

‘ARAB STONES’.
RODRIGO CARO’S TRANSLATIONS OF ARABIC
INSCRIPTIONS IN SEVILLE (1634), REVISITED

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... Esta corta piedad que agradecido
huésped a tus sagrados Manes debo,
les dó y consagro, Itálica famosa.
Tú (si lloroso don han admitido
las ingratas cenizas de que llevo
dulce noticia asaz, si lastimosa),
permíteme, piadosa
usura a tierno llanto,
que vea el cuerpo santo
de Geroncio, tu mártir y prelado;
muestra de su sepulcro algunas señas,
y cavaré con lágrimas las peñas
que ocultan su sarcófago sagrado:
pero mal pido el único consuelo
de todo el bien que airado quitó el cielo.
¡Goza en las tuyas sus reliquias bellas
para envidia del mundo y las estrellas!

Rodrigo Caro, *Canción a las ruinas de Itálica*

Rodrigo Caro published in his *Antigüedades y Principado de la Ilustrissima Ciudad de Sevilla* (1634) the first Castilian translations of Arabic inscriptions from Seville.¹ The translations are included in the 23rd chapter of the first book of *Antigüedades*, entitled ‘Some memories from the time of the Arabs’, in a sub-section entitled ‘Arab Stones’ [see

* The author would like to thank the following persons for their help and suggestions in the various stages of preparation of this article: Esperanza Alfonso, Mercedes García-Arenal, Nuria Casquete de Prado, Isabel González Ferrín, L. Patrick Harvey, Julian Raby, Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, Gerard Wieggers, Miguel Ángel de Bunes, Eduardo Manzano, Ana Rodríguez López, Rachid El-Hour, Michael Rogers, Molly Aitken.

¹ Caro, R., *Antigüedades y Principado de la Ilustrissima Ciudad de Sevilla y Chorographia de su Convento Iuridico, o Antigua Chancilleria*, Seville, 1634.

documentary appendix at the end for the texts].² They comprise the texts of inscription panels found in two former mosques, in a private house and on a city gate.³ Later historians of the city of Seville, such as Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga, reproduced these translations which became for a time, canonica. The translations, however, have nothing in common with the original Arabic texts of two of the inscriptions, the only ones which can be identified at present. They were mounted on two former mosques converted respectively to the collegiate and parish churches San Salvador and San Juan de la Palma.

Caro, a scholar of Latin and Greek, did not know Arabic and relied on interpreters to produce his erroneous translations. This paper will identify who these interpreters were, and analyse the historical context in which the translations of the Arabic inscriptions from Seville were made. A second aim will be to assess the texts of the translations and to explain both their misrepresentation of the original Arabic texts and how they re-write the history of Islamic architecture in Seville.

An ecclesiastic, a poet, a collector of antiquities, and a historian of the province of Seville, Rodrigo Caro came to public prominence in

² Caro, *Antigüedades*, fols. 42b-44a; for a study of the equally badly translated Hebrew inscription published by Caro see Cantera Burgos, F., "La epigrafía hebraica en Sevilla", *Sefarad*, XI (1951), 371-89.

³ The collegiate church of San Salvador, parish church of San Juan de la Palma, house of Juan Vallejo in the parish of San Miguel, and gate of San Juan de Acre; Ortiz de Zúñiga, D., *Anales Eclesiásticos y Seculares de la Muy Noble y Muy Leal Ciudad de Sevilla, Metropoli de la Andaluzia*, Madrid, 1677.

It is noteworthy that the most important early Arabic inscription in Seville, the foundational inscription of the Umayyad mosque of Ibn 'Adabbas dated in 214/829-30 (later the collegiate church of El Salvador), and now housed in the Museo Arqueológico de Sevilla, was not noticed by Caro (see Torres Balbás, L., "La primitiva mezquita mayor de Sevilla", *Al-Andalus*, XI (1946), 427). It was on a column located in the second nave on the eastern side of the mosque in front of the *mihrāb*. By the 17th century, it was incorporated into the macabre *quemadero* of the Inquisition in the Prado de San Sebastián outside of the city—and perhaps this explains Caro's lapse. The mosque was mentioned by Ibn al-Qūṭīyya, and Ibn Šāhib al-Šalā quoted the inscription (sources consulted by Lévi-Provençal for his reading of the badly scarred inscription), but neither of these sources was available to Rodrigo Caro. The *quemadero*, demolished in 1809, was composed of a brick platform with four columns at each corner surmounted by terracota statues. The inscribed column was first thought to be Latin spolia (see Torres Balbás, L., "La primera versión del epígrafe fundacional de la mezquita de Ibn 'Adabbas de Sevilla", *Al-Andalus*, XXV (1960), 219-21). For the first complete reading see, Ocaña Jiménez, M., "La inscripción fundacional de la mezquita de Ibn 'Adabbas de Sevilla", *Al-Andalus*, XII (1947), 145-51.

1627 with the publication of his enthusiastic, annotated edition of the forged martyrological chronicle of Flavio Lucio Dextro.⁴ Caro has been called a 'humanist' and though he wrote a great deal of poetry in Latin, he is perhaps best known among students of Spanish literature for his eulogy *Canción a las ruinas de Itálica*. Born in Utrera in October 1573, he died in Seville in August 1648, and was buried in the now defunct parish church of San Miguel.⁵ He matriculated in 1590 in the faculty of Canons at the University of Osuna and his ambitious ecclesiastical career lasted more than half a century.⁶ Under the patronage of the Sevillian Archbishop Pedro de Castro, he was promoted to a variety of important posts.⁷ In particular, Caro's enthusiasm for urban archaeology was facilitated by his promotion in 1622 to the post of 'Visitor of parishes and convents in the province of Seville'.⁸ Rodrigo Caro is still considered to be the founder of Spanish archaeology, and was immortalised in the name of the former Institute of Archaeology at the CSIC in Madrid.

In the mid-19th century, the Spanish Arabists Pascual de Gayangos and Rodrigo Amador de los Ríos lambasted Rodrigo Caro and his Arabic translations.⁹ Gayangos was sarcastic about Rodrigo Caro's translators, writing, "one can see the little faith which merit the

⁴ Caro, R., *Flavii Luci Dextri V.C. Omnimodaë Historiæ, quæ extant Fragmenta, cum Chronico M. Maximi, et Heleceæ, ac S. Braulionis Cæsaraugustanorum Episcoporum*, Seville, 1627. Caro's additions to these commentaries, *Additiones ad Dextri Notas*, were left in manuscript form at his death, see BN, Madrid, MS 6712, fols. 123a-132b; the Cistercian friar Francisco Bivar, also in 1627, published the major edition of the chronicle of Flavio Lucio Dextro in Leiden.

⁵ Gómez Canseco, L.M., *Rodrigo Caro: un Humanista en la Sevilla del Seiscientos*, Seville, 1986, 21. His tomb was moved to the Pantheon of Illustrious Sevillians.

⁶ *Id.*, 17.

⁷ *Id.*, 19-20: Visitador de monjas de Sevilla, Vicario General, Juez de la Santa Iglesia, Letrado de Fábricas (1628), Consultor del Santo Oficio (1632).

⁸ *Id.*, 19: Visitador de parroquias y conventos de fuera de Sevilla.

⁹ Gayangos, P. de, "Inscripciones arábicas de Sevilla", *Memorial Histórico Español*, II (1851), 385-400. Gayangos also provided a bad reference to an earlier reading made by the 18th-century Maronite priest Miguel Casiri, which according to Gayangos, was published in J.A. Conde's *Historia de la Dominación de los Árabes*, Madrid, 1820, I, 517. The cited text has nothing to do with the inscriptions from Seville. One of the few capable translators of Arabic in Spain in the 18th century, Casiri acted as a translator for the Church in Seville, providing a reading and Latin and Castilian translations of the Arabic inscription on the tomb of Fernando III. See Sánchez, T.A., "Explicación de los epitafios del sepulchro de el santo rey d. Fernando III" (1752) Institución Colombina (Biblioteca Capitular) MS 59-5-27; Amador de los Ríos, R., *Inscripciones Árabes de Sevilla*, Madrid, 1875, rpt. Seville, 1998, 48-60, 103-8.



Portrait of Rodrigo Caro from the Pacheco Manuscript in the Biblioteca Lázaro Galdiano (Madrid)

versions made by this and other translators of the feared tribunal”—but also chided Caro’s own gullibility—“Such is the translation made by a man, who according to Rodrigo Caro, enjoyed a great literary reputation in Seville, a translation that the historians of the said city adopted blindly in all of its parts, without penetrating to what end it was forged. So was history written in the 16th and 17th centuries!” Amador de los Ríos echoed Gayangos’ criticisms of the translations, and feared that the ‘incoherence’ and ‘absurdity’ of the translations influenced Caro’s view that the Muslims were ‘barbarians’ unlike the antique pagans whose excellence he praised.¹⁰

The concern of the Arabists in this case was to establish the ‘what’—a correct reading of the Arabic text of the inscriptions and their translations—and not the ‘why’ behind the translations, though Gayangos did raise the question of why the translations had been ‘forged’, though what he meant was not ‘falsified’, but rather ‘manufactured’.

Rodrigo Caro’s translators

The key that unlocks the door to the ‘why’ of Caro’s translations are his translators and the few details that he provided about them. According to his text, they were Sergio (d. 1645), a Lebanese Maronite priest trained at the Maronite seminary in Rome, and Juan Bautista, an ‘Arab’ and ‘Berber’, who, according to Caro, worked as a translator for the Holy Inquisition.¹¹ Caro provided their Castilian translations alone, without the Arabic texts of the inscriptions, excusing his lapse,

... [We are] making an account only of the places where today one can see the inscriptions, and of their translations, omitting the letters and characters... which

¹⁰ Amador de los Ríos, *Inscripciones*, 53-4; The most reliable readings of the two inscriptions is Lévi-Provençal, E., *Inscriptions Arabes d’Espagne*, Paris, 1931, nos.31-2, 38-42. See also Oliva, D., Gálvez, E. and Valencia, R., “Fondos epigráficos del museo arqueológico de Sevilla”, *Al-Qanṭara*, VI (1985), 451-67, however, it includes a number of unfortunate errors in the Arabic texts.

¹¹ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fols. 42b-43a. The Maronite college, or seminary in Rome was of relatively recent foundation, by pope Gregory XIII in June, 1584. See Ott, M., “Pope Gregory XIII (Ugo Buoncompagni)”, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII (1910, rpt. 1967).

I do not know how to write nor do I understand them, nor can one find in Seville characters to print them, but he who wishes to see the instruments themselves can do it easily by following my account, indicating the places where one can see them presently.¹²

He explained how he came to know Sergio, writing,

I knew him and had spoken several times to him because don Pedro de Castro, my lord Archbishop of this city, called him for the interpretation of the books from the Monte Santo in Granada, and credit was given to him for being a priest and versed in these languages.¹³

What is important in Caro's short description of Sergio is that it opens an avenue of research and begins to identify an heuristic context: the central figure here was Pedro de Castro Vaca y Quiñones, Archbishop of Granada (1588-1610) and of Seville (1610-1623); the 'books from the Monte Santo in Granada' were the cause, and the Arabic language was the medium. Rodrigo Caro misrepresented Sergio's relationship with Pedro de Castro (1534-1623) because Sergio never worked for the Archbishop as a translator, nor was he esteemed by him as being well-versed in Arabic. Rather, Sergio was employed as an Arabic translator between 1627-1629 by Adán Centurión, Marqués de Estepa (d. 1658), the most prominent supporter of research on and the publication of the 'books from the Monte Santo' after the death of the Archbishop Pedro de Castro in 1623—but this is beside the point for the moment.

The 'Books from the Monte Santo'

The 'books from the Monte Santo' were the well-known lead tablets, also called 'laminates' or 'books', discovered in the caves of a

¹² In 1631 Adán Centurión, appears to have sought in 1631 Arabic and Greek typefaces from the French printer Antoine Vitre for his publication of the lead tablets from Sacromonte (Gómez Gómez, A.A., "Adán Centurión, marqués de Estepa, traductor de los *Libros Plúmbeos del Sacromonte*, a través de documentación inédita conservada en el Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Granada", *Actas de las III Jornadas sobre historia de Estepa*, 5-7 de marzo, 1998, Estepa, 1999, 133. Caro seems to have rejected the possibility of reproducing Arabic letters, even though the printing typefaces may have been available.

¹³ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fol. 43a.

hill outside of Granada which came to be known as 'Sacromonte', the Sacred Mountain. They were part of a collection of ostensible early Christian texts—in Arabic, Latin and Castilian—and of relics, forged by Grenadine Moriscos planted and 'excavated' there between 1588 and 1599. Miguel José Hagerty has called the tablets, "the last testimony written in the Arabic language of the Andalusī civilisation already in its painful, final phase."¹⁴

The history of the lead tablets is complex and has been written up extensively, particularly in recent years.¹⁵ The lead tablets, circular and oval sheets of lead linked by rings into 'books' were inscribed with a burin mostly in a talismanic Arabic script and some in what the text itself calls 'Solomonic Script', actually wobbly Latin script. According to the texts themselves, their authors were San Cecilio, first bishop of Iliberri (Elvira), and San Thesiphon, known before their conversion to Christianity as Aben al-Radi and Aben Attar, respectively. Thesiphon Aben Attar was unknown of before these texts. Cecilio, on the other hand, is mentioned in a list of bishops of Iliberri in a Visigothic manuscript, the Emilian Codex in the Escorial library.¹⁶

¹⁴ Hagerty Fox, M.J., *Los Libros Plúmbeos del Sacromonte*, Madrid, 1980, 14.

¹⁵ Perhaps the most complete account can be found in Alonso, C., *Los Apócrifos del Sacromonte (Granada): Estudio Histórico*, Valladolid, 1979, which is itself partly based on Adán Centurión's own account, *Información para la historia del Sacromonte, llamado Valparaiso y antiguamente Illipulitano junto á Granada (donde parecieron las cenizas de S. Cecilio, S. Thesiphon, y S. Hiscio, discipulos del Apostol Unico patron de las Españas Santiago y otros santos discipulos dellos y sus libros escritos en laminas de plomo*, primera parte, Granada, 1632; Other important works are: Cabanelas Rodríguez, D. (OFM), *El Morisco Granadino, Alonso de Castillo*, Granada, 1991; Caro Baroja, J., *Las Falsificaciones de la Historia (en Relación con la de España)*, Barcelona, 1992, 115-58; Godoy Alcántara, J., *Historia Crítica de los Falsos Cronicones*, Madrid, 1868, rpt. 1981; Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥajarī (b.1569-70), *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn 'Alā 'l-Qawm al-Kāfirīn (The Supporter of Religion Against the Infidel)*, trans. and ed. Koningsveld, P.S. van, Al-Samarrai, Q., and Wiegers, G.A., Madrid, 1997; Wiegers, G.A., "The 'Old' or 'Turpiana' tower in Granada and its relics according to Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥajarī", in "Sites et monuments disparus d'après les témoignages de voyageurs", *Res Orientales*, VIII (1996), 193-207.

¹⁶ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 31, fn 23; Cabanelas, *El Morisco*, 15; Álvarez Barrientos, J., and Mora Rodríguez, G., "El final de una tradición. Las falsificaciones granadinas del siglo XVIII", *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares*, XL (1985), 165 fn 7; some authors, have stated that San Cecilio was also until this moment an unknown figure, see Hagerty, M.J., "La traducción interesada: el caso del Marqués de Estepa y los libros plúmbeos", *Homenaje al Profesor Jacinto Bosch Vilá*, Granada, 1991, I, 1180. It seems reasonable, however, to call him a forgotten, but documented figure—a clever

The first relics (a bone of Protomartyr Stephen, a fragment of the shawl of the Virgin and a parchment signed by bishop Cecilio containing a 'prophesy' written by St John the Evangelist) were discovered in 1588 in a square, lead box, coated and lined with bitumen, during the demolition of the Torre Turpiana, the old minaret of the congregational mosque of Granada.¹⁷ With the box was a panel painting of the Virgin—not the first of the so-called subterranean Virgins discovered in the Peninsula since the end of the 15th century.¹⁸ The concept behind the planting of the subterranean Virgins, the lead box at the Turpiana tower in Granada, and other Christian 'relics' in Andalucía at the bases of mosque minarets was to provide material evidence, literally subversive evidence, for the polemic of re-conquest: the Muslim conquerors and rulers of al-Andalus were not the founders of cities and religious monuments, but were rather usurpers of a vibrant Christian culture and its churches. The Christian conquests, nearly eight hundred years later, restored this culture and reclaimed its churches.¹⁹ In post-conquest Andalucía, the discoveries of subterranean relics were considered miraculous, in as much as the self-revealing images and relics buried by fleeing or martyred priests had remained hidden from the Muslim conquerors for centuries.²⁰

choice made by the author of the Turpiana parchment. It is an interesting detail that Cecilio appears in the Emilian Codex because, in theory only, one Morisco, Alonso de Castillo (b.1520-30, d.1607-1610), Arabic translator to Philip II and to Pedro de Castro, had access to this source when he was cataloguing the Arabic manuscripts there between 1573 and 1574. Although there is only circumstantial evidence, Castillo is considered by many modern historians to be the chief culprit of the lead tablet forgeries.

¹⁷ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 21-24.

¹⁸ Al-Ḥajarī, *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn*, 23; Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 19-21.

¹⁹ Imagining an indigenous revolution in Mexico in the year 2250 which would reclaim modern Mexico City as its holy capital, expel its Catholic occupants and claim all of its churches as ancestral temples reveals the absurdity of the posture of the 'reconquest'. See comments in Linehan, P., "La función de la historia en la reconquista de Sevilla", *Revista de Occidente*, no. 224 (January, 2000), 94-105.

²⁰ Granada was not the only city in which these types of miraculous relics or images were found: they were also found in Seville, as D. Ortiz de Zúñiga reported in the early 17th century. In his discourse on Seville's parish churches, *Anales*, fols. 94-96:4 (era 1299, año 1261), he affirmed that although some parish churches, including San Román, Santa Marina, San Nicolás and San Martín, were converted into mosques, they had been churches since late antiquity. He also reported that the parish of San Nicolás was known as Santa María Soterraña, for the image of the Virgin that was discovered in a subterranean cave under the church. This tradition predated 1485 according to the documentary evidence, see Ecker, H.L., "The conversion of mosques to synagogues in Seville: the case of the 'Mezquita de la Judería'", *Gesta*, XXXVI/2 (1997), 190-207. Luis de Peraza,

In the case of the Turpiana tower relics and the lead tablets and their associated relics—the ashes of presumed martyrs—excavated from the Sacromonte between 1595 and 1599, there was an added level of polemic. The lead tablets, like the parchment, appeared to be texts left by early Arabic-speaking Christians—disciples of St James the Greater—who evangelised the Peninsula and were martyred in Granada. The rhetorical thrust and presumably hoped-for understanding of the Arabic texts was that the Arabic-speaking Moriscos in Granada, triply converted, were descendants of the first Christians in the Peninsula: Arabs who were among the first recipients of Christ's divine revelation. The aim of the ruse is thought to have been to avoid the expulsion order that the Morisco community feared was imminent.

The discovery of its hitherto unknown early Christian martyrs—Arabic-speaking or not—enhanced Granada's prestige; beyond this, the relics were cleverly conceived to include material designed to appeal to the ecclesiastical authorities in Granada: proof that the church of Granada, founded by the disciples of an Apostle, had primacy in the Peninsula over Toledo and other metropolitan sees. They also included details upholding the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, a cause favoured by Pedro de Castro.²¹ Almost a century after their discovery, the lead tablets were finally condemned in Rome in 1681 as 'mere human fictions' and heresies which 'smelled of Muhammadanism'.²² The relics and tablets, however, were accepted by Archbishop Pedro de Castro at the time of their discovery as true apocrypha of Hispano-Roman martyrs in the Peninsula, and the relics themselves have never been condemned.²³

in his *Historia de la Ciudad de Sevilla* (c. 1535-6) lib.2 cap.4, claimed that the same cave served as a refuge for Hercules, who used it as a passageway to Sevilla la Vieja (Itálica), being the founder of both cities. The tower of San Martín revealed during its demolition a lead box containing a thorn from Christ's crown of thorns and a parchment reading "Sum ecclesiae diui Martini Hispalensi", reminiscent of the anachronistic relics in Granada. Ortiz de Zúñiga claimed that this event occurred before 1649, when the relic disappeared.

²¹ Álvarez and Mora, "El final" 163. In fact, there were no early martyrs from Granada or Elvira mentioned in early Peninsular martyrological texts. See Castillo Maldonado, P., *Los mártires hispanorromanos y su culto en la Hispania de la Antigüedad Tardía*, Granada, 1999.

²² Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 388.

²³ Barrios Aguilera, M., preliminary study to the facsimile edition of Heredia Bar-nuevo, D.N., *Místico Ramillete. Vida de d. Pedro de Castro, Fundador del Sacromonte*, Granada, 1998, xxxvi.

More recently, in June, 2000, the lead tablets were returned by the Vatican to the cathedral of Granada, where they were exhibited as part of the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Charles V.

Pedro de Castro Vaca y Quiñones

Pedro de Castro became obsessed with the lead tablets and spent the final 30 years of his long life and the greater part of his personal fortune trying to vindicate and to elevate them, and above all, to translate them, housing them under tight security in the collegiate church of the abbey of Sacromonte which he founded for this purpose.²⁴ He initiated a process in 1588 (which continued until 1655) to translate the Arabic text of the Turpiana tower parchment. It is this process of translation of the parchment and, later, of the lead tablets that is of interest here. Over the years, Pedro de Castro hired at least 19 translators who went to Granada, not including those who were offered to him by the Pope, nor those he was unsuccessful in attracting to the project. The latter included Semitic scholars such as Benito Arias Montano who made a translation of the Turpiana parchment and believed that the relics were forgeries and Thomas Erpenius, who was willing to provide translations, but only working from his home in Leiden.²⁵ There is evidence that Pedro de Castro

²⁴ Ollero Pina, J.A., "La carrera, los libros y la obsesión del arzobispo D. Pedro de Castro y Quiñones (1534-1623)", in: *De Libros y Bibliotecas—Homenaje a Rocío Caracuel*, Seville, 1994, 265; Harvey, L.P., and Wieggers, G.A., "The translation from Arabic of the Sacromonte Tablets", *Qurtuba*, I (1996), 60; Pedro de Castro also used the lead books to "provide evidence in support of the cause of the definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary".

²⁵ Some of the translators who worked on the parchment and lead tablets were: Diego de Urrea, Miguel de Luna, Alonso de Castillo, Francisco Gurmendi, Juan Bautista Hesronita 'Archbishop of Mount Lebanon', Marcos Obelio Citeroni, Aḥmad b. Qaṣim al-Ḥajārī, Fāris b. al-'Ilj, individuals in Muley Xequé's (Mawlāy al-Shaykh al-Ma'mūn, brother of Mawlay Zaydān) entourage in Carmona, P. Ignacio de las Casas, Miguel de Ayala (al-Ḥajārī?), *al-faqīh al-Ukayhīl al-Andalusī* (Miguel de Luna?), *al-faqīh al-Jabbīs* (Alonso de Castillo?), Bartolomé Pectorano, Fr. Alonso Remmón, P. Francisco Borja, Dr. Luis Zapata, Juan Martínez, and Pedro de Valencia. Thomas Erpenius did some translations from Leiden but never went to Granada or Seville. Adán Centurión, marqués de Estepa, worked with two known translators: Sergio Maronita and Juan Bautista Centurión.

even began to study Arabic himself because he feared that he might be misled by his translators.²⁶

The translation of the lead tablets is the key to understanding the translations of the Arabic inscriptions in Seville. The two projects shared translators—Caro attested to Sergio's participation—and, above all, the prime mover, Pedro de Castro. He was politely removed from his post as archbishop of Granada in 1610 and sent to the see of Seville, where it was hoped that he would quietly forget about the tablets and pass away, freeing them up to be sent to Madrid and from there to Rome for papal judgement. Pedro de Castro disappointed his superiors, outliving two kings, seven popes, his principle Arabic translators and his own successor in Granada.²⁷ It was presumably while he was archbishop of Seville, that he became interested in the Arabic inscriptions of the city. Evidence for his interest can be found in Rodrigo Caro's account of one of the inscriptions at the parish church San Juan de la Palma.

In the same parish church, San Juan de la Palma, another inscription was discovered that don Pedro de Castro my lord had made to be written on a very large parchment, which I have in my possession, and therein are written many Arabic letters...²⁸

Archbishop Pedro de Castro was Rodrigo Caro's patron in the cathedral of Seville, and may have given him the parchment. The question arises as to why Pedro de Castro became interested in these Arabic inscriptions in Seville. By the time Rodrigo Caro wrote his *Antigüedades*, Pedro de Castro had been dead for over a decade, and Caro did not state whether he had discussed the inscriptions with him. Furthermore, Pedro de Castro did not leave anything written on the matter.²⁹

²⁶ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 143.

²⁷ Kings: Philip II d. 1598, and Philip III d. 1621. Popes: Sixtus V d.1590, Urban VII d.1590, Gregory XIV d.1591, Innocent IX d.1591, Clement VIII d.1605, Leon XI d.1605, and Paul V d.1621. Arabic translators: Alonso de Castillo d.1607-10, and Miguel de Luna d.1615. Successor in Granada: Felipe de Tasis d.1620.

²⁸ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fol.43b. Caro believed that this inscription copied onto parchment was a second inscription. However, it seems likely that it was a transcription of the same well-known inscription which now hangs in the Museo Arqueológico in Seville, as Pascual de Gayangos believed. It is also possible that Caro confused this inscription with the columnar, foundational inscription from the mosque of Ibn 'Adabbas.

²⁹ A recent search for the parchment itself in the cathedral archive in Seville has not been fruitful.

Confronted with the parchment, Rodrigo Caro consulted first with his primary translator, Sergio, and doubting the accuracy of his translation, with Juan Bautista. Caro wrote,

I showed the parchment to Juan Bautista, of Arab origin, who is adequate for the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition as a translator, and he declared the letters in the following manner, which I believe is more correct, because according to what is written on the parchment, there are many more clauses and writing than that which Sergio translated...³⁰

As mentioned above, the translations of the parchment provided by both Sergio and Juan Bautista—like their other translations—are improbable and at least have nothing in common with the Arabic text of the well-known inscription panel from San Juan de la Palma. However, Juan Bautista's translation is of great interest because it reproduces the style and concepts of another forgery made by another Morisco translator, Miguel de Luna's *La Historia Verdadera del Rey don Rodrigo*, a point to which I will return.³¹

Who made the transcription on the parchment for Pedro de Castro is another mystery. Alonso de Castillo, who was one of Pedro de Castro's chief translators in Granada (from 1588 to 1607) and who had made the first Castilian translations of inscriptions in the Alhambra in 1564, was dead by 1610. He can thus be more or less ruled out for the Seville transcription which must have been made between 1610 and 1623—Castro's tenure in Seville. Juan Bautista's translation of the parchment cites its author as "Hamed Xarif, son of Hadalguad—my God give him liberty." Gerard Wiegers has pointed out that the phrase "May God give him liberty" (*'ataqahu Allāh*) was commonly used in this period by Morisco captives in Spain, and thus perhaps might indicate that Pedro de Castro took advantage of a literate Morisco captive or slave.³² In any case, without Pedro de Castro's parchment, it

³⁰ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fol.44a.

³¹ Luna, M. de, *La Hystoria Verdadera de Rey don Rodrigo en la qual se trata la causa principal de la perdida de España, y la conquista que della hizo Miramamolín Almançor, Rey que fue de Africa, y de las Arabias, y vida del Rey Iacob Almançor*, pt. 1, Granada, 1592, pt. 2, Granada, 1600, combined edition, Zaragoza, 1603, English translation, London, 1627, French translation, Paris, 1638, Italian translation, Rome, 1648. According to Luna, this work was composed by 'el sabio Alcayde Abulcasim Tarif Abentarique, de nacion Arabe, y natural de la Arabia Petrea'.

³² Wiegers, G.A., personal communication. See Königsweld, P.S. van, "Muslim slaves and captives in Western Europe during the late Middle Ages", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, VI (1995), 5-23.

is impossible to know if Juan Bautista's mis-translation was made from an accurate transcription of the inscription panel, or of another invented text, or indeed, who the author made from the parchment may have been.

One is left to guess what Pedro de Castro's interest in the inscription was, and to advance a couple of hypotheses. The most obvious is that Pedro de Castro was looking for Arabic texts in Seville which might support or justify the texts of the lead tablets in Granada. Perhaps he was disappointed to discover that the inscription from San Juan de la Palma was from the 11th century and Muslim, and so he did not pursue translations of any of the other Sevillian inscriptions.

Another possibility is that the translations in Seville made for both Pedro de Castro and Rodrigo Caro, as well as the translations of the lead tablets in Granada, were part of a much wider phenomenon of the period: the search for new saints and the relics of early Christian martyrs.³³ Pedro de Castro, enthused by the relics of Sacromonte and by his mission to elevate to martyrdom the victims of the Morisco rebellion in the Alpujarras, may have been searching for evidence of early Christian saints in Seville or martyrs from the Muslim period.³⁴ Evidence for his interest in this question are the minutes and reports from a series of meetings held with the dean and chapter of the cathedral of Seville in 1619-1620 to resolve questions regarding the worship of saints native to the diocese. The notes of these meetings were written by Cristóbal de Aybar, abbot of Sacromonte, canon of the collegiate church of El Salvador in Seville and secretary to Pedro de Castro.³⁵ Furthermore, Rodrigo Caro wrote about Pedro de Castro,

For this reason, the illustrious lord Pedro de Castro took up the cause to resuscitate the memory of many Saints from this Archbishopric [Seville] who were unworthily forgotten, restoring them to their native lands and ancient cults,

³³ Although Caro did not mention such a translation, I presume that Pedro de Castro had a translation of the inscription made, just as he had translations made of the lead tablets in Granada.

³⁴ For Pedro de Castro's interest in the martyrs of the Alpujarras, fed by his own hallucinatory visions, and the connection with the Sacromonte, see Barrios Aguilera, M., "Los mártires de las Alpujarras en la guerra de los Moriscos (1568). Revisión historiográfica", *Granada 1492-1992. Del Reino de Granada al Futuro del Mundo Mediterráneo*, eds. Barrios Aguilera, M., and Vincent, B., Granada, 1995, 183-206.

³⁵ Institución Colombina, Archivo Arzobispal, Congregación de Ritos (gobierno), leg.1, doc. 1 (1-7). Doc. 1/1 (a-b) *Junta en la [sic] casas y Palacio Arzobispal de Sevilla, miércoles, 30 octubre, 1619 para tratar del rezo de los santos de Sevilla.*

giving them much fame, and an annual service in the year 1620, and the illustrious Chapter executed his decrees and agreements after the death of that saintly Prelate. And among the Saints that they admitted was the glorious martyr San Geruncio, as Bishop of Italica, ordering to be prayed for him in Sevilla la Vieja, a double service of second class, and in the whole Archbishopric, a double common service. Try to see in this the divine providence, that although for a long time, negligence wrapped the memory of this saint and other glorious martyrs in silence, finally, the day of the promise of God arrived to the just, who will have him in his eternal memory.³⁶

All of the main figures mentioned so far, Rodrigo Caro, Pedro de Castro and Adán Centurión, Marqués de Estepa, were heavily implicated in the pursuit of relics of martyrs, and from their perspective, it is clear that even in Granada, the Arabic language, its translators and the hardships experienced by the Moriscos for whom the lead tablets might have served as a protective mantle—topics that have excited so many historians recently—were not their main concern. Rather, they sought to reconstitute the Christian history of Andalucía and the prestige of their own metropolitan churches by collapsing the millennial period of Muslim rule and engaging in a fantastic dialogue with their supposed Visigothic ancestors. Rodrigo Caro's plea in his *Canción a las ruinas de Itálica* to the city of Italica (Sevilla la Vieja) "to show some signs" from the tomb of San Geroncio, fictitious bishop of the Roman city, so that Caro could, "excavate with tears the boulders that hide his holy sarcophagus" were not empty words.³⁷ The translations of the Arabic texts in Seville were one element in a larger, antiquarian network promoting both fraudulent chronicles and identifications of relics of pre-Islamic Christian martyrs. This network permeated both ecclesiastical and political fields, and was composed of links throughout Spain, with its most persuasive components in Seville, Granada and Toledo.

'Sacred Antiquity'

Seville and its province was the context for Rodrigo Caro's research. Since the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate in Córdoba in the

³⁶ Gómez Canseco, *Rodrigo Caro*, 51-2; Caro, *Antigüedades*, 104a.

³⁷ Gómez Canseco, *Rodrigo Caro*, 51. Caro found San Geroncio in Usuard's *Martirologium*, probably in one of the three Belgian editions which were printed after 1568.

early 11th century and until the conquest of Granada by Fernando V and Isabel I in 1492, Seville was the most important city in the southern part of the Peninsula. Seville was, until its conquest by Fernando III in 1248, the capital city of the Almohad dynasty in al-Andalus, and it became the preferred court setting of the Castilian kings, most notably Alfonso X, Alfonso XI and Pedro I. The mosques of the city were converted for the most part in the 1250's to the Cathedral and parish churches, synagogues and to commercial properties rented out by the church.³⁸ Seville had until 1482 a significant and at times powerful Jewish and *converso* population, and until the early 17th century, a large Morisco population.

Although the city has to a large degree preserved its medieval street plan even today, its houses, palaces and churches were rebuilt with few exceptions in the 16th and 17th centuries when Seville held a monopoly over shipping to the New World colonies and consequently was at the hub of Spain's economic expansion. The city was obviously very transformed physically by the early 17th century, but it still retained some prominent features of the medieval Islamic city it had been. Most notable were its 12th century city wall and defense towers, its aqueduct, the Caños de Carmona, which brought water to the city's plumbing system from the nearby plateau of Alcalá de Guadaira, sections of its royal palace, the Alcázar, and the vestiges of Islamic religious architecture in the Cathedral and several parish churches. The Arabic inscription panels which were the subject of Rodrigo Caro's investigation were part of the corpus of Islamic vestiges in Seville still extant in the 17th century.

Among Caro's many published and unpublished works, the most prominent was his *Antigüedades*, the culmination of his research on antiquities in the city and province of Seville. His main motives for writing it were to establish the antique origins of Seville and its monuments, the towns in its province, and the remains and written proofs of their early Christian martyrs. The title of the work was not *Antigüedades e Historia*, but rather *Antigüedades y Principado*, indicating the purpose of the work as a testimony to Seville's primacy

³⁸ See, for example, Ecker, "The conversion", 190-207, and unpublished doctoral thesis *From Masjid to Casa-Mezquita. Neighbourhood Mosques in Seville after the Castilian Conquest (1248-1634)* (University of Oxford, 2000).

and excellence over other places, rather than an objective view of Seville's history. As Rodrigo Caro wrote in 1632 in a letter to the Jesuit, Juan de Pineda, responding to a critique of his work-in-progress made by Gil González Dávila, chronicler to Philip IV,

... because I am not writing a History of Seville, but rather only attempting that of its *Principado*, and thus all of the necessary proofs toward this end, I think, are so well researched and demonstrated that in this part of the work they are not lacking; as for the rest, however, I did not take such care, or thought that they were so well known, or because, in general, with regard to the number of inhabitants, houses, temples and monasteries, one can consider that all is well proportioned, and I remember that in some places, I do put the number of monks and nuns; but in the end, these are faults which are so easy to remedy that it is as good as done, as we have it all at hand.

Regarding the origins of kings, bishops, and illustrious men after its restoration, I have not even tried, because all of this would require a volume in itself, and to begin with some and leave out others is wrong and an offence, and is not my responsibility, as likewise a General History of Seville really would not be, it does not seem that I am obliged in this area so necessary in History; thus he who writes this should worry about it, and not I, for I have written a discourse only, if a discourse which throws much light on the subject for he who will undertake this feat, for which I do not lack mental vigour or knowledge of the subject, but rather health and favour of the same City, without which is it impossible to fulfil such an ambitious effort, and by 'favour' I mean money and assistants to rummage through the Archives and all of the Histories of Spain, and Sir, you see well the state in which one finds the things of this City, like those of the whole Kingdom, and so it will remain for when God would be served...³⁹

When Caro wrote of a General History of Seville, he was referring to a century-long genre of history writing in Seville initiated by Luis de Peraza in his *Historia de la Ciudad de Sevilla* (c.1535-6), and continued by Alonso de Morgado, Juan de Mal Lara, and other 16th-century writers.⁴⁰ In essence, all of these authors had the same

³⁹ IC (Biblioteca Capitular) MS 59-5-27 (sig. ant 63-8-40, sig. muy ant. 102-9-17) (not foliated) Letter from Rodrigo Caro to Juan de Pineda, dated January 4, 1632, entitled, "La naturaleza ò Patrias de Algunos Santos de Sevilla" responding to a letter dated December 21, 1631—text published in Caro, R., *Varones Insignes en Letras, Naturales de la Ilustrísima Ciudad de Sevilla. Epistolario*, ed. S. Montoto, Seville, 1915, 136-8.

⁴⁰ Morgado, A. de, *Historia de Sevilla, en la qual se contiene sus antigüedades, grandezas y cosas memorables en ella acontecidas desde su fundación hasta nuestros tiempos*, Seville, 1587; Mal Lara, J. de, *Recebimiento que la Muy Noble y Muy leal Ciudad de Sevilla hizo a la C.R.M. del Rey Don Philipe N.S.*, Seville, 1570; Ariño, F. de, *Sucesos de Sevilla de 1592 à 1604*, Seville, 1993.

motives as Caro—to illustrate the excellence of Seville and its illustrious past, from the time of its alleged foundation by Hercules himself. None wrote, in the strict sense, even what Caro might consider history, as opposed to *principado*. However, there is a sea change in Caro's work with regard to the question of Christian martyrs—it is a change that reflects an exterior reality as well as Caro's own interests and character.

Luis de Peraza, writing 100 years before Caro, mentions some relics which were in Seville before the Muslim conquest, of which, according to the *Flos Sanctorum*, only one was of a Sevillian martyr: the head of the archbishop San Laureano, venerated by the Visigothic king Totila.⁴¹ The rest, he reported, were contained in an arc carried to Toledo on the eve of the conquest and comprised only Levantine relics, some of them Mosaic.⁴² Furthermore, although in the second volume of Peraza's history, he paraphrases the traditional accounts of the Muslim conquest of Spain (those of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, Lucas de Tuy, *El Moro Rasis*, Sigeberto, and the *Primera Crónica General*), he remained uninterested in the Arabic inscriptions in Seville and did not report them. His lack of interest in these inscriptions was echoed by Alonso de Morgado in his *Historia de Sevilla* (1587) two decades later. Their indifference to them and their deprecatory or erroneous perceptions of Islamic architecture in Seville in general contrast sharply with the observation of the early traveller, Jerónimo Münzer, who wrote in 1495 that Seville “still contained innumerable monuments and antiquities of the Saracens.”⁴³

In the century that separated Luis de Peraza and Rodrigo Caro, several new factors came into play that shifted the local view toward Christian martyrs. Perhaps the most important was the ecumenical Council of Trent (1545-1563), convened by pope Paul III with the aims of establishing definitive Roman apostolic doctrines in the face of the Protestant challenge, and to review and remove abusive practices. In the 25th and final session in December 1563, under the

⁴¹ The *Flos Sanctorum*, a 15th-century Spanish compendium of the lives of saints.

⁴² Peraza, L. de, *Historia de la Ciudad de Sevilla* (~1535-6), ed. Pérez González, S.M., Seville, 1997, I, 218-24.

⁴³ Münzer, J., *Viaje por España y Portugal* (1494-1495), Madrid, 1991, 155; García Mercadal, J., *Viajes de Extranjeros por España y Portugal*, Madrid, 1952, I, 372; Lleó Cañal, V., *Nueva Roma: Mitología y Humanismo en el Renacimiento Sevillano*, Seville, 1979, 11.

pontificate of Pius IV, the text of the decree concerning relics and saints was drawn up: *On the invocation, veneration, and relics, of saints, and on sacred images*. The Council affirmed, "... that the holy bodies of holy martyrs, and of others now living with Christ—which bodies were the living members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost, and which are by Him to be raised unto eternal life, and to be glorified—are to be venerated by the faithful; through which (bodies) many benefits are bestowed by God on men."⁴⁴

The most important doctrine affirmed in this decree with regard to the veneration of images and relics was the absolute authority of the Bishop over the enthusiasms of popular piety, devotions considered vulnerable to abuse. The decree stated,

... the holy Synod ordains, that no one be allowed to place, or cause to be placed, any unusual image, in any place, or church, howsoever exempted, except that image have been approved of by the bishop: also, that no new miracles are to be acknowledged, or new relics recognised, unless the said bishop has taken cognisance and approved thereof; who, as soon as he has obtained some certain information in regard to these matters, shall, after having taken the advice of theologians, and of other pious men, act therein as he shall judge to be consonant with truth and piety. But if any doubtful, or difficult abuse has to be extirpated; or, in fine, if any more grave question shall arise touching these matters, the bishop, before deciding the controversy, shall await the sentence of the metropolitan and of the bishops of the province, in a provincial Council; yet so, that nothing new, or that previously has not been usual in the Church, shall be resolved on, without having first consulted the most holy Roman Pontiff.

This decree had the opposite effect, however. In 1625, against rising abuse of Episcopal authority in the matter of relics, a new decree was drawn up by Urban VIII which centralised the process of canonisation and beatification under the Holy See of Rome.⁴⁵

It is generally argued that during the so-called Counter Reformation, the cults of new saints were encouraged as a popular bulwark against the rising tide of state Protestantism. Why this was so, especially in light of the reforms imposed by the Council of Trent

⁴⁴ *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Ecumenical Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. Waterworth, J., London, 1848.

⁴⁵ *Diccionario de los Papas y Concilios*, eds. Paredes, J., et alii, Barcelona, 1998, 353; *Magnum Bullarium Romanum*, 9th ed., Luxemburg, 1742, IV, 85-6, decree dated March 13, 1625: 'Definitio quoad Imagines nondum á Sede Apostolica Canonizatorum, vel Beatificatorum...'

deserves wider analysis, especially in the Spanish context where Protestantism was not only not a threat but was the object of well-known monarchical repression. Whatever the motives and results of the Trent council's canon on relics, in Spain, devotion to relics was boosted by the example of Philip II, who concentrated a huge number of relics (more than seven thousand) in his Escorial monastery, conceived as the new temple, not of Rome, but of Jerusalem. Some of these relics were 'rescued' from the Protestant fray in Flanders and Germany, while others were amassed by ambassadors and members of Philip II's family.⁴⁶ Other relics, once spirited out of the Peninsula during Muslim rule, were sent during Philip II's reign to Spain for safekeeping.⁴⁷

Peter Burke argues that in fact, the counter-reformation's renewal of saint-making began in Spain in 1588 with the canonisation of Diego de Alcalá, following a sixty-year hiatus in canonisations.⁴⁸ This particular sanctification, which Burke saw as ultimately political, was helped by pressure from Philip II.⁴⁹ There is a coincidence of dates between the canonisation of Diego de Alcalá (St. Didacus), the discovery of the Turpiana tower relics and inscription, and the creation of the Congregation of Sacred Rites and Ceremonies in Rome, entrusted with canonisations all in the same year (1588).⁵⁰ Burke, citing Delooze, explained this phenomenon not in terms of the legalistic notion of 'heroic virtue' which since the 13th century was required of all candidates for sanctification, but rather in terms of mentality: "Some societies are... 'programmed' to perceive sanctity, while others are not. Italy and Spain were clearly programmed in this way."⁵¹

On the Apostolic level, there were three more events that contributed to the phenomenon: the first was Gregory XIII's projected Roman Martyrology, a compilation of earlier historical

⁴⁶ Christian, W.A. Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*, Princeton, 1981, 135-6. See Nalle, S.T., "A saint for all seasons. The cult of San Julian", *Culture and Control in Counter Reformation Spain*, eds. Cruz, A.J., and Perry, M.E., Minneapolis, 1992, 25-6.

⁴⁷ Christian, *Local Religion*, 136.

⁴⁸ Burke, P., "How to be a counter-reformation saint", *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800*, London, 1984, 46.

⁴⁹ Burke, "How to be", 53.

⁵⁰ *Id.*, 46.

⁵¹ *Id.*, 50.

martyrologies, intimately linked to his reform of the Julian calendar completed in 1578. It was the third edition of the *Martyrologium Romanum* in 1583 which received papal approval and universal acceptance.⁵² 17th-century falsifiers of martyrological material, such as the Toledan Jesuit, Jerónimo Román de la Higuera, took advantage of the officially sanctioned text by “massaging the data,” claiming Andalusian origins for martyrs listed without dates or nationalities. This technique avoided the necessity of completing the lengthy process for canonisation of hitherto unknown saints whose relics had only recently been discovered.

The second Apostolic event that favoured the search for the relics of new saints and martyrs was the accidental rediscovery of one of the early Christian catacombs in Rome in 1578.⁵³ The event may have become a *topos* for the discovery of relics in other places, for instance for the workmen taking down the Torre Turpiana in Granada. The catacombs in the Via Salaria Nova had remained untouched and forgotten since the general abandonment of the Roman catacombs by pope Paschal I in the 9th century, who had translated a majority of the remains to Roman churches as martyrs. At the time of their rediscovery in the 16th century, it was believed that these catacombs were the resting places of martyrs who died during the Pagan persecutions of the first centuries after Christ, relics of indisputable authenticity. A new interest in Christian archaeology was sparked, an endeavour which had hitherto escaped the attention of Italian and Spanish humanists.

The third apostolic factor was a bull issued by Gregory XIII, that conceded to the Spanish churches the right to worship in each of the churches those saints who were ‘natural’ to each diocese. Curiously, this bull, which must have been issued before 1585 when Gregory died, was not taken up as policy by the Spanish churches for several decades. The term ‘natural’ may have elicited a certain amount of confusion, as Rodrigo Caro took pains to explain what it might mean in his letter to the Jesuit Juan de Pineda of January 1632 *La*

⁵² *Martyrologium Romanum Gregorii XIII jussu editum*, Rome, 1583.

⁵³ The near contemporary source for these excavations is Bosio, A. (1575-1629), *Roma Sotteranea*, Rome, 1632, and its subsequent editions published by Aringho, P. (1651, 1659). The other classical text is Rossi, G.B. de, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, Rome, 1857-61. For an synthesised account see Pastor, L., *Historia de los Papas*, trans. Monserrat, J., Barcelona, 1935, IX (Gregorio XIII), 244-51; Burke, P., “How to be”, 51.

naturaleza ò patrias de algunos santos de Sevilla, “place of habitation, spiritual birth or place of burial.”⁵⁴ The meetings of the dean and chapter of the cathedral of Seville held in 1619-20 were convened by Pedro de Castro explicitly to respond to Gregory XIII’s bull by researching doubts about the documentation of a long list of saints worshipped in Seville. The principal documentary texts cited were the Roman Martyrology, the false chronicle of Flavio Dextro brought forward by Rodrigo Caro and other references to tradition.

Proof that these events were meaningful in Spain and particularly in Granada in the early 17th century was Adán Centurión, the Marqués de Estepa’s affirmation of the divine mission of Pedro de Castro. He wrote in 1632,

Pedro de Castro was born in the village of Roa, in the year 1534, on the 14th of May, showing us divine providence as if with a finger, the effect of his great service for which he came into the world; because it was the day of pope Saint Paschal, who by taking out with pious devotion from the cemetery caverns and catacombs many bodies of holy martyrs, made them to be elevated and honourably placed in diverse churches; and [it was] on the eve of the day on which the Roman Catholic [Church] in its Martyrology writes, and celebrates the seven sainted disciples of the Apostle St James the Greater, three of which and other holy martyrs, disciples of them, Don Pedro de Castro discovered their relics and took them out of the ground and caverns in which they were, and he elevated them and placed them most honourably.⁵⁵

St James the Greater, who by the 17th century was the subject of an eight-hundred year devotional history in the Peninsula, was recognised as Spain’s very own Apostle, equal to any apostolic relic, legend or favour from Rome or Palestine.⁵⁶ Thus, the relics of his disciples ‘discovered’ in caverns in Granada were considered parallel and equal to the remains of ‘martyred’ early Christians found in the Roman catacombs.⁵⁷ Their identification was facilitated by the publication of Gregory XIII’s Roman Martyrology, or perhaps Urban VIII’s new edition of 1630. The coincidence of events, highlighted by the Marqués de Estepa, was a sign of the favour and prestige showered on Granada by divine providence and it was indubitably advanced by him for the

⁵⁴ Caro, *Varones Insignes... Epistolario*, 137.

⁵⁵ Centurión, *Información para la historia del Sacromonte*, fols.17b-18a.

⁵⁶ Kendrick, T.D., *Saint James in Spain*, London, 1960.

⁵⁷ They were cremated like pagans, contrary to early Christian practices, but like some of the known Hispano-Roman martyrs.

defense of the relics in the Papal court. The relics of the Grenadine martyrs, SS Cecilio, Thesiphon and Hiscio, were, though, finally anathematised in Rome, but that have remained the local patron saints of the city. The relics of their martyred disciples, San Torquatus and San Segundus were honoured with papal permission in Celanova (New Spain) in 1593 and Avila in 1594 respectively.⁵⁸

William Christian has proposed that the underlying problem for the Andalucian churches in the 16th century was that they had little to show for their sacred history, writing, "Many of the relics that had been so highly valued in Spain before the Moslem invasion were taken back into the northern mountains or into France. And as the Reconquest moved back across the peninsula, many of the relics stayed in the north. As a result, by the sixteenth century there were fewer relics the farther south one went."⁵⁹ He qualified this statement with evidence from Philip II's questionnaire of parochial practices, naming a number of saints' relics that were venerated in the 16th century for their remedial or rain-inducing properties. Most of relics described as obtained after 1500, were, however, imported from abroad, chiefly from Rome, or were the relics of recently deceased individuals. He emphasised that, "the papacy co-operated in this massive reallocation of relics, especially in the 1570s and the 1580s, by providing authenticating documents. We know so much about the relics precisely because the Council of Trent required stricter procedures (if not standards) for the certification of relics; certificates accompanied all of the relics brought for Philip and many of those going to the villages after 1550."⁶⁰ Nevertheless, these new, imported relics did not animate popular devotion on the parochial level, though apparently they inspired the parishes to recover the relics of local saints which had been translated north.⁶¹ It was only around 1580, coinciding with the publication of the new Roman Martyrology and the discovery of the undisturbed Roman catacombs, that the relics of newly discovered or 'invented' saints in Andalucia began to gain local ecclesiastical approval.⁶² This date marks a definite shift in

⁵⁸ Kendrick, *Saint James*, 71-2.

⁵⁹ Christian, *Local Religion*, 126.

⁶⁰ *Id.*, 137.

⁶¹ *Id.*, 139.

⁶² A related phenomenon was the elevation to sainthood in this period of those responsible for the christianization of formerly Muslim towns during the so-called re-con-

policy and direction toward the devotion and veneration toward local relics between the 16th and 17th centuries.

Flavio Lucio Dextro

In his *Antigüedades*, Caro made a great deal of use of the chronicle of Flavio Lucio Dextro, which purported to be an early Spanish martyrology. This forged chronicle has a complex history which probably deserves more attention. It is the Toledan link in the network of antiquarians mentioned above who promoted, unwittingly or not, fraudulent myths about Christian personages including martyrs, in the first centuries after Christ. Both José Godoy Alcantara in 1868 and Julio Caro Baroja in 1991 wrote in detail about the birth of this chronicle around 1595 at the hands of the previously mentioned Jerónimo Román de la Higuera (1551-1624), and so only some brief details will be sketched out here.⁶³

The chronicle, offered as fragments, was copied first in 1595 by Román de la Higuera's colleagues in various stages of its composition, joined by fragments of its continuation, the equally fictitious chronicle of Marco Maximo. In 1608, perhaps inspired by the success of the lead books and associated relics from Sacromonte, Granada, Román de la Higuera issued his definitive texts by providing them to Bartolomé Llorente in Zaragoza, and copies began to be made and distributed to bishops all over the Peninsula.⁶⁴ Whereas Román de la Higuera previously had claimed that the texts were copied from manuscripts in the ancient monastic library at Fulda, he created a new story for the curious which could not be easily corroborated: Román de la Higuera asked a fellow Jesuit and disciple, Tomás de Torralva, to look for some manuscripts in the archive of the monastery of Fulda for him. The requested volumes could not be found there, and Torralva followed the trail to Worms to a private collector who had taken the volumes in question from the archive. Román de la Higuera received by mail a copy of the volumes

quest. See, for example, Jiménez Montesión, M., *Vere Pater Pauperum, El Culto de San Julián en Cuenca*, Cuenca, 1999.

⁶³ Godoy Alcántara, *Historia Crítica*; Caro Baroja, *Las Falsificaciones*.

⁶⁴ Godoy Alcántara, *Historia Crítica*, 170-1.

from Torralva, including these chronicles, in 1594.⁶⁵ By the time this story was made public, Torralva was conveniently dead.

The chronicles of Dextro and Maximo were intelligently constructed and their conception was based on references to works which have not survived but were mentioned in trustworthy sources. For example, San Jerónimo, the author of one of the most important historical martyrologies, writing in his *De viris illustribus* (390AD), mentioned an historical work by Dexter Paciani, son of San Paciani, bishop of Barcelona.⁶⁶ Román de la Higuera's discovery was, evidently at the time, this very work. Both chronicles also contained information which could be easily cross referenced to other reliable texts, one of the most of important of which was the 1583 edition of the Roman Martyrology. Because of these indices of worthiness, the more outlandish elements of Román de la Higuera's theological and political program were accepted as genuine by many prominent figures at the time, including Rodrigo Caro and Pedro de Castro, even before it was published in printed form by Juan Calderón in Zaragoza in 1619.⁶⁷ Indeed, Pedro de Castro may well have been influenced favourably toward it by Jerónimo Román de la Higuera's written defense of the relics of martyrs and their lead books discovered in Granada and in caves in the Sacromonte from 1588-1595.⁶⁸

Jerónimo Román de la Higuera's chronicles of Dextro and Maximo were written with several theological, and ultimately political, objectives. Godoy Alcántara was perhaps the first to suggest that Román de la Higuera was inspired in his creation of these chronicles by the discoveries of the relics in the Turpiana Tower and the lead books and their relics. His chronicles lent both prestige to the relics and lead texts from Granada and a new sociological dimension by both affirming the coming of the apostle Saint James to the Peninsula in the first century to preach and evangelise, and by claiming that his earliest followers were Toledan Jews, thus uniting them with the supposed Grenadine, Arabic-speaking, Christian ancestors of the Moriscos.⁶⁹ The affirmation of the antique Christian

⁶⁵ Caro Baroja, *Las Falsificaciones*, 165; Godoy Alcántara, *Historia Crítica*, 174-6.

⁶⁶ Godoy Alcántara, *Historia Crítica*, 17-18.

⁶⁷ Kendrick, *Saint James*, 122.

⁶⁸ Caro Baroja, *Las Falsificaciones*, 165.

⁶⁹ Godoy Alcántara, *Historia Crítica*, 136-44, 150-4.

primacy of the former was a posture against the basis for Inquisition of the descendants of contemporary *conversos*, which, as Caro Baroja suggested, was of personal concern to Román de la Higuera.⁷⁰ The chronicles of Dextro and Maximo also lent prestige to the early history of Andalusian churches which also lacked extensive medieval histories because of Muslim rule, by providing names of previously unknown Christian martyrs.⁷¹

One should always distinguish the forger from the defrauded. Dextro's chronicle was written in Latin and so, it was readily accessible, without translation, to ecclesiastics such as Pedro de Castro and Rodrigo Caro. However, Caro was stubbornly supportive of this text even when faced with published criticism.⁷² Furthermore, by including references to Dextro or Maximo in almost every chapter of *Convento Iuridico de Sevilla* (the second part of his *Antigüedades*), though it created inconsistencies in his historical data, and by citing Dextro to the Chapter of the Cathedral of Seville in 1619-20 to justify the inclusion of certain saints' feast days which Pedro de Castro had asked the chapter to investigate, he became, unwittingly or not, complicit in the fraud.⁷³ Caro's complicity endured even after Pedro de Castro's death: Caro defended Castro's decisions to accept the cults of certain saints in Seville citing the 'testimonio de Istorias autenticas', though clearly confronted with opposition from the new archbishop.⁷⁴

Rodrigo Caro was not alone in his credulity nor his complicity with regard to the Dextro forgery: Francisco de Bivar published his own annotated version of the text in 1627. However, Caro managed to rope into his own discourse on Dextro his whole circle of antiquarian-minded friends with whom he exchanged correspondence including Juan de Pineda and Adán Centurión [see documentary appendix, doc. 4]. This is not to claim that Juan de Pineda and Adán

⁷⁰ Caro Baroja, *Las Falsificaciones*, 164, 168.

⁷¹ See Kendrick's account of the martyrs of Arjona, identified through Román de la Higuera's chronicle, and the martyrs of Baeza, identified in the chronicle of Juliano Pérez: Kendrick, *Saint James*, 126-36.

⁷² Again Caro's correspondence with Juan de Pineda regarding the attacks he sustained for his support of the Dextro text, Caro, *Varones Insignes... Epistolario*, 136-8.

⁷³ See IC(AA), Congregación de Ritos (gobierno), leg.1, doc. 1 (1-7). Doc. 1/1 (a-b).

⁷⁴ See BNM MS Res 261, 1 al 100 (no.74) (micro. 13358), "Dubios que sean de resolver de los santos que el señor don Pedro de/ Castro Arçobispo de Sevilla recibió al culto y reço deste Arçobispado/ antes que se Negue a los meritos de la causa principal".

Centurión were convinced by Dextro, but rather that by agreeing to discuss the contents of the work with Caro, they became tacit confederates in its diffusion. Or so it seems—in reading their correspondence, perhaps one confuses baroque *politesse* among friends with assent, and perhaps it was all rather benign, historiographically speaking. As Julián González has written in his study of Caro's use of false Latin inscriptions, "from a study of the frauds present in Caro's work, it is clear that a majority were not executed by him, but that he limited himself only to copy them and use them for his concrete aims: the attribution of an ancient name to specific localities thus reflecting its glorious past..."⁷⁵

Luis Gómez Canseco has evaluated the religious mood of 17th century Spain as manifesting itself in a search for saints who would increase local prestige, and that it was this activity which stimulated religious and local history writing: "religious and local history was enlivened by the incentive provoked by Gregory XIII's bull, the primary objective of which was to favour the search for saints who, with their stories and remains, made illustrious the different locales. Towns and cities, headed by their own savants entered into a bitter competition, more attentive to the quantity of virtuous men than the reality of their existence and derivation." He argues that it was in this context that Rodrigo Caro's work on antiquities came into fruition, a uniting of his 'Christian fervour' with his reverence for 'Sacred Antiquity.'⁷⁶ It is worthwhile questioning Caro's use of the term 'Sacred Antiquity' which appears repeatedly in his works. What did he consider part of Sacred Antiquity, and what, in fact, made it Sacred? What was Caro's cut-off date for Sanctity?

It is tempting to argue that the Latin language, the language of both pagan and early Christian inscriptions and the language of the Roman Church was the mediating factor. However, Rodrigo Caro was, apparently, a supporter of the Arabic-language lead tablets and once declared of them, "How beautiful after the darkness of so many centuries is the light of newly shining and victorious truth!"⁷⁷ And,

⁷⁵ González, J., "Historiografía epigráfica andaluza (siglos XV-XVI)", *La Antigüedad como Argumento. Historiografía de Arqueología e Historia Antigua en Andalucía*, eds. Beltrán, J., and Gascó, F., Seville, 1993, 79.

⁷⁶ Gómez Canseco, *Rodrigo Caro*, 135-6.

⁷⁷ Kendrick, *Saint James*, 124.

the fact remains that he and Pedro de Castro valued the Arabic inscriptions in Seville enough to try to study them by having them translated, something which no post-renaissance ecclesiastic or historian in Seville had attempted previously. It would also be tempting to argue that the Sanctity of Caro's perceived Antiquity was a Christian sanctity of an Antiquity which seduced by yielding up the bones of Christian martyrs. However, the majority of the inscriptions that Caro reported were Roman and pagan.

One is left with Caro's marked reverential credulity toward the past: he advises his reader to, "become keen toward Sacred Antiquity, without which all of the arts are imperfect and without taste."⁷⁸ Gómez Canseco also has written that for Caro, as for many renaissance humanists, the past represented 'a paradigm of virtue and perfection', an implicit critical witness to the corruption of his contemporary world.⁷⁹ Idealism was an element of Caro's fascination with the antique, but a more important key to Caro's attitude is his uncritical affinity with the written word, the older, the better: what attracted him, what he collected, what he trusted and what he wrote about were narrative texts, inscriptions, coins and medals. It was precisely his credulity toward the written word which made Rodrigo Caro resistant to criticisms about forged manuscripts, forged inscriptions and forced interpretations.

In his prologue to *Antigüedades*, Caro described his method of working and his sources—his reliance on the 'excavated' written word—for what he wished to accomplish in the first part of the work—to find the name and origins of the city of Seville,

... with centuries so separated from our times, I have been able to research, collecting all the inscriptions which have remained, including Roman ones, as well as those in other people's languages, who dominated and possessed this land, declaring those that I understand, which are those in the Latin language. And serving me for the others, translators who understand them, and this has been brought together... in order to write this treatise, I innocently confess that it has cost me a lot of corporal work, sleeplessness, and soul-attention because I visited personally the places of which I write, conferring in each case with what the ancient writers, Greek as well as Latin, have left us, taking advantage at the

⁷⁸ Caro, R., *Días Geniales o Lúdicos*, ed. Etienvre, J.P., Madrid, 1978, I, 14; Gómez Canseco, *Rodrigo Caro*, 24-5.

⁷⁹ Gómez Canseco, *Rodrigo Caro*, 25, 31.

same time of ancient inscriptions and medals, which I have gathered with studious ardour.⁸⁰

Perhaps some negative examples provide better evidence than Caro's positive affirmation of his reliance on the written word. In *Antigüedades*, when Caro described any well-known Islamic structure or Arabic place-name in Seville, unless he had written evidence to the contrary, and of this there is only one case, he attributed them to the Visigoths or their Mozarabic descendants, to the Romans, to Latin, to Greek or even to the pre-Roman tribes who settled in the Peninsula; some examples are the city walls (fol. 20r), the Puerta de la Macarena (fols. 20v-21r), the Almohad congregational mosque converted to the cathedral (fol. 21v-22r), Mudéjar parish churches built on the sites of neighborhood mosques (fol. 22v), the Caños de Carmona (fol. 26rv), the place-name 'Alcalá' (fol. 26v), and two remaining public baths (fol. 27r). He did identify the word Medina in the place-name Medina Sidonia as the Arabic word for 'city', citing "those who understand this language."⁸¹ The one important exception to Caro's attributions, however, is the Giralda, the minaret of the Almohad congregational mosque and bell-tower of the cathedral which he thought was a marvellous structure. He wrote,

The tower of the Holy Church of Seville (as well as its ancient mosque) is a Moorish building; because even though there is no ancient inscription which demonstrates it, its fabrication and architecture declares it, as it is to those who understand this art, like those who have seen other buildings of these people in Africa.⁸²

The latter phrase is most likely an oblique reference to his friend Luis de Mármol Carvajal's (b. 1524—d. before 1599) *Descripción General de África* (1573-1599) in which he states that the architectural style of the tower of the mosque of the *qasba* of Marrakech is similar to that of the Giralda in Seville and that of the Almohad mosque of Rabat—Mármol took his description in turn from Leon Africanus.⁸³ Furthermore, if Caro did not attribute the

⁸⁰ Caro, *Antigüedades*, prologue.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, fol. 124a.

⁸² *Ibidem*, fol. 48a.

⁸³ I would like to thank F. Rodríguez Mediano for this reference from his forthcoming annotated edition of Luis de Mármol's work: Luis de Mármol Carvajal, *Descripción*

Giralda to the Muslims, he would have had to explain away the impressive descriptions of the tower in the 13th- and 14th-century chronicle, the *Primera Crónica General*; rather, he cited them as further proof of the 'Moorish' attribution. Even though Caro writes that the architecture itself was 'declaring' its origins, in fact his attribution never moved away from the written word.

How much baroque Spanish historians like Rodrigo Caro knew about the Islamic past of the Peninsula without having access to historical sources written in Arabic is debatable. Was Caro consciously repressing the Islamic history of Seville in his *Antigüedades* by focusing on the Romans and Visigoths or was he ignorant of the Islamic past because he did not know Arabic and had no access to historical works?

In *Antigüedades*, Caro cited five Muslim authors, the first two of whom he also cited in his *Varones Insignes en Letras Naturales de la Ilustrísima Ciudad de Sevilla*.⁸⁴ First, Avicenna (Abū 'Alī al-Ḥusayn b. 'Abd Allāh b. Sīnā) whom he calls 'the great doctor' and who he claims was born in Seville or studied in Seville based on evidence from one of his mistranslated Arabic inscriptions in Seville. Caro knew him from the Latin translation of his *Qānūn fī l-ṭibb*.⁸⁵ Second, Gever Moro (Jābir b. Aflaḥ), 12th-century astronomer and mathematician whom Caro correctly identified as a Sevillian. Caro, however, incorrectly identified him as both the inventor of Algebra

General de África, Rodríguez Mediano, F., and Aguilar Sebastian, V., eds., II, fol. 28a; Mármol included in his description of Marrakech a translation of an Arabic funerary inscription outside of the "Bib al Tobul" which strongly resembles the 'translation' style of Sergio Maronita, the translator who worked for both Rodrigo Caro and Adán Centurión. G. Deverdun, *Marrakech dès origines à 1912*, Rabat, 1959, I, 225, remarked about the doubtful nature of this translation, "... it is a simple fantasy of a folklorist more accustomed to the descriptions of *1001 Nights* than to Moroccan epigraphy".

⁸⁴ This work was never published in Caro's lifetime as he was working on it around the time of his death. See the modern edition: Caro, R., *Varones Insignes en Letras Naturales de la Ilustrísima Ciudad de Sevilla*, ed. Gómez Canseco, L.M., Sevilla, 1992.

⁸⁵ Ibn Sīnā was born in 370/980 in Afshana, near to Bukhārā, and died in Hamadān in 428/1037. It is certain that he never went to Seville; R. Caro (1992), 71-2 (1634), fols. 24a, 71a. Caro admitted that the subject of the location of Ibn Sīnā's birth was controversial, as "some say that he was born in Arabia, others in Córdoba, others in Seville". He cites several sources which place Ibn Sīnā in these different contexts including Cristóforo Costa's *Los Aromas*, which locates Ibn Sīnā's birth "in Bochoroa, in the province Usbesque, which is part of Tartaria". Caro, however, noted that it was foreign authors who declared Ibn Sīnā a Sevillian and thus did not wish to relinquish Seville's claim to its possible native son.

and the architect of the Giralda, the minaret of the Almohad mosque in Seville.⁸⁶ Third, Averroes (Abū ‘l-Walīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ruṣhd al-Ḥafīd) whom Caro knew from the Latin translation of his commentaries on Aristotle.⁸⁷ Fourth, El Moro Rasis (Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Rāzī, 889-995), known to Caro through a fractured, 13th-century translation of his geographical and historical work, *Akhbar Mulūk al-Andalus*, to Castilian through Portuguese.⁸⁸ And finally Abulcasim Tarif Abentarique (called by Caro ‘Abulcacin Arabe’), the invented author of Miguel de Luna’s false chronicle, *La Historia Verdadera del rey don Rodrigo*.⁸⁹

In Caro’s *Adiciones al Principado y Antigüedades de la Ciudad de Sevilla y su Convento Jurídico*—remaining unpublished during his lifetime—he dedicated a chapter to the Latin translation of al-Idrīsī’s *Kitāb nuzhat al-muṣhtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq* published in 1619 in Paris, extracting from it information relevant to the Peninsula.⁹⁰ This translation, based on the Arabic edition printed by the Medici press in 1592, was made by two Maronites, Gabriel Sionita, and Johannes Hesronita; the latter had also served Pedro de Castro as a translator of the lead tablets in Granada.⁹¹ What is most important about Caro’s analysis in the context of this paper is his apparent interest in the

⁸⁶ Abū Muḥammad Jābir b. Aflāḥ, known in Europe as Geber, is often confused with Jābir b. Ḥayyān b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Kūfī al-Ṣūfī, the 8th-century alchemist, who was also known in Latin as Geber. See Suter, H., *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New Edition), ‘Djābir b. Aflāḥ’; Caro, *Varones Insignes*, 72, *Antigüedades*, fol. 71r. Caro cites two 17th-century Castilian sources for his attribution of Geber as the architect of the Giralda: G. González de Ávila’s *Historia de la vida y hechos de don Enrique III de Castilla* (chapter LXVI, fol. 158) and J. de la Cueva’s *La Conquista de Bética* (prologue and book XXIII) containing the verse: “Salimos, dijo y pido justamente/ que ha de ser por el suelo derribada/ la mezquita mayor y la eminente/ torre del gran Geber edificada”; the architect of the Giralda was Aḥmad b. Bāšo.

⁸⁷ Ibn Ruṣhd, *qāḍī* and prolific writer on medicine, law and philosophy, was born in Córdoba in 520/1126 and died in Marrakech in 595/1198. Caro, *Antigüedades*, fol. 2a.

⁸⁸ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fols. 2a, 122b, 123ab—the volume Caro saw was a copy stored in the Cartuja in Seville; *Crónica del Moro Rasis*, eds. Catalán, D. and Andrés, M.S. de, Madrid, 1975.

⁸⁹ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fols. 2a, 85a.

⁹⁰ Caro, R., *Adiciones al Principado y Antigüedades de la Ciudad de Sevilla y su Convento Jurídico*, Seville, 1932, 99-115 [first published in *Memorial Histórico Español*, I, Madrid, 1851]; one of the earliest Castilian translations made of this text was Conde’s in 1799, *Descripción de España de Xerif Aledris Conocido por el Nubiense*, Madrid.

⁹¹ Caro called al-Idrīsī ‘El Nubiense’ because of a misinterpretation of a passage in the Arabic edition which lacks a colophon and biographical information about its author. See Oman, G., “al-Idrīsī”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., III, 1032-5.

Arabic language in order to determine the meanings of Arabic place-names mentioned in al-Idrīsī's text. In the context of his discussion of the term 'Axarafe', the fertile plains of the province of Seville, Caro mentioned Philip II's translator Diego de Urrea, professor of the University of Alcalá de Henares and one of Pedro de Castro's translators of the lead tablets who worked alongside Miguel de Luna.⁹² Whether Urrea was still alive after by 1629 is not clear, and Caro may have consulted a manuscript source in this case. Curiously, the only Arabic source which Caro's cites as comparative material to al-Idrīsī's geography was *El Moro Rasis*.

It is fair to say from this brief catalogue of his ostensible Arabic sources that, perhaps excluding what he knew from *El Moro Rasis*, which is the only historical source, Caro did not have enough information to be discriminating about Islamic history in Spain. It is precisely this lack of discrimination which clouds Rodrigo Caro's historical method: Caro cites his sources—he does not suppress them—but he was uncritical toward them, partly because he did not have enough information to be critical and partly because he was ingenuous toward the written word. Whatever was written formed part of his 'Sacred Antiquity', a relic of the pristine past with which he could not tamper.

And yet, there is another intellectual attitude which shaped Caro's view of 'Sacred Antiquity', a peculiarity which he shared with some of his contemporaries, most particularly Pedro de Castro and Adán Centurión. In part, this attitude is the recognition of the resurrection—if one can use the word here—in the 16th and 17th centuries of a certain sacred timeliness, a propitiousness which, in fact, was proper to a different epoch. In Peter Brown's study of the accounts of the discovery of the relics during the rise of the cults of Christian saints in the 4th and 5th centuries he wrote that "these accounts are shot through with a sense of the miracle of God's mercy in allowing so precious a thing as the *praesentia* of the holy dead to become available to the Christian congregations in their own place and in their own times" and cites St Augustine's view that, "God gave the relic; in the first instance, by allowing it to be discovered, and then by allowing it to be transferred." Brown cites Augustine's sermon on Saint Stephen, "his body lay hidden for so long a time. It

⁹² Caro, *Adiciones*, 106; Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 121, 129.

came forth when God wished it. It has brought light to all lands, it has performed such miracles.”⁹³

For men like Pedro de Castro, Rodrigo Caro and Adán Centurión, the timeliness of the discovery of the relics and tablets in Granada and elsewhere had a certain virtue of its own: God had chosen to reveal these relics and allow their transfer in their own lifetimes for a reason. The reason could have been a portent of good tidings, a sign of God’s approval of the conquest of Granada, or as P. Brown writes, “The discovery of a relic... was far more than an act of pious archaeology, and its transfer far more than a strange new form of Christian connoisseurship: both actions made plain, at a particular time and place, the immensity of God’s mercy. They announced moments of amnesty. They brought a sense of deliverance and pardon into the present.”⁹⁴ As Caro wrote of the admission of the service for San Geruncio by the dean and chapter of Seville in 1620, “Try to see in this the divine providence, that though for a long time, negligence wrapped the memory of this saint and other glorious martyrs in silence, finally, the day of the promise of God arrived to the just.”

The attitude of recognition of sacred timeliness (of discoveries that were proper to the 4th and 5th centuries and not to the 17th) forced a displacement for clerics such as Pedro de Castro and Rodrigo Caro, not only of what was then known and believed of church history, but also of their own relationship toward and role in that history. As the provocative agents of recognition of God’s timely mercy they, of necessity, paralleled themselves with those 5th-century Christians who lived in an age when most early saints’ relics were discovered. Rather than paralleling themselves, one might even venture to write that they were impersonating 5th-century clerics. For them, the relics of 1st-century saints and martyrs which properly should have been uncovered during the over six-hundred years of the Peninsula’s presumed Christian history before the Arab invasion, were miraculously held in terrestrial suspension in order to deliver renewal to the Christian community of their own era just as other relics had renewed the communities of another age. This historical displacement engendered an illusion of consensus: that the Arian heresy had

⁹³ Brown, P., *The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, Chicago, 1981, 91.

⁹⁴ Brown, *The Cult*, 92.

never existed, that there was historical consensus in the Christian community, that the Peninsula had not been a Muslim country with a flourishing Christian minority, that there had never been marriages, conversions and expulsions of all types, and most importantly, that the Christianity of a 1st-, 2nd- or 3rd-century skeleton of a person whose ancestors had converted recently from Roman paganism was more important to the Church than the Christianity of a Grenadine Morisco whose ancestors converted over a century ago from Islam, and that the Roman paganism which that person had left behind was glorious—though it may have caused that person’s martyrdom—whilst there was nothing glorious nor memorable about Islam.

The historical displacement which gave birth to this paradigm of illusion is clearly illustrated in an account of the discovery of a tomb and its bones from the Visigothic period in the province of Seville which lead to the local canonisation of a saint. The dubious miracle took place under the mitre of Pedro de Castro not long after his arrival from Granada. The account is contained in a letter written many years after the event, a missive designed to delight Rodrigo Caro.

In 1638, Caro sent his servant Juan Romero to bring a copy of his recently published *Antigüedades* to Francisco Fuentes de Madrigal, a parish priest in Salteras, in the Aljarafe of Seville. Fuentes de Madrigal responded on June 23rd with a letter, congratulating him for the book which he considered, “not just a book, but a great Library”, and adding that Juan Romero told him that Caro would enjoy hearing about some antiquities in Salteras [see documentary appendix, doc. no.2]. Among the antique items he described in the letter was an account of an event which had occurred in 1612, some twenty-six years earlier, involving Juan Romero’s mother and grandmother. He described the discovery of a Visigothic grave with a marble tombstone inscribed in Latin in ‘los Villares’, an area planted with vineyards and known for its ruins and tombs:

[drawing of two doves facing inward toward a large medallion containing the *chrismon* with two small heart shaped objects on either side below]

SVSANA FAMVLA/ DEI VIXIT ANNIS	Susana, servant of God, lived for more or less
PL/MX I RECESSIT IN PACE/ X XIII	91 years, rest in peace, .?. 14 <i>kalendas</i> May [April 18],
KAL MAIAS/AERA DC VIII	era 559 [521 AD] ⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Hübner, E., *Inscriptiones Hispaniæ Christianæ*, Berlin, 1871, 22, no.72. Hübner cited Fuentes de Madrigals’ letter to Caro as his source; The tombstone is described by

Fuentes de Madrigal describes how he found bones under the tombstone and carried them in his cape back toward his house. He recounts how people began to congregate around him, and how a lady came out of her house with her ailing teenage daughter, and asked him to touch her on the head with the bones. Fuentes de Madrigal did this, and the girl was instantly cured. This girl was, apparently, Juan Romero's mother. Fuentes de Madrigal goes on to tell that Pedro de Castro heard about the discovery and the miracle, and having received Fuentes de Madrigal's account of it, sent his crucifer, Gregorio Morillo, to investigate the case with a gilded cedar casket in which to store the bones. Castro ordered that the casket to be installed in the altar of the church [Santa María de la Oliva] in Salteras, and sent an official stonecutter to carve a new inscription into the lower half of the tombstone:

DEI FAMVLA SUSANNA/ IN VINEIS VILLARIVM/
SVB HOC LAPIDE INVENTA/ SVB EODEM IN HAC
ÆDE/ REPOSITA/ ANNO DOMINI/ M. DC. XII.

The Jesuit Juan de Pineda, a trusted friend of Rodrigo Caro, came to see the relics and criticised the Latin grammar of the new inscription and the dubious nature of the whole business, «que havia menester ver sus trapazeses». Pedro de Castro, on the other hand, read the tombstone and insisted that the symbol X signified AD—a rather spurious suggestion as the date is explicitly given in term of the 'era' of Cæsar—and that the age of Susana (X I) should be read as XVI (16) instead of XCI (91). Fuentes de Madrigal added, "I said that it seemed to me to be ninety-one years of age, and the count was clear to everyone, as the X before the C means ninety, except in the calculation of *Vuestra merced*."

One can only assume that for Castro, the relics of a young girl who might have died a martyred virgin were more attractive objects of devotion than the remains of an ancient lady who died of natural causes. More importantly, except for illustrating one of the means by

Morales, A.J. *et alii*, in their *Guía Artística de Sevilla y su Provincia*, Seville, 1989, 297, in the Mudéjar church of Santa María de la Oliva as, "Encrusted in the wall and near to the presbytery one finds a tombstone of the Visigothic period dated 520 [*sic*] with a re-inscription from 1612, date in which it must have been placed in this place", and illustrated with a photograph (no. 314). It is curious that they make no mention of the cult of Santa Susana, which perhaps has been forgotten.

which a new saint was created in counter-reformation Seville, this tale shows clearly the sleights of hand with which Pedro de Castro was accustomed when translating inscriptions, even Latin inscriptions and his will to sublimate texts from what they were into what he believed they ought to be, a will which is hard to pin down as simple credulity. Furthermore, it is precisely this contagious will to obfuscate with which Pedro de Castro infected his translators of the lead tablets in Granada, and Adán Centurión, what Miguel José Hagerty has called “interested translation” and what Manuel Barrios Aguilera describes in the Archbishop as “pertinacity in the service of credulity turned militant.”⁹⁶ Rodrigo Caro’s response to Fuentes de Madrigal’s account is for the moment, unknown.

Not all ecclesiastical historians or linguists in Andalucía shared these ingenuous views toward the past and toward written inscriptions. Benito Arias Montano (1527-1598), the greatest scholar of Semitic languages in Spain in the 16th century, and particularly in Seville, had a very different view of the treasure seekers. His differences with Rodrigo Caro and Pedro de Castro serve to underscore that the enthusiastic search for martyrs and truths in Antiquity was an attitude which corresponded with certain personalities and was not entirely due to external circumstances. He wrote in 1595,

This is a year of similar happenings, because in this land they have discovered many stones, round and flat marbles and bricks and tiles engraved with diverse forms of letters, some of them Arabic, some of which clerics, monks and lay persons have brought to me with desire and ambition for treasures. The adversaries of our Catholic Church, having seen that in some places they give easy credit to miracles and other things related to religion which are not well examined, take the opportunity and pretext to affirm that it was like so in the past. On the other hand, the vulgar man, friend of new topics of conversation, desires that they authenticate such things in order to have something to talk about rather than to better his life with them. Interest and its pretenders favour this part, and all of them *de magnis majora loquuntur*, and ordinarily allege the authority of men of credit and of the prelates; and if the prelate makes a manifest demonstration to the contrary, they say that he is impious or heretic, as happened to the bishop of León, Cuesta [Andrés Cuesta, bishop of León 1557-1564], in the false miracles of Majorqa in 1560. All of this shows that prudence, dexterity, and

⁹⁶ Hagerty, “La traducción interesada”, 1179-86; Barrios Aguilera, *Místico Ramillete*, xxxii.

perseverance are very necessary, and above all, to check interested pretensions and those who would want to abuse piety for “quæstorship.”⁹⁷

Had Arias Montano provided Pedro de Castro with the transcription or translation of the Arabic inscription from San Juan de la Palma on the parchment mentioned by Caro, the outcome of it would have been quite different. However Arias Montano refused Pedro de Castro’s numerous overtures to come to Granada to translate the lead tablets and by the time Castro became Archbishop of Seville, he was dead. However, it is interesting to note that Arias Montano also considered the translation of inscriptions in Seville, including Arabic inscriptions, as part of the same phenomenon as the contemporary search and authentication of false relics. Caro’s motivation to provide the Arabic translations of inscriptions from Seville appears in *Antigüedades*, however, as a mere curiosity, alongside an equally exotic translation of a Hebrew inscription. This attitude may have been conditioned by the quality of the translations he procured.

Again, Rodrigo Caro’s translators

Returning to the question of the identities of the Arabic translators hired by Rodrigo Caro in Seville, it is useful to review what Caro wrote about them. Of his main translator, Sergio Maronita, a Maronite priest presumably from the Lebanon, Caro wrote that he had been hired by Pedro de Castro to translate “the books from the Monte Santo in Granada”. As mentioned above, this statement was an exaggeration, as Sergio never worked as an Arabic translator for the Archbishop, but rather for Adán Centurión, Marqués de Estepa between the years 1627-29. In fact, the Archbishop refused to hire Sergio because he had no confidence in his abilities as an Arabic translator at all, contrary to what Caro wrote: “... credit was given to him for being a priest and versed in these languages.”

In 1622, Pedro de Castro fell out with another Maronite translator, Yuḥanna al-Hausabī or al-Hasrūnī—known as Juan Bautista Hesronita

⁹⁷ Letter dated May 3, 1595. Cabanelas, D., “Arias Montano y los libros plúmbeos de Granada”, *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, XVIII-XIX (1969-70), 27-8; Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 71.

in Spain and Johannes Hesronita in France—and was looking for a new translator.⁹⁸ Sergio was in Madrid at this time and presented himself to Cristóbal de Aybar, abbot of Sacromonte, as a candidate for the job. As a test, he was given the text of one of the lead tablets—the Book of Santiago—to translate. Cristóbal de Aybar considered Sergio's work worthless and wrote to Pedro de Castro:

He does not want to study, nor does he understand lexicographical texts (*los xauharies*), nor does he have Arabic vocabulary, and so there is no reason to take his translations seriously nor the transcriptions which he made. He does not understand what he writes, or he understands it badly; he cannot transcribe because he puts points where there are none and notably varies the writing. If this man were able to teach, he could occupy himself with this at the Monte. But I do not know if he is good enough for this.⁹⁹

Pedro de Castro wrote back to Cristóbal de Aybar, “He came from Madrid to my house without being invited, and now he asks for a salary.”¹⁰⁰ When Cristóbal de Aybar tried to find a solution to dismiss Sergio who had become a nuisance, Pedro de Castro wrote in so many words, that he should disappear because, “I did not bring him; he came of his own free will.”¹⁰¹ In a recent article, Antonio Agustín Gómez reflected on Sergio's indolent character by describing a sheet of notebook paper used for making drafts that he found in the archive of the Royal Chancellery of Granada, on which Sergio had

⁹⁸ For information regarding Juan Bautista Hesronita and his relationship with Pedro de Castro, see Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 217-33; and Ollero Pina, “La carrera”, 274.

⁹⁹ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 244. I would like to thank L.P. Harvey for pointing this story out to me; the term “los xauharies” is a curious Arabic loan-word that probably refers to grammatical or lexicographical texts in general, and is a reference to Abū Naṣr Ismā‘īl b. Muḥammad al-Jawharī, the 10th- and early 11th-century lexicographer and author of the *Tāj al-lughā wa-ṣiḥāḥ al-‘Arabiyya*. In M. Asín Palacio's catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the library of the abbey of Sacromonte, effectively, one finds the *Tāj al-lughā*, in addition to a number of other grammatical and lexicographical works including Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Zubaydī's compendium *Muḥtaṣar al-‘ayn*, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ‘Azīz al-Sijistānī's dictionary of rare Qur’anic terms *Tafsīr gharīb al-Qur’ān*, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Fakhkhār al-Khaulānī al-shahīr bi-l-Fahrī's (?) *Sharḥ al-Jumal*, al-shaykh al-imām Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Firūzābādī's Dictionary *Kitāb al-qāmūs al-muḥīt wa al-qābūs al-wasīf fī al-lughā*, and other anonymous grammatical treatises. See Asín Palacios, M., “Noticia de los manuscritos árabes del Sacromonte de Granada”, *Obras Escogidas II y III de Historia y Filología Árabe* (Madrid, 1948), 71-111.

¹⁰⁰ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 245.

¹⁰¹ *Id.*, 246.

written his name “Ego Sergio Maronita” dozens of times, accompanied by distracted doodling.¹⁰²

Adán Centurión was the third Marqués de Estepa, a title which had been granted to his grandfather, Adán Centurión y Ultramarino, first Marqués of Laula, Vivola and Monte de Vay in 1564. His autobiography in relation to the lead tablets is contained in the introduction to the book of translations which he produced in the 1620’s, the intention of which was to provide a definitive translation of the lead tablet texts to the Consejo Real in Madrid and to avoid the necessity of transferring the tablets from their secure home at the abbey of Sacromonte. This prologue, dated 1645, was added to the translations he produced sixteen years earlier, and was addressed to pope Innocent X. The marqués was writing to the pope because the tablets had arrived in Rome, where more translations were being produced.¹⁰³ In the prologue, he wrote that when he was first shown translations of the lead books in Seville he was opposed to their authenticity. He describes that after marrying in Granada, he went to live there in 1626, and his curiosity about the lead tablets grew. He was impressed with the foundation of the abbey of Sacromonte and its caverns and the level of popular devotion toward them, and decided to examine the translations already made by others. Dissatisfied with these texts, he arranged to examine the originals himself and to make new translations.¹⁰⁴

Sergio’s presumed ignorance as a translator did not stop Adán Centurión from making use of his services. The evidence for his employment is in the same prologue in a description of the process of making the translations. The marqués wrote:

that with the assistance of commissioners, named notaries, and the key holders every day, they would take out the book or books that were needed, and which could not be taken from the Sacromonte, and one of the notaries would be present always, and they would take them back to be locked up with the four keys every night; thus it was done, spending eight or nine hours each day on this project during a period of six months, with the assistance of two translators, recognising together with them each letter and diacritical mark; I made a transcript of all of the books, adjusting and emending without the errors of others, and with that

¹⁰² Gómez, “Adán Centurión”, 117, fn. 35.

¹⁰³ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 341-2.

¹⁰⁴ BNM, MS 10503, *Obra de San Cecilio*, (the frontispiece of this manuscript is dated 1647), fols. 1a-4a.

adjustment, the translation which follows: each page is numbered and each one signed with my name, and I put in the body of the text numbers with the intention of making indications and annotations. One would see in this, our translation, which is more consistent than any other that has been made until now; and which does not omit nor augment anything from the original Arabic, word for word.

It is easy to make the experiment or examination by seeing the transcript which I made with my own hand, and is bound in gilt-work boards in red leather and authorised and rubricated by a Notary and scribes and approved and signed by my hand and by that of the licentiate, Sergio Maronita, and by that of Juan Baptista Centurión. Compare it with the lead originals and discover that it is corrected from that translated by others or what they translated, and put our translation into the hands of a pious and dispassionate translator or translators, in such a way so that none of them should know any of the other translations or versions, and that they should say which is better, easier and to the point. We offer to explain each word with our dictionaries in our hands.¹⁰⁵

This text also provides the key to the identity of Rodrigo Caro's second translator, Juan Bautista, whom Caro had identified as an 'Arab' and 'Berber', and a translator for the Holy Tribunal.¹⁰⁶ Carlos Alonso wrote of Juan Bautista Centurión, "servant of Adán Centurión, Morisco, we do not know other details."¹⁰⁷ To this can be added a short description provided, again, by Adán Centurión, "Juan Baptista Centurión, who was raised since a child in my house and is so advanced in the translations of these books, that he could give satisfaction wherever it is wanted."¹⁰⁸

Although the description in the prologue of Juan Baptista working in tandem with Sergio Maronita convincingly identifies Rodrigo Caro's translators in Seville and their context, this scrap of a portrait poses a dilemma. If Juan Baptista or Bautista was a Morisco slave or servant who had been raised since he was a child in the house of an

¹⁰⁵ BNM, MS 10503, fols.2b-3a; Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 264-5. According to Alonso, there are two original exemplars of this manuscript, one in Rome and one at the Sacromonte.

¹⁰⁶ There were many Juan Bautistas in Andalucía and other parts of the southern Peninsula at this time. For circumstantial reasons, Juan Bautista Centurión is the most likely candidate for Rodrigo Caro's translator. However, one could point out other converts who also worked for the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition as translators, such as the *converso* Juan Bautista Ramírez, a rabbinical student from Fez who moved to Seville in 1608 and was baptised there (Archivo Historico Nacional, Leg.156, doc.4). Personal communication, García-Arenal, M., see in *Entre el Islam y Occidente, Vida de Samuel Pallache, Judío de Fez*, Madrid, 1999, 33.

¹⁰⁷ Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 265, fn14.

¹⁰⁸ BNM, MS 10503, fol.4a.

Andalucian grandee in the 17th century, it is highly unlikely that his Arabic would have been adequate to translate the lead books, or the inscription from Seville, if indeed he knew Arabic at all. If he did know Arabic, it was most likely Andalusí dialect, learned perhaps from his mother or other female relatives, and not the written language. Moriscos who were literate in Arabic in the 16th century, and there were not many, were raised in regions where Arabic was still the dominant language, and they had to hide their knowledge from the authorities.¹⁰⁹

The issue becomes complex because Adán Centurión stated that he himself had learned Arabic, although he never identified his teachers, nor stated simply that he studied from phrase books and grammars. He wrote,

I wished to see some of the translations made by translators of the Archbishop, and those that I did see, by Gurmendi¹¹⁰ and the Archbishop of Mount Lebanon,¹¹¹ seemed so incoherent, that I doubted that the original book could say such a thing. I saw some [translations] of the book *Fundamentum Ecclesiae*, and it seemed to me that there was a discrepancy between them, and I procured an Arabic transcript and I set myself to learn the language and to procure interpreters not only to satisfy myself, but to serve the Saints and the Church.¹¹²

If indeed the marqués had studied Arabic with his servant Juan Baptista and the Maronite priest, Sergio, there is little hope that he would have learned very much, and in fact M.J. Hagerty has suggested that he was assisted by “at least two Moriscos who liberated themselves from the expulsion of 1609 thanks precisely to their intimate relationship with the Sevillian nobleman and their collaboration in the affair of the lead tablets.”¹¹³ Whether Hagerty confused Sergio with a supposed Morisco is, unfortunately, unclear. What is clear, however, is that the marqués did know enough Arabic

¹⁰⁹ The fear of disclosure for knowing Arabic is described by al-Ḥajarī, *Kitāb Nāṣir al-Dīn*, 72-5, Arabic text 18-20.

¹¹⁰ Francisco Gurmendi, servant of Juan de Idiáquez, President of the Consejo de Órdenes, learned Arabic from the translator Marcos Dobelo. In 1614, he organized the volumes from the library of Muley Zaidan which had entered into the library of the Escorial. Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 209.

¹¹¹ The Lebanese Maronite-Dominican bishop Juan Bautista Hesronita, Yuḥanna al-Hasrūnī, who was one of the translators of the first Latin edition of al-Idrīsī's geography. Alonso, *Los Apócrifos*, 217-19.

¹¹² BNM, MS 10503, fol.2a.

to translate correctly an inscription on a tombstone found in Morón de la Frontera in 1634, a transcription or drawing of which was sent him by the priest Antonio Bohorques Villalón. Bohorques Villalón sent the transcription and the translation made by the marqués to Rodrigo Caro in 1641, an unexplained lapse of seven years, and too late to be included in his *Antigüedades* [see documentary appendix, doc. 3]. The translation of the tombstone may not be an adequate test of the marqués' linguistic abilities in Arabic, but it opens up the picture somewhat and suggests that there was more going on behind the scene of his campaign to translate the lead tablets than he was prepared to make public.¹¹⁴

It is probable that it was the marqués de Estepa himself who facilitated the services of Sergio Maronita and Juan Bautista Centurión to Rodrigo Caro. There is evidence that they were quite good friends: they used to share one another's libraries and exchange correspondence. Rodrigo Caro also dedicated one of his unpublished works to the marqués, leaving it to him in his will, stating "that he could give it to no better owner."¹¹⁵ In a letter he wrote in October, 1645 to the antiquarian Vincencio Juan de Castanosa in Huesca, in which he included an exemplar of the marqués de Estepa's discourse on Iberian Roman coins and medals, Rodrigo Caro described the marqués de Estepa as,

the *Señor* don Adan Centurion, Marquis of Laula, Almuña and Estepa is an Andalusian gentleman, very learned in all types of *belles lettres* and studious of Antiquity: he knows to great advantage, among other languages, Arabic, which he learned for the translation of the laminates from the Monte Santo in Granada, and has been my very great friend for many years...¹¹⁶

They were confidants who shared a common passion for Antiquity, common friends in the well-known circle of antiquarians in this period (including such figures as Juan Francisco Andrer in Zaragoza, Antonio Bohórquez Villalón in Morón de la Frontera, Diego de Colmenares in Segovia and the chronicler Juan Francisco

¹¹³ Hagerty, "La traducción interesada", 1185.

¹¹⁴ A textual study of his translations of the lead tablets has not been carried out due to the fact that the tablets were not made accessible to scholars at the Vatican since the 17th century.

¹¹⁵ Gómez Canseco, *Rodrigo Caro*, 131.

¹¹⁶ BNM, MS 8389, fols.208a-209a, letter to Don Vincencio Juan de Castanosa, fol.208b.

Andrés de Uztaaroz) and a common credulity toward texts, authentic and forged. Hagerty puts this down in the case of the Marqués to feeble-mindedness, but one would rather attribute these qualities to a mixture of inexperience in historical research and devotional passion.¹¹⁷ Regarding the lead tablets, the Marqués wrote to Rodrigo Caro,

I find myself so devoted to everything from the Sacromonte after having been so close to it, that I have compassion for those who having seen things without basis that they have written against it without having examined the substance, have adopted hard attitudes. I, for having been able to more fully satisfy myself, begin now, in old age, to learn to know.¹¹⁸

And yet, despite the excuse of ingenuity and credulity toward the lead tablets on the part of Adán Centurión or indeed, on the part of Pedro de Castro, there is more evidence for the conscious manipulation of the translations from Arabic which they sponsored—Hagerty’s “interested translation.” The rivulet of bizarre translations of the inscriptions from Seville flowed from this river. Whether indeed it was Pedro de Castro who infected his translators with a will to obfuscate, or whether it was they who infected him is an interesting question. Alonso de Castillo, suspected author of the Sacromonte forgeries, was Pedro de Castro’s Arabic translator first from 1579-82 when he was president of the royal chancellery in Granada and later from 1588-1610, during the Turpiana tower and lead tablet episodes.¹¹⁹ When Alonso de Castillo was sent by Philip II to Córdoba in 1583 to look for Arabic manuscripts in the archive of the mosque-cathedral, he found none and instead made translations of tombstones. The canons of the cathedral showed him a standard said to be from the time of al-Manṣūr and he made a translation which was completely fanciful: neither the names nor the dates mentioned correspond with any known figures.¹²⁰ While Islamic military

¹¹⁷ Hagerty, “La traducción interesada”, 1183.

¹¹⁸ IC (Biblioteca Capitular), MS 58-1-9 (sig. ant. 83-7-25), *Segundo Tomo de Cartas y Papeles Pertenecientes al Doctor Rodrigo Caro*, fol.296a-296b.

¹¹⁹ Cabanelas, *El Morisco*, 204-5.

¹²⁰ Cabanelas, *El Morisco*, 226-7. The text of the translation is in Alonso de Castillo’s notebook BNM MS 7453, fol.51r: “Este es el real estandarte que se mandó hacer en la ciudad blanca para el poderoso rey de los creyentes Mahamad, hijo del rey de los creyentes Aben Bexir Foholi aben Çaid, hijo del rey de los creyentes y ensalzador de la ley, el alto y poderoso rey aben Yaqob Almanzor aben Salomón (jensalce Dios sus insignias e

standards are typically decorated with Qur'anic inscriptions serving as talismans in battle, Castillo read it as if it were a foundational inscription on architecture, fulfilling the canons' expectations of a relic of the Almohad caliph al-Manṣūr.¹²¹ While there is no question as to Alonso de Castillo's knowledge of Arabic, why he would resort to produce a capricious translation for Córdoba's canons is not known. Perhaps his motive was a latent 'Uncle Tomism', a desire to please an ecclesiastical master and profit from him. Quite possibly, though, Pedro de Castro became accustomed to the ease with which Alonso de Castillo could fabricate a text to please his patron.

One of Pedro de Castro's more strident cases of manipulation was described in the autobiographical account written by the Morisco, Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥajarī (b.1569-70). Al-Ḥajarī, who believed that the Turpiana parchment and tablets were genuine relics, was called by Pedro de Castro to translate the parchment. He wrote about one of his encounters with Pedro de Castro,

... when I had translated the beginning of the Gospel and the contents of what was written, the priest said to me: "Have a look at this word! Does it have another meaning?" I answered: "It has only this meaning!" He said: "[In that case], leave the space of this word blank, because it contradicts the Gospel we possess!" I said to myself: "this which had been written in the time of our lord Jesus or shortly afterwards, is in my opinion more correct than what they possess nowadays."¹²²

The recent publication of correspondence exchanged by Luis Tribaldos de Córdoba and Adán Centurión in 1633, also indicates that Pedro de Castro influenced the early translators of the lead tablets with payments to produce results which were in keeping with Catholic doctrine.¹²³ Tribaldos de Córdoba reported that when Diego de Urrea, among other translators, went to Granada to work for the Archbishop,

haga victoriosas sus banderas!); el cual [estandarte] se hizo en el año de la hira 255, que hacen de los años de nuestra salud 990".

¹²¹ Michael Rogers has suggested that, in part, the syntax of the inscription may be accurate for a standard. Still, the content is an invention.

¹²² Al-Ḥajarī, *Kitāb Naṣir al-Dīn*, 26, 79-80, Arabic text, 23.

¹²³ Harvey, L.P. and Wieggers, G.A., "The translation from Arabic of the Sacromonte tablets and the Archbishop of Granada: an illuminating correspondence", *Qurtuba I* (1996), 59-78.

... in discovering that they were full of an evil doctrine of Mohammadanism, the Archbishop became angry with him and told him that he did not understand, nor was what he said possible, and that he should give it a convincing sense so that it would appear catholic, which Urrea never saw it as such, though carried along by his interests, he finally dissimulated, and corresponded with the taste of the Archbishop, but without a clear conscience...¹²⁴

G.A. Wieggers' examination of the translations of the Turpiana parchment confirms that the Archbishop made effort to influence the translations in line with Christian ideals.

The Seville Translations

As for the translations of the inscriptions in Seville, there is no evidence that Rodrigo Caro paid his translators to work in any specific manner or to produce translations which were doctrinally aligned. Therefore, the style and the content of the translations must be attributed to the translators themselves. It is easy to conclude that Sergio was an ignorant translator. However, one must take into account the fact that in the 17th century, the two marble panels from San Juan de la Palma and San Salvador were mounted well above eye-level and are composed in a typical 11th-century epigraphical style which is not easy to read. What he was not able to decipher, Sergio filled in with phrases and concepts borrowed from other texts—'In the name of God', 'God's praises upon Muḥammad', the 'Light of Muḥammad'—and from his own imagination about Islam and its rulers. As mentioned above, Caro used only one of Sergio's mistranslations (documentary appendix, 1.III) regarding the "study of Lord Marwān" in a historical context, to justify an idea that Ibn Sīna, "el gran Médico Avizena", had studied medicine in Seville.¹²⁵

Juan Bautista's translation of Pedro de Castro's parchment is rather different. While not precisely in the tenor of the lead tablets, his translation is written in the spirit, though not word for word, of the Morisco physician Miguel de Luna's *Historia Verdadera del Rey don Rodrigo*, a work of historical fiction which Luna, Arabic translator of Philip II, claimed to have translated from Arabic.¹²⁶ That the *Historia*

¹²⁴ Harvey and Wieggers, "The translation from Arabic", 65.

¹²⁵ Caro, *Antigüedades*, fol.24a.

¹²⁶ Luna, *La Verdadera Historia*.

Verdadera (H.V.) was dedicated to Philip II indicates that Luna was seeking a reward for his efforts, most likely a noble title which would gain for both him and his family an exemption from the decree of expulsion of 1610. This intention, to be declared *hijodalgo*, was also brought to light by Dario Cabanelas with his publication of some of Miguel de Luna's letters.¹²⁷ These letters, from 1609-1610 were written while Luna was in Madrid as Pedro de Castro's representative to promote the cause of the lead tablets from Sacromonte, but Luna apparently had his own reasons for being close to the court. He did gain a title of nobility ("A Dña María [his wife] envió unos papeles bien firmados de mi nobleza") in 1610, and died in Spain less than a decade later.

The historical intention of the *H.V.* was quite different from that of the lead tablets, and thus presents an obstacle for those who wished to link Luna with the Sacromonte forgeries. There is nothing in the *H.V.* regarding Saint James or his Apostles, rather it is a re-working of the received account of the Muslim conquest of Visigothic Spain. As Francisco Márquez Villanueva has indicated, Luna's device of creating an Arab author who had witnessed the Muslim conquest of the Peninsula gave him the freedom to pick and choose among the traditional accounts, between *El Moro Rasis* and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's own manipulated account based on it, and to press against the neo-gothicism of his contemporaries such as Ambrosio de Morales.¹²⁸ According to Luna, the Muslim conquest was a welcome conquest which saved the people of the Peninsula from a corrupt and vicious rule. The *H.V.* also allowed Luna to present, in the second part, a portrait of a perfect ruler, anachronistically named Iacob Almançor, a ruler who treated his Christian minority subjects justly and maintained his pacts with them, a model with which Philip II could measure himself according to his own conscience.¹²⁹

Miguel de Luna's work was not condemned as a forgery until the end of the 18th century, and, as mentioned above, Rodrigo Caro himself cited it in *Antigüedades* as an historical source. From the

¹²⁷ Cabanelas, D., "Cartas del morisco granadino Miguel de Luna", *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, XIV-XV (1965-1966), 31-47.

¹²⁸ Márquez Villanueva, F., *El problema morisco (desde otras laderas)*, Madrid, 1991, 51-2.

¹²⁹ *Id.*, 67-71; Luna, *La Historia Verdadera*, libro 2, cap. LIII, 219-20.

perspective of the present, the work contains an anachronistic mix of the historical with the ahistorical and the legendary with the documented, all described with a kind of temporal collapse which one finds in Juan Bautista's translation in Seville, i.e. 'they governed for many years and discovered a mosque in Seville which is called San Juan de la Palma'. Juan Bautista's 'translation' is a sort of condensed history of the Muslim conquest of Spain, strongly influenced by either Luna's *H.V.* or *El Moro Rasis*, which begins with Muḥammad and ends with a church/mosque in Seville 'called San Juan de la Palma' and its endowments.

When Luna wrote of Iacob Almançor's conquest of Seville in the *H.V.*, he affirmed, "He ordered their Cathedral Church to be taken from the Christians, together with others principal churches, and of them made mosques for his own people and later ordered them to fortify the walls"—a reversal of precisely what occurred to the neighbourhood and congregational mosques in Seville after the Castilian conquest in 1248.¹³⁰ It is notable that all three authors, Sergio, Juan Bautista and Miguel de Luna describe the re-building, the discovery and the conversion, respectively, of church to a mosque in Seville by a conqueror. The only known Arabic inscription from San Juan de la Palma actually commemorates the construction of a minaret added on to a mosque, under the patronage of the mother of 'Ubayd Allāh al-Raṣhīd, son of the 'Abbādi ruler al-Mu'tamid, an event which had nothing to do with conquest or conversion.¹³¹

All three authors, Morisco and Maronite, however subversive or anti-Gothic they wished to be, reveal that in the end they were typical men of 16th- and 17th-century Spain, who had ingested and assimilated the legitimising posture of the reconquest. Like their patrons, they perceived Arabic inscriptions as essential polemic reminders that the medieval Muslim conquerors were the usurpers of the fortified cities and churches of the Romans and Visigoths, and produced 'translations' that bolstered this perception. They provided 'sources' for the re-writing of the history of Islamic architecture as a microcosm

¹³⁰ Luna, *La Historia Verdadera*, *ibidem*: 'mandó tomar a los Christianos su Iglesia mayor, junto con otras de las mas principales, de las quales hizo mezquitas para los suyos, y luego mandó fortificar las murallas'.

¹³¹ Valencia, R., *Sevilla musulmana hasta la caída del Califato: contribución a su estudio*, Madrid, 1988, 595.

of the history of Islamic rule in al-Andalus. The historical pendulum would swing the other way in a century and a half when the romantics would declare the Naşrid palace known as the Alhambra, a dream palace, so unique and refined that it could not have been built by the hands of man.

DOCUMENTARY APPENDIX

1. TRANSLATIONS OF RODRIGO CARO'S TRANSLATIONS OF ARABIC INSCRIPTIONS IN SEVILLE:

I. (Marble?) inscription panel found in the house of Juan Vallejo, parish of San Miguel, present whereabouts unknown: [Sergio] En el nombre de Dios poderoso de piedad. Alabanças de Dios sobre Mahomad, y sobre los suyos discipulos, salud con salud, y la bendicion de Dios sobre Mahomad hijo de Ali, la piedad de Dios sobre el. Con el ayuda de Dios escrivi esta letra. Quien encomendasse, y rogasse setenta y siete vezes lo librarà Dios por su misericordia.

II. (Marble?) inscription panel on the gate of San Juan de Acre. (It is not clear if Rodrigo Caro was referring to the city gate of San Juan, named for the houses of the military order of St. John of Acre which were next to it, or to the door of the church of San Juan de Acre which had belonged to this order. The church was destroyed in 1864 and the gate torn down in 1868), present whereabouts of panel unknown: [Sergio] En el nombre de Dios piadoso de piedad. Alabanças de Dios sobre Mahomad. Mandado quedò de mano del Señor Mahomad la puerta, que hizo el año de la tribulacion de los Moros por agua. Convenció la ley sobre el hijo de Iuseph Alcafer: vença su mandado, y la tregua entre los fieles. Despues dixo el Señor Ali, a quien Dios dè larga vida, y lugar venturoso. Mandado fin el bendito con la alabança de Dios, y amparo de su ayuda, vencedor de la ley, y largueza de vida dellos, y el mandado de Dios el Alto. De mano de Alaziz. Ruegen a el, que le dè Dios vitoria. Todos quantos entraren desta puerta, hecha de mano de santo, el peregrino de la casa de Meca. Yo, el siervo, del temeroso Ellaratene cumpla con las alabanças de Dios, y el amparo de su ayuda. Siervo del amoroso saludo a todos.

III. White marble inscription panel formerly located on the tower of the collegiate church of El Salvador (minaret of the congregational mosque of Ibn 'Adabbas), Museo Arqueológico de Sevilla, reg. ent. no. 2.994. Panel now located on an inner wall at the entrance to the Sacristy: [Sergio] En el nombre de Dios podeso [*sic*]. Las alabanças de Dios sobre Mahomad, y sobre sus discipulos, salud sobre ellos, por la salud de Dios, en quien confio, y en Mahomad mi amparo. Este es el estudio del Señor Maruan, que Dios nos dé su gracia. Quien entrare en su templo, y capilla, y rezare quarenta y siete vezes, el perdonará Dios sus pecados, y rueguen por quien lo hizo, que le tenga Dios de su mano. *En la misma piedra, de letra Arabe assi mismo, pero hundida en la piedra al uso Romano:* Amar hijo de Faleb, con la ayuda del poderoso, salud a cada uno.

English Translation of Arabic inscription: Basmalla... God bless Muḥammad, seal of his Prophets and best of his sincere friends, and his family, the noble and pious ones, and grant them salvation. Al-Mu'tamid 'alā Allāh al-Mu'ayyad bi-Naṣr Allāh Abū l-Qāsim Muḥammad b. 'Abbād—may God perpetuate his support of his authority and continue the consolidation of his victory—ordered the building of the highest part of this minaret (*al-manār*)—it does not cease to invoke Islam profusely—when it was demolished by many earthquakes which took place on Sunday night at the beginning of Rabī' I in the year 472 [1 September, 1079]. It was completed with the power and support of God at the end of the month dated [above]—may God accept within it his noble work and build for himself a palace in paradise with each stone employed in its building, with his blessing and benevolence. [on lower border] Made by Abū Ibrahim b. Aflaḥ the marble-cutter, under the supervision of the secretary (*al-amīn*), head of the endowments (*sāhib al-aḥbās*), and custodian (*al-qayyim*) Abū 'Umar Aḥmad b. Ṭayyib—may God give him success. (Lévi-Provençal, *Inscriptions*, 38-40, no.31).

IV. Marble inscription panel formerly located on the tower of the parish church of San Juan de la Palma (minaret of the neighborhood mosque of Umm al-Rashīd). The church itself was constructed by Mudéjar masons on the site of the former neighborhood mosque. Museo Arqueológico de Sevilla, reg. ent. no. 252. Inventario General no. 3.369: [Sergio] En el nombre de Dios poderoso de piedad. Alabança de Dios sobre Mahomad, que la Fé fuente de bendicion, y que predicó en ella sobre vos, Dios la luz de Mahomad, que es Dios el mayor Dios, y Dios es luz de los cielos; y de la tierra [sic], como su luz, y todos quantos Angeles en el cielo, y fieles. Quien se ampara con estas palabras le perdona Dios sus pecados. Del Siervo de Dioe [sic] Mahomate bijo [sic] de Malique el Levantisco. Año de mil y cinco.

English Translation of Arabic inscription: In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, God bless Muḥammad, seal of the Prophets. The great lady Umm al-Rashīd Abū l-Ḥusayn 'Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mu'tamid 'alā Allāh, al-Mu'ayyad bi-Naṣr Allāh, Abū l-Qāsim Muḥammad b. 'Abbād—may God perpetuate his support and his authority and strengthen both of them—ordered the erection of this minaret (*sauma'a*) in her mosque—may God hold it true(?)—seeking a great reward. It was completed, with the help of God, under the supervision of the minister (*wazīr*), scribe and secretary (*al-amīn*) Abū l-Qāsim b. Ḥajjāj—may God give him success—and that was in Shā'bān in the year 478 [November 11-December 12, 1085]. (Lévi-Provençal, *Inscriptions*, 40-42, no.32.)

V. Inscription, said to be from the parish church of San Juan de la Palma, copied onto parchment for the Archbishop of Seville, Pedro de Castro, between 1610-1623, present whereabouts of the parchment unknown: [Sergio] Este es el gran templo de S. Iuan, el qual reedificó Axataf Rey de Sevilla, por mandado del gran Miramamolín; el qual fue dotado de su primera hazienda por Muley Almanzor Rey de Ezija: y esto fue en los años de mil y veinte, aviendo una gran pestilencia en toda España.

[Juan Bautista] Despues que Mahomad ya profetizó su ley dozientos años, y despues Reynó Muley Iacob Almanzor Amir Elmuminin Enàsar Edir, Teñiente de Dios. Despues que Reynò, passò a tierra de España el Conde don Iulian: el fue perdida de España: y assi passò en ella el Alcayde Tarif con Muça, el Carcelero ¹³², el que obtuvo todos los Chris-

¹³² Juan Bautista's appellation of Mūsā as "the jailer" has an interesting derivation. The term comes from "al-wazīr", the minister, which entered into Castilian as "alguacil" with a

tianos de España: despues desto passaron mil y veinte y cinco años, y despues quedaron en ella los Moros: governaron muchos años, y hallaron en Sevilla una mezquita, que se dize San Iuan de la Palma. Mandò el Rey Muley Iacob Almanzor edificarla, y mandò tambien al Alcayde de Sevilla, que se dize Alcaide Ahumed Balhapsa [Aḥmad Abū l-Qāsīm?], y hizo en la torre suya una losa de marmol, y escrivio en ella estas letras. Y la hizo mejor que todas las Iglesias de Sevilla, y mas que a la Iglesia mayor: y diole Muley Iacob Almanzor el diezmo para todo lo que ha menester, y casas, y tributos para siempre. Item, que todas las casas que estan a la orilla del rio, que son de los Moros, paguen tributo a esta Iglesia.

Dios le dé vitoria al que hizo esta obra de misericordia a esta Iglesia de tierra de Moros.
Quien escrivió esto es Hamed Xarif hijo de Hadalguad: Dios le dé libertad.

* * *

2. LETTER FROM FRANCISCO DE FUENTES MADRIGAL TO RODRIGO CARO DATED JUNE 23, 1638 (SALTERAS)

Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Capitular, MS 58-1-9 (sig. ant. 83-7-25), *Segundo Tomo de Cartas y Papeles Pertenecientes al Doctor Rodrigo Caro* (17th-century copy of letters and other papers which belonged to Rodrigo Caro), folios 214b-218a (microform 37/60)

Señor Doctor Rodrigo Caro=Yo havia deseado mucho ver/ el Libro que Vm. me hizo merced de enviarme con/ Juan Romero, por la noticia, que dèl tenia: oy/ cierto que sin adulacion puedo decir que es no/ solo Libro, sino muy gran Libreria doctisimamen-/ te, y con agradable y propio language escrita./ Guarde Nuestro Señor à Vm., muchos años para/ gloria y honra de Sevilla y mejor, de toda/ España, pues à todos honra, y à todos engran-/ dece; parto al fin, como de tal hijo, que si/ fuera premiado como merece, el mejor puesto/ havia de ocupar esa persona veneranda (des-/ dicha de este siglo, que corre, en que todo està pervertido) no por eso deje Vm. de proseguir/ à sacar à la luz sus desvelos; que à los varones/ de generoso corazon nada les perturba.

Digo, Señor mio, que Juan Romero me dijo que/ Vm. gustaba, le remitiese algunas antiguada-/ des: y las que à mi mano han venido, remito/ (fol.215a) a Vm.=En la esquina de la torre vieja de esta Ygle-/ sia estaba un pedestal de estatua de marmol/ de vara y quarta de alto, el qual està agora/ en un portico nuevo, que se ha hecho à la parte/ de la Plaza de la Villa: està notoriamente/ picado à mano, y tan maltrado por eso que/ no se puede leer mas de lo que aqui va.

.....

..... DIVI MARCI III:..... MODI FRATRI
SEPTIMO SEVERO PIO IMP MAXIMO, ARABICO
ADIABENICO PARTICO MAXIMO PONTIFICI II:.....
RIB:..... PO:..... II:..... COS II P.P. PROCOS. REL. POS. SP.
D ' D

change in meaning to “chief of police”. Juan Bautista transformed “alguacil” into “carcele-ro”, jailer, which may have been its widely understood meaning by the 17th century. The transformation which bypasses the medieval Castilian meaning of “alguacil” tends to confirm that Juan Bautista was trying, in some fashion, to translate an Arabic text.

En la esquina de la nabe de Nuestra Señora del/ Rosario está una piedra metida en la labor de la pared, tambien maltratada del tiempo: tendrá/ media vara de alto: es de marmol blanco y/ en ella no se puede leer mas letras que las siguientes:

.....LVDIS S::ENICIS °DITIS:.....
DEDIT DONAVIT DEDIC

Echando una zepa de cabeza en un Pago de viñas/ (*fol.215b*) que se dice los Villares (porque al rededor de este/ sitio se han hallado mucho material de edifi-/ cios deshechos, y sepulcros) se hallò un sepul-/ cro con una losa de varia y media de alto, de/ marmol blanco, y en ella escrito lo siguiente:/

[drawing of two doves facing inward toward a medallion containing the chrismon]

SUSANA FAMULA/DEI VIXIT ANNIS
 PL/M X X̄ I RECESSIT IN PACE/X XIII
 KAL MAIAS/AERA ̄ VIII

Esta piedra hice yo traer, y los huesos, que se/ hallaron debajo de ella, truge yo mesmo en mi/ capa recogidos; y viniendo à mi casa con ellos/ (haviendose convocado mucha gente sin lla-/ marla, que era dia de Fiesta) salio à la/ puerta de su casa una Muger, y sacò à una/ Hija suya de edad de mas de quince años, tan/ descolorida y flaca, que bien parecio à todos/ que estaba muy enferma: pidiome la Ma-/ dre de la enferma que le tocase à su Hija/ (*fol.216a*) en la cabeza con los Huesos hizelo así, y ins-/ tantaneamente quedò sana libre de su mal;/ así lo declarò con juramento la enferma, y su/ Madre y los presentes, que lo vimos, y oimos/ decir à la enferma, que fue Madre de Juan/ Romero, criado de Vm., Hijo de Bartolome/ Romero, que dira los nonbres de su Madre/ y Avuela.

Teniendo noticia de esta invencion el Ilustrisimo/ Señor Don Pedro de Castro y Quiñones, Arzobispo/ de Sevilla, me enviò à mandar à mi, le en-/ viase un tanto de la piedra con la relacion/ del caso, y se lo remiti, de que holgò mucho,/ y estimò como tan santo Prelado, y enviò à/ este Villa de Salteras à el Licenciado Gregorio Mo-/ rillo su crucifera- rio, para que hiciese Ynfor-/ macion autentica en forma del caso, y milagro;/ y el dicho trujo un arquita de cedro muy cu-/ riosa con guarniciones doradas, para que en/ ella se entrasen los Huesos, y mandò que se/ picase el pilar del arco toral del lado del/ Evangelio, y en el hueco se colocase el arca,/ y enviò un cantero oficial que subs-/ cribiese la piedra en el blanco que/ (*fol.216b*) abajo ella tenia y puso lo siguiente:

DEI FAMVLA SUSANNA IN VINEIS VILLARIUM
 SUB HOC LAPIDE INVENTA SUB EODEM IN HAC
 AÈDE REPOSITA ANNO DOMINI
 M. DC. XII.

El Padre Juan de Pineda, de la conpañia de/ Jesus, vino aqui à ver esta piedra, y dijo que/ havia de escribirse: Villarium, y no/ Villarium. Y en quanto à leer la piedra dijo/ que havia menester ver sus trapazeses. El/ Señor Arzobispo la leyò, y dijo que esta abre-/ viatura X significaba AD; y en la/ edad XC.I, leyò diez y seis: yo digo que/ me parecia que eran noventa y un años de/ edad, y parecio à todos clara la cuenta,/ porque el X detras de el C significa noventa,/ salvo el de Vm.

Divulgasè en Sevilla la fama de esta inven-/ cion; y un hombre rico, mercader ya muy/ anciano, que se decia Andres Garcia Garrido,/ vecino de Sevilla à la Solana de la Pescaderia,/ estando desafuciado ya de los Medicos, y ha-/ viendo sabido que se havia hallado este sepul-/ cro, enviò aqui un criado suyo por una/ poquita de tierra de èl, y à decir una Misa (*fol.217b*) yo la digo, y remiti un huesecito (que se quedò/ fuera del arca mas de un poco en mi poder de permi-/ sion del Señor Arzobispo) y haviendole tocado con/ èl

hueso al enfermo, se quedò dormido, y dijo/ que vido en sueño una señora muy hermosa, que/ le dijo que fiase en Dios, y sería sano: recordò/ con esto pidiendo de vestir, y se levantò sano,/ haviendo echado muy gruesas piedras sin dolor,/ vino a esta Villa, hizo una Fiesta, en que pre-/ dicio de Santa Susana un Padre de la Conpañia./ Fuera de esto, ha hecho otras maravillas. El Señor Don/ Pedro de Castro dijo al Licenciado Fernando [‘de belda’ *in another hand*]/ mi Primo, que fue su capellan, y murio Admi-/ nistrador del Hospital del Amor de Dios, que/ se tuviese por dichoso en haver nacido en Villa,/ donde havia Christianos Catolicos y santos quan-/ do havia muy pocos por la persecucion de los Aria-/ nos que entonces predominaba en tiempo de Leo-/ vigildo, Rey de Sevilla.

La losa que tiene San Gregoria Betico: que està en Alcalá del Rio, à quien los Reyes/ Catolicos hicieron Altar por un milagro, que/ obrò, tiene las mesmas palabras: *Famulus Dei/ recessit in pace.*


(*fol.218a*) Poniendo yo un cercado de viña, que tengo/ cerca de esta Villa, algo distante de la parte/ donde se hallò el sepulcro de Susana, se hallò/ otro con una losa de marmol encima, estaba/ hueco, y labrado de ladrillos mazaries¹³³, y à la/ cabeza una redomita de vidrio verde, como de/ medio quartillo, derecha, y negra por de dentro,/ que aun retenia olor de balsamo, la qual enviè/ al Señor Arzobispo y la puso sobre su escrito-/ rio estimandola en tanto, que no me la guiso/ volver. Las letras de la piedra decian asi:

[*drawing of a circular medallion with the chrismon*]

VALVPPIANA VIXIT A ANNIS XXVII DĪS
XX. RESESSIT IN PACE KĀL IĀN.

No tenia Era esta piedra, porque estaba encima/ de ella otra pequeñita, que parecia ser epi-/ tafio de una niña, que debia ser su Hija,/ que decia:

ANA GAVDIOSA SIVE AFRICA VIXIT ANNIS. VII

DIS. VIII  ÆRA. DC. ID. AG. A[*chrismon*] ω

Yo quisiera haver hallado muchas cosas curio-/ sas, y de importancia, que cebaran su buen/ gusto de Vm., porque yo le tuviera mucho/ (*fol.218a*) de remitirselas, como lo tendrè sienpre de servir/ à Vm., cuya persona Nuestro Señor guarde muchisi-/ mos años. Salteras y de junio 23 de 1638= de Vm. Francisco de Fuentes Madrigal= yo iré/ presto à Sevilla, Dios queriendo, y besaré su ma-/ no de Vm., y diré lo que se me ha ofrecido.

* * *

3. TWO LETTERS REFERRING TO THE SAME DISCOVERY AND TRANSLATION, ONE FROM PADRE DON ANTONIO BOHORQUES VILLALÓN TO RODRIGO CARO, DATED JULY 13, 1641 (MORÓN DE LA FRONTERA), AND ANOTHER FROM ADÁN CENTURIÓN, MARQUÉS DE ESTEPA, DATED JULY 4, 1634 (GRANADA) RESPONDING TO A LETTER FROM ABV DATED JUNE 2.

LETTER FROM ADÁN CENTURIÓN TO ANTONIO BOHORQUES VILLALÓN:

IC(BC), MS 58-1-9 (sig. ant. 83-7-25), *Segundo Tomo de Cartas y Papeles Pertenecientes al Doctor Rodrigo Caro*, fols. 294a-294b (microform 52/60).

¹³³ Mazari (Ar. *maṣrī*, egipcio), “Dícese del ladrillo cuadrado o baldosa que se usaba para solados”, *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, Real Academia Española.

Text: Por haver estado fuera de Granada estos dias/ havrè tardado en responder à lo que Vm. me escribe en la suya de 2 del pasado.

Ordinaria cosa es en las laudas de sepulcros de Moron, que se hallan en el Andalucia, par-/ ticularmente en Granada, ser las letras (*fol.294b*) no cavadas, sino de medio relieve; y la forma/ del sepulcro de tejas tambien es comun à/ ellos, mas no suelen ser de las comunes de teja-/ do, sino unos tejones grandes llanos de/ barro grueso; y estos tambien he visto en se-/ pulcros mas antiguos que no son de Moros.

Envio à Vm. lo que hemos podido entender/ de la copia de la piedra que se hallò ai, lo/ qual por no haver visto la misma piedra/ no va mirado con tanta atencion como con-/ venia, pero en sutancia es cierto que el/ sepulcro es de Cayde hijo de Soliman, y que/ era moro, y que murio el año de 377 de la cuenta de los Moros, que facilmente vera Vm./ à que corresponde por la cuenta, que los Histo-/ riedores, en particular Mariana, y Ambro-/ sio de Morales han hecho dandole principio/ y advirtiendo la cuenta de las lunas. Guarde/ dios à Vm. muchos años. En Granada julio 4 de 1634 =/ quedome con la inscripcion Ara- be, que/ Um. Me envia, pues tiene Vm. alla el original. El Marqués de Estepa=Padre don Antonio Bohorgues Villalòn.

LETTER FROM ANTONIO BOHORQUES VILLALÓN TO RODRIGO CARO:

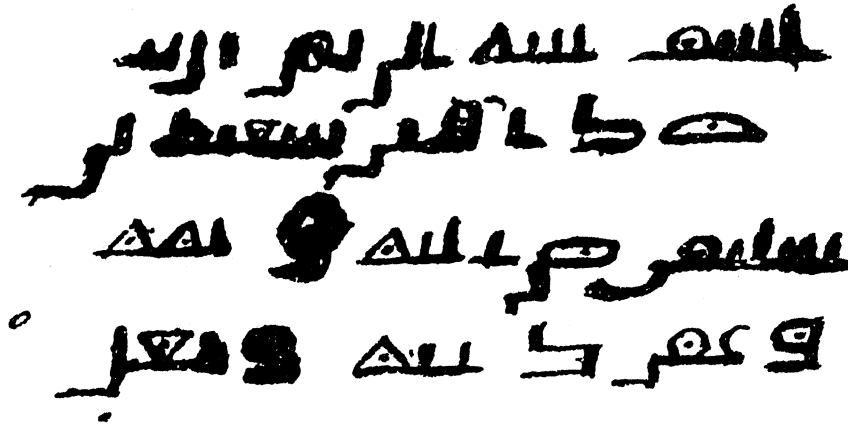
IC(BC), MS 57-6-22 (sig. ant. 83-6-37), *Primer Tomo de Manuscritos y Papeles Pertene- cientes à el Señor Doctor Rodrigo Caro* (17th-century copy of letters and other papers which belonged to Rodrigo Caro), fols. 42a-42b in old foliation (microforms 15/20-16/20).

Text: Muy alegre me hallo de saber de su salud de/ Vm., y muy favorecido con su carta, porque beso/ su mano muchas veces. Remito con esta la/ inscripcion Arabiga, que se hal- lo en el cerro de/ la atalaya de Moron, que esta al Poniente/ desta Villa, y oy se entierran los Moros, que/ mueren en esta comarca, pues los he visto ha-/ ciaqui desde Alcala de Guadaíra. Va la decla-/ ración mesma, que original me enviò el Mar-/ ques de Estepa. La pintura del tubicen(?) y la de-/ claracion es muy buena. Aqui se ha hallado/ estos dias una paloma de bronce con una he-/ billa muy grande en los lomos y la paloma/ no redonda [*sic*], sino tableadilla, y con dos agu-/ geros que parecia como estaba pegada a una/ puer- ta, la paloma, la bae-/ za hacia abajo, y se hallò en/ el canpo as de un estado de-/ bajo de tierra, cavando una/ madriguera de conejos. Tambien/ se ha hallado debajo de tierra una campana que/ agora esta en San Pablo: no la he visto. Dicen que es/ de hechura estraña, que no tiene abajo vuelta/ que viene à ser de hechura de esquilon. Debio de ser/ de Go- dos. Tambien se ha hallado una cabeza (*fol. 42b*) de un mancebo de barro, y en los carri- llos/ dos pesones como de pechos de muger. Aci/ me voy poco à poco en mi libro. Moron y julio 13 de 1641= Don Antonio de Bohorguez Villalon.

Sepultura de un moro hallada en la Atalaya Cerca de/Moron, interpretada por el Señor Marques de Estepa renglon por renglon.

[*note in manuscript*]: Este membrete es de letra de R. Caro; y todo lo demas (que esta a la s^{ta} de la carta) porque la piedra y explicacion original huvo de venir en papel separa- do—dize como sigue aqui:

Piedra hallada en el cerro del Atalaya (junto a Moron de la Frontera)



[scanned drawing of transcription of arabic inscription]

Declarò esta piedra Arabe el Señor Doctor Adan Centuriòn, Marques de Estepa

En el nombre de Dios Misericordioso
 este sepultura es de Zaide hijo de
 Salomon, Seale Dios misericordisos y Dios le Perdona y amalrado sea
 Dios le hàio inocente murio la noche
 Derima noche
 en el fin de la peregrinacion año
 siete y setenta y treceintos

esta interpretada renglon a renglon, salvo donde faltan algunas letras

las letras de a vuelta de la piedra

No hai Dios sino Dios
 Mahoma Apostol de Dios

Esta es locucion conocida de los que siguen la falsa y perfidencial secta de Mahoma.

* * *

4. LETTER FROM ADÁN CENTURIÓN, MARQUÉS DE ESTEPA TO RODRIGO CARO, DATED JANUARY 9, 1627 (GRANADA) REGARDING CONCERNS HE HAD ABOUT SOME ROMAN PLACE-NAMES IDENTIFIED BY FLAVIO DEXTRO AS PLACES WHERE SAINTS PERISHED

IC(BC) MS 58-1-9 (sig.ant. 83-7-25), folios 294b-296a (microforms 52/60-53/60).

Text: Con ocupaciones que no se han ofrecido pocas/ no he podido escribir a Vm. estos días. Deseo/ los haya Vm. tenido buenos y muy santas (*fol.295a*) Pascuas: Dios nos las ha dado aca buenos con ha-/ ver sido servido de darme un hijo sucesor, que/ nació el Jueves pasado, 4 deste. Deseo (si en/ estas vaxcacione se ha hecho la memoria de las/ moneas del Señor Sancho Hurtado, y de las de-/ mas de Vm. verlas.

Ofreceme que comunicar à Vm. un pen-/ samiento que creo, no se funda mal; y porque/ es contra lo que Vm. escribio, no lo podrè te-/ ner por bien fundado, si Vm/ no lo aprueba/ Dijo Vm. En el folio 110—de sus notas à Flavio Dextro que Alba, donde padecieron los/ santos martires Isacio, Apolo y Craton, era/ Arsona, por haverle llamado Municipia Al-/ bense; y yo habiendo mirado esto con algun/ cuydado, entiendo que podriamos aplicar estos/ santos con certeza moral de cosa tan ànti-/ gua à Abla [*sic*], lugar que està junto à Fiña-/ na y con muchos rastros de haver havido/ alli población Romana cerca de Guadix en/ el camino à Almeria. Y en el camino, que/ hay de Acci à Urçi; y que Acci sea Gua-/ dix, es cosa sabida; y que Urçi sea Alme-/ ria lo dicen muchos. Y en una historia de la/ traslacion de San Indalecio, que esta (*fol.295b*) manuscrita en San Juan de la Peña; yo he/ visto traslado della autorizado y andan pedazos/ della impresos en la Historia de San Juan de la/ Peña. Se dice que Vrci fue donde aora es Pechina/ junta à Almeria, y que los moros destruyendo/ aquella ciudad, la pasaron por la comodidad/ del Puerto dondè aora està Almeria. Y con-/ firmase esta historia con haver en Pechina/ muchos rastros de antiguedad, y tradicion de/ que alli se halla el cuerpo de San Yndalecio/ donde aora hay una Hermita, y fue anti-/ guamente la Yglesia deste Santo Obispo.

Bien/ se me ofrece la dificultad de que Acci, ò Colo-/nia Accitana, que es Guadix, no se consta/ antiguamente en la Betica; pero estando/ tan cercana, y variandose tan facilmente/ los terminos de las Provincias pudo Flavio Dextro/ ò por contrario en su tiempo en esta Provincia, como/ aora, ò por error, que es tan facil en tanta cerca-/ nia, aunque fuese tan diligente escritor como/ fue, contar à Acci en esta Provincia, donde/ aora lo contamos. Digame Vm. suplicoselo/ ingenuamente lo que piense desto, y les mi/ discurso de tanta fuerza, que se puede por/ èl pedir que se celebren ali como pro-/ pios de estos Santos, Guarde Dios à Vm. (*fol.296a*) como deseo. Granada, 9 de enero, 1627. El/ Marques de Estepa.

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to illuminate the problem of baroque translations of medieval Arabic inscriptions, in particular those provided by Rodrigo Caro in 1634 of inscriptions from Seville. The Sevillian inscriptions have been ignored by scholars since the nineteenth century when they were recognized as fraudulent. This paper argues that the content of these false translations was subservient to the context of their production -namely that of the translations of the Grenadine lead books, the baroque perceived ideal of a 'sacred antiquity', and the counter-reformation promotion and elevation of false martyrs and their

relics. These were all elements of a conscious programme of invention of a fictitious but significant Christian past in Andalucía. The main protagonists in the Seville translations—Rodrigo Caro, Pedro de Castro and Adán Centurión—were implicated in all of these processes as well as belonging to a Peninsula-wide network of antiquarian enthusiasts and forgers. Their critical judgement, when faced with evident frauds, was consumed by their will to promote specific religious and political agendas. Consequently, their shared translators, with their own agendas, obliged their patrons with capricious ammunition.

RESUMEN

Este artículo intenta iluminar el problema de las traducciones de inscripciones árabes medievales durante el Barroco, en particular, las propuestas por Rodrigo Caro en 1643 de las inscripciones de Sevilla, traducciones primero ignoradas y luego consideradas, en el siglo XIX, como fraudulentas. Aquí se propone que estas falsas traducciones están condicionadas por el contexto de las de los Plomos del Sacromonte, por el ideal de la época de «antigüedad sagrada» y por el interés contrarreformista en ensalzar mártires y reliquias. Estos eran todos elementos de un programa consciente de invención de un pasado cristiano, ficticio pero lleno de significado, en Andalucía. Los principales protagonistas de las traducciones de Sevilla, Rodrigo Caro, Pedro de Castro, Adán Centurión, estuvieron implicados en este proceso además de formar parte de una red, que implicaba a toda la península, de entusiastas anticuarios y falsarios. Su juicio crítico, cuando se enfrentaba con fraudes evidentes, quedaba obnubilado por su deseo de promover determinados fines religiosos y políticos. Sus traductores, que a menudo compartieron, era los productores de caprichosos instrumentos con que alcanzar dichos fines.