116r] Señor, i llamaḍlo a la creyencia piadoſamente, que él es torpe i no Me conoce, mas enpero acuytānſe de ſus qontraliḍaḍes las cosas”».

I deballó Jibrīl —‘*alayhi i’ssalām*— a Yahyā ibnu Zaydⁱⁿ i a Ḥam’ānⁱⁿ. I eran de los Alḥawariyos de ‘İḷā, de los que ſiguieron a ‘İḷā —‘*alayhi i’ssalām*—, i eran que ſervían aḍa Allah en Aḥām. I vinieron a la cibḍaḍ de Antāqiyah i veos que fallaron en ella un rey de grande

descreyencia, de fue^[116v] rte grandía, de fuertes enparas, de fuertes castigos, i estuvieron a su puerta un año, que no se pudieron allegar a él, i crecieron sobr'él en saña. Pues, cuando fue un día de los días, cabalgó el rey así como acostunbran a cabalgar los reyes i sallieron a él al camino aquellos dos mensajeros i cridaron a él con las más alta de sus voces i cridoles él, que pensó que a ellos abía algun menester i ellos lo denostaban^[117r] i lo maldezian.

Dixo: Pues, cuando oyó el rey sus palabras i sus voces, cuydó que ellos eran de los que debía aber a ellos alguna enjuria o nececidaḡ i dixo a los qu'estaban alderredor: «¿Qué es su estorya de aquellos dos onbres i qué es lo que dizen?».

I dixerón a él: «Ye rey onraḡo, esos son dos onbres que allegan que ellos son mensajeros de partes del Señor de las gentes i Señor del cielo,^[117v] i ellos te disfaman con sus palabras i dizen mal de tú i denuestan tu ley i tus ídolas».

I dixo: «A mí toca lo que dizen. ¡Venidme con ellos!».

I traxéronlos a él i mandó que les quitasen sus ropas i firiolos ferimiento doloroso i radioles la mitaḡ de sus cabeças i mandó que los llevasen a la cárcel. I era que abía a él una cárcel que la puerta que tenía era de trenta cobdos i en medio d'ella una cence^[118r] rra de fierro, que no se abría aquella puerta sino con fuerça de mu[*ch*]a hente [*sic pro* gente]. I era que, cuando se abría, oían a ella un ruido muy grande que lo oía los más de aquella cibdaḡ i, cuando la cerraban, asimesmo. Pues, cuando esto vieron en la cárcel, lloraron lloroy muy fuerte i demandaron socorro a su Señor i dixerón: «Ye nuestro Señor i Señor de Ibrāhīm i de Içmā'īl i de Içhaq i de Ya'qūb, no nos derrinclas en nuestra so^[118v] lledaḡ, que no ay a nós en esta cibdaḡ ninguno sino Tú. Pues apiáḡanos i apiáḡa nuestra flaqueza i nuestro aviltamiento, que Tú eres sobre toḡa cosa poderoso».

I reveló Allah 'azza wa-ḡala a Jibrīl —'alayhi i's-salām— i díxole: «A estos dos siervos, los é enviáḡo al rey de Antāquiyā i les mandé que le monesteasen piadosamente. I ellos an cunpliḡo el denuesto antes que^[119r] la mensajería i no conocieron cómo abían de fablarle piadosamente para volverlo al addīn del aliclām. I es que los á castigado i los á puesto en la cárcel i ellos me an rogado i sus rogaryas en Mi poder an lugar de ser respondiḡas, i Yo soy cerca de quien Me ruega i se acuesta a Mí. Mas enpero, ye Jibrīl, baxa con Mi mensajería a Yūlius i dīle a él: “El Señor de las gentes^[119v] t'envía el aççalem i te dize que vayas con mi mensajería al rey de Ant[a]quiy[a]h: i vuelve su fecho i destórbalo, que ya envió a Yaḡyā ibnu Zaydⁱⁿ i a Çama'ānⁱⁿ i no supieron cómo lo abían de volver i no cómo lo abían d'estorbar de su fecho. I llegaron a él el denuesto antes de la mensajería i los firió i radió en medyo de sus cabeças i los enpresionó. Pues, ves a ellos i ḡales el aççalem i dīles: “[*V*]ues^[120r]

tro señor está nigligente de [v]uestras rogaryas i Él os sastifará con Su onra i Su onor, no ay señor sino Él i Él dará vengança a vosotros de las gentes descreyentes”. Ye Yūlius, lléḡales Mi mensajería i dīles {i dīles} a ellos que estén en la cárcel fasta que los saque por Mi piadaḡ i Mi onra. I cuando salrás de donde ellos están, pues, pasa al rey i á piadaḡ con él i dīle que le^[120v] conviene el conocerme i ḡale a entender quien Yo soy, fasta que sepa que ello es que no ay señor fueras de Mí. I fáblale blandamente i piadosamente”». I fuese Jibrīl —'alayhi i'ssalām— con Yūlius.

Dixo: pues, cuando dentraron a la cárcel i miraron a ellos i el malo de sus estaḡos, lloraron fuertemente i dixo a ellos Yūlius: «Ye ermanos, vuestro Señor el Noble os envía el aççalem i dize a vosotros que os envió al rey de Antāquiya que ubi^[121r] yeséy[s] piadaḡ con él i que os amigasey[s] con él. I llegasteys el denostamiento antes que la mensajería i desobedeciste[ys] el mandamiento de vuestro Señor. Salvo que yo dīgo a vosotros que dize [v]uestro Señor que Él os ḡará vengança de las gentes decreyentes i os sacará de la cárcel i os sastifará con Su nobleza i Su onra, pues, no os desconfiéys i estaos en este vuestro lugar aora».

I dixerón: «Ye Yūlius, pasa a lo que as seýḡo mandado con ello».

I sallió Yūlius —'alayhi ilasalām— de don^[121v] de ellos estaban i dentró a la casa de las ídolas a donde tomaba espleyte el rey i sus gentes. I arrimose a una ídola grande que era muy estimada en poder del rey i púsola Yūlius entre él i entre l'alqibla i púsoselo en el servicio de Allah 'azza wa-ḡala i atomose a fazer aḡalá i a ḡayunar fasta que las aves eran que dentraban a la casa de las ídolas i caían sobre su cabeça por su mucho fazer aḡalá. I razonaban las gentes con ello en la cibdaḡ i en los mercaḡos i en poder de los grandes fasta que^[122r] llegó aquello al rey i cabalgó el rey i fuese a la casa de las ídolas i miró a él i él estaba paraḡo sobre la cabeça de la ídola, que no se volvía a man derecha ni a man icquierda, que estaba sirviendo aḡa Allah. I el rey pensaba que aḡoraba a la ídola i dixo el rey a los grandes de sus gentes i de su señoría: «¿Quién es este?». I dixerón a él: «Ye rey, este es un onbre extranjero i apartado de su casa i de sus tierras, que no abemos visto mayor aḡorador de ídolas que es él, que sienpre está aḡorando a esta ídola i le e^[122v] s muy buen siervo». I cuando aquello oyó el rey, alegrose alegría grande.

Depués mandolo llamar i díxole: «¿Quién eres tú?». Dixo: «Yo soy un onbre de los de Banī Içrā'ila». I dixo a él {a él}: «¿I qué es aquello que te á fecho venir?». Dixo: «É veniḡo a servir a mi Señor». I dixo a él el rey: «As veniḡo i te as paraḡo en mi poder i t'é tomaḡo tanto amor que no ay ninguno de mayor cantidaḡ enta mí que tú». I tomolo el rey por amigo i especialolo para su persona.

Pues, cuando se asentó el amor entr'ellos i corrió

del rey como corre la sangre i lo amaba el rey ^[123r] amor fuerte, i dixo a él: «Ye rey onrado, áme llegado que en tu cárcel ay dos onbres enpeñados enpresionados i que los as ferido ferimiento doloroso i as raído en medio de sus cabeças i que los as zizañado». Dixo el rey: «Verdad dizes, porque ellos allegaban que eran mensajeros de partes del Señor del cielo».

Dixo a él Yūliyus: «Ye rey onrado, pues, convie^[123v] ne a tú en qu'ellos mandes llamar delante de tú i, si traen razón clara, farás a tu voluntad; i si no ay a ellos razón, estarás en eslita de lo que querrás fazer de ellos. A cuanto aora, pues, las gentes dizes [*sic pro dizen*] á fecho el rey con ellos lo que á fecho de rigor i alo fecho sin escuchar su razón de ellos, i eso no lo acostunbran fazer los reyes, cuanto más un rey onrado como tú, porque tú eres rey muy grande».

I dixo {i dixo} a él el rey: «Ye Yūliyu^[124r]s, é miedo que afollarán sobre mí mis cibdades, que ellos dizen que son mensajeros de partes del Señor del cielo y ellos vienen con lo que no viene ninguno de las gentes del poder i la fuerça, con mucho atrevimiento».

I dixo a él Yūliyus: «Ye rey onrado, cuando ellos trayrán algún mysteryo o ale'a, iremos yo i tú a la casa de las ídolas i iremos a la ídola mayor, aquella que adoras a ella, i demandarle emos que nos venga con semejante de lo que vienen ^[124v] con ello estos dos mensajeros».

Dixo a él el rey: «D'esa manera, ellos nos destruirán i nos vencerán, ye Yūliyus, porque las ídolas no enseñorean nozimiento ni aprovechamiento, ni muerte ni vida, ni espandimiento ni revivcamiento, mas enpero adorámoslas por cuanto ffallamos a nuestros padres que a ellas adoraban i esquivamos dexar de adorar a quien nuestros padres adoraron».¹⁰⁶

Dixo a él Yūliyus: «Yo veo de mi consecho que me mandes a mí que vaya a ellos i que ^[125r] los saque de la cárcel i que los mande venir delante de mí i tú fasta que veas en la sabiduría que era lo que adoraban nuestros padres. I si ellos vendrán con mysteryos, también nosotros vendremos con mysteryos».

I dixo a él el rey: «Ye Yūliyus, ¿serás poderoso sobre aquello?». Dixo: «Sí, ye rey onrado». I gozose el rey con aquello gozo muy grande i mandó con sacarlos de la cárcel. Pues, cuando miró a ellos Yūliyus, mara^[125v] villose i tomó d'exemplo por lo que vio de su estado de ellos i de su mucha çufrençia sobre la obidència de Allah, su Señor. Después retúvose de llorar por miedo del rey i dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «¿Quién soys vosotros?», como que él no los conocía.

I dixerón ellos: «Nosotros somos mensajeros de partes del Señor de las gentes, Señor de los cielos i de la tierra i de lo que es entr'ellos, si bien o[s] certeficáys».

I dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «Dadnos a ver de la potestad

de vuestro Se^[126r]ñor para que conoscamos [*sic*] por ella que vosotros soys mensajeros Suyos i que no ay otro señor sino Él».

Dixerón ellos a él: «Demanda lo que te querrás, ye Yūliyus, que nosotros vendremos con ello con el poderío de nuestro Señor».

Dixo Yūliyus al rey: «Ye rey, ¿tú as visto dos siervos más desengañantes que estos dos siervos de su Señor, Aquel que los [á] enviado? I ellos por cawsa Suya, an estado en la cárcel, i aunque saben que los as castigado con saña, no se amed^[126v] rientan de tú ni te demandan que des pasada de ellos sobre lo que ád asentado con ellos i anlo çufrido. I demanda de ellos lo que querrás que ellos dizen que te vendrán con ello. Pues, ellos no te demandan paga para sus personas».

Depués dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «Haleqad a nós un haleqado». Dixerón: «Ye Yūliyus, demandas cosa poca i fácil según es el poderío de Allah, nuestro Señor». Dixo después que dixo Yūliyus: «Parad mientras si ay en no^[127r]sotros algunos onbres que estén faltos de sus ladós». I fueron i fallaron un onbre que estaba ciego de los dos ojos, que andaba por las calles de la cibdad, que no tenía en su cara sino la nariz i la boca. I vinieron con él al rey i dixo Yūliyus: «Ye rey onrado, si se juntasen todos los que son en la tierra para haleqar a él dos [o] jos, no serían poderosos sobre {a}aquello jamás». Dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «Vuestro fecho ^[127v] sea con él: que le tornéys sus ojos».

Dixo: i tomó Çam'āni un terroncico de tierra i púsola en su palma i escupi[ó] en ella una escupiñata i fizose en bodoque. Depués vino con él a su ojo el dere[*ch*]o i sufló en el asiento del ojo i abriose el cuero con el poderío de Allah 'azza wa-ğalla. Depués asentó el bodoque i fizolo d'entrar en la cabeça. Depues sufló en él un suflo i veos qu'el bodoque se fizo un pedaço de carne i sangre. De^[128r] pués sufló en él otro suflo i veos qu'el pedaço de la sangre se pegó en la cabeça i se fizo en él el blanco i lo negro del ocho i nacieron las pestañas i fizose el más lindo ocho de los que haleqó Allah 'azza wa-ğalla. Depués Yūliyus también fizo con el ojo içquierdo asimesmo.

Dixo: i alegrose el rey alegría grande i devantose i asentose i dixo a sus alwazires i a los señores de su rewno [*sic pro reino*]: «¿Cómo abéys ^[128v] visto lo que á fecho mi ídola! A la fe, detalla de nós nuestras nececidades i no responde a nuestras rogaryas, porque nosotros no le servimos el derecho de su servicio. Mirađ cómo le á demandado Yūliyus i á atorgado su demanda i á juzgado su menester».

Depués dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «Aquello que vosotros abéys fecho, ya lo emos fecho nosotros así como vosotros lo fiziste[is]. Mas enpero fazed cosa que nosotros no seamos poderosos de poderlo faze^[129r]. I dixerón a él: «Ye Yūliyus, demanda lo que querrás i venirt'emos con ello, si querrá Allah, con el poderío de nuestro Señor».

¹⁰⁶ See above note 86.

I dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «Revivcad a nós un muerto». Dixeron: «Plázenos».

I sallieron a la orilla de la cibdad y buscaron un muerto. I dixeron a ellos que Ḥabībi A'najer abía sallido a su ganado i que se abía muerto su ficho después qu'él sallió i abía fecho juramento su madre que ella no lo enterraría fasta que tornase su padre i ella ya abía enviado a buscarlo i se tardaban mucho, por^[129v] que estaba apartado donde él tenía el ganado. I tomaronlo i lleváronlo delante [d]el rey. Pues, cuando fue asentado, enbriagolo su mala olor de lo mucho que abía que estaba muerto i dixo Yūliyus: «Ye rey onrado, si se juntasen los de los cielos i los de la tierra para fazerlo tornar vivo, no serían poderosos sobre aquello jamás. ¡Ó que grande es el gualardón d'estos dos siervos sobre su Señor!» I remeció el re^[130r] y su cabeça como el que se maravilla i dixo a ellos Yūliyus: «Vuestro fecho sea con él: revivcaldo a nós así como allegáys que lo revivcaréys». I fueron a él i parose el uno d'ellos a su man derecha i el otro a su man izquierda i vozearon a él una voz sola i veos con él para do, que abía apartado la mortaja i él tendía su cabeça como que él no abía muerto jamás. I dixeron a él: «Ves a este rey i a este viecho¹⁰⁷ i fesles a saber lo que as visto i lo que as encontrado del poderío de nuestro Señor».

I^[130v] fue el ficho de Ḥabībi A'najer al rey i dioxle a él el rey: «Sobre nuestra ley, ¿as muerto?». Dixo: «Sí, i es la ley de la descreyencia i de la desyerror». Dixo a él: «¿I qué es lo que as encontrado después de la muerte? ¿I qué es lo que dizen estos?». I dixo a él: «Ye rey, tu parte i tu bien, tieneslo acá en el mundo i estos mensajeros te dizen la verdaḍ i tú estás sobre la falsía. Si supieses lo qu'és encontrado del al'aḍeb, maravillar^[131r] te ías». I dixo a él: «¿I qué es lo que as encontrado?». Dixo: «Cuando me quitaron mi arrūḥ de mi cuerpo, sacáronmelo con pastoflo i con pena fuerte i con fuerça i estriciamiento con fuerte enojo, i yo gritaba i cuydé que los de los cielos i de la tierra oían mis gritos.

»Después lançáronme en un río de los ríos del Fuego, i son siete ríos:¹⁰⁸ en medio de cada río i río, voces i barrancos, i no sabe ninguno su largueza sino Allah *ta'ālā*. Pues, cuando^[131v] me lançaron en él, veos que se atomó a bullir como el azeyte en el fuego i veos que abía en él cuevas i caḍos i montañas de fuego; i en aquellos caḍos, sierpes de fuego i alaqrans; i a cada alaqrán de aquellos mil espinas de fuego. I no pasé por ningún al'aqrab de aquellos que no me afizase mil fizaḍas i no pasé por culebra que no me afizase i me mordiese i yo cridando, i cuydé que todos los de los cielos^[132r] i de la tierra oían mis gritos, fasta que se desfazía mi carne.

»Después fue lançado {s} en los abismos de Jahannam i veos que son sus abismos de pez i de alanbre i alquitrán

i piedras de alcrebiḍ rosiente. Después sallí yo, después de aquello, a pozos i barrancos i mares de fuego, que se asaba mi cara por todas partes, fasta que dentré al río seteno i veos que abía un río grande i a él ay bramidos i cuydé que todos los de los cielos^[132v] i de la tierra oían sus bramidos, i dizenle aḍ aquel río Cijīnⁱⁿ.

»I dóblose mi tristeza i apretose mi crebanto i volví de todo lo que abía seído del al'aḍeb i un pregonero que pregonaba por encima de mi cabeça. I paré mientras i veos que los cielos se abían escubierto a mí i miré al pieḍ del Al'arx i veos con un viecho¹⁰⁹ rescolgado i dos onbres con él i fue dicho a mí: «¿Conoces este onbre?»,^[133r] i dixe: «No lo conoço». I dixerónme: «Aquel es 'Īḥā fijo de Maryam —*'alayhi i'ssalām*—». Después dixerónme: «¿Conoces los dos onbres i el tercero qu'está con ellos?», i dixe: «No lo sé», i dixeron a mí: «Aquellos son Ḥam'ānⁱⁿ i Yahyā i Yūliyus —sobr'ellos el aḥḥalem— los mensajeros enviados al rey». Después, é tornado delante de tú, así como me ves, con el poderío de Allah *'azza wa-ḡalla*. Pues, ¡sigue a estos mensajeros! Mira que so^[133v] y a tú desengañante fiel».

Después volviouse el fijo de Ḥabībi A'najer enta los mensajeros i besarles sus manos i sus pies i dixo {i dixo} a ellos: «Creo en vosotros i con lo que abéys seído enviados por mensajeros».

Pues, estando ellos en aquello, veos que dentró Ḥabībi A'najer de guardar su ganado i dixerónle: «Sepas que tu fijo á revivqado en el alqāsar del rey». I fuese a él apresuradamente. Pues, cuando lo vio su fijo, fuese^[134r] a él i abraçolo i fizose creyente Ḥabībi A'najer i fue buena su creyencia con Allah *ta'ālā*. I dixeron a él los mensajeros: «Si es que crees con Allah, pues, sal tú i monestea tus gentes i clámalos a la creyencia que crean con Allah».

Dixo: i sallió Ḥabībi A'najer, asentado su mano sobre su cabeça i él diziendo: «Ye gentes, seguid a estos mensajeros, seguid a quien no os demanda salaryo. I ellos^[134v] son guiados». ¹¹⁰ I encontráronlo los alwazires del rey i dixerónle: «Ye Ḥabībi A'najer, eres de mu[*ch*]os algos i as desconocido i as tornado danostador del rey i llamas a tus gentes a otra ley». I tomaronlo delante i fizieron [*sic pro* firieron] su cabeça fasta que cayó tunbado, i Ḥabībi A'najer diziendo: «¡Ya'nbonora mis gentes supiesen por lo que me á perdonado a mí mi Señor i me á puesto de los onrados!».¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ See n. 79

¹¹⁰ Q 36:2021-: cf. “[*wa-ḡā'a min 'aqṣā l-madīnati raḡulun yas'ā qāla*] *yā-qawmi ttabi'ū l-mursalīna ittabi'ū man lā yas'alukum 'aḡran wa-hum muhtadūn*”; “[*Entonces, de los arrabales, vino corriendo un hombre. Dijo:*] «¡Pueblo! ¡Seguid a los enviados! ¡Seguid a quienes no os piden salario y siguen la buena dirección! [...]»”; “[*(Just then) a man came running from the farthest part of the city. He said,*] ‘My people! Follow the envoys! Follow those who do not ask you for any reward, and (who) are (rightly) guided. [...]’”.

¹¹¹ Q 36:26-27: cf. “[*Se dijo:* «¡Entra en el Jardín!» Dijo:]

¹⁰⁷ See n. 79.

¹⁰⁸ See n. 77.

Depués murió Ḥabībī A'najer i removiose la cibḍaḍ i dixo el rey: «Ye Yūliyus, ¡vase^[135r] a yermado sobre mí mi reyno por cawsa tuya! Sacaste a los mensajeros de la cárcel, pues, revícanos a un muerto, como an fecho estos mensajeros, i tórnalos a la cárcel», i sallieron las gentes. I dixo Yūliyus: «Ye rey, ¿quién es poderoso de revivcar a los muertos sino con la potestaḍ de Allah ‘azza wa-ḡalla, Aquel que los á haleqado? Responde a lo que te llaman a ello los mensajeros. I yo también soy a ti desengañante amonestador de partes del^[135v] Señor de las gentes i ya Allah *ta ‘ālā* m’envió a mí para consolar a ellos i por apiadamiento i compañía a ellos. I yo é tenido tu compañía fasta que as visto la potestaḍ de mi Señor i tu Señor. I yo sé que no ay señor sino Él i Él mandó, todo esta en su mano». Dixo el rey: «Ye Yūliyus, tú me as fecho arte verdaderamente». Dixo el fijo de Ḥabībī A'najer: «Tú eres de sus compañeros, ye Yūliyus». I dixo el rey a sus gentes: «A vosotros sea con tomar estos mensajeros^[136r] i matarlos i folgarán vuestras villas».

Pues, cuando vio aquello Yūliyus, alçó sus manos al cielo i dixo: «Señor, mandesme que tomase su amistaḍ i tomela; i mandesme que porfiase i é porfiado, i que fablase i é fablado i é raçonado en la razón fasta que se á declarado a él, i le as daḍo a ver Tu potestaḍ i de Tu grandeza. I yo é fecho cuanto é poḍido i ello’s que no ay señor sino Tú i no es lo que nos dan en sastifación de lo que los emos clamado a ello de Tu obidencia, sino^[136v] que ellos quieren derramar nuestras sangres. Señor Allah, retién su[s] manos de nosotros por Tu poderío, qu’ello es que no ay defendedor a nós sino Tú, que Tú eres sobre toda cosa poderoso».

Dixo : i reveló Allah a Jibrīl —*‘alayhi i’ssalām*—: «Ye Jibrīl, ¡baxa a los mensajeros i sácalos de entre las

gentes descreídas! —i mandó¹¹² a los almalaques del cielo del mundo que decendiesen con el al‘adeb doloroso a los de la cibḍaḍ de Antāquiyāf—, que ya á crecido i se á pretado Mi saña sobre quien me^[137r]te con Mí aparcero a {a} otro señor fueras de Mí!».

Dixo: i deballó Jibrīl —*‘alayhi i’ssalām*— sobre los mensajeros i tomolos con sus alas i sacolos de la cibḍaḍ i asentaron sobr’ellos los almalaques con el al‘adeb. I vozeó a ellos Ji{bri}brīl con una voz i veoslo a todos aqueḍados más presto que pestañada de ocho, i volviéronse los almalaques a sus asientos.

I decendió Allah *ta ‘ālā* sobre su mensajero Muḥammad —*ṣ m*— la estorya de lo que aconteció con ellos en l’açūra de «Y[ā] ç[īn]» donde dize: «*in kānati ilā ṣayḥatā^[137v] wwāḥidatāⁱⁿ fa ‘idā hum ḥamidūna*» que quiere dezir que: «No fue sino una voz sola i veoslos a todos aqueḍados».¹¹³ I dize en la estorya de los mensajeros: «*idā arsalnā ilayhimu tṇayni fakaḍābūhumā fa ‘azzaznā biṭālītⁱⁿ*», que quiere dezir: «Enviemos a ellos dos mensajeros i desmintiéronlos i onrémoslos con el tercero»¹¹⁴ —quiere dezir, con Yūliyus—.

Dixo Ibnu ‘Abeç —apáguese Allah d’él—: «Fue enterrado Ḥabībī I'najer en la cibḍaḍ de Antāquiyāf i no le tocó a su cuerpo cosa del al‘adeb por la buena de^[138r] su creyencia i la buena de su certeficança con Allah *ta ‘alā*».

Demandemos aḍa Allah *ta ‘alā* en que no nos meta yermación en nuestros fechos i que nos alcance de Su piadaḍ i que Lo obedeçamos, así como pertenece a nós que Le sirvamos, por Su gracia i Su onra i Su nobleza i Su ivantalla. No ay señor sino Él i no ay bien sino Su bien, que Él es Aquel que pertenece a Él la temorança i pertenece a Él la perdonança. Acábase. *Wa-al-ḥamdu li-Llahi rabbi il- ‘ālamīna*.

«¡Ah! Si mi pueblo supiera que mi Señor me ha perdonado y me ha colocado entre los honrados»; “[It was said, ‘Enter the Garden!’ He said,] ‘Would that my people knew that my Lord has forgiven me, and made me one of the honored.’”

¹¹² A *ḍamma*—i.e. a 1st p. sg. indicative present or a 3rd p. sg. indicative preterit—corrects a *fatha*—i.e. an imperative singular—and renders difficult the reading: the *consecutio temporum* of the completive may indicate an incise, but another reading can be a declarative clausula with an irregular subjunctive imperfect. See also above note 67.

¹¹³ Q 36:29: cf. “*‘in kānat ‘illā ṣayḥatan wāḥidatan fa- ‘idā hum ḥamidūn*”; “No hubo más que un solo Grito y ¡helos sin vida!”; “It was only a single cry, and suddenly they were snuffed out.”

¹¹⁴ Q 36:14: cf. “*‘id ‘arsalnā ‘ilayhimu tṇayni fakaḍābūhumā fa- ‘azzaznā bi-ṭālītⁱⁿ [fa-qālū ‘innā ‘ilaykum mursalūn]*”; “Cuando les enviamos a dos y les desmintieron. Reforzamos con un tercer [y dijeron: «Se nos ha enviado a vosotros»]”; “When We sent two men to them, and they called them liars, We reinforced (them) with a third. [They said, ‘Surely we are envoys to you.’]”