"Translating" the Origins of the Spanish Nation in Miguel de Luna's *Verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo*

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From the late fourteenth until the early seventeenth century, late medieval and early modern Iberian writers, clerics, and translators embarked on the quest of creating and imagining the origins of the Spanish nation. Historical romances, chronicles, and a variety of different kinds of "histories" were produced at the end of the fourteenth century and during the fifteenth century in order to furnish an official Spanish history, one cemented in the belief in Spain's Gothic and early Christian origins for reasons that ranged from putative rights to the Castilian throne to social mobility. These histories served to define what was to be conceived as autochthonous to the Iberian Peninsula and what was to be perceived as foreign, thus excluding the Jews and Muslims as well as their descendants from the nation's hegemonic project. While the re-elaboration of these proto-national histories continued during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at a time when Spain had established itself as a global empire, a series of specific pseudohistories and/or pseudotranslations proliferated at the end of the sixteenth century.

These pseudohistories and pseudotranslations produced by official and ecclesiastic writers and translators of the period have shaken Spanish historiography from its early beginnings until the twentieth century. Echoes of their unsettling effect can be heard in the words of Spanish philologist and historian Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo:

> Triste fama, aunque algo merecida, hemos logrado siempre los españoles de falsificadores en historias. Y aunque sea verdad que no nació en España, sino en Italia, el Fray Anio de Viterbo, autor de los fragmentos apócrifos de Manethón y Beroso, y que críticos como Vives y Juan de Vergara fueron los primeros en llamarse a engaño […] a la cabeza de todos, Román de la Higuera y Lupián Zapata, con los forjados Cronicones […] infestaron de malezas el campo de nuestra historia, llenando de mejor voluntad del mundo y la más ancha conciencia, todos los vacíos, dotando a todas nuestras ciudades de larga procesión

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> de héroes y santos, confundiendo y trastocando de tal manera las especies, que aún hoy, después de abatido el monstruo de la fábula […] aún dura el contagio en historias locales. (*Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* 287-88)[1]

Ménendez Pelayo's lament of Spain's infamous reputation for producing false histories and forgeries raises the question of what "gaps" these pseudohistories were intended to fill.

In 1592, Miguel de Luna, official translator to King Felipe II, published a translation of a long-lost history written by an Arab historian. According to one of the prefaces of his text, Luna discovered the manuscript of Abulcaçin Tarif Abentariq, fully titled *La verdadera hystoria del Rey Rodrigo, en la qual se trata la causa principal de la perdida de España y la conquista que della hizo Miramamolin Almançor Rey que fue del Africa, y de las Arabias. Compuesta por el sabio Alcayde Abulcacim Tarif Abentarique, de la nación arabe, y natural de la Arabia Petrea*,[2] in a hidden corner of King Felipe II's library in El Escorial. One of the first questions raised by Luna's account of his finding is why he is returning to the trope of discovery of a long-lost manuscript. Another is why he would present this work as his "translation" of an authentic historical text.

While Luna's work has been analyzed from a variety of angles,[3] the trope of the "found manuscript" and its status as a pseudotranslation has not yet received critical attention. This article investigates the various types of artifices that Luna employed to frame *Verdadera historia* as an authentic translation and to inscribe himself in the text as a reliable translator. More particularly, I will analyze the position of (pseudo) translation in the work, and the ways in which it becomes a vehicle through which Luna, as a *morisco*, could present a counter-history of the proto-national legend of King Rodrigo. Furthermore, I will argue that Miguel de Luna's position as an official translator to the court allowed him to play upon the conventions of translation in order to present an alternative history of the imagined glorious origin of the Spanish nation, one that exalted the pivotal role that Arabs played in the foundation of Spain. Luna's pseudotranslation sought an antidote to the grim situation of *moriscos* in the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the sixteenth century, at a time when censorship measures, the displacement of the *morisco-granadino* community, and talks of their expulsion were already taking place in several official circles.

Resurrecting, Reinventing, and Translating the Past in the Renaissance

During the Renaissance, humanist authors, poets, artists, and historians eagerly resurrected, imitated, and revived classical models, making Antiquity both foreign and serviceable for their own purposes (Lowenthal 154). Historian and geographer David Lowenthal explains that humanists conceived the arduous and intricate retrieval and

revival of the past as proof of their own ingeniousness (160). At the same time, the rescue and transmission of ancient texts became the ultimate road to invention:

> Retrieving antiquity took on necromantic overtones of rebirth, resuscitation, reincarnation, even resurrection. Petrarch called lost and fragmented literary remains "ruins" […] Recovering ancient texts deployed explicitly archeological terms. Just as antiquaries pieced together long-vanished imperial Rome from surviving vestiges of temples and statuary, scholars who collated remnants of classical authors' "unearthed fragments." (Lowenthal 160)

Like early modern writers and artists, historians not only looked for ways to emulate classical models of historiography, but also searched and exhumed the "true" origins of their nations, which often dated back to Antiquity and Biblical times.

While Italian chroniclers and historians were the forerunners in this quest, France, England, and, later, Spain joined this pursuit of their ancient past. The case of Spain, however, distinguishes itself from other continental nations, to the extent that Spanish scholars went to great lengths to vault the eight centuries of Islamic presence in the Peninsula. The main intent driving early modern Spanish scholars was to demonstrate an uninterrupted continuum between a Biblical, Roman, and Visigothic past and the Trastamara and Habsburg dynasties. Furthermore, those "obscure" years of Islamic rule in the Peninsula "provided a particular fruitful territory for historical inventions, at least from the perspective of Christians, both new and old" (Olds 14) during the sixteenth century.

While medieval historiography is characterized by its composite nature, blurring the lines between fact and fiction, the sixteenth century witnessed a shift in Spanish historiography.[4] Early modern historians pursued authenticity and exemplarity, while also responding to the needs of the nation and empire (Binotti 8, Grieve 164), including reliable sources and evidence in their histories in the form of testimonies, eyewitnesses, documents (official documentations, letters, and other sources), and artifacts. From the 1540s onward, the production of histories and chronicles in the Peninsula increased. Historians and chroniclers, such as Ambrosio de Morales, the official chronicler to the Crown, used a variety of objects and documents such as jewels, inscriptions, coins, and relics, in conjunction with medieval historical texts, to confirm and prove the veracity of their accounts, while establishing their persona as a reliable authority. As Binotti points out: "The key was to highlight the cultural and patrimonial value of each datum and artifact used to underpin the historical veracity of the narrative" (9).

This proliferation of histories and chronicles went hand in hand with the creation of forgeries and pseudohistories. One historian and master forger who stands out at the end of the fifteenth century is the Italian friar Giovanni Nanni, also known as Annius da Viterbo, who endowed several European dynasties, including the Trastamara, with a grand ancient past (Binotti 8, Olds 11).[5] In Spain, the end of the sixteenth century was a fruitful period for writers wanting to compose pseudochronicles, pseudohistories, and pseudotranslations. Examples include the parchment of

the Tower of Turpin (1588), Miguel de Luna's *Verdadera historia del rey Don Rodrigo* (1589), Jerónimo Román de la Higuera's *falsos cronicones* (1594), the Lead Books of Sacromonte (1595), and the first part of Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Guerras Civiles de Granada*, entitled *Historia de los bandos de los Zegríes y Abencerrajes* (1595).

The Trope of the "Found Manuscript" and Pseudotranslation

The trope of the found manuscript was already a recurring topos in the Middle Ages, with several romances and chronicles recounting the fortuitous discovery of an ancient manuscript in a monastery library, a church archive, or a mysterious cave. As François Delpech argues, the cryptoauthorial prologues of these texts, in which the author attributes his work to the paternity of another writer, became a textual device in which the author fashions himself as the translator or transmitter who rescued the lost text from oblivion. The author thus simultaneously establishes himself as an authoritative figure: not only is he the finder of the discovered text, he also masters its ancient or exotic language (Delpech 9). In addition, it is in these prologues that the author introduces either a fictive or real intertextuality, which facilitates the manipulation of the reader's points of reference and expectations.[6] In the Iberian Peninsula, the trope of the discovered text was frequently seen in chivalric literature, such as the *Amadis de Gaula* and *Amadis de Grecia* (both of which Cervantes parodied in *Don Quijote*). As Delpech explains, the trope in the Peninsula was a combination of Classical, Christian, Eastern, Arab and Jewish textual traditions (12).[7] Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *converso* and *morisco* authors and translators reactivated the trope and used it to play upon contemporary conventions of historiography and translation.

In addition, pseudotranslation played upon the conventions of translation and the expectations of the reader. A translation was traditionally viewed as a text that remained in a perpetual state of submission to the original text. In addition, the translation served as a mediator between the source language and culture of a text and the target culture in which it was introduced (Rubio Tovar 119). Pseudotranslations substantially complicate this mediating function.

In its most traditional sense, pseudotranslations are "texts which have been presented as translations with no corresponding source texts in other languages ever having existed" (Toury 40). However, Brigitte Rath argues that the act of writing a text as if it were a translation creates a specific kind of fiction, in which there is an overlap between "the act of authorship with an invented author, and the original text with an invented original in a different language, aimed at a different audience" (*State of the Discipline Report ACLA*). Rath conceives a pseudotranslation as a *mode of reading* in which the reader oscillates between conceiving the text either as an original or as a translation that refers to an imagined original. This imagined origi-

nal materializes in the pseudotranslation as a work that was produced in another language and culture, and was intended for a different audience.

In a way, a pseudotranslation also manipulates the literary and textual production conventions of the culture from which it originates. As Toury explains, translational norms tend to be more admissible than literary or historical conventions:

> If, in such cases, translational norms differ from the norms of original literary writing in the target culture, and if the difference is in the direction of greater tolerance for deviations from sanctioned models, as is often the case, then translational norms can also be adopted, at least in part, for the composition of the original texts, which are introduced into the system in the guise of genuine translations and, as a result, have a lower resistance threshold to pass. (Bassnett 28)

As I will argue, in *Verdadera historia* Luna also manipulates translation conventions in order to avoid censorship.

Miguel de Luna: Court Translator and Master Forger

The sociopolitical context of Spain in the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is one of dichotomies, colonial expansion into the New World, strife and turmoil outside of the Peninsula, apocalyptic scenarios, prophecies, bankruptcy, and revolts among different ethnic and economic groups, including the *moriscos* (Grieve 109). Growing tensions between the *morisco* community and Spanish officials erupted on Christmas 1568, after new official stipulations prohibited various *morisco* customs, such as the use of Arabic, the wearing of Moorish attire, the use of Arab names, and Moorish baths, among others (Harvey 211).

The conflict lasted from 1568 to 1570 in the mountainous region known as the Alpujarras. It led to fatal casualties in both camps, and ended with the eventual deportation of the *morisco-granadino* population in small groups throughout Castile. The purpose of the deportation was to scatter the *morisco* population in order to control them and to facilitate the process of assimilation. Suspicions against *moriscos* were heightened at the time, since many believed that they were collaborating with Berber corsairs plaguing the coastal areas, and that they might be in league with Spain's main rival in the Mediterranean, the Ottoman Empire (Harris 22). At this time, policy makers and religious authorities began to debate the fate of the *morisco* population. Among the options was the expulsion of the *moriscos* from the Peninsula.[8]

In the short-lived, complex, and turbulent history of the Hispano-Arabic society of Granada, few *moriscos* have been the object of countless suspicions and accusations throughout the centuries as the physician and translator to the court, Miguel de Luna. He began his profession as a translator of Arabic texts in Granada, and later became the official translator to Felipe II and Felipe III. His first assignment was the translation of the parchment of the Tower of Turpin. In March 1588, a lead box,

containing some relics and a parchment, was found underneath a Granada minaret. The parchment, written in Arabic and Castilian with some inscriptions in Latin, suggested a probable connection between Muslims and Christians in the past in the Iberian Peninsula, something that deeply troubled Church and State authorities.

In 1595, Luna collaborated with physician and translator Alonso del Castillo, and other *morisco* translators, under the protection of Archbishop Pedro de Castro, as the official translators of the notorious Lead Books of Mount Valparaíso, which later came known as the Lead Books of Sacromonte.[9] The Lead Books, composed of nineteen to twenty-two thin lead circular leaves laced together with lead wire and bound within folded lead covers, were discovered in the hillside of the Sacromonte region of Granada. The texts revealed the pivotal role that Granada had played in the arrival of Christianity to the Peninsula. The Lead Books seemed to support the medieval legend of St. Cecilio, Granada's first bishop, and his six companions, while cementing the relationship between the saint and the city of Granada (Harris 29).[10] The texts presented a syncretic theology merging both Christian and Muslim doctrines. In this manner, the discoveries not only sharply contrasted the grim conditions in which the *morisco* community was living at the end of the sixteenth century, but it also validated their Arabic legacy as one that was not foreign and/or as one that disrupted the nation's illustrious Christian origins.

As several critics have already discussed, it is believed that both Miguel de Luna and Alonso del Castillo were the master forgers behind the creation of the Lead Books of Sacromonte. Luis F. Bernabé Pons argues that the sensation and success of the forgeries resided mostly in the role that Arabic played in the texts, since only someone possessing a comprehensive knowledge of Arabic could undertake the task of deciphering and translating the texts ("Estudio preliminar" XXII). At a time when the instruction of Arabic had already been banned and books written in Arabic were mostly censored and burned, only a selected group of *moriscos* would be capable of making a rigorous translation from Arabic into Spanish, something that the forgers themselves already anticipated in their endeavours.

In order to avert any suspicion, the translators/forgers fused the Islamic material in the books with Christian sources, and especially relied on their role as official translators to the court and Church. Nevertheless, the appearance of the Lead Books ignited both the curiosity and the suspicion of different personalities of the period. Among the skeptics were historian Luis del Mármol Carvajal, Pedro de Valencia, and Benito Arias Montano, while among the supporters were Pedro de Castro, a group of *morisco* intellectuals, and, of course, Jerónimo Román de la Higuera, creator of the pseudochronicles known as the *falsos cronicones*.[11]

Pseudotranslation and Reinvention in the "True" History of King Rodrigo and the Origins of the Spanish Nation

In the midst of the two monumental discoveries of the parchment of the Tower of Turpin and the Lead Books of Sacromonte, Miguel de Luna "translated" his *Verdadera historia del Rey Don Rodrigo compuesta por el Sabio Alcayde Abulcacim Tarif*, which was composed in 1589 and published in Granada in 1592. A second part was published eight years later. Although various personalities of the period questioned the authenticity of *Verdadera historia*, the text enjoyed great popularity inside and outside of the Iberian Peninsula. Several reprints of the text were made in various parts of Spain, including Granada, Madrid, and Valencia, among others, throughout the seventeenth century. In 1627, the first partial English translation of the text in London, titled *Almansor, the learned and victorious king that conquered Spaine*, was published. Other full English translations followed in the second half of the seventeenth century. French and Italian translations of the text were also published in the first half of the seventeenth century ("Estudio preliminar" XXXVI-VII).[12]

Little is known of the life of Miguel de Luna or how he formally learned Arabic. He was born in Granada sometime between 1540 and 1550, and studied medicine at the University of Granada. Although he translated a medical treatise on the topic of gout from Arabic into Spanish, it is not certain if he ever practiced medicine.[13] The little information that we know of how Luna learned Arabic comes from the translator himself. In his prefaces to *Verdadera historia*, Luna mentioned that he began his Arabic education in childhood, and that he had studied Arabic grammar and language for twenty-seven years. We know that by the second half of the sixteenth century, the kingdoms of Granada and Valencia were the only regions of Spain in which Arabic was still widely used. In addition, scientific and medical treatises were the few texts in Arabic that were excluded from censorship.[14] Therefore, the presence of the medical texts indicates that a minority of the population, including *morisco* physicians, could still read Arabic.

In *Verdadera historia*, Luna used several textual artifacts not only to explain why the translated book is a "true history," but also to develop his persona as a translator. One of these devices concerns the series of prefaces that frame his translation of the historical manuscript. The prefaces are addressed to a particular audience and are attributed to multiple authors, either the "translator" or the historians. Therefore, each preface introduces the reader to a gradual process in which the content and the importance of the history is stated, and also elaborates on the role of the translator as a transmitter and/or interpreter of the Arabic manuscript.

Before reading Luna's first preface, the reader comes across the inquisitors' forewords authorizing the work as a Christian text. As the inquisitor Doctor F. Vicente Gómez indicates: "I have not found any thing that is contrary to our Faith, nor

contradicts our good customs. More so, it seems to me that it (the book) should be beneficial, since it would help us remember those serious sins, for which ancients Christians were harshly punished by God" (4). In this manner, the text was able to circumvent the Inquisition's scrutiny, while duping the two inquisitors that appear in the text's forewords. Moreover, the book was introduced as a moral tale that informed Christian readers of the sins committed in the Peninsula in the past, and how God punished sinners.

In his preface to King Felipe II, Luna recounts how, through hard work, dedication, and practice, he immersed himself in the "sweet and delectable" study of letters, especially the study of Arabic:

> Bastantemente tiene hecha cumplida demostracion la experiencia, que con el continuo exercicio del hombre, las ciencias reciben perfeccion, y aumento: y el que las sigue, ornato de grandes virtudes, levantandole el entendimiento à contemplar altas, y divinas contemplaciones, y finalmente adquiere con ellas modo para vivir en este miserable estado, para no ser anegado en el pielago de la ciega, y monstrusa ignorancia. Con este designio (Catolica Magestad) comence desde mi niñez à cultivar mi ingenio en este dulce, y sabroso exercicio de la letras, mayormente en la facultad Arabiga [...]. (Pro)[15]

With his arduous efforts and studies of Arabic, the translator claimed that he was able to bring the book to life: "resurrecting the present History, so coveted by our Spaniards" (Pro). He then describes the content of the history, the encounter of Don Rodrigo with Tarif Abenzier, Captain of King Almançor, and other memorable events. Nevertheless, he portrays the importance of the history in a curious light. Luna explains that the purpose of the text is to remember and to illustrate the courage of the Spaniards, especially the bravery of Don Pelayo, and how he became conqueror and restorer of Spain under Arab dominion, and direct heir of the Gothic kings. This version of the story of King Rodrigo was the popular version of the account circulating at the time in different histories, chronicles, and ballads.[16] However, in a very subtle manner, Luna anticipates how the author of the book introduced a different version of the history that contemporary histories were lacking (Pro).

In the next preface, "Proemio al Christiano Lector," Luna further elaborates on the themes of the text and on his role as a translator. The author/translator begins his preface by referring to Saint Jerome and his translation of the Bible. Luna's allusion to the figure of the saint is not surprising, since Jerome's comments on translation are present in several of his prologues, comments, and epistles.

The translator compares his work to Saint Jerome's. Just as the Father of the Church undertook the difficult task of translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, Luna faced a similar challenge in translating *Verdadera historia* from Arabic into Spanish. However, he stresses that, even though he had dedicated twenty-seven years of his life to the study of Arabic, he would have never dared to carry out such a translation, since "it seemed to me that to translate such a language to our Castilian language was not only extremely arduous, as it is in itself a very repugnant language" (Pro). According to the translator, it was only at the insistence of certain curious

distinguished men, "who coveted to know a truth that remained buried in this language" (Pro), that he agreed to make his translation.

It is interesting to note that, throughout this preface, Luna establishes a distance between the subject of the history and his *morisco* background. He never mentions that he is a *morisco*, and in several passages, he repeats that the book caters to a Christian audience. Luna also underscores the fact that he is translating, from Arabic into "our Castilian language," an account missing or unknown in "our histories." At the same time, in this preface Luna introduces the persona of the fictive "author" of the history to the reader. The purported author of the book was a serious and prominent historian who had been an eyewitness to almost all of the events narrated in the text. Throughout the preface, Luna reiterates the authenticity of the account, and of the author, by referring multiple times to the history as "verdad" ("true") and "verdadera" ("truthful or reliable"). Even though the events come from an Arab source, the translator claims that the author was impartial to both sides, Spanish and Arab alike.

The preface also demonstrates how Luna fashions his role as an interpreter by explaining his methodology. For Luna, the most difficult task was not only overcoming the linguistic challenges of translation from Arabic into Spanish, but also knowing the historical context and the author in order to adapt Islamic content for a Christian audience. Additionally, he compares the work of a good translator to that of a good physician who must know the well the rules of his *métier*, as well as simple or complex ways in which to come up with remedies for what the historical "author" names; this is an appropriate image when we remember that he was also a physician.

The translator continues to explain his methodology by justifying his use of marginalia to explain words and ideas that were difficult to translate or interpret, and also to demonstrate his competence as a translator for those who could read Arabic. The fact that Luna resorts to the use of marginalia is not an unusual practice, nor is it uncommon for a translator to justify or excuse himself for making his comments or interpretations due to difficulty in the process of translation. However, what is noteworthy in Luna's work is how he plays with the conventions of the discipline of translation with his prefaces and marginalia in order to assert the authenticity of his fictitious or imagined original, and the temporalities of both works: the historical book and the translation.

It is important to consider that the act of writing and the act of translating entail a certain distancing in space and time. Hence, the activity of translation as an interpretation and expression of another text entails the activation of the older text. In this process, the translator establishes a dialogue with the author of the original text, which unavoidably leads to comparison and contrast between languages, space, cultural mores, and readership, among other factors. In addition, a translation is an experience in which different temporalities dialogue, cross, and accumulate in the text (Rubio Tovar 114). Luna cleverly plays with the intrinsic temporalities present in any given translation, and artfully confuses the reader by introducing in his text an

array of artifices pointing to various temporalities and sources.

As mentioned above, the notes in the margins become a textual device in which Luna demonstrates his knowledge of the Arabic language and the Islamic culture present in the texts. Moreover, Luna justifies the presence of the marginalia as a means of bridging the gaps between Arab and Christian temporalities, the Hijra and the Christian era. He also points out that he has undertaken the difficult task of inserting the equivalents of all the dates, and the names of the locations, in the margins of the text.

Nonetheless, if the traditional purpose of marginalia in a text is to create a dialogue between the author of the text and the translator, or between the translator and his audience, in Luna's case it became a constant display and reminder to the reader of his role and craftsmanship as a translator. Furthermore, the recurring explanations of the dates in the margins also served as a way of reinforcing the two temporalities in the text. It reminds the reader of the eight centuries' distance between the events narrated in the book and the translation produced at the end of the sixteenth century.

In the third preface, written by the "author" Abentarique, Luna announces that his book narrates authentic accounts "without resorting to any type of invention in order to recount a transparent truth" (2). After the customary *captatio benevolentiae*, Abentarique justified writing the history by declaring that he had witnessed most of the events presented in the book, such as the wars in Spain, Africa, and the Arab Kingdom. In addition to his own testimony, the historian emphasized that his history contains multiple sources that support its validity, such as collected letters, official military orders, and oral accounts from reliable witnesses of those few places and events that he did not witness himself. The author's preface ends with the proclamation of his work as a truthful account, and an example to be followed by other "historians." Therefore, Luna not only solidifies the fictitious figure of his author as a trustworthy witness, but, more so, ironically critiques those historians who compose less reliable accounts by writing fictionalized accounts of historical events. The use of irony in Luna's prologue of Abentarique illustrates the self-reflective nature that is intrinsic to the composition of pseudotranslations and pseudohistories. As Anthony Grafton has indicated, in the case of some early modern histories, writing about historical criticism and techniques of forgery developed in tandem: "In order to create a convincing fake, after all, an author needed to be aware of what his contemporaries considered not a fake" (Olds 16).

In this manner, the translator begets a whole elaborate apparatus surrounding the text, with its multiple prefaces, sources, and documents, in order to provide the façade of an accurate translation of a truthful account of historical events. Using the trope of the long-lost manuscript and the work of a translation or, in this case, a pseudotranslation, allowed Luna to manipulate the fissures of the literary and historical conventions of the period in order to introduce a counter-historical account of the legend of King Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king of the Iberian Peninsula before the Arab invasion in 711. Why did Luna resort to such lengthy measures in order to safe-

guard his book as a "verdadera historia" at a time when early modern historiography, for the most part, still contained some remnants of fiction? Furthermore, what is the importance of the legend of Don Rodrigo in the Spanish cultural imaginary? In order to answer these questions we must first take a look into the role of Neo-Gothic myth in relation to nation building during the Middle Ages and, especially, after the second half of the fifteenth century.

Neo-Gothicism alleged an uninterrupted blood continuity from the Visigothic kings (western Goths), who ruled the Peninsula from the fifth century until the 711 Arab invasion, through the Trastamara sovereigns who claimed the Castilian throne in 1369.[17] The neo-Gothic myth played a pivotal role in the Catholic Monarchs' creation of the national hegemonic project, for Isabel was depicted as the rightful heir of the Visigothic kings, and the Catholic Monarchs were portrayed as the restorers of the neo-Gothic body politic of Hispania (Weissberger 98). The role of Neo-Gothicism in the legitimization of the Spanish hegemonic project reverberated throughout the sixteenth century in the expansionist and imperial projects of Carlos I, Felipe II, and Felipe III. Moreover, at the heart of the neo-Gothic myth lies the legend of Don Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king.

Not much is known of the historical figure of King Rodrigo and of the Visigothic kingdom at the dawn of the eighth century. Accounts of the presumed events that led to the invasion and what transpired during and after the attack circulated during the Middle Ages and early Modernity in different cultural media, including ballads, chronicles, Arabic and Iberian histories and romances, among others.[18] In *Verdadera historia*, Miguel de Luna fused various traditions of the story of the fall of Spain, while he invented new ones for different purposes. At the beginning of the history, the reader first encounters Spain's glorified legendary last Visigothic monarch depicted in a less than favourable light. From the first paragraph of the book, Luna plays with the reader's anticipations of the story and with descriptions of an idealized Visigothic Spain, and of King Rodrigo. Earlier popular romances, chronicles, and ballads portrayed Visigothic Spain as an idyllic locus, an earthly paradise, which was lost with the Muslim invasion. The ballad tradition also portrayed Rodrigo as a tragic hero who succumbed to his sins, and then lost his kingdom. Luna begins his book with a similar description of Spain and Rodrigo, yet immediately introduces a twist in the story:

> En el año de la hixera de noventa y uno, reynava en España un Rey de profession Christiano, llamado por nombre Don Rodrigo, Godo de nacion, natural de la Scita, el qual tenía en aquel tiempo todo su Reyno en paz, tranquilidad, y sossiego, sin guerras, ni discordias, como nuestro Rey, y señor Miramamolin Abigualit Jacobo Almaçor estuvo en su tiempo. Y como la ociosidad acarrea vicios, y grandes daños, este desdichado Rey (que assi se puede llamar) diò en exercitar malos exercicios, y como tenia el reynado en confiança, y governacion por un sorbrino suyo, llamado D. Sancho… tenia mucha pena, y deseava heredar la sucession para tener el Cetro Real en propiedad […] (3-4)[19]

In this manner, Luna establishes two elements of his story from its beginning. First,

he draws a comparison between Rodrigo and Miramamolin Almaçor in order to, later, stress the contrast between both monarchs. Second, the reader encounters a flawed and ignoble King Rodrigo, a tyrant who wanted to kill his own nephew, his brother's son and heir to the throne, once he came of age, in order to secure his position on the throne.

In contrast to other accounts in which King Rodrigo was depicted as a good monarch, but whose two transgressions resulted in his downfall and the destruction of the Visigothic kingdom, Luna depicts the Peninsula according to the Decadence Tradition present in the early Christian chronicles, such as *Crónica de Alfonso III*, in which the Visigothic kingdom was ruled by an inherently vicious, cruel, and lascivious monarch. In Luna's account, once Rodrigo safeguarded his reign with the death of his nephew, the Peninsula was governed by chaos. Not only did Rodrigo order that all of the old supporters of his nephew be assassinated, but his irrepressible lust did not spare any women, married or maiden, of any rank. The king's concupiscence also contaminated all spheres of the realm, since he allowed clerics and monks to practice multiple marriages and concubinage (292). The king lacked the qualities of a good monarch, and his chaotic kingdom reflected his own depravities. As the narrator notes, this augurs his downfall, and also the destruction of the whole kingdom.

In *Verdadera historia*, King Rodrigo committed the same two transgressions present in the early Arab chronicles, such as the ones composed by historian Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam and Rasis the Moor, which foretell the fall of the Visigothic kingdom with the Arab invasion: the seduction of Julian's daughter and his trespassing in the enchanted castle. Luna introduced some modifications in the story of Rodrigo and Julian's daughter. First, the young maiden, who was known in other versions as Cava, was given a new name, Florinda, the name that other authors employed in latter versions of the story (Grieve 166-67). Secondly, as the author had already established in describing the king's lascivious nature, Rodrigo's rape of the maiden was not a product of a moment of unrestrained passion, but was another display of his lasciviousness. As the narrator mentions, even though Rodrigo was already married, he persisted in his old ways. Furthermore, in a similar manner as in *Crónica sarracina*, Florinda reveals her misfortune to her father through a letter.[20] As in other versions of the account in ballads and chronicles, Julian receives the letter, and seeks revenge by plotting to invade the Peninsula with the Berbers of North Africa.

A central aspect of the narrative in *Verdadera historia* is the use of letters, a common resource of early modern vernacular historiography. Nevertheless, Patricia E. Grieve explains that the inclusion of letters in sixteenth-century continental histories became a narrative device designed to support the truth value of the historical text (270). The letters would also demonstrate the historians' capacity as researchers, since they supposedly navigated the labyrinths of obscure libraries and searched remote corners of monasteries in order to find authentic documents. In addition, letters were also a common technique of medieval Arabic historiography as a way of carrying forward the narrative of the text (North 80).

In *Verdadera historia*, the letters function in a similar manner to those mentioned above, yet they also became another device used to assert the figure of the "original" author, Abentarique, and also of Luna's role as a translator. The historian Abentarique mentioned in his prologue that he personally collected the letters, since, for the most part, he was present in the events narrated in his book. At the same time, the letters become a display of the work of various translators and temporalities in the text, as some letters are translations of translations.[21] From the first letter of the text, written by Queen Anagilda, the mother of Prince Sancho, to King Rodrigo, the readers encounter Luna's clarification of the letter as a translation of a translation. In a marginal note in the folio, Luna explains that the original letter was written in Spanish by the queen; the historian Abentarique then translated the letter in his text into Arabic; and Luna later translated the letter back into Spanish. Therefore, the *morisco* translator encompassed in his text different authorships and historical temporalities as well as a history that was rooted in multiple translations and interpretations in order to render the text as an authentic translation of a historical document.

Regarding Luna's re-elaboration and reinvention of the story of King Rodrigo, *Verdadera historia* differs from other versions of the story, for there is no redemption in the figure of King Rodrigo. During the battle between Rodrigo and his army against Captain Tarif Abenzier and his men, Rodrigo runs away from the battle, exchanges clothes with a shepherd, and goes into exile. The act establishes Rodrigo as a coward who divests himself of his responsibilities as a monarch when facing the imminent destruction of his kingdom. Therefore, Luna's Rodrigo never truly laments the loss of his kingdom, nor does he ever repent for his sins. In the text, Rodrigo's spinelessness is contrasted with the loyalty, sense of justice, and honour of Captain Tarif Abenzier, Viceroy Muça el Zanhani, and, especially, King Abilgualit Miramamolin Jacob Almaçor, King of the Arabias.

Where the first part of *Verdadera historia* describes King Miramamolin Jacob Almaçor as an honourable, wise, and worthy sovereign, the second part of the book presents the laudable life of the king. The story of the life of King Jacob Almaçor came from a different author than Abentarique, the Alcayde Ali Abenzufian. Therefore, the reader encounters another of Luna's textual devices, since we have in the second part of *Verdadera historia* a metahistory: a historical book, the life of King Jacob Almaçor written by Ali Abenzufian, within the macrohistorical text, the history "composed" by Abentarique. According to a letter found at the beginning of Ali's text, King Abencirix requested the historian to compose the life of his great-grandfather, King Jacob Almaçor, because his story would be an example to be followed by other monarchs. In this manner, Luna inserts the fictive intertextuality of a new text into the text as a whole, which begets the existence of the second part of *Verdadera historia*. In addition, this intertextuality helps to play with the audience's expectations and also changes the narrative from a historical perspective to a *mirror of princes*. In turn, through the introduction of the *mirror of princes*, Luna further developed the figure of the exemplary king as the utmost opposite of the figure of King Rodrigo.

The text of Ali Abenzufian is in fact a pseudomirror of princes. The king is described as the archetype of a prince from his childhood.[22] He excelled in all of the arts and sciences, composed several texts on different subjects including an *Espejo de príncipes*, commented on Aristotle's texts, and learned several languages. Jacob Almaçor's knowledge on war and governance was unparallelled. In a way, Luna modelled the figure of Jacob Almaçor on the life of King Carlos I of Spain, with several parallels between them; for example, just as Carlos I did, Jacob Almaçor left the throne in his old age to his son, and retired to a secluded convent in the mountains.

However, Luna's exemplary monarch even surpassed the figure of Carlos I. King Almaçor had different notions of a person's worth, not based on blood, but on the person's intentions and deeds: "No tenia atencion à sangre, ni menos à altos linages, porque si era hombre particular de mediana condicion, y tenia valor para regir, y governar, le dava el mejor lugar, y cargo de sus consejos" (251).[23] Hence, a person's recognition and advancement in his position were solely based on merit and not blood, something that greatly contrasted with the sociopolitical reality in Spain during the sixteenth century. At this time in Spain, social and political advancement was based on the person's blood or ethnicity; according to the statutes of the *limpieza de sangre* (*statutes of blood purity*), the higher positions in the Church, government and court were reserved only for Old Christians. Thus, Luna criticized the unfairness and absurdity of the statutes of blood, while proposing a different scenario that would benefit the *morisco* community.

On the other hand, Tarif and Muça are depicted as exemplary soldiers and leaders. Not only did they excel in battle, but their great success also lay in their capacity to negotiate ethically with the vanquished Christians throughout the Iberian Peninsula. In this manner, Luna participates in the portrayal of the noble Moor found in the maurophile literature of the period.[24] Some of the exemplary deeds described in the text include Tarif's treatment of the Visigothic army once they were vanquished, the decrees that were established once Spanish towns were conquered, and his unquestionable loyalty to and respect for his superiors and king. In his account of the conquest of the Peninsula by Muça, Tarif, and their men, Luna describes the Berber army's treatment of the conquered people as fair; most importantly, he notes that the covenants that were made were always honoured. This is an allusion of sorts to those covenants and capitulations made between Christian and Muslim communities that were not always honoured by the Christian monarchs.

Another important element that Luna presents in his history is the role of religion and conversion in the Peninsula after the Berber invasion. Contrary to the fate of the Muslim community in Granada after King Fernando's and Queen Isabel's conquest, all the inhabitants of the Peninsula enjoyed freedom of religion. The text does not depict conversion as coercive and violent, but more as a voluntary and natural process of assimilation and acculturation. For Luna, the first conversions were out of real necessity, since there was a shortage of women available to marry the Muslim inhabitants. Thus, an announcement was made exhorting the voluntary decision of any

Christian who wished to convert to Islam. Ironically, the first to convert for political expediency were none other than Spain's archbishops.

Moreover, as José Godoy Alcántara accurately asserts in his insightful study of *Verdadera historia*, the passage shatters the notion of *limpieza de sangre* and the category of Old Christians. Under the Berber dominion, the successful growth of the population and development of Muslim Spain was rooted in the practices of mixed marriages, interreligiousness, and migration of Muslims and Jews from North Africa. Therefore, the whole idea of an uninterrupted and untainted bloodline dating from the Visigothic kingdoms to sixteenth century Spain, upon which the whole neo-Gothic myth rested, was nullified and exposed as just an idealistic and unrealistic fantasy. As Godoy Alcántara indicates, with Luna's depiction of Muslim Spain, no Spaniard could claim to have pure Visigothic blood.

Furthermore, with the intermarriages between Berber and Visigoth monarchies, Luna presents an alternative scenario of succession, one that would include the Muslim side. The first intermarriage that the reader encounters in Luna's text is the marriage of Rodrigo to a Muslim princess named Zahra. The Muslim princess was the sole heir of an Arab kingdom in East Africa. One day, the princess's ship goes astray and lands in Spain. After she converts to Christianity, the princess marries King Rodrigo. Hence, Rodrigo's kingdom, the "last Visigothic" kingdom, was one rooted in hybridity of both Visigothic and Arab blood.[25] Luna also changes Egilona, Rodrigo's wife in earlier chronicles, to the daughter of King Rodrigo and Queen Zahra. In the story, Egilona marries General Mahometo Abdelasis.[26] However, Egilona refuses to leave her faith; hence, an interreligious marriage takes place, in which each monarch, the Christian queen and the Muslim king, keeps and respects the other's religion. In this manner, Luna presents a different marriage scenario, based not on conversion of one of the parties, but on religious tolerance and a possible pluralistic society.

As we have seen, while early modern scholars centered their endeavours on finding, resurrecting, reimagining, and forging the past and legacy in order to create or invent their nation's origins, Miguel de Luna composed a pseudotranslation that invents an alternative version of the official story and foundational myth of King Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king in the Peninsula. The translator and master forger uses the well-known trope of the discovery of a long-lost manuscript in order to introduce his pseudotranslation, in which he plays upon late sixteenth-century conventions of history and translation by manipulating the fissures of both disciplines in order to create a "true" or plausible account of the story of King Rodrigo and the arrival of the Berbers to the Iberian Peninsula. Moreover, Luna's history exposes the pivotal role that the Berbers played in the foundation of the Spanish nation at a moment when the *morisco-granadino* community had already been exiled and scattered throughout various regions of Castile, and their expulsion was imminent. In this manner, between original and translation, between prefaces, text, and margins, Luna's pseudotranslation creates a space that presents the "true history of Spain" as one that is hybrid and inclusive of all its cultures. Therefore, Luna's *Verdadera histo-*

ria sought an antidote to the crisis that the *morisco* population was experiencing by presenting a history that was more idyllic and plausible than the one circulating in the histories and chronicle of the period.

Notes

1. "It is an unfortunate, although well deserved reputation, for Spaniards to be known as historical forgers. Even though this is true, its place of birth was not Spain, but Italy with Friar Anio de Viterbo, author of the apocryphal fragments of Manethon and Beroso. Spanish critics such as Vives and Juan de Vergara were the first to venture into this deceitfulness […] at the head of all of them reside Román de la Higuera and Lupián Zapata with their forged *Chronicles of Dextro* […] in which they infested our historical field with their weeds. They tried to fill in, with their best intentions and wide conscience, all of the historical gaps by investing all of our cities with a long procession of heroes and saints. Therefore, confusing and subverting all of its species to a point, that up to this present day the dejected monster of the fables… and its contagion still persist in local histories." (All translations are mine except where indicated.)

2. "True History of King Rodrigo, in which is treated the principal cause of the loss of Spain and her conquest by Emir Almazor, a king of Africa and the Arabias. Composed by the wise Alcayde Abulcacim Tarif Abentarique, from the Arab nation, and original of the Arabia Petrea."

3. Both James T. Monroe and Luce López-Baralt examine *Verdadera historia* from the perspective of the maurophile tradition, while Francisco Márquez Villanueva looks into the work from the perspective of the *morisco* problem, as well as studying the different authors that influenced Luna's work. On the other hand, Patricia E. Grieve, Elizabeth Drayson, and Sara Gottardi study from different standpoints Luna's contributions and re-invention of the legend of King Don Rodrigo. Moreover, Luis F. Bernabé Pons has been the only scholar to date to produce a critical edition of *Verdadera historia*.

4. Some of these histories and chronicles are Lucas de Túy's *Corónica de España* (c. 1238), Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *De rebus Hispaniae* (first half of the thirteenth century), Pero López de Ayala's (1332-1407) *Historia de los reyes de Castilla*, Pedro de Corral's *Crónica sarracina* (c. 1430), and Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo's (1404-70) *Historia Hispánica*, among others.

5. Viterbo's work under the Castilian ambassador at the papal court inspired him to dedicate a section of his work to the Trastamara Castilian dynasty, and confer a glorious imagined past on Castile: "The inventive Dominican also endowed Spain with cultural primacy over the ancients according to his Berosus, not only had Spain enjoyed a rich body of literature eight centuries before the Greeks, but its monarchy had predated that of Troy by an astounding six hundred years" (Olds 11).

6. "Pero entre el engaño puro y la ficción lúdica media todo un espacio de libertad literaria en el que el organizador de la material narrativa-ya se presente como autor o como mero transcriptor-puede aprovechar los desajustes que él mismo utiliza para controlar los enfoques y relativisar los puntos de vista" (Delpech 9).

7. François Delpech discusses some motives of the "found manuscript" in the Iberian Peninsula that come from Arab and Jewish cultural and textual traditions. In the case of the Arab tradition, Delpech notes the influence of the Talismanic tradition in various legends and literature in the Middle Ages and early Modernity in the Peninsula, in which an amulet or text containing symbols or mysterious characters must be hidden in a closed receptacle or in a secluded cave (15). On the other hand, the Jewish motives were inspired by the Jewish Cabala tradition, in which the discovery of hidden knowledge comes to the discoverer and transmitter through prophecies and dreams that reveals the whereabouts of the secret text (19).

8. A. Katie Harris mentions that among the measures debated at the time in order to isolate and neutral-

ize the *morisco* threat was the creation of ghettos in order to seclude them from the general population in cities and towns. Other critics argued for more extreme measures, such as galley service for all *morisco* men between the ages of eighteen and forty, castration, or expulsion from the Spanish realms (35-36).

9. It has been debated whether Miguel de Luna and Alonso del Castillo were in fact related. Darío Cabanelas Rodríguez mentions that Castillo was Luna's father-in-law; however, Bernabé Pons, Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano believe that it is merely a hypothesis.

10. According to the medieval legend, St. Cecilio and his six companions, known as the Seven Apostles of Spain, came to the Iberian Peninsula to continue the evangelization work that St. James had begun. The Seven Apostles, Torcuato, Segundo, Indalecio, Eufrasio, Hiscio, Tesifón, and Cecilio, were ordained as bishops in Rome by SS. Peter and Paul. They arrived in the town of Acci (Guadix), and spread their missionary work throughout Andalusia. According to medieval sources, St. Cecilio's destination was the town of Eliberri, Illiberri, or Illiberis, the Roman antecedent of Granada (Harris 29).

11. It is not surprising that Jerónimo Román de la Higuera was a fervent supporter of the Lead Books of Sacromonte, and of Alonso del Castillo's and Miguel de Luna's endeavours as translators, if we consider the friar's own historical and translation agenda in his false chronicles. Román de la Higuera fabricated four texts "composed" by four different authors: Dexter, Marcus Maximus, Luitprand, and Julián Pérez. In the case of the *Chronicle of Dextro*, Román de la Higuera claimed that he was translating a section of Flavio Lucio Dextro's omnimodus history, which specifically narrated the history of Christianity from the first century to the fourth century CE. The Jesuit friar's explanation of his finding of the long-lost manuscript is as marvellous as the chronicle itself. The manuscript was supposedly found at an abbey in Fulda, Germany, where a Jesuit Friar, Torralba, friend of Román de la Higuera, had obtained a copy of the manuscript from one of his disciples, who unfortunately was deceased; this disciple, in turn, had transcribed a copy of the original lost Gothic manuscript that was in the possession of a bourgeois man from Worms. However, the famous Dextro was an obscure figure in Iberian history. Little is known of this historian, except for a reference made by none other than Saint Jerome in *De viris illustribus*, where the Father of the Church mentions an omnimodus history composed by Dextro, the son of Paciano, bishop of Barcelona. Even though Saint Jerome alludes to Dextro's history, there were no extant copies of, or any references to, his manuscripts during the Middle Ages. In a way, Román de la Higuera resurrects this unknown historian in order to underscore the important role that the Iberian Peninsula played in the Church's history.

12. In his critical study of *Historia Verdadera del Rey don Rodrigo*, Bernabé Pons mentions that the first French translation of the text was published in 1638 under the title *La vie de Iacob Almaçor, roy d'Arabie. Traduire d'Espagnol en François par le sieur by Vieux-Maisons*. This translation was followed by several other French translations made in the second half of the seventeenth century and in the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1648 the first Italian translation, *Il Regno de Goti nella Spagne Abatutto, e Risorto: overo La Perdite, e Racquisto della Spagna ocupata da Mori*, was produced. Other Italian translations appeared throughout Italy in the second half of the seventeenth century (XXXVI-XXXVII).

13. We also know that amidst all sort of suspicion, Luna was granted the noble title of *hijodalgo* in 1610, five years before his death in 1615.

14. Bernabé Pons mentions that the decrees of Queen Juana in 1511 stipulated that all texts in Arabic were to be destroyed, with the exception of philosophical, historical, and medical texts (LXVIII).

15. "It is well known and proven that with experience and the continuous dedication of men, sciences are improved and increased, and he who pursues them, embellisher of great virtues, elevated by knowledge to ponder higher and more divine contemplations, finally acquire with them a way to live in this miserable state, in order not to be submerged in the deep blind and monstrous ignorance. With this intention (Catholic Majesty) I began since childhood to cultivate my formation in this sweet and delectable exercise in letters, and, principally in the faculty of Arabic." (Pro)

16. In the first half of the fifteenth century, two major texts retold the story of Don Rodrigo: Pedro de Corral's *Crónica sarracina* (c. 1430), and the anonymous *Refundición toledana de la Crónica de 1344* (c. 1440). Another version of the story was composed by Ambrosio de Morales, historian and chronicler to the court of Felipe II, in his *Corónica general de España* (c. 1574-84).

17. Barbara Weissberger explains that neo-Gothic myth aimed to advance different political agendas in the period: "From those worthy ancestors the royal dynasty founded by the illegitimate Enrique II were believed to have inherited Gothic-and masculine characteristics of virility, sobriety, and vigor, the very traits required to complete the sacred mission of the Iberian kingdoms: the recuperation of territorial and moral integrity of ancient Romano-Gothic Hispania through the expulsion of the Muslim conquerors" (96).

18. The first surviving accounts of King Rodrigo and the 711 fall of Spain are two Christian and two Arabic chronicles. The earliest source is the anonymous *Crónica mozárabe de 754*, which is believed to have been composed in Toledo by a Mozarab clergyman. The next two sources, an Arab and a Christian chronicle, circulated in the mid- and late ninth century. In the mid-ninth century *The History of the Conquest of Egypt*, the Arab historian Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam narrates the events of 711 from the Muslim perspective. In the late ninth century, another Christian chronicle, *Crónica de Alfonso III*, recounts the fall of Spain following the Decadence Tradition, but with a variation of the earlier Christian history. Another Arabic writer, Ahmad al-Razi, is believed to have contributed to the legend of the dishonour of Julian's daughter. Ahmad al-Rasis, or Rasis the Moor as he is referred to in Christian writings, was the most celebrated historian of Al-Andalus (c. 950-970). For a detailed discussion of the elaboration of the legend in each source, see Patricia E. Grieve's *The Eve of Spain*.

19. Here I use the English translation in *The History of the Conquest of Spain by the Moors*. Even though there are some differences in the wording, it does convey the idea of the text:
"In the year 91 of the Hegira, Spain was govern'd by a King call'd Rodrigo, of Race of the Goths; a People that came into the Country from the farthest parts of the North, and who made prosession of the Christian Religion. This kingdom did then enjoy a profound Peace, and was as much under his subjection, as could be formely to the Great Almazor, our Soveraign Lord. Insomuch that this unhappy Prince (for we may term him so) had the freedom to abandon himself to all the Vices, whereof idleness is commonly the force. What curb'd him, was the young Prince Don Sancho, Son to the late King… his Eldest Brother… his thoughts were wholly taken up in contriving the means to appropriate the whole Authority to himself […]." (*History* 1-2)

20. Luna introduces a symbolic broken emerald that Florinda sends to her father, Count Julian, which represents the loss of her maidenhood at the hands of the king.

21. The author frequently underlines the linguistic differences during the encounters between Arabs and Spanish, especially at the beginning of the book. He explains that either one person knew the language of the other, or there was a form of translation or interpretation involved.

22. Márquez Villanueva states that Luna's model for his mirror of princes, the life of Jacob Almaçor, is Antonio de Guevara's *Relox de príncipes*. Though it is undeniable that one of the sources for the story of the life of Jacob Almaçor is Guevara, other critics have also argued that Luna may have used Arabic sources for the story. For François Delpech, certain aspects of the story are similar to passages from Himyarī's *Rawd al-Mi'tār*. Bernabé Pons does not discard the possibility that Luna might have been inspired by an Andalusi tradition similar to the mirror of princes, since both Castillo and Luna had access to Andalusi manuscripts held at the Library of El Escorial ("Estudio preliminar" lxv-vii).

23. "He did not care for blood (lineage), and he paid less attention to high lineages, because if the person was an average man, and had the valor to rule and govern, then he would give him the best post and would make him part of his counsel."

24. Some of the best known texts written in the sixteenth century that followed the maurophile tradition are the anonymous *El Abencerraje*, composed probably a decade before the Alpujarra's War, and Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Historia de los bandos de los Zegríes y Abencerrajes*, published at the end of the sixteenth century.

25. After Rodrigo's death, Zahra married the Infante Mahomento Gilhair, son of the King of Tunisia, under the condition that he convert to Christianity. Even though the queen was Moorish and a Muslim convert, she was devoted to her faith. Therefore, the passage presents the idea that true conversion is possible. At a time when *moriscos*, just as *conversos* in the past, were under constant suspicion and the watchful eye of the Inquisition, who suspected them of being false converts and performing Muslim customs in private, Luna included in his book examples of true Muslim conversions to Christianity. This, of course, contrasted with the Archbishops' previous rapid and expedient conversion to Islam.

26. In the second part of *Verdadera historia*, the marriage between Egilona and Mahometo Abdelasis ended tragically due to external agents and factors. Nonetheless, the success of the marriage could have forged a new multireligious and hybrid dynasty in Spain. In the story, Egilona was pregnant, but lost the baby when she witnessed her husband's gruesome death. However, Luna presents an alternative scenario to the traditional account: if Rodrigo were to have a daughter, not only would she have been the rightful heir to the throne, instead of Pelayo, and the Spanish Monarchy not only would have been based on the hybridity embodied in an Arab/Visigothic princess, but *moriscos* could also lay claim to the Spanish throne through the marriage of one of their own, the Muslim prince Abdelasis, to the Visigothic princess (Grieve 174).

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