THE SEMANTICS OF MATERIAL CULTURE: ANDALUSIA MOORED AND UNMOORED

La semántica de la cultura material: Andalucía 'morizada' y 'desmorizada'

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ABSTRACT Andalusia has been always a liminal space between the West and the Orient. Since the late 18th century, the Muslim heritage of the region has been imagined, visited, and praised by foreign visitors, and remains its most well-known cultural legacy. Yet the language used in didactic panels when explaining Muslim monuments tends to refer more to its Christian past or its current use than to their Arab history and subsequent alienation under Christian rule. This article aims at analysing the logic and politics behind this use of language in two case studies, the touristic enactment of the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba, and La Giralda in Seville. It contextualises these monuments both in their medieval-modern past and in the present, when current Islamic terrorist attacks are fostering xenophobia, as well as the alienation of Muslim migrants and inhabitants in Andalusia, who seek to reroute their 'European' identity and connections by way of the Muslim history of the region.

Key words: Andalusia, Muslim Heritage, World Heritage, Language, Politics, Catholicism, Tourism.

RESUMEN Andalucía ha sido siempre un espacio liminar entre el Oeste y el Oriente. Desde finales del siglo XVIII, el patrimonio musulmán de la región ha sido imaginado, visitado y alabado por visitantes extranjeros, y continúa siendo su legado cultural más conocido. Sin embargo, el lenguaje usado en los paneles didácticos que explican los monumentos musulmanes tiende a hacer referencia más a su pasado cristiano o a su uso actual que a su historia árabe y a su ulterior alienación bajo mandato cristiano. Este artículo se centra en analizar la lógica y la política que se esconde tras ese uso del lenguaje explorando dos casos de estudio: la Mezquita-Catedral de Córdoba y La Giralda de Sevilla. Se contextualizan los dos monumentos tanto en su pasado medieval-moderno como en el presente, cuando los ataques terroristas islámicos están fomentando la xenofobia, así como la alienación de los migrantes y habitantes musulmanes en Andalucía, quienes tratan de canalizar su identidad y conexiones "europeas" a través de la historia musulmana de la región.

Palabras clave: Andalucía, Patrimonio musulmán, Patrimonio mundial, Lenguaje, Catolicismo, Turismo.

INTRODUCTION

The title of Mikaela H. Rogozen-Soltar's *Spain Unmoored: Migration, Conversion, and the Politics of Islam* (2017) uses a thought-provoking pun: to 'moor' is to safely attach boats to prevent them from floating off to sea, and she plays on the word to refer to the fear of Spaniards concerning the reinvasion of the Moors due to immigration, which they believe will eventually 'unmoor' Andalusia, i.e., detach it from Spain and Europe.

I would like to exploit Rogozen-Soltar's wordplay to discuss how Andalusia is continuously attached ('moored') and detached ('unmoored') from the Moors and their cultural heritage in the region. In doing so, I will explore Muslim heritage in Córdoba (the Mosque-Cathedral) and Seville (La Giralda) through the use of language, particularly semantics, in the presentation of such legacy to Andalusians and visitors.

Today, the Muslim cultural heritage of Andalusia draws in the greatest number of visitors to the region, and is accordingly heavily endorsed. But this is not new; since the late 18th century, Arab Spain has been a favoured destination for travellers from northern Europe and the United States (Vega González, 2004; Méndez Rodríguez *et al.*, 2010; Freire, 2012), and remains one of the main reasons to visit Andalusia today (Hernández Ramírez, 2008).

The nostalgia for al-Andalus has permeated discourse in Morocco, Syria and, above all, in Spain (Shannon, 2015). The al-Andalus period has become a synecdoche of the human and cultural history of Andalusia, which Antonio López Ontiveros terms *maurophilia* (López Ontiveros, 2001:25; see also Fuchs, 2009).

The traditional peregrination to Andalusia since the late 18th century has been mainly represented by the Alhambra, the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba, and the Alcázar of Seville (López Ontiveros, 2001:30), and continue to be 'must-visit-before-you-die' destinations in the region. In the case of Córdoba, a total of 1.279.928 people visited the Mosque-Cathedral between January and September 2015 (ABC, 2015). Likewise, the Seville Cathedral, followed by the Alcázar, were the most visited monuments in Seville for 2015 —the first attracting 1.581.238 visitors, and the latter 1.520.322 (Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 2016).

Given that these sites are seen by thousands of people every week, the way they are introduced to the public becomes very important: in terms of what the didactic panels and labels say about the monuments, what information is disclosed and undisclosed, the type of language used to outline their history, etc.

In this article, I will focus on the language used to present the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba and La Giralda to both visitors and locals. In doing so, I will first deal with the importance of grammar to introduce or explain cultural heritage, followed by two case studies. In each, there will be first a brief description of the monument in question, and subsequently a discussion on the use of language in their didactic panels. The article will be concluded by a final (and open) appraisal regarding the use of language, (religious) identity politics in Spain, Muslim immigration, and

the importance of Muslim cultural heritage for fostering ties between cultures in Andalusia and Spain.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRAMMAR

Identity is constructed in close relation to language and culture. Speakers identify themselves and are identified by other members of the same community by their accent, vocabulary and grammatical variations; these common features give them strength and a sense of social and historical belonging (Kramsch, 1998, 66). In this respect, the role of the audience is of deep importance. Speakers have at their disposal several codes, a wide range of registers, genres, expressions, etc., that they can use at any given time to communicate their messages (Duranti, 2009, 23).

Precisely for this reason, language is always a selection. What is important here is what language denotes and what it does. It is not so much the shared language of a community, but the intentional possibilities inherent to their language that are used or manipulated by their members —when it is filled with specific content, with particular judgements, and when it is interwoven with the interpretation or presentation of certain material culture.

By scrutinising the semantics, form, and function of a word or a sentence, we can easily see how it is manipulated to change the meaning and the performativity of language (Monaghan, 2012:153). Language, according to Mikhail Bakthin, can be easily modified by specific person or group of persons to "infect certain aspects of [it] that had been affected by its semantic and expressive impulse, imposing on them specific semantic nuances and specific axiological overtones" (2000:276).

Therefore, the importance of language, of the register used at a given moment, lies in its performativity. Language utterances have a logic of (re)interpreting and (re)producing history, and are therefore linked to the way people experience that particular history or material culture, or to how the speaker/writer would like people to do so. As Bakhtin says, "In language there are no 'neutral' words and forms— words and forms can belong to 'no one'; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents" (278).

If all words and utterances are populated by intentions, the question then is to unveil their purpose. This is particularly important when we are dealing with cultural heritage, whose experience and future memory, when visited, traverses political, social, economic, and cultural borderlands. Cultural heritage, especially Muslim cultural heritage in Spain, is inhabited by politics. In a country embedded in Catholic culture, the material culture associated with more than 800 years of Muslim rule and subsequent presence is highly a controversial legacy.

Besides being a religion, Catholicism is an ideology. A linguistic ideology, explain Judith Irvine and Susan Gal, can be a totalising vision when rendering specific persons, activities, or periods of history invisible (2000:38-39). Elements that do not fit an ideology can either be disregarded or highly distorted. This does not mean, however, that these elements have disappeared. In fact, language is inherently

heteroglot, for "it represents the coexistence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past [and] between different socio-ideological groups in the present" (Bakhtin, 2000:276).

In what follows, I will analyse the linguistic ideology used to present the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba and La Giralda in Seville to locals and tourists.

CASE STUDY: THE MOSQUE-CATHEDRAL OF CÓRDOBA

A brief history

The Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba is one of the greatest examples of an overwhelming archaeological site. It embodies different cultures and traditions in a unique building, such as the Roman, Visigoth, Muslim, and Catholic.

The Mosque-Cathedral was originally a Friday mosque located on top of Roman and Visigoth architectural remains (Marfil, 2007; Arce-Sainz, 2015), in the city that once was the capital of the Córdoba Emirate, and later the homonymous Caliphate. In 784, Muslim conquerors bought a piece of land where, according to literary sources, the abandoned San Vicente church stood (Borrás, 2003:18). The construction of the mosque started in 786 under the rule of 'Abd al-Raḥmān I[1], the Umayyad Emir of Córdoba.

The mosque underwent a series of major expansions and modifications, which echo Muslim history in Spain. It was subsequently expanded by 'Abd al-Raḥmān I's successors, Hishām I, 'Abd al-Raḥmān II, 'Abd al-Raḥmān III, al-Ḥakam II, and al-Manṣūr. It was, however, during the rule of al-Ḥakam II (978-1002), who was considered to be the "real master of al-Andalus" (Chalmeta, 2012), when the mosque was most expanded and embellished.

The mosque was regarded in medieval times as one of the four wonders of the Muslim world, and it encapsulates the history of al-Andalus (Hillenbrand, 1994:129). In Nuha Khoury's words, the mosque is "a unique reformulation of pre-existing architectural details (horseshoe arches, doubles-tiered arcades, alternating stone and brick voussoirs) within a novel arrangement of universal forms (hypostyle halls, axial naves, domed spaces)" (1996:80). It is therefore indebted to Umayyad architectural traditions as much as to previous styles existing both in the Iberian Peninsula and in North Africa.

In the 13th century, as part of the so-called "Reconquista", or the Catholic conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, Ferdinand II, the conqueror of Córdoba, converted the mosque into a cathedral devoted to the Virgin Mary in 1236. The Virgin Mary was believed to have supported and to helped in the "Reconquista", and even in the conquest of America (Remensnyder, 2014).

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1. In this article, I follow the transcription of Arab names used in the Leiden *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2012).

In 1371, the Royal Chapel of the Córdoba converted cathedral was finished under the rule of Henry II, and its *mudéjar* style had a remarkable impact on buildings associated with nobility in Córdoba constructed thereafter (Jordano Barbudo, 2009). Several Catholic kings were subsequently buried under the cathedral.

In this respect, Christians did not only conquer the territory under Muslim rule, but also their sacred spaces —leaving their religious buildings almost architecturally intact, and using them as churches and funerary chapels (Remensnyder, 2000). It was a common procedure during the "Reconquista", occurring in Asturias, León, Murcia, Toledo, Córdoba and Seville, among others (Harris, 1997). However, the importance of the latter three rendered the colonisation of Muslim sacred space highly symbolic.

It was only in the 16th century when the structure of the mosque was changed significantly (fig. 1). In 1523, there was a dispute between plans of the bishop Alonso Manrique and his chapter to build a choir and a Renaissance cathedral nave, and the city corporation who were against modifying the mosque, despite being Catholics themselves.

Charles I, gave his permission to proceed with the Catholic expansion, and a choir and a bigger and more recognisable church were thus built right in the middle of the Muslim temple. But he regretted this decision upon seeing the result, proclaiming "You have built what can be seen anywhere, and have destroyed something unique in the world" (quoted in Fletcher 1992:3). Aside from minor modifications, the mosque-cathedral stands today as it did in the late 16th century.

In 1882, the Mosque-Cathedral was designated national monument (Bien de Interés Cultural, or BIC), and in 1984, was included on the Unesco World Heritage list.

What lies behind a name

The Mezquita-Catedral (Mosque-Cathedral) of Córdoba was originally inscribed as 'The Mosque of Cordoba' on the World Heritage list, as recommended by the International Council on Museums and Sites (Icomos), the organisation that examines sites which are nominated for the Unesco World Heritage List (Icomos, 1984:1).

It was declared World Heritage by Unesco based on criteria I, II, III and IV, which praised the "highly relevant testimony" of the monument to the history, architecture, religion and art of Muslims (Icomos, 1984:3). In the official touristic brochure, however, the monument has appeared as Mezquita Catedral since 1981 (Pérez Navarro, 2016). The brochure was specifically entitled "Guía breve de la Mezquita Catedral de Córdoba" ("Brief guide to the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba").

In 1994, Icomos proposed to extend the Unesco declaration of the mosque of Córdoba to include its surroundings, i.e., the historic centre of Córdoba. It was only then that the mosque was labelled 'Mosque-Cathedral' by both Icomos and Unesco, and when the "historical significance" of the city —Carthaginian, Roman, Islamic and Christian— was added to the unique Islamic value for which it was first inscribed on the list (Icomos, 1994:1).

Fig. 1.—Christian but Muslim. Mezquita-Catedral of Córdoba (Picture: Author, 2013).

This shared historical importance, especially for Muslims and Christians, was undermined in 1998, when a new touristic brochure called "Guía breve de la Santa Iglesia Catedral" ("Brief guide to the Saint Church Cathedral") was created and given to visitors. It only referred to the Muslim past as an explanatory note, being called 'Antigua Mezquita de Córdoba' ('Ancient Mosque of Córdoba'), and was printed as such on entrance tickets (Pérez Navarro, 2016).

Between 2004-2005, the archaeologist Pedro Marfil carried out archaeological works in the Mosque-Cathedral. According to him, a pre-Islamic church preceded the Islamic temple, specifically the Basilica of San Vicente (Marfil, 2006; 2007). This discovery has since been greatly promoted by conservative and Christian newspapers in the country, which emphasised Christian primacy over the Muslim past (Barroso, 2010; García Moreno, 2014; L.M., 2014), even if prestigious medievalists cast doubt on the existence of any Christian temple beneath the mosque (Alba, 2014; Arce-Sainz, 2015 with bibliography).

Subsequently, in 2006, the Diocese of Córdoba registered the monument in the Property Registration Office under the name 'Santa Iglesia Catedral de Córdoba' ('Saint Church Cathedral of Córdoba'). The inscription reads as follows:

> The Diocese of Córdoba… is owner of this property, by operation of law, and has possessed it quietly and peacefully, without interruption or contradiction, *since time immemorial as owner, without having written title of domain* (Reina 2014, my translation and emphasis)[2].

Any Islamic traces were consequently and officially deleted from the name of the monument, in the hope of (re)writing an exclusive Christian history. Following this event, in 2009, a new touristic brochure entitled "La Catedral de Córdoba. Testigo vivo de nuestra historia" ("The Cathedral of Córdoba. A living testament of our history") was offered to visitors (fig. 2). The new brochure focused on the Christian presence in the building for 12 paragraphs, relegating what they labelled the "Muslim intervention" to five (Albert, 2010; Goytisolo, 2014; Alba, 2016a).

Both the secret registration of the property by the Church and the discriminatory discourse led to many protests from locals, academic scholars, and leftist political parties (Monteiro, 2011; Plataforma Mezquita-Catedral de Córdoba: Patrimonio de tod@s, 2013; Guia, 2014:135-139; Manzano, 2015; Pérez Navarro, 2016), who asked for the inclusion of the word 'mosque' in the name of the monument, and for its registration as public property. The controversy was served, with many newspapers carrying rightwing voices alerting of the dangers of the (re)Islamisation of Spain (Rojo, 2014; VOX, 2015).

The 'Catholic brochure' continued to be used up to March 2016 (Alba, 2016b), when a new leaflet entitled "La Mezquita Catedral de Córdoba es uno de los

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2. Translated from the original: '*La Diócesis de Córdoba […] resulta dueña del pleno dominio de esta finca, que posee quieta y pacíficamente, sin interrupción ni contradicción, desde tiempo inmemorial a título de dueño, sin que tenga título escrito de dominio'* (Reina, 2014).
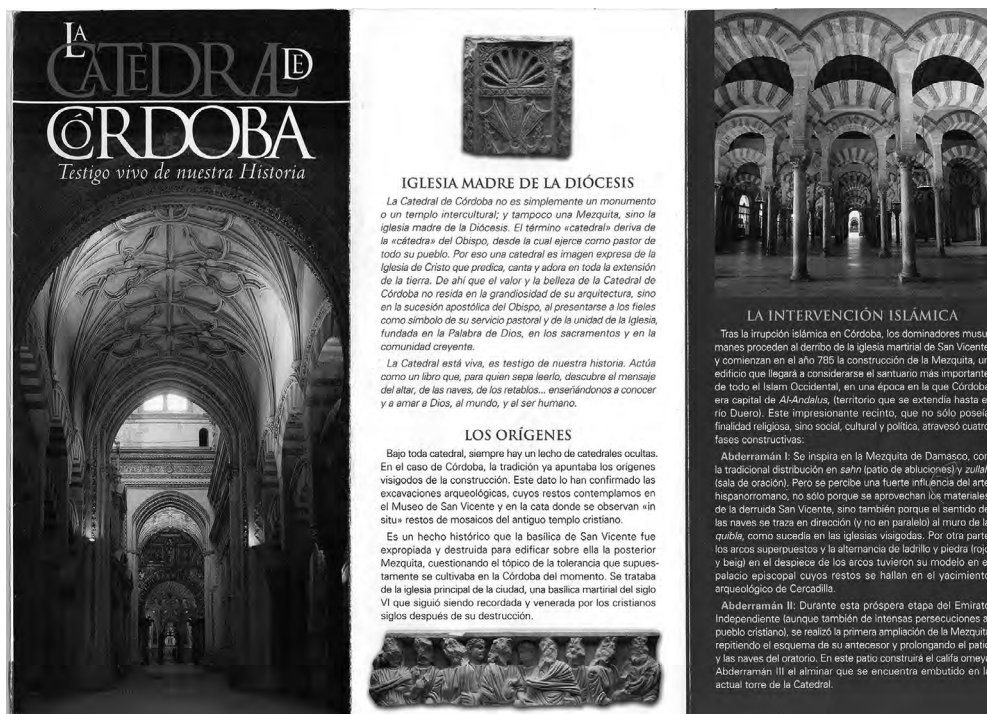
Fig. 2.—'The Cathedral of Córdoba. A living testament of our history' (Retrieved from: https://lacordobestia.wordpress.com/2015/02/01/la-segunda-desislamizacion-de-la-mezquita-de-cordoba/ on 03/03/2017).

monumentos más singulares del mundo, testigo de la alianza milenaria entre el arte y la fe" ("The Mosque Cathedral of Córdoba is one of the most unique monuments in the world, a testament to the millennial alliance of art and faith") was released. The Islamic importance of the temple was addressed at last, even if Muslims still cannot pray in it, and it remains ecclesiastical property.

CASE STUDY II: LA GIRALDA, SEVILLE

A short historical note

During the Mu'minid (Almohad) rule, Seville became the centre of power to the detriment of Córdoba, although the latter preserved its prestige (Casamar, 1992:77). Seville was made the capital of the Mu'minid caliphate under the rule of Abū Ya'ḳūb Yūsuf, where he built the most important mosque of the period. The city already had a mosque that was being used, but that was too small for the Friday <u>kh</u>uṭba (sermon).

The construction of the Almohad mosque began in 1172 and was finished in 1176, although it underwent some later modifications. The floor plan is rectangular, measuring 150 by 100 metres (Casamar, 1992:76), competing with the magnificence of the Great Mosque in Córdoba. The mosque has perpendicular naves, and was built out of plastered and whitewashed bricks and pointed horseshoe arches, similar to the ones in Córdoba (Casamar, 1992:76; Valencia, 1994:142).

The minaret, built in 1184, is located between the court and prayer hall, and is known today as La Giralda (fig. 3). It mirrors the minaret of the al-Kutubiyya mosque in Marrakesh, the capital of the Almohad Empire. A ramp gives access to La Giralda and continues to the top of the building. The tower has seven rooms crowned by groined vaults.

The minaret was already considered one of the wonders of Islamic art in medieval times. Describing it, the Almohad chronicler Abū Marwān Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt stated in 1198:

> This minaret is greater than all the others in the whole of al-Andalus, in elevation and in the extraordinary art of its construction. Observed from the distance it would appear that all the stars of the Zodiac had stopped in the heart of Seville (quoted in Valencia, 1994:142).

Seville was conquered in 1248 by Ferdinand III, who thanked the Virgin Mary for her intervention in favour of the Christians troops against the Muslims (Remensnyder, 2014:46). The king always carried with him a wooden statue of the Virgin, which apparently was handed over to the newly established cathedral (*Ibid.*: 84), also devoted to the Virgin Mary.

The cathedral was, however, a modest transformation of the former mosque. Christians used the Muslim temple, but transformed the sacred space inside the building: the *miḥrāb* was converted into a sacristy, and several chapels were built (Jiménez, 2006:22-43).

It was only between 1402 and 1403, when due to several earthquakes and bad preservation, a cathedral was erected on top of the mosque, which was demolished (Jiménez, 2006:41-3). The new Catholic temple was built in Gothic style —although other styles are also present due to later additions— and became the largest Gothic building in Europe. The only remains of the former mosque were the Patio de los Naranjos, converted into a cloister; the Pardon Door; and the minaret, La Giralda, transformed into a bell tower (fig. 4). All are still visible today.

The Cathedral of Seville was designated as a national monument in 1929, and included on the World Heritage List in 1987 together with the Alcázar and the Archivo de Indias. According to Unesco, the three buildings "epitomise the Spanish 'Golden Age', incorporating vestiges of Islamic culture, centuries of ecclesiastical power, royal sovereignty and the trading power that Spain acquired through its colonies in the New World" (Unesco, n.d.).
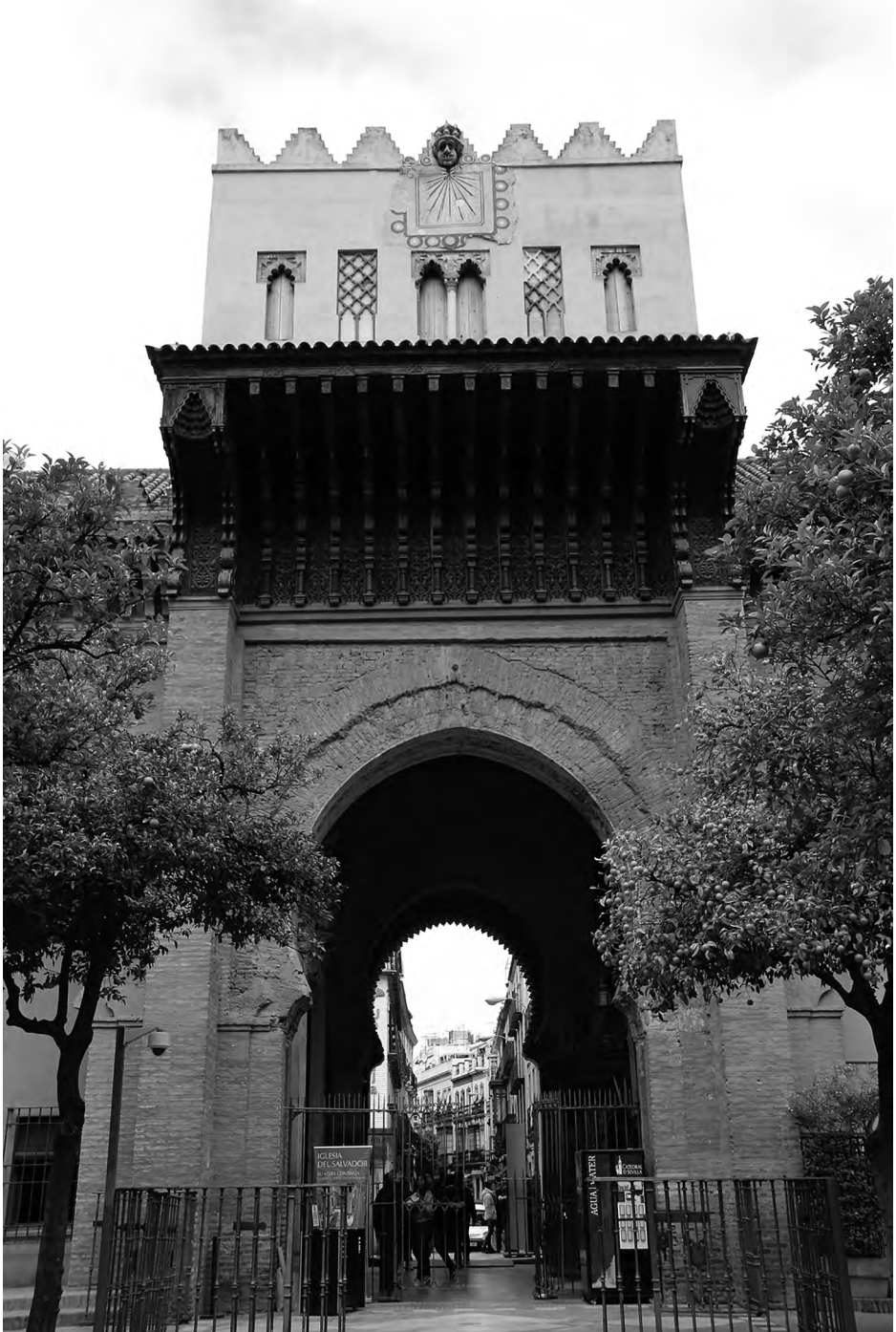
Fig. 3.—La Giralda (Picture: Author, 2017).

Fig. 4.—Pardon Gate from the Orange Tree Yard, Seville (Picture: Author, 2017).

The importance of semantics

At the entrance to La Giralda, there are two commemorative plaques made of tiles for the 800th anniversary of the construction of the minaret (fig. 5). The plaques, one in Castilian and the other in Arabic, state the very same information: they mention the year in which the minaret began to be built (1184), and the year that was finished (1197). The plaques also mention that Hernán Ruiz, an architect, 'renovated' the minaret in 1568. In Spanish, *renovar* (to renovate) means both to return something to its original state and to transform or replace it. The minaret was not restored, but transformed into a Catholic bell tower.

The Moriscos suffered their first expulsion in 1502 —or second, if we count the expulsion in 1492 after the conquest of Granada— and the period between 1556 and 1568 was particularly violent given the myriad of edicts dictated by the Inquisition against the Moriscos in many Spanish cities (Carr, 2009:135-148). In the kingdom of Aragon, the Inquisition decreed the enslavement of (supposedly) dissident Moriscos

Fig. 5.—Commemorative plaque in Spanish at the entrance of La Giralda (Picture: Stefan Hanß, 2017).

in the 16th century, and in 1560 Philip II recommended the same punishment all over Spain (*Ibid.*:144). In this period, Moriscos suffered additional abuses, 'from extortion to the rape and sexual harassment of their wives and daughters' (*Ibid.*:147).

In 16th century Seville, in particular, the Inquisition and the social pressure exposed the Morisco minority to slavery, great violence, and coercion (Fernández Chaves and Pérez García, 2012:84-87). Moreover, between 1569 and 1571, over 800 Moriscos —especially women and children— were sold as slaves in Seville after the Alpujarra wars (*Ibid.:*89).

In this context, the transformation of the minaret into a bell tower cannot simply be labelled as a 'renovation', for it implies clear religious violence against the Muslim and Morisco population of Seville in the 16th century. The way history is portrayed in the commemorative plaque is not only consciously partial, for it celebrates the impressive work of art without acknowledging Muslim uprooting and distress. It also praises the happy combination of Muslim and Catholic architecture as a pure multicultural and depoliticised event —as if there would have even been an agreement on the conversion of the minaret into a Catholic tower. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Moreover, in one of the didactic panels of the small exhibitions inside La Giralda, the so-called 'Cámara de los Oficios' (literally 'Chamber of trades'), it is stated that "Triana craftsmen, who *still* had Muslim names" ('los alfareros de Triana, muchos de los cuales aún tenían nombres musulmanes', emphasis added) worked in the conversion of the mosque into a church. The same didactic panel explains that a Muslim stonemason's mark was found on two pitchers inside La Giralda dated to this 'renovation' period, and it is precisely a Giralda mark.

As in the case of Córdoba, it was not enough to conquer the city. Christians needed to colonise and subjugate the religious buildings and icons of its Muslim inhabitants. Such dispossession is unequivocally violent, in a way more so than razing and/or outright destruction, being more powerful and symbolic —it is a continuous and humiliating memory for the inhabitants of Seville of their defeat by the Christians.

Moreover, Christian chroniclers explained how Seville's inhabitants during the siege of the city begged Christians for the demolition of the mosque, with particular emphasis on the destruction of the minaret, in exchange for the capitulation of the city (Remensnyder, 2016:127). Their petition to demolish their iconic building before being taken by the Christians was declined by Prince Alphonso (later Alphonso X), who affirmed that if any tile were removed from the temple, every Muslim in Seville would be executed (*Ibid.*).

There are several other cases in which Muslims implored the Christians not to take their mosque in Córdoba and in Toledo with similar results (Kroesen, 2008:116; Remensnyder, 2016:127). Whether legend or history, these stories imply that Christians knew how to mortify the conquered, both symbolically and militarily.

Additionally, as the didactic panel mentioned above states, there were Muslim workers building the church on top of the mosque. Not only were they conquered and dispossessed of their religious buildings, they were also part of the building craftsmen team during the conversion of their minaret into a bell tower (Muslims

equally obliged Christians to build mosques in their territories). The violence speaks for itself.

However, there is no mention of any of these violent acts suffered by the Muslims and Moriscos in the city, nor any reference to the social and political context in which the minaret was 'renovated'. Not even an allusion of it in the rooms inside La Giralda, which serve as small exhibitions on the history of the minaret/bell tower.

The expunging of violence from the history of the cathedral is also visible in the Patio de los Naranjos, where there is no indication of the destruction of the most important mosque of Seville for the construction of the cathedral, and the subsequent conversion of the courtyard into a cloister.

TOWARDS A POLITICAL AGENDA FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

Andalusia has always been a liminal space between the Orient and the West (González, 2000b; González, 2014), and such an ambivalent situation can be shown in the way their cultural heritage is —and has been— presented and promoted.

Spain has been orientalised since the late 18th century by northern Europeans and US travellers, who praised particularly the Arab heritage and past of the country (López Ontiveros, 2001; González, 2006; Marín-Aguilera, 2016). Some Spaniards even identified with Orientalist discourses in the 19th and 20th centuries, and built their own Orientalism, albeit more focused on Western Arab lands (Morales, 1990; Domínguez, 2010; Cañete, 2011).

The case of Andalusia is particularly interesting in this regard, for it is the trope of Orientalism and Orientals in Iberia, almost its *raison d'être*. Conquered by Christian Castilians between the 13th and 15th centuries, Andalusia became the arena for the struggle of Spanish identity politics. Since the 11th century, the conquest of al-Andalus included very prominently the Catholic colonisation of Muslim temples. It happened in Coimbra, Lisbon and Toledo in the 11th century (Kroesen, 2008:115-116), and in Córdoba and Seville in the 13th century, as we have seen above.

In general, Jews and Muslims could live in those cities after the Christian conquest and practice their religion, for both Ferdinand III and Alphonso X proudly considered themselves 'Kings of Three Religions' (Kroesen, 2008:115). That did not prevent them from invading the mosques of the cities they conquered, celebrating public mass, and consecrating the temples to the cult of the Virgin Mary, manifesting the supremacy of Catholicism over Islam.

The coexistence between the three religions in Iberia became particularly difficult from the 17th century onwards. The Catholic identity of Castile and Aragon clashed with the Orientalism of other regions such as Valencia, Murcia, and Andalusia, where there were many Moriscos, the 'Others' within (García Arenal and Wiegers, 2013).

In the case of Andalusia, the *casticismo* (casteist) ideology was imposed on its population, especially after the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609-1614, when all elements of religious and cultural differences were eradicated (González, 2014:196-

197). *Casticismo* was born in the 16th century as a Castilian imperial ideology deeply rooted in Catholicism and the purity of blood as a caste stratification, to such a degree that being Spanish was being Castilian (Unamuno, 2005; González, 2014:195-198).

Interestingly enough, despite efforts to consolidate *casticismo* in Andalusia since the 17th century (González, 2000a:104-124, 2014:47-64), the image of al-Andalus was more powerful and promoted more heavily than the Castilian, thanks to Romantic travel literature, as well as to Spanish orientalists.

Nevertheless, the persistence of the myth of al-Andalus battles against Spanish and European Christian culture in Andalusia and Spain, an attempt at repressing "a constitutive element of its historical identity" which "sees the oriental as its cultural and political other" (Colmeiro, 2002:129).

This contradictory identity of Andalusia —Western but Oriental, Catholic but Islamic, moored but unmoored— is wholly represented by its Arab heritage, and the way its discourse is offered to locals and visitors. There is a simultaneous necessity of stressing that Andalusia —and Spain— belongs to Europe as a Christian culture, and a desire to promote the Arab heritage of the region because it is what makes Andalusia unique in Europe and the world.

It is within this context where the semantics of material culture and cultural heritage is inserted. If the Catholic battle in the 13th century in Córdoba and Seville was focused on conquering Muslim territory and sacred spaces, in the 20th and 21st centuries, the focus of attention has shifted to the way the Muslim-but-Christian heritage is displayed. The touristic framing of the Muslim monuments moors and unmoors Andalusia endlessly.

In the case of the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba, simply renaming the building 'Córdoba Cathedral' is removing more than 450 years of history from the monument. In Seville, the depoliticised language used to indicate the conversion of the mosque and La Giralda into a Catholic cathedral and a bell tower silences the violence of the conquest, and the subsequent alienation of the Muslim population in the region. They are conscious political and religious decisions.

As noted in the beginning of this article, the Mosque-Cathedral in Córdoba and the Seville (Mosque-) Cathedral are the most visited monuments in each city. In fact, both Andalusia and Spain have strongly promoted the Muslim heritage of the region over other cultural monuments in every touristic campaign (Hernández, 2008:101-16). Unesco even inscribed the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba, focusing exclusively on its Muslim legacy initially (Icomos, 1984). Nowadays, Unesco praises the combination of Muslim and Christian architecture of the Mosque-Cathedral, as well as the Seville Cathedral (along with the Alcázar).

The amalgamation of Muslim and Christian architecture and material culture commonly refers to the idea of the coexistence of Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Córdoba and Seville —as well as in Toledo and Granada. Such coexistence has been famously branded as peaceful and tolerant, originating the idea of *Convivencia* (coexistence). There was no such a tolerance, or at least not as we understand it today —even if it is true that under Muslim rule in al-Andalus both Christians and

Jews were protected to a much greater extent than Jews and Muslims in Christian Europe (Madariaga, 2000; Marín, 2000:62-6).

Despite that, the *Convivencia* has been heavily marketed by both Spain and Andalusia in the touristic promotion of cities such as Córdoba, Seville, and Granada (Garcés and Vicente, 2013:31; Shannon, 2015:134). Such mythical coexistence in medieval Spain has been also presented as an example of religious and cultural tolerance worldwide.

For instance, Turkey and Spain used the idea of *Convivencia* when they jointly launched the Alliance of Civilisations in 2005 to the UN Secretariat, as a way of fostering intercultural relations between the three cultures in the Mediterranean. Similarly, in 2009, US president Barack Obama argued in his famous "A new beginning" speech delivered in Cairo that 'Islam has a proud tradition of tolerance. We see it in the *history of Andalusia and Cordoba* during the Inquisition' (quoted in Geller, 2010:188, emphasis added).

María Rosa de Madariaga Álvarez-Prida asks in her chapter on the use and abuse of the idea of *Convivencia* in al-Andalus the extent to which we can use that myth without distorting history (2000:89). To this, I would add: to what extent can we continue promoting (and benefiting from) the Muslim heritage in Andalusia when the history of Muslim grief and suffering is silenced? Furthermore, is it ethical to use the heritage of al-Andalus as a market product and detach it from its Muslim history? To whom does such heritage belong? (figs. 6a,b).

Spain is home to almost two million Muslims today, and has consistently rejected calls to allow the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba to be used as a symbolic mosque. Muslim communities have already made many unsuccessful attempts to pray in the mosque (Corpas, 2010:182-221; Monteiro, 2011; Guia, 2014:130-160).

In 2006, the Spanish Muslim community officially asked the prime minister at the time, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, to convert the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba and Hagia Sophia in Istanbul into ecumenical temples, where Christians and Muslims could pray peacefully together to their gods (Planelles, 2007). Their petition was declined, however, and only prominent individuals like Saddam Hussein have been allowed to pray in the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba thus far.

Catholicism sees Muslim immigrants as a threat to the stability of the country (Guia, 2014; Rogozen-Soltar, 2017; see also Zuloaga, 2014; Cembrero, 2014), but mainly to the power of the Catholic Church in Spain. Moreover, Muslim-themed tourism —which is presented didactically as almost exclusively Christian— coexists with anti-Muslim sentiments in Andalusia and Spain (Izcara, 2005; Sardar, 2013:21-22; Rogozen-Soltar, 2017:158-188).

On the other hand, many Muslim communities in Spain try to reroute their otherwise alienated identity mobilising the Muslim past and heritage in Spain, and particularly in Andalusia (Sardar, 2013; Rogozen-Soltar, 2017). Given the context of Islamic State (IS) terrorism, the refugee crisis, and the situation of Muslim immigrants in Spain and other countries, cultural heritage could and should serve as a vehicle for joint memories and solidarity, not for silence and exclusion.

Figs. 6 (a-b).—Córdoba stand promoting the Muslim heritage in the region at the
International Tourism Fair in Spain (Picture: Jaime Almansa Sánchez, 2017).

A good example in this regard is the "Multaqa: Museum as Meeting Point—Refugees as Guides in Berlin Museums" project, directed by Stefan Weber, Robert Winkler, Razan Nassreddine, and Cornelia Weber. It is a joint collaboration between the Museum für Islamische Kunst, the Vorderasiatisches Museum, the Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst and the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin. The project focuses on training Syrian and Iraqi refugees as tourist guides for their own past material culture and history exhibited in those museums, as well as creating bonds between Germany, Iraq and Syria (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2016).

Al-Andalus heritage offers a great opportunity in this regard, not only of enrichment through tourism, but also of (re)creating historical and cultural ties between Muslim immigrants and locals to foster social cohesion in Andalusia, as well as in other cities such as Murcia, Toledo or Valencia. Cities such as Córdoba and Seville should integrate Arabic history into their didactic panels on monuments, as well as to change the depoliticised language used to present the Christian conquest of (and current ownership of the religious buildings in) Andalusian territory.

As explained above, utterances have a logic of reinterpreting and reproducing history, and they influence the way people experience a particular history or monument, as in the case of the Mosque-Cathedral in Córdoba and La Giralda in Seville. Cultural heritage, and World Heritage in particular is severely politicised, and calls for its depoliticisation have already been made repeatedly (Omland, 2006; Beazley, 2010). As Olwen Beazley states:

> Unesco's processes do not provide an opportunity to question or validate the veracity of the heritage it legitimises through World Heritage inscriptions; only to assess it against predetermined heritage criteria. Thus, State Parties are able to manipulate heritage to meet their own ideologies and memory constructions while at the same time disempowering and subjugating the memories of minority groups. (Beazley 2010:62).

In this article, I argued that an inclusive and responsible policy regarding the preservation, display, and promotion of al-Andalus heritage is needed. What is also required is a politicised language grounded in history, but in a common history —Muslim, Jewish, and Christian— in the case of medieval-modern Spain. This would be language that acknowledges not only the magnificence of the architecture and the mixture of styles, but also the violence and the suffering of the conquered.

Only by addressing those experiences and changing our language, will we make a (first) big step towards a more inclusive history, that will also help Muslim immigrants and their children feel welcomed and at home in Andalusia in particular, and Spain in general.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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