

'This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Edinburgh University Press in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*. The Version of Record is available online at: [https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/jqs.2022.0502](https://www.euppublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/jqs.2022.0502)

The last Qur'an from al-Andalus?

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to improve upon the description of ms. 2 of the Escuela de Estudios Árabes de Granada, and to propose a new date based on the material analysis of the document carried out by Sonsoles González (2014), and our rereading and translation of its colophon. If one accepts our proposal, this would be the last Qur'an from the Iberian peninsula, copied as late as the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, in the city of Córdoba. Moreover, this copy is heir to an Andalusí tradition stretching back to the theoretical treatises of Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān al-Dānī, transmitted faithfully from generation to generation through the Andalusí, Mudejar and Morisco periods, down to the period of this manuscript. Lastly, the marginal notes with chapter numbers and Latin translations of the sura titles are clear evidence of its later use among Christian intellectual circles.

The last Qur'an from al-Andalus?

With manuscripts, some mystery always remains. (F. Déroche)

1 Introduction¹

As the years go by, we have humbly come to accept the powerful lesson that Prof François Déroche insisted on teaching us at the *Specialist Course in Arabic Manuscript Conservation*² (the first of its kind in Spain): that cataloguing a manuscript requires both time and patience. A copy's "definitive" codicological description is, to paraphrase Borges's adage about translation,³ more often than not the result of exhaustion, if not our own scholarly limitations. As such, all academic work – which of course includes our own – must necessarily be exposed to constant revision, as the only possible means for scholarship to truly move forward. It is in this constructive spirit that we would like to situate the present contribution.

New data presented in an exceptional doctoral thesis by Sonsoles González García on the formal, material and technical aspects of the dated manuscripts in the collection of the Escuela de Estudios Árabes de Granada,⁴ as well as Xavier Casassas's ongoing research into the so-called Qur'an of Bellús,⁵ with multiple common traits that we will examine below, have pushed us to revisit one of the most peculiar volumes in said collection: ms. 2, *olim* A-5-2. To summarize, based on the information included in its catalogue entry,⁶ it is an incomplete copy of the Qur'an (suras I-XVIII), copied, as indicated in the colophon, in Córdoba between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century by Ibrāhīm b. 'Ashir al-Gharīb in Maghribi script with vowel markings, with notes in Latin above the sura titles, and decorated with multiple circular vignettes, as well as a striking medallion at the beginning that contains an upside-down inscription.

Our goal in the present article is twofold. Firstly, we wish to revise the information given about the copyist and date. Secondly, we would like to expand upon any remaining information that might improve both the codicological description of this manuscript, as well as its content, and which might provide relevant information as to the history of how the Qur'an was transmitted in the Islamic West.

2 A material conclusion and a date called into question

The aforementioned thesis by González García has found the presence of two watermarks in the Qur'anic copy under consideration.⁷ Specifically, one is a very common watermark in the form of a circle with letters, and the other is a double circle surmounted by a straight cross and enclosing letters. Although its identification is debatable, since it is only partially visible, this second watermark appears in Spanish documents dated between 1661 and 1745. This span of time, between the second half of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, stands in stark contrast with the date interpreted in this Qur'an's colophon (ff. 227v and 228r) by Concha Castillo in 1984, which she first recorded in the catalogue entry: Thursday, 10 Sha'bān 1007/14 July 1598. This discrepancy, beyond its sheer size (at least half a

century), holds particular significance in that it would place the manuscript long after the definitive decree of expulsion against the Moriscos in 1609.

Prior to the material study carried out by González García, and within the framework of a study on sura titles in Iberian copies of the Qur'an, Arias and Déroche⁸ ventured a different possible reading of the date contained in the manuscript's colophon, since the date offered by Castillo presented multiple inconsistencies. First of all, whereas 10 Sha'bān 1007 was a Monday, the copyist indicates, with no room for interpretation, that he finished his task on a Thursday (*yawm al-khamis*).⁹ Castillo also made a mistake when calculating the corresponding date in the Christian calendar, which is in fact Monday, 8 March 1599.¹⁰ These two inconsistencies led Juan Pablo Arias and Déroche to reconsider the date provided in the colophon. Indeed, the date is difficult to read, as part of the year has been crossed out and corrected with a later annotation – with a different ink but in the same hand – which is not at all easy to interpret on first glance (fig. 1). Taking the Islamic calendar as their starting point, and bearing in mind the constant mistakes made by the copyist, the two researchers tentatively suggested the year 1067, which our copyist wrote as *alf wa-sab'ā sita/sata*, since it just so happens that 10 Sha'bān 1067 corresponds with Thursday, 24 May 1657.

Fig. 1 Close-up of the correction to the colophon (Photo: © CSIC-Escuela de Estudios Árabes).

Later, when this date matched up with the date range proposed by Sonsoles González, following her exhaustive codicological analysis, the need to revisit the manuscript became clear. This is why we have decided to review its date and to propose, based on a new reading of the colophon, a date more closely aligned with the results of the material analysis.

As happens all too often, through inertia Arias and Déroche failed to question Castillo's error as to the day of the month. Our first surprise upon reviewing the dates included by the copyist was that he does not say the 10 Sha'bān, but rather “the Thursday among the [first] ten days of the month of Sha'bān (*yawm^a al-khamis^a fī 'ashrāt^a ayammⁱ min^a shahrⁱ sha'bān*). This somewhat circuitous way of referring to the date in fact shows up in other colophons.¹¹ For example, in Qur'an 4948 of the Biblioteca Nacional de España, the copyist indicates that he completed his task on “the Wednesday among the second ten days of Sha'bān, which corresponds to 22 June of the Christian calendar, in the year 896 [H.]” (*yawm al-arbi'ā fī l-'ashr al-thānī min hilāl sha'bān muwāfiq^{am} bi-l-'ajamī ithnān wa-'ishrīn yawm^{an} khalawn min shahr yunyo alladhi min 'ām sitta watis'ūn wa-thamānī mi'a*). Indeed, among the second ten days of Sha'bān 896 there was only one Wednesday: 14 Sha'bān, which coincides with 22 June [1491 CE], as expressly indicated.

This change ruled out the date of 1067/1657. It was time to go back to the original. If we enlarge the image and look carefully at the crossed-out portion (fig. 2), it is clear that the copyist initially wrote *alf wa-sab'āmmiyatⁱ min il-hijratⁱ*¹², i.e. “1700 H.”

Fig. 2 Close-up of the date (Photo: the author)

Could it be that he accidentally got mixed up with the year 1700 of the Christian calendar? It is altogether possible. It could be yet another case of a late manuscript from the Iberian peninsula in which the days and months are given according to the Islamic calendar, but the year is given according to the Christian calendar.¹³ If we accept that the year 1700 was a slip of the pen, and then convert this Gregorian date into the Islamic calendar (1700 CE = 1111 H), in the first ten days of Sha‘bān 1111 there was indeed just one Thursday, the 7th (=28 January). However, since he also wrote “of the Hijra” (*min il-hijra*), when he later became aware of his blunder, he had no choice but to modify the text. Thus, after clearly choosing to correct the “hundred”, he scratches out *mmiya* and adds another number.¹⁴ The rest, however, is a matter of conjecture. Was his correction aimed at finding an equivalent Hijra year? Would a copyist with a tenuous grasp on Arabic spelling conventions have been able to figure out such an equivalence? We know that even much more qualified figures such as public translators and scribes were liable to make mistakes.¹⁵ Can we stick with the proposed reading of *alf wa-sab ā sita* (i.e. *wa-sittīn*)? If so, where does this date come from? Perhaps from a simple approximate calculation, such as 1700-633=1067?

Thus, with the material analysis as our main argument, but without losing sight of the fact that the copyist originally wrote “1700”, we can only conclude that the manuscript does not belong to the late sixteenth century, but rather to the late seventeenth century or perhaps the very early eighteenth century, i.e. well after the end of the Morisco period.¹⁶

3 The colophon revisited: Copyist and place

Having made our proposed rereading of the date, a logical next step is to offer a transcription and interpretation of the rest of the colophon, correcting certain errors in the catalogue entry, in order to refine what we know about where the copy was made and by whom.

[227v]

كُـمِلَ نِسْفَ الْكُتُبِ¹⁷ الْعَزِيزِ
عَلَى يَدَيِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ابْنِ عَشْرِ الْعَرِيبِ
فِي جَزِيرِ الْخُضْرَاءِ فِي الْإِنْدَالُوسِ فِي /¹⁸
مَيْدِينَةِ قُرْطُبَا عَدَهَا اللَّهُ لِلْسَّلَامِ
وَكَانَ الْأَفْرَعُو مِنْ هُ يَوْمَ الْخَمِيسِ
فِي عَشْرَاتِ أَيَّامِ مِنْ شَهْرِ / شَعْبَانَ /¹⁹

[228r]

فِي عَمِّ²⁰ أَلْفٍ وَسَبْعًا [مِئَةٍ] سِتَّةِ مِنْ إلهِ
جِرَّةِ فَارِحَ مَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي كَتَبَهُ

وَالَّذِي يَقْرَاهُ وَالَّذِي يَكْفُلُهُ
 وَالَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَلِجَمِيعَا الْمُسْلِمِينَ
 وَالْمُسْلِمَةِ²¹ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَةَ
 الْحَيَا مِنْ هُمْ وَالْمَوَاةِ وَصَلَّى
 اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ²² وَعَلَى آلِهِ
 وَأَسْحَبِيهِ وَسَلَّم تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا
 إِيَّاكَ يَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ وَلَا حَوْلًا وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ
 الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ²³
 وَحَدَاهُ قَبْلِي الْكَلِمَ وَبَعَادَاهُ وَقَصْدُ
 تُوكَا بِحَقِّ الْإِلَّهِ عَلَيْكَ يَقَارِ هَذَا
 الْأَحْزُورُفُ أَنْ تَدَاعُ لِلْكَتَبِ بِأَنَّ
 الْجَنَّتِ لَعَلَّ يَرْحَمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

Without going into detail, the copyist's constant deviation from the norms of Classical Arabic is plain to see. His errors include mixing up velar phonemes or assimilating them to their non-velar counterparts,²⁴ dropping the *hamza*²⁵, unduly merging or separating words, incorrectly shifting or adding the *tashdīd*,²⁶ altering the classical vowel pattern for the imperfective,²⁷ changing vowel length (long vowels written as short vowels and vice versa)²⁸ and vowel timbre,²⁹ making mistakes with or omitting *i'rāb*,³⁰ fluctuating the feminine markers,³¹ dropping articles,³² etc. All of this makes clear that the copyist has a tenuous grasp on Classical Arabic and exhibits significant interference from a colloquial variety.³³

Although the catalogue gives our scribe's name as Ibrāhīm b. 'Ashir al-Gharīb, we can safely rule out that *al-Gharīb* was part of his name; the fact that this word comes at the end of the line in the colophon is surely the source of prior cataloguers' misreading on this point. Rather, we believe that this term should be parsed together with "*fi jizira al-khazra fi il-Andalus*", as a means of describing the sense of strangeness or foreignness experienced by a Muslim believer in a hostile land, in this particular case the Iberian peninsula³⁴. Little else can be said with any certainty about the identity of the copyist. A first hypothesis is that he was an Arab slave – in which case most likely from the Maghreb – held captive in Algeciras (Ar. *al-jazira al-khadra*) and then taken to Córdoba, where he copied the manuscript. Prior to 1704, when Algeciras was re-founded, and close to the date we have proposed for our manuscript, there are signs of a settlement distributed in country estates throughout the Partido de Algeciras, and even the presence of slaves of Moroccan origin manumitted in the wills of its first settlers.³⁵

A second possibility is that he is in fact a descendant of the Moriscos who had managed to preserve his Muslim faith, one of those *algaribos* described in the famous Oran fatwa, or the *aljofor* of the manuscript BnF arabe 774,³⁶ who expresses in this way his unfortunate situation in the Iberian peninsula, to which he refers using its two traditional names in Arabic (Ar. *al-jazīra al-khaḍrā'* and *al-Andalus*).³⁷ Juan Aranda Doncel's classic study on the Moriscos of Córdoba³⁸ leaves no doubt as to the significant presence in the city, throughout the sixteenth century, of a Muslim community made up of old Mudejars from Palma del Río and, starting in 1569, Granadan Moriscos deported in the wake of the Alpujarras uprising. Until their expulsion in 1610, and in spite of the prohibitions in force, they preserved their Arabic language and names. Via testimony in trials before the Inquisition, we know that some kept multiple copies of the Qur'an, such as Inés de Soto, who "possesses seven books of the Koran of Mohamed and knows how to read Arabic".³⁹ It is also a known fact that a minority of Moriscos stayed on after the expulsion, and that still more returned in secret, "although eventually this meagre few would meld irrevocably with Christian society, without the possibility of retaining any of the traits that for the span of half a century had set apart this marginalized minority".⁴⁰ Perhaps among this minority there was one Ibrāhīm b. 'Ashir, a crypto-Muslim copyist⁴¹ who, in the middle of Inquisitorial Spain, continued to profess his faith in secret and – what is still more surprising – was versant enough in Arabic to make a copy of the sacred text of Islam and compose a brief colophon in this language, in addition to a second short tract on the rewards of fasting and praying in each of the months of the year, contained in ms. 3 *olim* A-5-3 of this same collection.⁴² Both manuscripts would therefore constitute late examples of Islamic strategies of resistance to this gradual and complete assimilation, through fasting, prayer and Qur'an reading.⁴³

Having cleared up some of the information as to the copyist's name and the place the copy was made, we will now give our own interpretation of the colophon:

The first half of the Holy Qur'an was completed in the city of Córdoba – God return it to Islam – by the hand of Ibrāhīm b. 'Ashir, a hapless stranger in the Green Isle, in al-Andalus. It was completed on the Thursday of the first ten days of the month of Sha'bān [i.e. 7 Sha'bān/28 January] 1700. God have mercy on him who wrote it, on whomsoever reads it, and on whomsoever keeps it, and on whosoever believes in Him, on all the Muslims and true believers, be they man or woman, alive or dead. May peace and prayers be upon the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions until Judgement Day. There is no power but in God, the Almighty, the Great. Praise be to the One God, before and after speaking. By God I beseech you, oh reader of these letters, to pray for him who has written them, that perhaps the One might have mercy upon him in Paradise.

4 A manuscript that is heir to the Andalusī tradition

Just as the information stemming from the linguistic analysis cannot conclusively identify the copyist, the same is true of the manuscript itself. However, the handwriting and style exhibit traits in line with the manuscript production of the Morisco period,⁴⁴ in particular the peculiar strokes employed in the word-final *nūn* and the *tā' marbūṭa* and word-final *hā'*, the habit of breaking off words at the end of a line, confusion between consonants,⁴⁵ mistakes in vowel markings and *tashdīd*,⁴⁶ and the unsystematic use of

long vowels – all of which is not limited to the colophon, but, as we have seen, even affects the text of the Qur’an itself.⁴⁷ Although the first two traits also show up in finely crafted manuscripts, the rest speak to a certain lack of expertise on the part of the copyist, of the sort we can find in many Morisco-period Qur’ans.

- He sometimes marks as the end of an aya (with three dots) what are in fact pauses in recitation, and in some cases has moved the end of an aya from its proper place, or left it out altogether.

- Although he is usually very accurate in marking the groups of five and ten ayas (with the letter *hā*⁴⁸ and with a circle containing various decorative motifs, respectively), in sura 3, for example, he has forgotten to mark ayas 35, 40, 45, 50 and 55.

- These mistakes in counting the ayas sometimes bleed over into the sura titles, as in the aforementioned example of sura 3, where the title indicates 180 ayas instead of the correct figure of 200 (f. 37r). In other instances, even though the ayas are properly signalled in the text, the wrong number is indicated in the title by mistake. The title for sura 7 states that it contains 160 (*mi’a wa-sittīna*) ayas instead of 206, or 107 instead of 109 in the case of sura 10.⁴⁹

- Another aspect is the page layout, where the written area changes shape, the guidelines shift (e.g. ff. 30v and 35r) and the writing extends into the margins (f.47v).

Another possible sign of Morisco origin might be the medallion that opens the book (f. 1r), if we read it as an amulet of the sort that we find in other Iberian Qur’ans.⁵⁰ The first aspect supporting such a reading is the fact that the medallion has been intentionally oriented upside down, as the manuscript appears to be in its original binding. The note “227” on the lower margin of the page, probably by a later hand that has numbered some of the ayas of sura 12, reinforces our conviction that it was orientated and bound in this way.⁵¹ The second is the medallion’s careful design, with three lavishly decorated concentric circles, enclosing a motto wherein the consonant ductus are written alternately in red and yellow ink, with the vowels in these same two colours, but always the opposite of the one used for the ductus. The third and final aspect is the formula included in this motto,⁵² with explicit use of the variant *ghayr*, which has been associated with marginal texts related to magical practices, and with a hypothetical – and still unproven – implantation in al-Andalus of a tendency toward affirmative theology (cataphatic) over apophatic theological discourses marked instead by the omnipresent *illa*.⁵³

Fig. 3 Medallion

However, one thing that to our mind is certain, and wherein resides part of the value of this manuscript, is that it is a clear heir to what we have recently described⁵⁴ as the Andalusī school of *maṣāḥif*-making. The school’s origins can be traced back to the specialist in Qur’anic studies Abū ‘Amr ‘Uthmān al-Dānī (d. 444/1053), and it was passed down from one generation to the next among the various Islamic communities of the Iberian peninsula until at least the seventeenth century. Among other traits, these manuscripts, based on the *varia lectio* (*qirā’a*) of the Medinan Nāfi’ according to the transmission (*riwāya*) of the Egyptian Warsh,⁵⁵ exhibit a peculiar division into fourths, each comprised of 15 *aḥzāb*: suras 1–6 (*aḥzāb* 1–15), suras 7–18 (16–30), suras 19–37 (31–45), and suras 38–114 (46–60). By contrast, in manuscripts unequivocally identified as Maghribī (e.g. BnF arabe 4528), or even in present-day Maghribī editions, the final fourth comprises suras 36–114. Moreover, although it is a less definitive trait,

these Qur’ans from the Iberian peninsula also tend to show certain preferences in the sura titles, among them the choice of *Dāwud* for sura 38, which opens this final fourth.

In the manuscript at hand, the decoration is used to signal this fourths-based structure. On the one hand, there are seven interlaced circles with various colourful motifs before the title of sura 1, and a border framing the written space on this first page to indicate the beginning of the first fourth (fig. 3). On the other, the tile of sura 7 appears between two bands or cartouches, one above and one below, to mark the beginning of the second fourth (fig. 4). The addition of the *ḥizb* next to the title of sura 7 to indicate the beginning of *ḥizb* 16 here, instead of at Q. 7:3, thus falls within the Andalusí tradition, as does the marker signalling the beginning of *ḥizb* 23 next to the title of sura 11, instead of Q. 11:5. (fig. 5).⁵⁶

Fig. 4: Decoration, suras 1 and 2 (Photo: © CSIC-Escuela de Estudios Árabes)

Fig. 5: Sura 7 (title, decoration and *ḥizb* marker) (Photo: © CSIC-Escuela de Estudios Árabes)

Fig. 6: Sura 11 (title and *ḥizb* marker) (Photo: © CSIC-Escuela de Estudios Árabes)

All of these distinctive traits are present in other Iberian Qur’ans and their *aljamiado* translations, such as that found in the well-known ms. 235 (1606) of the Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha. While this proves little more than the longevity of this tradition, it is also one more indication that the copyist may have been of Iberian origin.

5 And bears witness to Europe Islamic studies

Another striking aspect of this manuscript is the presence of Latin marginal notes numbering the suras and glossing their titles.⁵⁷ Beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century, Christian intellectual circles studying Islam in Europe adopted the four-part division inherited from the Andalusí tradition.⁵⁸ Within each book or part, the respective chapters are renumbered, such that book one, which leaves out sura 1, contains five chapters (suras 2–6); book two contains 12 chapters (suras 7–18); book three contains 19 chapters (suras 19–37); and book four contains 77 chapters (suras 38–114). In this system, the suras are indicated by book and chapter. For example, sura 2 is cited as book I, chapter I, or sura 9 as book II, chapter III. This structure and citation system shows up in various forms in the intellectual production of European scholars, for example in annotations in Qur’anic manuscripts such as the aforementioned Qur’an of Bellús (1518), in translations like that of Egidio da Viterbo (1518),⁵⁹ or in anti-Islamic treatises like that of Juan Andrés (1515).⁶⁰

Below is a complete list of the titles in Latin and the sura numbers written in the margins of the manuscript:

Liber Ius Alkorani Continet Azoaras V Apertio Libri seu Mater Alhamduley [1v]
--

1 Azoara de Vaca L.1 Alchorani [1v]
Azoara 2 ^a De Familia Amrani Ioachimo Patre B. M ^a V. [Beata Maria Virgo] [37r]
Azoara 3 De Feminis [56r]
Azoara 4 De la mesa [77r]
Azoara 5 De pecoribus brutisque animantibus [94r]
Liber Z(ecund)us Alkorani complectitur azoras XII [111v]
Azoara De Iona Propheta [152r]
Azoara De Hud Propheta Arabum [162r]
Azoara De Josepho filio Iacobi [172v]
Azoara De Tonitru [182v]
Azoara De Abrahamo Patriarcha [187v]
Azoara 9 De Ahigera [192r]
Azoara 10 De Apibus [196v]
Azoara 11 Filii Israel De translat(ion)e Mahumedis [207v]
Azoara 12 De spelunca et dormientibus [217r]

We should mention that the glossator forgot to translate the titles of suras 7, 8 and 9, and to number many of the suras in this second book. Interestingly, in sura 1 he has added the explanation *Seu Mater*, a translation of another of its possible titles (*Umm al-kitāb*) as well as a third name (*Alhamduley*) that, although not included in this original, is found in other Iberian Qur'ans, such as the aforementioned ms. 235. Likewise, in sura 17 (here book 2, sura 11) he provides the accepted variant of the title used in this original (*Bānū Isrā'īl*), and adds a translation of the common title by which this sura is known in other copies (*al-Isrā'*). He also reproduces the more common title of sura 5 (here book 1, sura 4), *The Table*, even though this original uses the less-common variant *al-ūqud (sic)*,⁶¹ which he may not have recognized. He also provides expansive translations of other titles, identifying the character mentioned (*De Hud Propheta Arabum*) or supplying the potential reader with additional information (e.g. *De spelunca et dormientibus*).

The last intervention of this second, later hand has to do with the numbers of ayas 1–31 in the sura of *Yūsuf* (ff. 172v–175v) and aya 111 (182v). He starts to number the ayas at the beginning and between the lines (ayas 1 and 2), but then switches to writing the number in the margin starting with aya 3. He realizes that the Arabic copyist has repeated the end of aya 7 and the beginning of aya 8 (173r–173v), and numbers aya 9 correctly. However, starting with aya 15 he gets thrown off course by the mistakes of the Arabic copyist, who has left out some aya markers and added in others, in general confusing recitation breaks with aya endings. The glossator is thus forced to repeat number 21, resulting in 33 ayas instead of the 31 that the selection actually contains.

We know nothing about the author of these notes, nor why he numbered these ayas in the chapter on the prophet Joseph. However, once again ms. 3 of this collection offers a clue: on folio 31v of the second treatise contained in the manuscript, a brief tract on *fiqh* (*ibādāt*), we find the note “Archivo del Col^o de la Comp^a de Jhs de Granada”, i.e. the archive of the Jesuit school of St. Paul in the city of Granada, to which ms. 3, and by extension our Qur'an, belonged before entering the collection of the library of the University of Granada. Perhaps the author of the glosses worked at the school, if we

accept the notion that the numbering system we have described was current among ecclesiastical circles.⁶²

6 Conclusions

- As we announced at the outset, this article's primary aim is to call researchers' attention to this fascinating manuscript, as we are convinced that collaboration between specialists from different disciplines always generates more robust results than individual work alone.
- The combination of the codicological study and the rereading of the colophon has led us to propose 1700 as the date of copy, in the city of Córdoba, which for now makes it the last extant vestige of the effective transmission of the sacred text of Islam in Iberian lands.
- Although we have clarified some points on the identity of the copyist, Ibrāhīm b. 'Ashir, we cannot determine for certain whether he was native to the Iberian peninsula or was a foreigner (from the Maghreb). If the former were true, it would be striking at such a late date for a Hispanic crypto-Muslim to have retained enough knowledge of Arabic not only to copy the Qur'an, but also to compose a colophon and a short religious treatise.
- However, on the other hand, this manuscript has formal elements in common with other Iberian Qur'ans, placing it squarely within an Andalusī tradition of *maṣāḥif*-making that can be traced back to the eleventh century, and was faithfully passed down through the Mudejar and Morisco periods. Based on Warsh's reading, other elements of this tradition are a division into four fourths (with a final fourth spanning suras 38-116) and certain exceptions in the distribution of the *aḥzāb* (*ḥizb* 16 starts at sura 7 instead of at Q. 7:3, and *ḥizb* 23 starts at sura 11 instead of at Q. 11:5).
- Lastly, this manuscript was used in Western intellectual circles, probably in the milieu of the Society of Jesus in Granada, as demonstrated by the annotations in Latin above the sura titles and the sura-numbering system, which means that it also bears witness to European Islamic studies.

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¹ The research leading to these results has been partially funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, grant agreement no. 810141, project EuQu: “The European Qur’an. Islamic Scripture in European Culture and Religion 1150–1850”, and by Spanish R&D project “Catalogación de los manuscritos aljamiados de la Biblioteca Nacional de España CAMAM-BNE”, PID2019-107175GB-I00.

² Organised by Fundación Universidad-Empresa de Granada during the 2008–09 academic year, directed by Dr Teresa Espejo.

³ “The notion of a ‘definitive text’ belongs only to religion, or perhaps merely to exhaustion” (*Some versions of Homer*, trans. Suzanne Jill Levine).

⁴ González, *Estudio de las encuadernaciones*, codicological description in Anexo I, pp. 19–24.

⁵ A 1518 manuscript from the province of Valencia held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Cod. arab. 7). See Casassas, “El Alcorán de Bellús; Casassas and Martínez Gázquez, “Scholia Latina”.

⁶ Available at https://csic-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1hd6u76/34CSIC_ALMA_DS21127880080004201. The information can be found in prior publications by Almagro, *Catálogo de los Manuscritos Árabes*, p. 16; Castillo, “Manuscritos arábigos”, p. 216; Ávila, Font and De la Torre, *Manuscritos árabes y fondo antiguo*, p. 102.

⁷ González-García, *Estudio*, p. 209. For other contributions to the improvement of this collection through material analysis, see González-García, Campillo-García and Espejo-Arias, “Novedades sobre la datación de los manuscritos árabes”.

⁸ Arias-Torres and Déroche, “Reflexiones sobre la catalogación de ejemplares alcoránicos”, p. 255.

⁹ All transcriptions have been made following the original, preserving all of its mistakes.

¹⁰ To convert the dates, we have used the application from the University of Zurich, available at <http://mela.us/egira.html>.

¹¹ On the ‘vague’ or even enigmatic dates given in the colophons of Arabic manuscripts, see Ramazan Sesen, “Esquisse d’une histoire”.

¹² The copyist writes the letters *alif-lām-hā’* and the beginning of the *jīm*, which he cuts off with a horizontal stroke that functions as a hyphen, then continues with *jīm-rā’-tā’ marbūṭa* on the following line.

¹³ Such is the case of the famous 1606 translation of the Qur’an contained in ms. 235 of the Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha. See López-Morillas, *El Corán de Toledo*.

¹⁴ Despite its visual similarity, we have ruled out the possibility of it reading *sana*, “year”, as just before he uses the synonym *‘ām*. Instead, we hold that it can be read as *sitta* (“six”), misspelled as *sita/sata* (sic) with both vowels and without the *tashdīd*. This is supported by the fact that in the first part of ms. 3 of this same collection, which clearly belongs to the same hand, we also find this number written as *sata* (sic), on folio 18r, and even as *satat* (sic) on 12r. A pervasive confusion as to the proper use of *tashdīd* is a trait common to both manuscripts. Available at: https://csic-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/homi3k/34CSIC_ALMA_DS71130119470004201.

¹⁵ Fera-García and Arias-Torres, “Un nuevo enfoque”.

¹⁶ For Dr Teresa Espejo, apart from the dated watermark discussed above, the presence of letters in the other watermark and the binding, which does not follow the Islamic models of prior centuries, also situate the manuscript in the transitional period between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We would like to express our gratitude for her feedback on the matter.

¹⁷ While it is obvious that the long *alif* is absent from the consonant ductus in black ink for *kitab*, it can be accounted for in the annotations in red ink. Recall that in copies of the Qur’an it is common to find the word *kitab* written without the extension of the consonant ductus, a licence recognised by classic specialists such as al-Dānī (*Muqni’*) or his disciple Ibn Najāh (*Mukhtaṣar al-Tabayīn*).

¹⁸ What at first appears to be an *alif* is actually not so, in our opinion, but rather a vertical stroke intended to justify the line or, only rarely, to highlight a certain word; thus, we have rendered it as a slash (/). Such vertical strokes are used throughout the manuscript as a means of justifying a line.

¹⁹ See note 18.

²⁰ The long *alif* missing from the consonant ductus in black ink for *‘am* can be accounted for in the annotations in red ink.

²¹ In the original, the *fathā* appears beneath the *tashdīd*.

²² As in note 21.

²³ See note 18.

²⁴ For example, /z/ instead of /ḏ/ in *khazrā* or /s/ instead of /ṣ/ in *niṣf* or *ashabī-hi*.

²⁵ For example, *yaqrā-hu* or *yuminū*.

²⁶ For example, *ayamm*, *mmīdīna*, *aladh dhī*.

²⁷ For example, *yakfula-hu*.

²⁸ For example, *khamis*, *ba’ dā-hu*, *il-Andālūs*.

²⁹ For example, *mmīdīna*, perhaps as an over-correction of the phenomenon known as *imāla*.

³⁰ For example, *yawn^a al-khamis^a*.

³¹ For example, *muslimma* or *mūmina*.

³² For example, by assimilation in *jjizīra*.

³³ All of these phenomena, which are present in North African dialects of Arabic, were equally characteristic of Andalusí varieties. See Corriente, *Árabe andalusí y lenguas romances*; Corriente, “Árabe andalusí”; Corriente, “Andalusí Arabic”; Corriente, Pereira and Vicente, *Aperçu grammatical du faisceau dialectal arabe andalou*; Corriente, Pereira and Vicente, *Dictionnaire du faisceau dialectal arabe andalou*. We are grateful to Dr Montserrat Benítez for her bibliographical recommendations and to Mr Antonio Giménez-Reillo for his comments about this colophon. A more in-depth study is still needed on the interferences found in ms. 3 of this collection, which falls outside the scope of the present article.

³⁴ On the term *gharīb* in medieval al-Andalus, understood as a true Muslim living in a corrupted Islamic society, see Fierro, “Revolución y tradición” and “Spiritual alienation and political activism”. Here, however, we echo the interpretation of this word in terms of expatriation and misfortune (*miskīn al-gharīb*, “poor stranger”) proposed for later historical periods by Barceló, “Endechas por la pérdida de al-Andalus”.

³⁵ See De Vicente-Lara and Ojeda-Gallardo, “Los primeros habitantes de la nueva población de Algeciras”; Ocaña-Torres, *Repoblación y repobladores en la nueva ciudad de Algeciras en el siglo XVIII*. In any case, we can rule out the city of Algeciras as the place where the manuscript was copied, as indicated in some catalogues, which moreover would not make for a reasonable translation of the colophon.

³⁶ See, respectively, Bernabé-Pons, “Fatwa del muftí de Orán”; López-Baralt, “El oráculo de Mahoma sobre la Andalucía musulmana”, p. 56.

³⁷ Referring to the Iberian peninsula as an “island” is equally common in *aljamiado*-Morisco literature. For example, BNE 5252 mentions *esta isla tan oscura a causa del perdimiento de los sabios* (“this island so darkened by the loss of our scholars”; see Soto, forthcoming). Likewise, BNF 774 (López-Baralt, “Las problemáticas profecías”, p. 363) and BNE Res 254 (*Sumario*, Gregorio Fonseca ed., p. 219) both refer to *la isla de España* (“the isle of Spain”) and CSIC-BTNT ms. Resc/3 (Kontzi, *Aljamiadotexte*, p. 633) refers to *la isla del-Andaluzía*. We would like to thank Dr Teresa Soto and Dr Pablo Roza for sharing these references with me and for their comments about this article.

³⁸ Aranda-Doncel, *Los moriscos en tierras de Córdoba*.

³⁹ Aranda, *Moriscos*, p. 338.

⁴⁰ Aranda, *Moriscos*, pp. 371–372.

⁴¹ Epalza, “Estructuras de acogida de los moriscos emigrantes”, confirms the presence of Moriscos or crypto-Muslims hiding out in the nearby city of Granada as late as 1730.

⁴² It is an untitled and anonymous short treatise, without a doubt penned by the same copyist, and which takes up folios 1–44 of the manuscript. Apart from sharing the same handwriting and same set of linguistic mistakes, there are additional material characteristics that connect the two manuscripts: similar binding, structure based on gatherings (quaternions), catchwords, same line spacing. It has a watermark in the form of a heart-shaped escutcheon enclosing a cross and, below the escutcheon, the capital letters “AM/MA.” This watermark is also found in mss. 17 and 18 of the Biblioteca del Sacromonte in Granada, both dated to 1603 (See Espejo-Arias and Arias-Torres, “*Addenda* a los manuscritos árabes del Sacromonte”). It discusses the virtues and benefits of fasting and praying in each month of the Islamic year, in particular the four holy months of Muḥarram, Rajab, Ramaḍān, and Dhū-l-Hijja. The issue of the months’ *al-fadilas* is a recurring topic in Morisco manuscripts. See Galmés de Fuentes, “Ms. 11/9393”, p. 13.

⁴³ The flyleaf of the manuscript contains a list of what appear to be several Christian names (Palacio, Esteban, Felipe, González, Zacarías, etc.) rendered in peculiar Arabic transliteration that, in some cases, coincided with that used in *aljamiado* texts (i.e. bb=p). Still, this does not constitute definitive evidence in favour of either of the two hypotheses as to the copyist’s origin.

⁴⁴ See Abboud-Haggar, “Los manuscritos de *al-Taḥrīr* en Marruecos y España”.

⁴⁵ For example, *tā’ marbūṭa* and *tā’ maftūḥa* in Q. 1:6 *an’amta* (f.1v).

⁴⁶ For example, in Q. 12:12 (f. 172v) he writes *arsala-hu* instead of *arsil-hu* and in Q. 12:14 he writes the consonant ductus *jsryn* instead of *jsrwn*, but then adds in the vowels as *jasiruyna* to repair his mistake.

⁴⁷ For example, *iyā-kā/iyā-kā, širātā* in Q. 1 (f. 1v).

⁴⁸ The online catalogue incorrectly describes this mark as a “word-final kāf”.

⁴⁹ Despite the confusion between *sab’a/tis’a* and variations thereof in the sura titles, generally written in Kufic or pseudo-Kufic script, this is not uncommon even in high-quality manuscripts.

⁵⁰ Although we cannot be sure that it belongs to the original layout of the work, it is not unusual to find amulets in Qur’ans from Morisco Spain, e.g. BnF arabe 425 or BnF arabe 410.

⁵¹ The 227 may be an imprecise count of the total number of folios made by the glossator. Although the catalogue says it contains 228, it should be noted that, since there is a jump between folios 1 and 2 in the folio numbers pencilled in by Castillo, we should add an additional folio, for a total of 229.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ وَلَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضِهِ شَرِكٌ

⁵³ Peña-Martín and Vega-Martín, “Con la guía del Corán”, p. 523. For *ghayr* used in an amulet, see <https://www.amuletosdealandalus.com/TB1-19.html>.

⁵⁴ Arias-Torres, “*Sicut Euangelia sunt quatuor...* On the Division of Iberian Qur’āns”.

⁵⁵ In consequence, and as a matter of methodological coherence, all of the Qur’anic references in this article follow the modern edition of Warsh, specifically the standard version *sine data, sine loco*, sanctioned in 1975 by al-Azhar University, and which is readily available in Moroccan book shops.

⁵⁶ The remaining 28 *ahzāb* are marked with medallions in the margins in the corresponding places, with minor inaccuracies. The same is true of the *sajda* markers. F. 32r also has a floret in the margin signalling the beginning of the Throne Verse (Q. 2:253–4).

⁵⁷ Hence its relationship with the Qur’an of Bellús, although the latter contains more Latin glosses. BnF arabe 384 also contains abundant notes in Latin, some of which were written by the Dominican friar Riccoldo da Monte di Croce and were based on Mark of Toledo’s 1210 Latin translation of the Qur’an. See Martínez-Gázquez and Déroche, “Lire et traduire le Coran au Moyen Âge”.

⁵⁸ See Arias Torres, “*Sicut Euangelia sunt quatuor*”.

⁵⁹ Starczewska, *Latin Translation of the Qur’ān (1518/1621) commissioned by Egidio da Viterbo*.

⁶⁰ Juan Andrés, *Confutación de la secta mahomética y del Alcorán*.

⁶¹ This manuscript also contains the variant *al-bara* (*sic*) as the title of sura 9, which does not appear in standard editions today. Arias and Déroche, “Reflexiones”.

⁶² On this important study centre and its library, which according to some sources contained Arabic grammars and dictionaries, see Mateu Ibars, “La antigua librería del Colegio de San Pablo en el siglo XVIII”; Arias de Saavedra, “La biblioteca de los jesuitas de Granada en el siglo XVIII”; Arias de Saavedra, “Biblioteca y lecturas de los jesuitas de Granada en el siglo XVIII”.